

BLUEPRINT 332

ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | ART

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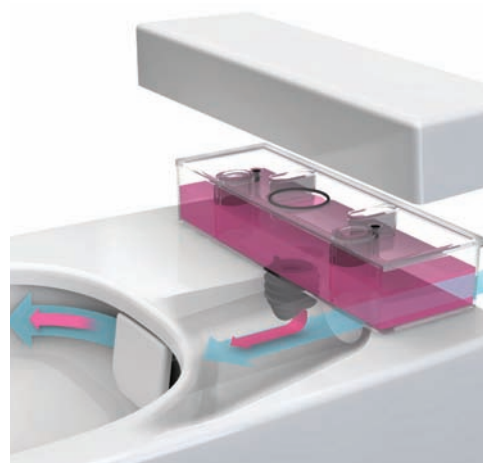
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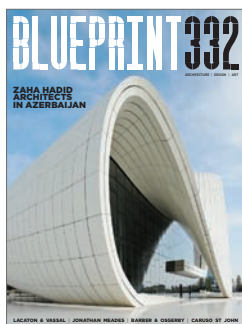
Welcome to 2014 and issue 332 of Blueprint – and we hope you're looking forward to this year as much as we are. We've plenty of new developments on the horizon, perhaps the most exciting of which is the launch of our first-ever full awards, which will be taking place this autumn.

The peer-judged awards will be in two parts, with both being judged by our panel of top architecture and design practitioners. There will be six architecture and design project categories, with a call for entries going out in March. Then there will be three further awards for architecture, design and critical thinking. For these we will be asking for nominations from our readers and the wider industry, before giving our judges the final say on who walks away with the Blueprint honours. More details on this in March.

Also looking forward in this issue is the first of a new series of Blueprint for the Future material masterclasses with designer and material expert Chris Lefteri. This month we look at the new (actually it was discovered in the early Sixties) wonder material, graphene, and some of its potential within architecture and design. It's super-conductive, super-light, super-dense and literally one atom thin, so super doesn't do that justice. The race is on to develop its applications, and one of the places this research will be happening is the National Graphene Institute in Manchester, designed by Jestico + Whiles (see On the Drawing Board, page 27). We also look at the future of personal mobility in Electric Dreams (see page 140). One very likely prediction is that the car has had its day and won't exist in 100 years' time. Think what kind of impact that will have on our cities and megacities. While later this year a hydrogen-powered car hits the market, we road test two of the just released all-electric and hybrid vehicles by BMW and VW, respectively.

And personal mobility is very much on the agenda in this issue too as we launch a student design competition, Velocity. Organised by the British timber trade organisation TRADA, with Blueprint as media partner, and linking into the Government's All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group, the brief calls for designs for a cycle hub building for Sheffield as part of its sustainable transport future (see page 42). It's open to undergraduates and there's £5,000 prize money to be won. So it's all go here, rushing headlong into a very exciting-looking future – do come along with us ■

Johnny Tucker, editor



Front cover — The Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku, Azerbaijan, by Zaha Hadid Architects. Photography by Hufton + Crow. Blueprint masthead set in Reduct by Dylan Kendle, Tomato.

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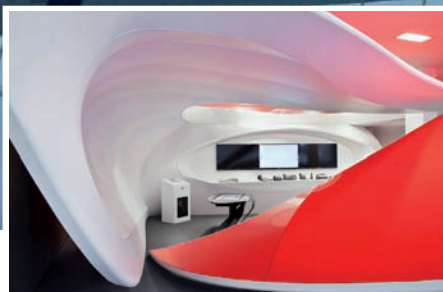


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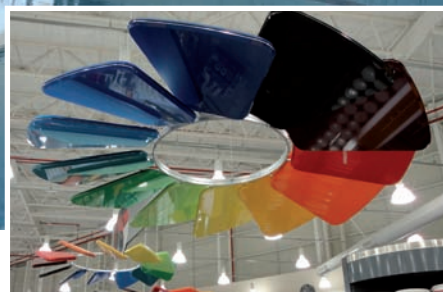
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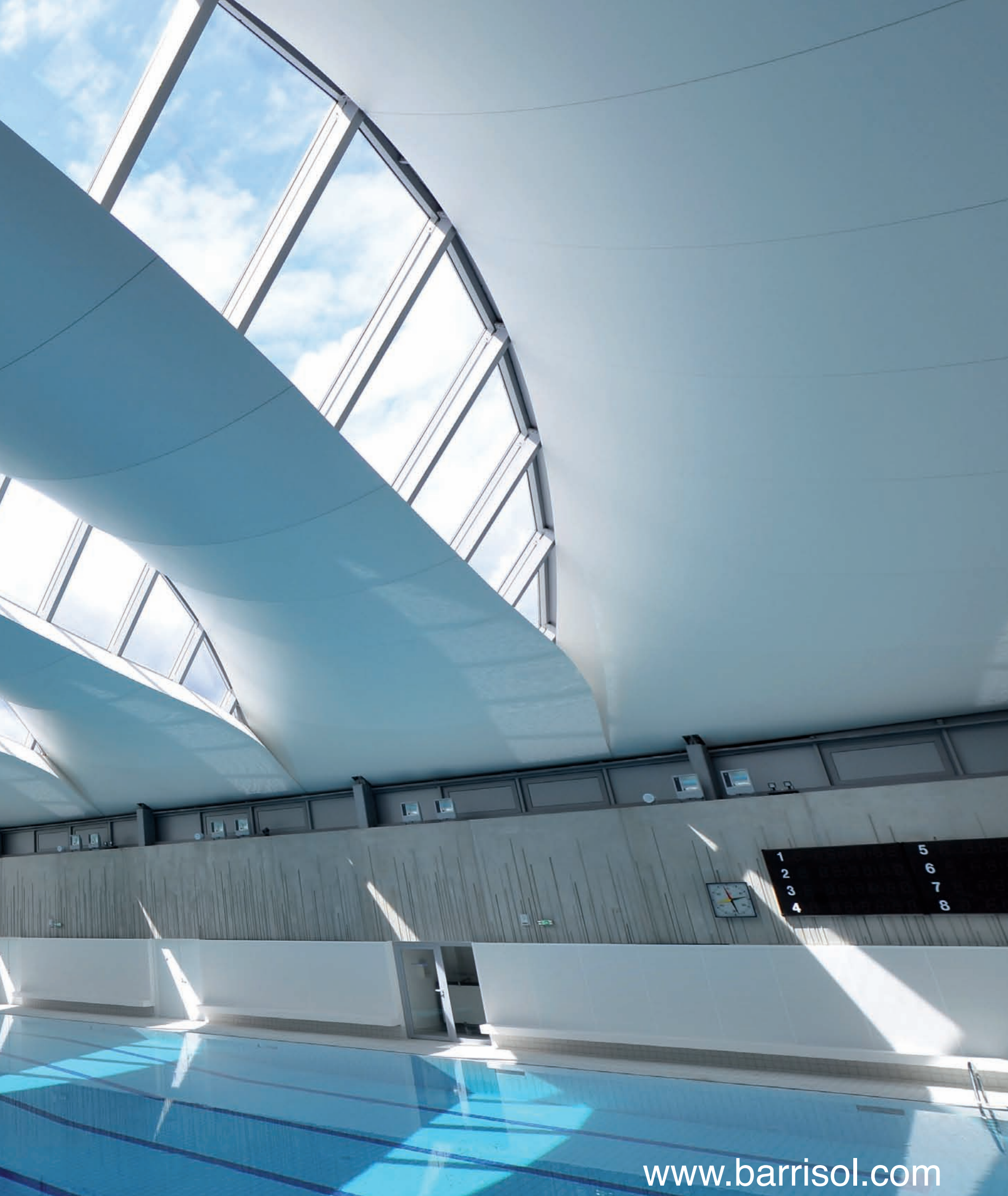
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Architecture authors Andreas Ruby and Nathalie Janson are advocates for a new way of urban dwellers building their own homes in the current climate

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Instead of letting the machines take over, new technologies can enable ‘smart’ citizens to better organise, improve, share and enjoy the urban environment, argues Dan Hill

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Blueprint for the Future: Graphene

Following on from our On the Drawing Board look at the Graphene Institute in Manchester, material maestro Chris Lefteri focuses on graphene itself

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Blueprint for the Future: Student design competition

A new competition in association with Blueprint to design a cycling hub, with £5000 of prize money up for grabs

Concepts

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Building New Solutions



Despite ever-increasing house prices, more than 86 per cent of Britons want to own their own home. As debates still range around the UK Government 'incentives' such as Help to Buy, can our continental cousins provide alternative models? Complementing our Self-Build feature (see page 88), Berlin's **Baugruppe** initiative brings benefits across scales of the individual, the community and the city. **Nathalie Janson** is a researcher, writer and editor at Ruby Press, an architecture and urbanism publisher founded and directed by co-author **Andreas Ruby**. They discuss the work of Baugruppe

ANDREAS RUBY, NATHALIE JANSON

The combined effects of rising house prices and a sluggish economy are putting home ownership beyond the reach of a younger generation. Those determined not to become slaves to rent are forced to look to the suburbs for homes they can afford. But rather than sacrificing the opportunities and amenities available in the city, why not lower barriers to home ownership by cutting out the middleman — the developer?

This is the main idea behind the **Baugruppe** (building group), a German building process in which future homeowners 'self-develop' their own building. The process usually works in one of two ways: either a community operating as a legal partnership buys a plot of land and hires an architect, or an architect initiates and carries out the entire development of the project for a group formed around the building and often a shared lifestyle. Cutting out the developer, the profit margin, and any marketing costs reduces the price of an apartment in Berlin by 25 per cent to 30 per cent. The building group phenomenon has made home ownership attainable for many middle-class households in Germany, where bank mortgages require a down payment of 20 per cent to 30 per cent. Renting is still the norm in Germany, but home ownership will become an increasingly important safety net as state pensions decrease.

While developer-driven apartments are usually designed for a notionally 'average' user, the members of a building group are able to define their needs and incorporate these in the design process. The result is a home tailored to specific

needs. Our office, for example, which is located in a building group-developed building, is intended as the future living space of a live-in caretaker. This amenity will allow the current residents to age in place. We also share several facilities with our neighbours — an outdoor garden, a meeting space and communal kitchen, a panoramic rooftop and an indoor bike shed — that provide some of the family-friendly qualities of the suburbs.

What's more, people get to know their neighbours in the process of self-developing their own homes. Factoring in individual schedules and reaching consensus as a group is a time-consuming community-building exercise. The pay-off is a sense of trust and respect which allows enjoyment of dense city living without the usual disadvantages. Neighbours are less likely to sit on their properties as investments or blast music into the early hours and more likely to keep a copy of your key, take turns keeping a watchful eye on the children, and take in your UPS packages.

The sense of community and belonging nurtured by self-developing is not only good for residents, it's good for the city. The only alternative for a family with a budget of €220,000 (£184,716) would be to leave the city for the suburbs. Thanks to building-group projects they can choose to stay. In that sense, Baugruppe represents a bottom-up strategy for achieving urban densification and avoiding sprawl. For the city, it means not only retaining its tax base, but also encouraging residents to invest in and help to improve their neighbourhoods, which is notable as Berlin

becomes home to an increasingly international and itinerant community. Many buildings groups are also driving the incorporation of sustainability into housing, with homeowners making long-term decisions to lower operating costs and limit their impact on the environment.

It's hard to imagine how a model such as the building group would apply to cities like London, Paris or Barcelona, with low availability of buildable land in the city; the model is also becoming less realisable in Berlin because of growing pressure on land. The building-group movement emerged out of a particular context after the fall of the Berlin Wall; plots in the city exceeded demand and density in central neighbourhoods was much lower than before the Second World War. Today, groups wishing to self-develop are increasingly competing with commercial developers in a frenzy to buy up available land. In this situation, the building group suffers from a structural disadvantage: it takes time to form, collect down payments, and reach a consensus. By the time the group is organised, investors who can provide upfront payments have already snapped up the land.

There are many reasons why cities should encourage initiatives like the building group — the image of the city, the well-being of its residents, and sustainability, to name just a few — and we can look to other German cities for inspiration. Hamburg has supported the movement by setting aside 20 per cent of its land to building-group projects. As we stumble ahead in this slow economy, cities need to help their communities help themselves.

COMMUNITY-DEVELOPED BUILDINGS PRODUCE VALUE FOR THE CITY; IN RETURN, THEY NEED HELP FROM THE CITY AND ITS ELECTED OFFICIALS





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Though we're still waiting for hoverboards, we live in an era long predicted by science fiction, where technology can intelligently operate our cities, responding to our needs. But instead of focusing on smart cities we should be concentrating on smart citizens, says Dan Hill as he outlines the past 10 years of smart-city thinking. Dan Hill is CEO of Fabrica, a design and communications research centre in Treviso, Italy

DAN HILL

The smart-cities movement has been around for nearly a decade, often feeling like a solution searching for a problem — **Cedric Price's** aphorism 'Technology is the answer, but what was the question?' is as relevant now as it was 50 years ago.

I would identify three ages of smart cities at least, perhaps indicating a restless search for a market, for a client. Yet as a result of this rapid evolution, could the third age mean a maturing of the conversation, finally the possibility of a new urban age informed and enabled by contemporary technologies rather than those of yesterday?

The first age we might see as defined by grand projects such as **Masdar** and **New Songdo City**, led largely by two sectors that seem out of step with thinking in cities, or in technology, never mind their intersection: property development and corporate IT.

As a result perhaps, these projects seem fundamentally flawed, oriented as they are almost entirely around efficiency. Philosophically, the same systems that run, say, a Formula 1 racing car — real-time sensors and actuators engaged in harmony — are simply applied to the city, as if it too was a coherent infrastructure that simply needs a new operating system, a bounded ecosystem that can be measured and managed in the same way.

The problem is that we do not build cities in order to build infrastructure. We do not make cities to make buildings. They are simply enablers, secondary matters. Despite their sheer obviousness, they are not that important. Nor are cities coherent systems that can be controlled. Perhaps people come together in cities to create commerce, to

create culture, for community and conviviality, even to create the idea of the city itself. These might be core drivers to orientate city-making around.

The second age of smart cities, emerging in response to the overblown promises of the first, was rather more humble: code-based interactive enhancements of building projects or of existing services such as transit, energy and so on. They are not holistic, but focused: installations, media facades, LED-based displays, open data-sets, mobile apps, devices... This age has been more successful, simply as clients and needs could be located and allied with contemporary technology.

Yet so far they fail to produce a new urban condition. They add new modes and layers to the city, yet the transformative promise of the smart city suggested in that first age is little more than hinted at. Hence the need for a third age of smart cities. Could we sketch out a more mature approach to smart cities, informed by contemporary technology thinking (rather than corporate IT) and contemporary urban thinking (rather than property development, and indeed most architecture) yet addressing systemic change at an urban scale?

Such a third age might observe that the 'smartest' use of technology is in the hands of citizens themselves, in the mobile social media that has somehow enabled revolutions and protests as well as all those taxi-hailing apps. The same dynamics, deployed elsewhere, are behind the explosion in urban crowdsourcing, crowdfunding and sharing economic platforms. While the latter are yet to enable large-scale urban change, such

movements have clearly accelerated, where the smart-city movement has generally meandered.

This is the emergence of what might be called a 'smart citizens' approach, predicated on the notion that many citizens now expect to be involved in the systems that affect their lives, and that includes urban policy, planning and design. Though often nascent, patchy and small-scale, such activity nevertheless has the promise of such a participative culture. And urban strategies that balance and integrate these hard infrastructures with the soft infrastructure of the civic might yet be able to weave together the disjointed innovations that characterise our second age, tempered, honed and directed through this engagement. Perhaps the design of a truly smart-city strategy could start here, building on a participative approach to city-making?

Technology culture frequently trots out the importance of 'failing fast', rarely realising that you don't really want to fail in truly meaningful areas, such as healthcare, education, housing, and yes, city-making. Yet we need to see the first and second ages of smart cities as fast failures, to call out their hubris and careless mismanagement of promising advances, sure, but also so that we learn from them.

Only by asking these broader questions might we find a way to weave together smart citizens, redesigned urban governance, integrated city systems, smart infrastructure, apps and services, and urban informatics. The city is a public good, greater than the sum of its parts. And so with the smart city — it must not simply be the sum of upgraded yet disjointed components but something greater too.

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Now finding themselves in a new world of post-digital publishing, book-lovers have more to tackle these days than they can possibly ever read, says Erik Spiekermann. Erik Spiekermann set up MetaDesign and FontShop, and is a teacher, author, designer and partner at Edenspiekermann

ERIK SPIEKERMANN

Books were the topic of an Achtung column about a year ago. I'm coming back to them not only because of my personal interest (yes, I do have more books than I could ever read), but also because what actually constitutes a book is very much under discussion.

Apparently, we have reached a world of 'post-digital-publishing', in which all books are produced digitally to a large degree, whether they then get printed on to paper or made into documents for screens. The competition is not between print and electronic books any more, but between all types (sic) of media that present text and images. And these images don't necessarily always have to be stills.

A recent monograph of **Gutenberg** by **Stephan Füssel**, one of the world's foremost authorities on the subject, has been published as what is termed an e-book-plus. Gutenberg speaks to us (if not live) in audio and video sequences, which enrich the book throughout. The chapter about making movable type — Gutenberg's most significant invention — opens up and shows movable letters in moving images.

Füssel still calls this a book, and the enhanced e-book is accompanied by a large foliant, a

hardcover and a simple paperback. Paperbacks were frowned on in the Sixties when I went to university, just as e-books are today. They certainly threaten the existence of books for quick consumption, which is what paperbacks were invented for.

Authors will no longer be people who deliver words only. Electronic media don't need to restrict content to a given space, length or size. A traditional book is linear, an enclosed experience. Printing errors (which normally are typesetting mistakes) have to wait for another edition that has to be distributed anew, making previous versions redundant or a collector's item. The page ends where the paper ends.

Outside of the book's margins is where its environment began. Video sequences inside an e-book bring this environment into the book itself, opening up windows — actually doors — through which the reader enters another medium. In traditional books, footnotes were supposed to direct the reader to other books, but that required physical effort, if only to get them.

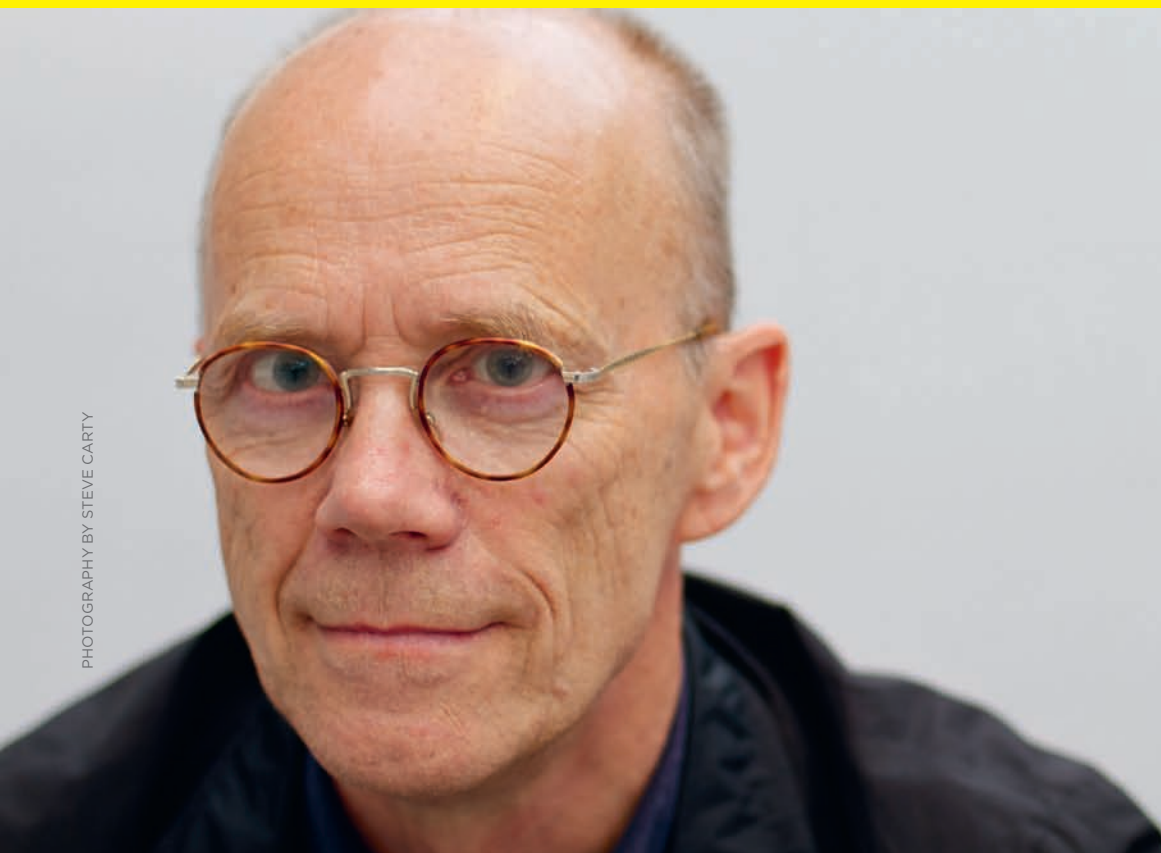
There are publishers who have already moved beyond e-books. They don't believe in a fixed format, albeit an electronic one which again needs

a dedicated device. They are interested in finding out how different readers perceive a text and what they may want to share with other readers or authors. Websites such as **medium.com** curate contributions from authors, inviting notes and comments that go beyond the normal heckling from ever-present trolls. The financial model of these sites would be another topic for discussion. So far, authors don't get paid.

The world of post-digital publishing doesn't have room for exclusive formats anymore. This is already leading to books reassuring their heritage by starting to experiment with materials and content alike. The increased interest in type and typography has given rise to not only better design of the actual pages rather than just the covers, but also to many titles about the aesthetics of books, their history and their future.

Publishers who think they have a strong brand because all their books carry the same logo should watch out. Branding will mean developing a unique attitude about content and its appropriate presentation, rather than merely pushing out letters on paper. Books are here to stay, but what they'll look like is anyone's guess.

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KELLY HOPPEN

ON THE LIST

The fastest, most economical, most beautiful and ugliest cars in the world



Later in this issue we look at mobility and the future of cars (see page 140), as well as car parks (see page 156), but for now we concentrate on the key reasons why people buy a car: looks and performance (in terms of speed or on the pocket). Two objective lists tackle the fastest and the most economical, while two highly subjective lists bring together the most beautiful and the ugliest cars ever produced (in our opinion) »

	10 Most BEAUTIFUL cars of all time (by year, ascending)			10 UGLIEST cars of all time (by year ascending)			Most ECONOMICAL petrol or part petrol-driven cars (by mpg)			FASTEST road cars in the world (by mph)		
1	Mercedes Benz 500k Roadster	1935		VEB Sachsenring Trabant	1957		VW XL1 (See page 152)	diesel/electric	313	Bugatti Veyron Super Sport	268	
2	Bugatti 57S Atlantic	1937		Triumph Herald	1959		Vauxhall/Chevrolet Ampera/Volt	petrol/electric	235	Hennessey Venom GT	260	
3	Mercedes Benz 300SL (Gullwing)	1954		Citr��n Ami	1961		Volvo V60 plug-in hybrid	diesel/electric	155	Koenigsegg Agera R	260	
4	Chevrolet Impala	1958		British Leyland Austin Allegro	1973		Toyota Prius Plug-in	petrol/electric	134	Shelby Super Cars Ultimate Aero	257	
5	Aston Martin DB4 GT Zagato	1960		Reliant Robin	1973		Renault Clio 1.5 dCi 90 ECO	petrol	88.3	9ff GT9-R	257	
6	Jaguar E-Type Mk1	1961		British Leyland Austin Metro	1980		Hyundai i20 1.1 CRDi Blue	petrol	88.3	Saleen S7 Twin Turbo	248	
7	Chevrolet Corvette Sting Ray	1963		Fiat Panda	1980		Kia Rio 1.1 Ecodynamics	petrol	88.3	Koenigsegg CCX	245	
8	Lamborghini Miura SV	1966		Aston Martin Lagonda (shooting brake)	1982		Smart Fortwo cdi	petrol	85.6	McLaren F1	240	
9	Citr��n Dspecial	1968		Renault Twingo	1993		Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 CDTi 95 EcoFlex S/S	petrol	85.6	Zenvo ST1	233	
10	Ferrari 246 GT Dino	1969		Fiat Multipla	1998		Peugeot 208 1.4 e-HDi 70 EGC	petrol	83.1	Jaguar XJ220	217	



1 - Vauxhall Ampera
2 - Citr  n DS
3 - Ferrari Dino
4 -Trabant
5 -Bugatti Veyron



DESIGN PORTRAIT.

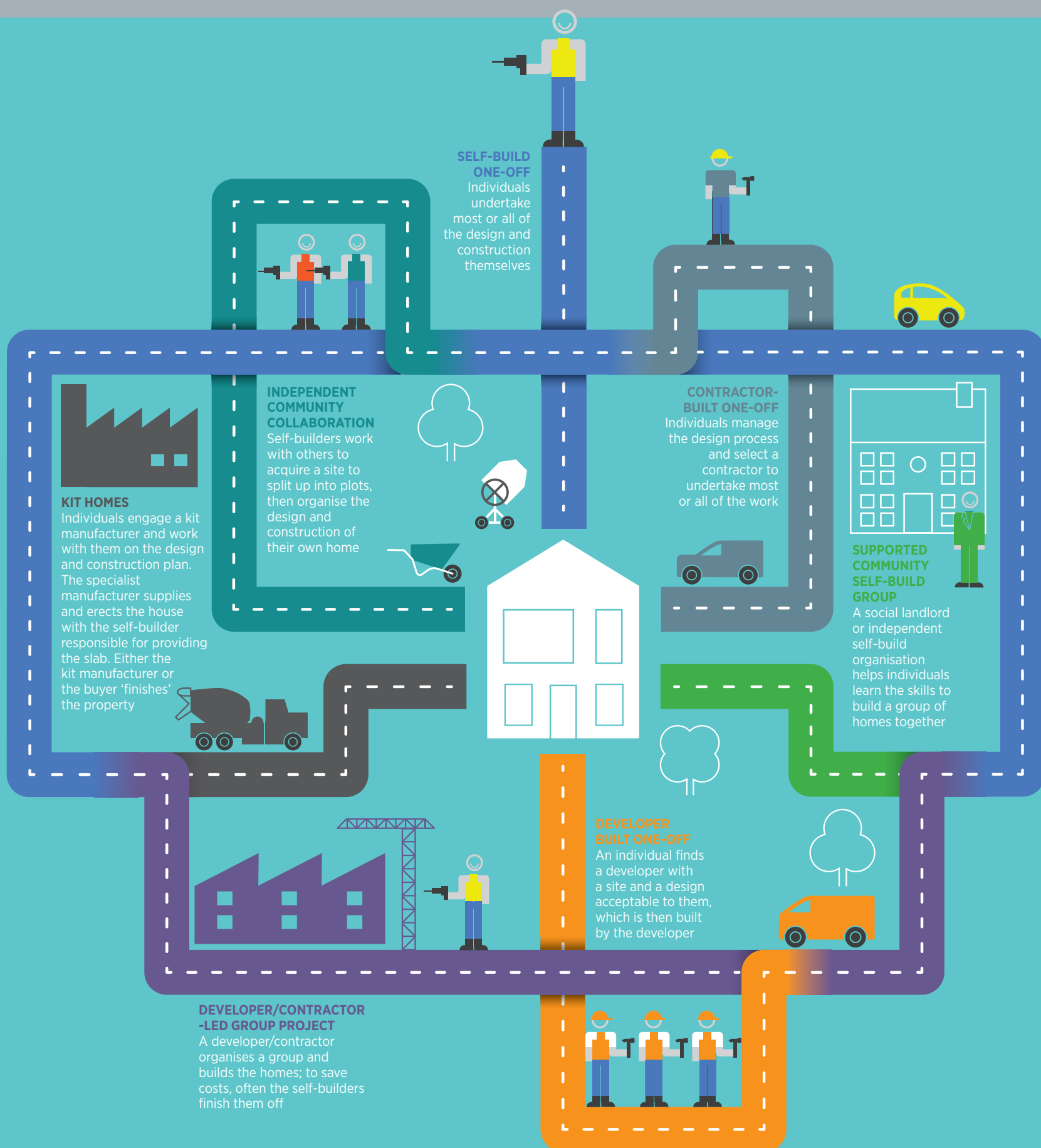
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In 2011, the UK government's Housing Strategy indicated a change in preferred terminology: from self-build to custom-build. The change in vocabulary allows the idea to seem more approachable — rather than the daunting prospect of construction work, the idea of 'customising' allows 'custom-ers' varying degrees of choice, control and involvement. The online information platform selfbuildportal.org.uk, produced by the National Self Build Association, identifies seven categories of self- and custom-build. To complement our feature, If you build it (see page 88), here's a visualisation of these categories



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In 2010 Konstantin Novoselov and Andre Geim, two Russian-born scientists working in Manchester, won the Nobel Prize in Physics for their work on graphene, a carbon lattice with the promise of fantastic industrial and commercial applications (see page 28). The University of Manchester's National Graphene Institute, designed by Jestico + Whiles, will open in 2015 with state-of-the-art research facilities and office space for commercial partners. J+W director Tony Ling tells *Herbert Wright* about it

What relevant experience did you bring to the National Graphene Institute?

We designed Southampton University's Mountbatten Building (winner of a 2009 RIBA Award), which has a very large clean room laboratory. A similar job at the University of Sydney is under construction. The National Graphene Institute would be by far the biggest job.

How is the five-storey, 7600 sq m National Graphene Institute organised?

It is divided into two basic independent structures, the working part — labs, offices — and central utility building with mechanical and electrical services, generators and so on. There's a big separation joint. A smaller (450 sq m) clean room on the first floor is designed for industry. The basement level one (1100 sq m), with the most vibration-sensitive parts, is designed for the university's own use — we have bedrock not very far down. It has a raised floor for air extraction, and a walk-on plenum (ground floor). It's 3m high, basically a ceiling void full of ducts and pipes. A viewing corridor goes all around the basement clean room, and we've devised a viewing window so that people outside could look in,

to ensure that the whole space is visible to the public. The offices, relaxation space, break-out areas are all naturally ventilated. On the third floor is a seminar room, terrace, roof garden and a skylight window which overlooks the double-height breakout space below.

What sort of input did Professor Novoselov bring?

He's been involved in every single detail — the design of the labs, the furniture, the lighting, everything. He's going to be running the centre. He wanted flexibility. In 10 years' time, it could all be doing quite different research.

He wanted to have as much area in the building that he could write on, but the ironic thing is that the

University of Manchester has banned blackboards, for health and safety reasons, because of the chalk. The solution quite often is whiteboards, but after a while you can never get it completely clean. Also, Novoselov wanted something that looked like a blackboard, because that's what he is used to. You have to be able to wipe off old ideas immediately — that's the way they work. We gave him a sample of this PVC sheet called Whiterock that he tried for about six months and he's quite happy. We decided to clad the corridors around a bunch of labs in this material, and we'll provide places for the pens to be stored. Any scientist walking there can pick up a pen, or have a discussion with their colleagues. It's not just a corridor, it's a working space.

That aesthetic extends to the exterior, doesn't it?

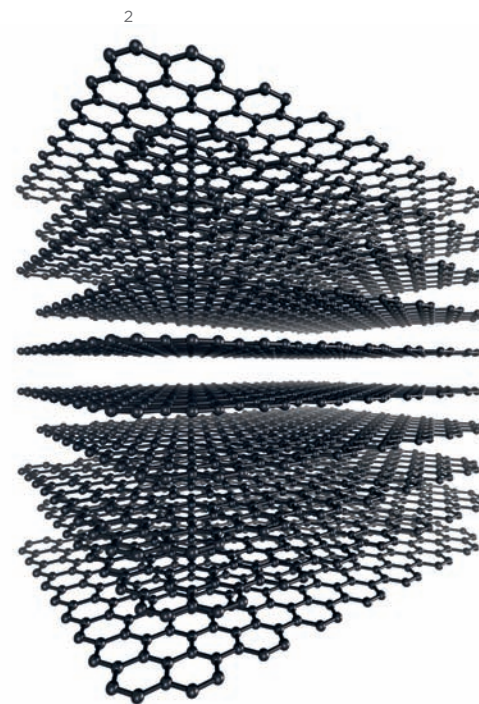
Yes, the exterior cladding is black, stainless steel, treated with acid and very reflective, like a mirror. We're still working on the perforation patterns for it. The original idea was to digitise blackboard formulas, but the illegibility of texts was an issue. Another idea was using images of graphene material on a nano scale. The latest is we've gone back to the formulas, but machine version, in different sizes.



1 – Tony Ling
2 – North view of the National Graphene Institute, due to open next year



In the first of a new series looking at the very latest materials and their likely impact on architecture, design and the wider world, Chris Lefteri turns his attention to graphene (see the National Graphene Institute, page 27). Chris Lefteri is a designer and has written seven books about new materials and their applications



When plastics were first realised as materials of mass-production in the Fifties, they completely changed the world. Not just through their benefits in all manner of products, buildings, clothes and packaging but these brightly-coloured pellets extracted from oil changed the way the world actually looked. At the time, artists, writers and in particular film makers viewed our future world through the lens of plastics, movies like **Forbidden Planet, 2001** and even kids cartoons such as **The Jetsons** painted an optimistic view of the world decorated with this new wonder material.

As we enter 2014, we are presented with a different palette for the future through advanced materials. A world where data-driven materials, shape-changing materials, lightweight and composite materials promise to take us into a new stage of evolution. Carbon fibre, silicon, titanium, aerogel — and increasingly the reuse of natural materials — promise to deliver a future with new potential for our environment, our planet and beyond, with one of the most recent and potentially significant being graphene.

The first thing to say about graphene is that I don't get it. It's super-strong, super-light, super-conductive, transparent, but incredibly dense. But what is really hard to understand is how something so unimaginably thin — one atom thick and therefore delicate — can be used for applications that require extreme strength (expert help on this later).

First off, to produce graphene is very simple in principle. To get a sense of its structure, you only

have to draw a line with a graphite pencil. Although this line might not be graphene, it will contain many, many layers of graphene. Being the world's thinnest material graphene would, in relative terms, take 300,000 layers of its 2D hexagonal structure of graphite to create the thickness of the paper you would be drawing on. If you want to understand one of its key properties, that of it being conductive, then connect two pencil lines with electrodes, a battery and small LED.

Although discovered in 1962, graphene received its status as a wonder material following groundbreaking experiments by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov, at the University of Manchester. The pair received the Nobel Prize for physics for their research of the 2D material in 2010 by using Sellotape to slowly peel off layers of graphite to leave a single layer of graphene. Now established as the strongest material ever measured — some 200 times stronger than structural steel — with the potential to be used in anything from composite materials and electronics, to digitised clothing and food packaging. One of its most recent developments was in March 2013, when scientists at Zhejiang University led by Professor Gao Chao, developed a hybrid of two 'wonder' materials by combining graphene with an aerogel structure to develop the lightest solid in the world weighing just 0.0019 kg per cubic decimetre. As a comparison, magnesium, which is the lightest commercially used

metal, weighs in at 1.73 kg per cubic decimetre.

The key to understanding graphene in real applications was explained to me by Line Kyhl, a PhD student at the iNano centre at Aarhus University, Denmark: 'To get from this ultra-thin material to something you can use in constructions can take different approaches. An example is to use it as a coating for ordinary steel to make it more resistant against corrosion, or to mix smaller flakes of graphene into plastics to completely change their properties, making very strong lightweight plastics, although this is a field not fully explored yet. Another issue is that it is currently very challenging to produce graphene at a large a scale to be used in these applications.'

As a result, the race is clearly on to find new applications for this astonishing material and, like many advanced materials, the first applications have already appeared in sports products, with Head making a tennis racquet that uses graphene to redistribute the weight. Consumer electronics companies are also exploring applications such as a transparent conductive base for ultra-thin electronic components for touch screens or smart watches.

One thing that is for sure, is that graphene has the potential to do what most other advanced materials can't — change the way the world looks. If plastics were responsible for changing the visual language of the world in the Fifties and Sixties with bright and bold colour in unusual shapes, then graphene could do the same in the 21st century by creating unimaginably thin, unimaginably tall, unimaginably strong, products and structures.



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MEET

Govaert & Vanhoutte architects



WHO Two directors: Damiaan Vanhoutte and Benny Govaert, plus 12 staff
WHAT Architecture and interior design
WHERE Bruges, Belgium
WHEN Founded 1990

Bruges-based practice **Govaert & Vanhoutte architects** is something of a paradox; its highly photogenic buildings have been widely published, yet the firm is nevertheless under the radar — possibly because its thick portfolio of projects is entirely Belgian. However, a clutch of recent awards has pushed it further into the international spotlight. Since it first won worldwide attention with 1998's Fort Napoleon — a series of bold, contemporary interventions which clarify and enhance the experience of visiting that 19th-century fort in Ostend — the practice has been busy with private commissions (minimalist dream homes) and inspired interpretations of the oblong for office schemes (in particular for **Deltalight**). Then its breathtakingly simple and elegant **Tyne Cot** cemetery pavilion won two Civic Trust Awards in 2011 as well as a Leaf Residential Building of the Year Award, which followed in 2012 for Benny Govaert's own Roces Residence.

But the gongs have really been stacking up in 2013: two Silvers at the IDA Awards in Los Angeles, and two top prizes at the German Design Council's Iconic Awards in a new category celebrating structures that deliver a high degree of integration between interior design and architecture. The winning projects in both cases were **Notarishuis**, a deliciously discreet guest pavilion nestled under the boughs of a 300-year-old beech tree adjacent to a historic restaurant, and the office building **Twelve** — a sculptural presence in glass and concrete, with a 7m-deep cantilevered third-floor terrace offering panoramic city views.

Founding directors Damiaan Vanhoutte and Benny Govaert both studied architecture at the University of Ghent, and set up practice almost

immediately after completing Belgium's then compulsory national service. Their respective passions — Govaert's for philosophy, psychology and urbanism and Vanhoutte's for art and sculpture — combined to inform their 'functionalism with a soul' aesthetic, underpinned by a shared love of the geometric purity of Mies van der Rohe and Russian painter Kasimir Malevich. Their approach, 23 years on, is 'similar but more mature', says Vanhoutte.

'Very strong lines. Very pure. Everything is in a good place. If you look at architecture now, there is a lot of storytelling. We don't like stories.' If there is a house rule, it is that architecture shouldn't dominate. 'Maybe it's not a rule,' says Vanhoutte. 'Norman Foster's Millau Viaduct is dominant, but it works. Some structures sit well within nature.' What they look to express, according to Vanhoutte, is more 'the essence of the place, the location, the culture'. They admire Peter Zumthor and David Chipperfield. Career highs? They say the best is yet to come. **vs**

1 – Benny Govaert and Damiaan Vanhoutte (L-R)
2 – Tyne Cot cemetery pavilion
3 – Twelve office building
4 – Notarishuis guest pavilion



032

THE ART OF REPETITION

An exhibition of iconic Soviet-era posters for iconic Soviet-era silent films go on display in London this January, produced using a combination of painterly technique and bold, graphic typography

Post-revolutionary Russia was a bubbling melting pot of creativity, until the lid of Stalinism slammed down. Then in its infancy, film was the perfect new medium with few preconceptions on content and the ability to reach mass audiences, and to this day many of the Russian silent films of the Twenties are still lauded. **Sergei Eisenstein's Battleship Potemkin**, is one of the most famous and often imitated.

This period also saw the first documentary, **Dziga Vertov's The Man with a Movie Camera**, which British minimalist composer **Michael Nyman** remade



- 1 - Aleksander Naumov, oil, 1927
- 2 - Stenberg brothers & Yakov Ruklevsky, The Decembrists, 1927
- 3 - Stenberg brothers, Aurora, 1927
- 4 - Stenberg brothers, Three Million Case, 1926

as a scene-for-scene modern version, adding a new musical score. Much of the power of Vertov's film comes from its age coupled with the then-unique process of documenting the everyday, so Nyman's slightly bland, self-referential movie may also improve with age.

These original Soviet films were promoted with mass-produced posters by equally talented artists, including **Aleksandr Rodchenko**, brothers **Georgii** and **Vladimir Stenberg** (responsible for seven of the images here), **Yakov Ruklevsky**, **Aleksander Naumov**,

Mikhail Dlugach and **Nikolai Prusakov**. A selection of these are now on display — many for the first time in the UK — at GRAD (Gallery for Russian Arts and Design) in London, in a show celebrating 2014 as the UK/Russia year of culture. During the exhibition, there will also be screenings of excerpts from Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* and *October*, and Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera*.

Kino/Film: Soviet Posters of the Silent Screen,
17 January-29 March, GRAD, London W1



- 5 – Stenberg brothers, *A Perfect Gentleman*, 1928
- 6 – Stenberg brothers, *Death Loop*, 1929
- 7 – Stenberg brothers, *Sporting Fever*, 1928
- 8 – Stenberg brothers, *The Screw from another Machine*, 1926

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Overshadowed for years by its younger, trendier relative, now it's Tate Britain's opportunity to turn heads. *Herbert Wright* visits the revamped gallery, after its £45m overhaul and finds that there is much to admire

Physically, the transformation of the Millbank side of **Tate Britain** turns around a spiral staircase. Billed as the 'New Tate Britain', and opened in November, the £45m project restored, enhanced and extended the original building designed by Sydney Smith.

Since opening in 1897 as the **National Gallery of British Art**, what is now Tate Britain has had many extensions. In May 2013, nine new galleries were delivered with reinforced flooring and contemporary climate control. The Tate gave little away of the surprises to follow, and indeed many new additions look as if they could have been part of the original. **Adam Caruso** of practice Caruso St John says 'the distinction between new and old is less interesting than for previous generations', and the new Tate plays on this ambiguity.

The main Millbank riverside entrance, reached by grand stairs, has been restored. New doors are framed in bronze, and on one side of the foyer a tranquil, leaded glasswork by 2009 Turner Prize-winner **Richard Wright** has been installed.

Step through into the rotunda, a central domed atrium space long under-utilised, and we are in the heart of the action. On its upper floor, the space behind Smith's octagonal balcony and columns has now been reclaimed as a lounge bar area for the members room. This space is accessed by two previously existing small spiral stairs, which now act



as satellites of the new staircase, right in the rotunda's centre. It's a swish, curving affair, almost art deco. A scallop pattern derived from Roman thermal baths radiates across the floor and forms an protective stone filigree circle around the new stairwell. Polished black and white terrazzo continues in the staircase itself, with glass inset in a steel balustrade. 'Architects are not trained to work on ornamentation, so it was a terrific effort,' commented Caruso.

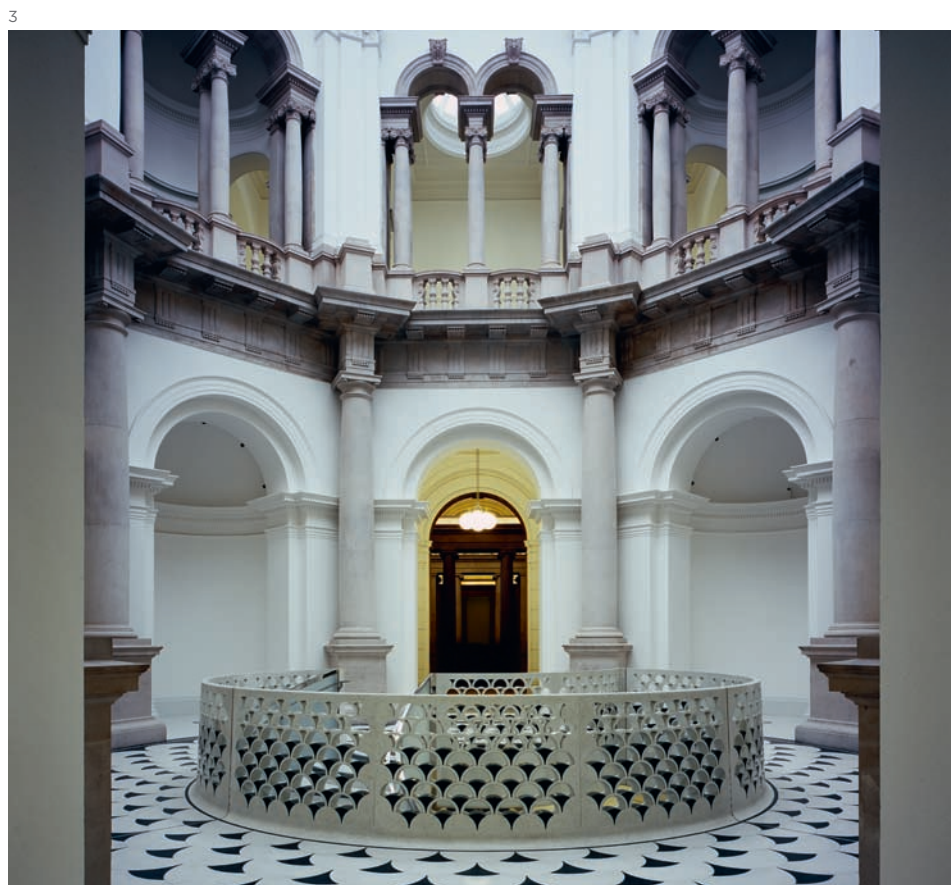
The lower levels have also been opened up. A new archive gallery with a central drum space has been created. The Whistler restaurant feels completely re-invigorated by the restoration of its epic classical fantasy mural by **Rex Whistler**. The space for the new **Djanogly Café** has been created

with the removal of columns. Here, 'it's all about the vaulting', says Peter St John. In what is possibly the most subtle architectonic intervention in London this century, artist **Alan Johnston** has exaggerated the shadows of the vaulted space with graphite pencil shading. Finally, the lower floor hosts the only space which feels completely contemporary: the Clore Centre, a learning studio into which school parties enter from below the main entrance.

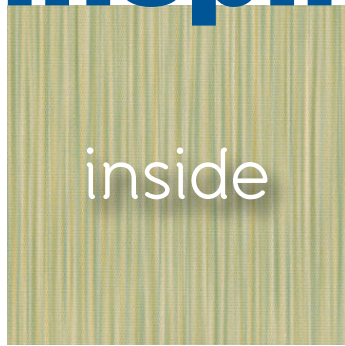
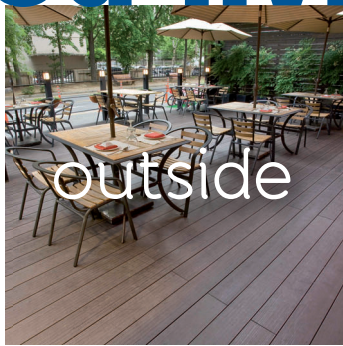
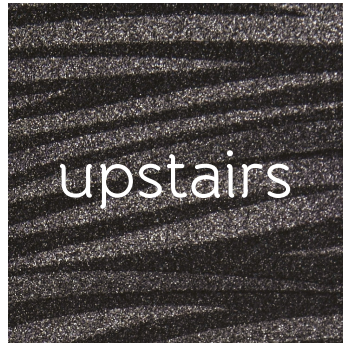
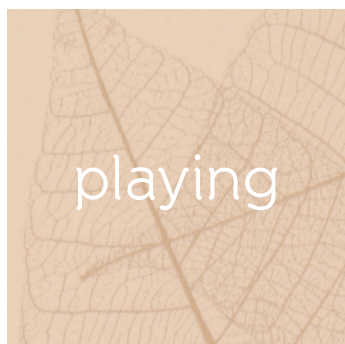
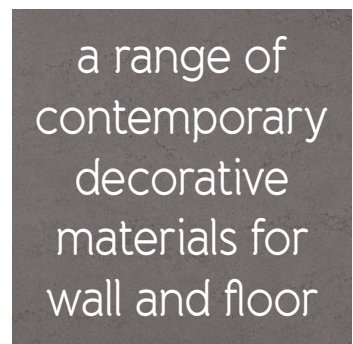
Directly above the Millbank lobby, a large meeting and event room, the Grand Saloon, has been restored, with the addition of new features.

The 'New' Tate Britain is a very different project from others underway in the Tate's empire — the £215m Tate Modern extension with its 64m-high sculptural tower by **Herzog & de Meuron**, and the clean, white, new galleries in **Tate St Ives'** £12m extension by **Jamie Fobert**. No one has mentioned postmodernism, the style of **James Stirling's** Clore gallery wing (1987), which deliberately made a counterplay against Smith's neo-classical structure. But the new works adjacent use historicist elements too. Rather than challenge the old, Caruso St John freely reinvents classical space. The effect is all the more powerful for its artisanship.

- 1 - The Djanogly Café, with graphite-shaded vaults
2 - A new gallery, one of nine opened last May
3 - The rotunda, with new stair behind a scalloped stone circle



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Trained architect-turned-artist, Yutaka Sone has just completed his third island sculpture — replicas in miniature and with exquisite detailing of Hong Kong, Manhattan and now Venice. He tells *Johnny Tucker* that they reflect his architectural background and 'island mentality'

Yutaka Sone trained as an architect in Tokyo before moving into the world of fine art. His work, though hard to classify, often plays with what he describes as 'the tension between realism and perfection', and he has flitted between media including painting, drawing, video and performance. He is probably best known though for his sculpture, from a series of realistic life-size palm trees woven from rattan over metal to his works in marble, and in particular his 3D mapping of three Islands: Hong Kong, Manhattan and, now, Venice. He says he is creating urban portraits in stone, and these works bring together his architectural background and his 'island mentality', while dealing with these physically finite landscapes.

In the late Nineties, he became captivated with the idea of Hong Kong being returned to the Chinese by the British and sought to 'capture' this in some way. Like many visitors to the city, he was also enthralled by the city's nightscape and spent time observing, drawing it in detail, even documenting the pattern of the lights going on and off. He then started to sculpt in plaster and papier mache and began working on what he calls British Hong Kong. By 1998 he had created **Hong Kong Island (Chinese)** — an edition of three.

Carved from a single block of marble and standing not far off 1m high, the surface is a replica of the island including all the peaks, valleys and

buildings. Below 'water level', the sculpture tapers inwards, looking as though it's hewn from the bedrock. The finish is that of industrial marble and not far from that of 3D ceramic printing. But this was produced before that technology, and to create its realistic topography, he used books, wandered around on foot and took helicopter rides. By the time he got to Venice this year, Google maps had relieved him of much of the legwork.

While Hong Kong looks hewn, his next piece, **Little Manhattan** (edition of five) feels as though it is has been extruded through a fine mesh. Manhattan's grid, skyscrapers, bridges and wharves are again reproduced in minute detail before giving way to a more liquid-like base that splays out as though it's only just set. It also weighs in at more than 2.5 tonnes (weight being an important factor in gauging the quality of artistic endeavour!)

