

Constructs

Yale Architecture

Spring '23

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Colophon

Constructs To form by putting together parts; build; frame; devise. A complex image or idea resulting from synthesis by the mind.	We would like to acknowledge the support of the Thomas Rutherford Trowbridge Fund; the Paul Rudolph Publication Fund; the Dean Robert A. M. Stern Fund; the Robert A. M. Stern Family Foundation for Advancement of Architectural Culture Fund; and the Nitkin Family Dean’s Discretionary Fund in Architecture.	Associate Editor Cathryn Drake
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Spring 2023 Events Calendar

All lectures take place at 6:30 p.m. in Hastings Hall, basement level of Paul Rudolph Hall, unless otherwise noted.

Lectures

Thursday, January 12	Thursday, March 30
Mabel Wilson	Sara Caples and Everardo Jefferson
Can We Forget?: A Memorial to Enslaved Laborers	Erasing Invisibility
Friday, January 13 Smith Conference Room (Third Floor)	Thursday, April 6
Ken Tadashi Oshima, Momoyo Kaijima, and Sunil Bald	Kathryn Yusoff
Found in Translation	Rural Moves
Thursday, January 19 Commons, Yale Schwarzman Center 168 College Street	David W. Roth and Robert H. Symonds Memorial Lecture
David Rockwell and Deborah Berke	Thursday, April 13
Dancing About Architecture	Ross Exo Adams
Thursday, January 26	Colonial Remnants of the Urban Present
Ann Beha	Myriam Bellazoug Memorial Lecture
Straight Up, with a Twist: Clarity, Intention, Delivery	Thursday, April 20
Gordon H. Smith Lecture	Christy Ten Eyck
Thursday, February 2	The Memory of Water
Carrie Norman and Thomas Kelley	Timothy Egan Lenahan Memorial Lecture
Being Particular	Saturday, April 22
Thursday, February 23	A Celebration of Turner Brooks
Nontsikelelo Mutiti	Thursday, April 24
	Shigeru Ban
	Balancing Architectural Works and Social Contributions
	Cosponsored by the Yale MacMillan Center’s Program on Refugees and Council on East Asian Studies
The School of Architecture Spring Lecture Series is supported in part by the Myriam Bellazoug Memorial Fund, Timothy Egan Lenahan Memorial Fund, David W. Roth and Robert H. Symonds Memorial Lecture Fund, and Gordon H. Smith Lectureship in Practical Architecture.	

Symposium

Wednesday, February 8, 2023 Hastings Hall, 1:30 p.m.	January 12 to May 22, 2023 Opening reception Monday, January 30
Denise Scott Brown: A Symposium	François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023
In 1972 Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi, together with Steve Izenour (MED ’69), published their treatise <i>Learning from Las Vegas</i> . This canonical text, based on the studio that they taught together at Yale in 1968, explores architectural communication in a new kind of automobile-oriented urban landscape. Its interdisciplinary methods helped change architecture and studio teaching in fundamental ways.	Organized by Justin Beal with Kara Hamilton, this exhibition showcases the work of Montreal-based architect, artist, and designer François Dallegret. <i>François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023</i> draws from 60 years of drawings, objects, films, and ephemera, including the original prototype for Tubula, an “automobile immobile” exhibited for the first time at the Centre Saidye Bronfman, in Montreal, in 1968. This exhibition builds on the 2011 exhibition <i>GOD & CO: Beyond the Bubble</i> , curated by Alessandra Ponte, Laurent Stalder, and Thomas Weaver, which originated at the Architectural Association, in London, and traveled to ETH Zurich and École des Beaux-Arts, in Paris.
Fifty years after its publication, “Denise Scott Brown: A Symposium” presents new scholarship related to the groundbreaking studio methods developed by Scott Brown during her teaching career and at Yale in the 1960s. Three panel discussions build on chapters in the recently published anthology <i>Denise Scott Brown in Other Eyes: Portraits of an Architect</i> (2022), edited by Frida Grahn.	The Yale School of Architecture’s exhibition program is supported in part by the Robert A.M. Stern Fund, Pickard Chilton Dean’s Resource Fund, Nitkin Family Dean’s Discretionary Fund in Architecture, Fred Koetter Exhibitions Fund, Kibel Foundation Fund, and James Wilder Green Dean’s Resource Fund.
Denise Scott Brown, along with Denise Costanzo, Lee Ann Custer, Valéry Didelon, Frida Grahn, Izzy Kornblatt, Sylvia Lavin, Craig Lee, Mary McLeod, Sarah Moses, Joan Ockman, Elihu Rubin, Surry Schlabs, and Katherine Smith.	

Constructs

Letter from Dean Deborah Berke



Scenes of gatherings for lottery and opening sessions at the school, photographs by Stephanie Anestis



Dear YSoA Alumni and Friends,

The architecture school is making great progress toward its many goals this academic year: we’ve increased the amount of money available for scholarships and financial aid; we’ve attracted excellent new faculty members, opening up new areas for research; and our student body, the largest yet, represents a wide range of backgrounds.

Our Spring semester advanced studio faculty include Stella Betts, Bishop Visiting Professor Tatiana Bilbao, Davenport Visiting Professor Zhu Pei, Foster Visiting Professor Momoyo Kaijima, Gwathmey Professors in Practice Neil Thomas and Ray Winkler, Kahn Visiting Professors Mauricio Pezo and Sofia von Ellrichshausen, Kahn Visiting Assistant Professors Carrie Norman and Thomas Kelley, Saarinen Visiting Professor Mabel Wilson, and Stern Visiting Professor Ann Beha. Bimal Mendis and Emily Abruzzo will teach the Post-Professional Design Research studio for MARCH II students pursuing a final independent studio project.

I hope you will join us this semester for our program of public events, including lectures by Mabel Wilson, David Rockwell, Ann Beha, Carrie Norman and Thomas Kelley, Nontsikelelo Mutiti, Sara Caples and Everardo Jefferson, Kathryn Yusoff, Ross Exo Adams, Shigeru Ban, and Christine Ten Eyck.

Special events include the discussion “Found in Translation,” with Ken Tadashi Oshima, Momoyo Kaijima, and Sunil Bald on the domestic architectures of the Japanese Exhibition House, displayed at the Museum of

Modern Art, and work by Antonin and Noémi Raymond and George Nakashima; a symposium on Denise Scott Brown, organized by Frida Grahn celebrating the 50th anniversary of *Learning from Las Vegas*, featuring Scott Brown, along with Denise Costanzo, Lee Ann Custer, Valéry Didelon, Grahn, Izzy Kornblatt, Sylvia Lavin, Craig Lee, Mary McLeod, Sarah Moses, Joan Ockman, Elihu Rubin, Surry Schlabs, and Katherine Smith; and a celebration of the design and teaching career of Turner Brooks (MARCH ’70). Our Spring exhibition is *François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023*, organized by Justin Beal and Kara Hamilton, drawing on sixty years of drawings, objects, films, and ephemera from the archive of the Montreal-based architect, artist, and designer.

It has been wonderful to meet so many alumni in person at school events and reunions, and during my travels this past semester. Enthusiasm for the school and architectural education among alumni and the public has been incredibly gratifying. It has made for some very energetic class reunions. I hope to see many more of you in New Haven, at the AIA National Conference in San Francisco, and beyond! I am looking forward to the semester ahead.

I end this letter with an enormous thanks to Nina Rappaport, *Constructs* editor, who is stepping down after 24 years. She has done an incredible job and I am happy to say she will continue her editorial work at the School on our book series and exhibit brochures.

Best, Deborah

Momoyo Kaijima

Momoyo Kaijima, founder of Atelier Bow-Wow, is the Norman R. Foster Visiting Professor this semester.



Atelier Bow-Wow, House Eight & Half, Tokyo, 2022



Atelier Bow-Wow, House Eight & Half, Tokyo, 2022



Atelier Bow-Wow, House Eight & Half, Tokyo, 2022

Nina Rappaport The themes that you’ve defined in architecture, manifested in your project “Made in Tokyo” and the *Pet Architecture Guidebook*, employ specific research and observation methods. I’m wondering how that relates to your current focus on “architectural behaviorology,” what you mean by the term, and what is the potential for interconnection?

Momoyo Kaijima We tried to determine how different actors connect architecture. We didn’t know the terms exactly, so at the time we referred to them as environmental units instead of architecture or *da-me* architecture. *Da-me* means *bad* in Japanese, but it has a positive meaning too. It means architecture is focusing not only on the building itself but also including the environment. This idea comes from our previous research. Yoshiharu Tsukamoto and I were studying at Tokyo Tech under professor Sakamoto Kazunari on the research project called “Spatial Composition in Contemporary Architecture in Japan.” We collected cases of modern architecture from after World War II, more than 200 examples of different typologies, to understand the literacy of the architectural form in the social context and how that language is applicable to reading the actions of architects through the design of architectural form.

“Made in Tokyo” became a test for how our knowledge of the literacy of architectural form could be explored in different fields in the context of urban Tokyo. Then I started teaching at the University of Tsukuba, over 70 kilometers away from Tokyo. It was established in the 1970s, when the Japanese government relocated some schools to this “Science City,” allowing us to encounter a cityscape in a rural area. I was able to test several cases in that context and explore how the urban fabric transformed, or translated, into the rural landscape. I also studied agriculture, mountain villages, and seaside fisherman’s villages to understand the diversity of living conditions in different contexts. In this case architecture is one of the nodes giving us a chance to intervene and allowing us to reflect on our design through a rural network.

NR Your analytical method is similar to the way cultural anthropologists and ethnographers study vernacular architecture to understand how people live and adapt to their environments. Do you feel you have to put yourself in the position of an objective outside observer in order to see these things in a different way?

MK Yes, in certain moments we were observers, but early on we were more inside-outsiders taking a new position in the context. We were lucky to win a competition to create a very small kiosk in a rural area. We had to build it by ourselves with the support of the forest union. It was during my master’s degree, so the project was really very small but

very effective in terms of my career. We understood that even if we are just observers we can be more responsible. It’s a heavy responsibility on our shoulders as architects, but it also inspires sharper ideas in the pursuit of real meaning.

The inside-outsider position that I experienced early in my career has been good luck for us. Afterward we worked on a case-study project for a small urban Tokyo house, like Mini House and Gae House. There we had the good fortune to meet generous clients who asked us to be collaborators, and they were happy to invite us into their lives, but we were also able to keep enough critical distance to work independently. That type of relationship is so important.

NR How did your studies of the weird hybrid in Tokyo influence your recent Eight & Half House? I don’t think we could ever build something like that here and wondered how you got through the zoning and planning regulations!

MK That is a very important project for me. The client has worked with us for a long time; I met him in my high school days, and he’s also my hair stylist. When I was a young architect I designed his salon, and over the last 20 years we have designed three salons for him. After going through some major life changes he wanted to become more independent, so he closed his three salons and works out of his house, which has reformed his life and allowed him to have a more personal relationship with customers.

At first we wanted to propose a building that was more contemporary and leaned toward a timber structure. But from the 1960s to ’80s he worked in concrete buildings that we renovated to highlight their materiality. Concrete provided a sense of comfort and protection, whereas a timber house seemed too weak for him, yet he also wanted openness and flexibility. We designed a box and created an overhang above some arches. It’s one room with several high and low spaces embedded within it. The differentiation of the spaces brings in light and heat, and the materiality of the concrete creates the perception of different places for living and sleeping.

NR Was the form something that you had seen or adapted from other vernaculars, or was it something completely new for you too?

MK We reside in a similar neighborhood, so we have an understanding of the residential context, which maintains a similar height standard for all the buildings, often in concrete. On the northern side a slash allows light into the house. There are several other houses like this in the neighborhood. One issue was the placement of a carport that creates a lot of ugliness for the frontage. We asked the client to reconsider the garage and just leave the car outside. However he wanted at least a roof over the car, which allowed some openness as well as other

uses while maintaining a good distance from the street. It also creates a nice entry for the salon, with a front garden set back but visible. This negotiation with the client also contributed to the unconventionality of the house, helping us to bring another language into the context.

NR How does your work relate to your idea of behaviorology? Architects talk about how buildings behave in terms of climate and material, but you also talk about how people behave in buildings. Do you think this is a field of architecture that needs a focus that could be compared to environmental psychology and the study of the meaningful lives and behaviors of structures?

MK For us behaviorology focuses on people, usage, climate, materials, and building technology. Our studies also focus on how form is determined. Why, for example, is a roof shaped in a certain way? Of course we can just accept the form as a symbol, but I’m not so interested in the symbol. I’m looking for a reason or a relationship between the form and the context. We try to understand why form is generated through history and what we can add to the next iteration. So in this way of thinking, architectural form is not a symbol for us; it is a dialectic element that should be explored to achieve good results in design. The population expansion of the twentieth century has required new spaces, and the industry also needs new consumers. The production loop is very effective for our design speed and methods, but we question this loop. I would like to make an alternative, a slow but very effective loop to create buildings, perhaps even anti-industrial, or revitalize good industrial routes. Instead of repeating the past we need to create a better building culture. That is why behaviorology is important to understanding form and meaning and how we can reproduce and recreate better things.

NR In your recent studies of architecture in Switzerland — which like Japan contains very different kinds of vernacular buildings related to culture and environment, from mountains to valleys, in a small area — what are you bringing to your studies of Swiss behaviorology? What is it that fascinates you most about what you’re seeing there?

MK I think Switzerland has a strong sense of locality, as you mentioned. Schaffhausen and Zurich are different worlds that are less than an hour apart. I’m very interested in how they can maintain this diversity. I am focusing on context studies such as the trajectory of Swiss window styles: we collected 70 different windows and looked at how they developed in different periods within the industrialized society.

NR What are you trying to get your students to understand in terms of this approach, which is something I have also studied in Switzerland?

MK We did twin studies of Japan and Switzerland, focusing on timber behaviorology in terms of the types of wood and how each is used in different parts of buildings. Although there are different results using different technologies, they both arrive at the timber house. This comparison between different things is like semiology. I touched on this in “Made in Tokyo,” and this search for meaning is a constant part of my ideology — thinking about where things come from and how they assemble as construction. How do these meanings affect our life? Buildings are always made for people, so we cannot keep cutting off the relationship between the human body and building technology. I try to enhance this relationship through usage while still thinking about social context and industry. Every single artifact has to be combined to reflect the meaning. This is one way to change not only design but also society as well as the flow of industry.

NR Are there any projects right now in which you’re trying to use this knowledge in a new way, such as the fisherman village that you presented at the Yale conference in 2019?

MK Yes, at the Japanese fisherman village we explored how local resources can be used as accommodation for urban-rural exchanges in recovery areas, and we developed a team there that created many new cottages and other projects in the area. I think it’s interesting how education becomes a new factor in a project. Yoshiharu is running the farmhouse since the thatched roofs were damaged in the hurricane in Japan. They wanted to recover them, so they started to recultivate a thatch field to replace the roof, renovated the farmhouse and built a new one, renovated the community center, and built a new hostel for guests in collaboration with the School of Design in Satoyama. The learning process has promoted much rich knowledge and opportunity; these projects reach a wider audience beyond the university.

NR What will you be teaching in your studio at Yale?

MK The project is about architectural behaviorology and learning from the Antonin Raymond Farm, in New Hope, Pennsylvania. Raymond had lived in Japan before he moved to the farm, where he developed interesting timber structures and hybrid Japanese-European timber joints. Ken Tadashi Oshima will collaborate with our studio, and we will propose some renovations or transformations for the farm. We will be trying to understand how a designer can interpret nature within the context of rural America in a way that can help to guide the students’ future projects.

Mauricio Pezo and Sofia von Ellrichshausen

Mauricio Pezo and Sofia von Ellrichshausen, of Pezo von Ellrichshausen, are the Louis I. Kahn Visiting Professors at Yale for Spring semester.



Pezo von Ellrichshausen, Casa NIDA, Navidad, Chile, photograph © Pezo von Ellrichshausen, 2015–16

Nina Rappaport You have practiced together since you met, more than 20 years ago. How do you organize the division of tasks and stay small?

Mauricio Pezo We believe in the need for authorship behind ideas and construction and having someone with a hierarchical position driving the creative process. In our practice this position is a joint venture, a shared authorship. This is a form of complicity, intimacy, and an overlap of subjectivity. Since the beginning it has always been just the two of us plus a few temporary collaborators.

Sofia von Ellrichshausen Our practice is rather unusual. Our romantic relationship started along with our conversations about everything we loved doing. We had no program; the work grew naturally. We have always found a way to materialize our ideas.

MP We have never known each other under different conditions. From day one we were engaged in a loving relationship while loving the art projects we could invent together.

SvE We’ve since grown into an interdependent relationship. Pezo is much more creative and I am more of an executive, like a good editor who knows how to break things down. We have learned how to be comfortable navigating projects together.

NR I’m particularly interested in the idea of painting together and how you actually work on a canvas versus how you design a building together.

MP There is a conventional distinction between the collaborative process of an architectural practice as opposed to the personal act of making a painting, which implies the same subjective projection in every single brushstroke. We have broken that myth by allowing ourselves to always be present in everything we do. Since we paint together, every painting is a record of our intimate relationship.

SvE We were trained as architects, not as artists. Painting is a form of conversation between us. We decide a painting is finished when both of us are satisfied with what we see. Many times I wish Pezo would not touch what I did because I feel that it’s already good. But then he comes along, and it’s not good enough for him. So he’ll retouch it, which takes it somewhere else. So there is reciprocity and surprise for both of us.

NR Many architects use drawing iterations and two-dimensionality for representational purposes, but you use the 2-D space almost as an inspiration for the 3-D, and vice-versa. How do you make them one project and keep an openness?

MP The paintings we make respond to very specific functions. On the one hand, there are paintings we understand as theoretical or as having a degree of self-sufficiency and generality since they reflect on abstract spatial relationships, sequences of rooms, density, scale, or

structure. On the other hand, there are paintings that relate directly to the buildings we’re developing, so they are highly instrumental and circumstantial. Both kinds of painting are equally precise and specific, but they differ in contingency and ambition. Accordingly, we tend to differentiate the techniques depending on the stage in each process. While some paintings respond to the speed and fast thinking enabled by pencil or watercolor, the big format of the oil on canvas takes more time and planning. Despite the fact that one painting refers to a real architectural space while the other is a fictional space in itself, both are meant to be tools for thinking about architecture.

NR Rather than spontaneous compositions of free-flowing forms, the paintings are very systematic.

MP The paintings are meant to be repetitive, like variations on a theme. This repetition, or tediousness, has a semantic relationship with the architecture we do, in the sense that we try to avoid a single idea for a building. We believe that buildings are too complex to be reduced to a single gesture. The painting series, some of them quite extensive, establish a set of considerations that can be verified in every particular case. The serial work allows us to embrace reality in a rather naive manner. Ultimately we endorse the constant tension between intentionality and ingenuity.

SvE I can read our buildings as pivoting over the same problems or, as an Argentinian poet would say, of “doing the same thing but never in the same way.” Over time our projects reflect a concept from a previous project until there is a point at which one feels it is exhausted and deviates into another direction.

NR Many have commented that your buildings are objects in the landscape; they are not always integrated into the site, yet they respect it in a strange and complex relationship. How does that express your reverence for a site and its culture?

MP We are skeptical about the notion of autonomous architecture. We believe it works only in an academic, theoretical realm. I can’t think of any building in the world that is totally alien from its context. So I prefer to think about buildings with a degree of detachment, with the necessary abstraction of a man-made object, which presupposes an intellectual articulation that carries both separation and integration. After all, cultural landscapes are not mere backgrounds but figures of interface and interpretation.

SvE In fact the traditional claim of contextualism is an ethical exaggeration — too literal and simplistic. I think there’s an invisible fallacy behind expecting architecture to blend into a context, as much as there is an expressive fallacy when it is made

to stand out or communicate a subliminal message.

NR How have you achieved a balance in Casa POLI, the cube house built on a dramatic cliff?

SvE POLI does not attempt either to disappear or to express. Despite being a solid monolith, it is porous not only to the views but also to the wind, the sun, the vertiginous sensation of the cliff, and so on. The concrete block is mute and direct; it ages in the same way that the cliff ages without any mimetic desire. I think it belongs to that particular place in a substantial, or rather ontological, dimension.

MP There is indeed a conceptual dimension in the relationship between a building and its context, and this is why architecture deserves to be read as a language, a system of signs, and a form of world-making. For us, a building should be acknowledged as an artifact within the world as well as a means to situate the human condition within a specific culture.

NR Do you feel connected to the vernacular architecture of Chile?

MP We don’t think in nationalistic terms. Instead the transversal dimension of vernacular constructions is what fascinates us. Bernard Rudofsky’s definition of the vernacular as “an architecture unaware of itself” is really precise. We find it beautiful because it refers to the degree of intentionality we are supposed to put forward in a more “academic architecture.” We like to think of architecture as a vast range of possible purposes, foundations, and effects. Despite being technically specific, vernacular constructions are rather universal. I like to read them as projections of human existence, even as spiritual devices within profound cultural edifices.

NR What construction techniques have you used and learned from the local context or the building skills of local workers wherever you build?

MP We don’t believe in the didactic interpretation of materials for buildings, as if following the botanical distinction between native and exotic flowers. In fact most of the buildings we’re doing at the moment are in a diverse range of locations, from the United States and Italy to South Korea and Australia. Certainly we’ve learned from the material conditions of the places where we grew up. We believe that we can extrapolate a kind of ethics of endurance, which is the result of two basic factors: resistance and economy. Resistance is not necessarily the traditional stability or strength of a building or its resilience against erosion over time but the very embodiment of the dramatic natural forces of earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanoes.

SvE It is also the economy of means that results from a precarious context. I like to read our buildings like sheer skeletons — as bones without fat or anything superfluous. This is what we understand as an ethics of endurance, which can be translated anywhere in the world. It is not necessarily one particular technology; it’s more like an underlying way of thinking, an attitude toward building.

MP In Chile we don’t have sophisticated artisanal traditions, like in stone or woodcrafts. We are more interested in the expression of a basic skill. Workers know how to put things together, as in a simple squaring of a corner. I think that’s also part of the attitude of being less precious at the level of detail as well as more direct and unpretentious.

SvE We normally start a project within an abstract, immaterial, idealized domain, so as to think specifically about spatial relationships. Then those relationships are crystalized within a material world. As we said, architecture is a form of world-making, and it is meaningfully formed by what the world is made of.

NR Which of your buildings have you designed from the outset to develop a patina over time through weathering or

use, in a way that also changed your interpretation or design of the building?

MP I suppose this is evident in our Casa LUNA. It is an eroded construction that can be understood as an accumulation of human failures, of failures that are the most human dimension of the human condition. In fact the quality of the concrete can be read as a record of a useless effort equivalent to any attempt at making a perfect line with our trembling hand.

SvE We like to accelerate weathering, erosion, and irregularity, which are features of the natural as opposed to the artificial. I believe it is much more sustainable to accept that buildings are also alive, like one more element of nature.

MP So the feeling of this building is equivalent to a ruin, despite it being a new building.

NR Your interest in the manipulation of perception is another defining aspect of your work. How do you use perspective in your projects?

MP We are interested in entasis and reversed perspective because it promotes a more puzzling imprint of the building. The experience of architecture is divided; there is always the sensual together with the intellectual dimension of space. The traditional representation of buildings through one-point perspective, in either drawing or photography, is no more than a distortion of the multidimensional reality of space. We have explored the collapse of perspective by forcing the mind to move faster than the eye, perhaps as an intuitive mechanism to awaken consciousness.

SvE This is explicit in some of our pavilions, such as ECHO, in Milan, or BLUE, at the Royal Academy in London, and also in severe floor plans like SOLO or GUNA. People see the existing landscape in a new manner through the abstract artifact, which works like a magnifying lens for an otherwise too well-known reality.

MP We believe that art and architecture are both physical and mental constructions. A building, as much as a painting, is a device to read and eventually to understand something more about the world. There is an epistemological breadth to any work of art. Eventually a building might become a poetic image. This is the case, for instance, in INES; it has a central circular void that reduces its diameter upon ascension, while the corner rooms do the opposite. There is both entasis and reverse entasis, which is antigravitational. And yet within the program of an innovation center, the successive void becomes the presence of an absence, perhaps the very acceptance of the unknown, but also the physical interference of a direct movement from one corner to the other. The strict diagonal symmetry becomes an obstruction, a confusing delay of everyday perception.

NR What is the focus of your studio at Yale this semester?

MP In general, we keep exploring a problem we have defined as “naive intention.” This is a pedagogic method that challenges the contradictory nature of architecture by accepting the overlap between purpose and futility, prediction and chance, or authorship and anonymity. Specifically we are going to develop a cultural infrastructure for a rural setting in central Chile, reflecting on the problem of living alone in nature, or in shared solitude.

SvE We are going to review two relevant paradigms we believe are nearly obsolete today. One is the traditional distinction between architecture and nature, which in our view differs only in its degree of interpretation. The second one is the separation between labor and leisure, or production and contemplation. This doesn’t refer only to the current shift in lifestyles, like working from home, but also to the very technology that allows us to “return” to nature without breaking our connection with cultural life.

Carrie Norman and Thomas Kelley

Carrie Norman and Thomas Kelley, of Norman Kelley, are teaching an advanced studio as the Spring 2023 Louis I. Kahn Visiting Assistant Professors.



Norman Kelley, 190 S LaSalle Street, Chicago, photograph by Kendall McCaugherty, 2022

Nina Rappaport How did you start working together, and where did each of you begin your architectural practice?

Carrie Norman We met nearly 20 years ago, when we were undergrads studying at the University of Virginia. During our time there we often collaborated with our professors, Jason Johnson and Nataly Gattegno, of FUTUREFORMS, on a number of competitions. Their office became a model practice for us, pairing teaching with professional work. Thomas and I met again in graduate school at Princeton. From there we followed different paths: Thomas went to Chicago and started teaching, and I went to New York to start a professional practice. We hoped another collaboration would bring us together again, and in 2012 we settled on a competition hosted by the Architectural League of New York. Like a lot of others starting out, we were both moonlighting and working on the competition nights and weekends. We didn’t win, but I think we got an honorable mention. It was enough to give us the confidence to keep working together. We opened a bank account, started a website, and have been calling our collaboration Norman Kelley ever since.

Thomas Kelley In 2012 I was awarded the Rome Prize at the American Academy and fled to Rome, where Carrie came to collaborate on one of our first wall drawings. A year later we completed “Wrong Chairs,” a collection of alterations to seven American Windsor chairs. The project seeded intellectual themes centered around optics and alterations that our practice continues to wrestle with and consider.

NR How does Chicago’s legacy as an architectural city — with historical masters such as Sullivan, Burnham, Root, and Mies as well as Tigerman and the new generation — play a part in your approach to architecture in both academia and professional practice?

TK Bob Somol, Stanley Tigerman, and Margaret McCurry were early supporters of our practice. In many ways Chicago — unlike New York and Rome — had a linear history since the Great Fire. The tension between the first school of Burnham and Root and the second school of Mies is where our practice took off. Stanley Tigerman, Jeanne Gang, and John Ronan carved out what is being called a “third” Chicago School, to which we contribute. Stanley made it a point to promote younger architects, organizing salons at his apartment where all the young and eager would come to meet key figures in Chicago’s cultural scene. While there were myths about him being a cantankerous, combative architect, we never saw that side; we saw him as a supporter with an amazing wit and critical eye. We often shared plans with him before building them. We proudly used one of his quotations on the wall of the Aesop shop in Bucktown: “The grid is abstract as well as realistic.”

CN As an outsider I sometimes think of our status in Chicago as the most local-nonlocal architects operating in the city, but I also hope that to be the case in every place



Norman Kelley, Notre shop, Chicago, photograph by Kendall McCaugherty, 2021

we work. I hope our work treads carefully in all histories, major and minor. Sometimes the local, little-known, or overlooked histories offer as much or more to learn.

NR Much of your work begins with the line and drawing things that then become shapes or physically dimensional. What is particular to your idea of a “drawing on the wall” versus that of the mural as a concept for the American Academy in Rome?

TK The project comes out of the tradition of anamorphosis, which is tied to perspective drawing. It is constructed of space that we drafted digitally and translated to a two-dimensional surface that we could then trace onto the surface of the wall. The drawing is more of an act as opposed to an artifact. We were interested in a one-to-one scale that was a superficial type of architecture and that from a specific vantage point corrected what we took note of as possibly an afterthought by the original architect.