'After finishing Hong Kong, I started almost immediately on Manhattan, but 9-11 happened and it stopped for years because I didn't want to present tragedy. I started again in 2007 because the city had recovered; it had become healthy again,' says Sone.

Guiding me around the three islands, he spends time talking about the areas beneath the surface:

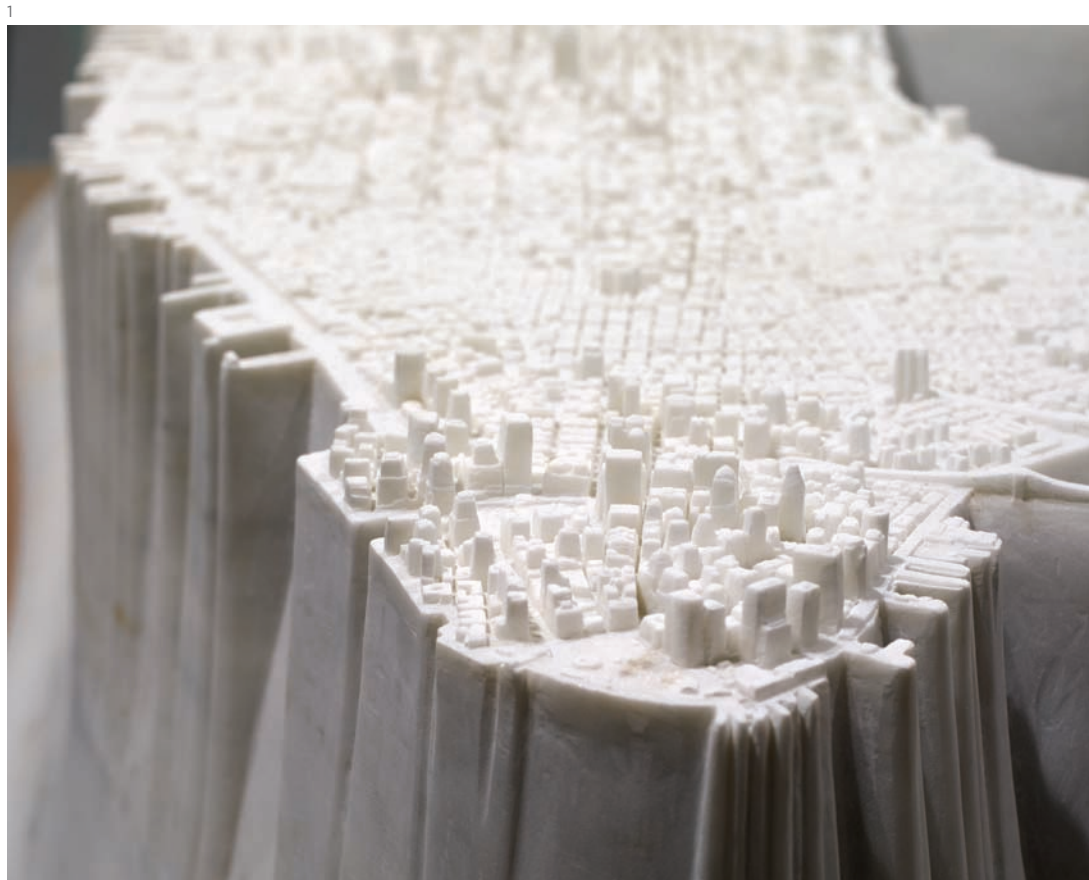
1 – Manhattan is sculpted in meticulous detail from a single piece of marble. 2 – Venice, Sone's latest work, with its somewhat amorphous, coral-like base. 3 – Hong Kong Island (Chinese)

'I can't change the cities, I can only change what is beneath!' Where Hong Kong tapers in, New York spreads out. 'I was thinking about Hong Kong being given back,' says Sone, explaining the evolution of the whole form, and demonstrates the entire island being ripped up and physically handed over 'like it's been pulled out. New York was a totally different idea and I think more successful. I wanted to make it much smoother, feminine and like a dress.'

Venice (edition of five) is the latest in his Island sculptures, finished this year and on show with the others at the **David Zwirner Gallery** in central London. Again the surface exhibits a meticulous attention to detail, but it sits like a plateau atop a mountain — Sone likens it to the Alps. 'With Manhattan, I was feeling my way through the process; it was evolving while I was creating it. I was deciding whether there should be bridges or not, things like that. With Venice — I have also had a biennale exhibition, so I knew the place — I wanted to make the base more complicated. I wanted to make the base very hard, make something weird and give it a sense of chaos.'

He doesn't rule out further additions and editions. He laughs and says: 'Who knows, maybe next time I will choose an empty island!'

Yutaka Sone, David Zwirner London, Grafton Street, London W1, until 25 January



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EXHIBITION

Barber & Osgerby



Opening this month at the Design Museum in London, Barber & Osgerby's *In The Making* show explores the design duo's fascination with the making process via unfinished objects, from pure high-tech silicon to how they put the swirl in a glass marble. Editor *Johnny Tucker* caught up with the design pair separately and asked them to question each other about the subject via *Blueprint*. You're reading their answers at the same time as they are

JAY OSGERBY

Tucker: Which part of the design process do you find most challenging?

It varies from project to project. This may sound trite, but the most challenging part is often evaluating and constructing the brief — synthesising the real need and requirement. We are very good at responding to analysis creatively. We respond well to constraints, but in a way it is very difficult to create the constraints yourself. Often the brief coming from the client is what they think they want, but not what they actually need. It's a challenge. You have to get it right at the beginning because if you don't, you set sail on the wrong course. Once you get into the process, it's a piece of cake!

Barber: If you were eight, what would fascinate you most in the *In The Making* exhibition?

I think in a way eight-year-olds are

actually our target audience for this. It was probably when Ed and I were around that age that we both tuned into making. I think the whole show should be quite a corker for that age. Particularly interesting would be the cork — a one-stop process from the bark, and if they are anything like my eight-year-old, they'll be very familiar with corks lying around! It also shows you how you put the swirls in a glass marble. We have actually got a marble midway through production, which is quite a lovely object.

Barber: What is your favourite piece in the show?

That would be the pure silicon we've got from the making of the silicon chip. It's a beautiful sculptural shape and form, which has come from the technical process and then it's about what that one element has done. In my lifetime, the silicon chip has changed everything. It's pretty epic.



EDWARD BARBER

Tucker: Which part of the design process do you find most rewarding? It's the early conceptual part, trying to find the big idea. Trying to find the innovation and give the project the character and personality. It's the sketchbook end of it and creating early models. Endless, endless drawing in the sketchbook.

Osgerby: What was your earliest memory of visiting a manufacturer and how did it inspire you?

I suppose you could call them manufacturers — it would be boatbuilders in Anglesey — seeing clinker-built boats being made. There's the most incredible craftsmanship and skill. They make the frame and then add the sides and I remember the smell of the timber and the varnish and I found it very exciting. I used to do a lot of sailing and I think we'd put a hole in a boat

and took it there to get repaired. The hulls of boats are the most beautiful objects, especially when they're made of wood, and that really resonated with me. I spent hours there.

Osgerby: What was your first memory of questioning how something was made?

That's a tricky little question, that one! [Cue a minute of guttural thinking noises]. That would be something from the garden. I used to spend a lot of time with my dad in the garden. So it would be a fork or a spade with the old wooden handle where it splits into two and then they put another round piece on the top for a handle. They cut it down the middle and then steam-bent it into a Y-shape. I remember thinking about that.

In the Making is at The Design Museum, London, 22 January – 4 May



Libby Sellers

Founder of Gallery Libby Sellers in London

1 'TU CASA, MI CASA', MARTINO GAMPER

MODERN INSTITUTE, GLASGOW

Until 25 January

It will be a sprint to the finish line to see Italian-born, London-based Martino Gamper's exhibition in Scotland. Apparently inspired by Le Corbusier's Proposal for a Living Habitat (c.1959) 'Tu casa, mi casa' is a hybrid living space of open-plan arrangement, complete with a stove, day bed, table, chairs and lamps. 'Tu casa, mi casa' addresses Gamper's interest in the psycho-social connotations of furniture. Knowing Gamper's wit and wisdom, I'm sure his house is a beautiful homage to design and domestic functionality. themoderninstitute.com



2 MARTIN CREED

HAYWARD, LONDON

29 Jan-27 April

British artist Martin Creed's first major survey of his playful art promises to deliver everything from his most minimal moments to extravagant room-sized installations. Much like his 'Light goes on. Light goes off' Turner Prize-winning piece, I too sometimes go off his work, but the last few public installations I've seen have been brilliant. Creed has pursued an extraordinary path by confounding traditional art categories. Crossing all artistic media, his art transforms the everyday into meditations on existence. southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/

2



3 ANTON ALVAREZ

GALLERY LIBBY SELLERS, LONDON

6 March-12 April

Following his graduation from the Royal College of Art in 2012, Anton Alvarez has steadily won critical praise and a loyal following for his Thread Wrapping Machine series. His background in cabinetmaking, interior architecture, craft and design, coupled with his inquisitive mind and strong personality, has led to a clever idiosyncratic approach to making. After nearly a year in the planning, he will be launching the next phase of his work in a solo exhibition in the gallery. I look forward to revealing the results. libbysellers.com

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Formerly senior curator of the Design Museum in London, **Libby Sellers** launched her eponymous venue in 2007 as a platform to support and promote progressive and critical design in a commercial gallery. Working with some of Europe's most engaging designers — including Aldo Bakker, Formafantasma, Simon Hasan, Max Lamb, M/M (Paris) and Paola Petrobelli — the gallery has since produced unique and editioned works presented through exhibitions and site-specific installations internationally. libbysellers.com

04

4 THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

CENTRAAL MUSEUM UTRECHT

Until 18 May

Ever pursuant of philosophies in design, Dutch studio Makkink & Bey (Rianne Makkink and Jurgen Bey) has reinterpreted Hieronymus Bosch's 16th-century painting The Seven Deadly Sins through this exhibition of vignettes, made up of objects from the museum's diverse collection, a selection of its designs and works by other contemporary artists. Makkink & Bey has avoided a literal translation of the paintings, but instead has dissected each image, translating items and figures into modern equivalents. centraalmuseum.nl/en/

5 DRIES VAN NOTEN

THE MUSÉES DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS, PARIS

28 February–31 August

Dries Van Noten will be the subject of a retrospective at this Paris museum, to be curated by Pamela Golbin and with exhibition design by Jean-Dominique Secondi. Les Arts Décoratifs said it invited the Antwerp-based designer to 'illuminate his creative vision' by drawing works from the museum's collection to sit alongside Van Noten's own. As a first step in this process, 19th-century prints selected from the museum's archives by Dries Van Noten were replicated and applied to garments for his Spring 2014 collections. lesartsdecoratifs.fr

6 BIENNALE OF SYDNEY

SYDNEY

21 March–9 June

Amazingly, the Biennale of Sydney was established in 1973, making it the third oldest biennial in the world. In order to take advantage of the warm autumn months, it is starting earlier this year, so will feel a bit like a summer holiday for any visiting Europeans. Curated by artistic director Juliana Engberg, the theme is You Imagine What You Desire, and will take place in venues all around the city, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA). biennaleofsydney.com.au

3



4





BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

£5000 student architecture competition

Architecture and design students are invited to put their creative talents to creating a cycling 'hub' building and satellite hubs in Sheffield, to support the city's drive to enhance its sustainable transport system and its cycling community. The VeloCity competition, run in conjunction with the British timber body TRADA, is offering a £5000 top prize

Blueprint has teamed up with the British wood industry body TRADA to launch the VeloCity student competition with a £5000 prize pot.

The brief is to use British wood to create a building that would act as a cycling hub in the heart of steel country, Sheffield. The project involves creating a main 'park and cycle superhub and smaller satellite hubs'.

VeloCity has in part been prompted by the Government's All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group's report last year that set out a vision to realise the potential of cycling for healthier communities and the need to look at 'redesigning our roads, streets and cities'.

A key aim of this competition brief is to serve, enhance and grow the cycling community in Sheffield as part of its sustainable transport system. Fittingly, the city will also be hosting the finishing of the UK stages of the Tour de France in July.

Your VeloCity design will have to accommodate the needs of:

- Daily commuters who would otherwise take cars into the city centre

- Weekend users of the Trans-Pennine way and other local scenic cycle routes
- Users of the Parkwood Springs mountain-bike trail
- Hire cycles for occasional users
- Other local community groups

VeloCity should:

- Provide secure over-night cycle storage/parking for up to 1000 bikes — to include space for recumbent bikes, tandems and tricycles
- Provide ancillary facilities
 - a cycle retail/workshop space
 - changing facilities for cyclists and community groups (eg users of football fields)
 - multi-use community space for events, training etc
 - cafe space
- Provide smaller, secure, cycle storage hubs for up to 50 cycles to be located strategically around the city centre to serve as satellite hubs and a link to the landmark building you have created overlooking the city

And

- Explore cycle storage and consider developing innovative methods and/or systems to store large

numbers of cycles in your building(s)

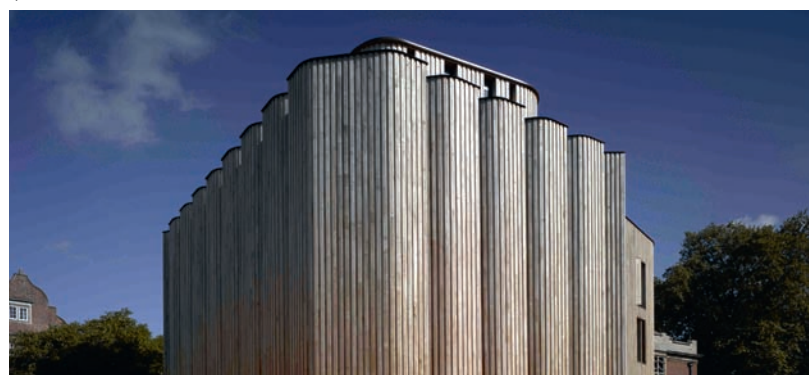
- Ensure that smooth, easy routes around the building(s) for cycles are included

The building must be designed using British timber species and related wood products, and you can find out a lot more about that on the TRADA website. You'll also find a plethora of information and advice there on designing with timber.

So the call is out for entries, to create 'a new landmark building for Sheffield' — and the deadline for entries is 6 June, 2014.

A shortlist will be created by a panel of judges including Blueprint editor, Johnny Tucker, designer Wayne Hemmingsway, Julian Huppert MP and co-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group, and representatives from TRADA, Buro Happold, BAM Construct UK and national cycling charity CTC. The final judging will take place in July with an award ceremony in September.

For more details and to download the full competition brief go to trada.co.uk/academic/designcompetitions



A selection of recent inspirational buildings utilising wood:
1 – Bishop Edward King Chapel (2012) by Niall McLaughlin Architects.
2 – Hooke Park Big Shed (2012) by Safwat + Williams.
3 – Brockholes Wetlands Nature Reserve (2011) by Adam Khan Architects.
4 – Emanuel College Library, Cambridge (2011) by Kilburn Nightingale Architects



The leading authority on wood



IN BRITISH TIMBER



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048-068

Turkic delight

Azerbaijan's capital Baku shows that it has its eye very much on the future. Herbert Wright visits the new Hadid-designed Heydar Aliyev Center

070 - 086

Postcards from the edge

Johnny Tucker finds meaning in Pidgin Snaps, a picture postcard project from critic and author Jonathan Meades

088 - 106

If you build it

New and revived methods of self-building are on the rise. Blueprint has assembled a panel of architects, developers, researchers and strategists to share their perspectives

108 - 122

Man Machine

A new book from Taschen looks at the ground-breaking work of Fritz Kahn – a German science writer, artist and polymath. Steven Heller examines the work of this unique man

124 - 138

Graubünden's new generation comes of age

The Swiss alpine canton of Graubünden is becoming a treasure trove of new architecture from local talent. Architecture critic Oliver Lowenstein looks at the future plans and the canton's legacy

140 - 154

Electric dreams

Guy Bird discusses the past, present and future of the car industry and asks what place it will have in future transport solutions

156 - 166

Park life

Once the most unloved of all structures, car parks are now being reinvented and revamped across the world. Veronica Simpson discovers if redemption is possible for these common 20th-century eyesores

168 - 174

French fancy

Opening in 1966, the French ski resort of Avoriaz was only accessible by cable car and looked like something from a German expressionist movie. It still does and there are no cars to be seen

176 - 186

Post World's End Architecture: Greece

In the fourth instalment of this series, Gonzalo Herrero Delicado turns his focus to Greece, cradle of democracy, and finds reason to be optimistic about the future of its architecture

188 - 202

Two of a kind

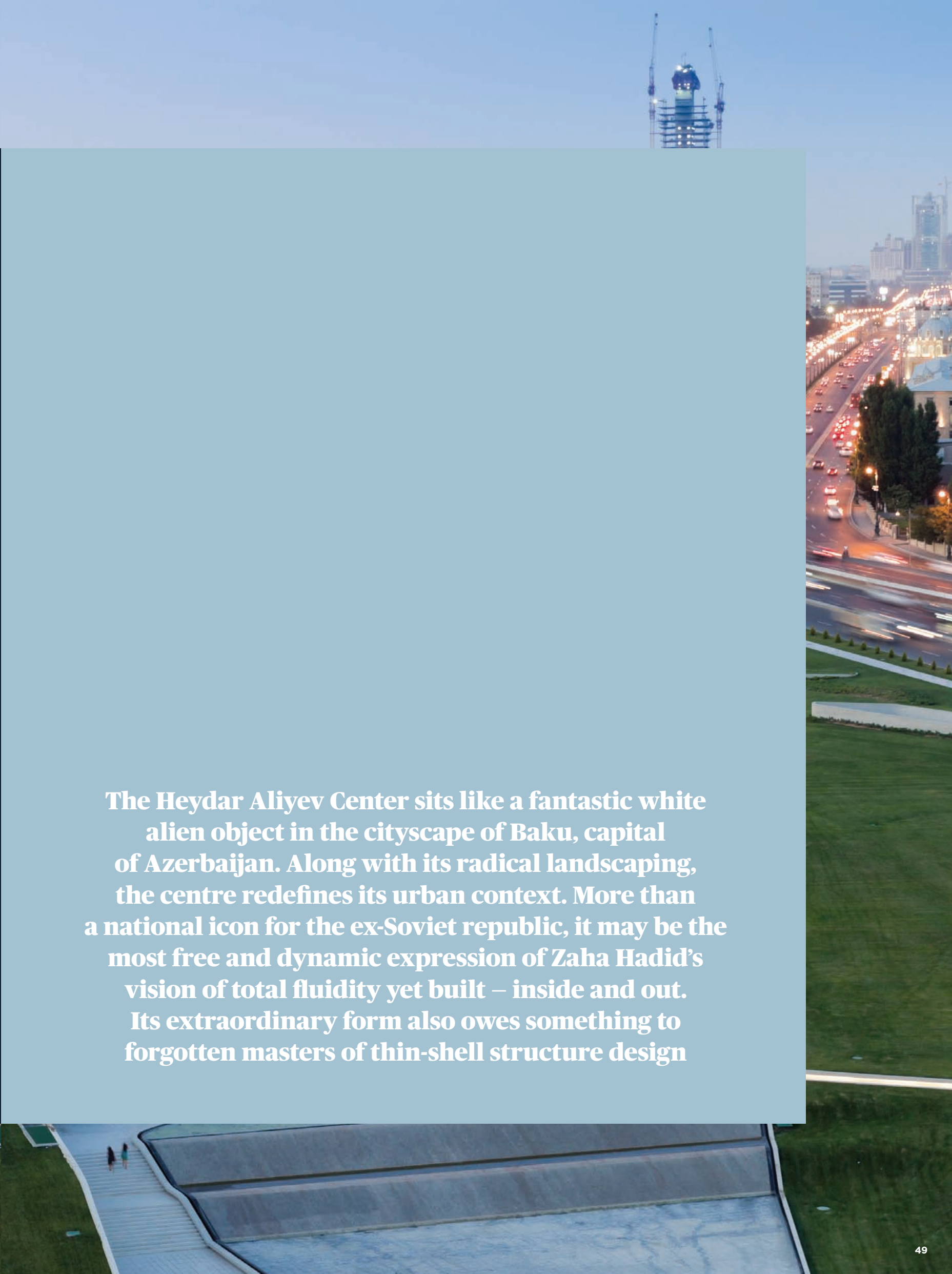
The new home for one of France's FRAC art centres realises a wild proposition from practice Lacaton & Vassal: Build a doppelganger volume in the docklands of Dunkirk



TURKIC DELIGHT

|

Words Herbert Wright
Photography Hufton + Crow and Iwan Baan



The Heydar Aliyev Center sits like a fantastic white alien object in the cityscape of Baku, capital of Azerbaijan. Along with its radical landscaping, the centre redefines its urban context. More than a national icon for the ex-Soviet republic, it may be the most free and dynamic expression of Zaha Hadid's vision of total fluidity yet built – inside and out. Its extraordinary form also owes something to forgotten masters of thin-shell structure design









3

Has ever anything so white, curvy and free been seen in Baku before, save perhaps sunlit clouds over the Caspian Sea? But this new shape atop a hillside in the Azerbaijani capital, lodged between social housing and a mini spaghetti junction of road loops, is not a cloud. The Heydar Aliyev Center is more like a vast white sheet that sweeps up from the ground into a strange composition of fissures, folds and rises, and then rolls in on itself along a great straight edge. Within this free-form surface is a complex of asymmetric white spaces where height and depth blur in the absence of straight lines. Glazed facades cut vertically, those at the front looking out over a cascade of terraces and water features. On this side, the building's white envelope plunges parabolically to touch the ground, a dramatic gesture that, with a towering peak at the rear, gives the building a shorthand signature.

The Heydar Aliyev Center, with an indoor area of 101,801 sq m, may look gloriously alien, but there is something familiar about it. The total fluidity inside and out, the way its malleable form bends and morphs, the tectonic topography that dissolves division between building and surroundings – of course, these are hallmarks of Zaha Hadid. 'My ambition was always to create fluid space, on all levels,' she reminded *Blueprint* (see page 68). In Baku as in contemporaneous projects, such as the Serpentine Sackler Gallery in London, the design is also informed by an exploration by her – and practice partner Patrik Schumacher –

of pre-digital masters with a very different history to the Russian Constructivists usually cited.

Local history too is relevant, at least contextually. The Russian Empire outpost of Baku became the world's first oil boomtown in the 1870s, and rapidly grew into an industrialised, overcrowded, polluted, but cosmopolitan, metropolis. From 1896, the Aliyev Center site hosted the Levinson factory, which made oil extraction machinery. After the country's independence in 1991, the engineering plant moved. There were plans for a grand mosque to replace it, but Azerbaijan decided that a forward-looking national icon would be better and held an international competition for a cultural centre in 2007.

Despite it containing a memorial museum to Azerbaijan's modern founder, the Aliyev Center is a symbol of new national aspirations – open, dynamic, forward-looking. Because of its role as the country's cultural hub, ZHA's project architect Saffet Kaya Bekiroglu says, 'We had to understand the Azeri culture and their aesthetic palate.' (Bekiroglu himself has the advantage of a Turkish Cypriot background, enabling him to understand the Azeris' Turkic language).

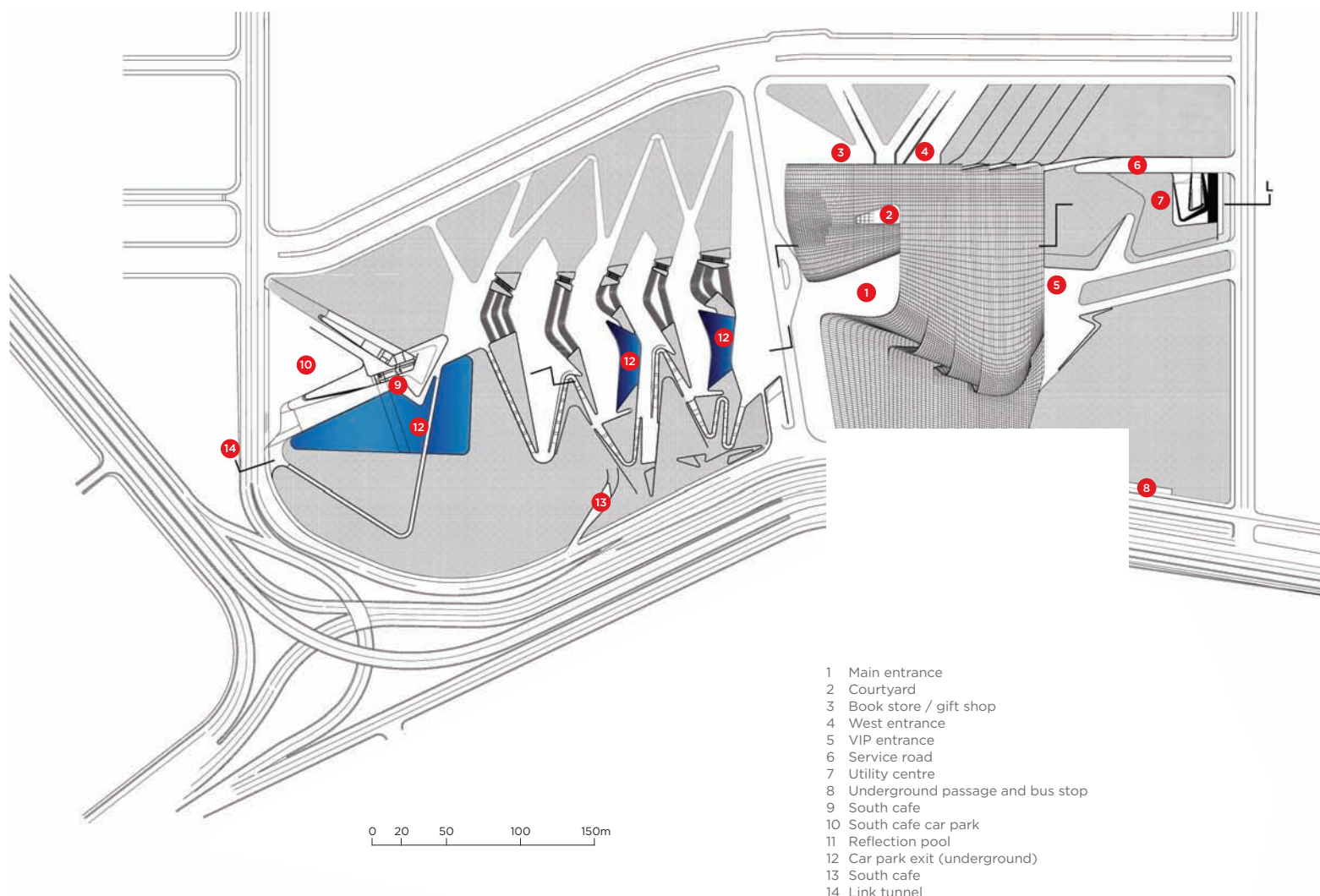
The 11ha site is awkward, sloping north to south down 20m from the main volume to a satellite building, the Pond Café – a triangular pavilion beside which eventually the Baku Metro will arrive. This small volume's dramatically cantilevered roof may faintly echo Hadid's upward, pointy concrete gesture in her

1 (previous page) – The Heydar Aliyev Center's main building is above the landscaping of a slope dropping to the Pond Café, situated under the triangular green roof in the foreground

2 (opposite page) – On the south-east side, the skin of the building is a continuum of the urban plaza beside it

3 – ZHA project architect Saffet Kaya Bekiroglu

Site plan



This centre is defined by its extraordinary white shell envelope. It starts as an apron of urban plaza on the eastern side, and curves up into a convex wall around the auditorium wing, staggered by gill-like fissures. The 50,000 sq m skin is a continuous whole, made up of 16,150 panels, 70 per cent of which become different trapezoids because of the surface curvature. 'If the surface is the music, then the seams between the panels are the rhythm,' says Bekiroglu. The seams certainly amplify the non-Euclidean geometry of the whole project, like grids in popular

The smooth panels are merely the surface of the centre's high-tech skin. No less than four layers lie beneath them, performing functions such as insulation and waterproofing, and the seams carry elements like rainwater gullies and lightning conductors. All this is mounted on a vast metal space frame.

Sandwiched between the external and internal skins and painted blue despite its invisibility, the double-curved space frame by MERO-TSK of Germany is another solution to the challenges of such difficult architecture. Without it, the space would have been full of columns. It also grounds an aerodynamic envelope from which wind creates vertical lift as if was an aircraft wing – and this in a city known for its wind. On top of this, the frame has to maintain rigidity in seismically active conditions and the centre's two concrete cores have poor

This topographic map shows a coastal area with various contour lines and elevation labels. The map includes a grid and a scale bar at the bottom left indicating distances from 0 to 50 meters. Key elevation points and contour lines are labeled as follows:

- Top Left:** Contour lines labeled +15.00m, +12.00m, +8.00m, +5.00m, and +2.00m.
- Top Center:** Contour lines labeled +15.00m, +12.00m, +8.00m, +5.00m, and +2.00m.
- Top Right:** Contour lines labeled +15.00m, +12.00m, +8.00m, +5.00m, and +2.00m.
- Bottom Left:** Contour lines labeled +21.00m, +24.00m, +27.00m, +30.00m, +33.00m, +36.00m, +39.00m, +42.00m, +45.00m, +48.00m, +51.00m, +54.00m, +57.00m, +60.00m, +63.00m, +66.00m, +69.00m, +72.00m, +75.00m, +78.00m, +81.00m, +84.00m, +87.00m, +90.00m, +93.00m, +96.00m, +99.00m, +102.00m, +105.00m, +108.00m, +111.00m, +114.00m, +117.00m, +120.00m, +123.00m, +126.00m, +129.00m, +132.00m, +135.00m, +138.00m, +141.00m, +144.00m, +147.00m, +150.00m, +153.00m, +156.00m, +159.00m, +162.00m, +165.00m, +168.00m, +171.00m, +174.00m, +177.00m, +180.00m, +183.00m, +186.00m, +189.00m, +192.00m, +195.00m, +198.00m, +201.00m, +204.00m, +207.00m, +210.00m, +213.00m, +216.00m, +219.00m, +222.00m, +225.00m, +228.00m, +231.00m, +234.00m, +237.00m, +240.00m, +243.00m, +246.00m, +249.00m, +252.00m, +255.00m, +258.00m, +261.00m, +264.00m, +267.00m, +270.00m, +273.00m, +276.00m, +279.00m, +282.00m, +285.00m, +288.00m, +291.00m, +294.00m, +297.00m, +300.00m, +303.00m, +306.00m, +309.00m, +312.00m, +315.00m, +318.00m, +321.00m, +324.00m, +327.00m, +330.00m, +333.00m, +336.00m, +339.00m, +342.00m, +345.00m, +348.00m, +351.00m, +354.00m, +357.00m, +360.00m, +363.00m, +366.00m, +369.00m, +372.00m, +375.00m, +378.00m, +381.00m, +384.00m, +387.00m, +390.00m, +393.00m, +396.00m, +399.00m, +402.00m, +405.00m, +408.00m, +411.00m, +414.00m, +417.00m, +420.00m, +423.00m, +426.00m, +429.00m, +432.00m, +435.00m, +438.00m, +441.00m, +444.00m, +447.00m, +450.00m, +453.00m, +456.00m, +459.00m, +462.00m, +465.00m, +468.00m, +471.00m, +474.00m, +477.00m, +480.00m, +483.00m, +486.00m, +489.00m, +492.00m, +495.00m, +498.00m, +501.00m, +504.00m, +507.00m, +510.00m, +513.00m, +516.00m, +519.00m, +522.00m, +525.00m, +528.00m, +531.00m, +534.00m, +537.00m, +540.00m, +543.00m, +546.00m, +549.00m, +552.00m, +555.00m, +558.00m, +561.00m, +564.00m, +567.00m, +570.00m, +573.00m, +576.00m, +579.00m, +582.00m, +585.00m, +588.00m, +591.00m, +594.00m, +597.00m, +600.00m, +603.00m, +606.00m, +609.00m, +612.00m, +615.00m, +618.00m, +621.00m, +624.00m, +627.00m, +630.00m, +633.00m, +636.00m, +639.00m, +642.00m, +645.00m, +648.00m, +651.00m, +654.00m, +657.00m, +660.00m, +663.00m, +666.00m, +669.00m, +672.00m, +675.00m, +678.00m, +681.00m, +684.00m, +687.00m, +690.00m, +693.00m, +696.00m, +699.00m, +702.00m, +705.00m, +708.00m, +711.00m, +714.00m, +717.00m, +720.00m, +723.00m, +726.00m, +729.00m, +732.00m, +735.00m, +738.00m, +741.00m, +744.00m, +747.00m, +750.00m, +753.00m, +756.00m, +759.00m, +762.00m, +765.00m, +768.00m, +771.00m, +774.00m, +777.00m, +780.00m, +783.00m, +786.00m, +789.00m, +792.00m, +795.00m, +798.00m, +801.00m, +804.00m, +807.00m, +810.00m, +813.00m, +816.00m, +819.00m, +822.00m, +825.00m, +828.00m, +831.00m, +834.00m, +837.00m, +840.00m, +843.00m, +846.00m, +849.00m, +852.00m, +855.00m, +858.00m, +861.00m, +864.00m, +867.00m, +870.00m, +873.00m, +876.00m, +879.00m, +882.00m, +885.00m, +888.00m, +891.00m, +894.00m, +897.00m, +900.00m, +903.00m, +906.00m, +909.00m, +912.00m, +915.00m, +918.00m, +921.00m, +924.00m, +927.00m, +930.00m, +933.00m, +936.00m, +939.00m, +942.00m, +945.00m, +948.00m, +951.00m, +954.00m, +957.00m, +960.00m, +963.00m, +966.00m, +969.00m, +972.00m, +975.00m, +978.00m, +981.00m, +984.00m, +987.00m, +990.00m, +993.00m, +996.00m, +999.00m, +1002.00m, +1005.00m, +1008.00m, +1011.00m, +1014.00m, +1017.00m, +1020.00m, +1023.00m, +1026.00m, +1029.00m, +1032.00m, +1035.00m, +1038.00m, +1041.00m, +1044.00m, +1047.00m, +1050.00m, +1053.00m, +1056.00m, +1059.00m, +1062.00m, +1065.00m, +1068.00m, +1071.00m, +1074.00m, +1077.00m, +1080.00m, +1083.00m, +1086.00m, +1089.00m, +1092.00m, +1095.00m, +1098.00m, +1101.00m, +1104.00m, +1107.00m, +1110.00m, +1113.00m, +1116.00m, +1119.00m, +1122.00m, +1125.00m, +1128.00m, +1131.00m, +1134.00m, +1137.00m, +1140.00m, +1143.00m, +1146.00m, +1149.00m, +1152.00m, +1155.00m, +1158.00m, +1161.00m, +1164.00m, +1167.00m, +1170.00m, +1173.00m, +1176.00m, +1179.00m, +1182.00m, +1185.00m, +1188.00m, +1191.00m, +1194.00m, +1197.00m, +1200.00m, +1203.00m, +1206.00m, +1209.00m, +1212.00m, +1215.00m, +1218.00m, +1221.00m, +1224.00m, +1227.00m, +1230.00m, +1233.00m, +1236.00m, +1239.00m, +1242.00m, +1245.00m, +1248.00m, +1251.00m, +1254.00m, +1257.00m, +1260.00m, +1263.00m, +1266.00m, +1269.00m, +1272.00m, +1275.00m, +1278.00

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4 - The Heydar Aliyev Center rises to a height of 74m on its northern corner

5 - The glazed north-east facade and the tower, originally intended as a library





7



8



6 (previous page) – The shape and design of the centre arguably makes it the most distinctive building in Baku

7 – The centre is entered from the south-west side, which includes the Heydar Aliyev Museum

8 – From the western corner, the centre may evoke a great whale

9



10



9 – The Heydar Aliyev Museum is in a part of the building set forward to the rest, here to the right of the roof's parabolic dip to the ground

10 – The multipurpose room where banquets can be hosted is ground floor, centre of the north-west facade

soil to contend with, requiring 20.5 km of piles. Construction began in 2007 and was completed in time for a soft opening in May 2012. A fire on a patch of exterior cladding made headlines last July, but damage was superficial. The centre was officially opened in November.

Throughout the building, epoxy resin floors curve up into white walls creating interiors with the smoothness of wombs, inlaid with parallel arcs of lighting like meteor showers. There are three main parts to the building. A permanent museum to Heydar Aliyev, the centre's namesake and Azerbaijan's last Soviet and first independent leader, lies within a five-storey rounded asymmetric cone cut by south-facing vertical glazing. Floors create terraces that climb towards the rounded gothic arch of its peak, under which fourth-floor admin offices are situated. Daylight falls through them into the building's interior.

The Aliyev museum is set just to one side of that dramatic point facing south over the slope, where, as if it had melted into a distorted paraboloid, the outer envelope plunges down to kiss the ground. Bekiroglu calls this point the 'Nureyev moment', after the ballet legend Rudolf Nureyev. 'One does not realise if it is structural or not, if it is landing or taking off', he says – it is 'a moment where it questions the existence of gravity'.

A half-tubed first floor bridge approaches the 'Nureyev moment' from open spaces to the north of the building, and turns to link into the museum. It is seductive, surprising and

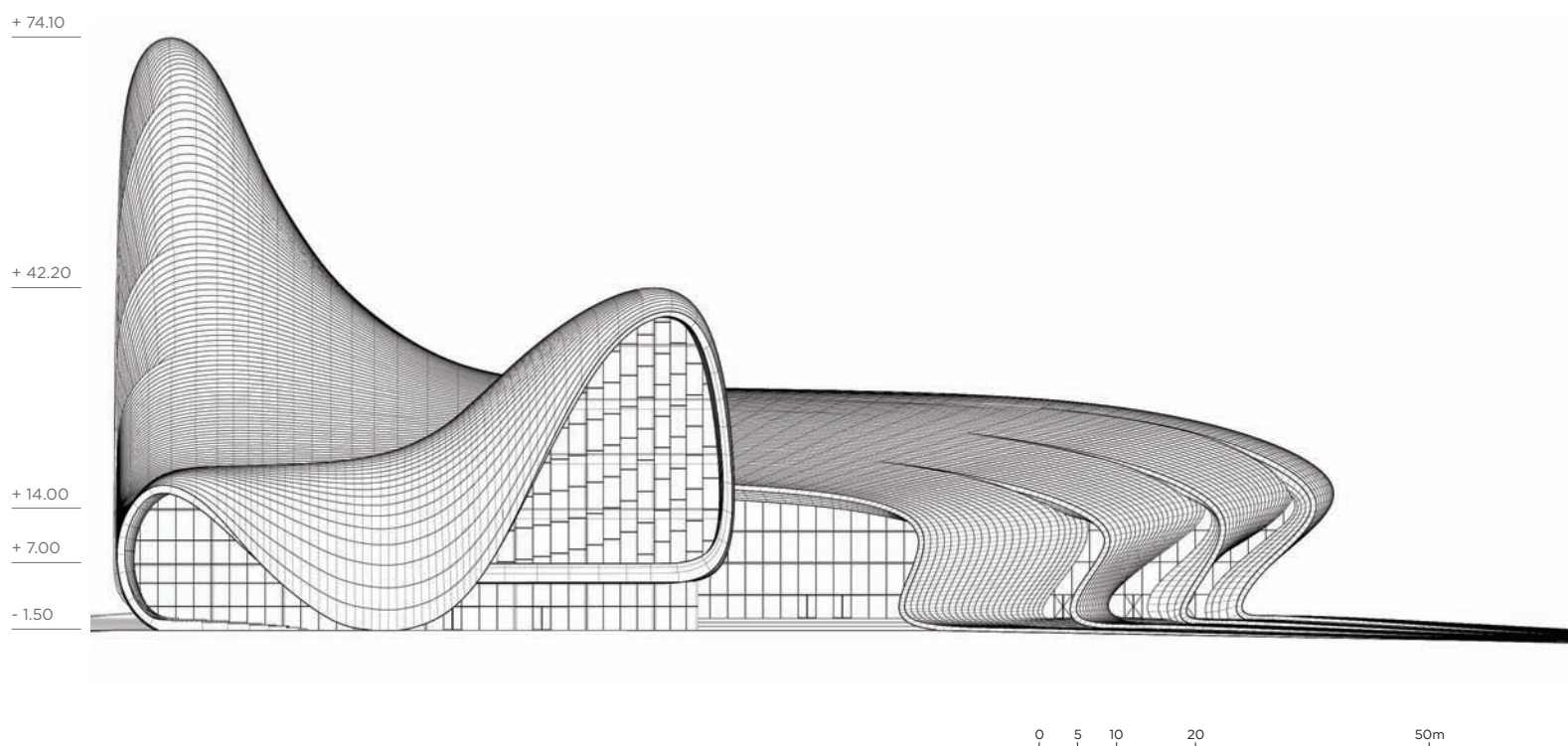
typical – there is virtually nowhere in the building that fails to reveal spatial drama. Some of the Aliyev Center's interior passages would make a great location if the last section of Woody Allen's movie 'Everything You Ever Wanted To Know...' was ever reshot.

The main entrance is set back from the museum, in a wide facade between it and the white plaza of panels to the east. This is the reception, or 'welcome zone', and immediately ahead is the auditorium and convention centre part of the building, to which we shall return. The welcome zone, though, stretches across the building, and its facade is penetrated by the exterior of the museum volume in front of it. Here, it has fallen in height and now ends in a cross-section shaped like a curl of butter. Turn into it and you are under the museum, but continue crossing the welcome zone and you pass an interior courtyard beside it, then an open cafe zone beneath a bridge and ramp and beside the north-west facade.

Unlike all other interior spaces, the 960-seater, 1200 sq m auditorium is not white but lined completely with American oak, layered in great laminate arcs that give it an instant, organic warmth. Bekiroglu comments that 'our intention was to use a traditional material with very contemporary lines.' He cites two previously built references: the Walt Disney Hall (2003) in Los Angeles, on which he worked as junior architect while at Frank Gehry's studio, and the acoustically innovative, expressionist

11 (opposite page) – Beneath the great sculptural form of the north-west side, glazing provides natural lighting to the cafe areas inside

South West Elevation









Berlin Philharmonic Concert Hall (1963) by Hans Scharoun.

Perhaps the most conventional space in the centre is the adjacent multipurpose hall, with a kitchen along one side of it. This is almost a standard rectangular space, but its corners are rounded and ridged lighting edges cut along walls and ceiling.

The third part of the building was originally intended as a library, and although digital library options remain open, its open spaces on six floors (including ground) are being used for temporary exhibitions, with a small functions floor at the top. They rise into the highest part of the Aliyev Center, the 74m-high northern tower, creating a chain of balconies along a direct line of sight that connects the ground floor with the arching cathedral-like space at the very top. The tower presents a sheer glazed facade to the north-east, looking out over a lawn and small outbuildings; behind them, a vast cliff of Soviet-era apartment housing. Perhaps surprised at their luminous new neighbour, the knackered flats have been spruced up with lightly ornamental new cladding.

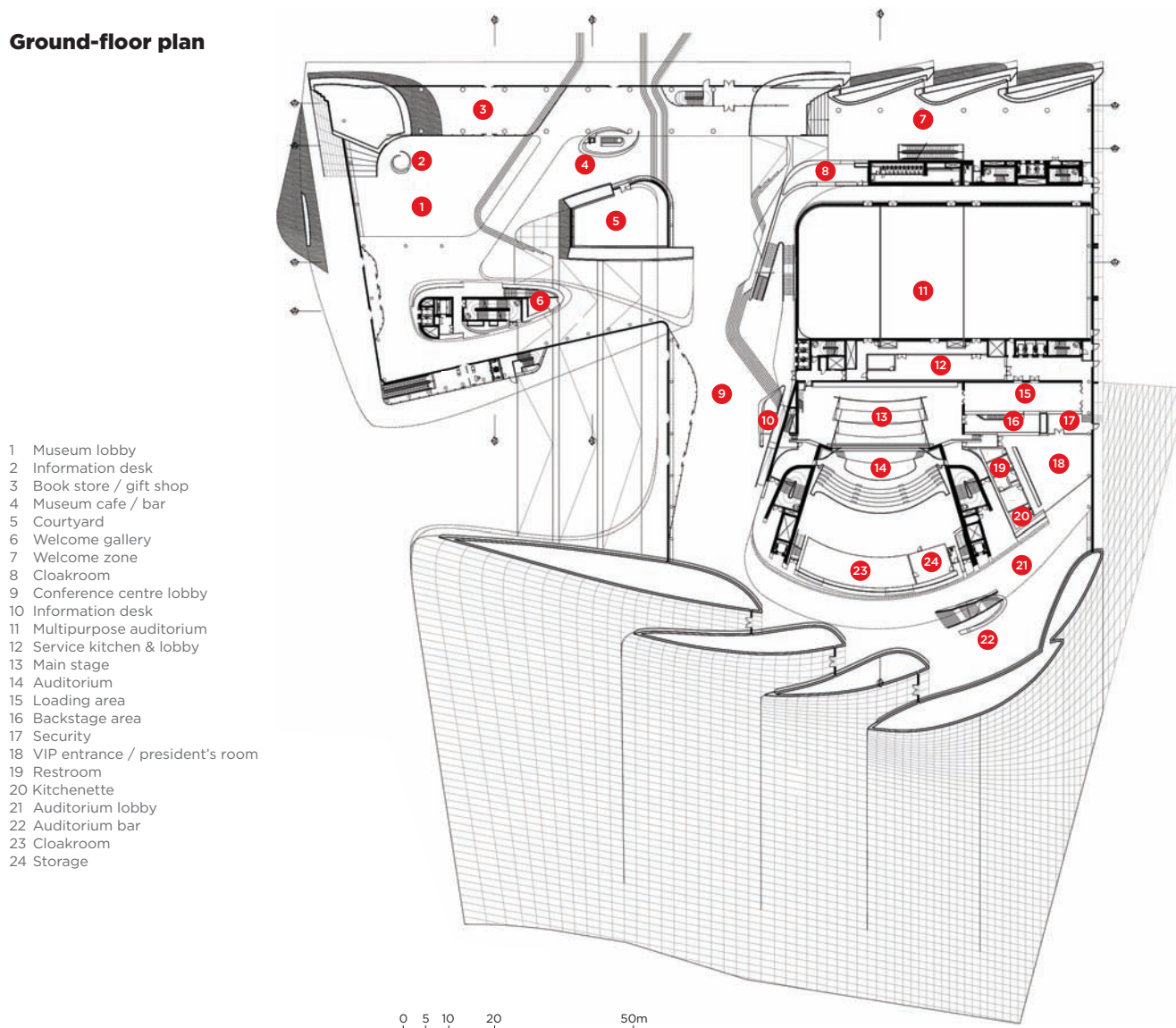
Seen from the south, towering behind the rest of the building, the northern peak might seem an easy compositional gesture, hiding its intent like Philip Guston's hood in his painting *The Studio*. But from the west, the tower takes on another role as the long, straight-edged north-west facade becomes legible. This entire side of the building is bone-shaped, narrowing in the middle (under which is glazing that lights the ground-floor cafe

areas), but the north end continues opening, full-height glazed flutings accentuating a pulse in its triumphant, trumpet-like rise. Move further to the north, and the tower becomes a vertical triangle of glass, its hypotenuse gently sagging. The north-west side of the Aliyev Centre particularly presents itself as a gargantuan, uplifting sculpture which totally transforms as you change viewpoint.

Inevitably, the early 20th-century Russian movements of constructivism and suprematism are cited as key influences in Hadid's work. But for the Venice Biennale of 2012, given the task of finding 'Common Ground' by fellow British architect Sir David Chipperfield, she and Schumacher announced that 'our recent work connects to a rather different historical strand of research'. There they displayed archives, models and projects from research into mid-20th-century pioneers of thin-shell structures Félix Candela and Heinz Isler, and tensile structure master Frei Otto.

Hadid and Schumacher had found a resonance between how these designers had harnessed the forces arising naturally from the geometry of structural surfaces, and the Hadid practice's parametric approach. They learned lessons from these pioneers, and the rest of the exhibition showed how they had realised them. Dominating the Arsenale room was an installation of pleated steel called ARUM, but just as spectacular was a row of spot-lit curvy surface models, all hanging pristine and white

Ground-floor plan



13



14



12 (previous pages) – A great curved way descends to the outer skin's signature dip, which has been called 'the Nureyev moment'

13 – The curl penetrating the welcome area's facade gives little indication of the museum volume behind

14 – A great first-floor tunnel-bridge is devoid of straight surfaces



15 - The auditorium, clad in American hardwood, is the only interior space that is not white

like manta rays. These were recent Hadid designs, including the Aliyev Center's exterior shell, the Serpentine Sackler Gallery extension and London Olympic Park's Aquatics Centre. At the Serpentine, Hadid had made two tensile structures before (the 2000 pavilion and a 2007 marquee), but the latest is the first permanent structure, configured on five columns shaped like Chinese soup spoons to scoop in light through skylights, over a restaurant adjoining the 1805 gunpowder store converted to a gallery. Though tiny compared to the Heydar Aliyev Center, it is a sibling, not just in being informed by the same research, but also in its white fibre glass skin (here a membrane rather than panels) and its dramatic plunge to touch the ground.

Candela's work leaves perhaps the clearest visual clues in the Aliyev Centre. The Spanish-born architect was exiled to Mexico where his feats of thin concrete engineering include the Los Manantiales restaurant at Xochimilco, Mexico City (1958), a pavilion structure of eight radial hyperbolic paraboloid saddles, which form arches to sit under. (By chance, it was crudely cloned in Baku in the Sixties for the waterside Pearl Restaurant). Interestingly, the Aliyev Center's 'Nureyev' point is also produced by a hyperbolic paraboloid, although distorted, and the facade housing the museum beside it echoes Candela works like the Bacardi Rum Factory, Cuautitlan (1960). However, as Bekiroglu points out, 'the relationship to the ground is different. Our building emerges out of the ground, Candela's restaurant is

more like an object which landed there'. (Hadid built a structure directly based on another of Candela's paraboloid-based projects in Beijing for the China Architecture Biennale last year).

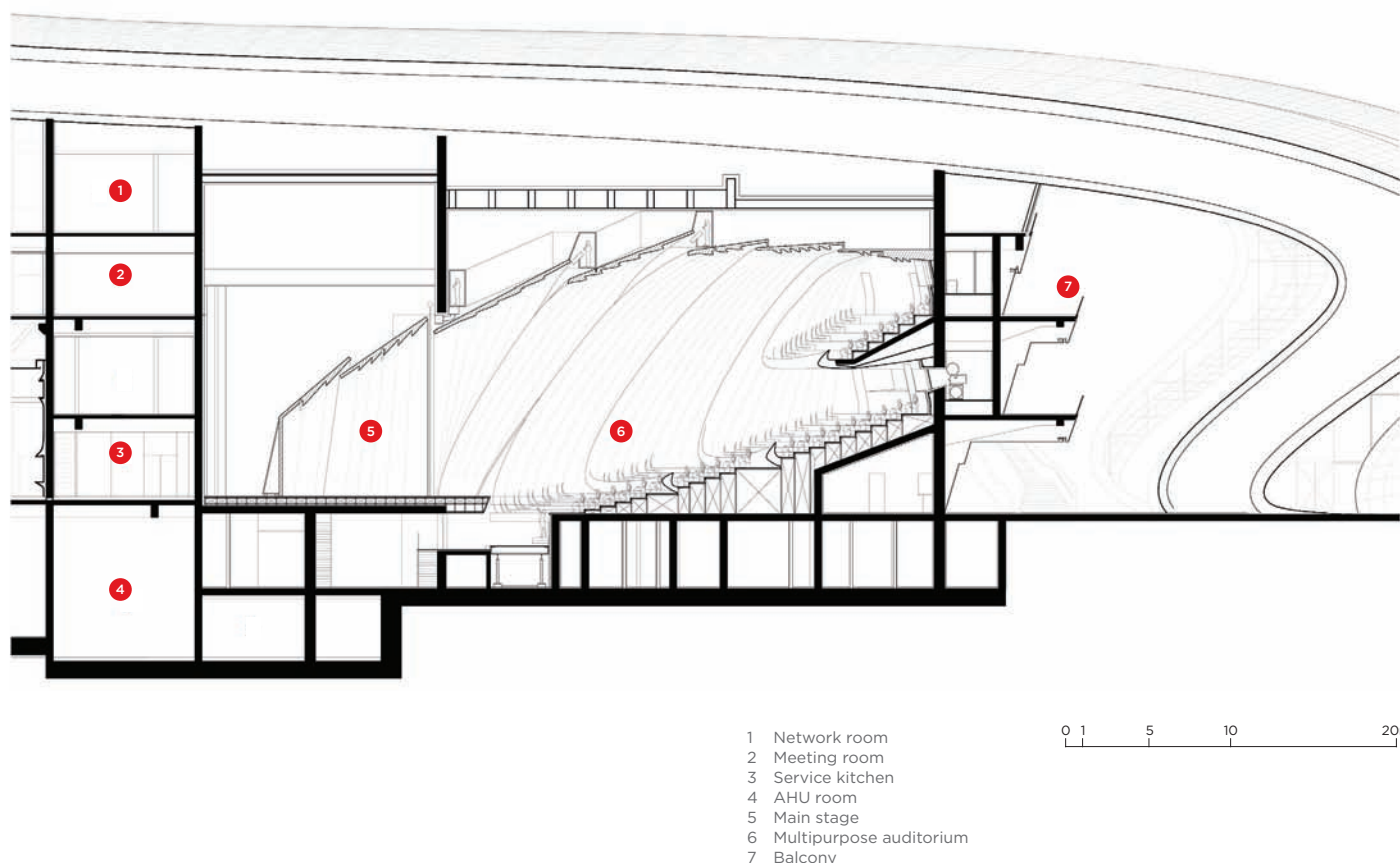
Schumacher comments that 'modernist engineering was based on dividing [a design] into different parts. Good for calculation, but bad for structural integration'. However, 'it's all coming together' with the digitisation of design, engineering, construction and so on, which now enables something with the complexity and vision of the Heydar Aliyev Center to be built.

With the West's current austerity, surely such projects are outmoded, as design gets back to basics? 'I reject that argument,' says Schumacher. 'Even if growth is slow, culture keeps evolving.' He maintains that forward-looking, new-build structures are getting 'materially lighter, more efficient', making them 'more competitive' against traditional buildings.

The Heydar Aliyev Center is one of those surprising projects that unexpectedly puts a city on the architectural map, like Utzon's Sydney Opera House or Gehry's Guggenheim Bilbao. With its lessons from past masters of thin sculptural surfaces, it also headlines a new wave within the expanding cornucopia of visionary projects from one of the most original architectural thinkers of our times. Not least, the sublime centre is a giant step forward in Hadid's journey into total fluidity. ►

For the story on lighting the Aliyev centre, see page 233

Auditorium section



HADID ON BAKU

The architect speaks to Blueprint about her approach to creating the new Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku

16



Blueprint: The Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku and the Serpentine Sackler designs are both characterised by fluid roofs that dramatically plunge to kiss the ground. Is that a coincidence?

ZH: The office works more like a school of thought, and there are lots of ideas and influences that nurture each other. Actually, if you look at the Aquatics Centre and Aqua Table, you can see the consistency and research in how to relate to the ground.

Blueprint: Was there an initial concept sketch for the Heydar Aliyev Center design?

ZH: It is more than a singular, initial sketch in the conventional sense. There are references within our research and repertoire of projects that explore architecture as landscape. The computer was used by the team at an early stage as it gives much greater understanding and control of complex geometry.

Blueprint: Does the fluidity of those designs ultimately have any root or inspiration in Arabic script?

ZH: It is the mathematics – the mix of logic and abstraction. I became interested in geometry while studying mathematics [at Beirut University, before moving to London]. I realised there was a connection with the logic of maths to architecture and the abstraction of Arabic calligraphy. Geometry and mathematics have a tremendous connection to architecture.

At the beginning of the 20th century, certain abstract movements in art were looking at figurative art, and also certain geometric abstractions, as well as Arabic calligraphy. I'm absolutely sure the Russians – Malevich, in particular – looked at those scripts. The calligraphy you see in architectural plans today is to do with the notion of deconstruction and fragmentation in space.

Blueprint: You used to talk of 'the drawing as an explosion', but has this idea matured into a less fragmented vision, as projects integrate into their architectural and urban settings, such as the Serpentine's Magazine building or a hillside in Baku?

ZH: I have always been interested in the concept of fragmentation and with ideas of abstraction and explosion, where we were deconstructing ideas of repetitiveness and mass production. So the work started out with abstraction. But my ambition was always to create fluid space – on all levels. The layering process increases the complexity to where the buildings become like a landscape. It's not linear; it changes according to what is appropriate for the project. ■

17



16 – Zaha Hadid

17 – A model of the Heydar Aliyev Center skin hung in ZHA's Venice Biennale 2012 installation 'Arum'

18 – The Serpentine Sackler Gallery extension beside the re-purposed Magazine building, built in 1805

18





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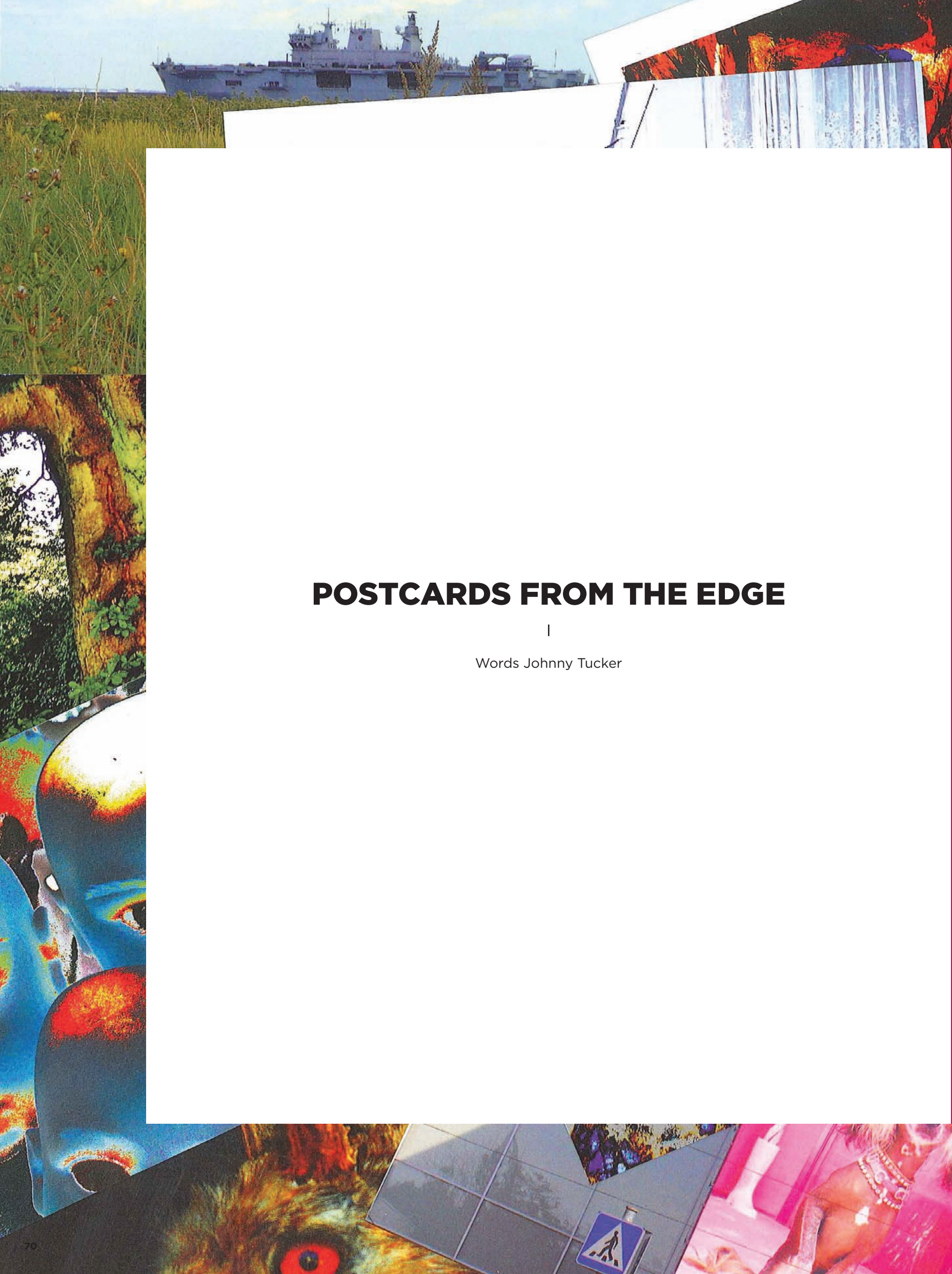
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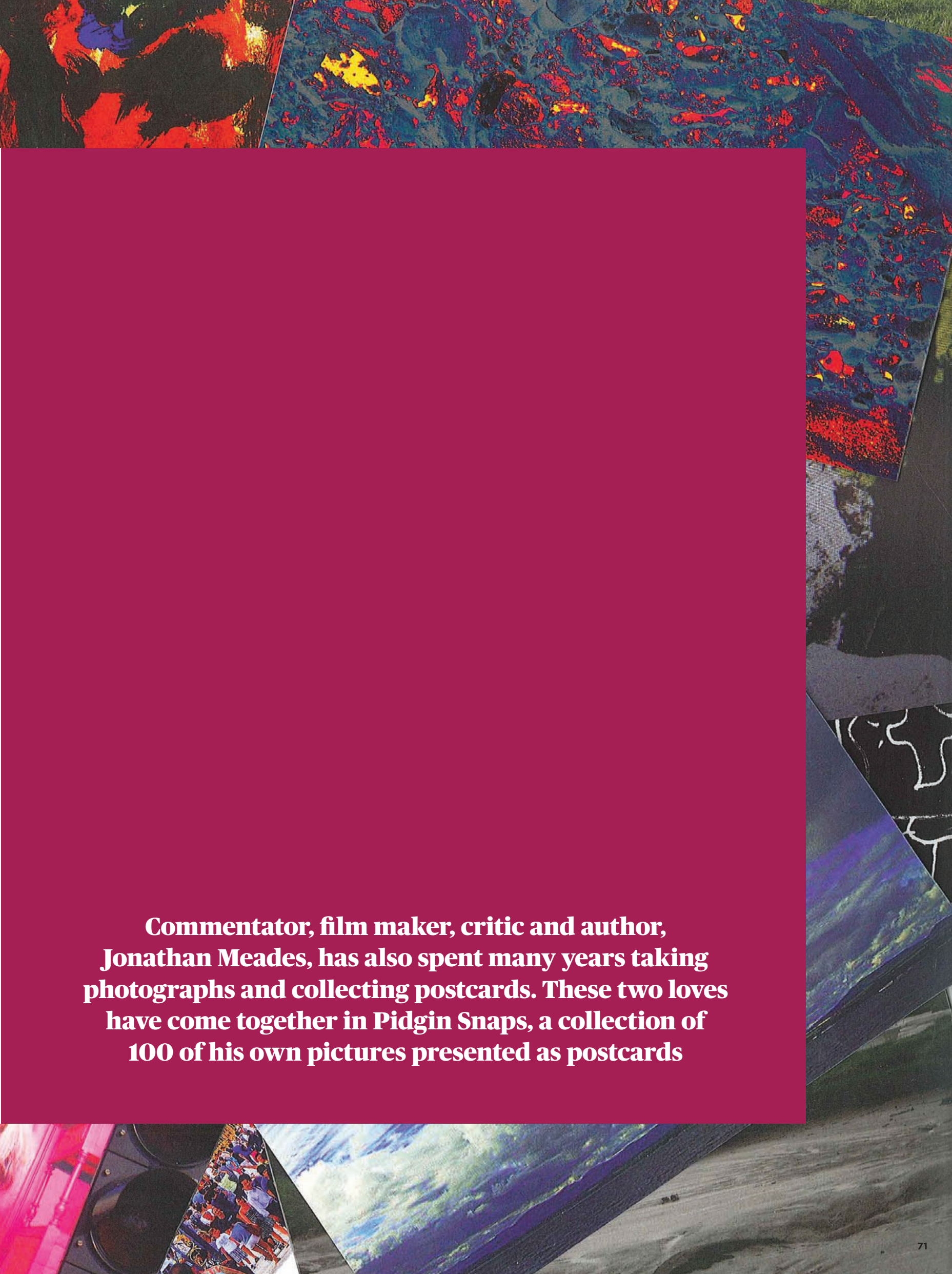
Fluent in Lighting



POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE

|

Words Johnny Tucker



Commentator, film maker, critic and author, Jonathan Meades, has also spent many years taking photographs and collecting postcards. These two loves have come together in *Pidgin Snaps*, a collection of 100 of his own pictures presented as postcards

on the subterranean caterpillar
nifies the host filling its body
ich hardens into a sclerotium.
erges from the remnants of the
ed in central and eastern Asia
ever hopeful in those regions).

Post Card

Place
Stamp
Here

Three horizontal lines for a stamp.

"They come from the night, howling, ululating, rushing on a wind belloyed
by the smith of fire." Liz Loodmer, *Extra Sandwiches for The Trip*.
© JONATHAN MEADES
UNBOUND

POST

Unbound 61 / 100

Wilf The Jawbone's house on Lewis.
He was said to live on a diet of kelp.
© Jonathan Meades

Hulks at Heybridge Basin near Maldon. A greengrocer h
redundant apostrophe year's before anyone else in 1970. ©

PO

Rural habita
movemen

POST CARD

The portal of la Major, M
Among the greatest of m
Architects: Léon Vaudroyer at

© Jonathan Meades Unbound 64 of 100

POST

The Green Man of Knowledge lives east of the moon and west of the stars. He has three
daughters, two black, one white. They turn into swans when they bathe. © Jonathan Meades

POST CARD



A rare example of Negative Primitivism. Incised in the bark of Kerr's Balsam whose seeds are believed to have been carried from Benin to Bahia on slave ships.

© Jonathan Meades

Postcard

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

STCARD

Thurrock's church is sandwiched between this warehouse and an equally magnificent detergent works which resembles a refinery.

© Jonathan Meades

Unbound
66 / 100

Stifice
at Tilbury.

Unbound 72 / 100

POST CARD

Unbound
77 / 100

UNBOUND

Jonathan Meades, writer and broadcaster, critic and

raconteur, delights in life's spice and the details that others miss, the spaces and events in between the big happenings that grab everyone's attention. Known for his TV discourses and prose, he's also a keen photographer with a magpie eye. Some of his most recent snaps – all taken on an HTC smartphone or pocket Sony digital camera – have just been published, not as a book, but as a box (a 'boxette', according to Meades) of 100 postcards entitled *Pidgin Snaps*.

The subject matter is suitably scattergun and often linked, mainly geographically, to projects he's recently worked on. They are very much snaps. They are not great studies in photographic technical excellence, though some have been set up, particularly a number of the abstract liquid-marbling images. The other pictures range from abandoned vehicles to forests of road signs, from architecture with a capital A, such as an interior of Hopkins' Westminster Tube station, to 'hideous' French bungalows, and from the view from a ferry to bucolic scenes of loveliness.

What really lifts this set of fairly disparate images to a new level is the device of turning them into postcards. Not only does this make you stop and look at each one, you can turn them over to find a series of captions and comments that range from the banal through the patently ludicrous to the preposterous-yet-highly-credible. These little notes occasionally lift the cards into the realms of the sublime. The vast majority of the nutritional factoids and pithy 'quotes' are completely made up and so very well reflect the nature of Meades as a highly educated, impish bruiser, mixing high culture and low-brow language, scattering intermingled knowledge and mischievous confusion in his wake.

He wrote a piece for *The Guardian* on these postcards and littered that too with 'facts' that many will take at face value, but are completely fictitious: The 'neeb', he claims in the piece, is the quadrangle showing you where to affix your stamp and named after Dieter Neeb, a publisher from Fulda in Bavaria. It's made more plausible by the 'fact' that until 1914, 70 per cent of the world's postcards were made in this southern German town, or so he claims. The neeb is probably an internet fact by now, complete with its own Wikipedia page.

He clearly has a love of this cardboard ephemera, particularly mass-produced gallery memento takeaways, and those picturing French post-war architecture from Les Trente Glorieuses. He lives in L'Unité in Marseille (Le Corbusier, 1947) though that doesn't make it into the 100 ('it's been over-photographed').

This highly personal boxette brings together two of his loves: postcards and photography. He has many other loves of course, including 'bestiality', he quips, and happily that also doesn't make an appearance here – though it does in his fiction, including *Pompey*. I caught up with him over a cup of coffee (me) and lapsang souchong tea (him) in a central London hotel right across from the editing suite where he was working on a cut of his latest TV outing, *Concrete Poetry: Bunkers, Brutalism, Bloodymindedness*, which is due to screen on BBC4 in February.

Easy-going and charming, his plummy drawl scattered with expletives entices you into his world of entwined fact and fiction. He's personally very pleased with the postcards and begins to tell me why: 'I'm not terribly well versed in the history

of postcards, but I collect them. I have been to postcard fairs, but the prices are ludicrous, so I buy them in bulk in France in street markets. I buy postcards of all sorts, but particularly architectural ones. I buy postcards wherever I go, when I go to galleries for example – you can own a Holbein for a quid.

'I have these wonderful transparent holders, which hang from a chandelier and they are double-sided and each side takes about 100 cards, and I've got boxes full as well. The Unité doesn't have particularly high ceilings though, apart from in the double-height sections.

'I also buy photography books. I'm very appreciative of photography like Bill Brandt's, Joel Sternfeld's, Tony Ray-Jones' and Martin Parr's, but I don't know any thing about it. What's more, I mistrust architectural photography – much of it is a lie.

'The impetus for these pictures was when I got my first digital camera and I went into a car wash somewhere in Somerset or Devon and started taking picture of the rollers through the windows. I ended up with abstract expressionism without any pain. So I started taking photographs through car windscreens in rain storms and then I started effecting rainstorms by getting plastic bags and filling them with different colour liquids of different viscosities to get these marble effects. The image on the cover of the book is actually brake lights of the car in front of me in a rainstorm (9).

'The subjects are inanimate things that take my fancy. I love rusting machinery – you can never go wrong with rust – but it's not much photographed. I don't understand that. There's not much here that would be recognised as architecture. I like taking picture of the interstitial spaces – the areas in between the buildings. I find that really interesting. There's a little bit of architecture, such as Westminster Station by Hopkins (1). It's one of my favourite places in London. I mean the inside, not that bit on top – that's reprehensible, making a nod to Norman Shaw's New Scotland Yard and it doesn't work.

'An architect friend of mine told me I really should publish my pictures. I knocked ideas around with the publisher John Mitchinson and came up with this idea of the postcards. I like photography and I like postcards and they go together. This is a way of doing photographs in a more throwaway way that was possibly useful, but that was also not a book. Because it's not a book you do have to look at them individually. That said, some of them you're going to say: "Well, what the fuck is this?" and move on to the next.

'It's called *Pidgin [Snaps]* because pidgin is a kind of mongrel language; it's a mongrel form, it's not art photography. It's not parody. I'm not attempting to do Parr's *Boring Postcard* or something similar. This has an impurity to it, a flaw, which is something I always strive for. Purity is a bore – chastity is a bore. I spend hours fretting over a sentence that I'm writing, but with this stuff I don't really give a toss. I just do it. If it works, fine, if it doesn't, fine.

'I have thousands of images and I chose these because they are ones I like myself, no other criteria. I don't approve of second guessing – the idea very prevalent in television is that you have to think about your audience. I don't give a fuck about the audience. They might be you, someone of my late mother's age or anyone, and if you try and gauge an audience you're lost. You just have to write, photograph and do



PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Westminster underground station. Michael Hopkins & Partners, 1999.
© Jonathan Meades

Unbound 1 / 100

POSTCARD

"Une dérive pavillonnaire qui gangrène nos paysages." Nicolas Sarkozy.

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

© Jonathan Meades

Unbound 5 / 100



Postcard

Turbid: all the characteristic marks of Hebridean Liddism are evident.
© Jonathan Meades



Unbound
9 of 100

POSTCARD

A colourful scene in Aberdeen dockyard!

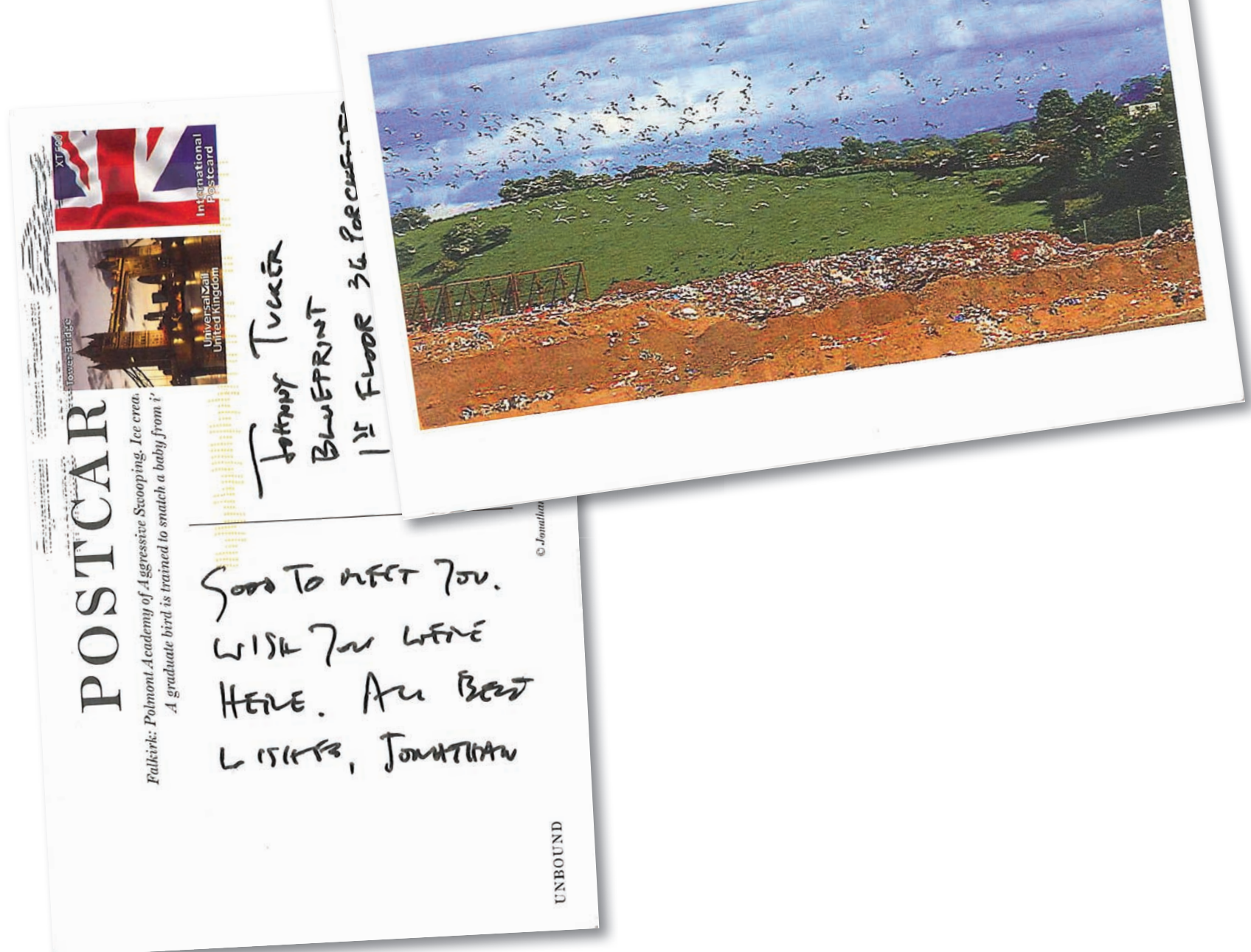
© Jonathan Meades



Don't forget to
affix a stamp!



12 of 100



everything for yourself and hope that someone else likes it.

'These pictures are reflective of the films I've been doing, so there are a lot of Scottish wastes. In fact I was up in Lewis the other day and I did drive around to check there were still lots of vehicles sinking into the ground. They are still there, thank god, just a bit more rusty and slightly more sunken. One had disappeared; it wasn't all that far from the track so I think someone had pulled it out. It was a cherry-coloured Austin Metro.

'It's truly extraordinary, I showed the film I was working on at Faclan, the Hebridean literary festival, and I expected to have an incredibly antagonistic audience, but they all loved it. It was actually saying something truthful about their island instead of just banging on about wonderful beaches and black pudding.

'Some of the postcard captions are dead straightforward, some of it is comedy, and some of it is malicious and bitchy and in the worst possible taste. I did them very quickly; it's much more perspiration than inspiration. We hadn't really thought about the captions until quite late on in the process so they had to be done quite quickly. There are various quotes from made-up writers. The whole thing is a fabrication, everything about this is completely bogus. It's a very peculiar thing to find oneself doing!'

At this point he grabs the boxette and start reminiscing: 'This is something I was absolutely drawn to in Marseille (21) and this one (20) was my rather joyous Christmas card a couple

of years ago. That is around the corner from L'Unité (25) and that is one of the few that is actually beautiful (38). It's a very remote place almost into Lithuania. The nearest town was Druskininkai, which is a deeply strange spa town. There's this chunk of late-Soviet architecture, which in the film I've done about it I call Leonid Brezhnev plays the sounds of Vegas.

'That's in western France (5) and the film was about the American influence on France, which is absolutely palpable, but the French won't acknowledge it. There is this kind of homestead mentality of building hideous bungalows which are all over France, mushrooming in a really bad way.

'That is the cover of Pompey (13) but it wasn't taken in Portsmouth, I took it in Aberdeen. I particularly like this (31) as it show the real grimness of north-east Scotland. It's the nearest I'd ever get to social realism. It feels like it's a different era up there.

'I like these pictures for their own sake and I'm sure if I was a proper photographer I would dream up a manifesto and rationale, but since I'm not I don't feel that I have to. I don't know if people will send them but I hope so. One thing I should say about them is that they are extremely underpriced. It's a good deal – they work out at about 15p each! In the National Gallery, postcards are a quid a piece or more.'

Both Meades and his postcard box, as it turns out, are very good value. ■

POSTCARD

*Beside a used car lot specialising in 4x4s. Security was abundant.
Not worth risking the wrath of the dogs by photographing them.*



13 of 100

Postcards



Lunch time on a Baltic cruise vessel. The moment, then, to retire to a picnic
in one's cabin and so avoid norovirus, diarrhoea, plague, purple fever.



POSTCARD

"They could hear the sound of scaffolding being dismantled in the distance."
Jenner Vavra, *Never Take a Photo of a Single Magpie.*

PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Unbound 20 / 100



21 of 100

© Jonathan Meades
Île Maire: it is delusional to consider landscape threatening. Rocks are inanimate. Nonetheless ...



© Jo

Answer a simple question and enter the draw to be the one who turns off the life support of _____
(Fill In Name Of Top Celebrity) who's in a coma following a Tragic Tanning Incident. It's what he/she would have wanted.

Unbound 25 of 100

Essex by night. The NFU has no statistics about the proportion of its members who enjoy a loving relationship with livestock.

Post Card

Place
Stamp
Here

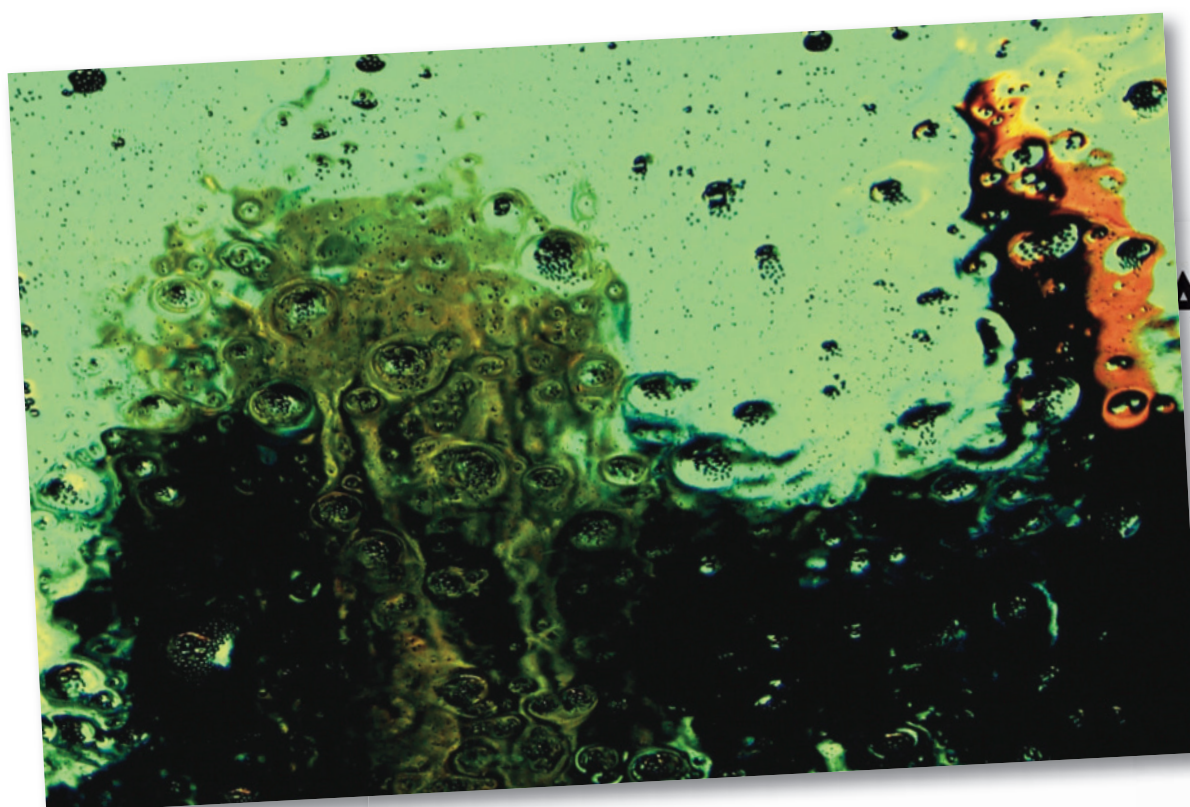
Unbound 28 of 100





Fraserburgh. Hometown of the serial killer Dennis Nilsen. Fraserburgh FC's local derbies against Peterhead were keenly contested. But Peterhead has been promoted from the Highland League to the Scottish League. Local derbies against Buckie Thistle and Inverurie Loco Works will be keenly contested. © Jonathan Meades

Unbound • 31 of 100



ARD

Place
Stamp
Here

Unbound 32 of 100

"Octopus comb with fetus mousse in equilibrium." A seminal Liddist work. © Jonathan Meades



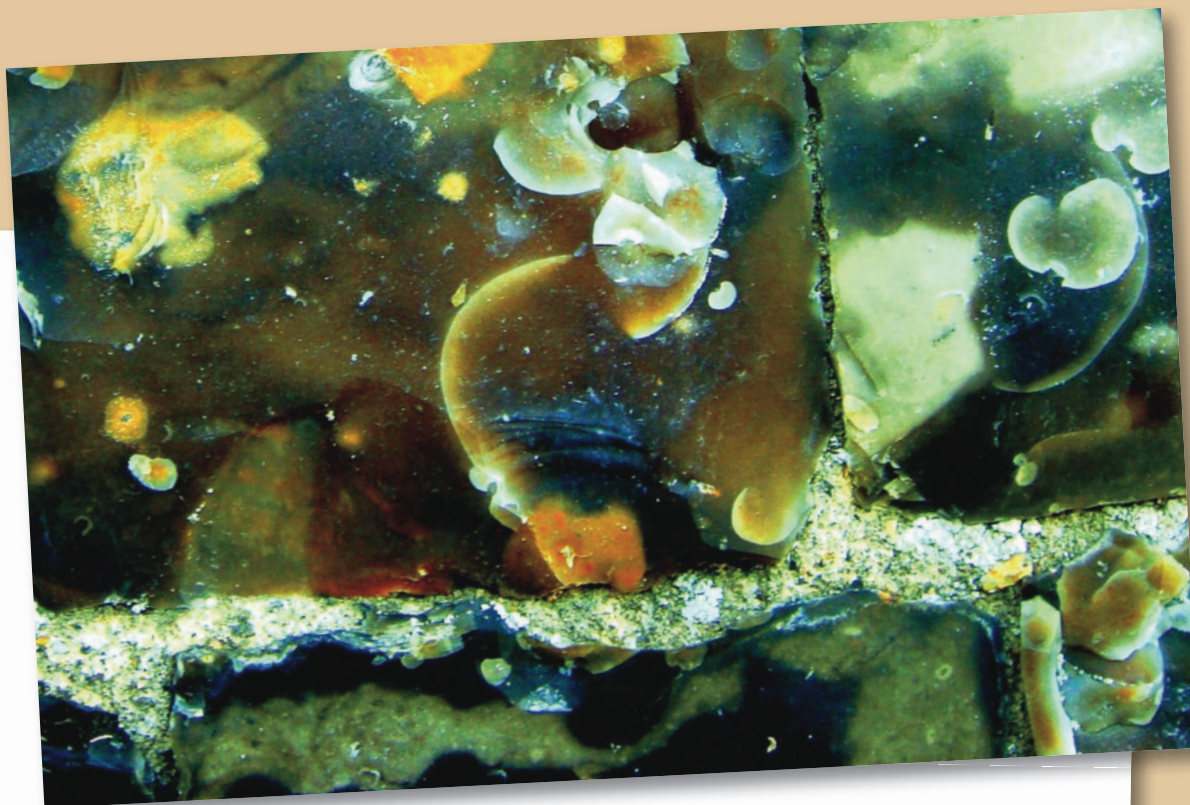
Głębokie, eastern Poland, near the Lithuanian border. The field system is unusual — it hasn't been fragmented into ever narrower strips by successive generations, each getting their share.

© Jonathan Meades Unbound 38 of 100



Unbound 42 of 100

Dr Spencer Prestige specialises in the hymenal reconstruction of Muslim girls who have to be "virgins" when they marry.



Flint, part of the flushwork decoration of St John's Abbey gatehouse, Colchester. The stone would have come from elsewhere. Flint, however, is abundant in Essex chalk. © Jonathan Meades

UNBOUND 51 of 100

The Isle of Harris. The most profound of mysteries: how do you dump a blue Transit in the middle of a peat bog which is seemingly impossible to drive across and which is 400 metres from a metalled road? The fact that Kenny McFerral has found a means of doing so points to another triumph for mankind.

© Jonathan Meades

POSTCARD





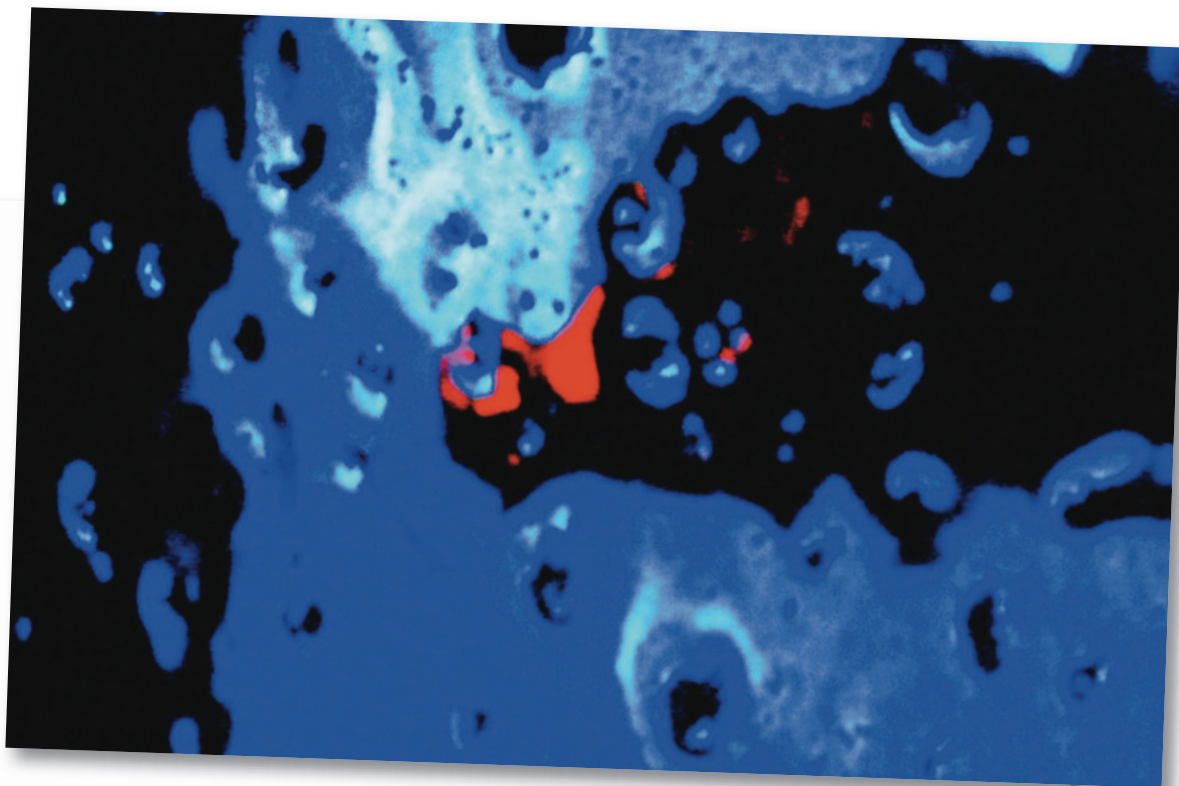
Why? How? Can Kenny McFeral, Dougie Nae-Mates and Kirsty The Beard really turn it over by themselves? Are the furies of scrap on hand to help out? You are of course reminded of the culmination of Phèdre. This is one for Racine. © Jonathan Mendes
Unbound 60 of 100



Another Harris moor, another blue Transit, this one weighed down with builder's rubble which makes the achievement of getting it into place all the greater.
© Jonathan Mendes

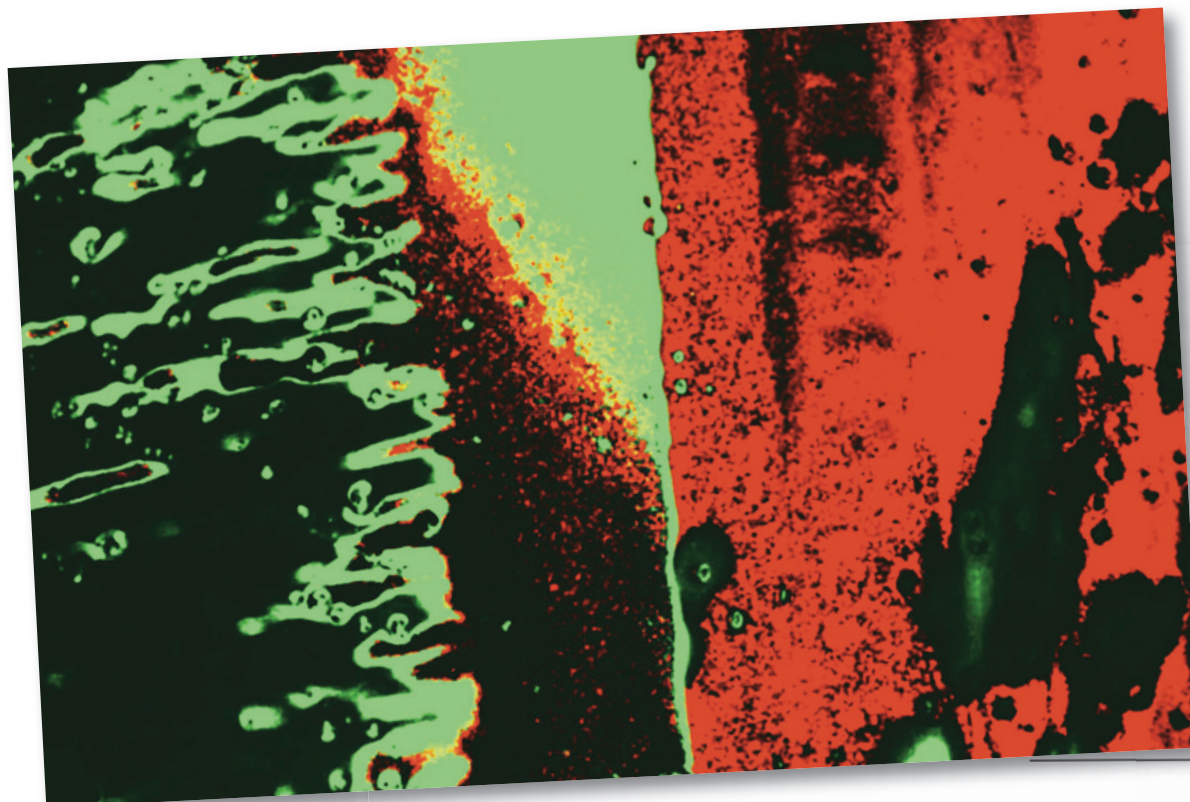
Unbound

73 of 100



Detail from the title sequence of Baby Trawl, a forthcoming reality TV show in which caring celebrities Sally Ber-Cow, Ann Spackman, Richard Bacon and Gregg Wallace compete to adopt the most disadvantaged, most multiply disabled, most gravely diseased Third World baby money can buy and give it a life of Fairtrade luxury in one of London's most prestigious postcodes. The show enjoys the Organic Seal of Bono Approval.

© Jonathan Meades



"The experimental farm where Vanier and Phimister attempted to breed a new species by crossing humans with horses and pigs is now no more than a series of ruinous, mostly roofless brick sheds sprouting buddleia and strangled by ivy."
Brewster Horrocks, *Breast Milk Cheese and Placenta Fritters*.

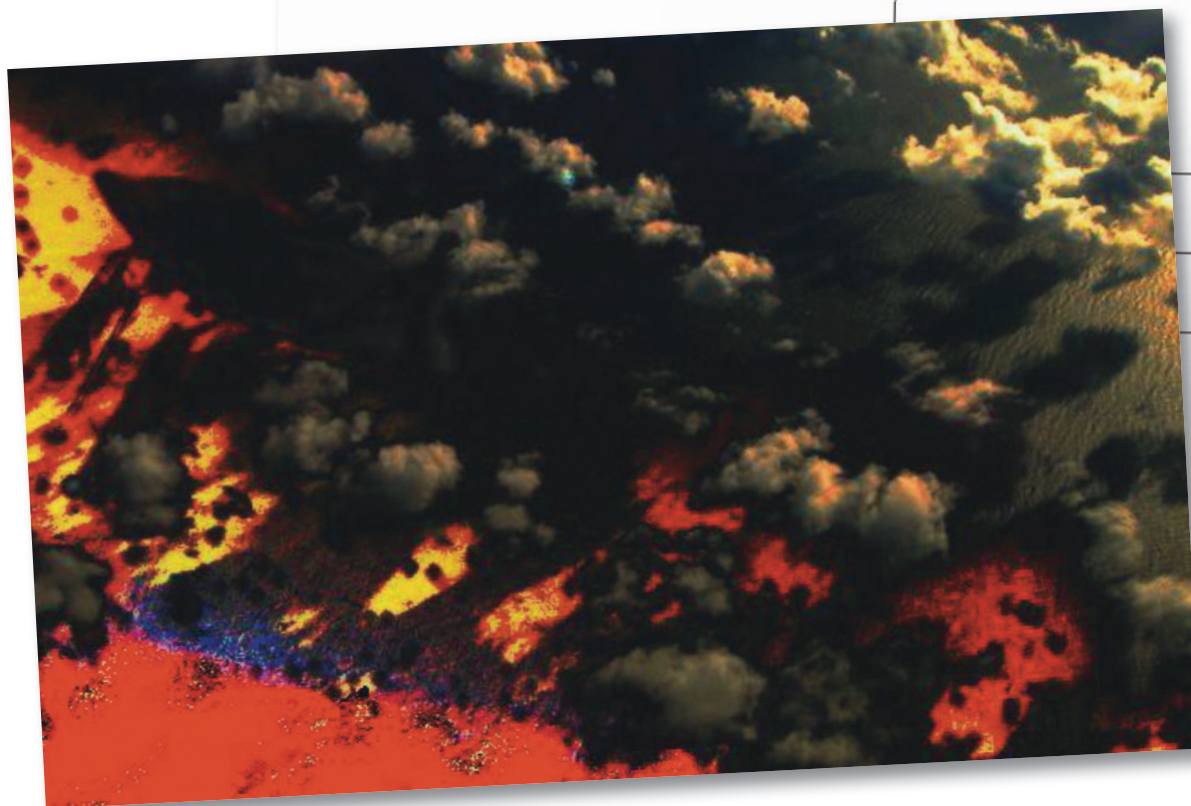
© Jonathan Meades

Unbound 89 / 100

He moves in mysterious ways. Mysterious is a euphemism for destructive. But apocalypse isn't at hand. And it won't look like this. Despite an education at Marlborough and Oxford Peter Medawar first read the Bible (Gileads) in an American hotel room. He wrote home to his wife: "My dear, the people!" And he warned her to make sure that such a book did not fall into the hands of the children.
© Jonathan Meades

Post Card

Place
Stamp
Here



PLACE
STAMP
HERE

The artist and his lovely personal assistant.
© Henri de Corinthe

UNBOUND
100/100



Shaped differently.

*We all know men and women are shaped differently.
Considering the differences, you would expect to find
many chairs specifically designed for women.
We were surprised to find there were none at all.*

*So together with designer Monica Förster we made Lei
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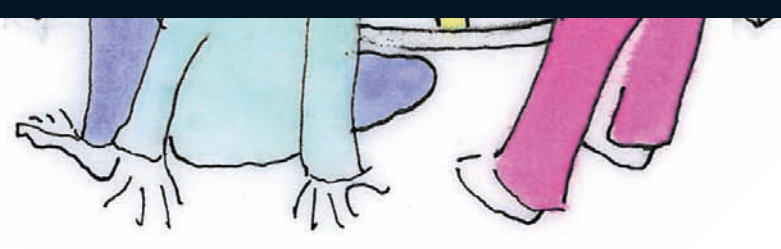
Officeline *lei*



IF YOU BUILD IT

|

Words Shumi Bose





Self-build, custom-build, collective custom-build – we’ve always been a nation of DIY lovers, and now the British housing crisis is spurring on several do-it-yourself alternatives to the hegemony of the volume housebuilder. Blueprint has assembled a panel of architects, developers, researchers and strategists to share their perspectives on this emergent field

We are going
to build it ourselves ...
Mum says I can help plant the trees
and ...
We are going to get giant
hammocks between the houses!



it's security for the kids

gardening club

... build my own
Glamour bathroom

a really professional kitchen...
breakfast parties in
the sun

babysitting clubs..
be great for them to live
next door
.. after school club



It will come as no surprise to most readers that the UK is in a severe housing crisis – so scream the daily headlines. The Government's financial policies, intended to boost the market, will succeed in pushing up house prices further and, in any case, do nothing for those excluded from the housing ladder. At the same time, development policies have undergone chaotic changes in the past few years, from neighbourhood planning frameworks to reckless conversions of purpose. Viewed together with struggling market conditions, volume house builders have not been incentivised to get on with providing the numbers that we need.

While this knotted situation tightens, there is an emerging yet distinct current of do-it-yourself energy complicit between the construction professions and imaginative clients: a way out of the bind is sought through innovative models of self-build and its nascent offspring, collective custom-build (see Infographic, page 25). These terms can conjure flawed preconceptions: hippyish commune dwelling for the latter or private dream housing for the former. There are myriad definitions and interpretations, but what self-build and collective custom-build initiatives do have in common are the offer of side-stepping the large volume housebuilder, providing a greater degree of choice to the consumer, and a freedom from the banality of the minimum-standard designs which tend to be rolled out en masse. Other benefits – particularly in the case of collective build – include a greater sense of community, shared responsibility and neighbourhood interaction.

Across the Channel in Europe, particularly in Austria and Germany, self-build models such as Berlin's Baugruppen (see Listen, page 17) make up a major proportion of new-build housing provision. Further afield, the 'fideicomiso' collective building contracts common in Buenos Aires were featured in the British Pavilion at the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale, as an idea we might learn from. However self-build is not new to Britain: witness Walter Segal's much studied efforts to develop self-build models in the 1970s – conceived during another period of economic duress, but still valuable today. Despite the complexity of legal and planning issues in this country, increasing numbers of architects, researchers and even developers are looking into new ways of working, and they are backed by the Government's urgency to provide more housing; there is a definite building of momentum. For this special feature, Blueprint has invited a cast of players in the self, collective and custom-build field to share in their own words their thoughts and experiences.

1 (previous pages) – Cartoons illustrating the multiple desires of a collective building group, drawn by Cany Ash

2 (opposite page) – Gus Zogolovitch's own Zog House uses the split section to maximise use of space

SOLIDSPACE Gus and Roger Zogolovitch

SolidSPACE is on a mission to build 'homes to love', geared towards modern living without compromising on quality, efficiency or style. The designs are characterised by a split section form, allowing for a flexibility of function and maximal use of plots. Headed by father and son team of architect-turned-developer Roger and Gus Zogolovitch, SolidSPACE combines Roger's design and development experience – built over a career spanning four decades – with Gus' business acumen and enthusiasm for self-build.

Gus Zogolovitch: Eric Pickles has recently (Oct 2013) announced more governmental support for the idea of self-build. There seems to be a political and professional force behind self-build; with our company SolidSPACE, it is one of the key areas that we want to look into.