CN One of our shortcomings is that we studied only architecture. Unlike many graduate students who have studied other disciplines, we studied architecture and then architecture — specifically hand drawing. So *drawing* rather than *mural* is in our vocabulary.

NR For the 2015 Chicago Biennial you created drawings that were integrated with the building’s windows. What was your interpretation of the space and the experience of the visitor?

TK We refer to these vinyl window supergraphics as drawing too. The way we worked with Sarah Herda and Irene Sunwoo was more of a curatorial method. The window dressings could move around to mitigate light or views based on the requirements of different exhibitions. The way it was delineated and the style of the graphic representation derive largely from how architects tend to draft window dressings. It elevates what is sometimes denigrated as an interior move to more of an envelope.



Norman Kelley, Venice Shaker Chair, American Pavilion, Venice Architecture Biennale, 2021

NR It reminds me more of a scenography and the way you create settings for interactions when not working on a complete building. What is the difference between scenography and architecture, or even interior design, for projects such as lobbies and the choreography of objects?

CN Scenography is one way to talk about architecture as background. Our work often involves altering something that already exists, and we find the need to look closely at the background. Our contexts can be historical, geographical, or even personal; they can also be direct and material. Our installation for the exhibition *Spaces without Drama*, curated by LIGA at the Graham Foundation in spring 2017, comes to mind. The show’s prompt involved tracing similarities between theatrical stage sets and architectural scale models. We designed a table whose horizontal surface served as the ground for restoring itself within its immediate context.

TK I think *scenography* is kind of a loaded term for its connotations to Modernism and interior design. In some of the earlier works, scenography comes out of our vision, designing from specific vantage points and curating the works around a specific way of looking at a project. It has been exciting to yield works that no longer require one to experience them from a specific vantage point in order to appreciate the vision. Sound is a component in a recent lobby project at 190 South LaSalle Street, and it doesn’t require your eyes to be open at all to experience. But I think we use the image to analyze the work, so sometimes it gets packaged as being highly scenographic, as opposed to something that’s more three-dimensional or experiential, which is something we are contending with as we grow.

NR How do you view the conditions of working within an existing building as both a constraint and a liberation from the constraints of your designs? And what is your design process for the Notre stores and the lobbies that you’ve been working on?

CN Some architects might enjoy the freedom of a blank page, but we prefer it when there is already a drawing on the sheet. Most projects begin by looking closely at the existing conditions and then drawing them, even if we’re given a set of as-built drawings. Observation takes work, but we think it’s our job to find value in existing structures. Anne Lacaton has a great value proposition she calls “making do,” and it refers to locating opportunity in what might readily be cast off. In the Notre project, the building’s baggage included a three-foot grade change between street and interior. Making do introduced accessibility as a guiding motive and prompted a very gentle 1:20 stair ramp that has become one of the project’s most successful features.

TK I would say that the initial survey is not neutral; it’s heavily biased. We get the most out of projects where the collaborators — owners, clients, and

stakeholders — are open to thinking about an existing site in terms of both its distant and its immediate histories. For example, the Notre space was a confectionery factory and then an art gallery for Rhona Hoffman. How do you synthesize these dueling histories in a way that challenges whatever the new typology might be? Building less is what we prefer.

NR At the smaller scale, you design furniture with an ironic twist, creating critical art objects. Why do you decide to adapt or reorganize furniture elements that may have a historic value or context, and what are your goals in terms of the design interpretation of these pieces?

TK Novelty is not interesting to us. At best, New England colonial furniture is just a synthesis of European trends. We would like an opportunity to participate in a form of historical revisionism to do something different. Fortunately the work should coexist with what has already transpired. With our most recent Venice Biennale project, we start with material and veer into DIY fabrication, and then we find ourselves circling back to Enzo Mari drawing manuals and objects, regardless of whether we wanted to or not. In this case we had to figure out how to produce a set of instructions to yield an object that could be made by a framer. We like to rethink colonial attitudes and how they may have misappropriated origins to produce what truly could have been an American sensibility. Perhaps we are chasing a premodern sensibility that leans more toward regional sensibilities and particularities of place.

NR What if you were to take George Washington’s or Thomas Jefferson’s furniture and imagine a project that relates to political and social reevaluations of history, as we are doing today?

TK We take an apolitical stance to George Washington’s collection of furniture. To us it is a diverse collection of objects. Perhaps the way our project has become more political is in rethinking wrongness and trying to derive a narrative about altering what was previously there. We just completed a lobby renovation in a building by Philip Johnson, who is a very charged author these days. One way to engage is by shifting attention toward other aspects of that building’s history, not as a way to forget but to elevate what is a more promising kind of future.

NR What is the focus of your studio at Yale?

TK It will take on the form of a lot of what happens in our practice now: conversions or alterations to existing buildings, a form of design that draws on context to develop a theory of observation that yields a survey drawing that can manifest, or project, a design proposal forward. We are excited to introduce this process to the students as a way of mobilizing the drawing or the as-built survey from something that was typically a neutral or objective document into something that’s highly specific, and maybe even highly biased, based on the way that you see.

Mabel Wilson

Mabel Wilson is teaching an advanced studio and seminar as the Eero Saarinen Visiting Professor for Spring semester.



Mabel Wilson with Höweler + Yoon, Gregg Bleam and Associates, and Frank Dukes, Memorial to Enslaved Laborers at the University of Virginia, photograph by Sanjay Suchuk

Nina Rappaport One of the interesting things about your career is that after becoming an architect you went on a journey that combined the built environment with historical studies and cultural history, and then returned to built environment and spatial practice as a lens to approach culture. How have you been able to keep all these threads going and then converge them?

Mabel Wilson The origins of my interest in history come from my undergraduate education at the University of Virginia (UVA) in the 1980s, when historicism was a focus in architectural education. But I constantly felt that my own history, as someone of African descent in the Americas, was absent. Thomas Jefferson is master of everything at UVA, and his dominance in the history of its institutional architecture coupled with the absence of teaching on the history of slavery confounded me. In the last 30 years these narratives about Monticello as a plantation and UVA have undergone an excavation in terms of the parts they played in histories of enslavement, which had been deliberately forgotten and buried. The effort to fill in those gaps really sparked my interest.

NR Do you see your approach to the built environment as anthropological, in an attempt to understand human difference and hierarchies in any society? Do you see your purview as encompassing the cultural-global environment rather than just a traditional and chronological study of architectural history?

MW These questions kept coming up in my Eurocentric graduate education. My last studio class with Stan Allen gave me an opportunity to use collage as a technique in the design of a single-family home, which allowed me to bring in methodologies and sites that would challenge assumptions about race, Blackness, and domesticity. There is a history of collage and assemblage with Black artists like David Hammons, Betye Saar, and also my uncle John Outterbridge. Working with the “found” has been a sensibility of “making do with what you have” in African-American cultural practices. For my project, the single-family suburban house in a place like Levittown was perfect because of its role in the history of segregation. This project allowed me to think about representation and the tools of architecture, and it sparked an intellectual and architectural exploration that I wanted to continue to work on after the studio ended and I began teaching at the University of Kentucky. I met great colleagues in geography, philosophy, and other disciplines who encouraged me to think about doctoral studies. Fortunately Rosalyn Deutsch suggested that I apply to American Studies, along with two architectural history programs, and the department was more receptive to studying race than architectural history at that time, in the mid 1990s.

NR That brought you to combining these different interests in your own kind of practice, Studio&, and in teaching. How have you been able to bring cultural history together with design, as in the project (A)way station?

MW In 1995, when I entered the doctoral program in American Studies at NYU, I started a design practice with Paul Kariouk, allowing me to maintain a presence as an architectural designer while doing scholarly work. The project, currently on view at the SFMOMA, is a study of migration histories and impacts in urban neighborhoods by migratory populations that aren’t evident in obvious ways because they often take place in the domestic sphere. It set a model of practice — design, scholarship, and research — that is the foundation for how I continue to work with Studio&.



Mabel Wilson and Paul Kariouk, (a)way station at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, photograph courtesy of SFMOMA, 2022

NR What’s interesting about your work is that you’re a historian who uses history to impact the present, not just to be kept in the archive. One of the things you talk about is how to make the history of marginalized people visible. How do you create projects that are not only a book on a shelf or an archive to inform the public more directly or experientially?

MW I always had exactly that question about “making history visible,” which was the title of my dissertation, a study of world expositions as precursors to the Black museum movement in the 1960s. These expositions were temporary events that are absent from the historical record because of Jim Crow segregation. My interest in this topic was catalyzed by the African Burial Ground controversy, in the early 1990s. Thousands of members of the city’s enslaved community were buried in the burial ground in Lower Manhattan, which remained hidden until excavation for a new federal building revealed it. Harvard’s decision to exhume the bodies and deconsecrate the site inflamed Black communities around the city. The fight by community groups to maintain the site as an historical burial ground and not build on it led me to reflect upon the invisibility of Black history in public spaces. This became the subject of an essay I wrote for *Harvard Design Magazine*. Around the same time Paul and I submitted an entry and were finalists in the competition to design a memorial for the site. The same was true for my dissertation, which traces the lineage of the Smithsonian’s

National African American Museum of History and Culture. I approached Liz Diller to collaborate on the competition, for which we were finalists. We didn’t win the commission, but a few years later Kinshasha Conwill, the associate director, and Lonnie Bunch, the director, asked me to write *Begin with the Past* for the museum. These examples show the cross-pollination between scholarly work, experimental installations, and built projects.

NR One of the advocacy projects you initiated was with a group of former students and colleagues who have been at the forefront of investigating the conditions of construction workers in architecture. How did that get started?

MW Kadambari Baxi and I started “Who Builds Your Architecture?” ten years ago because we wondered why architects weren’t involved in Gulf Labor’s protest against bad labor practices that might impact the building of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. We asked, “Why does labor have to be disconnected from what architects do, even though legally architects are not contractually obligated to the workers?” We brought people together for a public event, which raised even more questions.

We are committed to raising awareness about labor issues through our *WBYA? Critical Field Guide*. We’re not labor activists working on behalf of construction workers; we are architectural educators who believe that future architects should engage these questions. We wanted to ignite the conversation about labor practices that at the beginning included Peggy Deamer, who started the Architecture Lobby. Through various conversations, we began working with organizations like the Architectural League and people such as Phil Bernstein, who wanted to better account for labor in how buildings were digitally modeled.

NR Do you feel that the situation has improved at all, in spite of the disaster with building the stadiums for FIFA in Qatar?

MW The question of FIFA in Qatar appears in the *Field Guide*, for which the examples came from reports by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and other organizations. I remember looking at an engineering detail for keeping spectators cool, but nothing in the plans considered how we might keep *workers* cool in the punishing heat. There was a focus on the user and not the construction worker.

NR You’re involved in so many interdisciplinary studies at Columbia. How do you work with the School of Architecture, the Global Africa Lab, and Studio X Johannesburg?

MW The Global Africa Lab, which explores networks of diaspora, began when Mark Wigley was dean. In 2012 Mario Gooden and I approached Mark about starting a Studio X in Johannesburg. Our two-channel video *Im/mobility and the Afro Imaginary* was in the exhibition *African Mobilities: This Is Not a Refugee Camp*, curated by Mpho Matsipa, at the Architekturmuseum at TU Munich. One of the videos explored how the Cross Bronx Expressway, and others like it, bulldozed and displaced Black and other communities of color. The other video charted how protests like Black Lives Matter took over the same arteries and streets in order to shut down the systems that have greatly harmed lives and communities.

NR How do you collaborate with the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies at Columbia?

MW I was one of the faculty members who helped to develop the proposal for the new department, where I have a joint appointment. I’m currently director of the Institute for Research in African American Studies, which will celebrate its 30th year in 2024. Like American Studies, Black studies is interdisciplinary and — particularly with the influence of Black feminism, queer studies, and the work of Saidiya Hartman, Fred Moten, Christina Sharpe, and others — challenges core institutional disciplines. For instance we shouldn’t just presume that the disciplines of anthropology, architecture, sociology, and

history are neutral, but that they have been shaped by racial thinking.

NR In terms of institutional change, did you think your show *Reconstructions: Architecture and Blackness in America*, at MoMA, was a catalyst for more Black studies at the museum? How did you come to curate the show, and do you feel it made a real impact?

MW The *Reconstructions* show was the culmination of a number of things converging. From my perspective, it emerged from MoMA’s effort to expand the canon of Modernism institutionally with the realization that it wasn’t just Picasso and Pollock. I was invited by curator-at-large Darby English to write an essay for the book *Among Others: Blackness at MoMA*. They had engaged curators to find works that engage Blackness in their collections, and in the Architecture and Design collection there were none, which was shocking! I was asked to write about that issue, and it was really hard to start. In the museum’s study collection was a swatch of fabric by Joel Richardson, who was trained as an architect but ended up working as an industrial and graphic designer. Around the same time Sean Anderson, of the Architecture and Design department, asked if I wanted to collaborate on a show exploring Blackness and racism in architecture. *Reconstructions* commissioned new works from 11 designers, architects, and artists, and it served as a platform for the formation of the Black Reconstruction Collective. We also produced a field guide for the exhibition and developed an online class with Coursera that expands on themes of the show for the global public.

NR The crux of the work you’re doing is changing the paradigm and canon of architecture and the built environment in historical studies. How did the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement ignite more intense work for you in the field?

MW The knee-jerk reaction to the murder of George Floyd was to write statements of solidarity and social responsibility. I don’t think institutions were expecting to be held accountable. As before, with the murders of Trayvon Martin and Sandra Bland, the deadly project of racial domination continues. This is the outcome of hundreds of years of colonial and imperial domination, and it still has devastating consequences today. Racial hierarchies are so much a part of how the modern world works and what makes modernity function at a global scale. It’s an episteme. It’s an ontology. It’s part of how we know and learn about the world.

As Sylvia Wynter asks, “How could we be different humans together?” If we don’t figure that one out, the *Homo sapiens* species isn’t going to survive. Capitalism is destroying our habitat. It means that we really have to question everything to the point where it’s exhausting and even difficult to imagine what is possible. There has to be something else because this modern world came into being and there were other ways of living before all of this.

NR So we have to stay a little optimistic.

MW I think there are always possibilities; we have to imagine what is possible.

NR What is the subject of your studio and seminar at Yale, and how did it evolve?

MW My seminar is called “Thinking Race, Reading Architecture,” and we will think through the question of race and architectural discourse. The essay collection *Race and Modern Architecture*, which I coedited with Irene Cheng and Charles Davis, will supplement the material used to teach this class I developed about ten years ago. It’s really about how we read racialization back into an architectural discourse that is laden with racial meanings and thought. The studio is the third in a series I’ve taught with KPF Visiting Scholar Jordan Carver. We are looking at what the post-plantation future might be, considering that the plantation as a global typology of extraction and settler colonialism hasn’t disappeared but has simply been reconfigured.

Ray Winkler and Neil Thomas

Ray Winkler, architect and director of Stufish Entertainment Architecture, is the Bishop Visiting Professor, teaching a studio with Neil Thomas of Atelier One, on new ways to imagine entertainment design.



Stufish, ABBA stage, photograph © Dirk Lindner courtesy Stufish, 2022



Stufish, ABBA stage, rendering by Stufish, 2022

Nina Rappaport Ray, it is fascinating how you are working as an architect in the field of set design, with projects at the building scale. How did you get to this creative niche?

Ray Winkler Well, I have to blame or thank Neil, depending on which part of the story we want to tell. I started studying architecture at UCL in 1990, just when Peter Cook took a professorship there. It was probably the best three years of my academic life because it was complete mayhem. Everything was under the umbrella of architecture, including visual and performance art, sculpture, and furniture — but nothing that most people would normally recognize as being architecture. In my second year I met Neil, who was one of the tutors in Paul Monaghan and Simon Allford’s unit. Neil was the third member of the band. I was very interested in structural engineering and looking at things through the lenses of both architecture and engineering. So I took up Neil’s offer to visit him for tutorials, and I was a persistent bugger. Neil was very generous and forward thinking, and I ended up at SCI-Arc, where everything was ephemeral and transient. I think it laid the groundwork for going to Stufish as an entertainment architect to do a huge range of projects, from entertainment stages and sit-down shows in Las Vegas to one-off ceremonies like the Olympics and ship launches, as well as actual buildings.

Neil Thomas Can I tell my version of the same story? I had this arrangement at the Bartlett to tutor students, but some of them just didn’t bother turning up. So I said to Paul and Simon, “Instead I’ll give time to any student who wants to come to our office.” Ray came in every single moment he could, and it was a pleasure having him. Then when we employed him for a bit he was a great draftsman and had interesting ideas. We had been working with Mark Fisher at Stufish for quite a while, and Ray got involved in the U2 stage “PopMart.” One day I asked Aron, my partner, where Ray was, and it turns out he was at Mark’s studio, but we were paying his salary. I phoned Mark and said, “If Ray’s working in your studio, don’t you think you ought to be employing him?” So Ray moved there.

RW Yeah, so it wasn’t very subtle, but I did get the message.

NT Nobody wanted you to go — you just drifted! It was absolutely fantastic because it was a perfect kind of symbiosis, with Ray working as an architect in our engineering office and then drifting toward Mark’s intuition and understanding of engineering, which very few architects have. Ray picked that up, and it’s inherent.

NR Neil, how did you as an engineer become involved with set design and then how did you connect to Mark Fisher?

NT I was working with Tony Hunt, and Mark came to see Tony because Stufish

had been approached to do a project to retrain the National Westminster Bank staff in a rented venue but decided that the logistics were too complicated. Mark decided that we should design some temporary buildings that would move around the country, but it was a little beyond our in-house capability, so we needed to employ an engineer. Atelier One was hired, and the first major concert we worked on was Pink Floyd, in 1994.

NR What was your role in the set design and installation for the concert?

NT We used high-pressure inflatable tubes as the supporting structure for the spherical surface of the backdrop, where they did the light projections. We developed high-pressure inflatables and used them for the initial part of the tour. But then they kept exploding and the police got involved, so they decided to put trusses in place instead. What’s fantastic about working with Mark and Ray is that it allows you to push the technology. You could never do that in the conventional building industry.

NR Ray, as an architect how do you see and develop this interest in entertainment settings as architecture?

RW I think as an architect, whether you build buildings or stage architecture, or anything in between, you are taught to solve problems through lateral thinking where the trajectory between a problem and a solution is never a straight line, which allows you to search for viable solutions. I come from a family of architects. What Neil, and later on Mark, taught me is that there are a lot of solutions out there in search of problems. I think the joy of that discovery, and the evolution of these ideas into something tangible, as Neil just explained, was always the backbone of what we did in conjunction with Atelier One. I never make a distinction between engineering and architecture, nor between architecture and furniture design, which was my very first foray into the design world.

NR How was the recent ABBA Voyage set design significant in terms of construction technique, engineering, sustainability, and demountable design?

RW ABBA Voyage pushed the envelope to the limit. It was a perfect storm in which all of the strands converged to make content and context indistinguishable. The building without the content and the content without the building could not exist since it was a necessary spatial experience in relation to the screen and to the audience. The envelope we created with Atelier One was based on 30 years of understanding what touring structures required. It’s the world’s biggest demountable building, which couldn’t have been done without that collective experience of progressive innovation and how to transport large structures from A to B efficiently, safely, and quickly.

NR Neil, do you think using this technology to create demountable buildings

can be applied to buildings in general for increased sustainability?

NT Some of the innovation in that project you will never see. It has to do with how the structure, designed with Ray and Stufish, was possible to build. The roof was lifted up from the ground in totality. It was designed to not to lose any of the carbon sequestration, so at the end of its short life you can just move it somewhere else. I think a demountable building is definitely a step forward in the concept of how to design a building for its full life.

RW There was a two-pronged approach. First we designed the building from the inside out, focusing on the audience experience and the really weird hybrid experience of a digital and physical world colliding together to create a sort of singularity. There is no other building that is tailor-made to a single band. The fact that it needed to be moved in five years was the other driving force. We pushed the idea of sustainability from the very beginning, and it was inherent because there was only timber, and no concrete, which reduced the carbon footprint. All of the welding, steel fabrication, and timberwork was done so the carbon footprint — amortized over two or three or four iterations of this building in different locations — would be reduced.

There are three aspects to the building: the 70-meter-wide auditorium, which is the hexagonal space where the show happens; the front of house, which is a series of 24 interlocking hexagonal canopies, timber, and steel construction creating a partially enclosed open area where people congregate; and the back of house, made up of porta-cabins housing the administration, security, cast, and changing room. Flexibility was inherent in the design, with hexagons that could become wider and narrower or longer and fatter. There are no foundations, just very shallow pads, and it doesn’t need to be knocked down with a big crane. It just comes apart.

NR How do you collaborate with performers on the design of a project?

RW There is no template, and each client has a different way of working. There can be a very strong one-to-one relationship with many iterations, involving back-and-forth with the entertainer using animation, VR, renderings, scale models, and prototypes, often like architecture.

NR Neil, where does your structural-engineering work and material design expertise come together on a complex project with Stufish?

NT We worked with U2 on the 30th anniversary of Joshua Tree, where Ray’s colleague was designing the set and we were developing it with him. LED screens have become more accurate, with much less pixelation, and we came up with a structure built into the LED screen itself. In the 1990s the screens were televisions

that weighed 300 kilograms per square meter and were just bolted together. Now they’re super-sophisticated carbon-fiber structures weighing only 10 or 12 kilos per square meter. Jake Berry is one of the best production managers I’ve worked with, and this was the first tour loaded out before sunrise in living memory. So we developed the set with carbon fiber, which had never been done before. Interestingly Metallica, on tour at the same time, was complaining about being too loaded with big, heavy LED screens.

RW An important benefit was the reduction in crew, hotels, trucks, and flights, not just from a financial point of view but also a carbon-footprint perspective. A BBC study showed that 60 percent of the footprint of concerts was left by the audience, especially in North America, where most people travel to the venues by car. I was in Los Angeles for Elton John’s last tour, in a stadium hosting about 60,000 people with 40,000 cars. Some artists are talking about residencies rather than tours — where Adele would do many shows on a single occasion, reducing the carbon footprint. The future of entertainment architecture has much to do not only with the technology that delivers it but also the mindset that creates it. If our mindset is not attuned to the pressures we’re feeling, then we will fail in our task.

NR Neil, how do you see the focus on sustainability developing in the engineering field as well as in your own projects?

NT I think it’s fundamental in terms of the future of entertainment, which is the focus of the studio at Yale. We just won an award for advancement in the structural application of low-carbon materials, along with the Supreme Award for Structural Engineering Excellence from the Institution of Structural Engineers (ISE) for the Green School, in Bali. The ISE said it changed the nature of bamboo in the construction industry. But the construction industry has to change the nature of how it operates. We are making choices about certain projects, for example, not working on any proposals for Saudi Arabia because of its bad human-rights and sustainability track records.

NR What will the studio prompt and investigation be for the students at Yale?

RW We will attempt to redefine the future of entertainment, not simply through an incremental tweaking of an existing technology but also through disruptive ideas. We are very interested in thinking through the whole cycle — not just coming up with a clever idea of how to do something in a slightly different way. As Neil has pointed out, you can make a decision to make changes from within or you can sit outside. Sustainability is not an afterthought; it is a core principle by which everything gets built. I want our Yale studio to have a spirit of generous exploration and opening up minds to see things differently.

SOS Brutalism — Save the Concrete Monsters!



SOS Brutalism installed at Yale School of Architecture Gallery

Stepping off the 8:02 from Grand Central Terminal at New Haven Union Station on the last Saturday in October, I walked past a handful of buildings considered Brutalist: New Haven Police Department (1973) and the former Knights of Columbus Museum (1965), both designed by Orr, deCossey, Winder and Associates; Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo’s Knights of Columbus Headquarters (1967); Paul Rudolph’s Temple Street Garage (1961); and Louis Kahn’s Yale University Art Gallery (1951). I was on the way to Paul Rudolph Hall, the latest stop for the traveling exhibition *SOS Brutalism — Save the Concrete Monsters!* which took place from August 25, 2022 to December 10, 2022



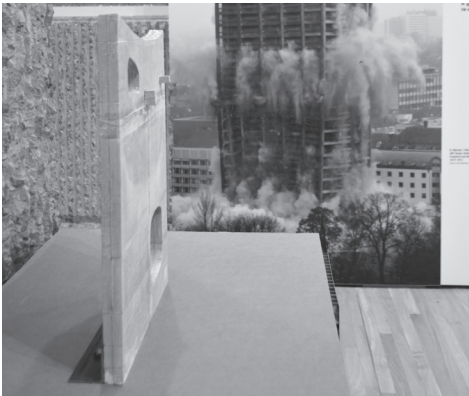
Model of Rudolph Hall by ArcModels, in SOS Brutalism at the Yale School of Architecture Gallery, 2022

Before I reached the two-block-long parking garage spanning George Street, within the realm of Rudolph’s “concrete monster,” there was yet a more impressive void: the expansive surface parking lot next to the 23-story Knights of Columbus tower. The empty lot hinted at the presence of its predecessor, Roche and Dinkeloo’s massive New Haven Veterans Memorial Coliseum, the sports and music venue topped by a four-story parking garage elevated by tile-clad concrete piers, fed by two helical ramps, and structured impressively in large weathering steel trusses. It opened in 1972 and was demolished in 2007, in a controlled implosion watched by more than 20,000 people — twice the capacity of the Roman Colosseum. The reasons given for the demolition of the building, closed in 2002, were fairly typical, namely that the cost of maintenance was too high to justify repairing the structure to keep it functioning as originally intended. Reuse was considered, but the result was demolition, a fate met by many Brutalist buildings this past century.

It was a new addition to *SOS Brutalism* — the popular exhibition curated by Oliver Elser that has traveled to numerous locations since it opened in 2017 at Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM), in Frankfurt — highlighting “New Haven Brutalism” among eleven regional and seven thematic sections collectively presenting 54 buildings. It was

fitting given that this city of only 135,000 residents hosts so many buildings considered Brutalist: 18, in fact. By comparison, #SOSBRUTALISM’s online database has identified just 17 Brutalist buildings in New York City. I could trace my route from Union Station to Yale School of Architecture and see that John M. Johansen’s Helene Grant School (1964) and the Dixwell Community House (1967), designed by Herbert S. Newman and Edward E. Cherry, met the same fate as the Coliseum. Four of the New Haven buildings were highlighted on cardboard panels (the display armature for the whole exhibition), including Temple Street Garage and the sorely missed Coliseum; the brief text and project data clearly indicated that Rudolph’s garage was designated as protected heritage while the Coliseum was demolished. A large sectional model of Rudolph Hall (a.k.a the Art & Architecture Building, 1963) noted the same protection for the building I stood within, but scanning the cardboard panels at the perimeter of the gallery yielded more than a few photos saturated in red — signals that they are “threatened.” Will João Filgueiras Lima’s Centro de Exposições, in Salvador, Brazil, structured in the form of a bridge, meet the same fate as the Coliseum? The exhibition asked visitors to ponder such questions while taking a proactive stance in the campaign for preservation.

The New Haven Brutalism section, albeit a small component of the exhibition, importantly paralleled the structure and themes explored by Elser and his colleagues in the wider “SOS Brutalism” project, which began with a symposium at the Wüsternot Foundation in 2012. Its proceedings were published in 2017 by Park Books along with an impressive catalog documenting 120 projects, and it has since comprised a growing online database with 2,180 projects to date. The term was first articulated as “New Brutalism” by Reyner Banham in describing British architects Alison and Peter Smithson’s unbuilt house for themselves in Soho (1952) and then two years later, with the completion



View of concrete cast of Palace of Assembly, Le Corbusier, Chandigarh, by Stav Dror and Serg Saab (both MArch II '22) with photo of imploded building in SOS Brutalism, the Yale School of Architecture Gallery, 2022

of the famed Hunstanton Secondary Modern School, used to express a belief in “truth to materials” — particularly bare bricks, concrete, and wood, or exposed structure. “Brutalism to us meant ‘direct’; to others it came to be a synonym for rough, crude, oversized, and using beams three times thicker than necessary,” the couple wrote in 1966, in an Architectural Association publication. “Brutalism was the opposite, necessary to suit the new situation, like Kahn’s work at Yale. That wasn’t rough or crude or oversized.” What they said about Kahn’s Yale Art Gallery made it, at least superficially, more Miesian than what would eventually be considered Brutalism by an audience much wider than architects and critics. It could be applied just as readily to their Hunstanton School, with its steel frame, expansive glass walls, and exposed services — most famously the sink drain pipes feeding a trough in the restrooms, presented in a large photograph at the start of the exhibition.