To rewind a little, I did my own self-build house several years ago – anyone who has done their own project is usually converted to the process. I wear another related hat, as a committee member of National Self Builders Association (NaSBA). According to NaSBA research, approximately one million Britons are actively looking how to do self-build now; the number of people who actually do it, is more like 10,000, a 99% drop off. We produce the least self-build as a percentage of new builds, as compared with places like Germany and Austria.

Incentivising the home owner

Gus: In basic terms, what self-build does is take the incentives away from the volume housebuilder and puts them back into the homeowner. A volume housebuilder is profit-driven; they pay for a piece of land and set house prices based on comparables, rather than the cost of producing units. So you can imagine what happens: units are often built as cheaply as possible or to maximise their number. When land is a scarce resource, and profit is the motivation, ultimately the thing that suffers is the house itself.

A self builder doesn't necessarily need a profit, or to build in terms of local competitive value. Mostly they're saying, 'I'm building something for myself, I want it to last, I'm going to spend what it takes.' There's a statistic that says the average cost of a new build speculative home is £170,000 and the average spend on a self-build is about £250,000. So people are basically spending more on their homes. And that spending more normally translates to better quality design, better quality of build and so on.

Developers versus self-builders

Gus: It's very small at the moment but the 'big boys' of development are looking at it – whether they will be able to pull it off too is difficult to say, as there might be a cultural mismatch. The problem is ultimately about scaling up. Our view is that in self-build people are so incentivised by all this good stuff – good design, longevity, building community – actually that's what drives us, our mission is to build really high-quality homes. The Government is putting a lot behind self-build – not least because self-builders keep building when there's a credit crunch – but also because it recognises the same thing: it's saying 'Let's try and support this sector'.

But you can't very easily support single self-builders; as a self-builder you need lots of intervention and help. What that has created is an interesting fledgling industry called custom-build. Custom-build is, in a sense, a hybrid between self-build and speculative development – it actually takes the speculation out of it and, to some extent, you get the best of both worlds. There are lots of definitions of custom-build, but the one that we use is to say that you get a developer to manage the process for you – so effectively you get a fixity of price and delivery, and a fixity of quality in some certain regards. Yet you are still in control of what you want to put into a house and you can have a lot more control about the house you want to live in.

Customer as client

Gus: Having control from the outset means that, as a customer, you effectively become the client. Recent – slightly scary – research suggests that approximately 75 per cent of us would not want to live in a new-build home, if given the option. In a way, that's where SolidSPACE comes in. We think we have a product that appeals to that majority – it's not the disagreeable standard, because we take the design, the feel and the client's needs very seriously. That's why for us custom-build fits very well with where we want to go as a company. It's attractive to our target market – people who want to have some control, as they're used to having some control in every other aspect of their lives. ►





If you're buying a car, you can have a whole load of customisation; your phone, I'm sure, is programmed with all sorts of apps to the ones that I have. It's almost a democratic ideal, and it's back to this collaborative sharing society: Twitter, for example is where we get our news from and people are watching things shared on YouTube – we're used to collaborating and actually creating content. We haven't seen that in housebuilding so much, and custom-build is about providing that opportunity.

Creative development

Roger: The interesting thing as far as I'm concerned is from the creative and design side of things – because I am an architect. But for the past 30 years I have engaged positively as a progression in my architecture career with my notion of commerce, as a developer. Those notions are to do with how the architecture profession lost its way in terms of having influence and control over what it makes.

I made a key decision that the only way that I could personally improve that influence was to move up the chain to become a developer – that is, a client in my own right. I derive pleasure from the notion that development is an art and that if you want to get good buildings, you have to treat it as a creative process and find a creative route to making it. Our project management skills are more like design management; more collaborative. As such, we've always had a very interesting,

robust collaboration working with architects like Matthew Wood, dRMM, Stephen Taylor, Meredith Bowles and most recently with AHMM – and engaging them in a creative process from the outset.

Of course, this comes from the background of architecture, but I'm now so embedded in the mechanisms of development: I believe that the only way a project is going to get better is if the client wants to make it better. The only reason the client will do that is if we determine the added value, which we begin to do at Solidspace. The work – the care, the thought, the time – that goes into our projects has to give it a financial benefit at the back-end, and that is the kind of premium that people are prepared to pay. So Gus's point about custom building is actually an incredibly interesting route that connects those two things together.

Allowing for choice

Roger: The reason lots of people shun new build is because the quality of housing produced by most housebuilders is so poor. People are voting with their feet and starting to say no. In this country you have a very limited supply of housing. You have the housebuilder, who has absolutely dominated – producing the 'bottom-end' in housebuilder parlance, right up to the top-end luxury level, often within the same company. The other side is social housing, which has its own set of problems. But we do desperately need a new kind of supply vehicle in this country and that's why I think custom-build is really interesting.

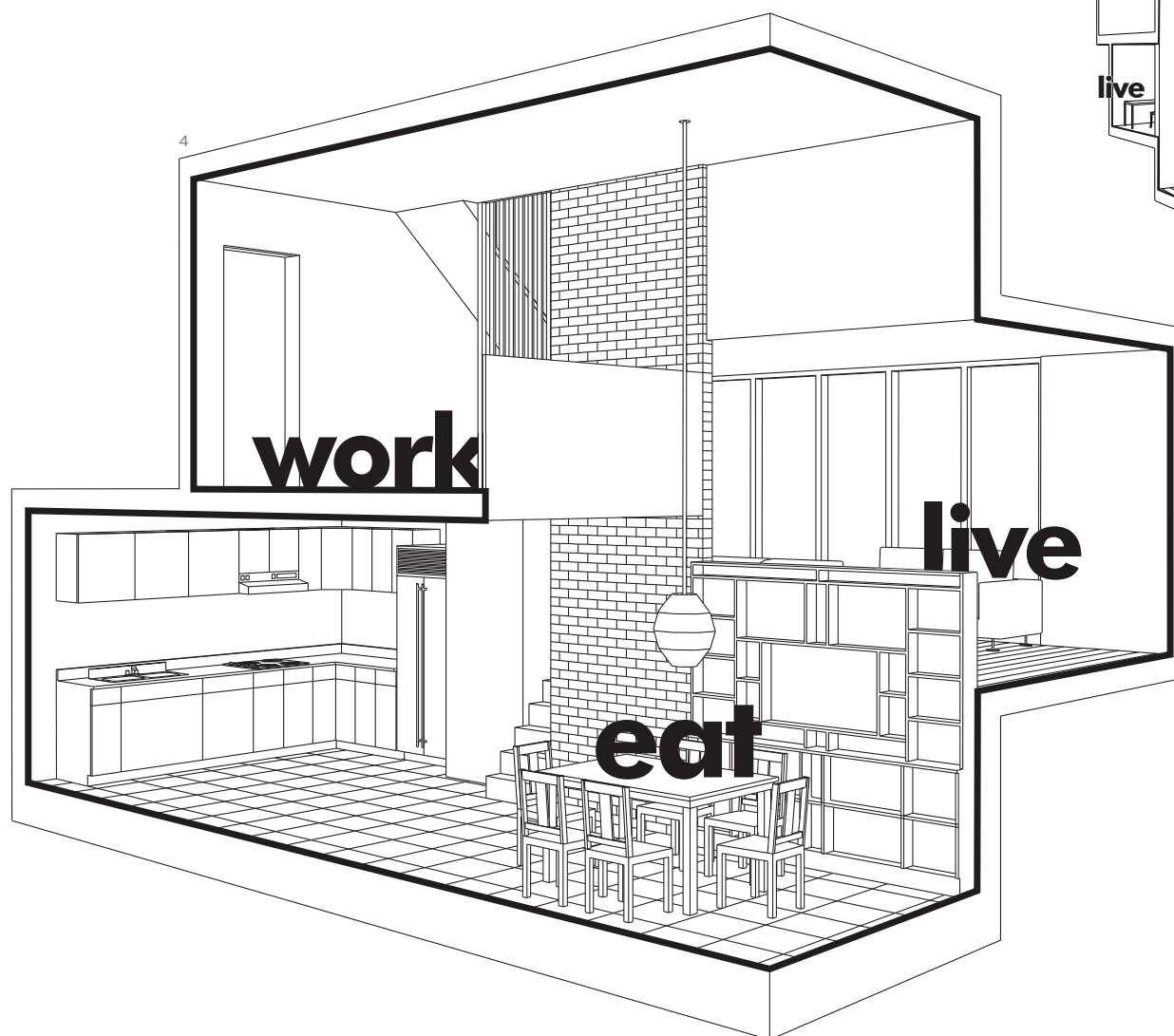
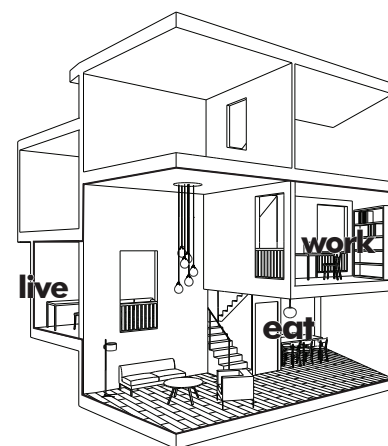
Gus: Ultimately in the UK, you only really have three options. One: you can go and buy an existing house, which may not give you the desired standard of efficiency or comfort. If it's not right for you, then you have to make the necessary refurbishments. Two is to go down the self-build route, but as I mentioned earlier so few people can actually make it happen. And the third option is to go and buy a new build. And so I suppose we see custom-build as a kind of fourth way, for those people who normally would be able and willing to see how they might adapt something existing – in a way that's just a form of custom build. What we're saying is that you can make new builds better, by engaging with the customer at the very beginning of the process.

We're also working with different types of groups – people at the beginning of their professional lives, or indeed at the end of their careers. That's interesting because some people are saying, 'We're priced out of the housing market, can we come together to do something, and can you help us?' And then others are saying, 'Actually, we all want to come together to live in the same place and grow old together, and we want to help our kids. Can you help us to do that?'

There are so many varied needs that we have as a society, which are simply not being catered for in the prevalent model of a big developer buying a tract of land and building what they think will sell – in the end, people will buy it because they think they've got no choice.

3 – Essex Mews: Splitting living areas across three levels gives a sense of movement and space

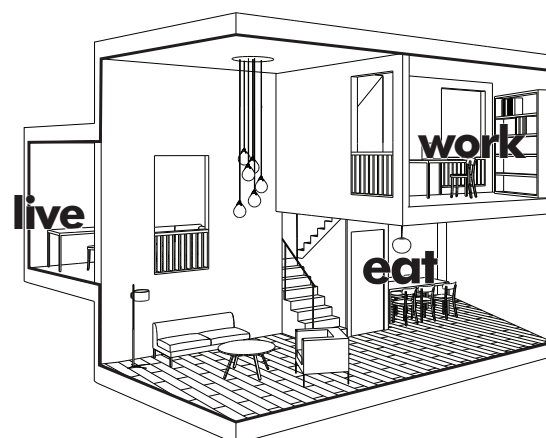
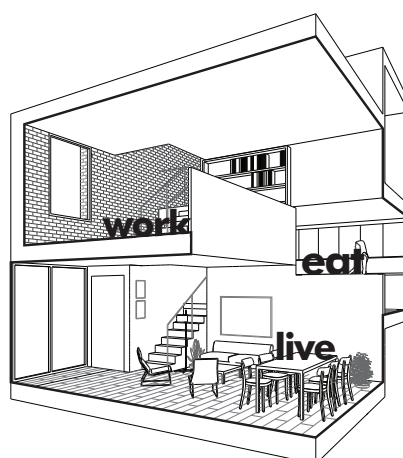
4 – Templates of house design customised according to the Solidspace DNA, featuring split levels and basic function



Get off my land

Roger: I do feel that we have to separate the notion of production from the ownership of land. The danger is that we've already put those two things together. The Government might well wonder why, after various schemes and cash injections to support buyers, we aren't getting volume from the housebuilders? I would answer that it is not in their interests. A housebuilder's primary business plan is about land, acquired in large tracts. If there is an increased supply of cash, that's going to drive an increase in house prices; if I'm sitting on a land bank of 10,000 units, and there's an increase in house prices, why would I accelerate my programme of delivery? It's against my interests – if I hold back, I'm more likely to get an increased price.

How do you then separate the ownership of land from the manufacture of housing? I think there's where the product then becomes important. This is being explored, for example, in things like prefabricated housing. If you bought a plot somewhere, you could find some 20 different prefab offers to put a house on that plot, from companies not interested in the ownership of your land but rather in the quality of that house. Both the American condominium and the co-operative model exist and thrive on similar ideas. You own shares and equity rather than land. The custom-build approach can create that deleveraged situation – which allows you as a producer to invest in the product itself. ►



'I do feel that we have to separate the notion of production from the ownership of land. The danger is that we've already put those two things together'



And that's all. You make sure that your product is attractive to your consumers; has all the capacity to vary what the consumers want; which is efficient, has a thermal capacity you want; is simple to manufacture – cheap to manufacture, so you can spend more money on space – all of the qualities you would expect any manufacturer to think about.

Gus: The model has been around since the mid-19th century; building societies were set up as mutual funds on a similar basis. Some local authorities are really trying to work out how they can provide affordable housing, either through sweat equity or by keeping the land itself. So if you're commissioning the first home, the land is owned by a community land trust (CLT); you only have to pay for the product. So when it comes to sell it, you still only have to sell the product, the stuff that sits on top.

I was at a custom-build conference yesterday – the first one in the UK – and it was very interesting to find out that there are a few of us doing it now, and that every one is following slightly different routes. But ultimately what I like is that it's all about the customer, it's giving value to the customer in a way that speculative development does not.

DAVID KOHN ARCHITECTS David Kohn

David Kohn is the founder of David Kohn Architects, a small, award-winning practice based in London. Projects include Sotheby's S | 2 space, Hackney Wick's creative hub The White Building, and most recently the Carrer Avinyó apartment in Barcelona.

During last year's Venice Architecture Biennale, DKA was invited by writer and curator Elias Redstone to think about the Argentinian model of 'fideicomiso' group building, a practice which has revived following the financial crisis. Kohn has used his teaching platform to explore what such a model might mean in the UK.

David Kohn: The practice has historically always been interested in building houses. Ever since our first house in Norfolk we've been trying to work out how you can scale up, from one home to many. But we are a small practice, interested in trying to retain a culture of searching and testing projects. And there are lots of people, established firms and markets who are doing standard, large volume housing schemes – and some of them do that quite well. We think we'd be better served by trying and think about how conventional models could be challenged.

We came across the research undertaken by the curator and writer Elias Redstone, who for his

work on the Venice Biennale had been speaking to a firm in Buenos Aires called Adamo Faiden – I was already aware of its beautiful work. We learned about the Argentinian fideicomiso contract which had enabled it to build so much, even when it was such a young practice. Essentially, fideicomiso is a fiduciary agreement, which allows the architects to bring a group of clients to an investment proposal for a piece of land. The group employs the architect together and in return, each investor gets a unit according to their specification. The group pays the architect for the design and to administer all these relationships, but they do not need to pay a developer to take planning or market risks. It is worth noting that in Buenos Aires they have very simple planning guidance that makes it quite straightforward to buy a plot and then know exactly what you can build on it; it's a gridded city and there's a rule book, which does help a huge amount.

Experimental research

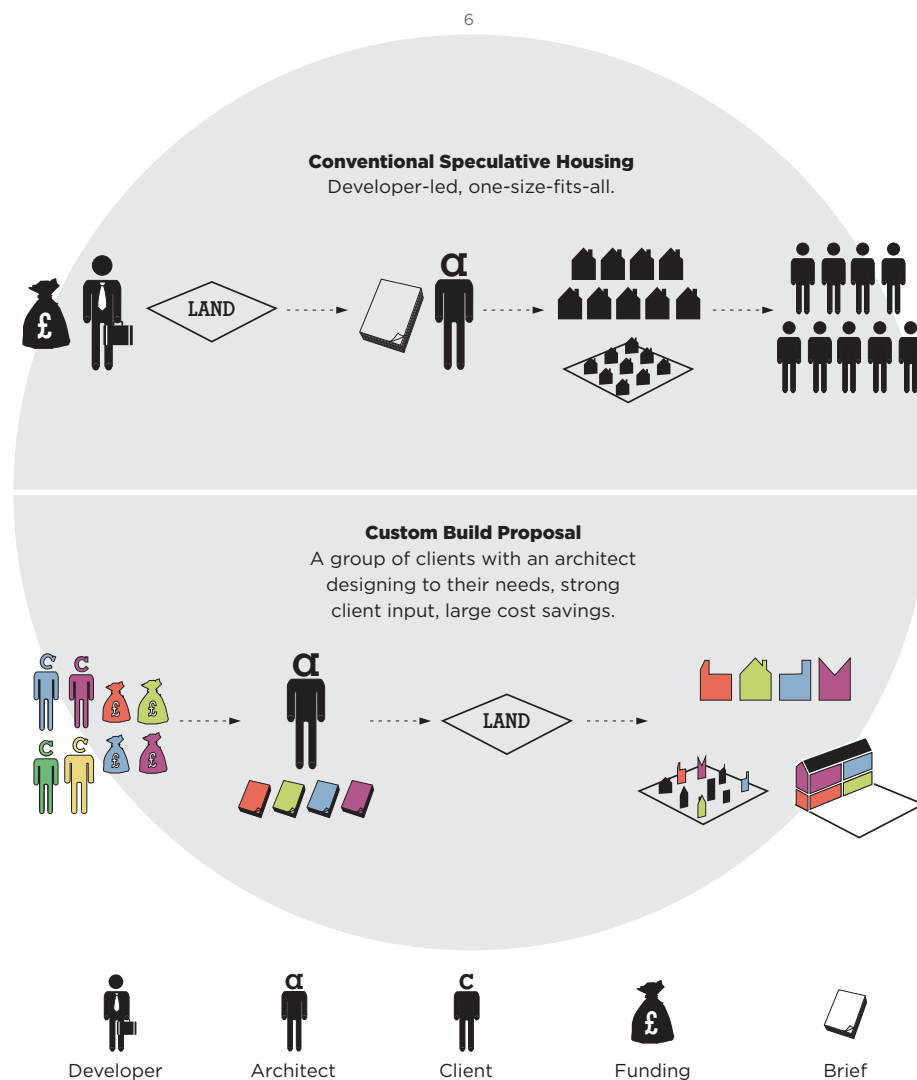
In response to these findings, we set up a research project at The CASS at London Metropolitan University, looking at what fideicomiso might mean for the UK – and also at all the existing ways that group custom-build might be realised. Our practice at DKA grew out of approaching collaborators through research, in a way to discuss potential projects or ways of working in a non-commercial context. In that way, you might be

5 – David Kohn imagines a British version of the 'fidecomiso' collective-built apartment block

6 – Procurement & choice diagram: standard cookie-cutter developments versus collective models

7 – Incremental development illustrating building phases

8 – Screen print made in collaboration with client, capturing a sense of desires and needs



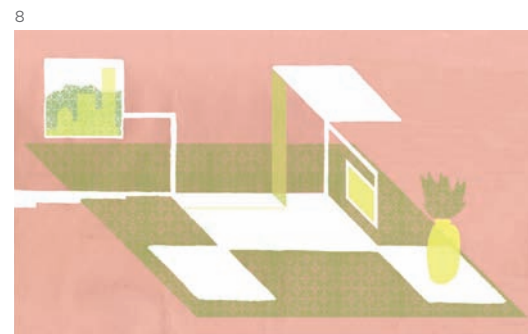
able to somehow explore risks that you wouldn't be able to try in a direct commission.

The unit within the architecture school acts like a sort of lab for experimentation. The people we tend to bring in are not only other architects or critics from other colleges, but also people from the industries that we are working with, and people who might be more like potential clients.

We had done some work for the Olympic Park Legacy Corporation (which became the London Legacy Development Corporation); we knew that it had historically advertised sites to have a custom-build component, and we knew that it had not delivered on that. So we asked it: 'Are you going to put your money where your mouth is, and could there be a scenario where we could explore the viability of those sites using custom build?' So over the course of the year, the students developed projects; we also went to Barcelona and found some ideas in the coherent, almost structuralist aesthetics in some of the housing projects there, which could work to give a place-identity to collective custom-build projects. Then we asked our students to go and find potential clients and negotiate.

Managing multiple clients

The idea is that rather than a kind of academic exercise, where professional architects talk to would-be architects about what architecture is, students would go and investigate talking to real clients and negotiate with them from the outset.



'The people we tend to bring in are not only other architects or critics from other colleges, but also people from the industries that we are working with, and people who might be more like potential clients'

Our work at DKA is very much driven by our clients; building this relationship is key to making business viable, so it seems odd that, at architecture school, the client is rarely even theorised.

In fact, we were trying to up the stakes in suggesting that in the future architects might be working on larger buildings with multiple clients. Architects in the UK are generally wary of being faced with many clients. Most architects in the UK are sole practitioners, building for one client per project. There's this idea of self-expression – and as *Grand Designs* tells you – of providing a dream. But how do you treat 10 people in that way? You can't; if you want to do group custom-build, you actually have to rethink what it means to be an architect. In the UK, group custom-build projects can take forever, because there's no vehicle for consensus on things that are necessarily shared.

If you look at these Argentinian models, the collective part – so the facade, the common areas, the structure – are super-simple and very consistent, even from building to building. So you see a lot of housing being built quickly, that looks very much like it is benefitting from some kind of coherent overview – yet, it's full of individuals or families who have had influence from the outset.

Reality and risk

Applying the CASS research into reality, we've been speaking to clients who approach our practice with housing requirements and are amenable to the idea of having a flat in a collective building. So we're testing our version of fideicomiso, if you like. We are able to show them how far a certain amount would go in a scheme like this, and if you think about it, you're getting a

new-build, to your specifications, in London. The cost for each individual client goes down; at a certain point you're exercising economies of scale through a pooling of their resources to employ you. The person who wanted us to find a site for their own house, get planning permission to build it, and employ us to build that one house, can now enjoy a house on that site for a sixth of the cost – if they're willing to co-invest with six other people.

Of course, it would not be like a conventional architect's appointment, so that's the bit we're trying to figure out now; to develop a working legal model. Hopefully, that becomes something we can offer to the profession, as a sort of protocol.

One of the main issues is managing risk. We want to remain a service provider, not a risk taker, so we have to allocate risk to each of the investors. Developers can take on risk; they spend their money to get you a plot of land with a house on it, and make money through passing that risk on to the buyer as a cost. Also, in the fideicomiso model at least, fees are paid in stages. Which means you can pull out at any point, and the other investors can buy your shares in the property. You don't want anyone to feel locked in, and you want the other investors to know that this model has sufficient flexibility so that it won't collapse.

Solving the bigger problem

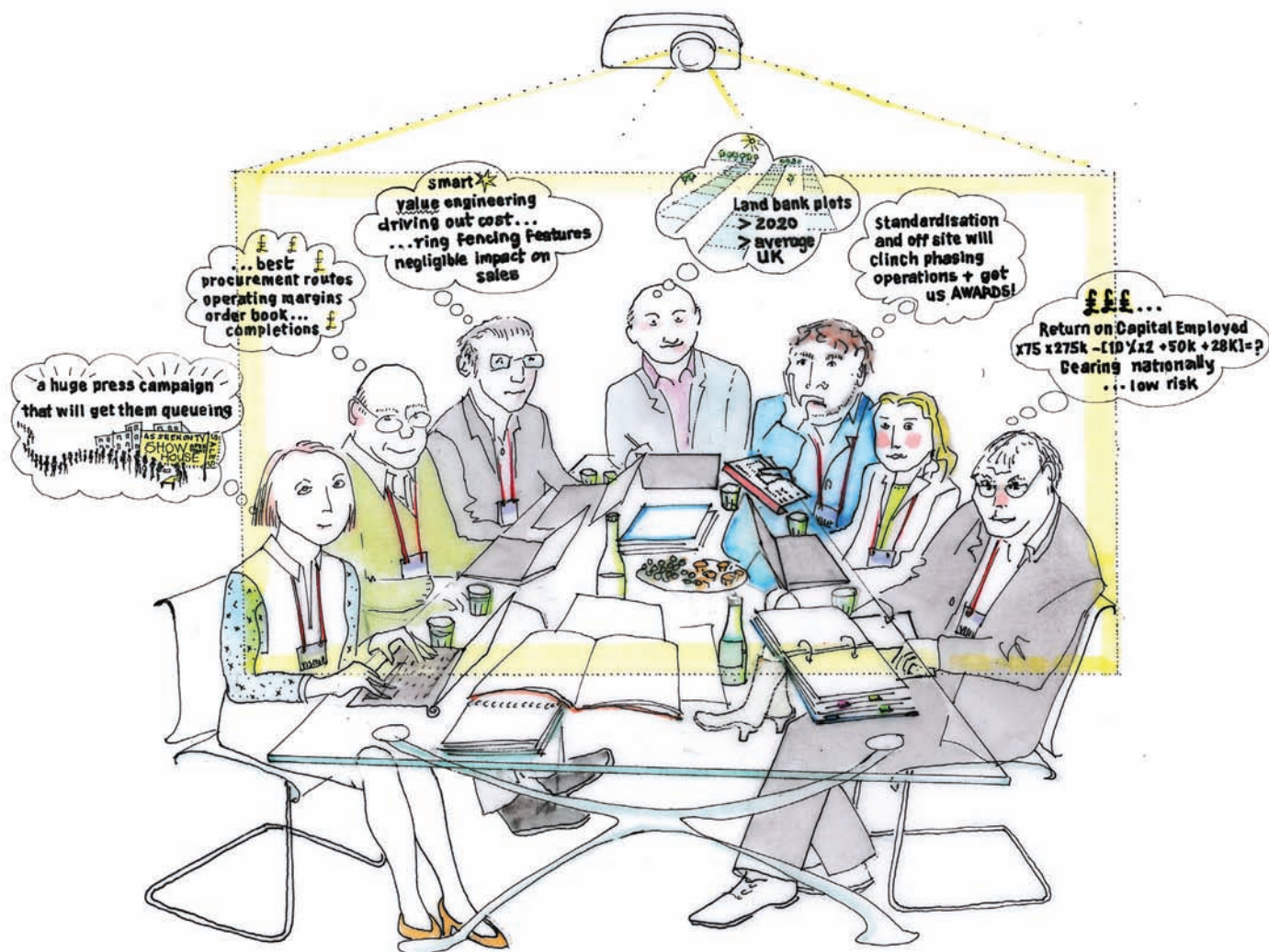
My feeling is that this isn't a panacea by any means; the proportion of new homes that are self-build is only something like seven per cent to 12 per cent. However, to even change the UK ratio of volume housebuilders to group custom-build or self-build by even a few per cent would be well worth it. It might be in part the legacy of social

housing, which has somehow fed into a slightly class-ridden idea of what it is to build at scale and to live that way. However, if you look at mansion blocks, dating from 50 years before the typical stigmatised council estates were built, you realise that 'collective living' was actually available to lots of different economic groups, at varying levels of luxury or provision.

We want to start where there is a realistic chance to actually deliver something through the opportunities presented to us. People do contact us because they love our design and because they'd like their own house. So through doing that, we can work out the hurdles of this sort of model. None of our current clients are the super-wealthy; professionals with families who would be owner-occupiers, not buying for investment. So if we work out that sort of model, it becomes possible to imagine what could happen if you're working with half the cost, or half the size. It is a conceivable hope that, as the model is repeated, then one could start to reduce the cost each time, even introducing possible funding models. This would make it more affordable – eventually it could attract people who wouldn't come to us directly.

At this stage we're not approaching mass housing; we're looking at the scale of about five or six units on plot sizes that are perhaps too big for a single house, but too small to interest a developer. It might not happen, if the risks cannot be entirely mitigated. But rather than coming up with definitive answers, or a model where you just push a button and houses come flying out of the other end, I think the way we'd hope to work, the way we enjoy working, is to constantly refine ideas, to keep working on it.





COLLECTIVECUSTOMBUILD.ORG Cany Ash

Cany Ash is a co founder, together with Robert Sakula, of Ash Sakula Architects, a small, imaginative, community-focused practice whose work has won a large number of RIBA awards as well as wide public acclaim. Cany has also worked for the Greater London Council (GLC) architects department and as a Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) enabler. She worked through 2013 to investigate Collective Custom Build, stemming from a research initiative at Sheffield University, producing website collectivecustombuild.org

Cany Ash: The way that things like self-build are defined is obviously crucially important. For some, it can actually mean physically building things yourself, whereas for others it usually means self-procured. Some statistics are a little out of date when looking at how much self-procured stuff is built here as opposed to places like Austria, where we're talking about 80 per cent – and a lot depends on definitions, but in England, we're at around five per cent. It's only by adding Scotland and Northern Ireland that the UK reaches a 10 per cent to 12 per cent figure of self-build.

Beyond the house as a product

In his *Sentences on the House*, the architect John Hejduk thought about what the house means

in an almost animate way; in the Middle Ages too, it was quite normal to speak about inanimate objects as having desires and preferences. These sorts of ideas are of course not talked about in the housing industry. It's a product: a market product, a financial product and a consumer product. Normally with consumer products, there is some choice. But instead, there has been reduction by more than 50 per cent of those housebuilders producing between one and 30 houses in this country.

If you go back to this idea of the house as something beyond a market product, you could start to think of it more subjectively, as part of your personal story, part of your emotions. For most individuals, it is the biggest purchase you'll ever make, and it gets tied in with relationships and personal circumstances, ideas of permanence and commitment. And I guess the most powerful way of fostering good architecture and good communities – all that positive stuff – is for that connection to start quite early with the house. So if you're involved in designing it or building it, or if you're involved in a collective of people who are jointly moving forward with a plan to co-author some part of it, there's going to be a deeper idea of ownership.

Creative constraints

A huge amount of housing regulation – especially in volume house production – leads to crazy limitations and distortions, both in design and in procurement. These might produce houses that pass through

building regulations, but they're not the only way of complying with them. Cutting away all of that and getting back to some of those qualities a house or a home is – what the joy might be, for example, in a circular route between a kitchen, bedroom and hall.

You're not left to explore these areas if you're buying 'off the shelf', or if you're an architect who is an expert in large-scale residential development, but used to paring things down to minimum floor areas rather than being creative within constraints.

The publication of *A Right to Build*, by Alastair Parvin and OO:/, was a really good primer and catalyst for lots of things that need doing to develop the self-build sector. There are notions like of the consumer becoming a producer or prosumer through digital means that we can't anticipate yet. Combined with Kickstarter funding and the aggregation of demand, it seemed to suggest there would be a 'revolution' really quickly!

But those things are just a bit slower to take off, not least because of the super-conservative construction industry. The players who would be excited by those new possibilities might not have the means or confidence to explore those possibilities. The reason for doing our project is to move on from the slight sense of abstraction and idealism in that publication.

Making research useful

Our website *Collective Custom Build* is very much a tool for advocacy and a knowledge transfer project, which we have made in collaboration with

Sheffield University – specifically Sam Brown, Christine Cerulli and Fionn Stevenson, who is about to replace Flora Samuel as head of the school of architecture there, as well as David Birkbeck from Design for Homes.

Sheffield University invited us to pitch for a tranche of research money granted by AHRA (Architectural Humanities Research Association), to research self build. We, as Ash Sakula, were pitching against architecture 00:/, mae architects and others, working with academics and housing industry figures. The main idea we put forward was that this kind of research would only be useful if it could succeed in getting out there and really be a useful tool. So we said from the beginning that we would like to make a website – one with a number of ways into it, with layers of information. As an individual you can browse for facts; if you are an academic, or a group of people wanting to build up an amount of information over time, you would also find resources there to build an argument when you approach your local authority.

Our idea of collective custom-build – which is very loose, actually – doesn't involve actually living together; everyone has their own territory. We haven't been exploring co-housing that much. The hope is that the Collective Custom Build site is something that can be chatted about and consulted casually – that it remains undaunting – but that also becomes a really good, solid resource for people to make their own libraries. It's like a self-help, self-build library. There's lots of information out there but it's all diluted in different places, so the achievement has been in pulling it together, making it navigable and useful, to be able to present and use it to make an argument.

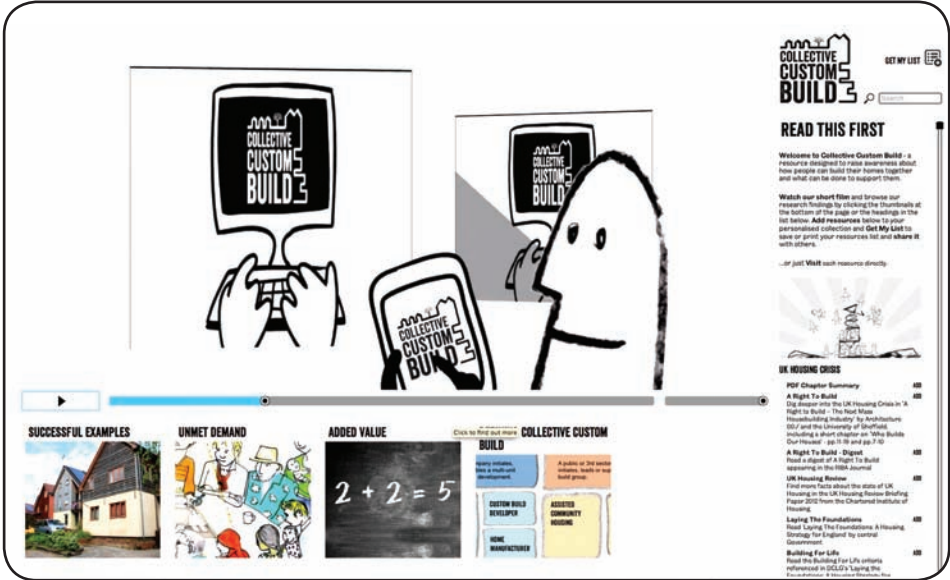
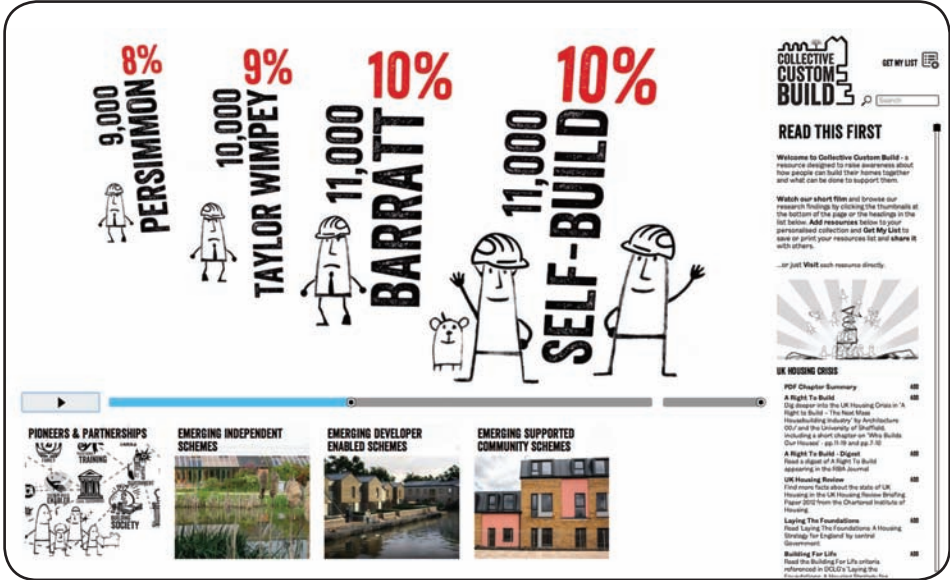
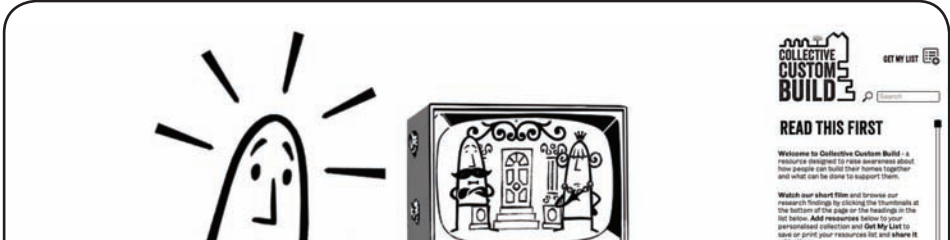
Housebuilders are doing a terrible job

The fact is the housebuilders are doing a terrible job. There is a target of 240,000 houses built each year, but at its peak in 2007 there were only 212,000 – we're building in this huge deficit. Housebuilders don't want to build too much because you have to show that your development is creating huge demand; it's how sales works. So rather than oversupply, you have to trickle them out. With self-build in the Seventies and Eighties, for example, you had people doing things on their own, and so couples would get divorced or you would run out of steam on a project, and that kind of fragile situation is probably what gave rise to the idea that there is more risk involved in self-build. But if the housebuilders are not delivering, then surely that's a risk too.

But local authorities could really start releasing land to people who want to build maybe five, 10 or 15 houses, on crucial corners that can achieve good placemaking, which can give an area an identity. We've been talking to Leicester City Council, for example, which has given clearance and outline planning permission on sites for something like 3000 homes. For anyone to move on those sites, there are some 80 planning conditions, so you can only do it at scale – because no one person is going to be able to conduct the onerous environmental impact studies. The fact is if you've got huge sites – such as that one in Leicester – you could cut off a little bit of that land and let a group build 20 houses. But local authorities prefer the idea of doing one large deal rather than lots of little deals.

Targeting local authorities

Although we've put a lot of care into making the website accessible to all sorts of people, the main target audience was perhaps the local authorities



themselves. They have new powers and they can dispose of land, but they don't always have the confidence to take those steps. In the past, councils could not work with the private sector to sell off land; then gradually it became OK to talk to the 'good guys' who would address regeneration. This has been built up through public-private partnership models and as long there are enough Section 106 or CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) agreements going back and forth, they can work positively.

Councils could be forgiven for feeling like these exchanges are the only cards they hold in their hands, the only way to move a community forward – to pay for stuff by leveraging against lucrative private development. But they're more powerful than they think they are, and could kill two birds with one stone; they've got people who need housing in their communities, there are problems with local employment, and a lot of land in holdings.

We've been trying to work with city councils; we find that when it comes to anyone who isn't a large-scale volume housebuilder, they're not so comfortable. But it might be helpful for someone to see, on our website, the UK self-build compared with the provision from any single housebuilder. The total number of self-build matches those built by any individual large-scale housebuilder, which is quite encouraging.

Multi-level access

As with all good software, there are multiple ways to get into that sort of information on the website; there are curated headings of information, and

then there are other routes to that content too. For example, if you watch the short introductory film on the home page of the website, there are themes which move along the bottom, and these themes relate to sets of documents on the right-hand side of the window – facts about the housing crisis, facts about local authority schemes and the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework).

It's trying all the time to normalise the idea, to say 'No, actually it's quite sensible.' The idea is that through familiarity with the CoCuBuild resource, we can normalise and increase this sort of activity. The website or information from it can be sent to local authorities and taken in by groups that want to negotiate with them. If we can keep it up to date over the next few years – adding and subtracting content as things develop – then it becomes a way to make one's argument. It should enable people to point to evidence that actually central government is behind schemes like this, to say there is support in the NPPF, or to present that this is how they're doing it in Berlin, or Argentina. Even internally it's helpful for staff in council authorities to go back to their superiors and prove the point to them. So it's really about creating accessibility and agency at many levels.

Architecture of information

The guys who built this web 'infrastructure' – a group called Hush – did so for very little money, because they're going to use this multi-access model in other, commercial projects. The colour cartoons are mine, and the black and white drawings are done by some artist friends of mine in Berlin. We agreed that we'd have these two levels

of drawings accompanied by this BBC voiceover, to give it a sort of approachable but authoritative feel – a little bit tongue-in-cheek, we hope.

For us as an architecture practice, the website has been an interesting place to be using one's talents, because you're more directly connected to users. It's been fantastic to be able to talk to people and hear about real needs, quite intimately – it's why we trained. We're quite good at scenario planning, of testing an idea and thinking about the extremes of how it can be played out. If we can imagine a new brand of architect who could be very people-based, like we are, who knew about planning, finance and legal routes, I think that could make me a better architect; I could learn more in the field and become more entrepreneurial as an agent in that field. But I'm not actually sure that's the same as investing what tiny bits of money one's own practice has in developing one structure or answer that cracks the nut.

Moving forward, it would be nice to think that the Homes and Communities Agency could take the lead on this sort of initiative. Local authorities – such as in Bristol, with architect George Ferguson at the helm – could also take these ideas on. That CIL has been removed from self-build projects is pretty encouraging; I guess it's a sign of central government's support of the industry, which this sector really needs, in order to become more and more confident. The problem is that you need a certain quantum of schemes that are very visible and successful to prove that it works, and to be honest, it's early days yet.

11 – Screenshots taken from collectivecustombuild.org, the information portal created by Cany Ash and colleagues

12 – Collective custom-build can catalyse and give identity to awkwardly located sites



'That CIL has been removed from self-build projects is encouraging; I guess it's a sign of central government's support of the industry, which this sector needs'



DE FLAT, KLEIBURG Kamiel Klaasse & Martijn Blom

In the Bijlmer Estate on the outskirts of Amsterdam, Kleiburg is one of the biggest apartment blocks in the Netherlands. As a remnant of ‘obsolete’ modernism, its story is comparable to that of London’s Heygate or Robin Hood Gardens estates; despite its unique, quasi-brutal composition, it faced neglect and ultimately, demolition. That is, until planner-strategist Martijn Blom bought the rights to develop Kleiburg for less than a song, and together with NL Architects’ Kamiel Klaasse, devised a DIY self-build strategy to give the building a new lease of life.

Kamiel Klaasse: Martijn started working the whole project with a developer, who has much more muscle power and money, basically. They formed a consortium, proposing this fairly new type of project: not a completed renovation but an opportunity of making your own apartment according to your wishes. They also made a plan within their development framework to renovate the common spaces of the building.

Martijn Blom: The project was made possible by the decision of the housing corporation to devalue the building in a way to €1 (84p). That’s 500 flats for one euro, as well as the land lease to the

municipality, of course. The municipality owns the land and we have a long-term lease construction for 44 years, which is generally the situation across Amsterdam. The low acquisition price meant that we could invest more in the plan. Our consortium immediately produced a booklet of DIY housing, and we had to make a proposal for securities, schedule, mortgage options, financing models for the project itself and so on. The basis for renovation was a property investment project; the focus on the people who would live there comes after that. Of course we could not market the DIY self-build idea until we had all that stuff worked out.

Obsolete typologies

Klaasse: I think the housing association that owned the Kleiburg building actually hated it; before the Lehman Brothers crash of 2008 changed everything, it had hoped to demolish it and build new low-rise apartments – as has happened across the rest of the Bijlmer estate. The general notion, even from some figures in the Government, was that this sort of building could not be a successful typology any more, that people wouldn’t like to live that way anymore. Systemic neglect, to the point of dereliction, had allowed the owner to claim that costs were too high to even renovate; in a way they had made it so derelict to even renovate. Of course, there was another force resisting this: people who live in the area were quite fond of the building, and other heritage fans

15



13 – The Kleiburg block on the Bijlmer housing estate; reminiscent of Sheffield’s Park Hill

14 – Kleiburg’s brutal slab is located in lush parklands, adjacent to a lake and an elevated train track

15 – Open workshops explore possible apartment types in De Flat, the regeneration scheme for Kleiburg



who respected this urban ensemble and its unique geometry—because it is a beautiful composition. If you remove Kleiburg, one of the last untouched examples of its kind, you'd really be getting rid of a significant piece of heritage.

Blom: The building was advertised in December 2010, in January 2011 we started to formulate our bid; the selection process was in June. And then negotiations on the plan started in December until September the following year, when we could begin the project in earnest, though we had done a little bit of promotion before that, even though we had not signed a contract. Formal marketing started in November 2012, and then in March 2013, the first house owners started to sign their leases. By May, we were already at 70 per cent – 70 of the initial 100 apartments finding tenants. So now contractors are working on the basic renovation of the building and they are scheduled to be finished early this year, when people can start coming in and taking over, making the changes they want.

Collaborative practice

Klaasse So although the housing corporation wanted to get rid of it, it was forced somehow by media and other pressures to give one last push, to see if there was any possible way to rescue it. So it generously advertised this scheme where you could obtain the building for €1, if you could propose a working, feasible business model, and of course they received a lot of proposals.

Four proposals were selected for further development, including the self-build pitch made by Martijn's consortium – and at that point we were not part of that at all. Then the area supervisor – whose position is probably the most beautiful cog in the Dutch planning system machine, to resist the pressure from the market to roll out banal proposals – this guy thought Martijn's plan was really solid, but he suggested that NL Architects came on board to give a little more concern to the existing building and the final aesthetics.

Martijn had proposed sweeping balconies and things that would have altered the facade and the look of the building. When we came on board, we were able to save it a lot of money by saying that we think the building was fine as it is; it just needed a little help to look more like itself, in a way. We were really excited to be involved in this process.

Blom: In essence, I act as a consultant for architects and for planning, making property plans for the cultural sector and commercial estates. The initiation of a development project is not easy these days. But it's doable if you have a great idea. And a great team, so we had Kamiel as well as the three partners on the consortium; each person has their area of expertise. Kamiel and NL Architects came on board in June of 2011. Then negotiations on the plan started in December until September the following year. ►

'The risk we took for the development and for Martijn's consortium was the hope that enough people would see the same beauty that we did in this high-modern, early brutalist kind of aesthetic'

‘We might have been freaks who just loved Kleiburg for its historical value – but apparently not, as it seems to be quite popular. I actually think that this attitude towards the old materials is strongest in London’

16



Long-term interests

Klaasse: Actually we'd been thinking about it for a while. In the mid-Nineties, when this area started to be regenerated and developments started appearing, we tried to submit some proposals in order to change public opinion. Architects don't usually have too many opportunities to address the public, but in that case we were given the opportunity to take over some billboards, and so we took that opportunity to heighten awareness about the existing qualities of the area, which were not so bad after all. We wanted to suggest that, if you paid a bit of care and attention to the existing materials, maybe people would appreciate them more. That was a very long time ago, but it was aimed at opening the eyes of the public to the intrinsic beauty of the place as it is.

Of course, we were not successful and by and large the demolition party started. But 15 years later when we saw this Kleiburg situation unfolding, we saw the opportunity to use our blog to vocalise the same idea. Before we were invited on to Martijn's plan, the only response we had was to make a mash-up of a magazine – we put Kleiburg on the cover. It's completely false of course, but the idea was to suggest that if you hit the right momentum, many people would start to see the building's potential. That showed our belief in this building, and that it was just a matter of time before people would see its beauty.

Structurally the building is sound, and I think it's beautiful; the way that it embraces the

landscape is probably its best feature. You have to understand that as soon as you make this dense carpet of low-rise buildings, you would destroy the greenery and park landscape that sits underneath, something which has happened elsewhere in the area. The slogan we came up with against this demolition was to say: 'What use is a vista if you are short-sighted?'

Like-minded freaks

Klaasse: Of course, the risk we took for the development and for Martijn's consortium was the hope that enough people would see the same beauty that we did, in this high-modern, early brutalist kind of aesthetic. We might have been freaks who just loved Kleiburg for its historical value – but apparently not, as it seems to be quite popular. I actually think that this attitude towards the old materials is strongest in London – you have these wonderful Lasdun buildings, and things like the Trellick Tower. The big advantage of those examples is that they are very well-placed in the urban fabric; with Kleiburg it's a slightly different story, because the Bijlmer estate is in more of a suburban neighbourhood. A typical suburb is low-rise; when people choose to live there, they expect a garden and a place to park. We were suggesting a more urban way of living in a suburban setting.

So our part in the proposal, on an aesthetic level, was to suggest that we return the building to its original beauty; to expose the beautiful

concrete and the hardwood details as they are. There is a big trend in the market embracing this 'all natural' aspect; you see it in food, for example, where there is an interest in rawness or roughness, which is perfectly in sync with our intentions. So we wanted to leave the original building as intact as possible, and looking more like itself; all the earlier proposals that we had seen were concerned with changing the way it looks. The consortium took a little convincing, as did certain figures in government, but they were soon on board – not least because it saved a lot of money.

Blom: There was a precedent for this self-build-led regeneration in Rotterdam; in order to develop a certain area, there was a similar offer to buy cheap houses that allowed people to invest themselves – to base the project on the energy of the people. That was very experimental, but quite successful. This project was well-known, and we thought about whether we could transfer this idea to Kleiburg as De Flat. We didn't apply the self-build idea to the outer facade or to building free-form architecture, the wild housing concepts of 10 years ago – like you had in Almere – with no municipal oversight. The trick in our case was that you lower investment by using the DIY system, and at the same time you introduce the concept of freedom to the buyer right from the start. And of course the other attractive thing is the affordable price; it's a low-cost model so it's suitable for starter homes, at a time when it's difficult to buy a property.



16 - Klaasse hopes that options offered for the communal deck areas will encourage social exchange

17 - Various public events have attempted to change the way the neglected block is perceived

18 - Tetris-like painted panels on the outside of Kleiburg demonstrate internal possibilities within the block

Community and transparency

Klaasse: We thought the building looks quite abstract, maybe one of the most abstract in the Netherlands. It doesn't have any 'buttons' on it. It has a kind of Dieter Rams aesthetic. So we thought if people are enjoying this kind of smooth, button-free 'Apple' design, maybe we should work on customising the interface. We approached the interface as if it was that second skin, the actual walls of the flat which open on to the public galleries and walkways. These interfaces between inside and outside were a little defensive originally; the windows were small and set above opaque panels for privacy. We decided that it would be better to open this up, to expose the diversity of interior configuration and create more porosity through the views of the building from front to back.

We decided to remove all those opaque panels and to introduce new facade elements such as sliding doors and set-backs, allowing people to modulate this interface. In the apartment block where I live we have colonised the gallery outside – my kids grow their vegetables there, we've placed a bench where we have breakfast and it's a wonderful extension to our home. The hypothesis is that it fosters a sense of community through the way you use that space, and it might actually work this time because the people taking up this scheme are so motivated and eager to make it work. My guess is that most of them will stick to the layouts we have advised. ►



The main apartment size is 100 sq m but there are smaller units too, which are really popular. In the structure, you can join units laterally or vertically – I am pleased to see that some people are doing what we hoped and interpreting the inside – taking two or three units and thinking about creative ways to integrate them. The colourful Tetris-like billboard effect was just to demonstrate what could be done on the inside. Structurally there are a few constraints; knocking through and joining flats would work better on the upper levels, and things like openings in the floors must be carefully coordinated by the consortium – it's not a Wild West situation.