SOS Brutalism installed at Yale School of Architecture Gallery

“The Brutalism of today is no longer the Brutalism that Alison Smithson, Peter Smithson, and Reyner Banham introduced to the architectural discourse,” Elser wrote in the companion publication to the Yale exhibition. Banham proffered his own definition of Brutalism in the December 1955 issue of *Architectural Review*, tentatively stating that “New Brutalism eludes precise description” and “as a descriptive label it has two overlapping, but not identical, senses.” Simply put, the two senses were a *brutal honesty* in material and structure, à la the Smithsons, and architectural form expressed through *béton brut*, or raw concrete, as Le Corbusier did boldly in the Unité d’Habitation, in Marseille, in 1952. Singling out Hunstanton and the Yale Art Gallery but moving beyond their strict formality, Banham asserted that, in addition to a “clear exhibition of structure” and “valuation of materials,” the New Brutalism should have “memorability as an image” as one of its tripartite characteristics. In a sense Banham was calling on architects to create a new architecture expressive of the time, not a reappraisal of Mies van der Rohe or Le

Corbusier, or other early Modern architects. By the time Banham wrote at length on Brutalism, in the book *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* (1966) — its subtitle retaining those two senses still at loggerheads — the style was ensconced in international architectural practice, if already slowly receding in favor of an architecture and urbanism more greatly informed by histories predating the Modern movement.

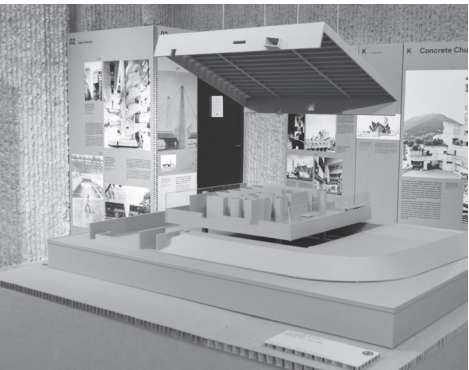
“Ethic or aesthetic, that does not matter anymore,” read a wall text at the start of the exhibition, “nowadays, all concrete giants need our protection!” I could not agree more, though not solely because the expressive raw-concrete architecture that took hold in the 1960s is beautiful: even the ugly examples should be saved. Reinforced-concrete buildings have functional lives of at least a century, if not considerably longer when maintained adequately; therefore, the extant Brutalist buildings on display in the YSoA gallery are only halfway through their useful lives. To tear down the threatened buildings in the exhibition would turn them into memories akin to the New Haven Coliseum, but it would also hasten the release of carbon into the atmosphere and further contribute to climate change, which architecture plays an outsized role in contributing to but should counter by reusing as many buildings as possible — especially the “concrete monsters,” with their enormous amounts of embodied carbon. In the exhibition wall text, the environmental benefits of converting Brutalist buildings took a back seat to preserving their progressive images — architectural, institutional, nationalistic, and otherwise — in the face of critiques over their ugliness or supposed inflexibility. Creative reuse should be paramount as a departure from the save-or-destroy dichotomy that far too often results in demolition and continues to aggravate our climate emergency.

When I first walked into the gallery, the exhibition appeared flimsy, almost inconsequential compared to the rough and weighty building it occupied. Each region (numbered 1 to 11) and theme (lettered, with NH for New Haven, LC for Le Corbusier, K for churches, F for Ms. Brutalist, etc.) was given three connected cardboard panels that stood against the corrugated concrete walls, angled in plan to fit the space accordingly. While the panels appeared to rely on the Rudolph building to stand, further making the choice of cardboard questionable, considerations of the wastefulness of exhibitions generally drew me to another conclusion: the panels are ideal simply because they can be reused or recycled, perhaps by students in the studios upstairs. So I left the gallery with thoughts of concrete monsters in my head and a feeling of optimism about the project’s ongoing efforts to protect them. On the walk to Union Station to take the train back to New York City, I spotted young Halloween revelers filling the bars next to campus and imagined the concrete monsters, now middle-aged, rising up and demanding that we save them: “If not for us,” they shouted, “then for your own survival!”

— John Hill

Hill is an architectural critic, author of numerous books on architecture, and editor of world-architects.com.

Photographs by Nina Rappaport



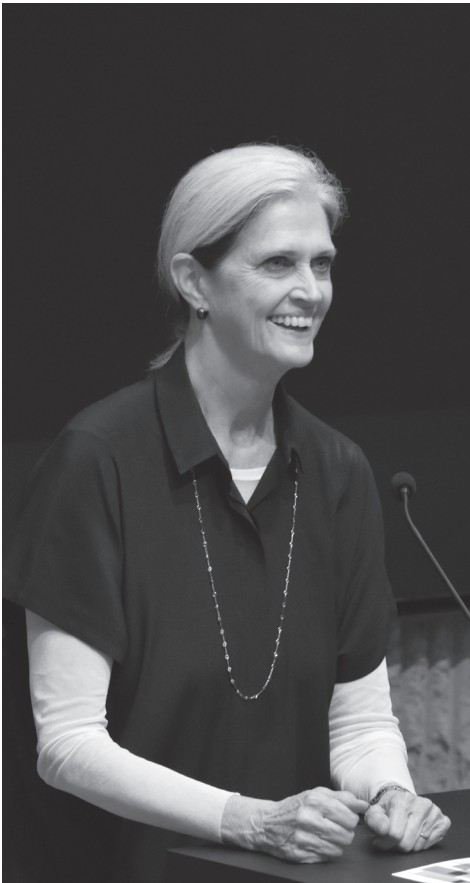
SOS Brutalism installed at Yale School of Architecture Gallery

The Legacy of Alexander Garvin

“What Works, What Doesn’t: The Planning and Development Legacy of Alexander Garvin” was convened by Dean Deborah Berke and lecturer Antonia Devine (MARCH ’13) on October 6–7 to celebrate Garvin’s life and contributions to the fields of architecture, planning, and urban development.



Discussion panel from left: Chris Glaisek, Gregg Pasquarelli, EB Kelly, and Michael Kimmelman



Deborah Berke

What Works, What Doesn’t: The Planning and Development Legacy of Alexander Garvin

The paprika seats disappeared from view as the bustling audience gathered for Daniel Libeskind’s lecture “Memory Foundations,” leading the symposium honoring his late friend Alexander Garvin (1941–2021). Named after the master plan for Ground Zero that brought Garvin and Libeskind together two decades ago, the talk was the alluring first act of “What Works, What Doesn’t: The Planning and Development Legacy of Alexander Garvin.”

Libeskind opened with an ode to Garvin’s memory — “charming, well-dressed professor; lover of cities, of Russian literature (“*Pushkin! The scope of the man!*”), of museums and culture” — and then invited us on a trek through projects dedicated to remembering: museums and memorials. “Memory,” he said, “is the ground on which architecture is held.” The playful glint in his eyes, self-assured gentleness and relaxed tone, softened the uncomfortable truths and geometries of his subject. His space-bending was most convincing when serving the memory of horror. He asked us to look not only at metaphors and “magnificent plays of volumes in light,” but also forms following the function of remembrance in places from Berlin to New York.¹

“Memory,” he said, “is not for the past but for the future.” He posited the recogniz-

able sharp edges and contorted shapes as choreographies of meanings and experiences: memory constructed. Voided footprints, shards of histories meant to be bodily encountered, and fragmented space-time intent to etch itself in memory become manifestations of sense and traumatizing senselessness in built form. “Pass through and you see the depths of History in crevices of space.”

Pass through and you see the gored ground of the absent towers. Ending with his concept for the 9/11 Memorial and master plan for the WTC site, Libeskind turned to a ground on which to build an homage to his “hugely admired friend and mentor.” The idea is very simple: “Preserve the slurry wall that stood there, silent witness.”

A very simple idea, he admitted, for what turned out to be a complicated reality with diverging stakeholders, knotted infrastructure and politics, and overlapping ownership. Garvin’s world, yet: “Alex himself hardly understood how such a project could be done.”

“Be naive,” Libeskind says twenty years and many turns later. “If you know too much you never enter the labyrinth.”

Naive newcomer and knowledgeable master together in the labyrinth of the planning game, they shared a love for New York City, a quest for learning from the past, and a trust in people and architecture.



Daniel Libeskind

In life and memory they share the brilliant gaze of the fortunate who do the work they love. That is the way to grow old; the way to be remembered.

Like its namesake, “Memory Foundations” was a compelling introduction to the tedious and complicated matters that would follow, when we delved into Garvin’s *practice*, the ground that holds his legacy.



Antonia Devine

Act II

It is pretty rare to excite a group of people with a question like, “Why is zoning so hot?” Yet if there has ever been a panel equipped to discuss that issue, along with a series of others connected to land use and public policy, it was certainly that comprised of Laurie Beckelman, Elihu Rubin (BA’99), and Joe Rose (BA’81), all of whom offered reflections tied to Garvin’s work and legacy and the dynamics of public-sector initiatives.

In a wide-ranging discussion that focused primarily on the public realm and the citizens that drive the regulatory framework in which it is developed, the panelists offered views that were, not surprisingly, sympathetic to those espoused by Alex Garvin. As Rose noted, Garvin’s greatest legacy is sending people into positions where their engagement with the land-use process is informed by the key beliefs on which all three panelists reflected:

1 The Jewish Museum Berlin (2001), which put him on the map; the Dresden Museum of Military History (2011); the Dutch Holocaust Memorial of Names (2021); and the 9/11 Memorial (2003).

2 Paul Goldberger provides an in-depth account in his 2005 book *Up from Zero: Politics, Architecture, and the Rebuilding of New York*, for which Garvin, he explained, was a very important source.

3 The model is the 1859 war memorial competition in Milan that yielded the Galleria.

4 New Yankee Stadium, Mill Pond Park, Bronx Terminal Market, the 369th Armory renovation, the Williamsburg waterfront parks, Flushing Meadows natatorium and CitiField, the Barclay Center, Hudson Yards I and the extension of the no. 7 Subway line, and a number of projects on their way, such as Hunter’s Point South and the development of the West Side. “I think it’s an ongoing story,” Glaisek concluded.

5 Metrics that changed a lot over 20 years.

6 As Kimmelman, agreeing with Glaisek, noted: “Lower Manhattan continues to evolve, and people are finding ways to reinvent this part of the city. Willet’s Point may look completely different in twenty years.”

7 As in LA’s channeling the river to prevent flooding.

8 Preservation, for example — an elite NIMBY endeavor to prevent development — aligns affluent white people using legislation for the purpose with tenant-activists worried that development will displace them or their neighbors.

that planners succeed most when they pursue policies desired by the public; that public officials have an obligation to deploy the public trust responsibly; and that planners must seek out consensus, but not at the expense of being more assertive in their pursuit of big ideas.

In their introductory remarks Beckelman recounted a history of the preservation movement, Rubin recapped Garvin’s contributions as an urban historian and public entrepreneur, and Rose summarized the benefits of zoning — it’s legal, it’s free, and it works to effect desired outcomes. The theme that ran through the entire exchange, however, was a sense that the public officials engaged in the change business must respect the interests of the entire community they service with an awareness of the impacts across the spectrum of players in the game, as Garvin might have put it. Rose recalled Garvin’s regular declaration that he was “in the change business,” but the group’s consensus was that the business of planning is not as much about transformation or radicalism as it is about responsible deployment of the levers of change. Rubin used the expression “advocacy planner” to capture the official, invoked by Garvin, who embodies and effects the desires of the citizenry. It’s a noble thought certainly, and an accurate way to capture Garvin’s affection for the public positions he held and the influence he wielded through them.

— Ioana Barac (’03)

Barac is principal of the New Haven practice Atelier Cue.

Act III

Inviting all into the labyrinth of planning for Ground Zero, Paul Goldberger (Joseph Urban Professor of Design at The New School) picked up Libeskind’s thread in “Heart of the City: The Architects and Planners of the World Trade Center Post-9/11,” a tightly paced saga of multiple characters and turns of events he seemed to know almost too much about.² At every bifurcation in the intricate path, Goldberger illustrated Garvin’s “multi-hyphenate” motives: his love for New York, Yale, and teaching; his interest in design, development, places, and people; his delight in the planning game.

Garvin joined the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) in February 2002, as vice president of Planning, Design & Development, and saw his task as transforming the district into a place “where everyone wants to go.” As Goldberger reminded us, he was skeptical of overarching theories, allergic to simplistic ideologies and proclaimers of absolutes, biased toward traditional urbanism, and distrustful of superblocks. He was a pragmatic idealist well suited for his role at LMDC. Garvin sought to reframe the development of Ground Zero within a larger vision for Lower Manhattan, its effect rippling outward from the memorial site. He pushed for housing and an extension of the subway line, for recreating the street grid and reconnecting the site to its surroundings, for the memorial and supporting activities as catalysts for development. He aimed, Goldberger recalled, for “a memorial that changed an entire city.”³



Paul Goldberger

“Living in the most complicated games of all,” with conflicting pressures and shifts in power, Garvin’s efforts failed. The first round of proposals, unveiled in July 2002 at the Federal Hall, recreated the lost square-footage in “almost interchangeable” collections of bulky, nondescript office towers “arrayed around some open space.” “Listening to the City,” the town hall convened by the Civic Alliance, cosponsored by LMDC, and attended by 4,500 people, denounced the “stunningly ordinary” plans as “poor and unacceptable.” The saving grace, Garvin realized, would come from this reception. The planning game moved to the town square, with the public called upon to share expectations and devise design goals, facilitated in part by Alex and his crew of Garvinistas. The town hall became the path for reframing the vision for Ground Zero and a test case for “solid planning and design to serve its ultimate users, not [just] the bottom line or profit.” The design goals resulting from these deliberations formed the criteria for LMDC’s new international competition, which Libeskind won a few months later. It was a good time for Garvin, after securing the new master plan in 2003, to exit this labyrinth and enter another: the planning of New York’s bid for the Olympics. Goldberger concluded that “Listening to the City” and that period of hot national debates about architecture convinced Garvin

that, although looking messy while it is happening, the rational process will reach a resolution and democracy will prevail. “Idealism met cynicism at Ground Zero, and it was a draw.” But the most remarkable turn of events, Goldberger added, was the role the public played on the side of idealism — the condemnation of ordinary architecture when the extraordinary was hoped for, the yes to more vision, not less, and the validation of Garvin’s realism with high aspirations.

— Ryan Salvatore (’13)

Salvatore is a principal of the firm Burr Salvatore Architects PLLC, in New York and Darien, Connecticut.

Act IV

We picked up the next slice of the memory feast at the Javits Center, and the fervor of “5,000 people passionately arguing about design” was recalled with fondness and emotion by EB Kelly (BA’03), managing director of Tishman Speyer, the moderator of the afternoon talks and one of Garvin’s interns at the time. She introduced fellow Garvinista Chris Glaisek (MARCH ’96), chief design and planning officer of WATERFRONT Toronto and a YSoA graduate, former colleague Gregg Pasquarelli, founding partner of SHoP Architects, and Michael Kimmelman, architecture critic for the *New York Times*, as guides through “the built legacy of Alex Garvin” and the “Olympic X: The Urban Planning Legacy of NYC’s 2012 Olympics Bid.” Describing the complex project, Glaisek made food analogies that were both pertinent and amusing: Planning is very much like cooking, except “when you’re the planner, exterior ingredients come in,” he quoted Garvin saying. “This process is very much like preparing a Chinese meal — a lot of peeling and chopping before you combine the ingredients.” He nostalgically described the hard work and the serious study behind the big dream — “Visited all one hundred potential sites! ... including a canoe trip, down the Bronx River!”



Marci Clark

The recipes are conceptually simple: place *catalytic* buildings at critical spots (underused riverfront sites and rail yards, coverable infrastructure); connect with solid transit infrastructure; create public amenities

and shared spaces; be generous with parks, views, and housing (one cannot have too much of it); mix in new people and engage the old; let spurred development and spill-over improve the quality of life for all. Enjoy!



Elihu Rubin and Laurie Beckelman

Even without winning the bid the far-reaching plan, intricately and carefully laid within the body of the city and its systems, “changed the face of modern New York City” with many of the sites developed and yet to be developed in the framework.⁴ New York gained without having to build for the Olympics. Pasquarelli zoomed into the making of the Atlantic Yards and the Barclays Center as a test recipe that worked. The Brooklyn landmark, a striking and overwhelmingly massive presence in the city, turned charming in his concept-to-fabrication story: Who can resist the prince-frog-prince drama of the building design or the erector-set tale? The exposition mirrored at the block scale the difficulties and aspirations of the mother plan, as well as the expansive pride of its creators. When Michael Kimmelman took the mic there was a lot of peeling and chopping of a different kind — reminiscent of spicy lunches at the Bangkok Garden, a Garvin favorite. In a survey of what works and what doesn’t, Kimmelman examined the Olympic X menu item by item for ingredients and taste. In his review statistics of monthly rents and income brackets⁵ questioned the meaning of affordable and accessible living. The transformation of the waterfront and water transport was an opportune move by Garvin. Steven Holl’s remarkable library at Hunter’s Point is not “the accessible solution needed at that location.” Domino Park is “a different kind of architecture.” One South First is “a wonderful place, a model of how public open space can be used.” CitiField was not developed properly or made more accessible. Bronx Terminal Market “got the short stick.” One subway stop added: “not amazing.” There were reasons why Hudson Yards made sense, yet it turned out “a profound failure.” The Vessel is “a billion-dollar deck.” The model of the giant office-tower park is “completely insane.” “The city is hostage to private money,” Kimmelman concluded. Costly projects such as Hudson Yards and the shopping mall by Santiago Calatrava, and the bias toward

high-end development and speedy growth (the High Line), reveal the disconnect between public investment and public input and benefit. *Public market reaction* needs reframing. Yet Kimmelman’s final assessment gratified the chef: Olympic X laid the groundwork for the most dramatic changes that took place in the city in decades. “Why does it take fourteen days of games to think big?” an audience member asked. “Deadlines and rivalry between cities and nations help,” Glaisek and Pasquarelli responded. “How do we think about big venues like this?” another audience member asked. “Think infrastructure versus buildings. Create another urban center and then connect to it,” Glaisek said. The consensus was that, twenty years after the conception of Olympic X and the WTC, it may be too soon to judge the success of these projects.⁶ I wonder: Are we, this small audience of Garvin acolytes, too close to these projects and their creators to appreciate their success through their struggles and good intentions, as well as biased by what works for us? The design recipes seem simple, yet the ingredients are shifting. Everyone agreed that the process is very difficult and time-consuming, and rarely clear. To follow in Garvin’s footsteps through the labyrinth of city planning and urban development would be to keep questioning what works, what doesn’t, and, most importantly, for whom. As Kimmelman pointed out, while we reframe the measuring sticks, we’d do well to heed Garvin’s other teachings: remember that today’s solution can be tomorrow’s problem;⁷ recognize that *community* comprises not a single thing but complex and contradictory motives and forces;⁸ seek not a compromise that nobody likes but a thoughtful middle ground. Most of all, dream big and work hard. Once you lose your naivete, you need unrelenting courage and imagination.

— Ioana Barac



Garvin’s bow ties were given to symposium participants.

Alex and Architecture at Yale

It was probably about five years ago when Alex Garvin and I were discussing some policy change at Yale and he concluded, “Well, that’s how I feel about it. But that’s because I’m an ‘Old Blue.’” It was a declaration of his commitment to a place that was so important to him. Alex was a proud, active member of the Yale College Class of ’62, a graduate of the School of Architecture with a dual degree in architecture and planning, and then a member of the Yale faculty for the next fifty-plus years. While his career, in the conventional sense, spanned from government to real estate management and development, and then back again to the public sphere, Yale was an unwavering constant throughout. It’s not surprising that Alex’s impact as an educator was a thread weaving through all of the symposium’s discussions. The panels in Hastings Hall were largely stacked with Alex’s former students, and all of the participants could be identified as “Garvinistas” — an operator who thinks big,

Burnham style, but is tempered by the practicality required to get an idea implemented. That dose of pragmatism was a hallmark of Alex’s thinking and instruction: If a project’s grandeur makes it worth building, an understanding of its politics gets it built. “What Works” was the perfect title for a gathering rooted in an exchange of Alex’s ideas. Like it or not — and there are people on both sides — Alex’s pedagogical content and style were unique. Panelist Joe Rose made reference to what I might brand “the Garvin Doctrine” — that government investments should be evaluated based on their return of a “sustained and widespread private market reaction.” By the time I arrived in Alex’s second-year course the expression had almost become a cliché, embedded in the discourse that students ahead of me were having about the class. It’s a theme that panelists came back to over and over again and that continues to inform the scores of Garvinistas operating all around the world. If Alex was widely respected, he was not always loved. Architecture students often found his jury comments too sensible and his insistence on resolution and marketability too practical. Fellow YSoA faculty would bristle at his insistence that a design “work,” favoring a more liberal view of what architecture might be. Alex nonetheless reminded us that he was educated as an architect and could therefore engage in a serious discus-

sion about architecture, even if his day-to-day craft was not the design of buildings. He was acutely aware of his role as a gadfly, using lessons about “the planning game” to emphasize the value of an architecture of inspiration *and* viability, of designs that might capture the imagination but also be successful real estate investments and, most importantly, welcome contributors to the public realm. Indeed he felt very strongly that he had a responsibility to ensure that every student leave the school with a set of skills in workable design and astute salesmanship, which was as important as any so-called “capital-A” architectural ideas. Such was the commitment that spawned more than two generations of students informed by his thinking in public and private roles. Alex could converse widely about his domestic and international travel, but the streets of New York were his touchstone and principal instructional laboratory. I fondly recall participating in walking tours of various New York neighborhoods, during which he would march unabashedly down the street, camera flashing, while sharing observations and, equally important, asking questions about why a particular place worked urbanistically or failed miserably. He had high standards for his students. “This is Yale!” he would often declare,

with a pride perhaps specific to an alumnus, and provide candid and unembellished feedback. In his graduate seminars focused on a specific neighborhood, Alex asked students to present positions and critique their peers; lessons were delivered through dialogue, not monologue. Alex’s legacy is connected most of all to his professional work, which was covered throughout the weekend. While his projects may have provided the context, his greatest role was as an educator of fifty years of students whose influence has spread far beyond the classroom. It is an amazing irony that Alex Garvin and Peter Eisenman, both longtime Yale faculty members, should be recognized within weeks of each other at YSoA. They could not be more different, no matter what metric one uses to evaluate them, and yet they are equally educators at the core. That they could both share their thinking at the same institution is a tribute to the pluralism of Yale, a place where the exchange of divergent ideas continues to thrive. That’s what a university should be, and it is why Alex, the “Old Blue,” remained tethered to Yale for his entire adult life. His most indelible legacy is as a teacher at Yale.

— Ryan Salvatore

Notes on Peter Eisenman: Towards a Celebration

A tribute to Peter Eisenman was convened in November 2022 by critic in architecture Surry Schlabs (BA ’99, MArch ’03, PhD ’17) to celebrate his long career as an architect, author, and educator on the occasion of his retirement from Yale.



Peter Eisenman

The event to celebrate Eisenman’s contribution to architectural discourse began on Friday November 11th with a warm welcome by Dean Deborah Berke, followed by Phyllis Lambert, founder of the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), recounting via prerecorded video the parallel growth trajectories of the CCA and its Eisenman archive through cataloging and projecting the architect’s work in both analog and digital forms: “The ‘Peter Eisenman Fonds’ are the first papers of a living architect acquired for the CCA collection,” she noted, adding that it is therefore appropriate for this forum to examine the reciprocity between Eisenman’s and CCA’s practices. Lambert said she would attempt to do this through the lens of major exhibitions and related publications, explaining that “exhibitions as a mode of research at the CCA was initiated with Eisenman’s *Cities of Artificial Excavation*,” curated by Jean-François Bédard and designed by Eisenman. *The Archaeology of the Digital*, a tripartite exhibition curated by Greg Lynn, was presented in 2013 and shown later at Yale. It was followed with *Architecture Itself and Other Postmodernist Myths*, a show curated by Sylvia Lavin — which, Lambert noted, highlighted the work of Michael Graves and Peter Eisenman over other participants. Lambert concluded with a telling query: “But can you imagine Eisenman designing boudoirs?”



Phyllis Lambert

Former dean Robert A. M. Stern (’65) provided, also via video, a historical account of Eisenman’s defining presence at Yale under his leadership and initiatives, which started with appointing him to teach his first advanced architectural studio. In 1999 Philip Johnson, “ensuing” a newly appointed dean’s agenda “to reenergize the school,” had arrived with Peter as his “teaching assistant” to focus on the ambitious challenge of redesigning the architecture school on the site of Rudolph Hall. Stern recounted the 2008 establishment of the doctoral program in architecture, which Eisenman advocated and supported passionately — and eventually defended in front of university authorities. Ultimately Stern declared the series of formal analysis seminars as cornerstones of the school’s core curriculum, responding to his pedagogical plans for introductory courses to visual studies as fundamental for all students. Stern linked his reasoning for “inviting”

Eisenman to Yale with the discursive past of the school, which in its prime sought coexistence and dialogue between differentiated educational models. For the former dean this was manifested in the studios and exhibitions, along with a 2002 symposium shared between Eisenman and Léon Krier, who was deemed his ideological opposite. Stern noted that Eisenman believes in “architecture as discipline,” rather than merely as an excursion in nostalgia or style, and expressed a deep appreciation for his contribution to reestablishing the school’s prominence.



Robert A.M. Stern

Unfortunately Anthony Vidler’s planned keynote evening lecture, “The Idea of Form in Architecture: An Enduring Vision,” was postponed and replaced by an improvised Q&A session titled “11 Questions on 11/11 in the Absence of a Lecture.” Participants were asked to submit one question each as “softballs” to trigger a dynamic conversation with Eisenman. In one of many notable instances, Jeffrey Kipnis cited Eisenman’s foundational statement about the “mind-blowing” book *Lateness* — which he announced as the topic of his paper, explicitly stressing Eisenman’s commitment to criticality and resistance yet asking for clarification on the “critical project” as well as the object of resistance. Eisenman responded that he specifically “resists architecture as a mode of consumption,” and Preston Scott Cohen speculated that, considering its content, Eisenman’s work “makes architecture a moving image of thought” rather than overcoming or “resisting its static and intractable presence.” It was a potent statement and a query that he repeated both days, and yet it was left unanswered by Eisenman.



Surry Schlabs

Opening the floor on Saturday morning, Surry Schlabs announced the session “Notes on Peter Eisenman” as a prolegomenon to a

forthcoming collection of essays on Eisenman’s impact on architecture and architectural education. Symposium attendees assembled in Rudolph Hall’s fourth-floor “pit” to hear presenters speaking from a podium set strategically beneath what is allegedly a statue of Minerva, the goddess of war and wisdom, but is actually Demeter, the goddess of earthly fertility and motherhood. A wooden staircase, attached to the béton brut pedestal as if a stage prop, recalled Eisenman’s notoriously abstracted, functionally eroded stairs in House VI.



Greg Lynn

The first speaker, Greg Lynn, discussed the significance of his stint at Eisenman Architects at a time when the office was growing exponentially, emphasizing the challenges of scaling up a professional practice while maintaining an intellectual culture along with architectural output of theoretical merit and resisting the pressures of commercialization. Noting that as an ongoing concern for every developing practice with “projective” ambitions, including his own, Lynn stressed the notion of “intellection” in describing Eisenman’s initiatives to organize informal series of afternoon seminars for his employees — later called an “intellectual machine” by Eisenman — in the form of talks by invited academics, critics, and theoreticians, latently reviving the spirit of the Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS).



Joan Ockman

Joan Ockman told spirited anecdotes from her lengthy exchanges with Eisenman at the IAUS. She spoke of their common editorial pursuits and his phrasal recollaging of cut-and-pasted printed text as a copyediting technique alluding to digital operations, his handwriting obsessions (or “graphomania,” exercised in his own multi-pen signature), and his ingenious conjuring of footnotes into an implied yet invisible essay mapped by their numerical place-holding in the absence of a completed text about, literally, “Notes on Conceptual Architecture” for a special issue of *Design Quarterly* in 1970. Ockman concluded with the Mallarméan precept “Everything in the world exists in order to become a book” — a fitting reference for Eisenman’s authorship, or “crucial role,” in the making of 60-some “good” books (as Jacques Derrida noted in *Chora L Works*) over the course of an almost equal number of years, constituting a “resonant and influential contribution to the culture of architecture.”