Blom: The response we're getting is mainly from the greater Amsterdam area; these people know a bit about urban life and are more relaxed about living this way. They can see past the sometimes negative image that the Bijlmer estate has, through to its positive future. However we are getting people from the south of the Netherlands, and families too. By May 2013, we had already filled 70 of the initial 100 apartments. Now contractors are working on the basic renovation of the building and the first phase is scheduled to be finished in January or February: then people can start coming in and taking over, making the changes they want. The consortium oversees the work, but we can also provide support in terms of logistics, of arranging social controls, like not building all night, but basically enabling this freedom.

Hope and glory

Blom: In essence I consult for architects and developers, making property plans for the cultural and commercial sectors. The initiation of plans, in collaboration with others, came to be something that I enjoyed, though initiating a development project is not easy these days. It's possible if you have a great idea and a great team, and we had Kamiel as well as the partners on the consortium.

The project is an investment opportunity, but it comes at the right time to address the city's housing situation. Property prices in Amsterdam are too high and it's not easy to find a house. There are some opportunities like this, where owners are devaluing and releasing building stock.

Klaasse: There is a tendency to vaunt the most technically 'sustainable' building – but new builds often leave a lot of space unused and old buildings remain neglected. I think it's a good idea to see what you can do with existing structures before you tear them down; they have some qualities that are hard to beat. In this case I think it's a really beautiful and generous offer we're making: you can own a place in this beautiful shell, but you can make it yourself and create a range of opportunities. At this time of crisis, the possibility of owning your own property and being able to do what you want with it is really attractive. It's about bringing the building back to its former glory, but also a new way of looking at property. ■

19 – NL Architects' founder Kamiel Klaasse identifies the Klieburg's relationship with its landscape as a crucial advantage

'At this time of crisis, the possibility of owning your own property and being able to do what you want with it is really attractive. It's about bringing the building back to its former glory, but also a new way of looking at property'



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Words Steven Heller

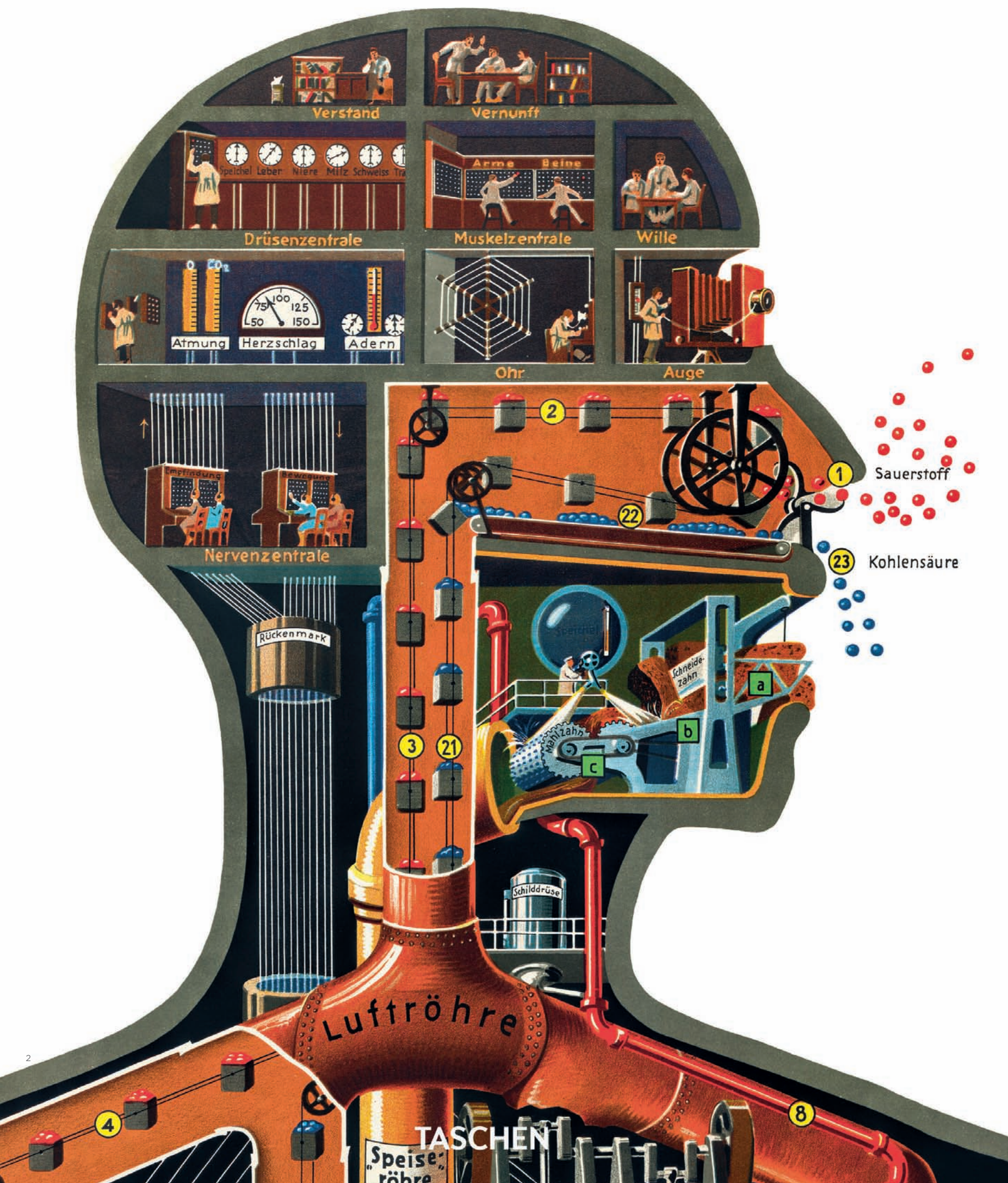


After looking at the graphic visualisations of the human body and its organs as devised by German scientist, gynaecologist and author Dr Fritz Kahn as a way to explain complex functions, it may not be possible to think of them in any other way again









How often have you imagined that little humanoids control our every move in the multi-leveled factory that comprises the human body? For those, like me, who are confused by the language of science, simplification through metaphor and analogy are common in order to comprehend the complex mechanics of everyday human existence. This is how the rediscovered visionary, Dr Fritz Kahn (1888-1968), a German scientist, gynaecologist and author, tapped directly into our collective conscious and subconscious.

While the notion he adopted was admittedly absurd, even naïve, his work then developed it into an effective learning tool – and an iconic, copyrighted graphic system that brought this metaphor to virtual life. If Kahn is remembered for any single accomplishment during his formidable and storied career, it will be as author of the subversively comical yet decidedly resolute diagrammatic wall poster titled *Der mensch als industriepalast* (Man as Industrial Palace, 1926), where he graphically transformed a human body into the mechanised factory we often imagine it should be.

Kahn found an eye for visualising data decades before data visualisation became a recognised method for processing and interpreting information. His 'Industriepalast' poster, a surreal rendering (as precise as any Dalí and as ironic as any Duchamp) of a schematic, cut-away human head and armless torso, exposed mazes of intersecting apparatus housed in compartments and bound to one another by the efforts of specialised homunculi (those little humanoids), each a patently skilled labourer wearing a lab coat, work clothes or business suit, depending on their respective hierarchical or class status within the body. These 'individuals' ensure the smooth progression of all the bodily

functions as though they were working a normal shift with any industrial manufacturer. In fact, these meticulous machine-age wonders are the body's organs, muscles and nerves, better understood in their anthropomorphic forms.

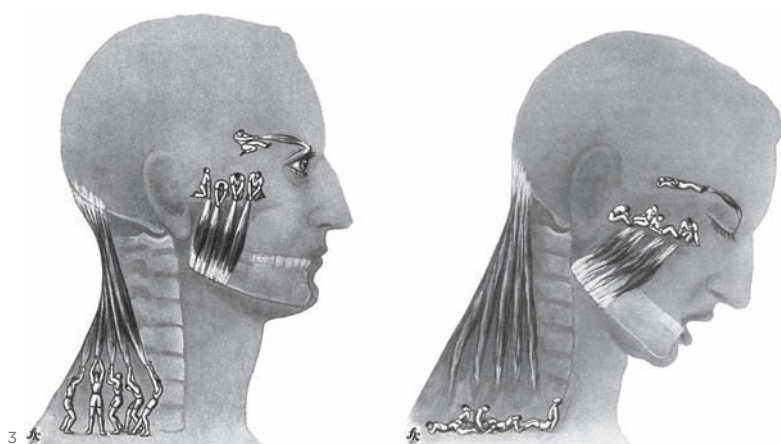
Every part of the body had its own avatar (before such a thing was coined) – the eye is a bellows camera, the lung is made of copper tubes, the stomach and intestines are fast-moving conveyor belts doused with pressurised hydraulics. The poster further reveals the left and right parts of the top of the brain where studious homunculi are seen busily reading, drawing and conversing. Lower down, once food is consumed, it slides directly towards the bowels, where workers physically break it down into sugars and starches and other components to be conveyed along the disassembly line into nearby digesting-rooms. Although I wouldn't want any physician of mine to have this on his examining-room wall in place of a Gray's Anatomy chart, Kahn was such a master of his métier and pioneer of information graphics that a viewer could not help but be entertained as well as informed by what would otherwise be cold, clinical information. This and other diagrams were so profoundly and widely appealing that Kahn's influence spread throughout the world during his lifetime and is clearly manifest in various media today, long after he died, even if his name has been forgotten.

A once-ubiquitous US TV commercial in the Fifties and Sixties advertising Bufferin showed the painful image of a sledge-hammer tortuously pounding away inside an X-rayed head to approximate the feeling of a headache. It was a Kahn rip-off. Yet in Kahn's universe, the intricacies and subtleties of human bodily functions were more fascinating than the facile attempts of Bufferin's ad agency to reduce a complex medical problem to the mere

1 (previous pages) –
'The intestinal mucosa'
(1926)

2 – 'In the plate "Man as
Industrial Palace", an attempt
was made to depict the most
important processes of life,
which can never be observed
directly, in the form of
familiar technical processes
so as to provide an overall
picture of the human body's
inner life' (1926)

3 – 'When we are awake'
and 'When we are asleep'
(both 1939)



pounding of a cudgel. His primary mission was to remove the mystery from biology and pathology by presenting it through words and pictures that most people could comprehend – and even enjoy. Paradoxically, his own words were a bit more obtuse: ‘The cell state is a republic under the hereditary hegemony of the mind’s aristocracy,’ Kahn wrote using the arcane terminology of socio-political language, ‘its economic system is a strict communism.’

Kahn and the visual linguist Otto Neurath, founder of isotype (International System of Typographic Picture Education), were two halves of the same pie chart. Although it is probable the two never met, each passionately sought to devise a distinct graphic design language to replace jargon and lay waste to an ever-growing Tower of Babel. Neurath, a philosopher, scientist, sociologist and political economist, could not actually make the signs and symbols he was known for. Kahn was not an artist either yet he compensated nicely through his powers of logic. He also hired professionals to follow his dictates and expand his tastes. His graphic-design preferences were eclectic and included such methods as photo-collage, painting and drawing and styles such as comic, surrealist, dada and more. The art of analogy was Kahn’s forte (sometimes to the extreme): he might compare an ear with a car or a feather with railroad tracks, all meant to explain ever more impenetrable phenomena by means that triggered the viewer’s imagination. Kahn employed whatever visual tricks he could cobble together for the end result: popular comprehension.

The ‘Industriepalast’ poster may be Kahn’s most emblematic work – it has certainly up until now been the most visible – but it is not the only noteworthy piece in an extensive oeuvre. Some

of his work was more cartoon than diagram and more narrative than didactic. The incredible and fantastical tableau of the lone female homunculus riding on the cell while surfing the gland cave is reminiscent of Max Ernst’s later works, while there are also cellular landscapes that rival any science-fiction illustration where biological patterning is a leitmotif for visual storytelling.

Kahn also embraced modernism and those responsible for it and his own followers included the Bauhausers Herbert Bayer and Walter Gropius. He avidly employed new technologies as visualisation tools for explaining the invisible physical world, such as the senses of smell and sight. One of his most illuminating diagrams, among the many, was ‘What goes on in our heads when we see a car and say “car”’, a complex orchestration of functions starting with the eye, imprinting a message on a film-strip that leads to a projection booth, inhabited by a homunculus projecting a photo of the car on to a screen that relays this image to a second screen that displays the word ‘car’. The message subsequently is broadcast to a pipe-organ which then toots out the word. If only it really worked this way... Nonetheless, Kahn saw the process operating in this way and made his viewers see it the same.

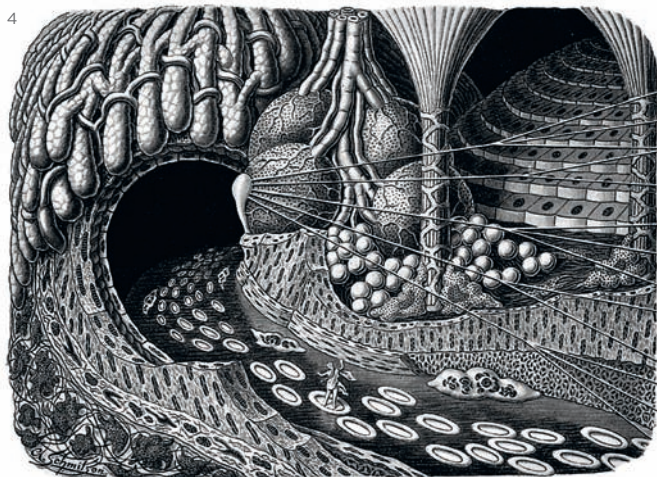
The legacy of Kahn’s work has resonance now and this will continue into the future. The assembly of his little-known and lesser-known images in this book is nothing less than a treasure of conceptual thinking. After seeing the connections Kahn had made, it may be impossible to look at the human body or any similar composite structure in quite the same way again. ■

This text is the foreword to the Taschen monograph, Fritz Kahn, by Uta and Thilo von Debschitz, £34.99

4 - ‘Entering a gland cave. Ideal landscape picture of the microscopic structure of a man’s body’ (1924)

5 - ‘Travel experiences of wandering cell: on top of the nasal conchae inside the nose’ (1924)

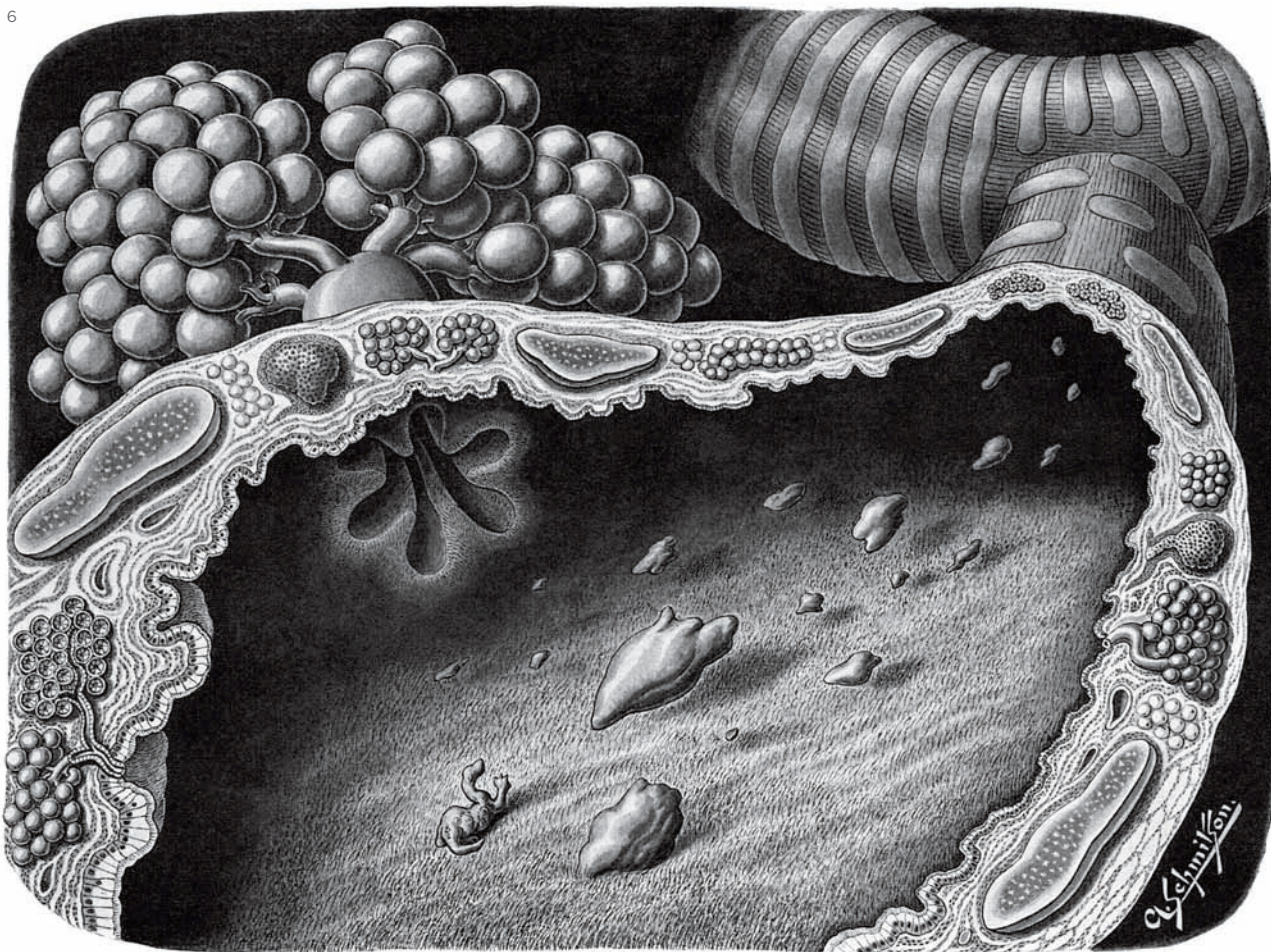
6 - ‘Travel experiences of wandering cell: in the dust storm of the windpipe’ (1924)

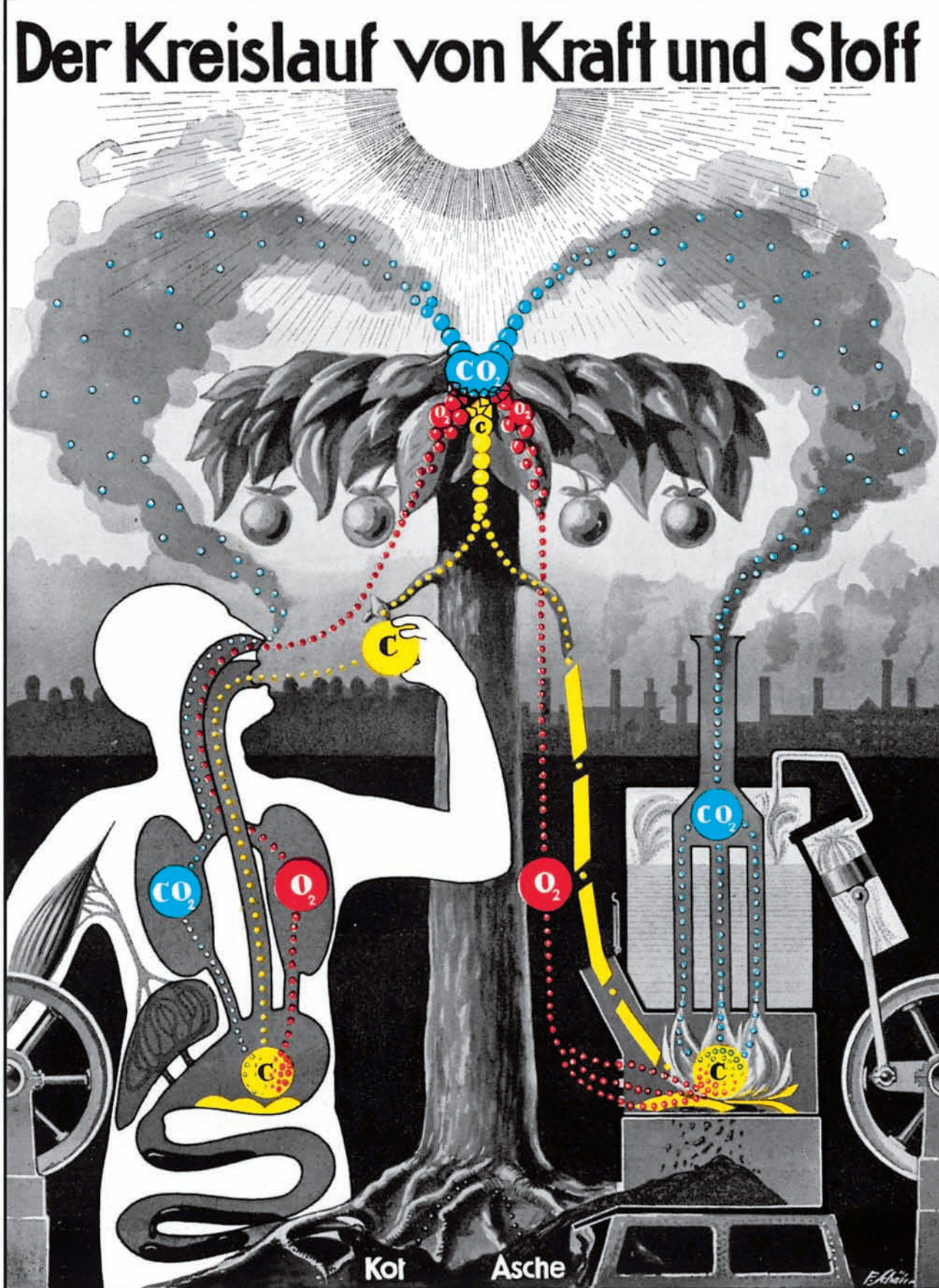


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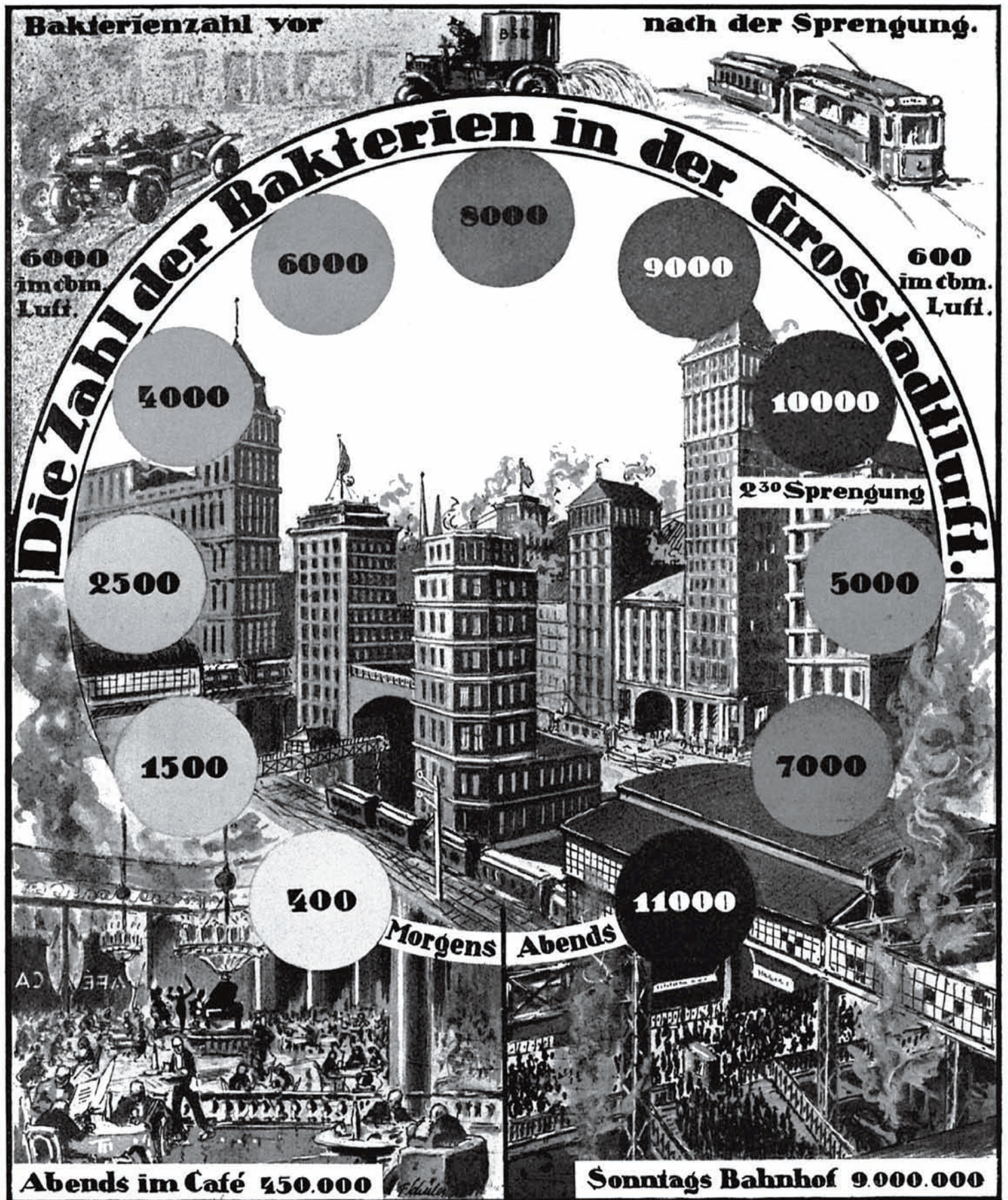


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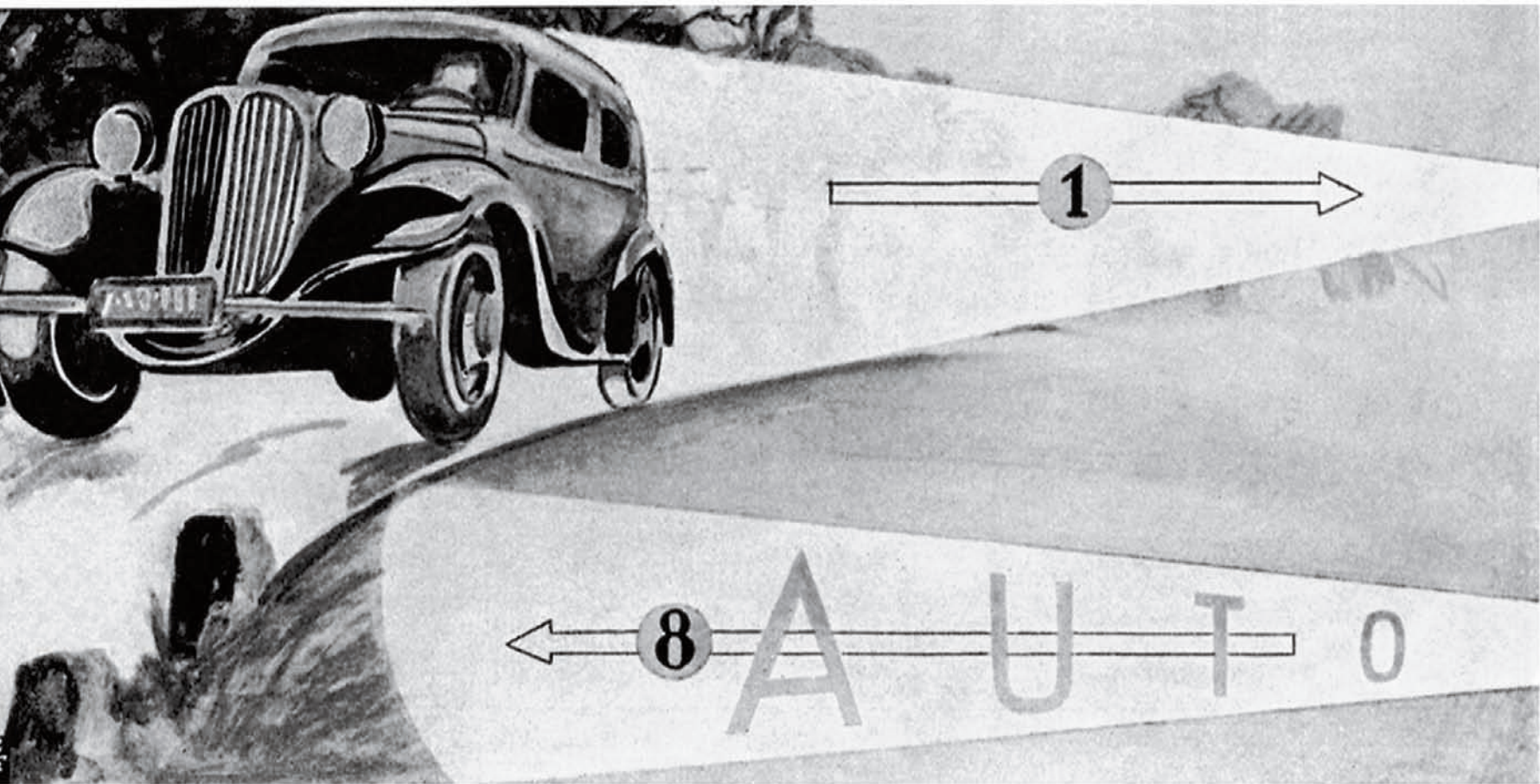


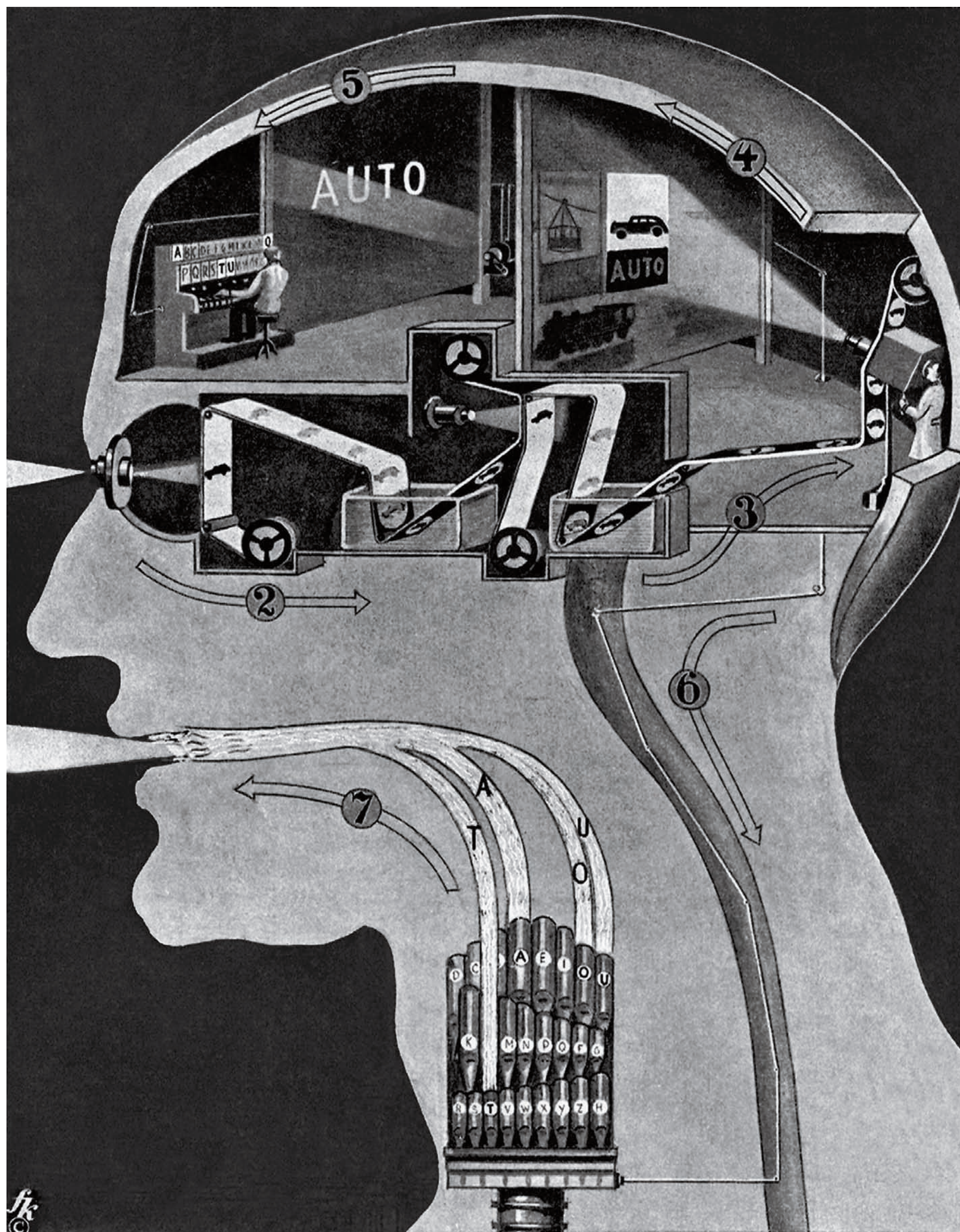


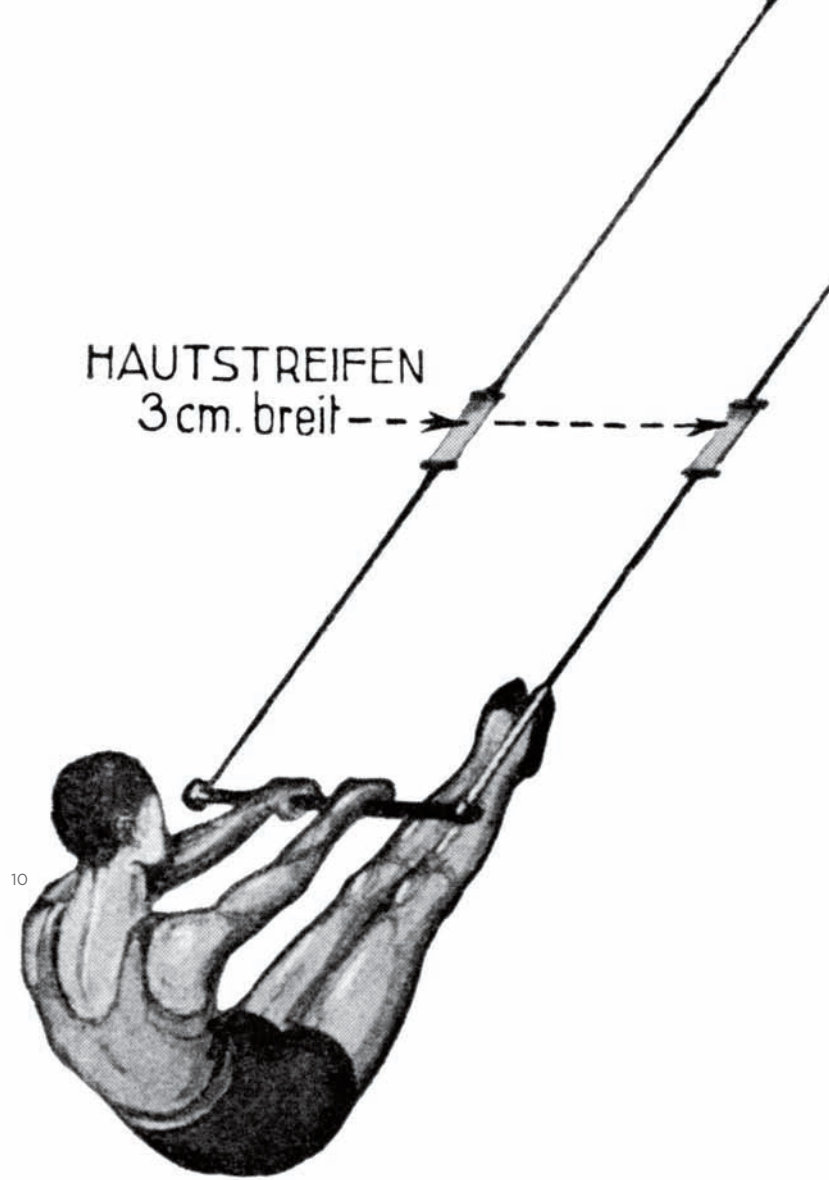
7 - The cycle of matter and energy



8 - 'The number of bacteria in the air in a metropolis. People recognise the exceptional importance of watering the streets to keep down the dust and of disinfecting the air, as well as the health hazards accompanying all large crowds' (1926)



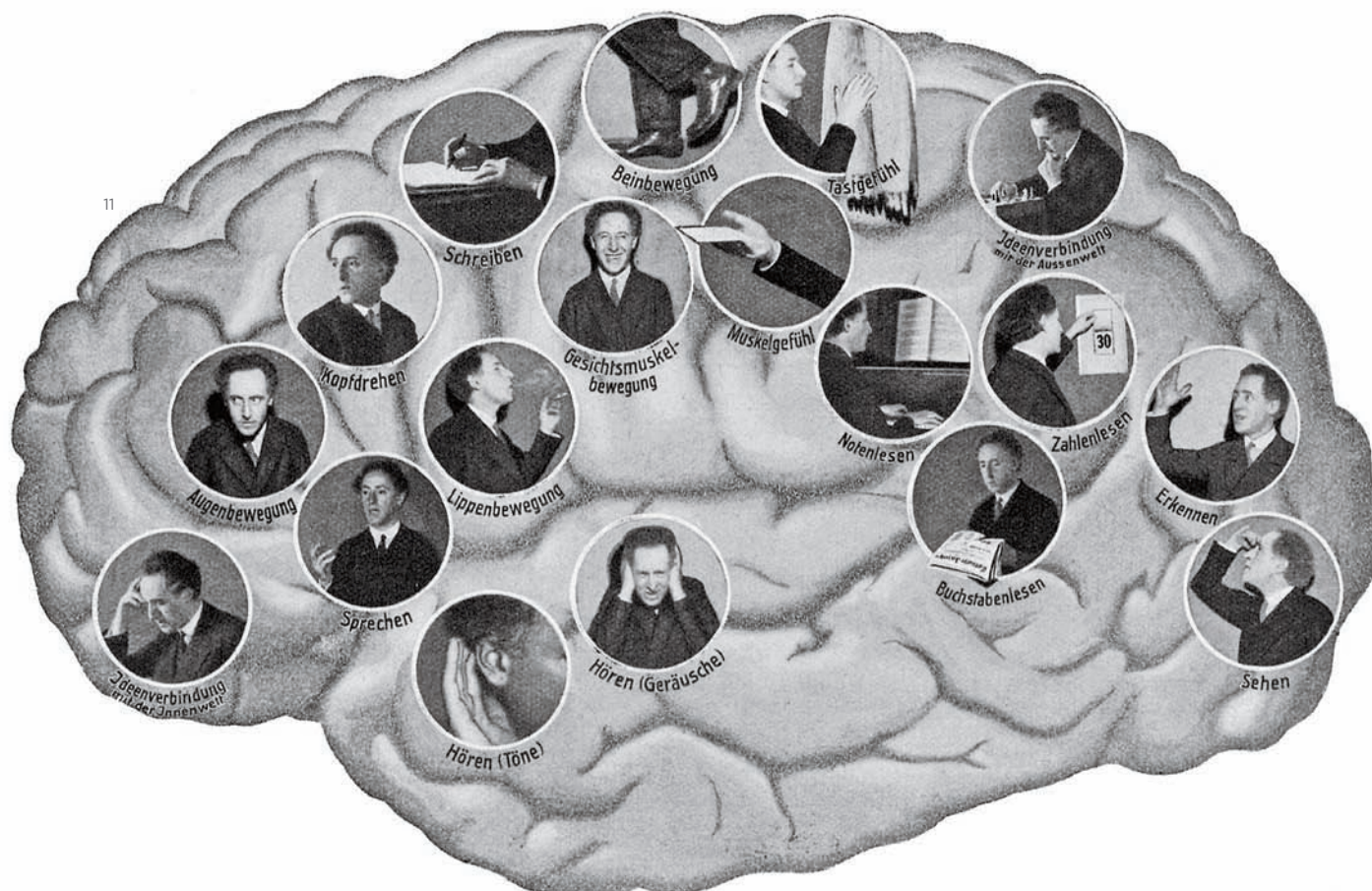




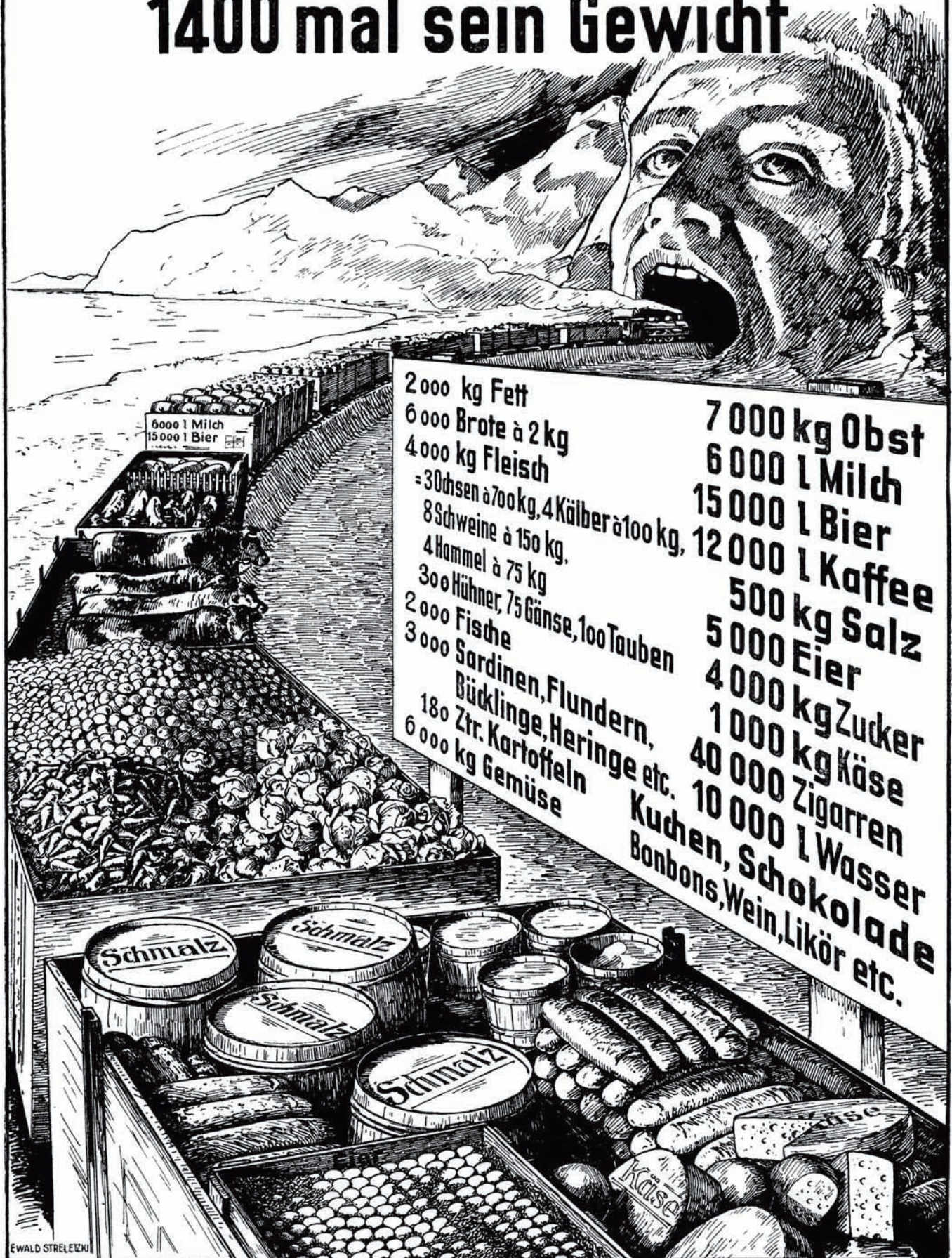
10 - 'The lifting capacity of a man's skin is so great that a strip of skin 3cm wide is capable of bearing the weight of the whole body' (1929)

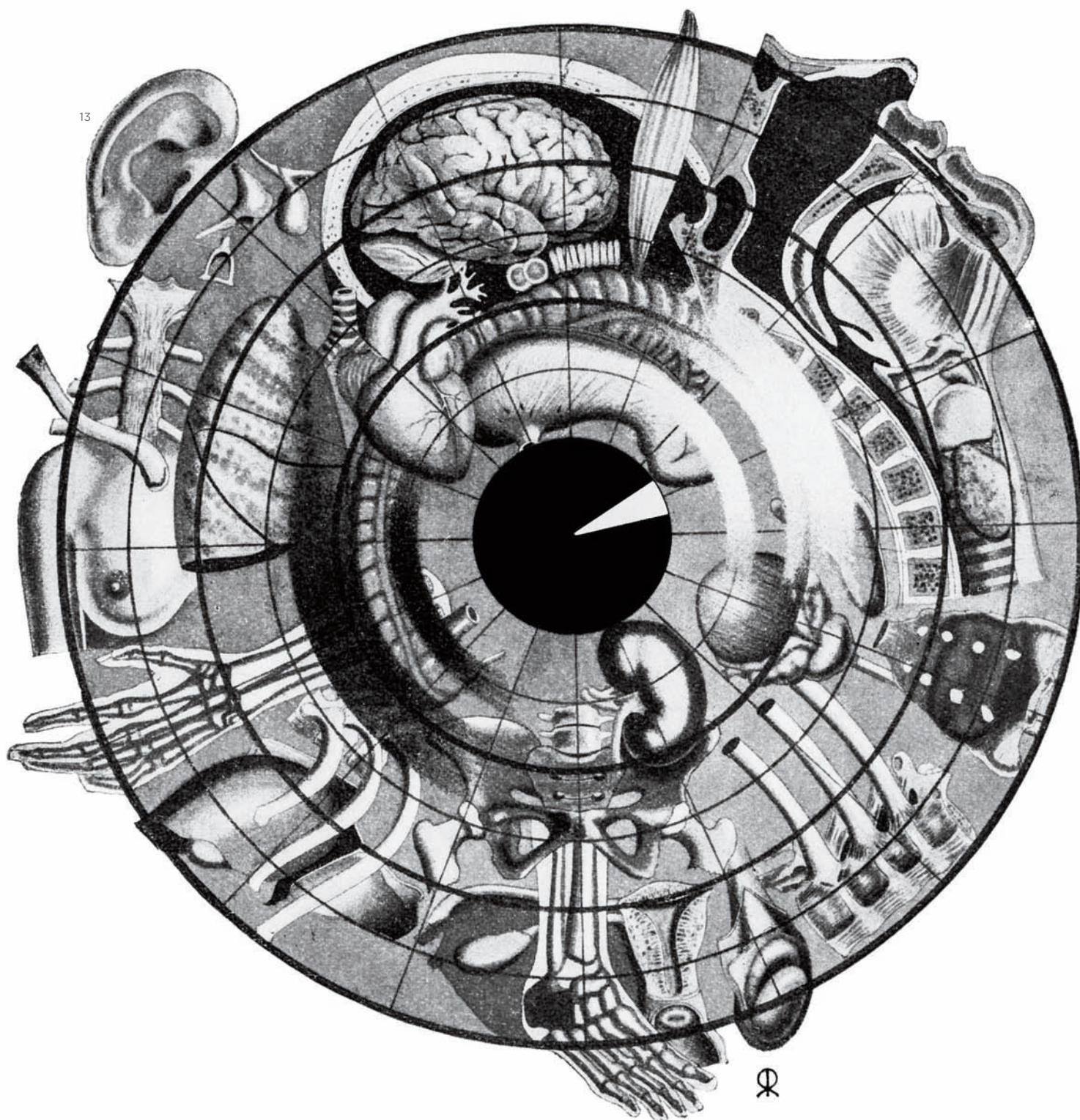
11 - Fritz Kahn demonstrates the functions of the cerebral cortex (1929)

12 - 'In 70 years, a man eats 1,400 times his own weight' (1926)



In 70 Jahren ißt der Mensch 1400 mal sein Gewicht



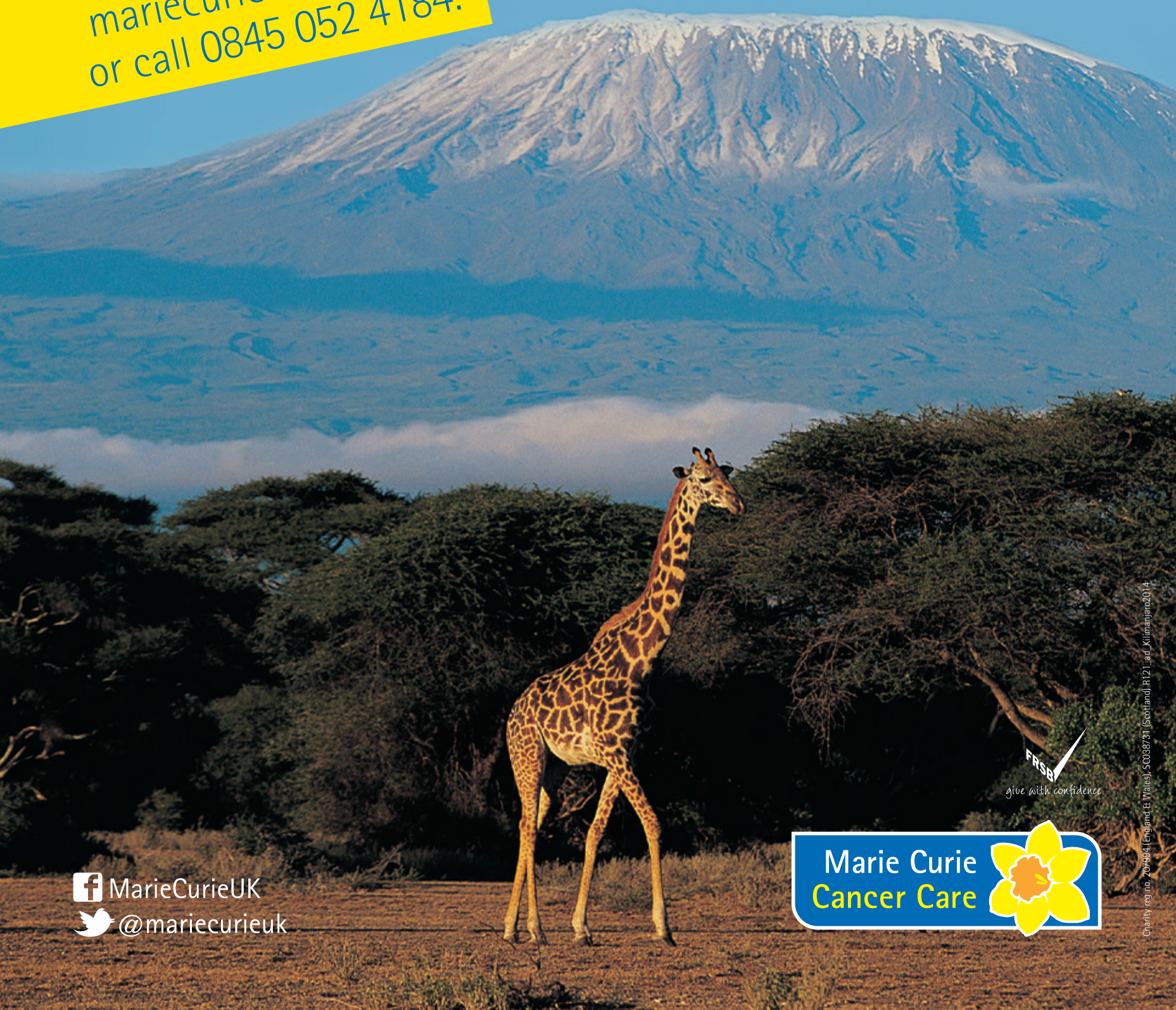


13 - 'Iris diagnosis, or the art of identifying illnesses from the appearance of the eye, using an "Iris key". Changes in the iris are thought to be associated with illnesses in the various organs, as shown in their corresponding positions in the picture above' (1931)

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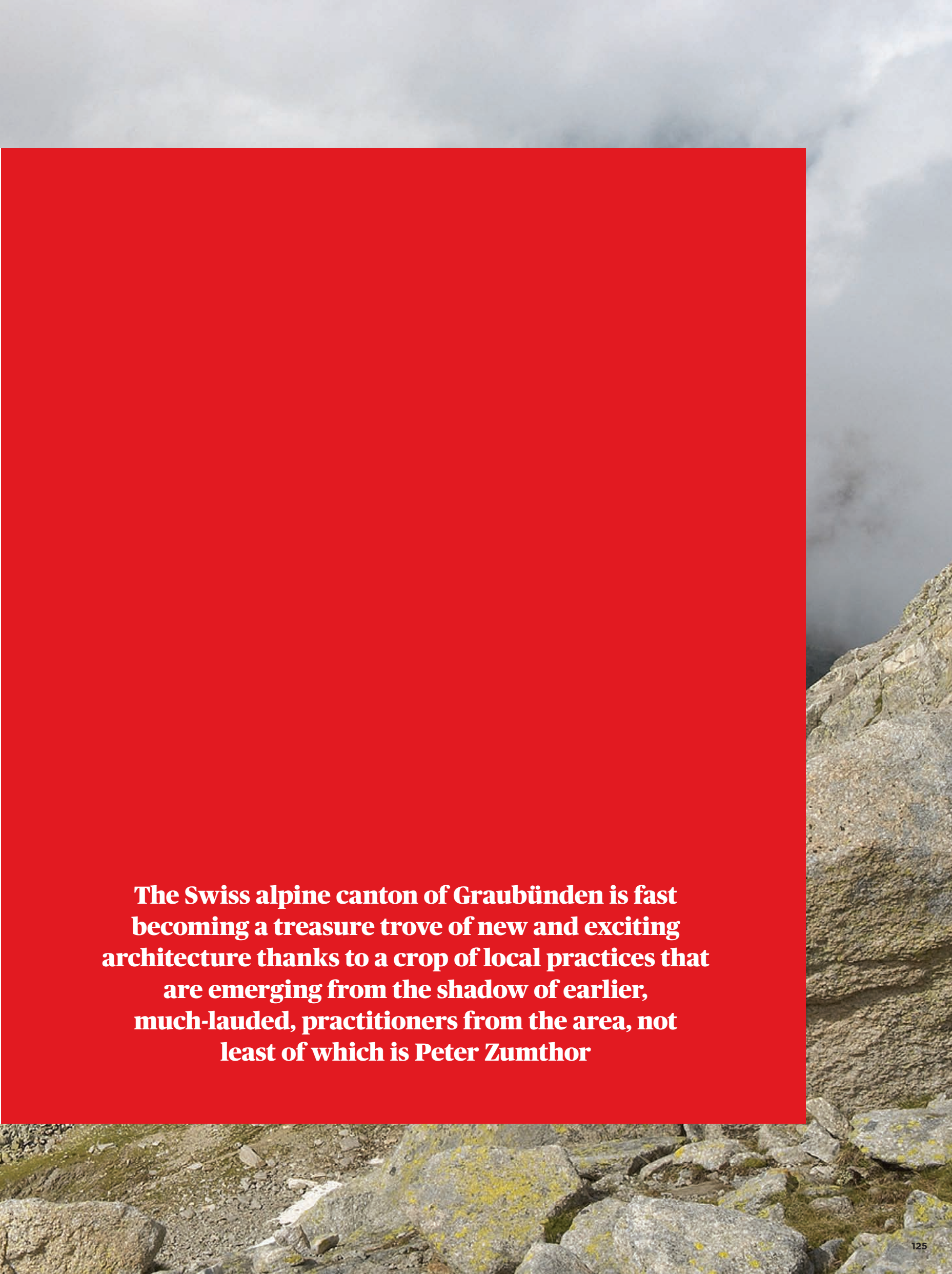

give with confidence



GRAUBÜNDEN'S NEW GENERATION COMES OF AGE

|

Words Oliver Lowenstein



The Swiss alpine canton of Graubünden is fast becoming a treasure trove of new and exciting architecture thanks to a crop of local practices that are emerging from the shadow of earlier, much-lauded, practitioners from the area, not least of which is Peter Zumthor







You are a foreign architect recently arrived in Zurich.

You travel, by car or possibly by train and bus east, towards a modern architectural shrine, the thermal baths in the upland valley village of Vals. You spend time in this modern wonder, a virtuoso performance in materiality and atmosphere half-dug into the steep hillside by its world-famous architect, Peter Zumthor. After having paid appropriate due homage, you speed back to the country's largest city. And as you do so, you miss the entire wider tableau that is around you: Graubünden's remarkable and much wider architectural culture. Zumthor is surely a central part, but only a part nonetheless.

If the emphasis here is on Zumthor's international stature, and specifically Vals, which the critic Edwin Heathcote recently suggested is 'oddly emerging as a one of the world centres of architecture', some at least of these destination art-architecture tourists will likely be aware of the generation and work of architects of which Zumthor is the most visible: Bearth & Deplazes, Valerio Olgiati, Gion Caminada, and engineer Jürg Conzett are all recognised figures.

What is less known is that the Graubünden story doesn't end there. Indeed, this is graphically illustrated by the emergence of a new generation of Graubündener architects, heirs to the older 60-something generation; architects and practices such as Corinna Menn, Capaul & Blumenthal, Iseppi/Kurath and Raphael Zuber (along with at least two dozen young practices) are making their presence increasingly felt across the Swiss canton with work that is beginning to be recognised. Five years ago when

I wrote about this generation in a Graubünden edition of the occasional cultural review I run, Fourth Door Review, a key issue and complaint was about getting work and winning commissions over the dominant established practices. This is no longer such an issue, as many of this thirty-/forty-something generation can now point to a variety of completed projects, and are themselves well established and competing successfully for commissions.

'The younger generation is more visible and getting projects, even if they're not officially recognised that much,' says Daniel Walser, a young architectural historian teaching at the University of Applied Arts HTW Chur. Walser should know, as the generation's unofficial chief documenter and all-round promoter, most recently in an ongoing overview exhibition of the generation's work, which opened in Chur before continuing to ETH Zurich. What is also clear is that an intergenerational tension, balancing continuity with change, and the finding of feet and identity in the shadow of elders, much like children of over-achieving parents, is continuing to be played out.

This is most obvious with Corinna Menn who, as niece of one of Switzerland's most eminent engineers, Christian Menn, had perhaps particular reason to search for an architectural identity of her own. Menn, like many of her peers, benefited from the wider horizons available compared to the previous generation. After the semi-mandatory first years at ETHZ, she studied in the late Nineties first in Berlin and then Harvard Graduate School of Design, before returning to Graubünden with a characteristically Nineties' interest in urbanism. This has fed through into Menn setting her sights on

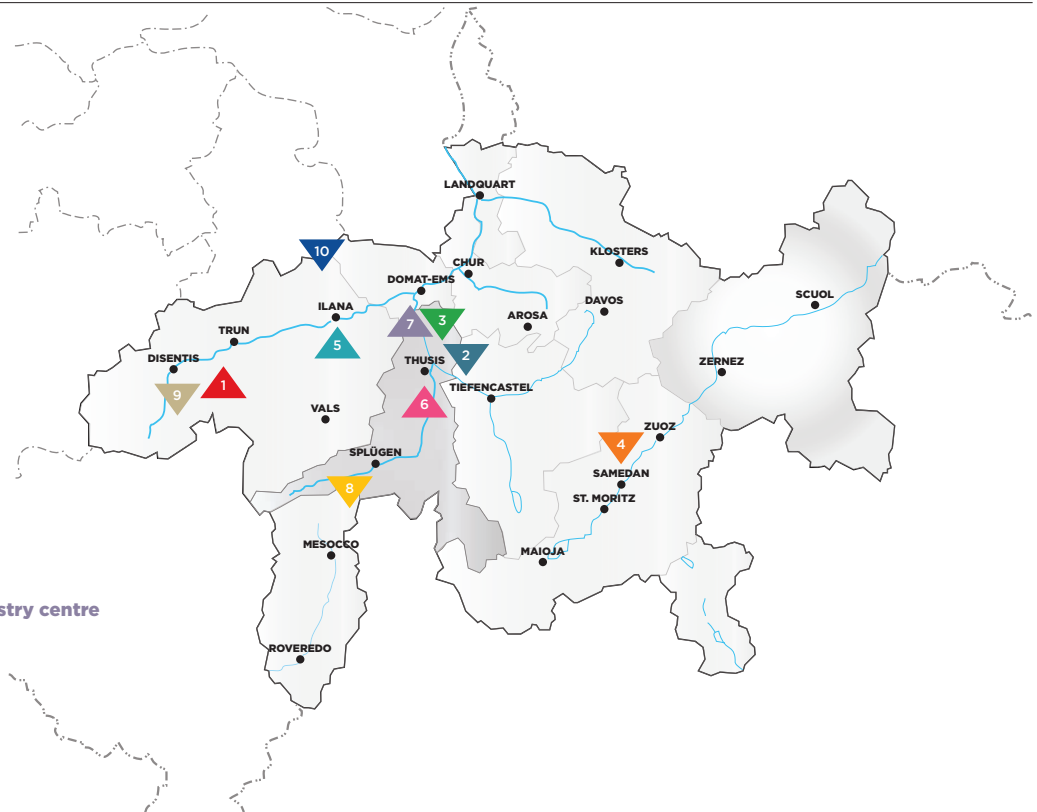


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Graubünden

- ▶ 1 **MedeserHütte**
- ▶ 2 **Manu Holzbau**
- ▶ 3 **Almens House**
- ▶ 4 **Samedan House**
- ▶ 5 **Ilanz Cinema**
- ▶ 6 **Via Mala**
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For a persuasive and poetic illustration of the contextual sensibility go to the small town of Ilanz. Here Capaul & Blumenthal completed the first-ever rammed earth cinema



Mani Holzbau

Iseppi/Kurath's participatory approach to the Mani Holzbau woodworks yard resulted in a simple yet elegant structure

working in cities and other urban contexts, as well as Graubünden, impossible in the overwhelmingly rural canton. Menn runs through a series of ongoing and recent projects, such as a children's hospital extension in the northern Swiss city of St Gallen, a lakeside housing block in Zurich, and a car-parking project, urban in type albeit in the small village of Soglio.

All of these required the urbanist's mindset. 'What I've realised is that I'm not only connected to Graubünden as a source of my identity and of projects. My field of work has expanded,' she says. Menn had an early start with winning two projects – a viewing platform above the dramatic Ruinaulta gorges of the Vorderrhein and a home for disabled children in the village of Scharans – before she was 35. 'I felt a bit alone, while now there are several architects who are getting work and recognition. There are different backgrounds and different positions, and Daniel Walser's exhibition was very important to gather these positions together, to meet and talk and be connected, as that can be difficult in Graubünden,' she recounts.

Menn's last observation becomes clearer when you take in Graubünden's size, a mite smaller than Wales, (and a population only 10,000 more than Swansea – 180,000) as well as equally challenging accessibility through the overwhelmingly dramatic, mountainous splendour. If the majority of practices are clustered around Chur, the valley-head entrance to the Alpine fastnesses and passes, another characteristic is that a significant number are in the small towns dotting the canton, an antithesis of sorts to architecture's metropolitan identity. Of these, it is

Iseppi/Kurath, which has taken a similar fully fledged urbanist interests and integrated it with a participatory agenda the furthest.

Stefan Kurath, like Menn, studied abroad, this time in Delft, Holland, and was exposed to the then-prevailing SuperDutch urbanism, particularly participatory urbanist thinking. Working from the small town of Thusis, Kurath and his partner Ivano Iseppi have sought to integrate participation into their practice, most recently in a timber-yard building. Working with the owner, a simple yet smart timber frame system was arrived at, helping to lighten the shed's inside. And as Mani Holzbau's carpenter-owner tells it, the M truss system reminds him of his name, a design extra that has sparked the interest of rival carpentry companies. Says Kurath: 'It's totally changed people's ideas about buildings round here. It's important to make architecture that is a negotiation, although I have to be happy with the result.'

While other architects may not engage with participation's social dimension, the majority, regardless of generation, see context – site, topography and environment – as a given in their architectural thinking, particularly highlighted by the undeniable, overwhelming presence of mountains. Menn's rural projects, including a Swiss Alpine Club hostel and what looks like a sensitive, painstaking reconstruction of a 16th-century house in the Engadin village of Samedan, are equally important for her, amid the canton's overwhelmingly rural, mountain-embedded backdrop. Yet on the other side of this critical fault line there is a definite, if small and controversial, counter-tendency, influenced and aligned with two major Swiss architecture outsiders: Valerio Olgiati and, in Zurich, Christian Kerez, and their manifestos for new, total architectural languages that exist beyond any appeal to context, which we will return to.

For a persuasive and poetic illustration of the contextual sensibility, go to the small junction town of Ilanz, where those heading for Vals need to join the small valley road to the village. It's in this town that Capaul & Blumenthal completed the first-ever rammed-earth cinema, influenced both by Zumthor and Gion Caminada. Caminda is the village architect with an international reputation, whose buildings are on the doorstep of his village home, Vrin, and include farm sheds, the school and numerous strickbau (log house) chalets sit at the end of a mountain road less travelled, just a few miles above Vals. Blumenthal worked at the Zumthor studio in the Nineties, while Capaul grew up in Vrin's neighbouring village of Valle, so that the ancient-modern mix



Almens House

The client for GujanPally's Almens rammed-earth and timber strickbau house asked for an all-natural materials interior conversion



Ilanz Cinema

Capaul & Blumenthal's rammed-earth interior for its Cinema sil Platz in Ilanz redefines the cinematic experience

Corinna Menn had an early start with winning two projects before she was 35. 'I felt a bit alone, while now there are several architects who are getting work and recognition,' she says



Samedan House

Atmospheric retrofit for the future — Corinna Menn's restoration of this old house in the Engadin, reflects Graubünden architects immersion in materiality, detailing and the tactile





of craft, tradition and vernacular integrated into the contemporary world isn't completely surprising.

Cinema sil Piazza, a community-run venue, was completed in 2010 (both architects are active members). Enter the rebuilt theatre auditorium and – at least, when it's not in use – you may well be (as I was) stopped in your tracks by its stillness, atmosphere and silence. This cave-like space has an almost reverential ambience. 'It was a very low-budget project,' says Capaul, 'with members working on the construction.' Begun in 2008, the pair approached the Vorarlberg rammed-earth master, Martin Rauch. After a visit he readily agreed to be involved. One of Rauch's team visited and led four local volunteers for four months before the cinema club opened the doors and attracted the attention of the mittel-Europa community and a string of awards.

Himself a cinephile, Capaul talks of the sensibility as 'archaic', ancient materials holding cinematic hi-tech and a collapse of categories – a medieval electric cinema. For some, the rammed earth speaks of sustainability, although Capaul points out that the practice is immersed in environmentally sensitive buildings. 'For us it is normal, living here, looking around, appreciating the existing old buildings, and working out of tradition, to create this atmosphere with craftsmanship; that's what we're looking for. You know, when I was studying at ETHZ it wasn't the architecture that was missing, it was the roots.' Currently, the practice is involved in a large office in Ilanz, a possible further cinema in Schaffhausen, and, again with Rauch, the remaking of a strickbau Alpine farm home using rammed earth in Capaul's own village.

Not entirely dissimilar is the already complete strickbau barn interior, recrafted by GujanPally, the first to introduce Rauch's rammed earth into the region. Marlene Gujan, also an ex-Zumthor hand, and Conrad Pally, who originally trained as a carpenter, are well recognised for a series of dramatically perched mountain hiking hostels in the canton's Surselva region. The recent strickbau home in Almens was for a client who stipulated an interior of all-natural materials with a pronounced Asian sensibility. The result is an exquisitely designed interior that highlights rammed earth with Pally's woodworking. In examples like these, one can see how these younger practices have embraced natural, renewable materials and sustainability in a way that the previous generation didn't.

'It's a generational thing,' says Norbert Mathis, another young architect, whose all-timber fire station and forestry centre in Bonaduz applied an interlocking glueless, timber, wall-jointing system based on vertical log construction, for which the timber was cut when its sap was just right, on a particular full moon! Mathis, with project partners Michael Hemmi and Michele Vassella, completed the less than straight-forward, challenging project. 'A nightmare!' exclaims Mathis, although he is now interested in trying another version, perhaps related to the building going on to win a regional timber-building award. Mathis spent nearly a decade in another influential local practice, that of Conradin Clavuot, thinking that one day his employers would turn over a new leaf and embrace sustainability. It didn't happen and eventually Mathis left, starting up alone and focusing



Via Mala

Isippi/Kurath introduces architectural theory to the refuelling experience at this motorway service station



Bondaluz fire station and forestry centre

Architects Michael Hemmi and Michele Vassella, reintroduced old, glueless timber techniques for their building at Bondaluz



Grono School

At odds with Graubünden's main architectural conventions, Grono School is Raphael Zuber's first manifestation of his total architecture





►
**Puzetta
mountain hut**

GujanPally's Puzetta
mountain hostel dresses local
tradition in new clothes





Steinhausen funeral chapel

Raphael Zuber's Steinhausen funeral chapel design, though much admired, is currently unbuilt

on his main stock-in-trade, sustainable houses. Many use cross-laminated timber, including his own family home, a stone's throw from one of the early residential projects by BearthDeplazes.

At radical odds with both projects and practices is the small number of young architects aligned with Valerio Olgiati. With a mix of outspoken and seemingly arrogant claims about his abilities, Olgiati cuts a controversial figure in the canton (as he does in Switzerland generally), where he still lives and works. Olgiati's conviction of an architecture as a pure and physical representation of the intellect, realised so far in a modest number of projects, has led to international acclaim and a cult following among some younger architects.

Of these, the best known is Raphael Zuber, whose first completed project, the Grono School, excited critical interest

across Europe when it was completed in 2011. The three-storey concrete primary school and kindergarten applies elliptical concrete circles at and above the entrances, the facade concrete both visual motif and key structural elements in the composition. Zuber was on the verge of abandoning architecture when he came upon Olgiati by 'pure accident.'

'It was the first time I'd met an architect who used architecture as an expression of the intellect in a very strong, very personal way; not through a text, or in thinking, but in a purely physical way,' he says. Like Olgiati, Zuber has stirred up the more mainstream Graubünden scene. Corinna Menn states that, after visiting the Grono School on its sloping field site, she could not reconcile Zuber's rhetoric with what she saw as an undeniable contextual influence. While also underlining how interesting she finds Zuber's work, this is one of the more diplomatic observations I hear while in Graubünden.

Ranging from the cult of Zumthor to the cult of Olgiati, from Zuber's uncompromisingly demanding total freedom for his total architecture to the archaic atmospherics of Capaul & Blumenthal, from the urban and contextual work of Menn to Kuruth's participatory approach, common to all is a certain intensity in architectural passions found among this generation. If you happen to be on the road out of Zurich heading towards Graubünden you would do well to extend the visit beyond Vals, and explore this singular canton and its architecture a while longer. ■

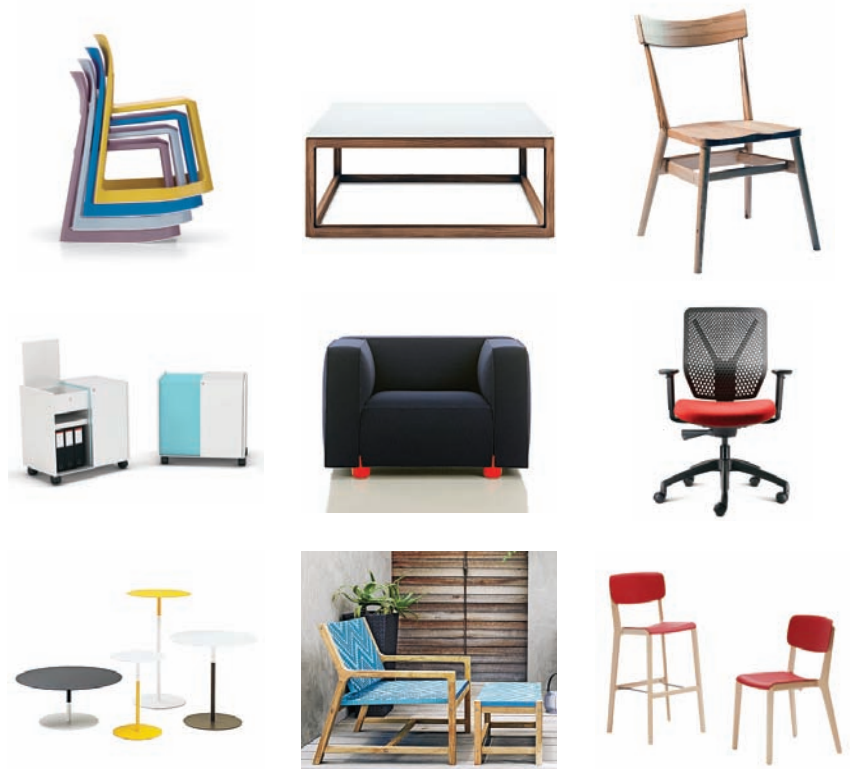
One can see how the younger practices have embraced natural, renewable materials and sustainability in a way that the previous generation didn't



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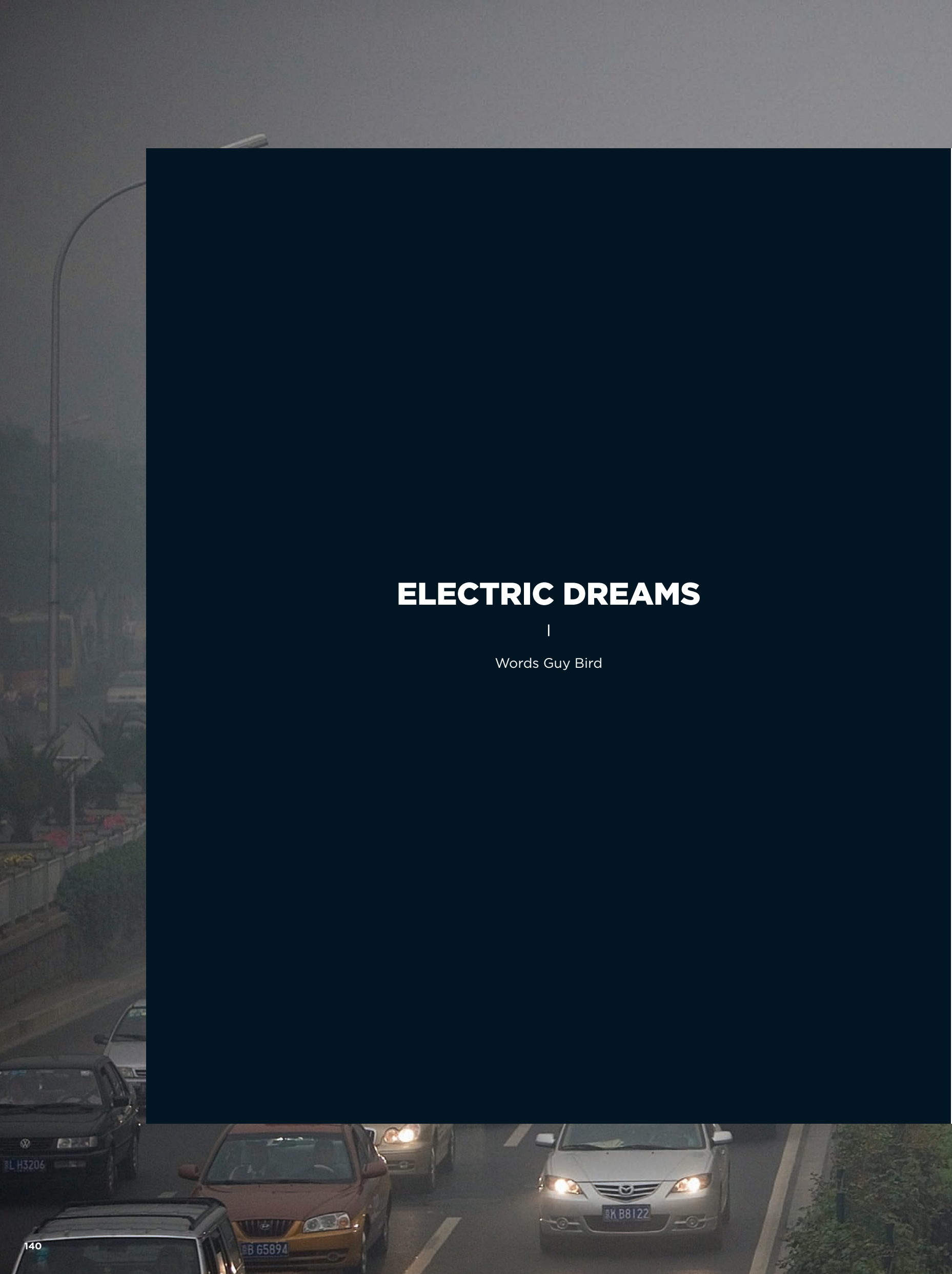
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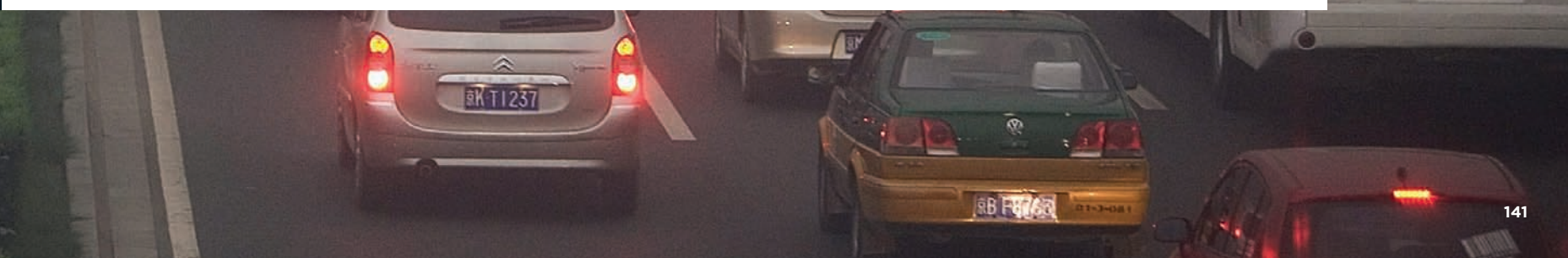


ELECTRIC DREAMS

|

Words Guy Bird

The car was undoubtedly one of the most important products of the 20th century. But as the 21st century gathers pace, this incredible personal transportation device has become a victim of its own success, causing many cities to suffer increasingly unacceptable pollution levels and gridlock. The car industry is reinventing itself, but may not be part of the future transport solution at all







It was all going so well. The automobile – officially patented in 1886 by Karl Benz – became the great enabler of the 20th century via the mass-production manufacturing process of Henry Ford. Once the preserve of the global elite, and now better known as a car, it's become affordable to a large proportion of the human race, with China the most recent convert quickly becoming the world's biggest vehicle market, at about 20 million units bought a year.

But anyone who's visited Beijing on a bad day – and it has many – will know its pollution problem is tangible, its unsettling white fog blocking out the sun for days and leaving skin and eyes irritated. It's not all to do with vehicle traffic fumes – there are bundles of factories nearby and endless construction sites within the city significantly adding to the problem – but one of the issues Beijing and China faces is the low-grade fuel used to fill up too many old vehicles. Just under 10 per cent of China's vehicles are from the pre-China I fuel standard – the latest standard aimed for is Beijing V, similar to Euro V – but the China Daily says they account for 40 per cent of total vehicle emissions. When it gets really bad the city resorts to a ballot based on registration plates to decide who can enter the city by car.

And China's cities are far from alone. London has suffered chronic traffic levels for decades and missed many related pollution-ceiling targets for years, turning to congestion charging and other restrictions to alleviate the city's lungs.

But arguably the car industry is starting to get its act together. All new cars bound for most global markets are obliged to meet ever-more stringent emission standards. Ten years ago few UK buyers knew their vehicle's carbon dioxide emissions.

Now most do, as the grammes of the global warming-related gas emitted per kilogram (g/km) dictate numerous car taxes, and lower figures become selling points. Powertrains are being downsized from inefficient big petrol or diesel engines to smaller units with fewer cylinders and turbochargers for fuel economy rather than go-faster benefit. Hybrid cars – symbolised by the trailblazing Toyota Prius – are now common on UK roads, combining the range and power of internal combustion engines with the low-to-zero-emission tailpipe benefits of electric motors to offer cars that create little or no pollution inside the city while being frugal with the fuel they use outside of it (see page 153 for our drive in the 313mpg VW XL1 for further evidence).

Fully electric vehicles (EVs), whose wheels are only powered by an electric motor using onboard battery power, might make better sense for those doing short commutes in and around the city, although they're still expensive and suffer a patchy charging network (in the UK especially). Concerns about how many miles EVs can travel before having to recharge – 80-100 miles is typical today – are countered by 'range-extender' versions such as the BMW i3 (also tested for this article) and the Vauxhall Ampera, both of which carry tiny petrol engines solely designed to top-up the battery pack to allow the electric motors to spin the car's wheels further.

Finally, there are hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. Honda has already produced a limited number of its FCX vehicles and the Hyundai Tuscon, a full production model, goes on lease, rather than sale, in the US this spring. These also employ electric motors to turn their wheels. The electricity is created using from a motor powered by hydrogen from an onboard tank. These can ►

2



1 (previous pages) – Beijing and its thick smog during rush hour

2 – Looking out from inside the now common, but still very 'worthy' Toyota Prius

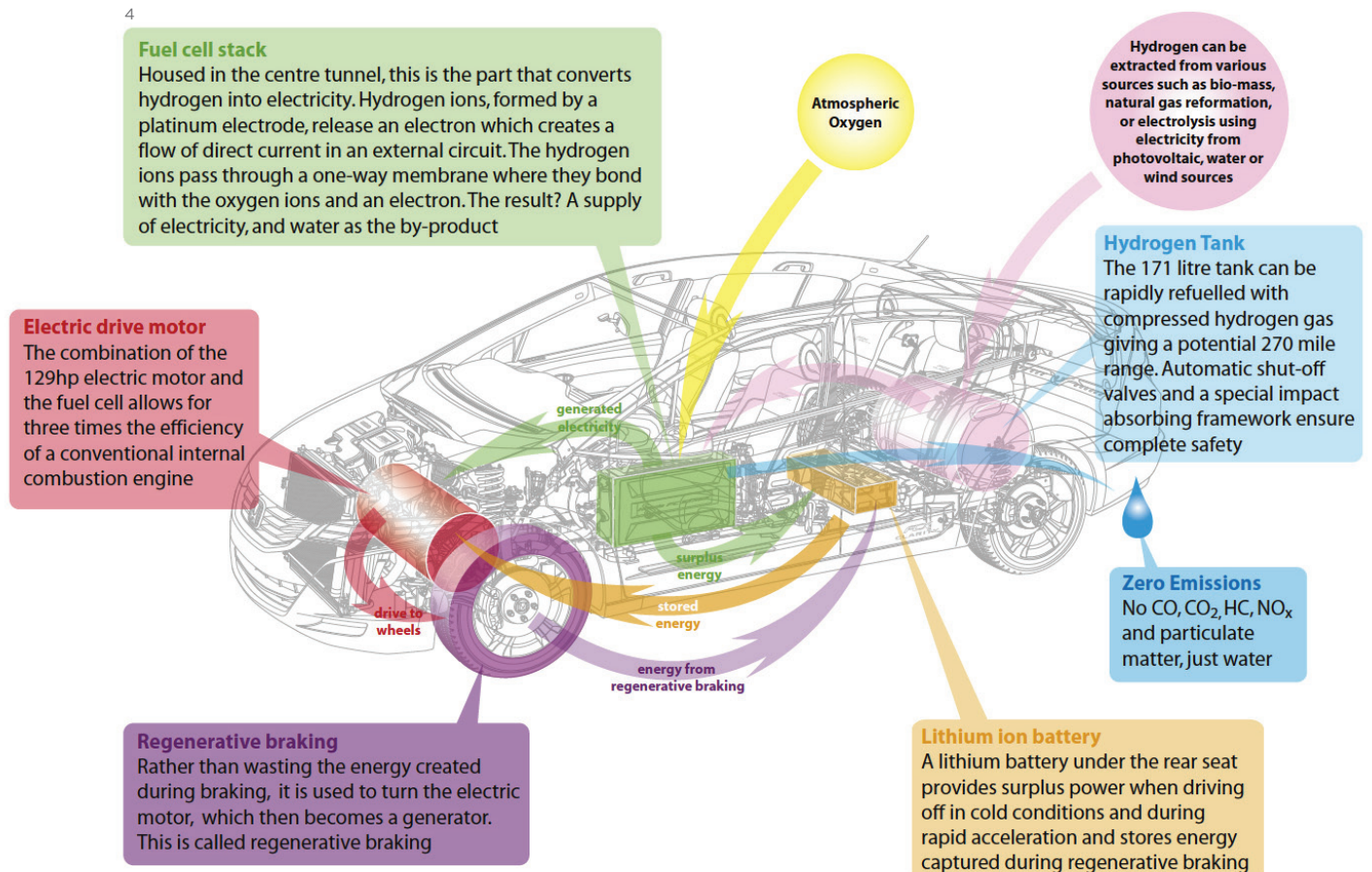
3 – The hydrogen powered Honda FCX Clarity

4 – How the Honda FCX Clarity hydrogen fuel cell works to power the car



3

4



make journeys of a similar length to conventionally-powered cars (the Tuscon is claiming a range of 480km with a top speed of 160km/h) and the only tailpipe emission is a little heat and water vapour. Honda and Toyota are planning to commercialise fuel-cell vehicle manufacture in 2015 (by which time they all hope a global hydrogen fuelling infrastructure will be more advanced and the current high price of making the cars reduced). Most experts agree that if carmakers achieve sufficient cost savings, fuel-cell vehicles will be the best eco and practical solution for most people, with full-electric cars more prevalent in cities where less miles are travelled.

Reducing harmful emissions is one side of the equation but fundamentally, where congestion is rife (and mega cities are only expected to increase in population size and number), fewer cars is a logical solution. One idea now being embraced by some more forward-thinking car makers is the idea of 'membership', not 'ownership'. In the past three years, numerous car-share schemes have developed alongside firms such as ZipCar, which employ apps that list locations where its latest vehicles can be hired by the minute and hour rather than days, taking an on-demand but non-ownership approach to vehicle hire, rather like Spotify does for music. Indeed, the app for BMW's new i3 even suggests an integrated transport approach involving parking the car and using a mixture of trains, buses and walking rather than assuming the driver will always drive. This is a mindset change for an industry that seemed to be in denial that other forms of transport existed, let alone that they could be preferable for certain journeys.

And where cars can still work in cities many brands are looking at slimmer, differently shaped vehicles more seriously than ever. Renault launched the radical four-wheel, but super-

narrow tandem electric car-cum-scooter in 2012, although an impractical lack of proper windows and optional-only doors has hampered its sales in colder and wetter locations. The Tokyo Motor Show – historically a hotbed of automotive innovation – has revealed numerous alternative transport concepts over the decades, like Honda's electric U3-X unicycle, originally envisaged to be unplugged from the interior of its 2009 EV-N concept car to enable the driver to travel onwards where four-wheeled vehicles were too wide. At the 2013 show, Honda revealed its enhanced Uni-Cub unicycle and was joined by the low-slung Toyota FV2, whose designers imagined a slimline pod accessed by a front-hinged canopy where movement is dictated not by a steering wheel but through the driver shifting their body intuitively in their intended direction of travel.

This Toyota also 'talks' to nearby vehicles to avoid accidents, which is a very real near-term technology enabled through enhanced sensors. Indeed several production cars, notably from Volvo and Mercedes, will already brake on the driver's behalf in dangerous circumstances. The FV2 also puts forward the notion of developing an emotional relationship with the driver, like a rider and horse, by using voice and image recognition to ascertain driver mood before suggesting destinations and driving style. Augmented reality presents driver information on its windscreen and exterior body panels beam out a changing array of digital images – like an automotive screen saver – to add human warmth to the hi-tech. Still only a concept, it nonetheless points to a dramatically different future driving experience.

As many commentators have observed, the idea of cars avoiding accidents is best achieved in the long term by not allowing humans to drive at all, their potential for errors of judgement too huge and the consequent social costs too large (around 1.2 million global road deaths a year). Autonomously driven prototype cars have already proved their worth in various tests and competitions and non-traditional car makers like Google have joined traditional ones to tout their ability to sell perfectly workable driverless cars within 10-15 years if laws are changed to allow them. Then, as Michael Robinson, design director of independent design house Bertone, puts it: 'There would be a paradigm shift – zero traffic deaths. Thus design can change, as bumpers, pedals and steering wheels are no longer needed.' Robinson predicts such a scenario by 2050, with humans behind the wheel only for private track-day capers, a sentiment shared by Gert Hildebrand, ex-Mini design chief (now behind Chinese/Israeli start-up car brand Qoros): 'Some 130 years ago there were no cars and I propose that in 100 years' time there will be no cars again – except perhaps as devices for just having fun.'

Safe journeys and fun on the track sounds good, freeing up road-going passengers to make their journey in low-to-no emission fully connected mobile lounges without risk, travelling in harmonious traffic regulated by all the vehicles within the stream, like fish in shoals.

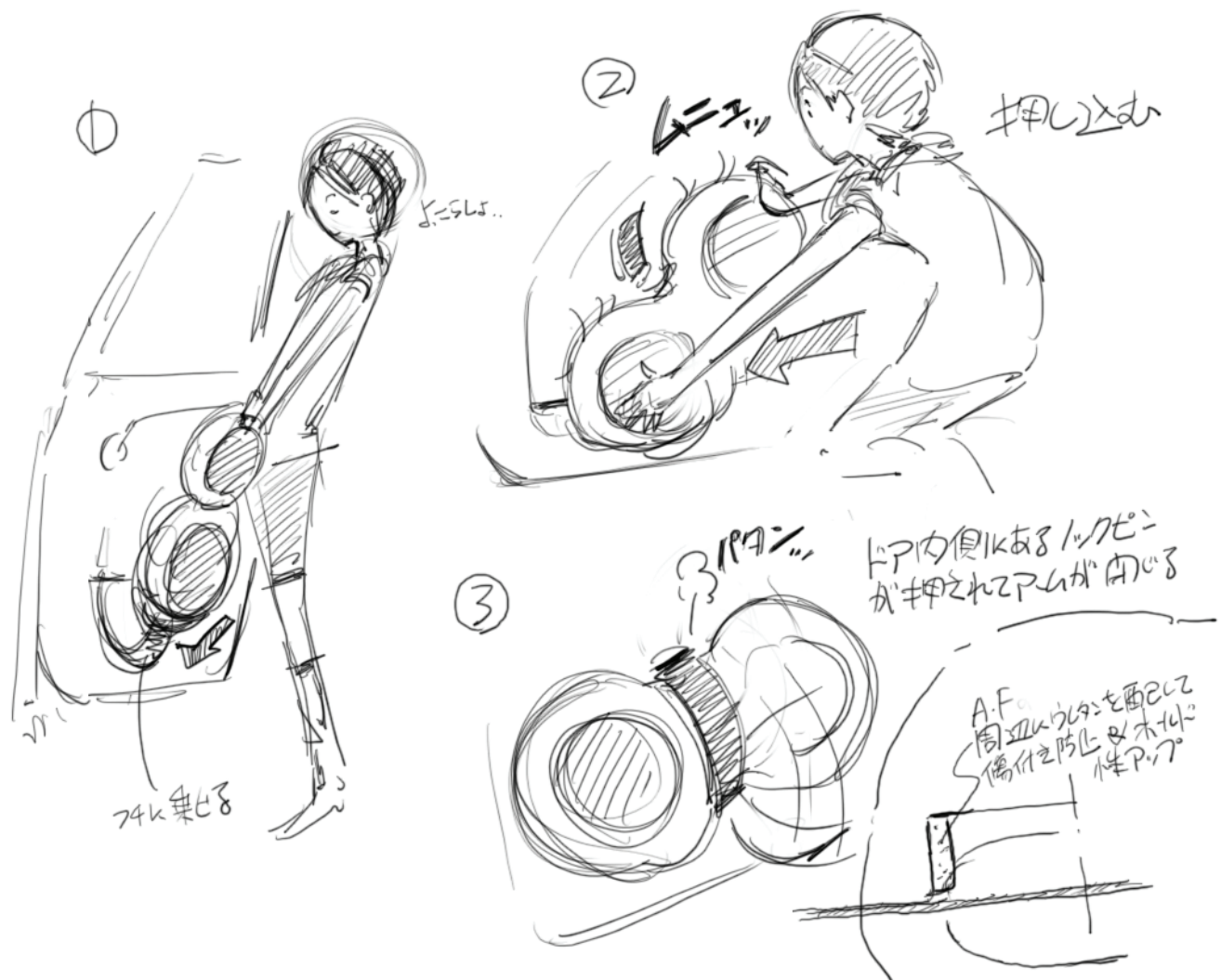
Until that time there's still a lot of work to do, but at its best the auto industry is a genuinely creative global business (whose executives have kids and want them to have a future worth living I suspect), so perhaps one day London's congestion will really ease and Beijing's pollution lessen to reveal more blue skies. we're getting there in a way that didn't seem likely a decade ago, so in another decade or two who knows what progress will have been made? I'm staying positive about humanity's ability (and desire) to figure it out. ►



5 - The Toyota FV2 concept is accessed by a front-hinged canopy, has a heads-up display and movement is dictated not by a steering wheel, but by the driver shifting their body in the intended direction of travel





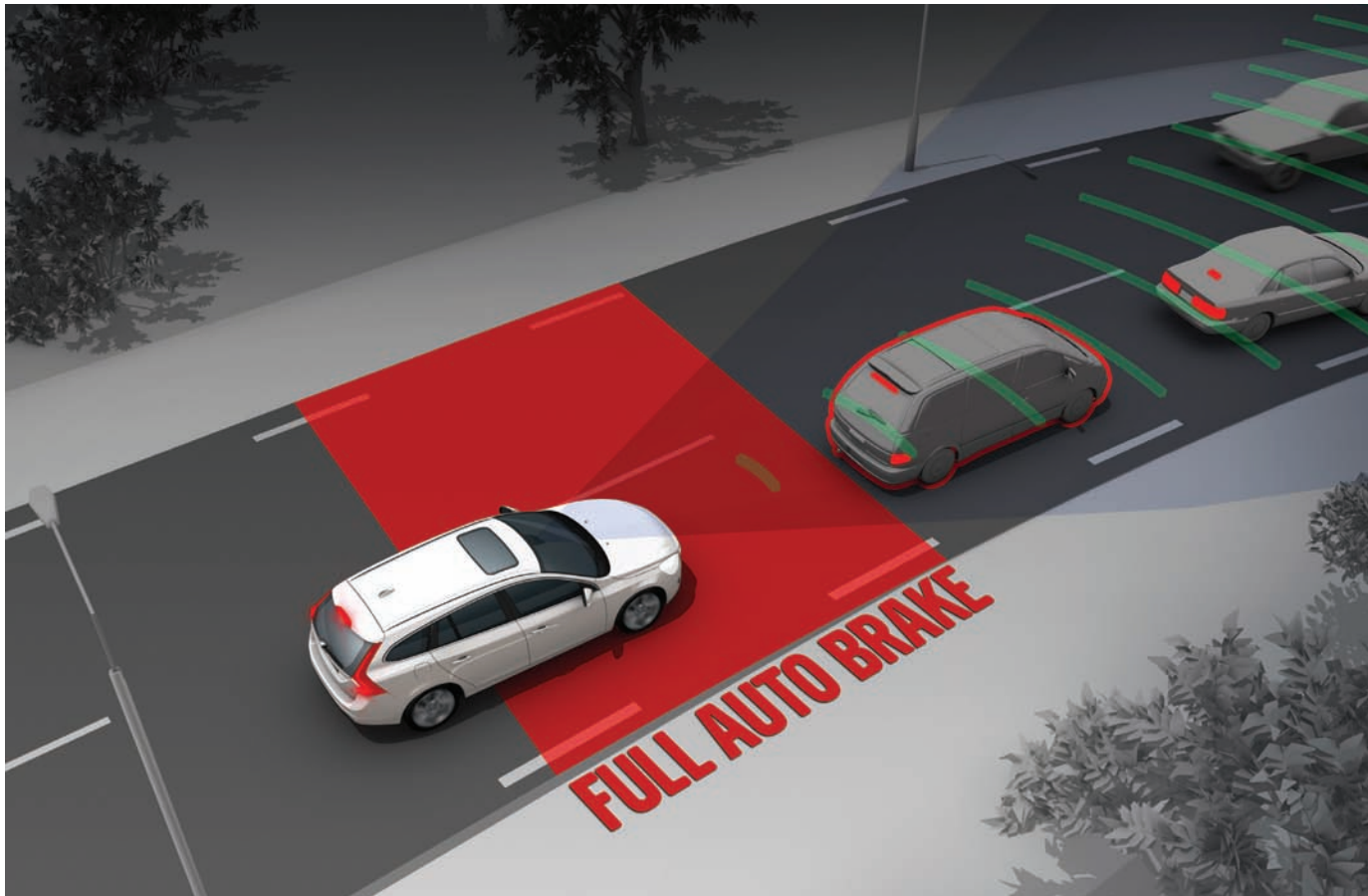


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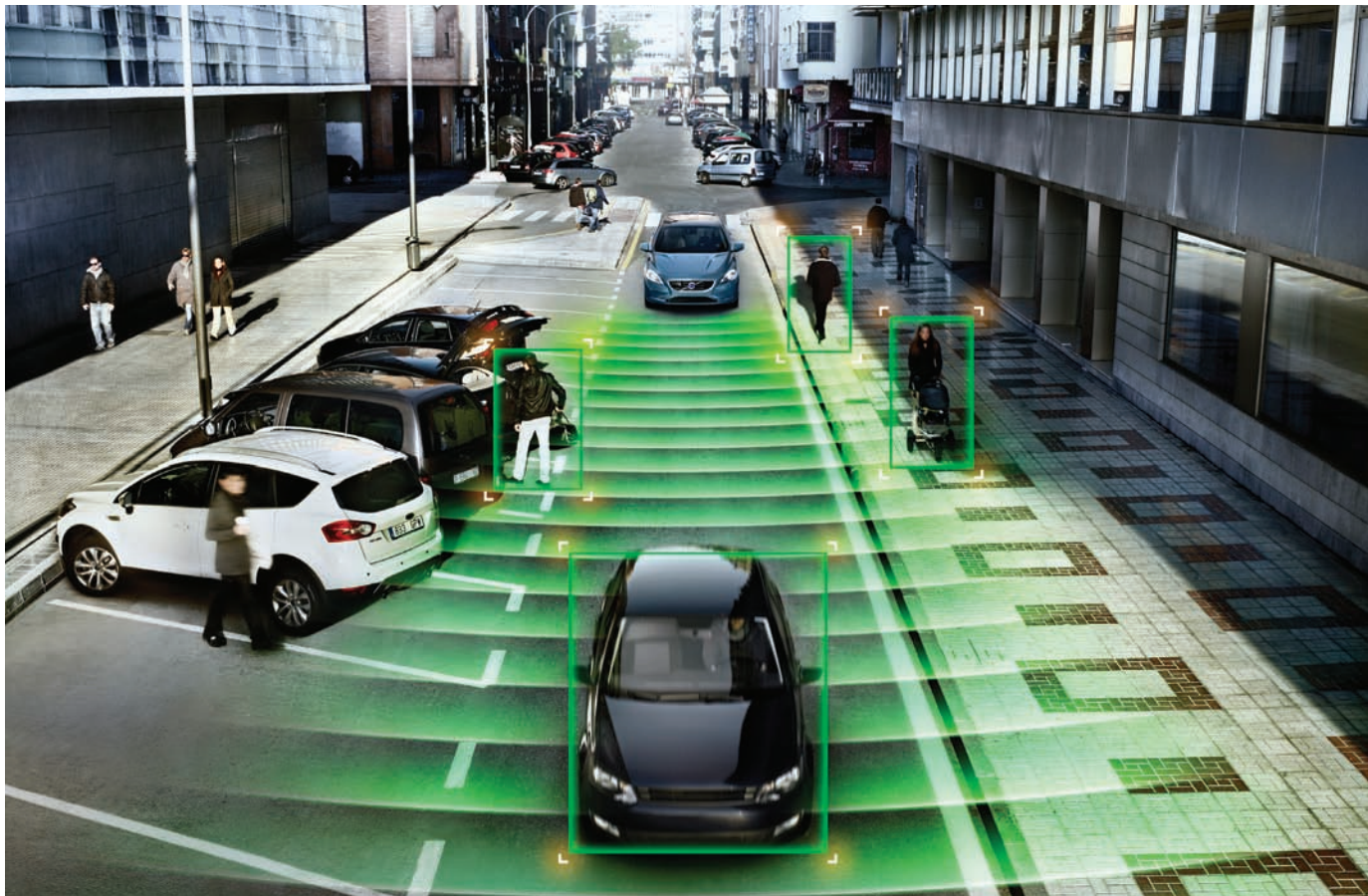


6 - The Honda EV-N concept is not beautiful, but certainly innovative, incorporating a U3-X unicycle into the door for onward journeys where space is at a premium

7



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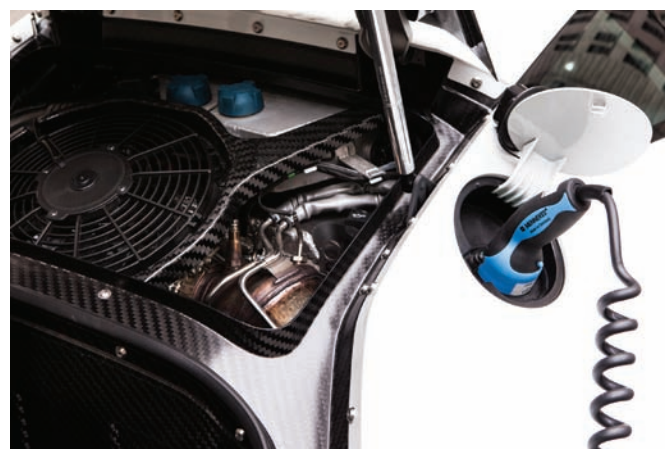


7 and 8 – examples from Volvo of how self-braking cars work by on-board computers sensing stationary vehicles as well as monitoring other factors such as moving pedestrians

9 – Mercedes takes autonomous driving to its full, hands-free conclusion with an estimated planned introduction around 2020







DRIVING THE FUTURE

Photography Peter Guenzel

We take two of the most technically advanced and visually appealing eco-focused cars currently on sale - the diesel/hybrid VW XL1 and electric BMW i3 - on the road

The two-seat VW XL1 is the more extreme vehicle, offering 313mpg – unprecedented for a production car (see page 23)– by employing a raft of weight-saving techniques such as ultra-lightweight carbon fibre for the chassis, body panels and bucket seats, and magnesium wheels. The 795kg result is less than the current Lotus Elise (itself a paragon of lightness) but still has creature comforts like air conditioning.