Mary McLeod expanded on the autobiographical prose that marked the proceedings by emphasizing Eisenman’s lust for “debating, even outright arguing” — as in her theory seminars over several years — and expressed admiration for “his delight in being challenged, undoubtedly one reason why he was such a brilliant teacher for over fifty years.” McLeod accentuated his “immense curiosity

and eagerness to explore ideas,” using the terms “obsessions” and “fixations” rather than “interests” when referring to Eisenman’s irresistible “digressions” toward “the strange, the grotesque, the uncanny, the mysterious.” While Eisenman underlined the “rational,” even linking to “rationalism” in multiple responses, McLeod revealed his “questioning of reason, outside of and beyond reason,” his ardor for paradox and deviance, and his enjoyment of “slippage and play.” McLeod highlighted Eisenman’s “desire to go beyond words to express the inexpressible” and lasting attention to the “limits of linguistic analogy” for architecture through his own quote on “information that cannot be equated with words.” Thus architecture, as an “undisciplined” discipline, overrides the “limits of traditional means of representation” and may even demand its own lexicological and syntactical order while constantly feeding off cross-disciplinary fascinations with the arts, film, music, and literature as it craves the vibrant culture generated by other media.



Mary McLeod

Well-versed in rethinking Eisenman’s work publicly, Cohen spoke of his self-torturous architectural processes as “doing so many things, destined to become so many mistakes, and make us laugh about it all endlessly.” For the heretic Eisenman, Cohen noted, “true ‘Modern’ architecture hadn’t happened yet, ... an architecture that does not signify presence, the structural or material basis of form, nor its functions.” Eisenman has sought the marginal and noncanonical. Having prioritized “everything architecture had not explicitly articulated, the seemingly impossible for this intractably grounded and static medium,” Eisenman aimed at “motivating” architecture, reintroducing it all “first and foremost” as “an intellectual project.” In “opting out of the dead-end historicist dialectic” prevalent in architectural discourse during his early career (i.e. the clash of resurrecting either classicism or Modernism), Eisenman instead prioritized, and for Cohen embodied, the notion of “presentness” — even though pursuing its architectonic incarnation remains an oxymoron, or an intended impossibility. As an elucidating interpretation of well-known Eisenman epigrams, presentness guides his “perpetually thwarted efforts to break the signifying chain, the original sin,” dejecting signs in the dichotomy of metaphysical classicism versus functionalist Modernism to ultimately “unmotivate the signs.” This bipolarity of “motivating” our field while demotivating its established theorems, of moving yet pausing, is reiterated by Cohen into a noumenal animation that, as “the moving image” of form rethought, “anamorphic and elastic,” tentatively embodies Eisenman’s project of fluid potentialities rather than any singular and stationary iteration.



Preston Scott Cohen

Moving further into the realm of geometric manipulation, Cohen prioritized the Eisenman L project — the case of (literally) “building as a text” par excellence — as “an allegorical Modernist expression of presentness” and an epitome of animate architecture. If, for Cohen, Eisenman’s agenda is to “undo the ends,” literally and metaphorically ceasing polar dualities — be that a point and a cube for L — then Wes Jones posited a relevant question that springs from geometricizing another nodal project, the Wexner Center for the Arts: Centerlines or edges? In the Wexner scheme “grids of various scales” were brought together or intersected, aligning to “various local and regional conditions,” as manifest visually throughout. Jones narrated lasting “figural” traumas from his stint at Eisenman Architects, when a drawing set prioritizing, calculating, and editing edge relations of geometric entities, while compromising their axial alignments, was compulsively trashed in favor of the reverse approach, as validated by Eisenman: Centerlines — regulating lines — were to be maintained, leaving edge conditions to simply occur, to result automatically. Jones apparently favored the nascent approach — that edge interfaces be preserved at the expense of centerlines — to serve the necessities of implementation and therefore manicure the crossing of thickened patterns that deliberately misaligned. For him the executed scheme meant “sloppy topological relationships obscuring the reading of the intended concept,” arriving notoriously at the rhetorical question or jest, “Where’s the beef?” He even assigned discursive content to each scenario: working “with” axialities serves notions of architecture as object, while working “toward” edge relationships favors architecture as experience. Bravely playing the phenomenology wild card right in front of its most passionate opponent triggered Eisenman’s outright yet tactful response, right on the “beef”: As an autonomous discipline, architecture’s discourse is not about Post-Modernism versus Modernism but rather the rational versus the phenomenological. While the XV Triennale di Milano exhibition, *Architettura Razionale* (1973), was brought up as a favored reference in the mission of recalibrating architecture, the “rational” is to be interpreted as analytical rather than rationalist. Meanwhile the term deconstruction was deserted entirely and surprisingly never mentioned during the two days.



Wes Jones

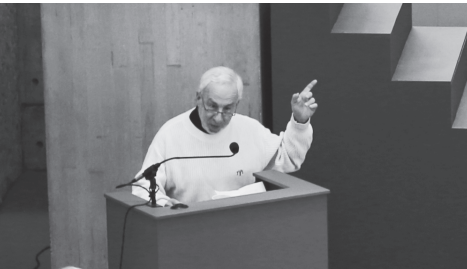
Rafael Moneo presented a concise account of his long-lasting rapport with Eisenman, beginning with their first encounters in Aspen, Colorado, in 1968, during his academic sabbatical at the IAUS, and “kept alive until now” beyond geographical constraints. “As a glimpse of a conversation that has lasted more than fifty years,” Moneo emphasized two events: the IAUS exhibition *Idea as Model* (1976), in New York, and the “seminar” led by Aldo Rossi in Venice, focused on the neighborhood of Cannaregio. Moneo spoke meticulously of Eisenman’s pointedly acontextual project for Cannaregio as an epitome of “material expression in a literally brilliant golden model ... wavering between being an abstract object that embodied an entire architectural discourse and something tangible,” which really stood for an urban intervention. This notional duality of a city-fragment maquette tentatively responding to twofold curatorial scenarios “on the wall like an abstract bas-relief or on a podium, as if an artifact in the form of an altar for ritual” constitutes an early diptych for absent physicality, for much-discussed presence of absence, for metaphysical architecture, and precisely for “ideal as model.” Moneo’s chronological account showcased IAUS’s transnational scope, linking thinkers, historians, and architects from the Mediterranean to an American scene through Eisenman’s efforts. Highlighting a series of aphorisms in support of a shared perspective on “architecture as discipline,” Moneo stressed that Eisenman’s “intellectual project” is foremost interdisciplinary, overriding boundaries and

therefore “expanding the relevance of architecture.” He declared Eisenman as a “nonconformist who never lowered his guard in the unequal struggle” with “plain-spoken professionalism.” Moneo noted that while for Eisenman “only in construction does architecture reach fullness,” he also prioritizes “abstract ideas” of a nonphysical, even scaleless, architecture, constituting a “paradox.”



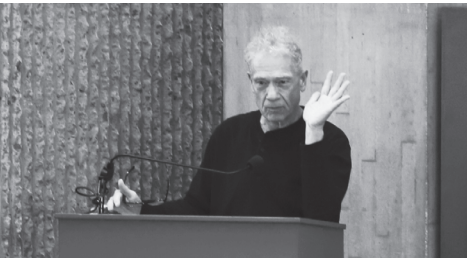
Rafael Moneo

Professor Alan Plattus recited his first, amusing and apparently striking, encounter with Eisenman’s intellectual agendas in his student years on the occasion of a field trip to the IAUS with a Yale architecture-major seminar in 1972. Then open to a select few sophomores such as Plattus, the course was led by Vincent Scully with Bob Stern, the latter apparently “devastated” by the fact that Plattus soon after ended up “leaving school and moving in with Peter,” allured by exploratory philosophical approaches and conceptual pursuits. His provocative argument on Eisenman’s work addressed its latent yet powerfully urbanist directives. For Plattus context and locus emerge as definitive parameters, even in projects deemed siteless, amplifying the significance of precedent analytics and intertwined conceptual narratives by “autogenerating spatial complexity and differentiation.” The advocated, implicitly urban, focus — if not urban “turn” — in Eisenman’s work constitutes a thought-provoking interpretation, considering his established views against so-called contextualism and genius loci proponents — admittedly countering Colin Rowe’s urbanist scope.



Alan Plattus

Cohen bought up the shared hypothesis of whether Eisenman did actually possess an “urban project,” even if the case has been dismissed repeatedly, since he “got it right.” In response, Eisenman confessed that although many of his projects demonstrate an urban scope, much of his work is dedicated to evading the “remaining influence of the Colin Rowe project,” noting that — in a retiree mood of “save the last dance for me” — he intends to clarify all aspects of his work that have been “misunderstood.” Apparently “thinking post-Yale,” Eisenman is preparing a “master class on the formal” — versus formalism — considering this symposium as the latent inaugural event for his project of expounding the “formal basis” of architecture. The keynote lecture on form as idea by Vidler, his first student and the scholarly eye behind the book *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*, might have been seen as the introduction.



Jeffrey Kipnis

Jeffrey Kipnis recalibrated his main talk in response to Friday evening’s panel discussion, specifically Cohen’s questioning of the relevance of formalism given its widening criticism. Eisenman had already rejected the formalist label, differentiating the formal and form. Kipnis alluded to “bad grammar as a different performance than good grammar,” not good, not bad.

He considered the arts and architecture as haunted by insidious “forces exercising the power to reward, suppress, or punish. Peter’s work is an extraordinary exercise in punishing the punishers.” Kipnis declared Eisenman “the most important figure in my life” in an emotionally charged conclusion: “The arts and architecture require deep study, connoisseurship, and an open mind capable of deep conviction, striated opinion, and vigilantly defended, irrepressible passion, not for mere change but for authentic growth and mutation. This is who Peter is for me.”



Sarah Whiting

“Hey, hey, hey, can I tell you something?” Sarah Whiting repeated this familiar and illustrative catchphrase denoting Eisenman’s persistent hankering for thought-provoking verbal exchange with colleagues and coworkers beyond barriers of seniority or hierarchical roles. Whiting thus proclaimed a “verbal form of project,” always “be-forming” and in constant reedition. She drew from her time as his assistant and editor to highlight the “conversational” character of Eisenman’s approaches to “architecture as culture” in teaching and practice and his effort to reinforce a “currency of culture,” drawing passionately from other disciplines. This built on Lynn’s description of typically witnessing Eisenman in a team-coaching mood amid groups of people, whether students or fellow peers, as a “resistance to complacency.” Whiting related Eisenman’s version of architecture parlante — the “project that has marked his practice” — accentuating his fervently communicative nature. She conjured his ceaseless alertness in relation to all aspects of architectural activity and beyond: “You spar in conversation, you push people” to take stances, to comprehensively form and outwardly express sturdy opinions on discursive matters in academia as much as on commissions at the drafting table. While admitting to being “always incredibly nervous” on such occasions, Whiting concluded by expressing her gratitude for these formative experiences and a deep appreciation for Eisenman’s dedication and commitment.



Phillip Bernstein

Associate Dean Phillip Bernstein (BA ’79, MArch ’83) highlighted Eisenman’s profile as a fervent sports fan, purchasing season tickets for multiple collegiate teams, alongside his passion for competitiveness, and solidarity. Plattus had spoken about Eisenman’s enthusiasm for sports the previous evening. Bernstein recounted memories of attending an Arata Isozaki design crit during his Yale graduate stint, with Eisenman in the jury, which felt daunting and intimidating. This reflected a common experience of Eisenman studio reviews, given the qualities of pinned-up work, the high expectations, and the challenge of uncompromised criticism of the highest caliber. Bernstein confessed, the Isozaki pin-up might have been the formative moment where his interest in the performative aspects of architectural practice, implementation, project delivery, and construction management crystallized — in dread and awe of the intellectual obscurities and noumenal abstractions of the Eisenman lineage.

In his introduction on Friday, Schlabs also reminisced about the trauma of student reviews from his Eisenman studio days — the “provocative” distress and still unprocessed and unresolved crit comments that over a

decade later, however challenging in their “inconsistency,” might have tentatively influenced his doctoral study on American pragmatism. That Eisenman’s cryptic prose remains largely misunderstood and willingly undecipherable was a common issue for many participants: “A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds,” Schlabs repeated in reference to Ralph Waldo Emerson’s celebrated quote of his tutor. Returning to his reminiscences of Eisenman’s Fall 2002 studio on Saturday, Schlabs recalled the weekly pin-ups as dialogues with the work itself. This dialogue was “intermittently Socratic,” thus frustrating by definition, and deconstructive yet creatively subversive, lending a zealous flair to the deep contemplation of pinned-up drawings or “half-baked” student work. For Schlabs a fitting analogy is drawn from the realm of theology and Martin Buber’s book *I and Thou* (1922), evoking the attempt to extend a “believer’s relationship to god” into the context of a studio crit, “a revelatory encounter” with the divine at large, or the sanctification of architecture. Schlabs’s reference to Janus of Thessaly, the Roman god of thresholds, passages, and transitions — perhaps as an embodied divinity of architectural circulation — and to William James’s *The Meaning of Truth*, an “account of truth, as ongoing process of verification,” lend to Eisenman’s pedagogical practices a fittingly feverish religious dimension, borne out in the iconolatri of studio pin-ups. According to Schlabs, these ritualistic studio crits, as seen through Buber’s act of *Begegnung/Beziehung*, or encounter/interrelation, lead “potentially to the revelation of presence in the space between an attentive, engaged subject and its other,” or “thick threshold” (in German *Gestalt gewordene Zwischen*), offering perhaps another definition for the notion of presentness and illuminating the miracle within the architectural process.

In the concluding session, Lynn inquired about the possibility for the systematization of Eisenman’s heritage in the lineage of Le Corbusier’s own modularization obsessions with the aphoristic definition of “five points” of architecture, in the interest of generating a replicable model for an Eisenman “school.” Eisenman responded that his work is mostly relational and responsive to his peers, foremost considering Frank Gehry’s consumable work as opposed to his own inconsumable output. He emphasized his attention to resisting consumption: an admittedly “dumb project that has been always with me,” but a side effect that reveals his genuine attentiveness to architecture as an autonomous discipline. Ultimately this negated the possibility of breeding a school, as there currently exists “no school of anybody, [and] no discipline that would articulate a school.” Eisenman cited Rafael Moneo as a “committed” character who “produces an architecture that has at its roots a disciplinary activity and has always been someone to measure up to.”

Following the event, Eisenman and his wife, Cynthia Davidson, headed to the Yale Bowl with some of the guest speakers for the last home football game of the season, against Princeton. Yale Athletics had prepared a custom football with a dedication to “Peter Eisenman, the inaugural Charles Gwathmey Professor in Practice, Yale 2022,” which Schlabs presented to him along with a copy of the book *Yale’s Ironmen* — a pun on Peter’s German surname — commemorating a Depression-era football game played between Princeton and Yale while alluding to the architect’s strength, commitment, and endurance.



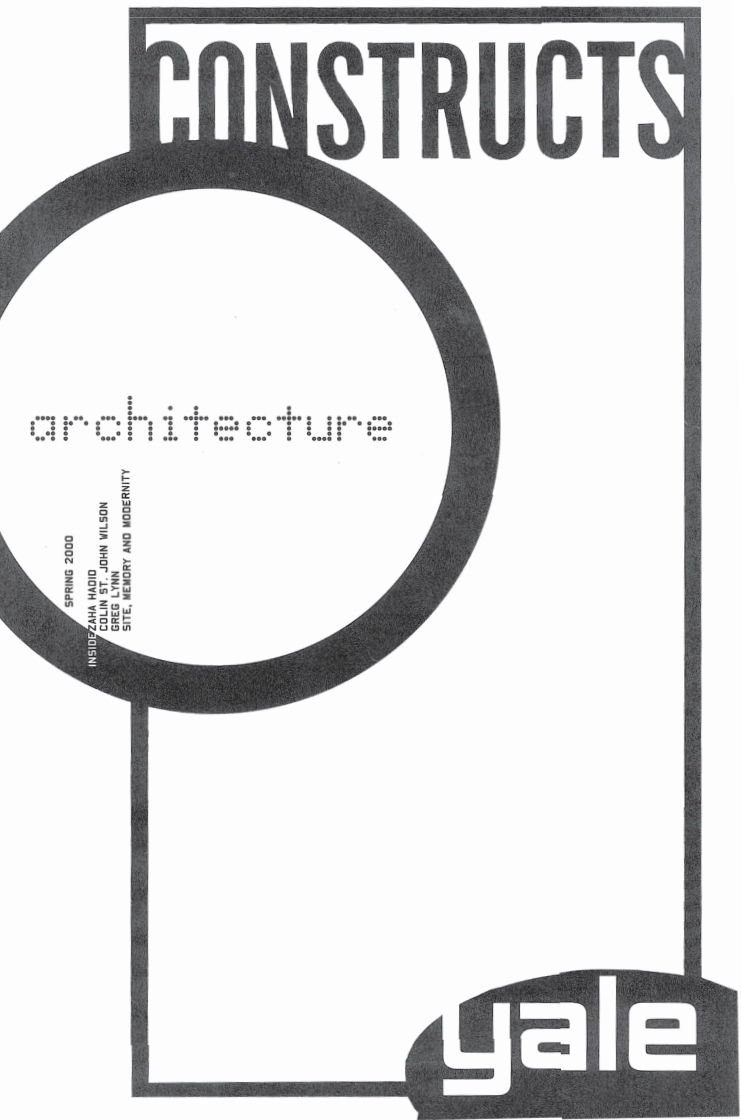
Peter Eisenman receiving football

— Aristotelis Dimitrakopoulos (March ’00)

Dimitrakopoulos, Fulbright Visiting Fellow at the Yale School of Architecture, is an architect and urban designer, educator, consultant, and critic with international experience.

Constructing

Nina Rappaport in Conversation with Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen



Various type treatments for *Constructs* over the years



After 24 years as editor of *Constructs*, Nina Rappaport is stepping aside and continuing as editor of the school’s book projects and exhibition catalogs to focus on her urban industrial projects, writing, and teaching.

Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen I was reading some early issues, and there were captivating pieces such as your interview with Frank Gehry and Zaha Hadid. It reminded me that what I really like about reading the magazine is the different modalities — the interviews, book reviews, and little snippets you can read at different speeds. It’s not just one long article after another, so you can skim and then be engaged by a particular piece. The format works really well. So tell me how it all started.

Nina Rappaport When he was appointed dean at Yale, Bob Stern held a faculty meeting and announced that he wanted to publish a news magazine combining aspects of *Interview*, *Blueprint*, and *Skyline Magazine*. He was looking for an editor and Louise Harpman (’93) said, “Why don’t you ask Nina Rappaport, news editor of the AIA magazine *Oculus* with Jayne Merkel?” So that’s what he did. We proceeded to map out the publication concept, and he asked me to develop the content. He brought in Michael Bierut, of Pentagram, to create a graphic identity for the school that related to Bob’s interest in plurality. I met with Michael at Pentagram’s Fifth Avenue office and we brainstormed about what an architecture school publication should look like. We tossed around names like *constructing* and *building*, and finally came up with *Constructs*. We liked it because of the double meaning. The first issue was a lot of work because Bob wanted it out for January 1999, and I had

just been hired in September, so we had to figure it all out right away.

ELP What is interesting about the name is that the school and publications like *Perspecta* had been a bit dormant, and Bob was using the magazine to construct a new place. It has the double meaning because it was constructing a discourse. It wasn’t just reporting what was happening; its function was to construct happenings. When you have to report your faculty news in the publication every semester, you become very conscious of whether or not you’ve contributed anything to the field, as well as what others have contributed.

NR I remember meeting faculty members when I started at Yale and asking them what they were working on so I could create stories. Some of them responded, “No one’s asked me this before.” I was surprised because I assumed everyone knew and engaged one another. So *Constructs* was a vehicle of communication both among those in the school and to the wider community.

ELP The wonderful café in Paul Rudolph’s former apartment was the physical hub for communication and exchange. *Constructs* filled the journalistic gap. I was always drawn to the interviews with visiting faculty. You didn’t often get a chance to sit down with people, but through *Constructs* you got a glimpse into their thinking. I always admired your skill in interviewing people. You teased a lot out of very in-depth conversations.

NR A journalist colleague once called me the Mike Wallace of architecture interviews. I always introduce the conversation with: “I’m introducing you to the school, to our community, and to the wider architecture field. Sometimes I play devil’s advocate, not to put you on the spot but to get more information out of you.” I do a

lot of research beforehand. I listen to their past lectures online to get the rhythm of their voice so I know how they will sound when I talk to them, which helps me to anticipate their tone and nuances.

ELP It has reminded me that we’ve had some amazing visitors throughout the years. How do you get people going? What is your secret?

NR Usually I begin a conversation with them offline. Previously I would often travel to meet and interview architects. For example, Sean Griffiths and Sam Jacob toured me around the FAT office, in London, and then I visited some of the firm’s projects. It was a fantastic experience for an architectural critic. When we were already in a conversation, I would turn on the recorder discreetly so as not to intimidate them. The questions related to their personal approaches to design, their work, and their ideology. I pose questions related to themes brought out in their work and then reference a specific project that illustrates it to our audience. In the past eight years, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, I communicated through virtual platforms or spoke on the phone with them.

ELP I learned recently that Terry Gross only interviews people via videoconference.

NR It’s easier; there are fewer distractions. But I find I can focus better on the words over the phone, whereas with Zoom the image gets in the way.

ELP I did some interviews earlier in my career, but it’s a real skill. It can be totally flat, with a terrible power imbalance. Did you have any disasters, or did things always go smoothly?

NR Of 150 or so interviews, I’ve only had two or three architects who didn’t like

what they said and wanted to do it again. We always send the transcription to them for review, and we edit for flow. I am considering collecting these into book form.

ELP Another wonderful feature is the book reviews. I looked at the first issue again and saw Alan Plattus’s beautifully written review of the book *Turner Brooks: Work*. I like that you had faculty review each other’s work, making *Constructs* a valuable platform for interdepartmental exchange.

NR There are very few magazines that review architecture books, and we felt it was important to highlight books by both faculty and alumni. It’s been fabulous that I have been able to find four books to review for almost every issue, which means our community is very prolific. The reviews became a way to include outside voices too, since I also look for critics and architects from beyond Yale to contribute. We have featured a great trove of books over the years.

ELP You have also engaged PhD and MED students as authors, although there is *Paprika*!. How has it been working with students, faculty, and visiting scholars?

NR We started to have student editorial assistants from the third issue. It is a learning experience, like an internship, for them. We work closely with the *Retrospecta* team because there’s so much information that overlaps. We began to feature the MED program, which had a newsletter that was not being published regularly, so we folded it into *Constructs*. So the students can write about the Building Project and their other activities. It is good experience for the students, some of whom have gone on to write for *Retrospecta* or *Perspecta* and beyond, like Nicolas Kemper, a former assistant

Constructs

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Yale Architecture

who is now publisher of *New York Review of Architecture*.

ELP The writing style is very journalistic, and the magazine format communicates clearly to the different audiences — alumni, students, faculty, and visitors.

NR I have hired the best editors in the publishing business and the first one was a newspaper copy editor. Cathryn Drake, a former copy chief of *Metropolis*, has been whipping the *Constructs* articles into shape for the past 23 years. An insightful art critic in her own right, she works magic with words to ensure a clear, accurate, and vivid read. David Delp, who has worked for *Rolling Stone*, *New York*, and *WWD*, was our proofreader for many years.

ELP I want to return to the impressive format of the magazine — along with the ginormous school program posters. I had the privilege of working with Michael Bierut on several books, and he really believes that graphic design should attract the eyes, and not hinder reading. Although the magazine is all black-and-white, the way things are framed and flipped between black or white backgrounds keeps it from feeling monotonous. It’s animated enough to facilitate a combination of deep reading and skimming.

NR Often the multiple typefaces we used led to negative comments from readers. In the first few issues, designed by Pentagram’s Kerrie Powell, each page was unique, making for a very time-consuming production process. Later Pentagram recommended David Reinfurt, of O-R-G, also a Yale School of Art graduate, and he took it on in 2001. He developed a new graphic design, retaining the idea of using varied typefaces, which he commissioned from different designers. So we produced

a collection of new typefaces for *Constructs*. Reinfurt recommended Jeff Ramsey to replace him, and then he followed with Hyo Kwon and Berton Hasebe, and then three years ago we hired the designer Manuel Miranda, who teaches at the Yale School of Art.

ELP Do you have a digital platform for the publication?

NR Each issue is posted online as a PDF. With Dean Deborah Berke, and our communications director, AJ Artemel, we are planning to make a dedicated website where it can be accessed by a wider audience, in addition to the print version.

ELP *Constructs* is also a historical document with tentacles extending to the outside world. What news events have you featured besides considering how to memorialize the tragedy of 9/11?

NR More recent events such as the murder of George Floyd and the protests that followed, teaching during COVID-19, and global topics such as urbanism, housing, and sustainability have created opportunities for Yale graduates and faculty members to speak out about contemporary issues. We record, transcribe, and edit carefully for readers.

ELP You’ve had the privilege of engaging in deep conversations with basically everybody who’s come through the doors of the school for the past 24 years. That’s a lot of people!

NR Certainly one of the most gratifying aspects of working on the publications is all of the people I have gotten to know. I develop interesting relationships with authors because I have to critique their work. It was also fantastic to bring together visiting faculty, who otherwise might not have met one another, in productive and lively discussions.

ELP What other publications have you been involved in at the school?

NR I started the books program at the School of Architecture with Bob Stern, reaching out to Yale University Press to collaborate. Our first book was *Building a New Europe*, a collection of essays by George Nelson. In 2001 we published Zaha Hadid’s first Yale studio, focused on centers for contemporary art, with Monacelli Press. When the Louis I. Kahn Visiting Assistant and Edward P. Bass Distinguished Visiting Professorships were established, we began the studio book series and expanded to publications for smaller studio editions, the symposia, and exhibitions.

ELP You also worked to organize some exhibitions and symposia?

NR I helped with symposia such as *Saving Corporate Modernism*, which was also an exhibition. The topic came to Bob’s attention in 2001 through Yale graduate Tyler Smith, who wanted to save the Connecticut General Life Insurance complex, near Hartford, designed by SOM. I also organized “Dense-Cities” with Winy Maas in 2003, when he was a visiting professor, and worked with

engineering professor James Axley on the symposium “Non-Standard Structures” in 2005, when I was writing the book *Support and Resist*. I supported these projects because I understood the importance of the link between the academics, other programs, and faculty activities.

ELP It sounds like *Constructs* was one of the first pieces in what became an ecology of various publications and programs. You are the one who navigates through and unites all of these events. What is the next step for you?

NR I will continue to work on the book series, revamping content, as well as the exhibition catalogs, which now number 73! Stepping down from *Constructs* will allow me to focus more on my urban industrial work, described in the newly released book *Hybrid Factory/Hybrid City*, and the initiation of a new Center of Urban Industry, at Kean University School of Public Architecture, where I teach in New Jersey. It all runs parallel to the Vertical Urban Factory projects that I plan to now *construct*.



Constructs covers, Rudolph Hall

Book Reviews

Architecture After God: Babel Resurgent



By Kyle Dugdale
Birkhäuser, 2022, 416 pp.

The evocative title of this book might remind us of how the history and theory of architecture have often been intertwined with concepts of the divine, in particular the Judeo-Christian God. Although Friedrich Nietzsche declared the death of God in *Gay Science* (1882), nearly a half-century later Le Corbusier’s iconic image of the hand of the architect gesturing to his city model still evoked Michelangelo’s depiction of God as the progenitive creator, in the Sistine Chapel. Art has perhaps constructed more concepts of God than the discipline of theology itself has produced, so it is not surprising that the Divine Creator as a metaphor for the architect has remained a consistent if ironic trope in Western culture.

In the context of a frenetic digital world, Kyle Dugdale (PhD ’15) reminds us of architecture’s literary and spiritual foundations — specifically its ties to the cultural history of modern Germany. His book is the second in the Birkhäuser series “Exploring Architecture,” which according to its editors is intended to offer “novel and unexpected readings” of architectural works and texts, which this book deftly accomplishes. Two threads form the book’s warp and weft. First, through a close reading of the Tower of Babel myth in Genesis 11, Dugdale revisits the allegorical power of architecture and its implications for the architect as shaper of humanity. This more familiar narrative is then paired with a relatively unknown retelling of the myth: Uriel Birnbaum’s 1924 allegory, *Der Kaiser und der Architekt: Ein Märchen in fünfzig Bildern*. Part of the Jewish intellectual scene of Vienna and Berlin during the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Birnbaum was a poet, fantastical novelist, and artist who used architecture and Mount Zion as motifs for exploring the heavenly city and the metaphysical significance of God. Birnbaum’s fable revolves around an architect’s megalomaniacal obsession with building just such a perfect city. Dugdale takes up the text, meticulously recounting and analyzing the implications of this cautionary tale about the messianic creative drive and utopic idealism. His analysis is accompanied with vivid reproductions of some of

the allegory’s original Expressionist images of imaginary dream cities, giving the book a visual as well as textual richness.

Complicating the famous prediction in Victor Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris* that “the book will kill the building,” Dugdale’s two literary threads remind us of architecture’s enduring and inextricable ties to textual artifacts. We are reminded too of Peter Sloterdijk’s more recent suggestion that, as Dugdale puts it, “the printed book lends itself to the representation of truth in a way that no longer holds true for the ephemeral digital image.” Indeed Sloterdijk’s writings on the relationship of architecture to the conception of the Judeo-Christian God, notably his intertwining of philosophy with the history of architecture, the city, and the architectural image, are a recurring touchstone for Dugdale’s own text.

In the book’s foreword the series editors describe it as a “journey” crossing many cultural and disciplinary boundaries. The link between building and text, for example, is made clear in the opening chapter with the author’s account of a visit with new architecture students to view classical and modern works in the architectural collection at Yale’s Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Given the author’s appreciation for craftsmanship and the process of book creation (influenced no doubt by his own academic formation in classics and architecture, as well as his doctoral guidance by Yale philosopher Karsten Harries), this carefully written and generously illustrated book is a celebratory tribute to European modernity and its philosophical and aesthetic tradition.

The book’s broad focus on the German Modernist tradition offers the reader a number of unexpected accounts of creative moments as it traces a cultural fascination with ancient Babylon and the ideal of the *Gestamtkunstwerk* as foils to Birnbaum’s own text. We learn, for example, about topics ranging from the Behrens Antiqua typeface, created by Peter Behrens in 1924; the Berlin-Babylonian architectural connection and the colossal undertaking of the moving of the Ishtar Gate

to Berlin, in 1914; and the architectural symbolism of antiquity, which influenced Albert Speer and Adolf Hitler’s architectural aspirations.

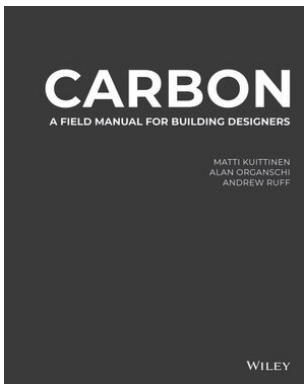
Yet the author asks, “What good are such stories now? Are they merely of archaeological or historical interest at best?” For this reader, at least, it is immensely rewarding to return intellectually to a world where complex questions about “civilization’s discontents and the anxieties of a godless modernity” were addressed through the creative imaginings of modern art and architecture. Yet considering the weight of responsibility that Dugdale sees placed upon the contemporary architect (“the formidable project of recreating the world *after* God”), the book remains curiously aloof from engaging the inescapable reality that the world has largely recreated itself — albeit as a world that we may no longer wish to inhabit — almost entirely detached from the intervening hand of the architect.

In his conclusion Dugdale returns to the array of works laid out for his students in the Beinecke Library, where the book began. In retrospect, the placement of Birnbaum’s book lying aside the others offered, he says, “the capacity to breathe a new form of life into this collection of texts.” His mission is to open up how Birnbaum’s book might do this by refocusing our attention away from the “mortalities of history through a focus on nothing less than eternity.” This shift is to see not just the physical but also the metaphysical significance of architecture — building as an activity that participates in a creative dimension that ultimately originates outside of human history. Based on this perspective, Dugdale closes with a set of general and “increasingly tentative” conclusions for architectural education today, each pointing in the direction of this larger view of what it means to construct.

— Karla Cavarra Britton

Britton is professor of art history and dean of the School of Arts and Humanities at Diné College, the tribal college of the Navajo Nation in Tsaile, Arizona.

Carbon: A Field Manual for Building Designers



By Matti Kuittinen, Alan Organschi, and Andrew Ruff
Wiley, 2022, 261 pp.

“Survivability,” write Matti Kuittinen, Alan Organschi (’88), and Andrew Ruff (MED ’15) in their new book *Carbon*, “should be our new curricular keyword.” The palpable sense of urgency throughout the book derives from decades of research and design work by its authors: Kuittinen is an advisor to Finland’s Ministry of the Environment and faculty in the Department of Architecture at Aalto University, Organschi is a senior critic at the Yale School of Architecture and cofounder of Gray Organschi Architecture, and Ruff is the research director at the firm. They draw on their collective experience in architectural design, construction technologies, materials research, and policy advising to offer a field manual for “anyone who makes daily decisions about ... the built environment,” arguing for a fundamental reimagining of the boundaries of design in relation to climate impacts. *Carbon* not only reminds us of the severity of the climate crisis we confront but equips us with precision tools to work on it.

Carbon joins a vast and growing body of literature that urges climate action through design, but what sets this book apart are its wide-reaching strategies for decarbonizing the building professions as well as its rigor in tracking the direct and indirect effects of design and construction. Kuittinen, Organschi, and Ruff argue that the focus among architects on high-performance building design as a means to reduce operational energy is no longer tenable. Instead we must understand the impacts of design decisions as they reverberate across a much broader system that includes sites of extraction, routes of transportation, processes of manufacturing, modes of assembly, and the fates of disused materials. The book meticulously accounts for the carbon emissions attributable to building construction, and rather than looking

for excuses to *exclude* emissions from the process to appear more sustainable, the authors find reasons to *include* as many emissions as possible in order to be more realistic. For example, the book includes a drawing that depicts the hypothetical disassembly of a casement window from a decommissioned building, showing the wood frame being taken apart and sawed for reuse. Next to the newly sawn boards is a small pile of sawdust, which is shown being used as biofuel for future energy production, thus hardly a carbon molecule goes unaccounted for. Examples of this kind of thoroughness abound, demonstrating the authors’ commitment to expanding an understanding of the climate impacts of building (and unbuiding) through as many variables as possible.

Rather than prescribing a rote method for quantifying the carbon emissions associated with a given project, the authors emphasize the importance of honing in on what they call “informed intuition.” To this end they identify decarbonization principles — simplify, reduce weight, minimize disturbance, optimize ecosystem services, reuse, design for durability then reversibility, keep track of time and distance, share, store carbon, decouple — that encourage readers to fundamentally rethink the relationship between building construction and carbon emissions without the added burden of calculations performed on the fly. The authors rightfully claim that the most significant impacts on carbon emissions for a project occur very early in the design process. In addition to these principles, the book outlines the theories and methods underpinning life-cycle assessment in order to contextualize it as one tool among many in the decarbonization effort.

The book includes case studies that offer a deep dive into two projects, Common

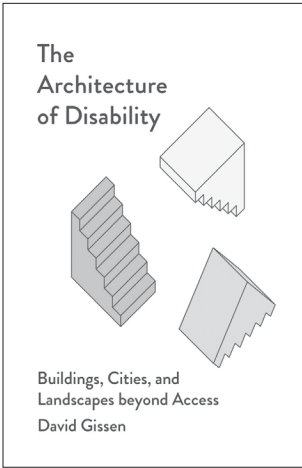
Ground High School and Puukuokka One Apartment Building, illustrating with impeccable detail the type of carbon accounting outlined in the rest of the book. For some readers the data tables might be off-putting, but sustained attention offers rewards, particularly in the orders-of-magnitude differences in carbon emissions by building element. Even more compelling are the visual connections provided by the carbon accounting associated with each group of building elements. The roof assembly of Common Ground High School, for example, contributed 78 tons of carbon emissions in its production and assembly, and stored a total of 134 tons, both of which appear in a delightfully illustrated balance sheet in the right margin. The book is published on carbon sequestering material (paper), and it embraces the spirit of carbon at every turn. Periodic atmospheric photographs, published in grayscale with a subtly lowered contrast, give the impression of having been lightly charred, and the grayscale drawings throughout the book offer such an intensely rich narrative into the carbon cycle that they compel intensely close observation.

Kuittinen, Organschi, and Ruff have carefully elaborated the manifold ways in which design is entangled with the climate crisis and have given us a set of specific tools to work with to address the issue. *Carbon* is a critically important book for both students and practitioners, and it deserves a commitment from readers interested in facing the challenges of decarbonizing design.

— Brent Sturlaugson

Sturlaugson (MED ’15) is an architect and assistant professor at Morgan State University.

The Architecture of Disability: Buildings, Cities, and Landscapes beyond Access



By David Gissen
University of Minnesota Press, 2022, 224 pp.

- 1 Gissen acknowledges the relevance of the pursuit of access but presents himself as “critical of many accessible design strategies as ultimately belittling of disabled people like [himself].” Gissen, *The Architecture of Disability*, vii.
- 2 See, for example, Sins Invalid, *Skin, Tooth, and Bone: The Basis of Movement Is Our People. A Disability Justice Primer*, Chicago 2nd ed. (Berkeley: Sins Invalid, 2019).
- 3 See James I. Charlton, *Nothing about Us without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
- 4 Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, *The Future is Disabled. Prophecies, Love Notes, and Mourning Songs* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2022), 140-ss.

What if disability was not external to architecture — a reality that architects and historians have to address simply to comply with accessibility requirements or an ever-expanding set of disciplinary concerns? What if disability was always implicit in any discussion of the built environment and the forms of architectural practice today? In *The Architecture of Disability*, disabled architect and historian David Gissen (’96) makes this proposition, which is as straightforward as it is disruptive. Written against the reductive (even “belittling”) emphasis on accessibility (with its associated technocratic ideologies), the book demonstrates that disability is not a problem for architects to solve but a culture, an episteme, and a politics deeply entangled with architecture.¹

The book’s first three chapters challenge the current push for access to monuments, landscapes, and cities, proposing that disability be used instead to question prevailing understandings of preservation, nature, and urbanization. The first chapter claims that making the spaces of heritage accessible often obscures the intertwined histories of architecture and impairment. Gissen argues for the “preservation of disability,” attending to both the presence of impairment in history and the incorporation of disabilities as a critical lens on the perception and discussion of historical works toward the construction of “multiple and contested pasts.” The second chapter questions the ways in which the usability of natural landscapes as well as functionalist evaluations of nature act as alibis for exclusionary productions of wilderness and justify the eradication of infirmity in the shaping of “normality.” Gissen proposes that disability might help us to explore our manifold entanglements within the environment beyond productivity. The third chapter positions disability along with other critiques of the city and the ideals of circulation, mobility, and monumentality while arguing that the perspective of impairment challenges counter-urban reactions embodied exclusively by nondisabled young white men, which often exalt individual autonomy and physical resistance. What Gissen calls “a disability critique of property” as the source for diverse forms of communalism is one among the different implications of this challenge that he analyzes.

The second set of chapters questions some critical foundations of architectural discourse from a disability perspective. Chapter four explores the relationship between form, perception, and experience, building a powerful response to depoliticized formalisms and, even more profound, an analysis of form itself as a notion predicated in architecture against disability. The next chapter addresses ideas of physical capacity and notions about the body implied in discourses of the environment. It also challenges environmentalist precepts tied to normative notions of comfort, calling for contingent and relative positionings. The final chapter follows a critique of the ways in which the study of tectonics is often grounded on hierarchies of crafts and labor that are linked to evaluations of human capacities. Gissen accompanies this discussion with an exploration of alternative genealogies concerned with “de-skilling” construction practices.

As an argument for a radical revision of the built environment, the book sits among a burgeoning number of volumes written by disabled scholars that have positioned disability at the center of diverse areas of contemporary scholarship. Likewise it reframes entrenched histories and the shaping of contested futures. Gissen introduces many of these other books to the reader. As is characteristic of this groundbreaking body of scholarship, the book does not isolate disability from its alliances and intersections with race, gender, and class, among other categories of identity and spaces of politics that altogether contribute to contemporary pursuits for disability justice.²

The book is also thoroughly enmeshed in contemporary architectural discussions. Throughout its different chapters there is no realm of discourse or practice that is left untouched — rarely does one encounter such profound destabilization of the field. Gissen’s arguments travel through diverse topics and connect actors and works in unexpected ways through novel genealogies across periods and geographies. Some recast canonical figures and established discourses, and others add to the disciplinary repertoire. This extraordinary scholarly effort is particularly significant within architecture’s growing impetus to

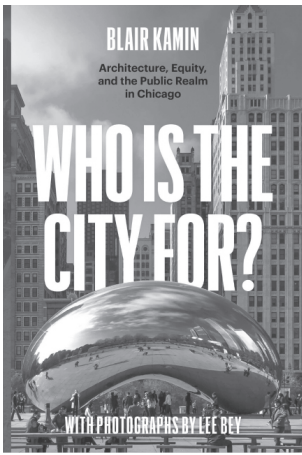
challenge the biases and exclusions of hegemonic canons and modes of practice. Often poorly understood, this drive has led architects and scholars to the inclusion of new realities within their purview — just new topics and new problems to solve. Gissen debunks paternalistic efforts toward the “inclusion” of disability within architecture’s concerns, positioning disability at the center of a collective rethinking of the discipline and the profession — just as the field has been challenged in addressing its entanglements with gender and race and has been transformed by hitherto excluded discourses and practices from outside the Global North. While Gissen invites readers to join in this radical rethinking of architecture, in practice the centering of disability requires the presence of disabled architects and scholars in the profession and in academia, leading platforms for both practice and education — as Gissen himself has advocated elsewhere. Following the motto popularized by disability-rights activists, “Nothing about us without us.”³ Others have recently gone even further, posing that no radical transformation could unfold without the presence of disabled individuals: “No revolution without us.”⁴

This book builds on Gissen’s transformative contributions to the discipline with a combination of erudition and accessibility — a pun that is well intended. Indeed the pursuit of access is evident, for example, in the written descriptions accompanying images and, more broadly, in the number of examples provided and in the text’s clear style. And yet the book is not shy of neologisms that, I would argue, are necessary to its pursuit of creating a new conversation. I only wish that this new vocabulary and its discursive frameworks had been available earlier: I wish I had learned architecture with this book. As is true of the best lessons, the book does not propose a totalizing set of instructions but rather a process of unlearning as much as one of learning, and it offers more questions than answers for the collective rearticulation of the field.

— Ignacio G. Galán

Galán is an architect, historian, and assistant professor at Barnard College, Columbia University.

Who Is the City For? Architecture, Equity, and the Public Realm in Chicago



By Blair Kamin
University of Chicago Press, 2022, 312 pp.

Hired in 1992 as the architecture critic for the *Chicago Tribune*, Blair Kamin has anthologized his career in three volumes compiling roughly one decade each of published columns. The first, *Why Architecture Matters: Lessons from Chicago*, was published in 2001; the second, *Terror and Wonder: Architecture in a Tumultuous Age*, was released in 2010; and the latest is *Who Is the City For? Architecture, Equity, and the Public Realm*.

In 2021 Alden Capital, the hedge fund that had recently bought the *Chicago Tribune*, implemented a buyout program to reduce expenses, leading Blair Kamin to make the decision to step down after 28 years at the paper. A compilation of stories from his last decade at the *Tribune*, the book includes critiques of transportation, urban planning, presidents and mayors, and design while prompting discussions about who benefits from architecture and how that does, or does not, create a more just city. The columns are organized by themes, with some featuring postscripts bringing the stories into the present. Like Kamin’s other two books, *Who Is the City For?* provides a detailed historical record of the era in a format that contextualizes the writing. It’s useful for those looking to refresh their knowledge and learn about the last decade of architecture in Chicago.

Kamin advocates that our understanding of the term *equity* be broadened to comprise both its economic and social definitions: “A wiser alternative, in my view, is to expand and enrich the social meaning

of “equity” by borrowing from its economic counterpart so that, when we use the word, we’re talking about the physical environment that we *share*.” In others words, not investment interest but *shares of the city*. It is important that Kamin defines this for readers because social equity has not been a regular or stated theme in his writing, and working to advance equity (or appearing to do so) is on trend for architects and architecture critics alike. Yet before equity was a buzzword, Kamin received a Pulitzer Prize for distinguished criticism for the 1998 series of columns “Reinventing the Lakefront,” which called out the historic imbalance in lakefront amenities between the North and South sides of Chicago. Despite an absence of the word *equity* in the text, the concept was baked into the series. In the last decade equity has become, as Kamin writes, “a central issue of our time.” The practice of architecture has begun to change its approach to its social responsibilities, and Kamin has followed those changes while “serving as a watchdog, unafraid to bark — and, if necessary, bite.”

It is reasonable to ask if anyone will cover Chicago in such detail again. It’s those details that serve as a warning that in terms of the public realm and the shares its citizens receive, we rarely get what we are promised. “All the dazzling renderings in the world are no guarantee that you’ll be strolling along beautiful riverwalks,” Kamin wrote in “An Incredible Transformation? Not Really. The ‘Meh’ Blocks West of Navy Pier Are a Cautionary Tale for Chicago’s Next

Round of Megaprojects,” in 2018. It’s easy to imagine future megaprojects such as Lincoln Yards, The 78, the Bally’s Chicago casino complex, and the Obama Presidential Center falling short on amenities that don’t build equity for developers.

Who Is the City For? is illustrated with photographs by Lee Bey, an architectural journalist and former rival of Kamin’s from the *Chicago Sun-Times* in the 1990s. Bey’s black-and-white photos fit snugly on each page and are at times crowded. Yet readers familiar with Bey’s *Southern Exposure: The Overlooked Architecture of Chicago’s South Side* will find themselves wishing for more since the photographs in the book lack some of the juiciness of his larger-format color work.

The book ends with Kamin asserting, “My columns sought to be a conversation between you and me, the readers, and the critic.” That discourse was often loud and clear enough for architects, city planners, and even Donald Trump to hear and respond to. Architectural criticism at that level is a public service, and Kamin is keenly aware that his audience is well informed and has the critical skills to consider who it is that the architecture and policies of the city are meant to serve.

— Elizabeth Blasius

Elizabeth Blasius is an architectural historian, writer, and co-founder of Preservation Futures, a Chicago-based firm exploring the future of historic preservation through research, action, and design.

Spring Events

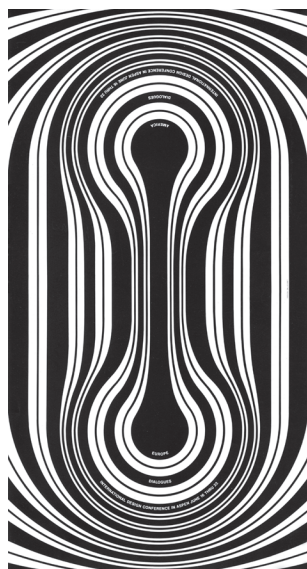
Exhibition



Installation view of *Tubula*, Saidye Bronfman Centre, Montreal, 1968, photograph by Richard Nickel

François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023

Curated by Justin Beal and Kara Hamilton
January 12–May 22, 2023



François Dallegret, Poster for the 18th International Design Conference in Aspen, 1968, 36" x 19"

The exhibition *François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023* focuses on the eponymous Montreal-based architect, artist, and designer. Born in Morocco in 1937, Dallegret received his architectural training at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris before settling in Montreal, by way of New York, in 1964. The following year Dallegret produced a series of meticulous illustrations commissioned by *Art in America* to illustrate Reyner Banham’s seminal essay “A Home Is Not a House,” launching his international reputation. His first architectural commission, Le Drug, a pharmacy-cum-discothèque in downtown Montreal, established him as a central figure of the Canadian architectural avant-garde of the 1960s and ’70s. In 1968 Dallegret told *Time* magazine, “New York may be where the action is, but in Montreal you can be a pioneer”—and that is exactly what he did. He has forged an enigmatic practice that collapses the boundaries between design and life, body and technology, persona and product.

François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023 draws from sixty years of drawings, objects, films, and ephemera, including the original prototype for *Tubula*, an “automobile immobile” made from aluminum air-duct tubing, exhibited for the first time as it originally appeared at the Saidye Bronfman

Centre for the Arts (now the Segal Centre for Performing Arts), in Montreal, in 1968. This exhibition builds on the 2011 show *GOD & Co: François Dallegret. Beyond the Bubble*, curated by Alessandra Ponte, Laurent Stalder, and Thomas Weaver, which originated at the Architectural Association, in London, and traveled to ETH, in Zurich, and the École des Beaux-Arts, in Paris.



François Dallegret, *Tas de Fumier*, 1982, photograph

Symposium



Denise Scott Brown, 1978 © Lynn Gilbert

Denise Scott Brown: A Symposium

Wednesday, February 8, 2023
Hastings Hall, 1:30 p.m.

In 1972 Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi, together with Steve Izenour (MED ’67), published their treatise *Learning from Las Vegas*. This canonical text, based on the studio that they taught together at Yale in 1968, explores architectural communication in a new kind of automobile-oriented urban landscape. Its interdisciplinary methods helped change architecture and studio teaching in fundamental ways.

Fifty years after its publication, “Denise Scott Brown: A Symposium,” organized by Frida Grahm, presents new scholarship related to the groundbreaking studio methods developed by Scott Brown during her teaching career in the early 1960s. Three panel discussions build on chapters in the recently published anthology *Denise Scott Brown in Other Eyes: Portraits of an Architect* (2022), edited by Frida Grahm, to offer new perspectives on Scott Brown’s intellectual formation, research on determinants of urban form, concern for social factors, and advocacy for minimal

design interventions in lieu of large-scale urban renewal. It will highlight her conceptual contributions, distinct voice, and incisive impact on architectural education and design.

Speakers include Denise Scott Brown, along with Denise Costanzo, Lee Ann Custer, Valéry Didelon, Frida Grahm, Izzy Kornblatt, Sylvia Lavin, Craig Lee, Mary McLeod, Sarah Moses, Joan Ockman, Elihu Rubin, Surry Schlabs, and Katherine Smith.

Denise Scott Brown: A Symposium is supported in part by the J. Irwin Miller Endowment.

“Found in Translation” Ken Tadashi Oshima

January 13, 2023

In his talk on January 13, Ken Tadashi Oshima examined the multiple translations of architecture, culture, and living embodied in the Japanese Exhibition House, designed by architect Junzō Yoshimura (1908–1997) and displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York from June 1954 to October 1955. It translated seventeenth-century Japanese precedents from Midtown Manhattan to Philadelphia’s West Fairmont Park as paradigms of indoor/outdoor living between house and garden. Oshima explored the broader domestic ideals found within a constellation of architects from Antonin (1888–1976) and Noëmi Raymond (1889–1980) and George Nakashima (1905–1990) to the contemporary residences of Atelier Bow-Wow, situated in diverse settings such as Karuizawa, Japan, and New Hope, Pennsylvania. The talk was followed by a discussion on implications for future design engaging local/global landscapes with Atelier Bow-Wow principal and founder Momoyo Kaijima and associate dean Sunil Bald.

Fall Student North Gallery Exhibitions

Students curated three exhibitions in the North Gallery this fall that were funded in part through the Yale School of Architecture Exhibitions Fund.



?side the Box, 2022

?side The Box

September 16–October 8, 2022

The exhibition *?side The Box* began the series of student-organized shows displayed in the North Gallery during Fall semester. The show was an interdisciplinary collaboration curated by

Youssef Denial (MARCH I ’23), Kaifeng Wu (MARCH I ’23), Shi Li (MARCH I ’23), Chloe Hou (MARCH I ’23), Yunming Zhang (BA in Comparative Literature ’23), and Junyan Hu (MFA in Graphic Design ’24). Through objects constructed primarily from recycled cardboard, the curators revealed that cardboard boxes play a transitory role in our daily lives, creating a cycle of waste in the form of containers for contemporary shipping that are much less valued than their contents. Yet, they argued, boxes have unseen lives of continuous dialogue. Images of observers scattered across walls from live cameras, projected onto these flattened boxes, prompted questions of the seen and unseen as the contents of these boxes were brought out.



Thank You for Loving Me till the End: Life, Memory, and Reconstruction in Post-Atrocity Bosnia and Rwanda, 2022

Thank You for Loving Me till the End: Life, Memory, and Reconstruction in Post-Atrocity Bosnia and Rwanda

October 13–November 5, 2023

Curated by Christina Zhang (MARCH I ’23) with artists Smirna Kulenović, of Bosnia, and Amatus Ndizeye, of Rwanda, *Thank You for Loving Me till the End* was based on Zhang’s research on memory and genocide in the two countries, which continued with funding from the George Nelson Fellowship in 2021. The exhibition included four workshops: “Memorialization Unmoored: Mass Violence and Memory in the Digital Age,” by David Simon; “Urban History and Public Space Development of Rwanda,” by Amatus Ndizeye and Josh Greene (MARCH I ’23); and “Performing Landscapes of Care,” by Smirna Kulenović, with a screening of the film *Our Family Garden*. The multimedia exhibition examined “violence, destruction, and the incomprehensibility of mass atrocities,” seeking to underscore “the fragility of life, the beauty of love, the resilience

of survivors ... [and] living and healing—what we share as human beings.”



Weight of Time, 2022

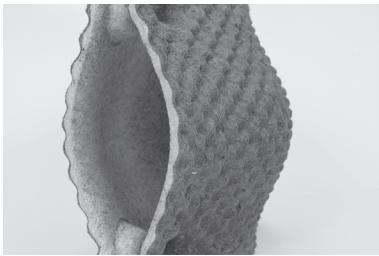
Weight of Time

November 15–December 10, 2022

The exhibition *Weight of Time*, curated by Ana Battle, Signe Ferguson, (both MARCH I ’23), Jeeu Sarah Kim, and Inhwan Ivan Tae, (both MARCH II ’23), explored materiality and temporality in an effort to realize the concept of a non-site. The contents of sandbags filled with sand from the shores of the Connecticut coast were slowly released to reconstitute a site of spectacle, maintenance, and care. Through a series of time-based performances, the exhibition deconstructed concepts of time and place as a physical manifestation tied to collective memory.

Discussion with Mae-ling Lokko

Mae-ling Lokko is a new assistant professor at the School of Architecture teaching sustainable materials and systems.



Mae-ling Lokko, *AMBIS Biomaterial Brick*, 2016, photograph by Tanner Whitney

Nina Rappaport What was your trajectory from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where you studied for your PhD, to practicing in Ghana and teaching at Yale?

Mae-ling Lokko I started my company while studying for my PhD, with a vision for it to be headquartered in Ghana while operating across the Atlantic. But I quickly realized that the kind of support, in terms of funding and ecosystem needed for research, particularly for emerging materials in the building sector, is incredibly difficult to sustain in a place like Ghana. An opportunity came up to apply for a tenure-track position at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 2018, and then in 2019 I became director of the new Building Sciences program. While I loved it there, two things were really missing for me — one was a global relationship to Africa, and the other is that you can’t really accelerate sustainability in the building sectors by focusing only on technology. So for that reason I started looking elsewhere. Around that time a tenure-track position opened up at Yale’s School of Architecture. I was particularly drawn to the Yale in Africa program, spearheaded by the president’s office, and the Center for Ecosystems and Architecture, directed by my former mentor. It seemed like fertile ground to integrate and expand aspects of my research.

NR I find it interesting that you’re working on biomaterials used for construction while incorporating agro-waste and biopolymers. Can you explain the potentials for these different materials?

ML Twenty-first-century material inventories are incredibly different. In the last century there was a focus on the use of mineral-based materials, and it has caused

the detrimental production of greenhouse gas emissions. Secondly, the underbelly of our materials sector produced “waste” — materials in the wrong place or the wrong time. We are completely missing the immense opportunities to understand and value these by-product materials. One of the biggest areas for this opportunity is using agricultural waste that’s so intricately tied with our population growth as a species. The more crops we grow to feed our growing populations, the more agricultural by-products we produce. If we think of what the skin of a crop has to do to protect and nurture the fruit in terms of its chemical and physical infrastructure, all that material performance and intelligence are things that we’ve leveraged in vernacular architectures around the world. We really have to figure out how to bring back that intelligence. We fill our products with highly toxic, high-energy intensive additives and synthetic glues. I’m incredibly excited about how we might design emerging bio-based materials to “close this loop,” and in doing so explore what this integrated lifetime criteria for materials might mean for building materials.