Driving it in London, the most common response from passers-by was 'Is this some kind of concept car?' such are its futuristic looks – although its gloss-white aerodynamic shape with sloping roof and covered rear wheels has a little 'retro' mixed in, recalling the Fifties' Citroen DS plus a dash of late-Seventies' TV series Battlestar Galactica.

You may also notice an absence of drag-inducing wing mirrors, replaced by rear-facing cameras integrated into the exterior doors that relay images back to two interior video screens. Shown on many previous concept cars, these cameras now pass the necessary road-going legislation and should set

a precedent for more streamlined, mirror-less cars in the future. The screens work well in identifying bicycles and buses, but reversing into poorly lit parking spaces is tricky. An extra central camera (or rear-facing floodlights) might help.

The VW Polo-sized car features a rear-mounted 0.8ltr diesel engine, which combines with an electric motor to offer 75hp, 21g/km CO₂ and a near-silent 31-mile electric-only range, but when that dwindles, or when accelerating harder, the diesel assists in a contrastingly raucous way (because VW left out noise-cancelling insulation to keep weight down). The car's easy to manoeuvre, comfortable, has a 120ltr boot to carry a few bags, and even its supercar-style 'gull-wing' doors have good function. Hinged well into the ceiling, they create a higher aperture where conventional side-hinged doors on a car as low as the XL1 would cause real problems.

It's truly an amazing car, and amazing that VW decided to build it. Only 250 are initially scheduled for series production with a hefty price tag of about £100,000, and while a few

10 - The DS meet's Battle star
Galactica VW XL1 is a diesel
electric hybrid



11



hundred 'eco supercars' won't change the world, the project's importance lies in the application of its many ground-breaking technologies to affordable volume cars. As a case in point, VW showed the Twin-Up version of its already available Up city car at the 2013 Tokyo Motor Show with the XLI's diesel/electric power train inside. Still offering 257mpg, with four seats and more practicality, it could go on sale inside two years for about £17,000.

Less extreme but also less expensive than the XLI (£25,680-£28,830) and intended as a volume premium model, the BMW i3 launches both a car and a new less speed-obsessed sub-brand for the traditionally go-faster German marque. Not that the full-electric i3 four-seater is slow. The instant acceleration from the 170hp electric motor is surprising (0-62mph takes only 7.2 seconds), and makes the i3 well able to keep up with bigger cars and their unsuspecting drivers. Barrelling into corners feels uncannily safe for such a narrow and high-sided vehicle and the steering is firm. There is a noticeable 'bite' to the brakes to boost energy regeneration, but it's easy to get used to. The only real

difference with the Range Extender version is a slight extra noise when the tiny 650cc two-cylinder petrol engine is required to top up the battery, and to add the extra 80 miles over the regular EV's 100-mile range to give 180-odd miles to play with.

For city-based drivers who want a full EV but only need to make occasional longer journeys, BMW is offering a scheme from £40 a month where points can be swapped for preferential hire rates on bigger conventionally engined BMWs. Also employing a lightweight carbon-fibre body and many sustainable materials and manufacturing processes, plus smart phone apps to help manage off-peak charging and more, BMW has attempted to cover off all the concerns that have hampered EV sales thus far. Special mention must also be made of the cabin, which resembles an airy domestic modern interior more than a car. Featuring a curved wood dashboard and luxury leather seats, it feels like nothing else on the road. All round, this is a very special car that finally makes EV driving desirable and relatively affordable as well as merely worthy. ■

11 - Electric from the ground up, the new BMW i3 was launched at the end of 2013 starting at £25,680

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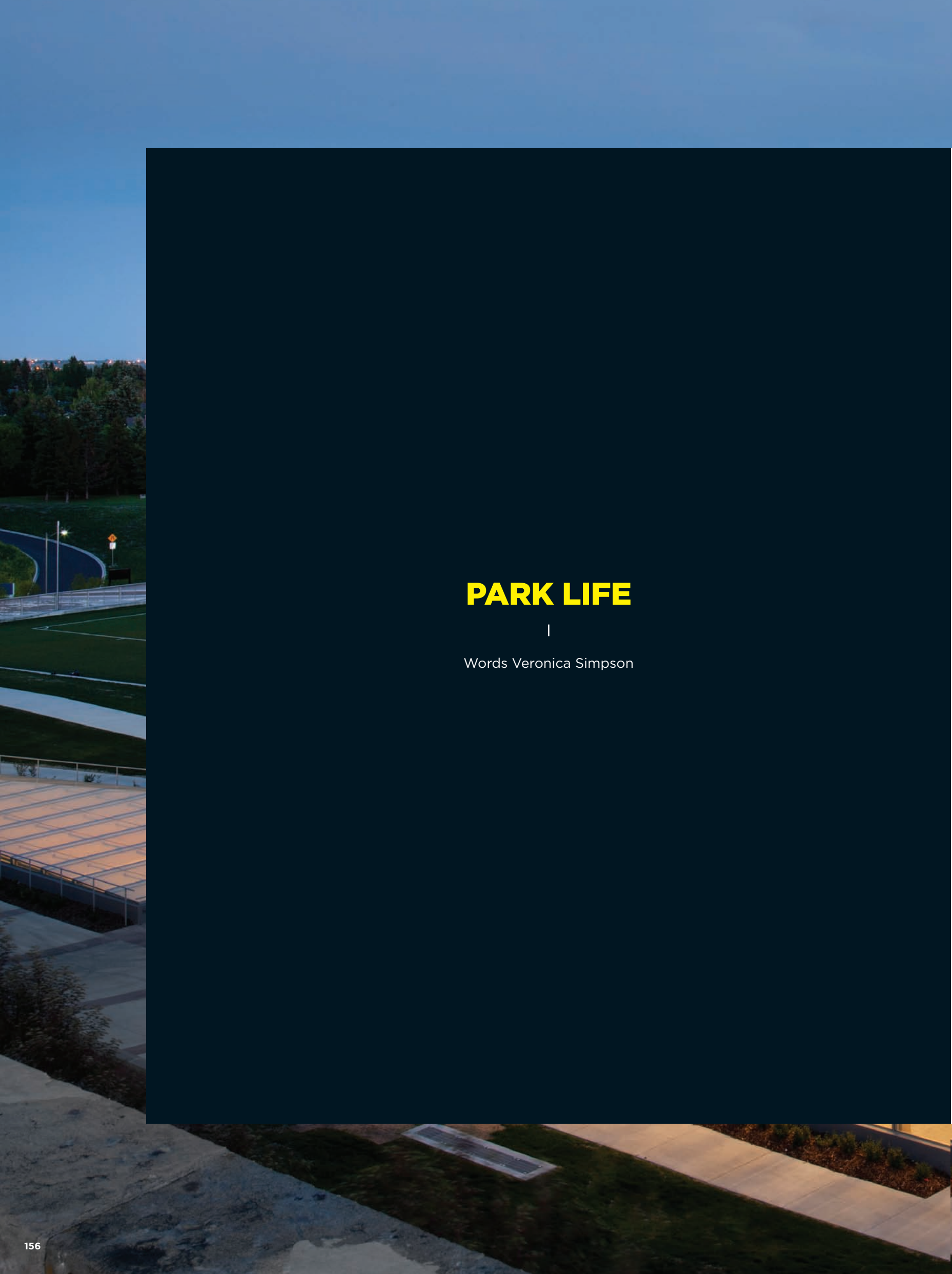
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PARK LIFE

|

Words Veronica Simpson

Should car parks be written off as dinosaurs of a bygone, car-centric age, or can they be refurbished, repurposed or reinvented to become urban assets rather than eyesores? Veronica Simpson goes in search of answers, and unearths some surprisingly attractive and innovative solutions







Urban car parks: surely they must be near the top of the list of least lovely of all possible structures – only slightly behind power stations, nuclear bunkers and Eighties shopping malls. Though magnificent examples do exist (the catacomb-like Parc des Célestins in Lyon, for example), the vast majority are cheaply built, utilitarian in design, badly lit, and often poorly maintained. Collectively, they have failed to become what was envisaged for them in the mid-20th-century heyday of car-centric living and town planning – emblems of the machine age, temples to what then seemed our inevitable, utterly motorised future. Instead, they squat in their monumental concrete ugliness, inefficiently and inelegantly taking up valuable city-centre space, like the boorish guest who refuses to recognise the party is over. As the civic hearts of towns and cities are masterplanned towards a more sustainable, connective future in which public transport, cyclists and pedestrians are central, the modern car-park typology appears increasingly obsolete.

Among architects they have their fans, however – purists or functionalists who appreciate them as the ultimate in streamlined construction, offering an exhilarating simplicity and rawness. UK architect Simon Henley of Henley Halebrown Rorrison (HHbR) makes a convincing case for their appreciation in his excellent book, *The Architecture of Parking* (Thames & Hudson, 2009). The only comprehensive international survey on this building type, it charts their evolution: from the comfortable ‘liveried stables’ of the early days (when cars were the playthings of the rich, driven and maintained by chauffeurs) through Louis Kahn’s proposed cylindrical car ‘ports’ placed around the edges of futuristic city masterplans, to the proliferation of private-sector, rented-by-the-hour, anonymous car ‘warehouses’ of the latter half of the 20th century.

Henley asserts: ‘The multistorey car park is a stealthy architecture that has been tracing the zeitgeist for more than a century, projecting ideas of what is technically possible and

what is emotionally interesting.’ Emotionally interesting? Indeed. For anyone who hasn’t been paying attention, there is now a new breed of car park that attempts to engage the emotions – to attract and even to delight the user.

In the past decade or so, a small but select group of architects – including OMA, MVRDV, Herzog & de Meuron, UN Studio, Zaha Hadid and NL Architects – have been exploring the formal and spatial possibilities of parking structures, resulting in some wonderfully sculptural spaces. Not a car park in the strictest sense, UN Studio’s 2006 Mercedes-Benz Museum is more of a vehicular beauty parade: 160 iconic and historic car models spin around a central atrium in a building that places people at the centre of the experience.

It’s obviously easier to remedy the claustrophobic environment of an above-ground car park. Ingenhoven Architects’ 2002 car park in Burda, Switzerland is apparently a joy to experience: a circular race-track structure veiled by slim wooden louvres, which complements and embraces its leafy suburban setting. However, even the tomb-like confinement of an underground garage can be remedied, with the right creative mindset. OMA’s underground car park in Breda city centre built in 2000 banishes dark corners, walls and slabs that could hide potential assailants. Daylight pours in through rooflights on the ground floor, while steel and glass patios punched through to the lower levels allow daylight to bounce off white ceilings and backlit perforated steel walls.

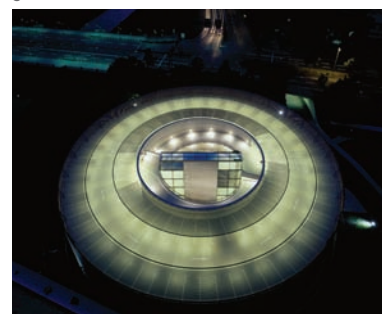
In the past decade, many architects have woken up to the potential of car-park exteriors and interiors as blank canvases, perfect for the deployment of dramatic lighting, materials and effects. For example, Zaha Hadid’s 2001 Hoehnheim-Nord Terminus and Car Park in Strasbourg is conceived as a series of overlapping energetic fields, providing a dynamic interplay between the horizontal streaks of moving car headlights against slimline diagonal pillars and go-faster ceiling strip lights.

1 – (previous pages) Bing Thom Architects’ 2011 campus car park for the South Alberta Institute of Technology is dug into a hillside, with a playing field on top and a pixellated mesh exterior created by BTA in conjunction with Vancouver artist Roderick Quinn

2 – UN Studio’s Mercedes Benz museum: A double helix structure internally generates two descending pathways through the eight-storey building, offering multiple pathways connecting with offices, a museum shop and restaurant

3 – Ingenhoven Architects’ car park in Burda, Switzerland: ramps and bays are integrated into a circular, ascending race track veiled by slim, wooden louvres

3





4 – The clever use of graphics, lighting and materials at the Avenida Libertad Car Park in Spain won its designer, Manuel Clavel Rojo, a 2010 Tile of Spain Award

5 – Diller Scofidio + Renfro helped designer David Rockwell reinvent a former parking garage in New York as a film centre, featuring a 27m-long glass front wall



5



6



6 - Hawkins\Brown used the car park under a first-floor office to create an aspirational shop front for learning for the London South Bank University

7 - On top of a 10-storey car park in Peckham is Frank's Bar, designed by Practice Architecture, using old scaffolding planks, ratchet straps and a red PVC canopy

Birmingham's Millennium Point Car Park, by Urban Design (now Acivico DCFM), is a beacon for regeneration in the city's Eastside: glowing Perspex sheets in Arctic Blue are scattered across the seven-storey facade; when lit up at night, it is visible for miles around. It won a European Car Park Award in 2012.

Birmingham's Millennium Point and Sheffield's Charles Street car park, by Allies and Morrison, recently made it into the top 10 'coolest car parks in the world' in a competition organised by Stress-Free Airport Parking and Blueprint's sister title, FX magazine. The Charles Street car park in Sheffield, its surface animated by rotated aluminium panels painted green on the inside, also garnered two RIBA Awards in 2009 – one of few parking structures ever to do so.

Redressing the normally hostile visitor experience is a key feature of this new breed of car park, with colour-coded floors, lighting, clear graphics and digital gadgetry frequently deployed to help people navigate their way around – not to mention to assist them locating their car.

Where there's a well-heeled customer to attract, there is justification for investing in better quality finishes and features. For example, in BDP's Liverpool One multistorey car park, attached to Grosvenor Estate's £42bn Liverpool shopping centre, the environment is enhanced with coloured lights, crisp graphic treatments, polished concrete flooring, and a conical atrium entrance lobby that welcomes and orientates visitors (it won a European Parking Association Award in 2009). The 2010 Avenida Libertad Car Park in Murcia, south-east Spain, goes to even greater extremes, with a scheme more reminiscent of an edgy European nightclub than a parking facility – complete with exquisitely tiled customer toilets and supercool graphics.

The ultimate 'car park as campus asset' has to be Vancouver-based practice Bing Thom Architects (BTA)'s sleek, low-key, three-storey scheme for the South Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT), commissioned to rationalise scattered parking across the campus into one spot and free up valuable

land. Completed in 2011, this 35,000 sq m building is sunk into an existing hillside to minimise visibility and support the campus's full-sized playing field on its roof, leaving only the east and south sides of the parking lot fully visible. Glass pyramids articulate the staircase and entrance atria. But the real masterstroke is the pixilated, undulating metal facade that reflects light and cloudscapes across the Alberta prairie sky.

But in tune with a certain fashion for urban authenticity, there are now champions for even the grottiest, most run-down versions of the multistorey. For example, the hippest, hottest car-park experience in London since 2007 has been young gallerist Hannah Barry's Bold Tendencies, a summer arts and sculpture festival, which takes place on the top floors of a 10-storey Seventies' car park in the edgy urban environs of Peckham, south London. It is now a regular fixture in London's summer cultural scene, aided by Practice Architecture's rooftop restaurant Frank's Bar. Bold Tendencies' programming has become increasingly ambitious, with highlights including a 2011 performance of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (with a 100-piece youth orchestra gathered from London's music schools). As a model for low-cost, arts-led regeneration it has blazed a trail. Says Barry: 'There have been 12 university studies of this car park since it [Bold Tendencies] opened, from Kyoto to Canada.'

Miami went one better than Peckham in 2010, with Herzog & de Meuron's 1111 (referred to as 'eleven eleven') Lincoln Road – a parking structure that is also a permanent community asset. This beautifully simple concrete building has become a year-round destination, with yoga classes, parties and even weddings staged here regularly. With a fully open exterior (safety grilles are set back from the edge), the structure reads as a podium – an excitingly accessible frame providing vistas and perspectives from its upper storeys on to the surrounding cityscape. Circulation is through an open, sculptural stair in the centre of the building. The owner – developer and entrepreneur Robert Wennett – had his own private apartment built into the upper

7





mezzanine floor levels, with a massive roof terrace.

'Lincoln Road is the centre of cultural and civic life in Miami Beach,' says Wennett, in Elizabeth Priore's short film about the project (vimeo.com/51889050). 'Everything that we do in the garage is not what you expect of a parking garage...This garage is all about the pedestrian.' (It deservedly won the aforementioned World's Coolest Car Park competition.)

Sadly, most of us – especially in Western Europe – are unlikely to see similarly engaging and flexible new parking schemes in our major cities, thanks in large part to prohibitively high land values and lack of year-round sunshine. So why not pull down the really ugly postwar ones and replace them? Simon Henley, the author and car park expert, explains that these, in particular, 'would be abnormally difficult to demolish. They are either standard precast or in-situ concrete. Older engineering tends to err on the clever side, so is significantly harder to dismantle.'

Opportunities are also rare for reinvention, as the building plan is usually too deep and dark and the floor heights too low to work for commercial or residential uses. There are a few exceptions, however – most famously, the Eighties' conversion of Wallis Gilbert & Partners' Grade II listed art deco Daimler Car Hire garage in Fitzrovia into offices for advertising company McCann-Erickson, (now McCann London, and still there).

Two new and notable examples show that in some cases – where the intended usage or specific building layout allows – repurposing can work really well. In the summer of 2013, Hawkins\Brown converted a first-floor office with undercroft parking at London South Bank University (LSBU) into a vibrant two-storey student hub, whose entrance lobby takes advantage

of the large volume afforded by its former incarnation as off-street parking for delivery vans and lorries. The original Seventies coffered concrete car-park ceiling is retained and creates a pleasing geometry within this social and learning hub.

In 2011, with the help of Diller, Scofidio + Renfro, David Rockwell reinvented a former parking garage in New York as a state-of-the-art movie theatre. The Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center features an eye-catching entrance with 27m-long glass wall, while the low ceiling and deep floorplates help to create a charming boutique feel to the screening rooms (one 90 seater and another 150 seater) and the cafe/restaurant.

So what does the future hold for car-park architecture? It depends on your part of the world. In the urban megacities of China and elsewhere in Asia we can expect to see more sprawling megamalls with giant car parks, though underground appears to be the fashionable choice (BDP is working on several InterIKEA shopping malls in China, one of which, in Beijing, has underground parking for 7000 cars).

There will be more sculptural and fantastical creations too – like Joho Architecture's Herma car park in South Korea. As with this version, there is a strong trend for new car parks having retail on the ground floor. It helps to justify greater investment in design, as well as improve and animate the street-level presence.

But for the vast majority of the Seventies and Eighties' relics we appear to be lumbered with, Simon Henley hopes that, at the very least, we can expect a lick of paint and some dramatic lighting – even music. Where most car parks are concerned, he concludes: 'They don't need to be that much better to be a lot better.' ■

8 – Joho Architecture's Herma car park in South Korea is designed to create 'an art gallery-like parking building' to raise the prestige and commercial value of ground-floor rental units

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FRENCH FANCY

|

Words and images Alastair Philip Wiper

A wide-angle photograph of a snowy mountain landscape. The foreground is a vast, flat expanse of snow. In the background, a wooden building with a dark roof is visible on the right side. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall atmosphere is quiet and serene.

Opening in 1966, the French ski resort of Avoriaz was only accessible by cable car and looked like something from a expressionist movie. It still does and there are still no cars to be seen...



2

3



1 & 2 - Datcha from 1986,
designed by Jacques Labro
and Jean-Jacques Orzoni

Redolent of the sets from the German expressionist classic

The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, the Sixties' ski resort of Avoriaz in the French Alps was pioneering in many ways, not least in that cars were never part of the plan. When seen from afar, the buildings appear to blend in with the mountains. The resort was planned so that every door opens to a piste to the bottom of town, while a series of public lifts carry people back up to the top of the town. You can ski to the shops to pick up your groceries, then take a lift back to your apartment. If you want to go from one part of town to the other, a horse-drawn sleigh will take you there.

A little more than an hour's drive from Geneva and 1,800m above sea level, it is part of the Portes du Soleil ski area. Avoriaz started life as a desolate plateau, on a cliff high above the town of Morzine. In the summer it was used by a few goat herders, and in the winter it was not used at all, until a few brave skiers started to venture up there – the old-fashioned way, walking all the way up and then skiing down very quickly. One of those energetic people was Jean Vuarnet, a child of Morzine, and winner of the 1960 Olympics' men's downhill. After returning from the Games, he was asked by the municipality of Morzine to develop a new area for skiing around the town, and Vuarnet proposed the plateau as the site for a purpose-built resort of Avoriaz.

Vuarnet unearthed an investor in the shape of Gerard Bremond, the son of a rich industrialist and part of the French

jet set. Bremond wanted a 'Saint Tropez de Neige' – a Swinging Sixties resort, with high-profile guests frolicking in the snow drinking champagne. But he was also a visionary – he had a strong passion for jazz and film – and he wanted to create a totally unique resort, which embraced the modern world but was also in harmony with nature.

'When one goes on holiday, one hopes to find a different context to the one in which one lives daily,' extolled Bremond. 'In Avoriaz there will be no cars. The roads will serve as ski runs, the architecture will integrate itself into the landscape, but will be new and ground-breaking. It is not necessary to explain how these proposals will cause an outcry!'

To fulfil his vision, Bremond hired the young, recently graduated architect Jacques Labro, who assembled a team and set about designing Avoriaz. In 1966, the resort opened to guests, with one hotel, the Hotel des Dromonts, sitting on top of the cliff. It must have been quite surreal. The French writer, Regine Deforges, was hired to install a library at the hotel: 'At the time one could only access its 1800m by a swaying and squeaking cable car, which lifted one above the level of the trees. We got out relieved but with trembly legs. But what a reward! An immense white area limited only by the sky, the steep slopes cheered up by the presence of fir trees and the cliff face, a cliff like the one which plunges into the North Sea or the Channel. I anticipated the sound of the sea, but all around me was silence

4



3 & 4 – Summer and winter shots of Chalet Tequila, Chalets de la Combe and Chalet Famose by Jacques Labro from 1991

5



6



5 – Sequoia designed by Atelier d'Architecture d'Avoriaz (Jacques Labro and Jean-Jacques Orzoni) with Bertrand + Delb, in 1966

6 – Résidence Tilia by Jacques Labro from 1988

7 – Office de Tourisme by Jacques Labro from 1984

8 – Allegro, part of Résidence les Ruches, by Collectif Architecture (Jacques Labro and Jean-Jacques Orzoni), from 1972



7



8



9

– a unique, pure silence, which made one respectful of such virgin beauty. A horse-drawn carriage transported me away and the night swallowed up the mountains. “We are here,” cried a voice. Looking up I saw a dark mass spotted here and there with lights, a chateau from a dark novel: it was the Hotel des Dromonts on the eve of Christmas 1966.’

Bremond also found a great way to draw publicity to Avoriaz, by launching the Festival international du film fantastique d’Avoriaz, a horror and fantasy film festival, which ran from 1973 to 1993. The fantastical nature of the buildings and their surroundings was the perfect backdrop to the festival, which quickly became well respected, attracting directors such as David Lynch and Roman Polanski.

I first visited Avoriaz in 2004, as a 23-year-old ski bum, and was immediately struck by the architecture, a subject I knew nothing about. It was the spookiness of the buildings that really grabbed my attention. I thought they had a dark side, in a good way – and I immediately began to imagine what the architect was thinking and what he was influenced by when he was designing this place. Later on, I saw Robert Weine’s *Cabinet of Dr Caligari* and wondered if it had been an influence: ‘I had seen it, but no, it wasn’t an influence!’ says Jacques Labro. ‘The mountains were more of an inspiration. And other architects of the time – Alvar Alto, Frank Lloyd Wright, Gaudi, the expressionist architects that were the base of my studies.

‘The buildings were not intended to have this fantastical element, but when Bremond came up with the idea for the festival I thought it fitted perfectly. I could see why others thought that. Bremond is very cultured, he is very passionate about film and music. But I think that the buildings only add to

the fantastic nature of the area; it has always been like that – the cliffs, the plateau, the fact that when we opened Avoriaz there was no road, you had to take the cable car.

‘Actually the whole idea of no cars was very, very important to the concept. I think it is still completely unique in the world for a skiing resort. It was Jean Vuarnet who pushed the idea that you had to be able to ski in and out of every building, and this was very controversial at that time because the car was king, it was almost a symbol of France. But the idea of parking your car at the bottom of the cliff, and then leaving the ground and flying through the air in a cable car, and arriving in a new, magical place where everything looks different, like another world, was very important when we were designing Avoriaz.

‘You should be leaving your normal world behind and experiencing something else for a week. We even brought reindeer from Lapland to pull the sleds, to add to the magical feeling – but it ended up being a bit of a disaster because you cannot control a reindeer the way you can a horse – they get scared very easily – so soon there was baggage strewn all over the resort by out-of-control reindeer!’

Another person deeply affected by Avoriaz, was fellow ski bum Simon Cloutier, who first saw it in the Eighties. He also fell in love with the architecture – so much so that he decided to become an architect so he could continue the work on those buildings. At architecture school in Grenoble, Cloutier made his final project about a new sector of the town, and part of that project has now been realised in the new Amara area that opened last year. Labro and Cloutier now work together on Avoriaz through the Atelier d’Architecture d’Avoriaz, with Cloutier based in Avoriaz and Jacques based in Paris. ■

9 – Kouria by Jacques Labro
designed in 1988

SURFACE DESIGN SHOW

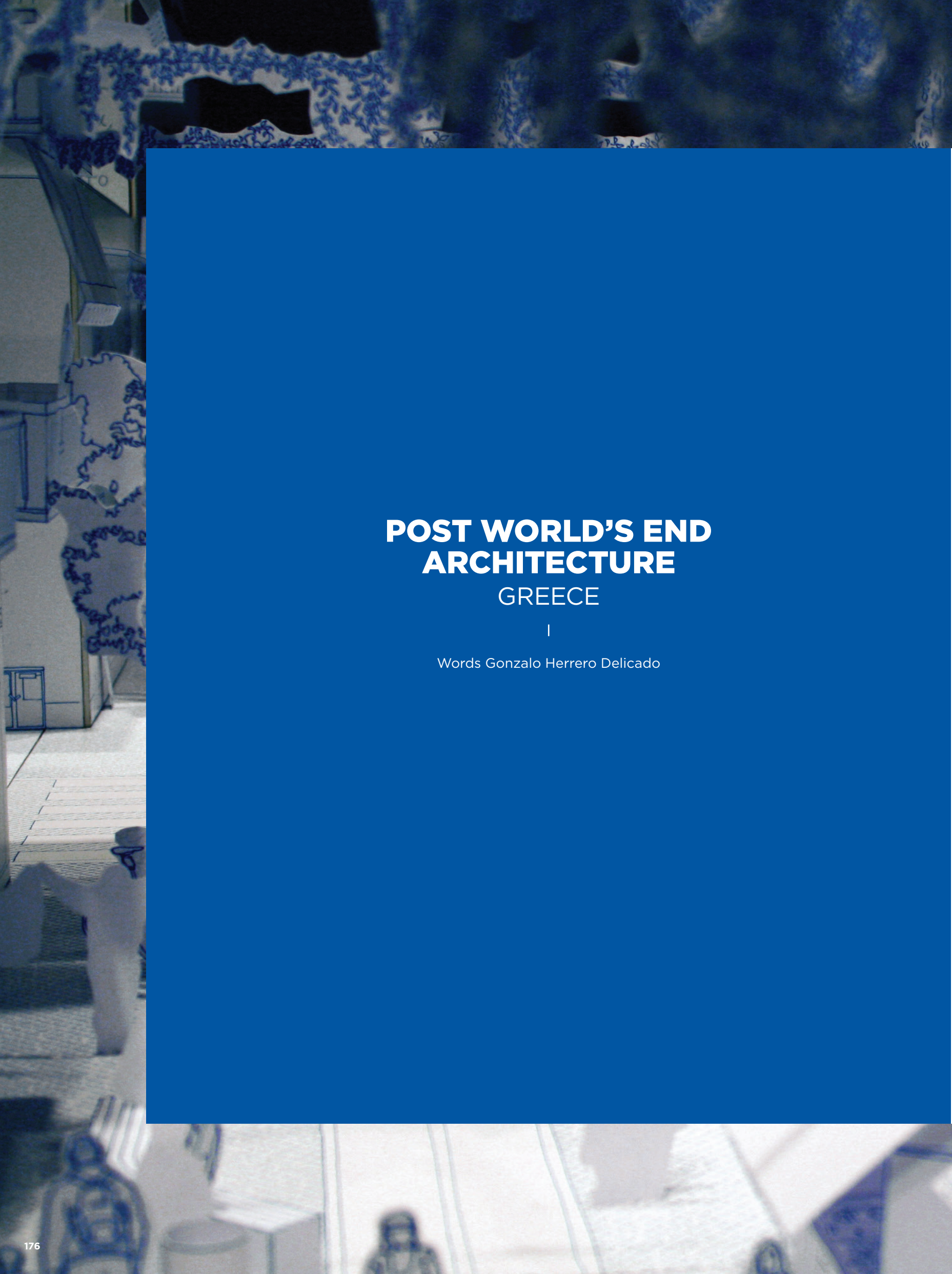
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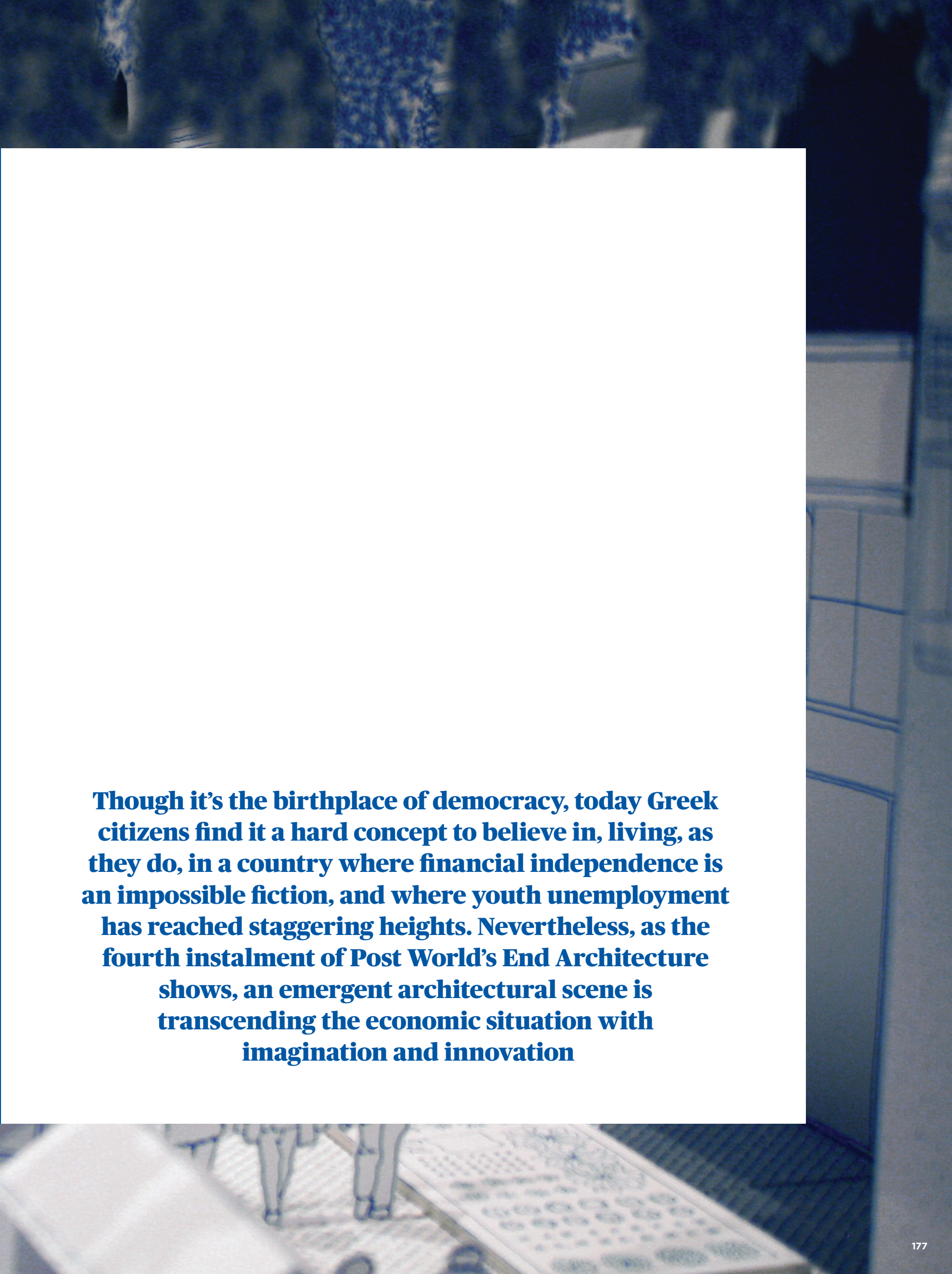


POST WORLD'S END ARCHITECTURE

GREECE

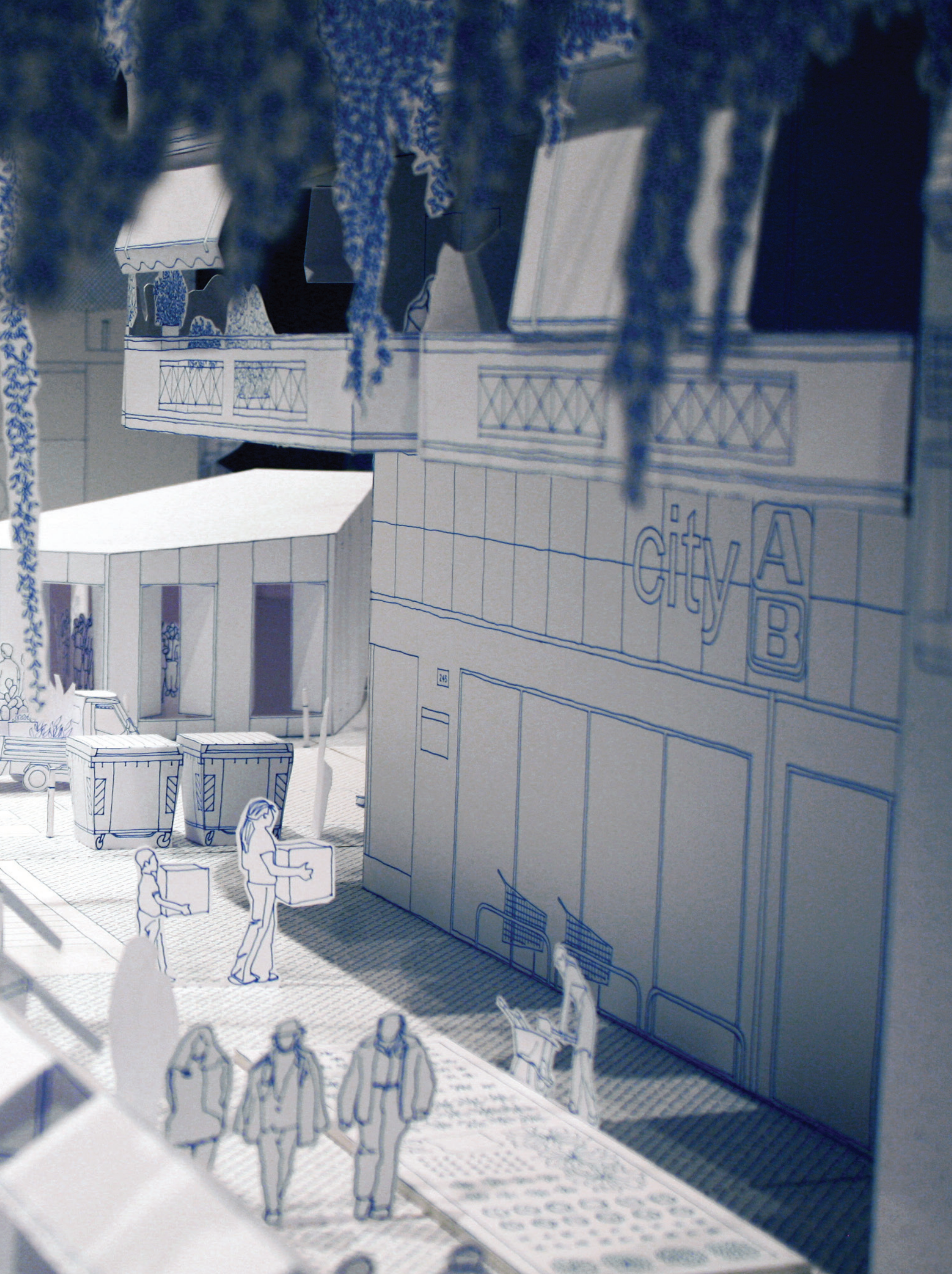
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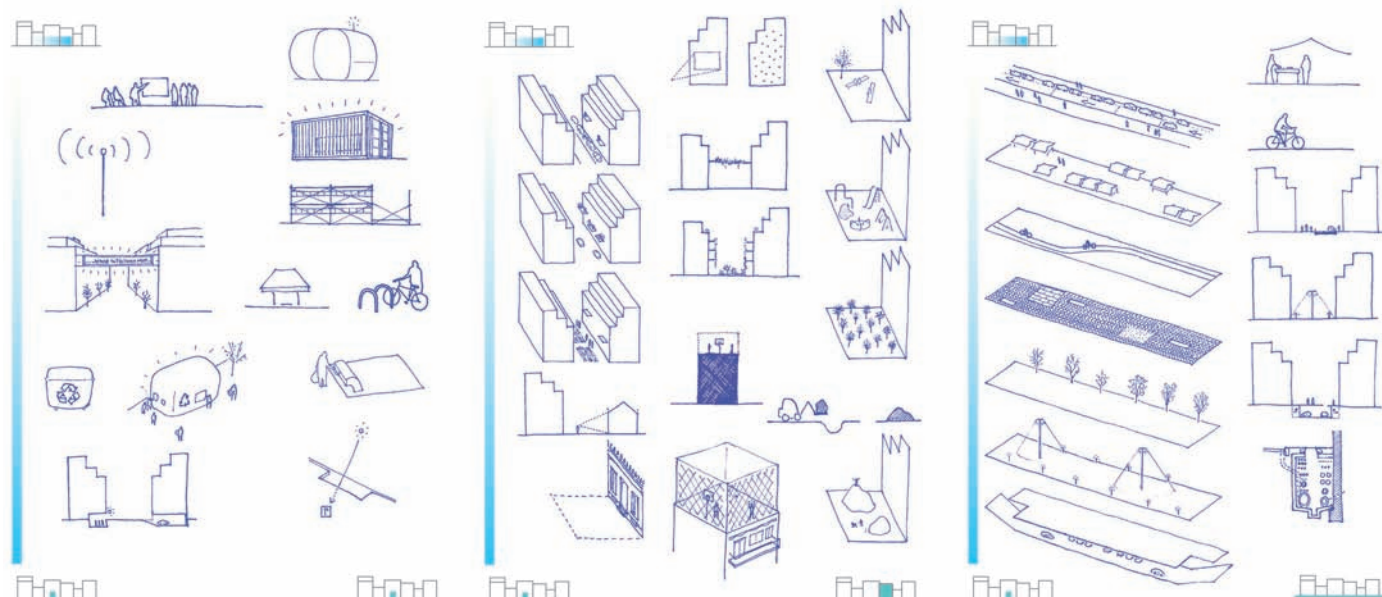
Words Gonzalo Herrero Delicado



Though it's the birthplace of democracy, today Greek citizens find it a hard concept to believe in, living, as they do, in a country where financial independence is an impossible fiction, and where youth unemployment has reached staggering heights. Nevertheless, as the fourth instalment of Post World's End Architecture shows, an emergent architectural scene is transcending the economic situation with imagination and innovation







Although architectural production has been deeply damaged by current socio-political and economic conditions, as a sector it is historically one of the most propitious in adapting to new circumstances. As in the other editions of the this series, examining emergent and resilient practitioners in Portugal, Spain and Italy, the 2008 financial crash and its ongoing reverberations have mainly affected small to medium-sized practices in Greece, with a marked emphasis on emerging firms. This emerging scene is adept however at turning disadvantages into advantages: renewing core architectural concerns, rethinking how the city and society should evolve, and experimenting with new methods of working that would, in more profitable and economically dynamic times, be rejected.

Two adjectives that could currently define the emerging architecture practices in Greece are radical and ethical. Young practices are exploring, without prejudices and often without the limitations of real commissions, new architecture goals and formats. Despite the undesirable absence of paid work – fallow periods are often romanticised without heed for practical necessities – it is undeniable that this sort of experimental and ideological creativity would not have been possible 10 years ago, when the prospect of making a profit was still a motivating possibility.

In the work of Aristide Antonas or Point Supreme for instance, one finds echoes of the Utopian urban projects of the Sixties and Seventies, when similar economic constraints on the possibility of construction led to a flourishing of polemic paper architecture. On the other side of the spectrum, we find risky proposals exploring new formats, which transgress the boundaries of architecture to enter into a field of art practice, as seen in the work of A Whale's Architects or Andreas Angelidakis – the latter having taken part in the last edition of the Frieze art fair in London.

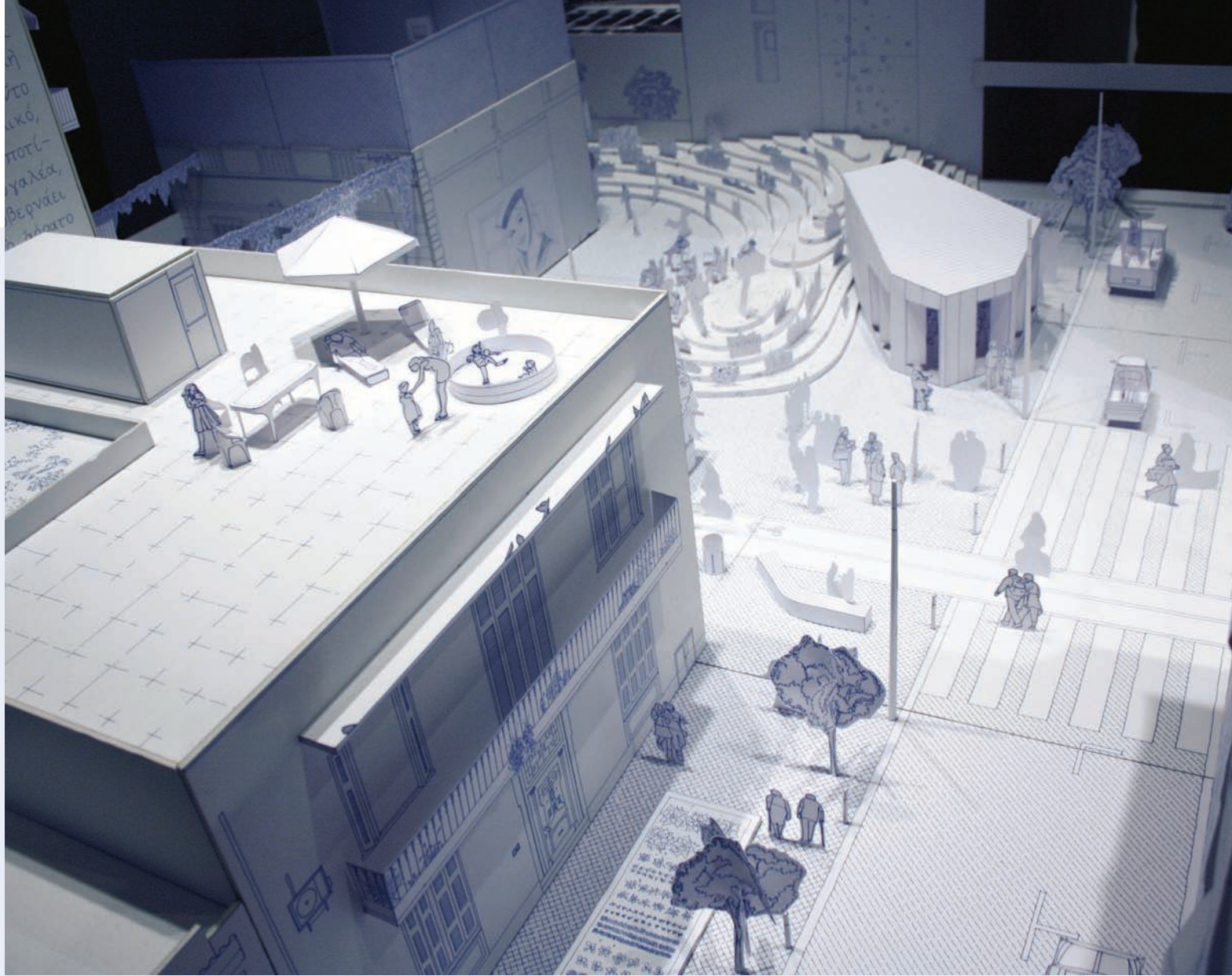
But perhaps a more accurate definition of the Greek predicament can be labelled as a process of ethical reflection. What went wrong? Why is it that our cities and buildings are not fulfilling societal needs? The importance of recognising local history, and of linking local relationships with larger global contexts, is nowadays more necessary than ever – inasmuch as every local action conceived as an accurate solution for specific

needs of a client, whether public or private, will have an effect on its broader environment. This can be recognised in the work of architects such as draftworks*, AREA or Divercity, among others.

Having researched the Post World's End Architecture series across several issues of Blueprint and, in particular, engaging with many emergent practitioners within the particularities of the southern European context, one common thread seems to emerge: that the architect, as the traditional figure we know, will nevermore be able to practice an autonomous discipline. Rather the architect emerges as a detector of urban conditions to be improved as well as a connecting node between different professionals and experts. The phenomenon of the collective has developed – or regained, in opposition to the genius author of icons – a major role in the future of architecture, as seen in various permutations all across Europe. Although not as prevalent in the Greek contemporary scene as they are in Spain and Portugal, there are examples in this country that highlight the relevance of collaborative and cross-disciplinary practices; one such example discussed in the survey below is SARCHA (School of Architecture for All).

Optimism is something that has been broadly absent in recent years; however, new light can be seen at the end of the tunnel. The situation of architecture has changed radically and broadly optimistically since the early phases of the crisis. The concerns and overarching remit of the architects is completely different, and though undeniable difficulties persist, the future of European architecture as analysed in Post World's End Architecture series seems, in some holistic way, more promising than ever before. A whole new generation of architects is ready to adapt to the human and spatial challenges found in any possible economic, social or urban condition.

1 (previous pages) & 2
– Athens Charting, by AREA,
catalogues numerous
informal urban actions.
The hand-drawn model
underlines the idea of direct
action on the city fabric



3

Research after city: AREA

After studying in the United States, Styliani Daouti, Giorgos Mitroulias and Michaeljohn Raftopoulos established their professional design practice, AREA (Architecture Research Athens) in 2006. Part of their decision to relocate to Athens

was a will to actually realise their projects in the near future – seemingly impossible in the saturated and unforgiving context of New York where they met – but also because they wanted to be part of the recent dynamic transformations of the architectural landscape in their native country. AREA's approach is heavily based on openness and discourse, through which both clients and designers expand their perception of projects into unforeseen territories. Although at first sight their work looks globalised, thanks to their international training, they have used a polished design aesthetic to bring the focus of Greek architecture to matters such as social engagement and environmental efficiency. One of AREA's most acclaimed works is Athens Charting, a strategy to create a public space and regenerate a whole area by connecting four private buildings. areaoffice.gr



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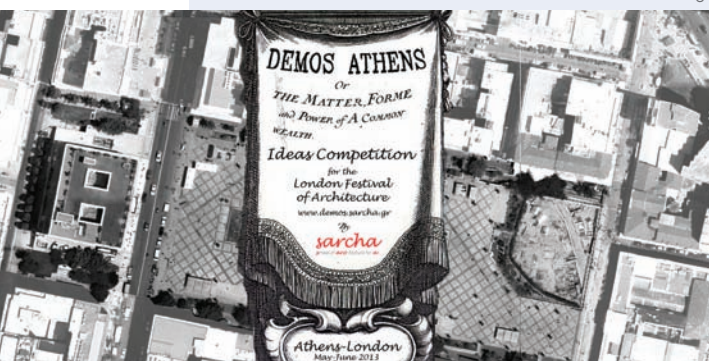
2 – Part spectacle, part urban survey; a painstaking paper model of Athens Charting, at the 13th Venice Architecture Biennale in 2012

3 – Mosaic, AREA's commended model for an bioclimatic school complex in Crete

5



6



The collective experience: SARCHA

SARCHA (School of Architecture for All) was founded in 2006 in Athens. It is an expanding open structure with more than 250 associates from different countries and diverse professional backgrounds, including architects, artists, engineers, lawyers and geographers. SARCHA conducts rigorous researches on architecture, with a marked focus on the city. SARCHA has initiated international research programmes that contribute to systematising urban questions applicable both in Greece and elsewhere: for example, the potential of 'unbuilt' or unclaimed parts of the city, especially in relation to the social improvements or the use of public resources to be managed as a common good by citizens. Its relevance to the contemporary Greek situation is due to its open structure, a collective platform to share resources and experiences while learning with every project. The architect is no longer an isolated professional. sarcha.gr

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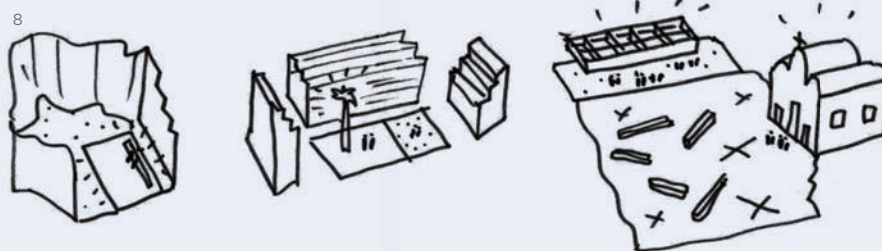


The success of the risk: Point Supreme

After starting their careers in Rotterdam in 2007, with a Dutch heritage very tangible in their work, Point Supreme Architects, founders Konstantinos Pantazis and Marianna Rentzou moved back to Athens in where they are now based. They have won some international competitions that are now in a development phase, and some other projects in Athens and the Greek Islands currently under construction. A big part of their work consists of self-initiated proposals for the contemporary city.