NR Besides mushrooms, which everyone in the field is into these days, what other organic edibles do we have to rethink in terms of their waste and its usefulness?

ML More than fifty percent of everything we produce comes from four crops: sugar, wheat, corn, and rice. So we have these huge monocultures of agricultural crops and by-products being produced at scale. But there’s also a whole stream of other agricultural wastes. I started off with coconut husk as a flagship agricultural by-product. From there I explored materials like hemp, corn, biomass-invasive species like water hyacinth, and moringa pressmeal, an agricultural by-product we use to treat water. The application avenues are endless, so the challenge is to figure out how to use which materials in the right quantities for a specific application to see what design and performance might be achieved.

NR I noticed that often your exhibitions are testing grounds for product development because you work at a small scale — like when architects design pavilions. What have



Mae-ling Lokko and Gustavo Crembil, *Groundmurmurs*, Sonsbeek20→24 Biennial, Netherlands, 2021

you been able to take from a small prototype to a larger scale, and how is this done?

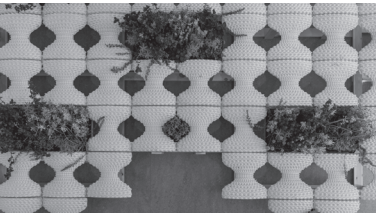
ML The cultural exhibition space is both a platform to exhibit and a space to explore the challenges around collective biomaterial production. It allows me to examine issues around quality control and distributed material production. It’s also a way of engaging the broader public, particularly around the deep-seated cultural reservations about using natural materials. With exhibitions that use mycelium, for example, it is important to think about where the works can find final homes. From my first solo show in Europe, the myco-based installations made their way to four exhibitions around Europe and one has found a final home at a sustainability hub, De Ceuvél, in Amsterdam. The coconut panels were never intended to go to market. It was a proof-of-concept design prototype since we had to figure out the right model of production for processing a distributed and low-quality material resource in the city. This means that a lot of our work needs to focus on finding new production and business models to make affordable products. However that design prototype will remain at the Museum of the Future, in Dubai, for the next three years.

NR So we need to purposefully harvest the coconut and its husk to be reused, even as biochar.

ML Exactly. It means that there’s an opportunity for coconut farmers and urban traders to become part of this green eco-manufacturing system. Coconut by-products produce one of the highest-quality activated carbons — that’s one pathway. Buildings propose a number of careers for these amazing materials, which have comparatively low carbon footprints. So designing the life-cycle timing of material transformations is key and offers potential circular-economy opportunities to connect the agricultural and building materials to broader material loops. In doing so it opens new avenues for the designer to expand services to new “clients” and collaborators, including farmers, urban food and waste enterprises, and companies trying to transition to circular material principles.

NR What are you currently teaching at Yale?

ML In the fall I will teach “Environmental Design”, which is the foundational environmental technology course. This upcoming spring I am teaching a seminar called “Soil Sisters,” which is supported by an SOM Foundation research grant. We will learn from long-standing agricultural practices in places like Ghana and Guatemala, where there is a sophisticated understanding of multicrop practices. In



Mae-ling Lokko, *Healing Meadow*, Z33 House for Contemporary Art, Design, and Architecture, Hasselt, Belgium, 2021, photograph by Selma Gurbuz

Guatemala, for example, corn, squash, and beans — the three sister crops — are grown in certain proportions seasonally. So we are interested in understanding how scaling construction material production can respond to such healthy soil practices. This is really counter to what we’re seeing in terms of monoculture farming, and it presents an opportunity to think about the by-products that come out of the agriculture, textile, medicine, and building industries to develop a new catalog of materials that promote ecological responsibility.

NR Will the students be able to pick a combination of countries to research?

ML We have industrial partners in Ghana and Guatemala. We will use plants and crops from those countries as the basis of the material inventory for the workshops. We will look specifically at natural dyes and bio-based materials, ranging from low-density insulation to medium-density fiberboards. We will be doing mechanical and thermal testing through a collaborator’s lab in the School of Engineering. This research will be expanded during the YSoA 2023 summer program in Ghana.

NR How do you see the future of materials and sustainability, and how can we improve research in the field?

ML I think it’s hard to do this type of work in the material sector because of disciplinary silos. Environments and funding that activate and accelerate interdisciplinary research are incredibly transformative. Recently, for example, my approach to bio-based materials has been strongly influenced by the culinary arts. A chef’s understanding of ingredients is fascinating. I spent all of last year working with one of Africa’s leading chefs on a menu that reintroduces indigenous ingredients to address some of the key challenges facing Ghana’s food economy. The parallels with the issues faced by materials in the building sector are fundamentally the same, and more critically, we can learn a lot from each other in terms of integrated mechanisms for transforming the value of our materials. Ultimately it is this disconnection between material cycles and designers that has yielded our world’s problems around landfill, polluted waters, and carbon in our atmosphere.

The Inaugural Yale UDW Housing Connecticut Clinic

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Connecticut has a shortage of nearly 87,000 units of affordable housing for low-income residents. Disproportionately impacting inner-city communities of color in cities like New Haven, Bridgeport, Hartford, and Waterbury, lack of affordable housing damages residents’ mental and physical health and affects children’s sense of stability and ability to learn. It also increases the racial-equity gap by limiting opportunities to build intergenerational wealth through homeownership.

The Fall 2022 course, “Housing Connecticut: Developing Healthy and Sustainable Neighborhoods,” was the first interdisciplinary clinical seminar convened by the Yale Urban Design Workshop (UDW), the School of Architecture’s community design center,

and was offered in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Housing. Bringing together students and faculty from Yale’s School of Architecture, Law School, and School of Management, “Housing Connecticut” allowed students to work directly with nonprofit affordable-housing developers in two of New Haven’s most disadvantaged neighborhoods, Newhallville and Fair Haven. The students developed proposals anchored by affordable housing that engaged with community-development issues, including environmental justice, sustainability, resilience, social equity, identity, food scarcity, mobility, and health.

The supervising faculty included Andrei Harwell (’06), who coordinated the course; Anika Singh Lemar (BA ’01), from the Law School; Kate Cooney, from the School of Management; and Alan Plattus (BA ’76), from the Architecture School. They began by providing the students with a boot-camp-style interdisciplinary introduction to the world of affordable-housing design and development. Seminars on GIS mapping, data analysis, zoning, building codes, pro formas, financing mechanisms, housing design, and community engagement provided the students with a foundation for developing strategies, identifying opportunity sites, and preparing design concepts for development.

The students worked in multidisciplinary teams and collaborated with three

nonprofit developers — NeighborWorks New Horizons, Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, and Beulah Land — to develop detailed development proposals, which included demographic and spatial neighborhood analyses, site selection, conceptual architectural design, pro formas, and proposed financing stacks. Borrowing from the pedagogical practices of architecture, law, and management, the students received input and support through clinical rounds, moots, case studies, desk crits, and design reviews in the clinic. Additional input and feedback were provided by the Connecticut Department of Housing and the Connecticut Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA), along with substantial predevelopment support so the three projects may move toward realization.

On December 16, 2022, students presented their work in the fourth-floor “pit” at the School of Architecture to state officials, developers, city administrators, and other stakeholders. Nine students from the clinic will continue with the work over Spring semester as UDW Housing Assistants in consultation with the clinical faculty, nonprofit developers, and the local community. A grant from the SNF Fund for the Integration of Theory and Practice, administered through the Law School, allowed the YUDW to provide additional resources to the students and their projects, including the appointment Elise Barker Limon (MARCH II ’22) as YUDW

Fellow in Housing and Urban Design. Limon will coordinate the students’ work in the spring and assist faculty with preparation for the fall 2023 edition of the clinic.

— Andrei Harwell (’06), Senior Critic in Architecture, and Elise Barker Limon (MARCH II ’22), YUDW Fellow in Housing and Urban Design



A reinterpretation of traditional New Haven housing typologies in Newhallville by Yi Ming Wu, Noah Sannes, N’Dos Onochie, Chandana Rajanna, Robby Mulcahy, Natalie Smith, and Nketiah Berko



A proposal to make Grand Ave in Fairhaven a key corridor for affordable housing projects by Annika Babra, Serena Liu, Eric Wang, Jiaying Yan, Malcolm Davis, Nicholas Fernández, Gabriel Gassmann, and Dahlia Leffell

Fall 2022 Lectures

The Fall 2022 lecture series took place fully in person and was met with enthusiasm and engagement by the YSoA community and beyond.

Francis Kéré



Recent Work

August 25

Francis Kéré, founder of Kéré Architecture and recipient of the 2022 Pritzker Architecture Prize, thanked Dean Deborah Berke for her generosity, in the opening talk of the Fall lecture series. He discussed his approach to design, highlighting recent work in Burkina Faso, Benin, and Kenya. After an education in Germany, “I wanted to give something. I don’t like this term *giving back* because it has become very heavy, but I just wanted to do something for my people working with what we have locally, with available materials. You have people that are full of enthusiasm and looking to contribute, and so with that I just started to give.” Kéré described his design process using full-scale mock-ups when professionals could not be hired, particularly to show communities his vision.

Kéré elaborated on community input for the design of the Gando Primary School and the Léo Surgical Clinic, in Burkina Faso. These places, he noted, became a central node in the community, what he referred to as “a frame for their own projection,” constructed with traditional materials to produce a replicable model for similar projects. These were processes that emerged in the Serpentine and Xylem Pavilions, drawing on mock-ups and local timber. Kéré spoke of passive environmental design and local labor as critical to his work, in projects like the Lycée Schorge and Burkina Institute of Technology (BIT) Campus, for which women built the facade in workshops where they tied together eucalyptus wood. As part of his design ethos, Kéré aspires to compose projects that “bring light and access” to neglected communities.

In Benin traditional construction inspired Kéré’s largest and most recent project, Parliament House: “In West African tradition, people gather together under a big tree and solve problems as a real democracy. People sit around in the shadow of the tree as equals. There is no boundary. People come and sit where it’s really open to make a decision about the community; it is really transparent. And I wanted to learn from that.” In all of his projects Kéré seeks “to create an environment that is positive for teaching, celebrating, and doing whatever. Especially for a big gathering, where people take ownership using every corner.”

Deyan Sudjic



Dancing with Power: The Architect’s Dilemma

Brendan Gill Memorial Lecture

September 1

Deyan Sudjic, architectural critic, former director of the Design Museum London, and

author of *The Edifice Complex*, *The Language of Things*, and *The Language of Cities*, discussed the political nature of design and architects in proximity to autocratic power through a presentation on his recent book *Stalin’s Architect: Power and Survival in Moscow*. Sudjic focused on Boris Iofan (1891–1976), who worked under Stalin as the main figurehead of Soviet architecture. Invited to view Iofan’s former apartment, untouched since his death, Sudjic observed that “in all its dusty boxes and papers, it felt like a metaphor for the collapse of the entire Soviet system. I wanted to know more about this individual — the things his career forced him to do, the compromises he made, the way he actually managed to outlive Stalin — as a dedicated Communist who got so close to power that he really was Stalin’s architect.”

Describing Iofan’s upbringing in Odessa, education in Rome, and ten years in Italy, Sudjic examined the ties of his neoclassical training and adherence to figuration in his designs. As members of the Italian Communist Party, he and his wife were exiled from Italy when the Blackshirts took power, pushing Iofan to continue a career in Moscow. Sudjic noted: “He built very much showing traces of Russian-Italian work; one could say in this part of Iofan’s career he was trying a range of architectural languages, when Constructivism was at its peak and the Soviet Union was most experimental. Yet as Lenin’s influence waned and Stalin came to power, this would be replaced by a search for what Stalin saw as a language of architecture that was more understandable by the masses.”

Sudjic noted that this Stalinist notion ignited Iofan’s most well-known works, including the classical and Constructivist House on the Embankment and the plan for the Palace of the Soviets, on the site of Moscow’s largest church “to demonstrate that the Soviet system was there to stay, to mark the transfer of the capital, and as a physical manifestation of the new regime and Soviet triumph as the Vatican of socialism.” Iofan invested 25 years in its construction until Khrushchev discarded him, and it was never completed. Yet he continued to sketch it for the rest of his life. Iofan had also designed the Worker and Peasant Monument for the 1937 Soviet Pavilion, directly opposite the German Pavilion, where Hitler used architecture to instigate his vision of Germania, whereas Stalin projected himself as the architect of socialism. Both were the ultimate symbols of “an architecture of statecraft.”

“He was a gifted architect who sacrificed his reputation for becoming too close to power. But, in writing this book, it wasn’t my role to blame Iofan. One has to think about the courage to stand up in that context as we think of those who stand up in Ukraine, and especially those protesting against Putin right now.”

Rachaporn Choochuey



Lightly/Casually

Louis I. Kahn Visiting Assistant Professor

September 8

Rachaporn Choochuey, of the Bangkok-based studio all(zone), is known for reuse and recycling of local materials and using vernacular construction techniques, a method that has been described as serious yet playful. Choochuey discussed contemporary urban issues in Bangkok, such as affordable housing, which was the critical investigation in the Fall studio she taught at Yale. She described her first

In West African tradition, people gather together under a big tree and solve problems as a real democracy. People sit around in the shadow of the tree as equals. There is no boundary. People come and sit where it’s really open to make a decision about the community; it is really transparent. And I wanted to learn from that.

— Francis Kéré

project, the transformation of a vacant “shophouse” in central Bangkok into a multi-level live-in artist studio, which now houses her office. “Right after our first shophouse transformation we published a lot and gave a lot of interviews, including information on the financial side of the project. Little by little shophouse transformations became common, with different programs, and even fashionable. When we started to live like that ourselves, nobody had ... We could make a little claim that even though we were *surely* not the first ones to transform a shophouse in Bangkok, perhaps we made it sexy enough so that it is very trendy now.”

all(zone)’s dwelling concept, Light House, which was featured at the 2016 Chicago Architecture Biennale, is a semipermanent, semitemporary house for a young professional living in a tropical metropolis. “Like me, these people cannot afford to live properly in the city center, and the house is a kind of incubation space for those starting a career. In a city like Bangkok there are so many abandoned structures where water and electricity are already running, so we think that these houses can be placed in these empty structures, and with many houses together it could be a community.” She concluded by showing a series of semi-permanent projects, including the M-Pavilion, which at the time of the lecture was just being installed as waffle-structured site-specific textile intervention in Melbourne.

Brigitte Shim



The Passage of Time

September 22

Brigitte Shim, principal of Shim-Sutcliffe Architects, reflected on time as a critical architectural material in her practice. She recognizes that “all buildings exist in time, even if designed for permanence. Even when made of concrete and steel, architecture decays and weathers.” Shim noted that at the core of the studio’s ethos “time is a framework for experiences within architecture. We’re always thinking about how our buildings operate over time. Even the choice of weathering steel and other materials is always changing and evolving, interacting with the invisible qualities in the air that we can’t see.”

The notion of the invisible yet inevitable touch of time is considered at the beginning of the studio’s process, as Shim noted in describing the firm’s design philosophy: “We think about whether our buildings will transform into a good ruin. And we wonder if a good ruin may actually have the chance of becoming a good building. The idea for us is to actually go back to our projects, even three decades later, to reflect on

whether the aged building may actually be closer to what we imagined in our mind’s eye.” Such was the case in some of the firm’s earliest projects followed as long-term collaborations, including the Beach Pavilion and Ravine House, both of which aimed to form greater dialogues to their Canadian landscapes. Shim noted the importance of photographing these sites 20 years after construction to “look at the role of nature and question the kind of forces of weathering on steel, concrete, glass, and wood in a way that enables us to observe the forces of aging on these inert materials. Then we’re also able to observe the continually shifting balance between nature and built form. We’re always interested in this way of linking nature and culture and trying to inter-weave them within our architecture.”

In paying close attention to the fabrication of materials and assembly, Shim emphasized the firm’s practice of full-scale mock-ups, even crude studies, as essential to understanding “their properties, their potential, and their limitations,” particularly to examine “subtle projections, gaps, and textures” formed by the nature of aggregating forms. These material and time-based studies have led into further emphasis on shading, custom lighting, and working with water as a key ephemeral component of the firm’s work, as it “is capable of registering the subtle shifts of winter temperature, transforming from steam to mist to ice through the course of a day. It’s the ability to make the invisible visible all the time.”

Oliver Elser



SOS Brutalism: Tools for Preservation Activism and a Theory for the Monsters

October 24

Oliver Elser, curator at the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) and organizer of the School of Architecture fall exhibition *SOS Brutalism: Save the Concrete Monsters*, addressed two main topics: “the tools for preservation activism and a theory for the monsters.” As he defined a theory of Brutalism, he returned to the term’s original context in the dialogue between the Smithsons and Reyner Banham. The latter, he noted, celebrated Louis Kahn’s Yale Art Gallery in 1955 as the “most truly Brutalist building in the New World,” due to the three principles of memorability as an image,

clear exhibition of structure, and valuation of materials “as found,” promoted by the Smithsons. By 1966 Banham declared Brutalism to be dead as a contemporary idea, noting how for his Yale Art & Architecture Building Paul Rudolph was overly concerned with the monumental approach of pre-Modernism. Later Elser noted: “Everywhere in the world a second generation of Brutalist buildings emerged that no longer stood in a theory-based context. There was no Banham anymore. There was no debate anymore. Nobody took over his role as a historian of the contemporary. Our project “SOS Brutalism” started exactly at this point. We wanted to write a sequel to Banham’s book and record everything that Banham would not have agreed with.”

Rhetoric, Elser argued, is introduced as a fourth point in Banham’s principles of Brutalism, which accounts for the exaggerated and impractical qualities of Brutalist buildings. He then showed how DAM has used “SOS Brutalism” to raise awareness and advocate against the demolition of these structures. “What should be discussed if Brutalism is now given a second chance? The trend — not only in social media but also in these concrete-kitsch products everywhere — in Brutalism goes hand in hand with a risk of losing sight of the awkward, resistant nature of the original movement ... There is no longer only one Brutalism. Instead we need to reactivate the idea of a world history of architecture.” Elser stressed that “it means a lot that the Yale School of Architecture invited me to speak to you today in this lecture hall, one of the most Brutalist, but not at all brutal I would say, spaces in the world.”

Peter Zumthor with Tod Williams and Billie Tsien



Architects in Conversation: To Build for Art

Hosted by the Yale Center for British Art

October 27

Peter Zumthor, founder of Atelier Peter Zumthor and recipient of the 2009 Pritzker Architecture Prize, joined this semester’s Charles Gwathmey Professors in Practice, Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, of Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects, at the Yale Center for British Art as a part of the discussion series “Architects in Conversation: To Build for Art.” They started by asking, “What the heck is a museum?” Zumthor likened a museum to a looking glass, or a space where one can experience wonder and marvel. Williams argued for a broader definition in terms of creating artificial spaces: “My idea of a museum is where one’s life is ... I rather like the fact that I can walk into someone’s house and believe I’m in a museum.” Tsien countered, “I think you can have incredible experiences if you keep your eyes and senses and heart open as you walk through life, but museums do have a place because they give you a focus.” She also suggested that “if you had a piece of art and it was in the forest, there needs to be enough enclosure so your attention is focused. An artwork is not the same thing in a forest or in Grand Central Station. One of the problems now is that there are too many places to focus, and everything is at the same volume. You need to make a place where the volume is turned down, or even off.”

For Zumthor, the spaces of a museum need to balance curation and spontaneity. They have “a lot of open space and a lot of contained space. The whole thing is

meandering through closed spaces. And the meandering spaces establish a field of experience. It’s now like being in the forest. You walk around and there’s no path. ... Many times a museum is chronological. But life is not chronological. Life is not linear. Sometimes you want to go to the forest.” Zumthor, Williams, and Tsien agreed that museums are public spaces, and Williams advocated for museums to be free of charge. “I believe they’re democratic spaces for people to enjoy the qualities of culture. But I think culture is more and more open, and therefore more possibilities exist within museums.” Zumthor concurred that creating a public space is “the most beautiful thing we can do because it is something that is used by a lot of people and creates public life.”

Xu Tiantian



Rural Moves

November 3

Xu Tiantian, founding principal of DnA Design and Architecture and the William B. and Charlotte Shepherd Davenport Visiting Professor of Architectural Design, discussed her collaborations with rural Chinese communities to revitalize endangered local trades and collective means of production while responding to complex geographic conditions. Tiantian employed the strategy of “architecture acupuncture” to create specific interventions based on the local context and heritage, for example, in the usage of a lost masonry construction technique for the firm’s Hakka Indenture Museum, in Shicang Village.

Tiantian worked in rural communities to promote local trades such as brown sugar and tofu production. Architecture plays a supporting role in “establishing a new village union, which becomes a new collective economic entity to operate the factory. In the Chinese rural context there’s a very special collective economic structure that is neither private nor public. It’s like the co-op system in the United States. But in a village every family is more or less related, and a *collective* implies co-sharing of ownership within the community. In architecture design the production space is the central stage.” To bring a greater appreciation for these local traditions beyond the immediate community, the public is invited into the space “parallel to the production sequence, an open lounge for visitors to observe the production. The factory becomes a live museum showcasing the intangible cultural heritage of the village.”

Tiantian’s work with abandoned quarries continues her efforts to preserve the sentimental connection between rural communities and their industrial pasts. Interventions in these spaces require the support of many stakeholders, as Tiantian recounts in terms of her work in Jinyun county: “We proposed to local government that these spaces could be transformed with adaptive reuse, with a new design intervention, to host new functions and restore the identity of Jinyun with its quarry heritage and history.” A district of renovated quarries emerged, showcasing the diverse possibilities of these spaces, from teahouse and restaurant to viewing platform and study space. One of the quarries was transformed into a “performance space, with minimal intervention. We kept the collective memory of the previous attempts to reuse the quarry by the local villagers. In the center there is a sunken water area, but could it also be used as a theater with minimal touches, and the space could be used by young villagers as essential performance space or for traditional opera performances.”

She notes that another historical Chinese building, the Fujian *tulou*, “can become an unusual resource in the rural region through adaptive reuse. Each building could be reused as a community

We think about whether our buildings will transform into a good ruin. And we wonder if a good ruin may actually have the chance of becoming a good building. The idea for us is to actually go back to our projects, even three decades later, to reflect how whether the aged building may actually be closer to what we imagined in our mind’s eye.

— Brigitte Shim

center with public programs. At the same time, the program can also represent the heritage of the village or of its own context. In short, this traditional typology can still be performative in our contemporary context.”

Javier González-Campaña and Noémie Lafaurie-Debany



Balmori Associates: A Landscape Never Happens Twice

Beatrix Farrand Lecture

November 10

Javier González-Campaña and Noémie Lafaurie-Debany, partners at Balmori Associates, reflected on how their past projects relate to their founding principle that “a landscape, like a moment, never happens twice.” Within each site the technical and utilitarian aspects of landscape design become visceral encounters with nature, from changing tides transforming the experience of platforms at Beale Street Landing, in Memphis, Tennessee, to the dynamic parallel layering of the Parque de La Ribera which responded to the flooding of the Nervión River in Bilbao.

Landscape design is shown as a device to foster relationships between humans and nature. “As the example of Bilbao illustrates, landscapes are all about connections. It is shaping the space between the buildings — above, through, and under them — and sometimes shaping the buildings themselves, as for the New Government City, in Sejong, South Korea. Landscape is what connects all living things in space and time. How do we connect design ideas with communities and clients? Landscape representation, one of the labs here at the office, is about reaffirming the position of the landscape discipline. This is not just about planting or ‘shrubbing it up’ like Diana [Balmori] used to say, but about creating spaces for all living things while revealing the forces of nature.”

The work also challenges the conventional hierarchy of human-centric design, by proposing “a new human attitude toward the other species in our ecosystem and treating humans as part of it in a horizontal way. There is no longer a pyramid where humans are on top. We were attracting and supporting wildlife on their terms, not ours, considering what animals really need as opposed to what we think they need. We humans are described just like any other animals or insects along the site.” In the case of the Mata Atlantica Park, in São Paulo, the installation of the landscape is not the end but the birth of an ever-changing ecosystem: “Once the construction was finished and the building open to the public, in that precise moment, the landscape really started. This is the moment where the plants could start to grow, where birds and insects come to the site. And every single year it will evolve to eventually go to complete maturity.”

Communication of the firm’s work remains a vital component of creating a lasting practice, which can be seen in its series of books. González-Campaña remarks that “in these guidelines, we use what we learn through our labs to test and apply concepts. Just like we saw in Bilbao, these guidelines may be reapplied 20 or 25 years later ... In the future things could change, and you need to make sure they can be adapted as long as the underlying concept is maintained.”

Claire Weisz



Shared Spaces

November 17

Claire Weisz, cofounder and principal architect of WXY studio in New York City, delivered the final lecture of the fall semester. She argued that if architects allow public spaces to lead the design process, the relationship between architects and communities has the potential to be fully realized. Weisz underscored the holistic approach that architectural processes should pursue in a world of increasingly complicated interrelations, explaining that “the idea of public space as resources being shared is essential to all architecture and planning projects, and what you might call the death of the *single* project.”

She highlighted three distinct elements of her architectural philosophy. First, places are complex and the relentless method of simplification pervasive in practice is overly reductive; second, the specificity of the concept of neighborhoods is valuable to architectural dialogue, especially in the post-pandemic environment. Third, public space is vast and has been legitimized as an idea over the past two decades, which has led her practice through its development on projects focused on water relations and “dealing with the fact that we have a tenuous relationship with one of the most important things that keeps human life afloat.” Weisz described how such relations have largely shaped the firm’s approach to planning, materials, and scale in parallel to studies on sand, sea, and salt for an “architecture that resolves competing forces at a point where they intersect land and water, built and natural environments, public and private space.”

Weisz described their coastal-resiliency and community-engagement project in the Rockaways, Brooklyn, after the hurricane; environmental remediation in Captiva, Florida; and the architectural expression in the Department of Sanitation’s (DSNY) Garage and Salt Shed, in Manhattan. She noted the criticality of “the ambition of architecture to be part of a plan, and to position this as kind of the dream scenario.” Inspired by Mierle Laderman Ukeles’s maintenance art with DSNY in the 1970s, WXY explored the need for a sanitation facility in Manhattan by taking on a multifaceted approach through an architectural project of displaying and accounting for waste and “bridging whether this is worth hiding or not.”

Fall 2022 Advanced Studios

The largest number of advanced studios are being taught this semester.

Francis Kéré and Martin Finio

Trash

Francis Kéré, Kahn Visiting Professor, and Martin Finio, Senior Critic in Architecture, led the studio “Trash” to reconsider architecture on a water-based site in Ganvié, on Lake Nokoué, in Benin. The students traveled to Ganvié, a village of more than 20,000 people known as the “Venice of Africa,” built on stilts in the middle of Lake Nokoué. About 500 years ago the Tofinu people settled here to avoid being captured and sold into slavery to the Portuguese by the Fon, who were prohibited from entering the water for religious reasons.

Over the years Ganvié has developed an intricate and prosperous culture within the constraints of life in the lake, becoming a self-sustaining community that survives on highly developed fishing techniques and tourism. Ganvians travel almost exclusively by boat. The lake, however, lies in the densely populated coastal area of Benin — surrounded by the large cities of Cotonou and Porto-Novo, the capital — with a population of more than one million. This leads to many problems with waste and pollution.

Unpurified sewage and waste from the urban settlements causes the constant deterioration of water quality in Lake Nokoué and threatens the village population. Poor hygienic conditions cause diseases that kill many children under the age of five. In addition, legislation in the protected area cannot be enforced because of a lack of government funding. Since Lake Nokoué is a main source of fish production in Benin, this level of pollution poses an existential threat not only to the people and their health but also to the environment and biodiversity.

The studio considered this dilemma by asking a simple question: Does architecture have a role to play here? Students responded with optimism, demonstrating a resourcefulness and sensitivity that came from an acute awareness of their own otherness in this place. Looking at ideas of reuse, recycle, and repair, the students’ proposals ranged from public baths, maker spaces, and new ways to inhabit a floating city to a place for producing sanitary pads from the pervasive, and invasive, water hyacinth plant. All proposals incorporated waste management and power generation, and used only the limited local building materials available. The detailed models and drawings evoked the aura of Ganvié.

Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry and Daisy Ames

The Architectural Diptych

Peter Eisenman, Visiting Professor, teaching his last studio at Yale, led a studio

with Critic in Architecture Daisy Ames and frequent virtual desk crits by Visiting Professor Frank Gehry, challenging students to consider the painterly term *diptych* in the context of architecture. The idea is that a diptych is a nonhierarchical composition where neither part is prioritized.

Students began with analyses of paintings and other precedents toward developing a concept of what *diptych*, a norm in painting, means in architectural terms. They also considered the precepts of Deconstruction and how to produce a nonhierarchical dialectic in an architectural project. The students then developed a series of urban and building morphological diagrams, from which they established the relationships between two building components. Each student designed a project with two complementary components in a program of their choice for a site in Los Angeles near the Hollywood Bowl. One component of the project would be identified as “iconic” and the other as “multi-use,” responding as a whole to the theme of “the diptych.”

Prior to traveling to Los Angeles, the students identified the single-family house as the iconic architectural type since it makes up the majority of the urban fabric of the city. It has also been the vehicle for testing spatial concepts and construction innovations since the early 1900s. During the trip to Los Angeles they visited many Case Study Homes, and projects such as Gehry Partners’ Walt Disney Concert Hall and newly completed The Grand, and visited Frank Gehry in his office.

The students’ projects ranged in scope, scale, and program; some of them challenging the dialectic between observed and observer, effectively undoing the hierarchy between the two through the design of two slab buildings. Others looked at the way that an architectural diptych could manifest horizontally, creating an urban ground that connected a new housing typology and a multi-use component to the Hollywood Bowl. The projects sparked a lively discussion during the final review.

Xu Tiantian and Tei Carpenter

Reinventing Referinghausen

Xu Tiantian, Davenport Visiting Professor, and Tei Carpenter, Critic in Architecture, organized a studio to include a social strategy and architectural design project focusing on revitalizing a rural village of 250 people in Referinghausen, Germany. Although the village has been affected by the migration of nearly a quarter of the population to urban centers, the local community is vibrant and open to projects that will support and strengthen the sense of community. The village’s cultural heritage is tied to agricultural production and its regional network of

food, labor, and landscape. The students were asked to create their own design interventions, whether cultural, agricultural, or infrastructural, with social and economic measures to help reinvent the village, incorporating local materials and traditional building technologies.

During travel week they visited Berlin and *Documenta 15*, in Kassel, where the concept of *lumbung* (a collectively governed architecture for the storage of food to serve a community’s well-being) was a central theme influencing the students’ projects. The rest of the week was spent in Referinghausen, where each student investigated how a particular social strategy could translate into architectural design. Through community meetings and discussions, the students engaged with the village and other communities as well as local, city, and regional officials to understand how to design for and make an impact in the area.

Students worked in teams to consider the social and material fabric of the village and propose projects as social strategies that engage with the context at both local and regional scales. The various strategies included themes such as “Memory Forms,” a cluster of installations and buildings that nurture a collective memory of local heritage and materials. “Silvopasture” proposed land usages that mix forestry and agriculture to cultivate interest in farming in the young at the regional level. “On Gathering” created sites for performance that support the local economy through tourism and water filtration. “Village Vitality” incorporated sites to stimulate the economy and bring people back to the community with a focus on collective workspaces and blacksmithing. The projects focusing on “Rural Commoning” incorporated collective spaces for the sharing of objects and experiences within the network of the five surrounding rural villages. The projects came out of a collaboration between students and the local community as a model that could open up new possibilities on a regional scale.

Rachaporn Choochuey and Surry Schlabs

Going Home, Again

Rachaporn Choochuey, Kahn Visiting Assistant Professor, and Surry Schlabs, Senior Critic in Architecture, taught the studio “Going Home, Again,” in which they asked the students to explore questions related to house and home, family and community, and architecture. The students investigated social conditions in light of the challenges associated with climate change and its impact on coastal cities like Bangkok, the realities of designing and building for a tropical urban environment, and the ongoing trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic. The students visited Bangkok, which served as a situational case study to use in developing alternative models of

mass housing and collective living capable of adapting to the radical uncertainties inherent in the current crises.

Conversations about housing — whether “affordable” or “premium”— are fraught with contradiction and uncertainty, and the terminology employed is often sorely inadequate to describing the way people, families, and communities actually live. The way we talk (and think) matters, and whether one begins at the bottom with the individual housing “unit” or at the top with a governing “master plan,” the end is often preordained. The studio challenged the students to develop a position on these issues and then design concepts somewhere in between: individual and collective, public and private, inside and outside, house and community, domestic and urban. Questions considered included the following: What does it mean to live or dwell in such an in-between place? What might home, so considered, even look like?

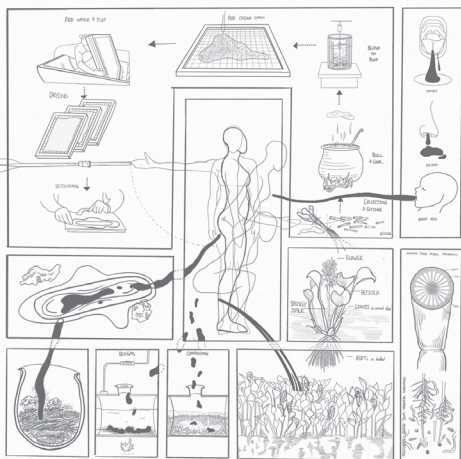
Student projects toyed with the fundamental “looseness” and “fluidity” of domestic experience in the modern city, exploiting the potentials of *drawing* and *making* — the tools of architectural representation — to illuminate (and celebrate) the various ambiguities inherent in social and spatial relations in contemporary Bangkok. Their dynamic multimedia models, placed in the center of the jurors’ circle at final review, demonstrated visions of new ways to live in fragile, dense environments.

Marc de La Bruyère, Claire Weisz, and Andrei Harwell

Oil, Land, People:
The Challenges for Architecture

Marc de La Bruyère, Edward P. Bass Visiting Fellow, Claire Weisz, Visiting Professor, and Andrei Harwell, Senior Critic in Architecture, taught a studio focused on a housing development in Edmonton, Alberta, that La Bruyère’s firm, Maclab Development, is in the process of developing. Since most of North American urbanity is thought of as new, particularly in northern and western Canada, the students were asked to investigate the mythologies around newness. They were also challenged to create alternative proposals for how we build and for whom using tools of development (site acquisition and financing potential) to renegotiate the trade-offs between environmental opportunity and the cost of change.

Alberta’s economy is dependent on cyclical resource extraction threatened both by the global climate crisis and the increasing production cost of its primary product, oil and gas. This is prompting some of its political leaders to reorient the province’s economy toward a more sustainable future inclusive of Indigenous



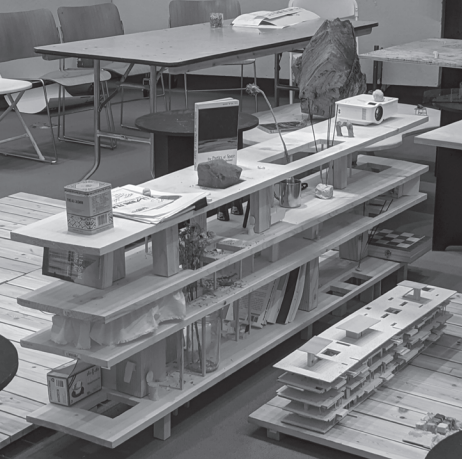
Reem Nassour ('24) and **Jia Ying Guan** ('23)
On Sanity and Sanitation
Francis Kéré, Kahn Visiting Professor, with Martin Finio, Senior Critic in Architecture



Adam Rostek ('23) and **Aleksa Milojevic** ('23)
Observances
Peter Eisenman, Visiting Professor, and Frank O. Gehry, Visiting Professor, and Daisy Ames, Critic in Architecture



Chong Gu ('23)
Memory Forms
Xu Tiantian, Davenport Visiting Professor, with Tei Carpenter, Critic in Architecture



Ariel Bintang ('23)
Furniture as Architecture
Rachaporn Choochuey, Kahn Visiting Assistant Professor, with Surry Schlabs, Senior Critic in Architecture

communities and in support of continued growth and prosperity.

On their trip to Edmonton, students met with public officials, visited multiple housing typologies, and learned about renewable-energy models. They were then asked to interrogate the role of architecture through design research and iterations to explore potential relationships through program, space, and adjacency. The studio collaborated with Canada’s Urban Institute and Maclab Development, which provided market studies and surveys. The goal was to design models that address the scale of change through a renewable approach. These parameters were supported by material investigations that challenged current expectations for residential living amid the mounting pressure for sustainability and for architecture to create the setting for positive social impacts. The approach to resources (people, land, oil) was the main organizing principle in visualizing innovative housing configurations through a sustainable ethos at the local scale.

Brigitte Shim, Talitha Liu, and Dean Sakamoto

Lessons from Hawai’i: Time, Space, and Paradise

Brigitte Shim, Foster Visiting Professor, Dean Sakamoto (MED ’98), and Talitha Liu (MArch ’13), both instructors, led a studio on a site in Honolulu, the crossroads of the Pacific. Hawai’i is embedded in our collective imagination as a paradise; however, there are many Hawai’is. One belongs to the Native Hawai’ians, whose communal identity is inextricable from the land. Hawai’i has an immigrant culture, including laborers from Japan and Portugal, who have made the islands their home. It is also an occupied military encampment. The carefully constructed myth of an idyllic tropical paradise draws tourists from all around the world to its shores. It is also a remote bellwether that might forecast the future evolution of human society, where architecture plays a critical role in shaping the collective and individual spaces. Housing as a typology acts as a robust framework for public life.

The studio site was in the Kapālama neighborhood of Honolulu, adjacent to a future mass-transit rail station in an area slated for transformational redevelopment. Translated as “The Edge,” Kapālama represents a neighborhood on the precipice of change. At the center of the site is Hawaii Hochi (1972), an abandoned *béton brut* building designed by Japanese architect Kenzo Tange (1913–2005), which housed the offices and printing press for the island’s oldest and most radical Japanese-language newspaper. The students were asked to speculate on how to reinhabit the Brutalist structure, balancing its concrete with mass timber as the primary building material for a new urban ensemble of mixed-use buildings, including housing needed for the underserved immigrant community.

After visiting the site, studying the Hochi plant, and touring architectural sites on the island, the students interviewed local community organizations, historians, and activists in the interest of producing designs that would restore the existing building. The final projects linked materiality with sustainability, addressing design as a social act, and imagined how adaptive reuse could be a catalyst for a new urban sphere.



Andrea Sanchez Moctezuma (’23) and **Jahaan Scipio** (’23)
Most Likely: A Case for the Better, Edmonton, Canada
Claire Weisz and Marc de La Bruyère, Visiting Professors, with Andrei Harwell, Senior Critic in Architecture

Tod Williams and Billie Tsien with Andrew Benner

Turtles All the Way Down

The Galapagos Islands hold a revered place in the popular imagination, thanks to a five-week visit in 1835 by Charles Darwin, whose reflections on what he observed there would spur his creation of the Theory of Evolution. It is still pictured as an Eden, but the reality is much less sublime — a place of stark fragility subject to the entangled and often competing interests of conservation, science, and tourism.

Although the archipelago has long been visited by seafarers, human presence there has only been established within the last 100 years. Despite legal and ecological protections, human development has been largely unchecked and poorly considered. Tod Williams, Billie Tsien, the Charles Gwathmey Professors in Practice, and Andrew Benner (’06), Senior Critic in Architecture, prompted the students to explore more thoughtful and responsible approaches in the design of a 30,000-square-foot building for a branch office of the Galapagos Conservancy, a residency program for visiting scholars, a public meeting space, and a public garden. The goal was to create bridges between the local, national, and international communities and the island’s iconic flora and fauna.

The students traveled to the Galapagos via Quito with support from the University of San Francisco of Quito (USFQ), which maintains a teaching and research facility on San Cristobal island. They met with local residents and observed typical construction and material practices. They chose between two sites. One was on an infill site adjacent to the USFQ campus to expand the public outreach of the university buildings. Projects involved creating a large bamboo-tiled roof to provide shade for formal and informal programs and employing volcanic rock to form a public plinth, along with a series of sustainably sourced lumber pavilions housing technical and residential programs. The second was a site north of the USFQ, at the entry to protected parklands, aiming to create a clear edge to human development and provide access to visitors exploring the landscape and trails beyond. Several projects sought to minimize the impact of building by burrowing into the rock or building in contingent ways that would allow for future changes, and even disappearance. Another project was set along a strip of disturbed land using new construction to collect and filter water on the site. Overall the projects addressed human cohabitation with nature while designing for future preservation.

Sunil Bald

The Cosmological Landscape: Chankillo

Sunil Bald, Associate Dean and Professor Adjunct, with his students, explored architecture’s multifaceted relationship to the sun — looking both backward in time and upward to the sky — through the intermingling of the expansive and ordinary, set in an extraordinary landscape. Some of the earliest examples of what we call architecture were shaped and sited in relation to the sun in order to operate as massive clocks used for planning the planting of crops and performing rituals.



Inhwan Tae (’23)
A Moment of Pause, A Moment of Paradise
Brigitte Shim, Foster Visiting Professor, Dean Sakamoto, instructor, and Talitha Liu, Critic in Architecture

Chankillo, located in the coastal desert of northern Peru, is the oldest example of a “solar observatory” in the Americas, dating back to 300 BCE. The expansive ruins of this cosmological landscape include a fortified temple and a striking linear array of 13 towers on a ridge. The year was tracked by where the sun set through the 12 gaps between the towers.

For the past decade an intensive conservation project has been underway at Chankillo, leading to its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2021. Following the management plan for the Chankillo Archaeoastronomical Complex, prepared for its UNESCO designation, students proposed new facilities to support research, continued conservation, and public access to engage with the archaeology, landscape, and sky defining the site.

Students proposed a diverse set of solutions to the problem of how to design a small intervention in a vast context. *Vastness* took on many meanings, from distance and emptiness to possibility. Alignment over great distance was a prevalent theme and an issue, as were architecture’s relationship to the “elements,” whether wind, sand, and ground as a dynamic element, or the sun as omnipresent. The students assumed “off-grid” solutions made of simple materials and produced a range of formal solutions that carved out a fluid spatial and environmental range of occupiable conditions from interior to exterior. Finally, the presence of ruins on the site was reflected in the conception of impermanence, with each student imagining their work as eventually becoming an imprint on the landscape akin to those of the mysterious sun cult that built this place 2,500 years ago.

Alan Plattus and Liz Gálvez

Land Matters

For several years now the city and citizens of Santa Fe, New Mexico (Oga Po’geh to the Tewa peoples), along with institutional and community partners, have had an extended public conversation about the future development of a 64-acre site known as the Midtown Campus. Formerly the campus of the College of Santa Fe, founded in 1859 as St. Michael’s College and renamed in 1966, the site was purchased by the city, the State of New Mexico, and a for-profit educational corporation in 2010. In collaboration with Santa Fe Art Institute (SFAI) and two architecture studios at the University of New Mexico, the students contributed to the dialogue about converting a crucial but chaotic superblock in the midst of diverse neighborhoods in the Midtown area into shared space addressing issues of land tenure, climate and environmental justice, storytelling, Indigenous culture and knowledge, housing, and the role of arts in building community.

Professor Alan Plattus and Liz Gálvez, Critic in Architecture, began with an intensive period of site research, focusing on the layered and brutally colonized landscapes and cultures of the region, from waves of European conquistadores and settlers to more recent struggles to define an identity in the wake of the tourism invasion, real estate boom, and high-end art market. By engaging Indigenous thought and contemporary culture, the students learned new ways of being in the world architecturally and in the urban realm. Focusing on material, climate, and infrastructure, the students



Haonan Li (’23)
The Wrinkle of Hawaii
Brigitte Shim, Foster Visiting Professor, Dean Sakamoto, instructor, and Talitha Liu, Critic in Architecture

experimented with building technologies that grappled with the ecologies and climates of desert environments while engaging both ancestral and contemporary cultures to materialize alternative futures in multiscale approaches.

The students began with an initial “technical artifact” exercise, learning about how traditional and modern technologies and material assemblies have embodied different forms of environmental and cultural knowledge in the American Southwest. Following travel week the students worked in groups of five to present visions for restitching the former college campus into the fabric of surrounding communities through scale interventions that foregrounded interactions with and through the land. They then developed individual speculations on possible futures for the site. Some used the archaeology, Indigenous traditions and materials, the adobe wall, or concepts relating to celestial viewing points. While the projects spanned a range of physical and temporal scales, each was a reinterpretation of the idea of “land” within the cultural and geographical context of Santa Fe, proposing ways of engaging with the site by understanding its value to human and nonhuman communities alike.

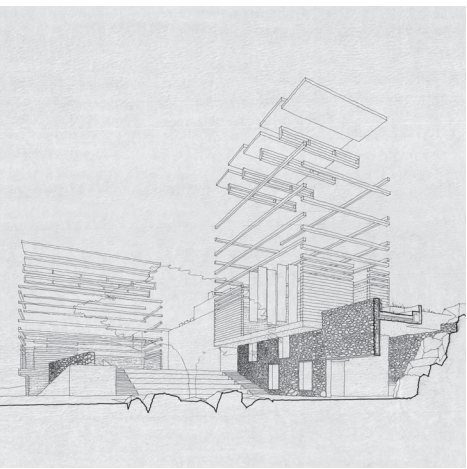
Patrick Bellew, Andy Bow, and Tess McNamara

The Fragile Earth Research Institute

As architects and engineers we are trained to be optimistic about the future and to believe we can make a difference in people’s lives and leave our cities or existing buildings better than we found them. Extreme weather and the changing climate present us with significant new challenges. The Fragile Earth Institute at Biosphere 2 is a project designed to touch the earth lightly according to the most exacting twenty-first-century construction and environmental standards.

The studio took cues from the legacy of Biosphere 2, a visionary project from the 1990s that explores sustainable ways for humankind to live in harmony with nature. The challenge was to develop proposals for a research center that would conserve and create energy, water, and food. The students visited a number of pioneering projects in Arizona. After a few days at Biosphere 2, they went to the Sonoran Desert to look at houses designed by Rick Joy; the Phoenix Botanical Gardens, by Christy Ten Eyck; Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West; and Paolo Soleri’s enlightened plans for future city living at Arcosanti. After a tour of the Grand Canyon and the Hoover Dam, the trip culminated with a visit to Springs Preserve in Las Vegas, which incorporates many energy and water conservation methods that stand in direct contrast to the excess of the Vegas strip.

The students designed projects with different takes on what being sustainable in the desert means today. They dealt with low-carbon materials, water reuse, wildlife and the landscape, algae production, hydrogen, waste, and the fragility of desert ecosystems. Each scheme married its sustainability agenda with a unique perspective on building, designing, and living in the desert.



Louis Koushouris (’23)
USFQ New Campus
Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, Charles Gwathmey Professors in Practice, and Andrew Benner, Senior Critic in Architecture

Faculty News

Anthony Acciavatti, the new Diana Balmori Assistant Professor, exhibited the project “Ganga: A River Without Banks” in the *Rivers of Life* show, at Azim Premji University, in Bengaluru, India. Building on nearly two decades of research, the drawings and photographs document the architecture and agriculture of a vast monsoonal landscape. He also delivered a virtual lecture at Azim Premji University and in-person lectures at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Rhode Island School of Design, and Princeton University. At the invitation of the Charles Correa Foundation, Acciavatti was on the jury for the 2022 Nagari Short Film Competition, whose theme was architecture and water in urban South Asia.

Victor Agran (’97), lecturer and principal of Architectural Resources Cambridge (ARC), recently won an AIA New Hampshire Design Award for the Friends of Dartmouth Rowing Boathouse Training Facility. He is currently working on the Boynton Yards 808 Windsor project, an 11-story research facility targeting LEED Platinum certification, in Somerville, Massachusetts, and the Phillips Academy Music building, in Andover. ARC has been working on pro-bono building improvements for Roca Inc., which focuses on urban violence in Boston and Chelsea, Massachusetts; Hartford, Connecticut; and Baltimore, Maryland. Agran continues to draw extensively as well.



Victor Agran, Friends of Dartmouth Rowing Boathouse Training Facility, 2022

Norma Barbacci, critic and principal of Norma Barbacci Preservation Consultants, led the EU-funded project Public-Private Partnership in Cultural Heritage, resulting in the development of two cultural routes in Lima, Peru, and the organization of several workshops and seminars on private participation in the management of cultural heritage. She also collaborated in several training, site-documentation, and narrative storytelling projects organized by CYARK for archaeological sites in Mexico, Ecuador, and Peru and is currently leading cultural interpretation studies in the historic centers of Rimac and Huamanga, Peru, for ARS Progetti.

Deborah Berke, dean and professor, was elected a member of the National Academy of Design, a leading honorary society for visual artists and architects based in New York. This Spring semester Berke will start as the Marjorie Mead Hooker Visiting Scholar at the University of New Mexico’s School of Architecture and Planning. Hooker was the first woman to earn a bachelor’s degree in architecture from the University of Texas and the third to be licensed and practice architecture in Texas. Deborah Berke Partners and Ballinger were selected to design Brown University’s integrated life sciences building in the Jewelry District of Providence, Rhode Island. The structure will house a new laboratory space for high-impact research that could lead to breakthroughs on pressing health-related issues. The firm’s Princeton University Residential Colleges, which opened its doors to students last fall, won an AIA NY Merit Award.

Phil Bernstein (BA ’79, March ’83), associate dean and professor, lectured about his recent book on the implications of machine learning on architectural practice at several campuses, including the University of Arkansas Fay Jones School, the Bartlett School of Architecture at University College London, and the

Taubman School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Michigan. He also gave a talk with Edgar Alvarado (’24) on recent research and teaching about modern slavery in the building industry at the AIA CT JEDI Conference and spoke on the future of architectural practice to the AIA Trust and the Center for Innovation. Bernstein’s article exploring the copyright and intellectual property implications of 2021 Louis I. Kahn Visiting Professor Marlon Blackwell’s Saracen Resort Casino project and lawsuit was published in *Architectural Record*, in August 2022.

Stella Betts, senior critic in architecture and partner at LEVENBETTS with David Leven (’91), has completed a pavilion for the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art as part of *Architecture at Home*, an exhibition focusing on contemporary housing. The firm is also designing Aperture Foundation’s new headquarters in Manhattan. Betts served on the jury for *Architectural Record*’s 2022 Women in Architecture Awards and lectured at the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design, Columbia University’s GSAPP, and the College of Architecture at Texas Tech University.



Stella Betts, House of Trees Pavilion, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas, 2022

Tei Carpenter, critic in architecture, is founder of the studio Agency — Agency, which will be featured in the Museum of Modern Art exhibition *New York, New Publics*, opening in February 2023.

Karolina Czekczek (’15), critic in architecture and principal of Only If, was featured with Adam Frampton in *AN Interior*’s 2022 Top 50 Architects list. Their work will be featured in the exhibition *New York, New Publics*, opening at the Museum of Modern Art in February 2023.



Only If, Bedford Stuyvesant Kosciuszko Pool, 2022
Photo © Anna Morgowicz

Peggy Deamer, professor emerita, lectured at Kent State College of Architecture and Environmental Design, Tulane School of Architecture, and Hillier College of Architecture and Design at NJIT in fall 2022. She was a speaker at Miller|Hull, in Seattle, in the AA/ETH seminar “Exhibiting Architecture: Media, Methods, Agents,” and at Central Saint Martins’ “Production Studies: Building Alliances.” Deamer wrote two articles for the *Architect*’s *Newspaper*, “Another Base: In Response to the SCI-Arc Basecamp Controversy” and “Three Women Deans.” She coauthored the article “Architecture Journalism and the Proto-Political” with Ian Volner, published in “Architecture, Media, Populism ... and Violence,” *JAE* (76:2), edited by Graham Cairns, as well as “Beyond Capitalism? Organizing Architecture Education,” with nine other members of the Architecture Beyond Capitalism (ABC) School, and “Not as Easy as ABC,” in *Log* 54.

Kyle Dugdale (PhD ’15), senior critic, was invited to address the 44th annual convention of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars to present the paper “For the Love of Ruins.” He also delivered the lecture “Classical White, Bauhaus Buff, and Other Problems” for the Walton Critic Lecture Series at the School of Architecture and Planning, Catholic University of America, and joined the advisory committee for an upcoming research project planned by Duke Divinity School’s Ormond Center. Dugdale’s monograph *Architecture After God* was published recently by Birkhäuser (see page 16 for a review).

Ana María Durán Calisto, lecturer of architecture, published her acceptance speech for the Second Mark Cousins Theory Award in *Log*, with an introduction and postscript by Sanford Kwinter. She contributed guidelines for a regional approach to CAF’s (Development Bank of Latin America) *Lineamientos estratégicos de desarrollo urbano*. She participated on the panel “Urban Planning for Human Settlements in Carbon-Rich and Ecologically Sensitive Regions” at the 4th International Symposium on Environmental Management and Climate Change in Brazil and at ELAF 2022, the Latin American-European Forum. She published “The Agroecological Urban Constellations of Pre-Columbian America,” in *Turba Tol Hol Hol Tol*, and “Requiem for Pantoja,” in *Roadside Picnics*. She was also guest editor of an issue of the Canadian magazine *FOLD* celebrating oral and written traditions of knowledge acquisition and dissemination, with contributions by Shuar poet María Clara Sharupi Juá and YSoA student Haorong Lee (’24) in conversation with Waorani brothers Martín and Manuel Baihuaeri. Durán Calisto and Shuar architect Fernando Huambutzeque contributed a critique of urban and regional planning in “The Practice of Planning among the Aents.”

Michelle Fornabai, critic in architecture, published the essays “16 Paradoxes for Studio Practice (2008–18),” in *Materia Arquitectura* #17, and “the null, the void and the pretty vacant,” in *Design Research Practices* (ORO Editions, 2022). In 2019 she started Grass Pillow, a site for land art in Boston’s Roxbury neighborhood, with staged construction processes as choreographed performances to build empathy kinesthetically, including *The Weight of Earth* (16 elephants in a pandemic) (2020), for which she moved 63,385 tons of material; *An Ocean of Tears* (2021–), consisting of 2,100 lbs of rock salt; *Tea for not one* (2022), performed for MassArt Graduate Sculpture students; and *broke* (2022). Fornabai has continued to donate her series “Data Paintings” (2020–) and “An Ocean of Tears” (2021) to the Annual AIDS Benefit Auction at the Krakow Witkin Gallery, in Boston.



Michelle Fornabai, An Ocean of Tears

Andrei Harwell (’06), senior critic and director of the Yale Urban Design Workshop, received an Environmental Justice Small Project grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to support a new neighborhood plan for New Haven’s Dwight neighborhood focused on community health and environmental justice. The Jordan River Peace Park, which Harwell has worked on since coordinating a major design charrette in Jordan in 2008, was featured in the Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum online exhibit and publication *Designing Peace*, curated by Cynthia E. Smith. Harwell recently completed the design and construction

of Uni-Life, a new retail space on Chapel Street in New Haven, in collaboration with Keith Krolak Architects.

Erleen Hatfield, senior lecturer, was named a Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers in 2022.

Kristin Hawkins (’85), lecturer and associate principal at Pelli Clarke & Partners, recently completed the Chengdu Museum of Natural History in Chengdu, China. The project was selected as the winner of an international design competition in 2018 and opened to the public in November 2022.

Nicholas McDermott (’08), critic in architecture, and his New York office, Future Expansion, have been honored with the 2022 Best of Design award from *Architect*’s *Newspaper* for religious buildings. The project Open Church, an addition to the Park Slope United Methodist Church, creates an accessible entrance as well as gathering spaces and new connections between the existing building and an adjacent garden.

Joeb Moore, senior critic in architecture and principal of Joeb Moore & Partners, received the 2022 Innovation in Design Innovator Award from CTC&G. Joeb Moore & Partners received a 2022 AIA New England Honor Award, for Hill House, and a 2022 AIA Connecticut Excellence Award, for the Lost and Found (Art) Lab, a gallery and artist-in-residence space in Connecticut. The firm is currently working on projects in Palm Beach, Miami, Fairfield, Westchester Counties, and Colorado.



Joeb Moore, Meadow Pavilion II, Westchester, New York, 2021

André Patrão, a postdoctoral fellow at the Yale School of Architecture funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, has recently published a chapter in the book *Life within Ruins: Essays on Architecture Restoration Theory* (2022), promoted by Save the Heritage Benefit Corporation. The essay, “The Ruin in the World: From Heidegger’s *Kunstwerk* to Baudrillard’s *objet ancien*,” connects two unlikely philosophers’ incidental remarks on architecture to reflect on the becoming not “into” but “of” the architectural ruin as a ruin within our everyday lives.

Miriam Peterson (’09), critic in architecture, and her Brooklyn-based practice, Peterson Rich Office (PRO) with partner Nathan Rich (’08), is featured in the show *Architecture Now: New York, New Publics*, at the Museum of Modern Art, highlighting projects by 12 New York firms. Recent projects include the Shepherd Gallery and Arts Center, in Detroit; a three-story showroom in Midtown Manhattan for furniture manufacturer Blu Dot; an art studio and home for painter Nina Chanel Abney, in Cold Spring, New York; and the new Davison Art Center, at Wesleyan University.



Miriam Peterson, Scalable Solutions for the New York City Housing Authority, 2020

Nina Rappaport, publications director published *Hybrid Factory/Hybrid City* with Actar and held a presentation event in Milan. She gave a talk at the MAXXI Museum in Rome in conjunction with the exhibition *Technoscapes*, and was a participant in a PhD workshop on reuse of industrial space at EPFL in Lausanne. She also gave talks at the University of Oregon and ETH Zurich.

Elihu Rubin (BA '99), director of undergraduate studies and associate professor of urbanism, received a MacArthur “X-Grant” to support the public program “The Pandemic Diary,” a panel discussion around the work of photographer Camilo José Vergara that

included Yale professor of epidemiology Gregg Gonsalves. Rubin delivered the lecture “Spaces of Democracy: The Goffe Street Armory as Civic Infrastructure” as part of the series “Democracy in America,” a collaboration between the New Haven Free Public Library and Public Humanities at Yale. In early 2023 Rubin will launch the website for his place-based public scholarship initiative, the Yale Urban Media Project.

Joel Sanders, professor in practice and principal of JSA/MIXdesign, is collaborating with Woofter Bolch Architecture to design Portland Community College’s Sylvania Campus Health Technology building. The

firm is designing Carnegie Mellon University’s Highmark Center for Health, Wellness, and Athletics; a new residential college at Princeton University; and a complex of 17 villas in Sejong, Korea. MIXdesign collaborated on the article “Multisensory Wayfinding,” published in the September issue of *Baumeister: Das Architektur-Magazin*, and was featured in the article “Forging a Path in Inclusive Design,” in *Architect Magazine*. Sanders spoke about the MIXmuseum initiative at the National Museum of Norway and gave the talk “From Stud to Stalled!” at the Oslo Architecture Triennale, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the decriminalization of homo-

sexuality in Norway. He also participated in the panel “Beside* Glitter: Queer Aesthetics and Materiality,” hosted by Carnegie Mellon University’s School of Architecture.

Violette de la Selle (’14), critic and founding member of Citygroup, was featured in the ongoing exhibition *New Practices New York*, organized by AIA NY at the Center of Architecture, and took part in the debate “Architecture Responds.” She was also invited to discuss the topic “Architecture Is Submissive” in the student-run Salon series at Princeton School of Architecture.

YSoA New Books

What about Learning?

Studio of Deborah Saunt
Edited by David Grant
and Saba Salekfard

What about Learning? focuses on how architectural education and learning at large faced ongoing disruptions and pressures under the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of disembodied learning and a renewed sense of civic participation, along with an increasing awareness of how our relationship to the environment is so critical to life at home. These issues led the students to consider a twofold architectural question: What is the best site for learning today? What alternative forms of learning and exchange could it nurture?

The research came out of a studio led by Deborah Saunt, of DSDHA, based in London. A collective analysis of the Yale School of Architecture’s changing conditions, from its physical site to a virtual presence and networks, in parallel with research into alternative learning models such as University of the Underground and the London School of Architecture, served as the basis for critique and the making and unmaking of a curriculum in the students’ studio projects. The design projects drew from lockdown and the need for different spatial potentials for learning in sites of personal significance. Talks from a symposium with guests invited from different fields — from activism and planning to pedagogy, triggering a cross-disciplinary exchange about learning and the built environment — are also included. The book is distributed by Actar.

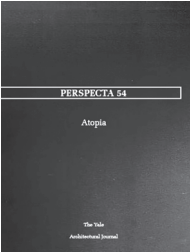
Housing Redux: Alternatives for NYC’s Housing Projects

By Nnenna Lynch, James von Klemperer,
Hana Kassan, and Andrei Harwell
Edited by Nina Rappaport and
Saba Salekfard

The book *Housing Redux* focuses on ways to reinvent public housing in New York City through a series of design projects produced in a studio at Yale School of Architecture that integrate form with social programs for the residents. Nnenna Lynch, housing developer and Edward P. Bass Distinguished Visiting Professor, with architects Jamie von Klemperer and Hana Kassem, of Kohn Pederson Fox, and Andrei Harwell (’06), senior critic in architecture, led the studio, focusing on the redesign of the New York City Housing Authority’s Washington Houses, in East Harlem. Investigating the relationship between housing, equity, health, and community, the students developed comprehensive frameworks for the Washington Houses, comprised of three connected superblocks equivalent to seven city blocks. The concepts focused on restitching the project into the city street grid by adding new built fabric that would allow the Modernist towers-in-the-park to connect with public streets. Some found ways to keep the superblock with interventions to support the community at different scales and family structures. Urban farms and community facilities as well as recreation spaces were included as a way to reorient public housing with a range of interventions for care, health, and equity. The book is designed by Manuel Miranda Practice and distributed by Actar.

Perspecta 54

Edited by Melinda Aaron, Timon Covelli,
Alexis Kandel, and David Langdon



Literally a nonplace, *atopia* represents the spatial end product of a society seemingly flattened by supraterritorial flows of information and material. It expresses both a physical artifact and a condition of mass culture, and like the global systems of production and consumption from which it is conceived, *atopia* is both nowhere and everywhere at once. For the contributors of *Perspecta 54*, the ephemeral conditions of *atopia* are also an invitation to an equally unconstrained critical practice. Blurred boundaries — geopolitical, virtual, technical, and disciplinary — offer sites for transgressive speculation and critique from beyond the limits of traditional design agency.

What results is a form of design practice that ambiguously straddles impossibility and hyperreality. *Atopia* rejects both the escapist fantasy of utopia and the nihilism of dystopia, favoring instead a conceptual middle ground from which real-world conditions can be productively engaged and challenged. Architecture’s traditional objectives of critical inquiry — locating modes of complicity, agency, and resistance within larger structures — are mediated and reframed through nontraditional strategies of speculative design and fiction. For a profession that is routinely asked to navigate extreme complexity with limited tools, this approach

suggests an expanded operational domain and possibilities for reinvigorated creative thought. From urban crises and climate emergencies to border disputes and geopolitics, *Perspecta 54* examines *atopia* as both a site of architecture’s critical confrontation with hegemonic systems and a theoretical space in which its own processes can be challenged. The journal is designed by Steven Rodriguez and Nicholas Welytk and distributed by MIT Press.

The Innovative Urban Workplace

Edited by Stella Yu
and Nina Rappaport



The Innovative Urban Workplace documents the Edward P. Bass Distinguished Visiting Architecture Fellowship studio with Abby Hamlin, founder of Hamlin Ventures, Dana Tang (’95), architect and partner at Gluckman Tang Architects, and Andrei Harwell (’06), critic in architecture. The studio investigated the role of the Brooklyn Navy Yard in New York City’s history of manufacturing in order to understand and meet the BNY’s mission and design distinctive solutions that speak to the type of workplace needed in an urban development today. They looked at comparable waterfront development projects and addressed issues including flood mitigation and environmental remediation in their proposals. The book is designed by Manuel Miranda Practice, and distributed by Actar.

Advanced Studios (Continued from page 23)

Billy Fleming

Designing a Green New Deal

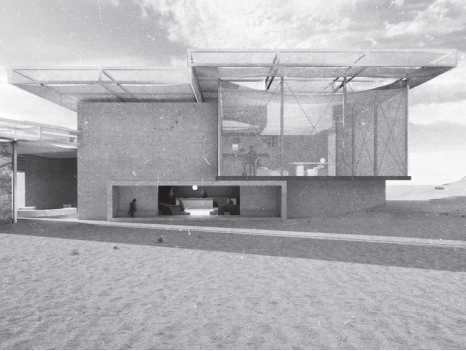
National climate plans like the Green New Deal will be understood by most people through the sites of extraction and deposition they create and displace — the rare earth mineral mines of south Greenland and the Congo; the industrial-scale wind and solar farms of Appalachia and the Gulf of Mexico; the buildings, landscapes, and infrastructures of the oil, gas, and mining industries at the heart of the energy transition.

Billy Fleming, the Diana Balmori Visiting Professor, taught a studio at Yale that builds on three years of fieldwork and previous studio research in and around the Kvanefjeld mine of Greenland — an erstwhile uranium mine for the U.S. and European nuclear energy and weapons programs of the twentieth century that continues to leach radioactive material into the surrounding village of Narsaq, now reimaged by Greenland Minerals (an Australian multinational mining company) as a key cog in its global clean energy supply chain. Students were asked to think about this network of mines — and its related sites of waste disposal, manufacturing, transportation and

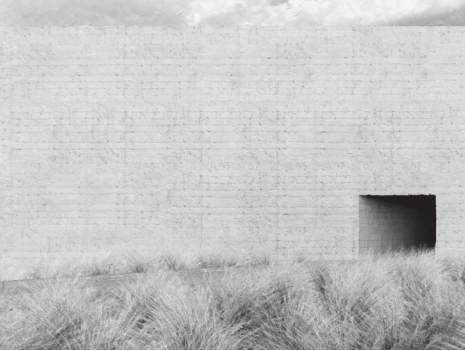
logistics, and end-use deployment of clean energy technology — in ways that link the present and future of places like Narsaq with those of Reykjavik and Northern Virginia, where clean energy and digital infrastructure are being rapidly deployed. One key to a just transition is building a more robust understanding of how thresholds of waste come to be defined, articulated, and regulated both at these sites and between them. This entails seeing industrial processes like mining, manufacturing, deployment, and postconsumer discard as part of a singular interrelated matrix.

Through this lens, mining in Greenland is connected in a variety of nonlinear

ways to semiconductor fabrication in Taiwan, e-waste disposal in Zimbabwe, the Amazon Data Center buildout in Northern Virginia, and so on. Seeing these sites as moving together and bound to one another is key to unlocking pathways toward a just transition. Instead of designing a set of beautiful buildings or object-oriented images, the studio focused on producing reciprocal relationships between sites of extraction (Greenland) and deposition or disposal (the Delta and Appalachia) and making them legible and actionable for those at the frontlines of the struggle for climate justice.



Christina Zhang (’23)
Sifting Light
Sunil Bald, Associate Dean and Professor Adjunct



Calvin Lang (’23)
Land Matters
Alan Plattus, professor
and Liz Gálvez, critic in architecture



Kyle Coxe (’23)
Carbon Research Institute
Patrick Bellew and Andy Bow, Bishop Visiting Professors,
with Tess McNamara, critic in architecture



Signe Ferguson (’23) and **Kaifeng Wu** (’23)
River Records: Sounds, Collection, and Storytelling
Billy Fleming, Diana Balmori Visiting Professor

Tributes to James Stewart Polshek

James Stewart Polshek died in the Fall after a long career as founder of the firm Polshek and Partners. He graduated from Yale School of Architecture in 1955. In 2008 he created the Eugene Nalle Drawing Room in Rudolph Hall, named after his mentor.

Adventurer and Friend

By Helen Searing

A felicitous chain of circumstances was set in motion when Jim Polshek arrived in Copenhagen as a Fulbright scholar, along with his wife and muse, Ellyn, in 1956. The couple’s first European experience would occur in a country that nurtured and developed attitudes already present in their imaginations and, fortuitously, prepared them for their next sojourn abroad, this time in Japan. In both places, aesthetic considerations were determinative to a degree then unknown in the United States. Similarly, respect for heritage was not thought incompatible with employment of the latest technology, and if grandiosity was shunned, this was not at the expense of the sublime. Danish architects eschewed stylistic purity in favor of integrating traditional and modern materials and construction methods appropriate to a given context and program, lessons compatible with Jim’s ideas about architecture and urbanism. Denmark’s welfare state was also politically in accord with the Polsheks’ leftist sympathies. The government’s humanitarian aims were in sync with its citizens’ approach to the role of the arts.

The Polsheks’ impact on me personally was no less life-changing than Denmark’s influence on them. My Fulbright was awarded for the study of economics, yet contact with this dazzling pair convinced me that my future lay in studying the history of buildings and cities. Although I would not enter Yale as a graduate student until 1963, it was my year in Denmark that led to my choice of that university for my doctoral program. Curiously, in 1956 and ’57 the Yale School of Architecture was an invisible but potent presence in Copenhagen, especially at the Royal Academy of Arts, to which Jim had been assigned. Rai Okamoto (1927–1993), who had an MArch in City Planning from Yale and was later a city planner in San Francisco, was teaching as a visiting instructor that year. During Jim’s years at Yale, Ellyn was secretary to Christopher Tunnard, head of the program. Soon we were a foursome sharing lively evenings at Galatea Kro, a tavern) in the city’s picturesque Nyhavn quarter, where we would converse about Danish design culture with budding stars like Henning Larsen (1925–2013) and Poul

Kjaerholm (1929–1980). We were the beneficiaries of a lively cultural scene that embraced at once the Danish Royal Ballet and cool jazz musicians such as Kai Winding (1922–1982), at that time already active in the United States as well. There were visits to the Cinemateket, which screened the movies of Nordisk Film A/S, the fourth-oldest film company in the world, and ferry trips to Malmø, in Sweden, to see the latest American gems. We vied to collect the desirable objects crafted by noted Scandinavian designers that were showcased and sold at Den Permanente, a design museum that was also a department store. These dishes, flatware, and textiles can still be found in the Polsheks’ apartment in Greenwich Village and my house in Montauk.

Another critical ingredient in the complicated brew that would shape the Polsheks’ lives and careers was their encounter with France, specifically Paris. It was easy to visit the French capital from Copenhagen, and the Polsheks’ love for the city would be manifested in their purchase of an apartment in an eighteenth-century building on the Rue de Lille. Not surprisingly, the main attractions of Paris in 1956 were works by figures such as Le Corbusier, Charlotte Perriand, André Lurçat, and Eileen Gray; subsequently the many centuries of French achievements in the arts would supplant purely Modernist fascinations.

This is a slender remembrance of my oldest and dearest friends — whom a host of others cherish too, for they had a unique gift for friendship that encompassed generosity, selflessness, and an intense concern for others. This talent for friendship was not only incidental to Jim’s contributions as an architect, but indispensable to every aspect of his professional practice and philosophy. His buildings have purposefully shaped and enhanced the lives spent in and around them, and his ideas about the potential of design to improve the environment have, through his roles as educator and practitioner, challenged others to embrace those admirable goals. Jim’s respect for tradition and the positive qualities of existing construction and norms, coupled with his innovations in the realms of form and technique, contributed to the enduring value of his creations. James Stewart Polshek’s passing has left a gaping void.

—Searing is professor emerita of art history at Smith College.



James Polshek as mentor, 1980s, photograph courtesy of Ennead Architects

At Work

By Duncan Hazard

Jim Polshek took a keen interest in the renovation of the Kahn Building for the Yale University Art Gallery. When he was a graduate student in the architecture program, the Kahn building was primarily a studio building for the art and architecture programs. He loved the building and had many fond memories of his days there, although he liked to tell irreverent stories about having to tape up brown paper on the west-facing windows to cut down on the glare from the afternoon sun. He liked to tell cheeky stories about crits with Louis Kahn, who criticized one of his site plans because he said, trees didn’t grow in straight lines, to which Polshek replied, “But, Mr. Kahn, they do if you plant them that way.” (That was definitely one of his favorites.) He lamented the fact that many ad hoc renovations had adulterated the clarity of the building’s original concept over the years.

When it came to the renovation, which I worked on as a principal at Polshek Partnership, his advice was straightforward and clear. Regarding the replacement of the famous (and famously problematic) glass-and-steel exterior walls, Polshek’s directions were, in effect, that he didn’t know how we were going to solve all the technical problems of the original design and adapt the wall to accommodate a contemporary museum climate-control system. But he knew one thing: when we were done it had better look exactly like the original!

With regard to the interior renovation, Polshek advised not to make it look new. He wanted to make it look like the great building it was, which had served nobly, and give it the loving, discerning renovation it deserved. Repair and refinish where possible, but don’t replace. If a concrete column has been painted blue and the corner bashed out, then obviously you have to strip the paint and fix the corner. But in general, just clean the concrete and the ground block walls and allow them to show their beautiful age.

On the fourth floor, where there had been a pay phone on the back side of the central stair’s concrete enclosure, he wanted to leave all the telephone numbers and messages scrawled on the concrete walls by generations of architecture students as part of the building’s history.

Polshek rejected several proposed replacements of the railing panels of the famous central stair — a beautiful but fragile looped-wire mesh that had deformed and pillowed over the years — and was certain something right would turn up. And it did. After many months of searching, a stray catalog from a food-production equipment supplier crossed our desks, and there it was, the identical product, originally designed for the conveyor belts used to produce frozen foods! We were able to order and install an exact replica of the original, only in a heavier and more durable gauge. Polshek’s only comment was, “I told you it would turn up. You just have to keep searching!”

—Hazard was a partner at Polshek Partnership [Ennead] from 1998 to 2018. He graduated from Yale College in 1971.

Mentor

By Susan T. Rodriguez

Jim Polshek was a one and only, a great architect, educator, and humanist. He was a master of bringing people

together to effect change — in the academy, in the studio, and beyond. He led with a smile, a sense of humor, and a keen intellect, yet was radical and ahead of his time in so many ways. Fueled by a passion for doing what is right, he was an advocate for protecting our civil liberties, our environment, and providing

for those in need. He taught us all so much, especially that architecture and being an architect is both an art and a responsibility.

Jim left an indelible mark as a leader with a unique perspective that sought to communicate values and meaning through architecture. His approach to design was a true synthesis, not letting the making of his personal mark interfere with what really mattered — instilling lasting meaning and memory in the spaces, experiences, and forms that were being made. To that end he assembled expertise to great effect with results that had a tremendous impact on the life of our cities, especially New York City. Because of that, his influence on the public realm was vast, not only through specific works, but also in projecting an attitude about design as a force for making the public realm more open and accessible, something that reflected his own character. Jim spoke up and raised the bar for all of us. He brought architectural discourse to a higher level beyond the formal nuances of design, conveying a heightened awareness of the power of architecture to strengthen the built environment,

improve the quality of life for all, and enhance the cultural and educational infrastructure that we hold so dear.

Jim dedicated his life to architecture. He brought to his work a profound curiosity and a desire to connect and be informed. He made it personal and brought so many of us into his world by giving us opportunities that we could never have imagined. He was generous that way, but he also made sure that we fulfilled what he saw as a moral obligation to serve and put our skills toward effecting lasting impact. We will miss the sparkle in his eye and his uncanny ability to communicate what is possible. His legacy will carry on in all of those he has inspired.

—Rodriguez was a partner at Polshek Partnership (now Ennead) from 1997–2017. She began her tenure at James Stewart Polshek and Partners in 1985 and was a student of James Polshek at Columbia University. She started her own firm, Susan T. Rodriguez | Architecture. Design in 2017.



James Stewart Polshek at Carnegie Hall, 1980s, New York, photograph courtesy of Ennead Architects

1970s

Laurence Rosen (’70), with his firm Upper South Studio, recently completed custom designs and manufacturing of all interior materials at the newly opened Virgin Vegas. Other recent projects include Ritz Carlton Residences Waikiki, Four Seasons Mexico City, Lotte New York Palace, Nobu Vegas, Fouquet New York, Commodore Perry Estate Austin.



The Gate of the Exonerated for the Central Park Conservancy, New York, 2022

John Reddick (’75), architectural historian and founding member of Harlem Pride, was engaged in advancing the project the Gate of the Exonerated for the Central Park Conservancy, a project that won unanimous approval from the city’s Public Design Commission in 2022. The project was published in the *New York Times* on December 12, 2022, and the public unveiling took place a week later.



Waggonner & Ball, Louisiana Children’s Museum, Louisiana, 2019

David Waggoner (’75) is founding principal of Waggonner & Ball. The firm joined infrastructure advisory firm, Moffatt & Nichol in 2022. They will remain a distinct design innovation studio within Moffatt & Nichol and will continue to pursue projects in all aspects of the built environment.

1980s

John Tittmann (BA ’81, MArch ’86) and **J. B. Clancy** (MArch ’96), of Albert, Righter & Tittmann Architects, based in Boston, won a 2022 Bulfinch Award for BRIO Condominiums, sponsored by the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art.

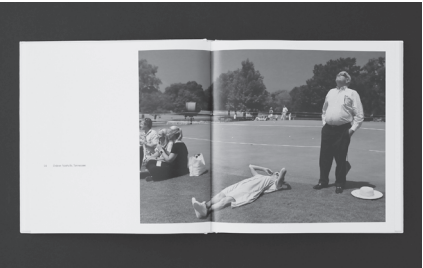


MBB Architects, Park Avenue Synagogue, New York, 2022

Mary Burnham (’83), principal at MBB Architects, and her practice received a National Society of American Registered Architects Award for the renovation of the Park Avenue Synagogue. The firm’s renovation of Trinity Church Wall Street received a Lucy G. Moses Preservation Award from the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and construction work began on the new visitors center for the Bayard Cutting Arboretum in late 2022.

Evan Markiewicz (’83) is cofounder and executive director of the nonprofit ViviendasLeón, which has built 33 food-security farms in Nicaragua and is working on an additional 10 family farms. The organization has also launched a new food and nutrition program in rural communities around Lake Atitlán, in Guatemala.

Blair Kamin (MED ’84), author, editor, and Pulitzer Prize winner, published *Who Is the City For? Architecture, Equity, and the Public Realm in Chicago* (University of Chicago Press, 2023). See page 17 for a review.



Price Harrison, *Idiomatic*, 2022

Price Harrison (’87), founder of Price Harrison Architect and Associates PLLC, published a book of his recent photographs, titled *Idiomatic*, in 2022.

Cary Bernstein (’88) received a Presidential Citation from AIA California for her work on the state law SB1214. On August 29, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom signed the bill, initiated by Bernstein and supported by AIA CA, which protects architectural copyright by prohibiting state and local governments from providing copies of architectural design drawings to the public, except in person. The bill reconciles long-standing federal copyright laws with California state government transparency laws.

1990s

Daniel Naegele (’90), associate professor emeritus at Iowa State University, published *I Almost Forget: Unpublished Colin Rowe* (MIT Press, 2022). He owns and is restoring the John Frank House, in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, designed by Bruce Goff in 1957.



Koffi & Diabaté Architectes, Orange Village, Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire, photograph by François Xavier-Gbré, 2022

Issa Diabaté (’95), managing director of the Koffi & Diabaté Architectes office, founded in 2001 with Guillaume Koffi, and cofounder of Koffi & Diabaté Group, won the Engineering Prize at the World Architecture Festival 2022 for the firm’s building Orange Village, the new headquarters of Orange Côte d’Ivoire, completed in January 2022.

David Gissen (’96), professor of architecture and urban history at Parsons School of Design at the New School, published *The Architecture of Disability: Buildings, Cities, and Landscapes beyond Access* (University of Minnesota Press, 2023). See page 17 for a review.

2000s

Daniel A. Barber (MED ’05), recently appointed professor of architecture at the

University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and a Guggenheim Fellow, was featured in the *Places Journal* series “Field Notes on Design Activism.”



Naomi Darling Architecture, Maier Camerlenghi Addition, Massachusetts, photograph by Sean Kernan, 2021

Naomi Darling (’06), principal of Naomi Darling Architecture, and her practice have been awarded a Western MA AIA Honor Award for the Maier Camerlenghi Addition, in Amherst, Massachusetts.



Worrell Yeung Architecture, Canal Projects, New York, photograph by Naho Kubota, 2022

Maxwell Worrell (’06) and **Jejon Yeung** (’07), of Worrell Yeung Architecture, completed the renovation and redesign of two floors in a landmarked cast-iron building on the edge of the SoHo and TriBeCa neighborhoods for Canal Projects, a new nonprofit contemporary arts space. The practice was named an *AN Interior’s* 2022 Top 50 Architects for the third consecutive year. The North Salem Farm was featured in *Dwell* magazine (September/October 2022) and published online in *Wallpaper** (January 2023), and the firm’s Lake House appeared online in *Wallpaper** (September 2022). House in the Dunes is featured in *Hamptons Modern: Contemporary Living on the East End*, by David Sokol (Monacelli Press, 2022).

Marc Guberman (’08), senior partner at Foster + Partners, became the studio lead for the firm’s new office in Los Angeles.

Yichen Lu (’08), principal at Studio Link-Arc, and his practice received the Merit Award, as part of the 2022 AIANY Design Awards for the China Resources Archive Library, in Shenzhen.



Studio Link-Arc, China Resources Archive Library, China, photograph by Shengliang Su, 2018

2010s

Nicholas Gilliland (’10), cofounder of Tolila + Gilliland Atelier d’Architecture, had the project Le Nouveau Monde, in Ivry-sur-Seine, published in *Les Echos* (February 2, 2022). He also contributed an essay in the book *Hybrid Factory/Hybrid City*, edited by Nina Rappaport (Actar, 2022).

Chat Travieso (’10), cofounder of multidisciplinary collaborative practice Yezu & Chat with Yezu Choi, is the 2022–23 Faculty Fellow for the Mellon Initiative for Inclusive Faculty Excellence at the New School. In the latest issue of *AD: Architectural Design*, edited by Jill Stoner and Ozayr Saloojee, he contributed the essay “101 Ways to Refuse a Wall,” which examines various ways to refuse the exclusionary function of a wall by either disregarding it, appropriating it, circumventing it, or abolishing it, and the political implications of each of these categories. The piece builds on his drawing series “101 Ways to Subvert a Wall.”

Elisa Iturbe (BA ’08, MEM ’15, MArch ’15), assistant professor at the Cooper Union School of Architecture, published the essay “Other Transitions: A Brief Pre-history of Carbon Form” in the *AA Files* 78 (January 2022) and presented it at the Architectural Association on the occasion of the issue launch.

James Sobczak (’12) is the new editor of the *Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals* at Columbia University’s Avery Architecture and Fine Arts Library.

Ashley Bigham (’13) and **Erik Herrmann** (’12), founders of Outpost Office, participated in the Uzbekistan Pavilion at the Venice Biennale with the visual essay “Spake Scapes” in the catalog, *Dixit Algorizmi: The Garden of Knowledge*. Herrmann published the piece “Architecture and Its End(s) Users” in the inaugural issue of the architectural journal *Disc* (2022).

Dima Srouji (’16), founder of Hollow Forms, completed the Jameel Fellowship 2021–22 at the Victoria and Albert Museum, in London.

Aesthetics from the End of History

AJ Artemel (’14), communications director at the school, organized the show *Aesthetics from the End of History: Liberalization, Privatization, and Other Ghosts of the 90s*, displayed at Citygroup, in New York. The exhibition showcases books and ephemera from the early 1990s collected from used bookstores and library sales around the D.C. area. Artifacts range from post-Soviet manuals for developing private housing to an urban-planning manifesto by

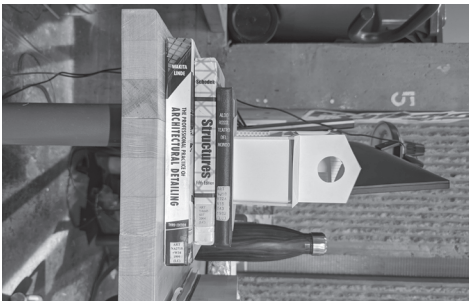
then Prince Charles. Altogether the material takes us back to the end of history and the beginnings of the 33-year era of liberalization and privatization. The gathering of this material into one space is an attempt to conjure the spirit of that time and to understand the aesthetic and tonal methods by which these now faltering ideologies and policies were marketed to audiences around the globe. Artemel embarked on another exploration of American aesthetics with the article “Off White,” published in the *New York Review of Architecture* (January 2023), about the hidden desires embedded in the architecture of the Washington, D.C. Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

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“In West African tradition, people gather together under a big tree and solve problems as a real democracy. People sit around in the shadow of the tree as equals. There is no boundary. People come and sit where it’s really open to make a decision about the community; it is really transparent. And I wanted to learn from that.”

— Francis Kéré



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Books are back on desks, photographs by Annika Babra and Julie Chan