This choice of designing projects just for the pleasure of creating is a common characteristic in many current emerging practices that have given them new ways of imagining the city from a critical position. This is evident in Point Supreme projects such as Archipelago City, Athens by Hills and even Faliro Pier, one of its latest developments, which was chosen as the winning design in a competition. This project, for a pier in the Athens coastline, highlights the largely unexploited quality of the area. pointssupreme.com

8



5 – SARCHA's pilot research on common resources in the neighbourhood of Gerani suggests a strategy of recombinant urbanism

6 – The London Festival of Architecture 2013 hosted SARCHA's open call for ideas for Athens City Hall

7 – Kotzia Square, a proposal to turn Athens City Hall square into a grassy field, complete with irrigation sprinklers that cool off the heat

8 – Three of Point Supreme's '100 Squares' strategies to regenerate Thessaloniki



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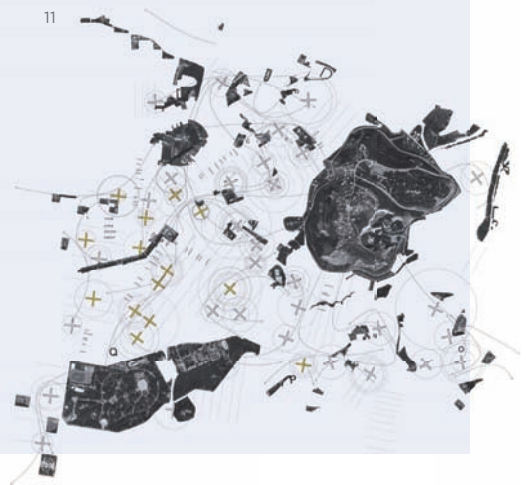
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The pleasure of imagination: draftworks*

If Greek architecture finds itself in a 'standby' status, with an end no one can foresee, then imagination offers like one way to move forward. draftworks* was founded in London in 2006 by Christiana Ioannou and Christos Papastergiou; it currently operates in Nicosia and Athens. Through various forms of practice and research the studio looks for opportunities to work on new ideas in architectural design with imagination as its main leitmotif. Although draftworks* is extremely traditional in its way of working with drawings and models, creating amazing miniature wooden worlds, it has an extremely contemporary

and delicate aesthetic noticeable in all its portfolio. One of its most recent projects is 'Athens Northwest Passage', exhibited at the 13th Venice Biennale as part of the Greek national pavilion, and showing an architectural fiction about the speculative transformation of Athenian urban typologies; the city is rendered as primary material, which can be transformed through the use of imagination. draftworks.eu

11



9 - Athens, Northwest Passage integrates fiction and myth within urban analysis

10 - Local histories inform draftwork*'s proposal for Eletherias Square in Thessaloniki

11 - Athens by Exception, competition entry for Athensx4 for the Greek ministry for environment



12

Architecture for present day: Divercity

Because the current economic situation is probably the worst of the past 20 years, some practices have decided to expand their boundaries to look for new and more exciting opportunities beyond Greece. Divercity is one of these. Its young team is divided in two offices in Athens and London, a smart strategy to enlarge and find new networks of clients. Although its approach to architecture could be considered as traditional, Divercity designs are a fresh and contemporary take on Greek architecture. Nikolas Travasaros, Dimitris Travasaros and Christina Achtypi, the practice's partners, work on projects at differing scales including housing, hotels, commercial and masterplan projects in Greece, the UK and the USA. This is through a design process based on enriching the unique local characteristics and context via an international architectural language, with specific emphasis on craftsmanship and sustainability.
divercityarchitects.com



13

14



12 & 13 – Psychiko House – a private residence named for its location in the hilly Psychiko suburb of Athens

14 – IT Cafe in Athens is a cafe and multipurpose event space 'packaged' as a food crate

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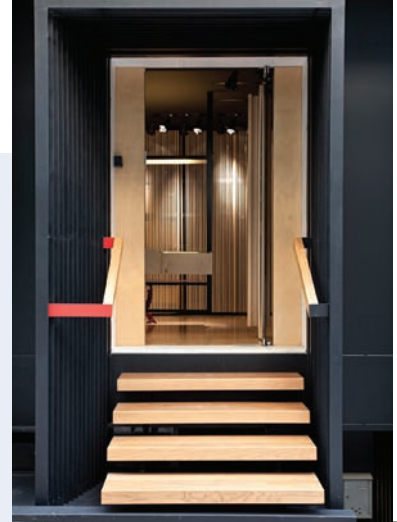


Utopian optimism: Aristide Antonas

The work of the architect, writer and teacher Aristide Antonas, trained in Athens and Paris, occupies the gap between visions of a dystopian future and very real experiences of the wasteland of expired infrastructures. One of the best examples to define his work is the proposal for Keg apartments. Using abandoned buses, tanker trucks and construction cranes, he suggests a kind of DIY initiative to fill them simply with furniture and plumbing, windows and skylights, in the hope of creating unexpected behavioural modes. His interventions are speculative rather than Utopian; new ways of inhabiting urban and wild landscapes in unfamiliar future conditions. His practice has an extremely political load, arguing that if architecture accepts functions as fixed and pre-determined, then it is just a mode of thoughtless repetition. Antonas' proposals cannot be read as aesthetic indulgences: instead, he suggests the purpose of architecture could be to transform habits, rather than appeasing them. aristideantonas.com

14 & 15 – Aerial and in-situ views of the KEG apartment, a movable DIY residence housed in the wagons of industrial vehicles

17



18



Exploring formats: A Whale's architects

A Whale's architects is a practice created by Iris and Leda Lykourioti, which is based in Athens and Brussels. Its activities simultaneously combine research, product design and different sizes of architectural projects; three fields that create a continuous feedback loop responding to different conditions and clients, developing a theoretical approach in the way it creates architecture.

It supports the idea that 'architects and craftsmen belong to the same chain of production; if one disappears, so does the other'. Consequently its work often includes significant collaboration with small local industries to create lamps, curtains, stools as well as buildings. In the present state of financial crisis, A Whale's architects believe that this is a way of resistance: keeping the means of production in the hands of more self-employed people, thus increasing social cohesion in a permanent way. A Whale's architects is an all-terrain example for constrained times. a-whale-s-architects.net

17 & 18 – When we were Middle Class I & II, respectively a residence for a tradesman (above) and a shop for a jeweller (below)



The art-architecture complex: Andreas Angelidakis

Angelidakis studied architecture abroad, as did most of the Greek architects featured in this report, with the aim of finding out not just how to design buildings but why – something he found unquestioned in Greek architectural education. After his studies, he established his primary office in New York and another one in Athens; he bounces back and forth between the artists' studio and architecture practice. His projects are a miscellany of art, curatorial and research projects, a meeting point between art and buildings, with a focus on how society shifts – especially through the internet, which he defines as the most significant paradigm shifter of our time. He combines his practice with teaching at AHO, the Oslo School of Architecture and Design. One of his most acclaimed projects is Domesticated Mountain. angelidakis.com



19, 20 & 21 – Angelidakis' Domesticated Mountain suggests that the suburban home is a repository of real and virtual life

22 – TUBES, one of a series of buildings created and inhabited by Angelidakis in Second Life, the massive, multiplayer, online role-playing game

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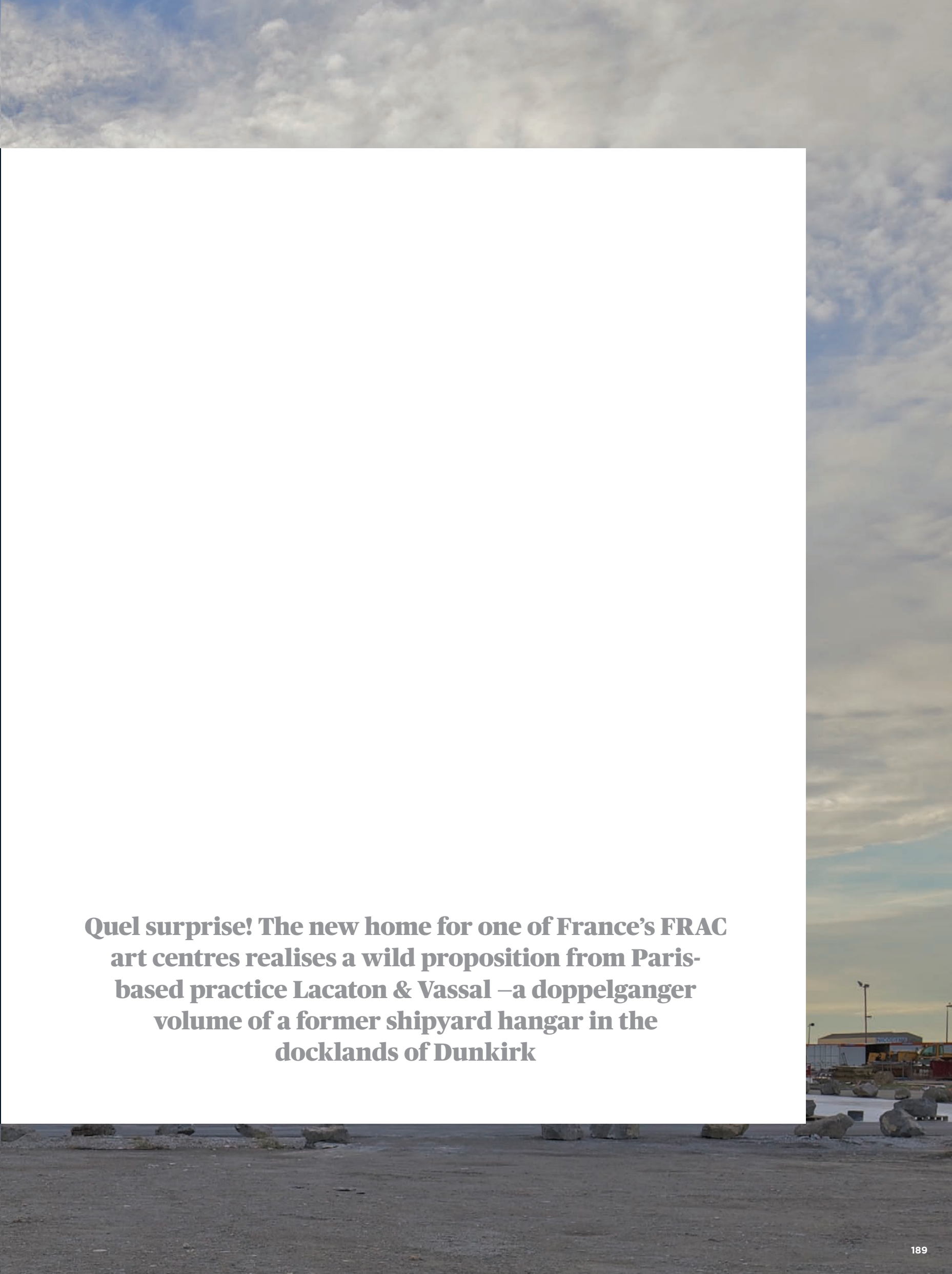
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TWO OF A KIND

|

Words Herbert Wright



Quel surprise! The new home for one of France's FRAC art centres realises a wild proposition from Paris-based practice Lacaton & Vassal –a doppelganger volume of a former shipyard hangar in the docklands of Dunkirk



L'ART EST SIMPLEMENT
LA PREUVE D'UNE VIE
PLEINEMENT VÉCUE

STIV BATES 3 JUIN 1990





Deep in the docklands of Dunkirk, Parisian architect

Lacaton & Vassal has delivered such a stroke of genius that it is literally a double take just looking at the project. The competition brief was to take the vast deserted shell of a ship-repair facility called AP2 and make a new art centre. Lacaton & Vassal was one of 70 practices that took up the challenge. Partner Anne Lacaton says that when they saw the space, their thought was 'it's a pity to sacrifice the volume'. Their big idea: leave it, and build a twin of it alongside to host all the galleries, storage and other functions. No other competition proposal envisioned anything like that. The art centre, home of FRAC Nord-Pas de Calais, opened in November.

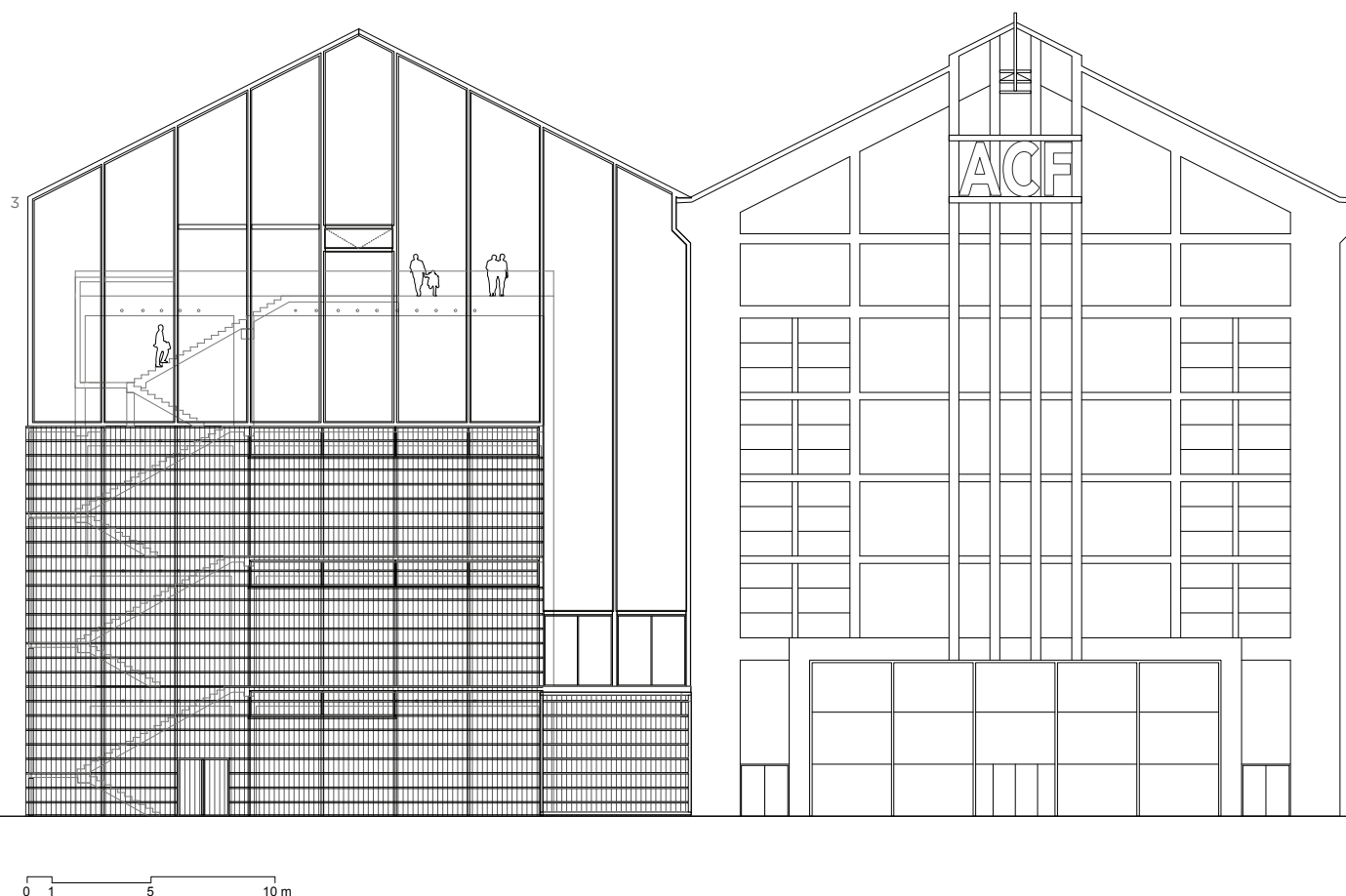
Two volumes, each 75m long, stand conjoined on a rectangular plan, with parallel pitched roofs and flat facades. Their forms may be as mundane as Monopoly houses but they loom with a magnificent, monstrous scale over their maritime, industrial surroundings. The original volume is the opaque AP2 hangar, opened in 1949. From here, until 1988, shipbuilder Chantiers de France despatched all manner of great vessels. It was long-known locally as 'the cathedral' because of its vastness and profile.

A double-height door beside the new east-facing entrance opens directly on to its empty interior, as high as Tate Modern's Turbine Hall – a comparison that immediately came to the architects' minds. Next to it is the new volume, shiny and translucent like a vast greenhouse. This is far from empty.

Its internal structure and facades are rational but complex. Greeting visitors from near the new volume's apex are pink neon capital letters, by British artist Scott King, quoting punk pioneer Stiv Bators' proclamation in French: 'Art is merely the evidence of a life wholly lived'.

It's a fine thought with which to enter Lacaton & Vassal's new volume. Within it the structure is essentially a concrete frame with a 7.5m grid, creating 9,300 sq m of space over five floors, including an observation level, all enclosed in glass. But around this is an outer envelope, largely made of transparent corrugated polycarbonate mounted on light metal frames. This offers thermal insulation (making it at least 7°C warmer than outside in winter), but it is not airtight (thus avoiding condensation) and is 50 per cent openable. Its separation from the concrete internal volume is 2m on the long north-facing side, and 3m at its narrow east and west ends. The polycarbonate feels a bit temporary on first encounter, perhaps even a little low-budget – it actually costs about €25-€30 (£21-£25) a square metre. In fact, Lacaton & Vassal has used the material in a family house in Bordeaux, the Maison Latapie, as long ago as 1993. After 20 years, Lacaton can testify that 'it does not yellow'.

The gap between exterior skin and inner glazing accommodates stairs or is spanned by floor to create passages along the facade. This horizontal extension of contained space recalls Lacaton & Vassal's 2011 work on the Tour Bois le Prêtre



1 (previous page) – The new FRAC volume (right), mounted with the letters of a Scott King artwork, adjoins the AP2 hangar (left)

2 – The Belvedere beneath FRAC's gable commands views over Dunkirk docklands

3 – The west facade, showing the mix of polycarbonate and glass cladding, stairs and floors in the FRAC volume (left)

(Blueprint 326, May 2013), which boosted the floor space of the Parisian social housing tower by 40%.

Each FRAC floor is different. The ground floor has a cafe along half of the 5m-wide gap between the old and new volumes. Above this an interior pathway runs between them, something planned to integrate into a crucial project scheduled for 2015: a 'passarelle', or raised pedestrian pathway, that will continue east out of the building, jump 111m across a canal and mount the great dyke that protects the docklands from the sea. It will land in Dunkirk's eastern quarter of Malo les Bains, a resort area where the beach stretches east towards the nearby Belgian border. The 300m connection is crucial to make FRAC accessible, and Paris architect Brigit de Cosmi has won its design competition.

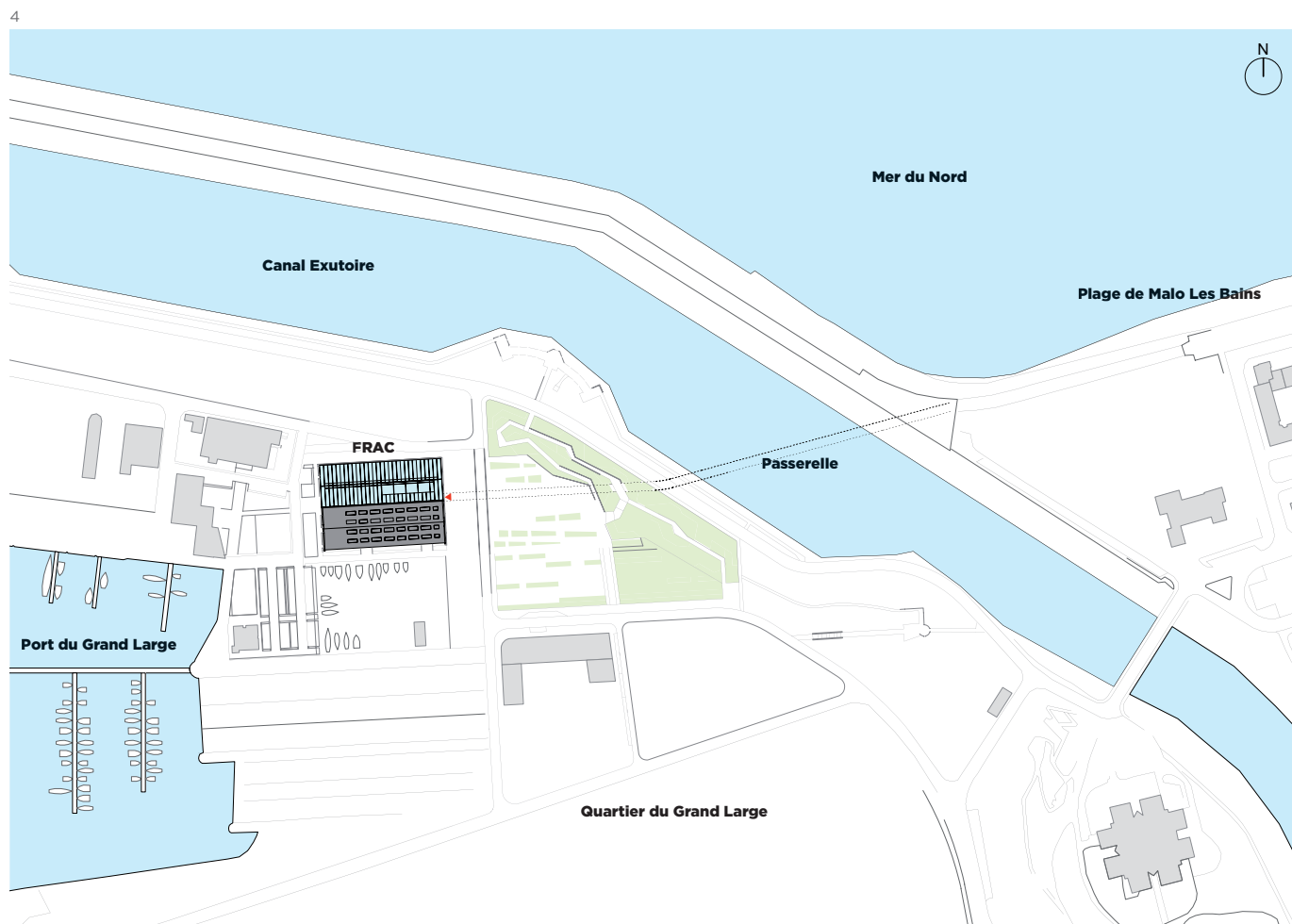
Light floods through to each floor, naturally illuminating galleries. From up on the north side, the sea below presents a vast vista. On the fourth floor, the envelope's polycarbonate starts to give way to glass. The double-height exhibition area here, stretches across the building's width to a gallery terrace that cantilevers high above the first floor internal pathway, towards the void of AP2. An overhead bridge crane only costs about €200,000 (£170,000), and so a new one was introduced to run on rails the length of AP2's roof, allowing works to be placed on the terrace, for example. Thus the old space retains its previous function of being able to move heavy or bulky objects internally.

The fifth floor stretches the full length of the building. This

'As an architect it is impossible to have certainty. It's a question of having the capacity, the tools and the freedom,' says Anne Lacaton

was designed as the observation deck, and under the pitched roof of EFTE (a clear fluorine-based polymer material), is a mezzanine and a wide open platform called the Belvedere. Currently, a walk-in installation for screenings called the H-Box, designed by Didier Fiuza Faustino, is there. Behind it, to the west, the view over the docklands offers a field of industrial forms layered with stretches of water.

Lacaton & Vasal's biggest gallery space project was the transformation of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, starting in 2001. It opened up the vast, raw spaces of a grand 1937 building for a contemporary art venue that was instantly edgier than the Centre Pompidou and soon rivalled its international reputation. Blueprint asked Lacaton what lessons had been brought from there to FRAC Dunkirk. 'What we learned...is to have doubts,' she replied. 'As an architect it is impossible to have certainty. It's a question of having the capacity, the tools and the freedom.'



4 - This map locates FRAC in the Grande Large docklands area, and shows how it will be connected by a footbridge to Dunkirk's resort zone

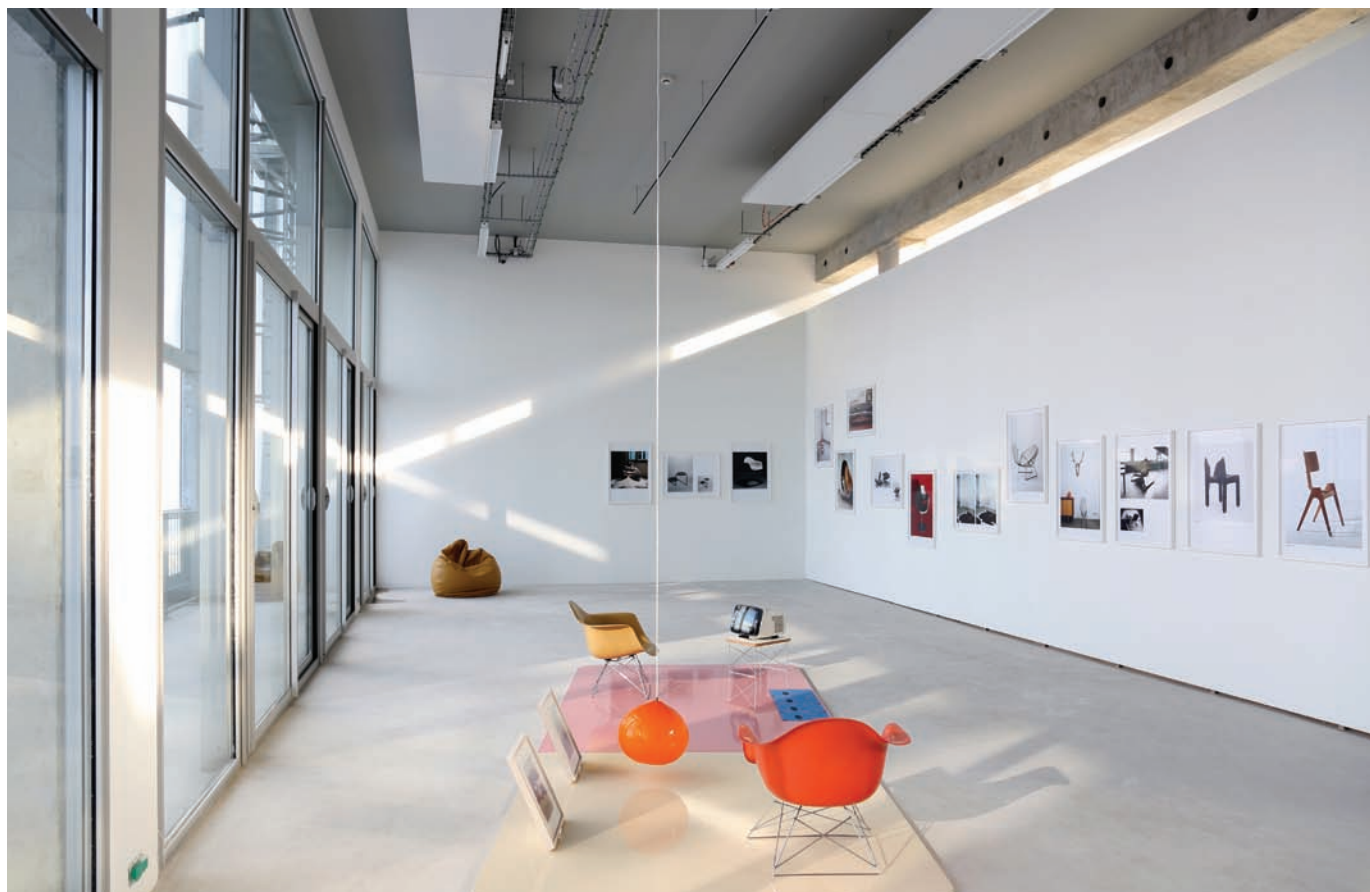
5 - The AP2 hangar's space has been left open for FRAC visitors and shows



6



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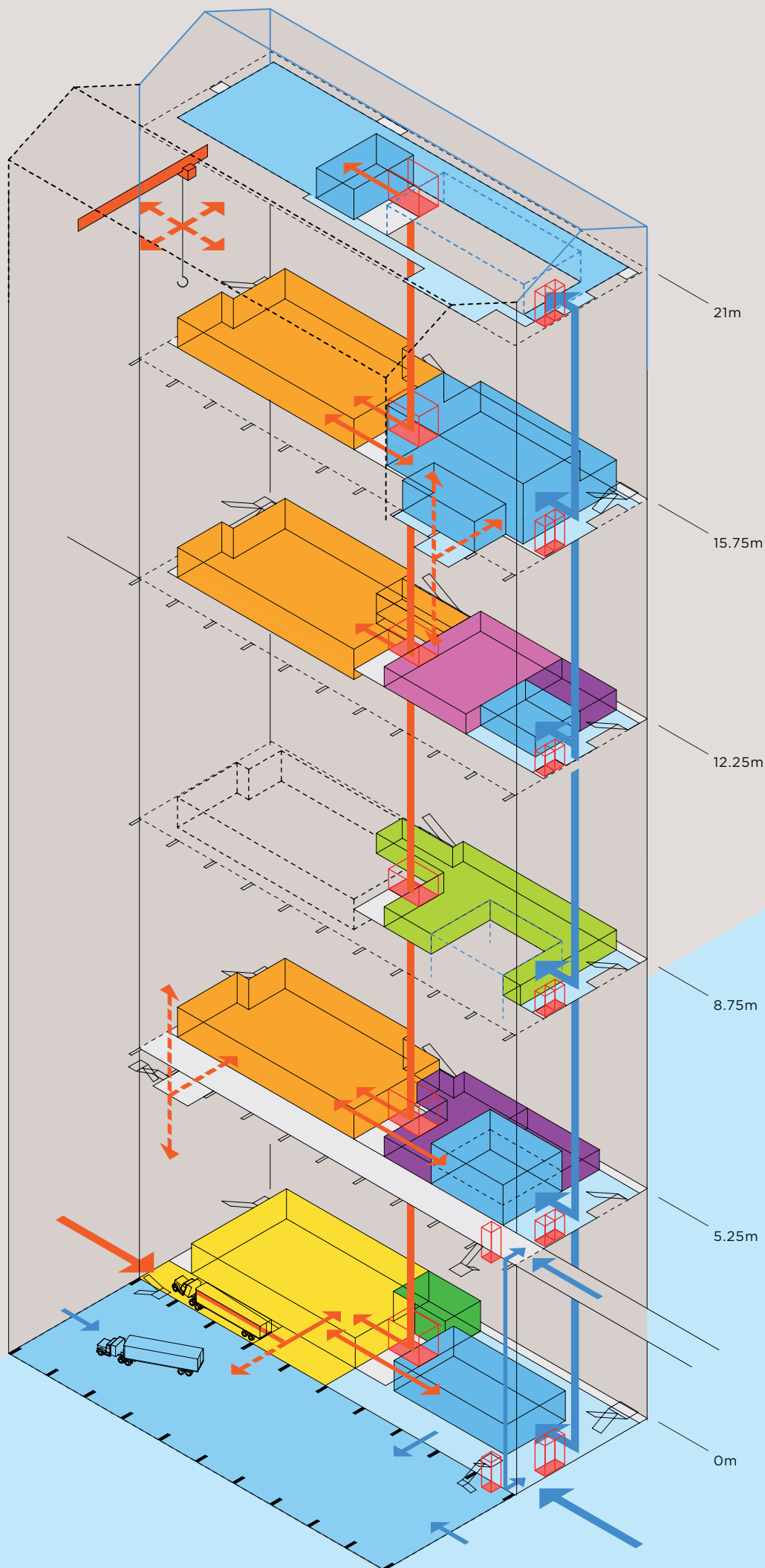


6 - A cafe installed in the gap between the old and new volumes

7 - FRAC's fourth floor. The inaugural show includes Delanov' and Heger's Still Life (Plenty Objects of Desire) (1997) in foreground

A sense of structure

An axonometric visual guide to Lacaton & Vassal's new Dunkirk FRAC project



PUBLIC

- Galleries
- information point
- Additional space
- Circulation
- Flexible event space
- Development laboratory
- Administration

SERVICES

- Loading area
- Store
- Lifts
- Goods access
- Additional goods access
- Plant room

L'ART EST SIMPLEMENT
LA PREUVE D'UNE VIE
PLEINEMENT VÉCUE
STIV BATORS, PARIS, 3 JUIN 1990

MUSEE D'ART MODERNE - PAS DE CALAIS





10



The transparency of the structure spells out an openness to the public, to which Lacaton & Vassal offers the thrill that comes with the sheer audacity of its design

11



8 (previous pages) - The new volume is a box of light at night

9 - The southern facade exposes the concrete-framed structure within as well as cladding

10 - A gallery within FRAC Nord Pas-de-Calais

11 - The first-floor gap between old and new volumes will connect to a new exterior footbridge



FRAC stands, in French, for regional contemporary art fund, a government initiative started in 1983. Some 23 regions have one, each with their own collections, and this century they have been developing permanent venues for storing and display. Dunkirk now hosts the collection for Pas-de-Calais, France's northernmost region. Financed equally by the state, the region and the city, the building hints at France's largesse for publicly funded cultural citadels, although this project cost only €12m (£10m) to build – less than if the older space had been repurposed and still €1m (£0.8m) under budget. It is not the only new, high-profile cultural venue in Pas-de-Calais – as recently as 2012 the SANAA-designed Louvre-Lens opened (Blueprint 323, February 2013).

But in this age of austerity, is France's age of grands projets over? 'For the architects, it's a challenge', admits Lacaton. 'We must defend the idea of public spending.' These sound like easy words, but they do reveal a definite political dimension to the practice's ethos, a quiet passion that would be difficult to find among British practices. It is easily apparent in Lacaton & Vassal's

housing projects ('the occupant must be a participant in the process,' she says), which are ongoing.

FRAC Pas-de-Calais's collection includes works from legends like Duchamp, Warhol and Judd, and has a €280,000 annual acquisition budget. It has connections with the Turner Contemporary in Margate (interestingly, another seaside venue with pitched roofs and an innovative skin – Chipperfield used acid-etched glass). FRAC's inaugural exhibition, *The Future Starts Here*, running until April, shows off its big names and includes a fascinating collection of subversive works featuring chairs and a room themed by Matthew Darbyshire.

Nowadays, contemporary art institutions increasingly reach out to engage the public, but in the case of FRAC that's been its mission for 30 years. Dunkirk, Lacaton says, was 'very important to us because it's a public collection'. The transparency of the structure spells out an openness to the public, to which Lacaton & Vassal offers the thrill that comes with the sheer audacity of its design. ■

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Process

When furniture designer Matthew Hilton couldn't find a wrist watch he liked, he decided to design his own. But the process wasn't as simple as he first assumed

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Exhibition — Hello my name is Paul Smith

The career of the iconic London fashion designer is celebrated through a unique exhibition at London's Design Museum. Veronica Simpson checks it out

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Book — Megastructure Schiphol

Dutch courage: Thomas Wensing finds this hefty tome about Holland's ground-breaking airport, created back in 1967, is well worth a look

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Exhibition — Lebbeus Woods is an archetype

The SCI-Arc Gallery in Los Angeles takes a look at the life of Lebbeus Woods. Pete Collard pays his respects to the visionary architect

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Event — Sydney Architecture Festival

Marissa Looby assesses the fourth annual outing of the festival taking place in New South Wales' capital

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Event — Adaption Lab

Shumi Bose finds food for thought at the Architecture Foundation with C-LAB, looking at the relationship between technology and buildings

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Carl Gardner looks in-depth at the Maurice Brill Lighting Design scheme for our cover story building

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We revisit Blueprint 158 (February 1999) to follow dRMM's Alex de Rijke road trip to photograph some of the UK's most impressive motorway systems, underpasses and car parks



1 JOHNNY TUCKER

Process

When furniture designer Matthew Hilton couldn't find a wristwatch that suited his own taste the solution was easy – he designed his own, though realising it wasn't so simple

by Johnny Tucker

When you think Matthew Hilton, you think furniture. That's what he does. But his latest offering is something that could easily get lost down the back of his 1991 Balzac sofa — a watch.

It's an intriguing move that sees the designer developing personally while extending himself as a brand as well, having set up his eponymous company in 2007. He's well aware that he has a loyal design following and this is a lifestyle product extension. 'I've decided that, at this stage in my career, it's best for me to just get on and do rather than trying to find somebody I can design something for. So I am the client. It's more risky, but I learn a hell of a lot more and it's very exciting.

'There are parts in this watch that are not standard by any stretch and I think when you approach something naively and have to find out and push and struggle you end up with something that is more likely to be an original concept.'

The impetus for the project was also personal, stemming from a love of watches (and engineering) and being

unable to find exactly the right one for his personal taste. The result is minimal to say the least, lacking virtually all extraneous detail, and is a strong statement too, a disk of metal sitting proudly, in all senses of the word, on top of a fine Italian leather strap for which he linked up with Bill Amberg. The watch also represent a massive change in scale for this designer who has always had an obsessive eye for detail: 'It's amazing how, when you are working at this scale, tiny, tiny fractions make a huge difference.'

The design and construction has been a two-year journey, which saw the watch begin life as possibly being fully 3D printed and ending up being precision engineered. 'Around two years ago I started buying watches. We took one apart in the studio and started wondering about making our own,' he says. 'We started to wonder about 3D printing and I thought it would be fantastic to make the first 3D-printed watch and we actually designed a body that could be printed.

'Because 3D printing is so expensive, we decided to try to get as much out of that original print of the body because that component is always the most important. I wanted real simplicity, so one of the first decisions was that the face, and the three or four components that usually make up the body, should become one. I didn't want lugs on the watch [the bars which hold the strap] either. I also wanted flush-fitting glass: I didn't want the glass standing proud of the body.

'I wanted it to be a very, very simple form and that leads you to this. There's nothing else you can do. I also wanted to have a feeling of solidity to make people feel the weight. Then you get to the size and then you start

adjusting it — and honestly just half a millimetre can make a difference. It is so different working at this scale. It may not be fascinating to anyone but us, but this took four different prototypes to get it right, including the size of the logo and how deep it is. You end up dealing with these tiny, tiny things. This has taken a lot of time.

'During the design process, we realised that the 3D-printing technique of manufacturing doesn't give you all the solutions as people assume it does. It's not quite as easy as you think and there are quite a lot of restrictions. You don't have these with standard high precision engineering, which has been around a long time. It's so developed and the guys in the workshops really know what they are doing.'

Initial design work on paper, then CAD, led to the 3D-printed models. Then they decided to find an engineer to work with to mill the body from a solid piece of marine-grade stainless steel: 'We took the idea to different metal engineers and the third engineer, who is in aerospace, Formula 1 and medical, was very helpful and its machining was amazing. The factory was a fantastic place to be, full of bins filled with machined metal that could be anything — you could imagine them being turned into all sorts of things.

'The body is bead-blasted stainless steel, that puts that matt finish on it. We tried other things that were more standard to watch making, but it looked more standard. This is an engineering finish, which I like.'

Hilton admits that part of the reason for not having watchstrap lugs was that it made the design even harder. The team was also struggling with the strap. In the end, the watch's

backplate holds the strap in place, and a suitably simple strap it is: 'We decided on leather because I like it, and making a good metal strap in small numbers is very expensive. I felt rubber could be an option later on but wasn't right to start with. It was difficult to find the right leather and we were really struggling with it, so we went to Bill Amberg because he knows about leather. I met him a few years ago, so I went to talk to him about it and he was very keen to be involved.'

Hilton concludes: 'I know I have a number of good retailers around the world and a section of people who buy my furniture, which is quite expensive, and they are quite loyal. I also know my collaboration with De La Espada in particular, with its quality level, has helped to raise people's idea of where I am in the market.

'So I felt there was a potential for moving into other things as long as there's a link somewhere. I've always had an interest in watches and thought it would be a good way to go. "Lifestyle" is a crap word now, but it is the right word; it's what you surround yourself with. Another really good reason to do this is because it's enjoyable — it's been really exciting, and now when people ask what I can do, I have it here on my wrist!'

The watch, which debuted during the London Design Festival, is now on sale, but small-scale production and this level of attention to detail doesn't come cheap: it'll set you back £910.

1 - Matthew Hilton in front of his watch

2 - The final strap design in the three chosen leather colours, brown, tan and black



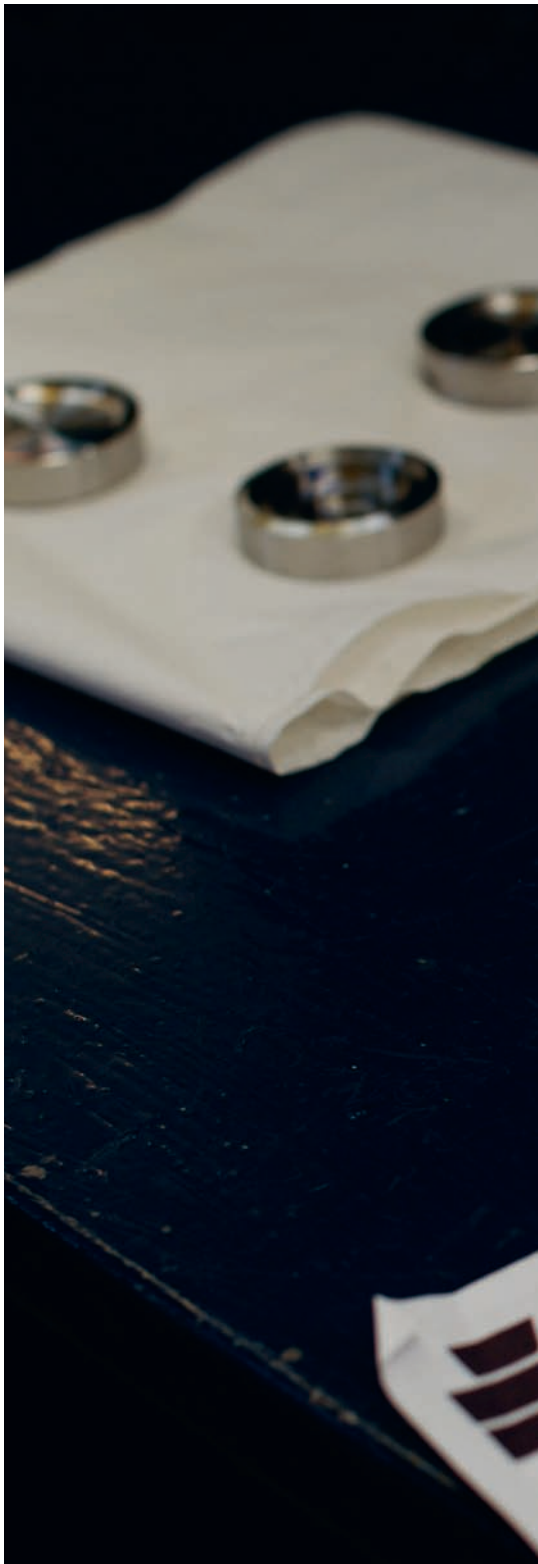
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The watch began life with the possibility of being fully 3D printed and ended up being precision engineered

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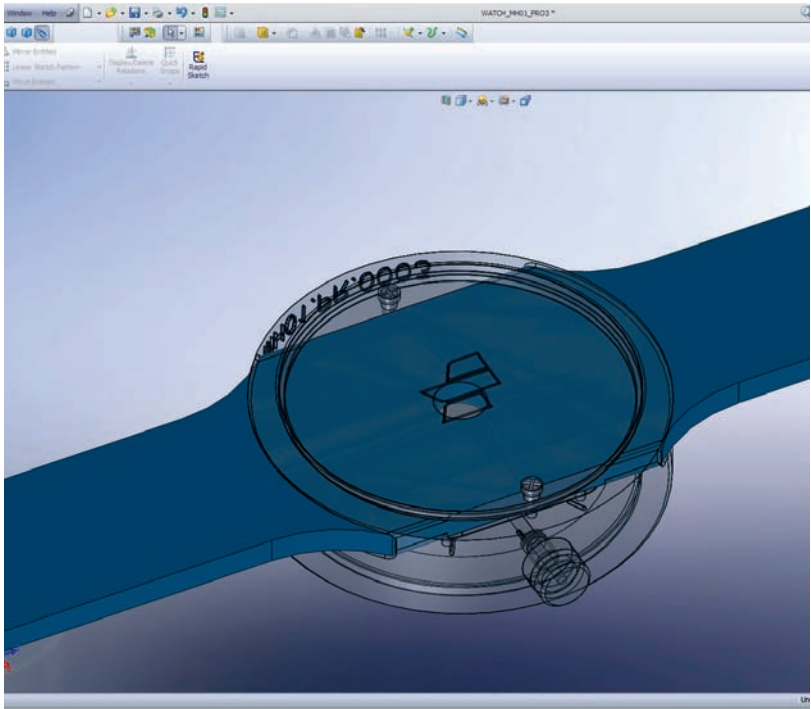
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ALL PROCESS IMAGES COURTESY MATTHEW HILTON



8



3 - 3D prints of early designed for a bezel

4 - Technical drawings and early machined prototype

5 - A render of an alternative design for the watch face

6 - A sample of two machined components, aluminium and brass, as an example of the complex machining the engineers are able to achieve

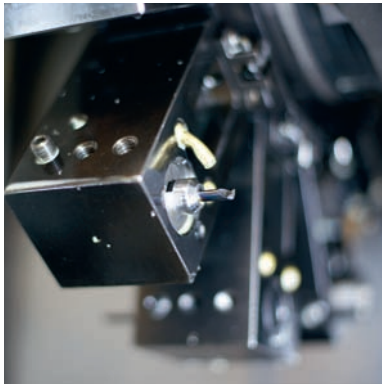
7 - A CAD model of the watch, showing how the strap passes through the body

8 - A prototype in 316 stainless steel, before finishing — machining marks still clearly visible

11



12



13



9 - Metal lathe for turning the watch body

10 - The lathe's control panel

11 - 3D prints of an early design for the body and back

12 - Multi-tool heads for the CNC machine

13 - Prototypes of the watch crown

14 - Test shot of the final design

14





16



17



18





19



20



15 - Laser-cut prototypes of an early design for the strap

16 - Render of the watch back, without strap

17 - Render of the watch back, with strap

18 - First prototype of the logo being machined in the back

19 - Laser-etched logo sample

20 - Watch body and strap prototypes, with screwdriver and glass press in the background



They decided to find an engineer to work with to mill the watch body from a solid piece of marine-grade stainless steel

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One of the most telling moments of Paul Smith’s Design Museum exhibition arrives, almost as an aside, in a filmed interview about the meaning and purpose of catwalk shows. He sets out the choreography thus: ‘You’ve got buyers on one side and the press on the other and you’ve got 40 minutes to say (waves to the buyers’ side) we’ve got new ideas and (waves to the press side) we can pay the rent.’ So there you have it: fashion’s peak experience boiled down to its essence, stripped of its fraught, high-octane, lives-depend-on-this-hemline silliness. To paraphrase Alan Yentob in his recent Culture Show special: how can anyone this normal have not just survived but thrived in ‘the most faddish and fickle industry there is’?

But it’s exactly this pragmatic, no-nonsense approach to fashion that is Smith’s secret. Having dispensed with the idea that there’s any mystery to how it works, he has seized fashion’s essential fickleness and faddishness and turned it to his advantage — as a means to deploy his endlessly inventive imagination. And he’s certainly made a bob or two in the process: 43 years in fashion and the party ain’t over yet.

Smith has stated that above all he wanted this exhibition to ‘encourage people’ to engage with the world of design: to see the life-enhancing potential in this versatile skill. As a passionate supporter of design industry issues — and a mentor to young creatives — a few key messages come through loud and clear: humble origins are no barrier to the truly determined; influences and inspirations can come from anywhere as long as you stay open and connected to your public; and designers shouldn’t limit their talents to one arena (no fear of that with Smith). These messages are communicated via a sequence of room sets, most of which aim to recreate significant places and stages in Smith’s life.

So first up we encounter Smith’s humble roots, evoked by a white box replica of the tiny 4 sq m shop he first traded from in Nottingham back in the Seventies. ‘Managed’ by his Afghan hound Homer, it gave Smith an opportunity to hone his people skills and sense of showmanship; unlike many at the top of the fashion food chain, Smith still appears to really enjoy engaging with his customers. As demonstrated clearly



by the next room set: a recreation of his famously chaotic Covent Garden office, its shelves overflowing with paraphernalia (from rabbit figurines to bikes) sent by adoring fans from all over the world.

Humility and determination are both apparent in the hand-painted recreation of the Paris hotel bedroom from which he sold his first collection (a few shirts, a couple of suits and a jumper), to the one customer who bothered turning up over the four-day event.

At this point, there is a bizarre break in the narrative, with a room that invites you inside Smith’s head: its walls and ceiling are covered in angled mirrors while multiple high-

Given how interview-friendly Smith is, it’s hard to know whether this show would offer any surprises for die-hard aficionados

definition TV screens throw out close-ups of pattern and colour, which swirl and morph kaleidoscopically from raw material into clothes. I’m not sure how effective this room is in communicating anything other than the importance of having a piece of wacky, immersive A/V in every contemporary design-led show.

For budding designers, there’s a nice bit of insight into a design studio environment, with a replica of his fashion team’s office — all

white iMacs, paint boxes, sketchbooks and fabric swatches, with a white Roberts Radio blaring out Bowie, the Beatles and Bolan. But it’s at this point that the room-set theme seems to peter out, and we get a series of spaces which try, with varying degrees of success, to sum up the Paul Smith ethos: retail design, clothes, fashion shows (a simple black box A/V room with three screens, where the aforementioned interview snippet appears, accompanied by footage of a 2013 Paris menswear show).

Smith is an enthusiastic and canny collaborator. There’s a whole room filled with plinths crammed with the objects that have received the Paul Smith treatment, from limited-edition racing bikes (for Stelton and Pinarello) and racing kit (for Santini) to mineral water bottles (Evian). However, racing paraphernalia aside, only some objects — in their marriage of Smith with the maker’s sensibility — add up to more than the sum of their parts: the multistripe Mini, for example, or the sober men’s brogues lined and laced in rich blue, green or mauve for John Lobb. The floral leather Roberts Radio? A tad too Cath Kidston, surely.

Smith is a retail trendsetter, as the show’s blurb tells us. And it’s true — his shops are distinctive, memorable and seem more intent on showcasing odd, craftsmanlike finishes and antique memorabilia than flogging clothes. But all that we get on this topic is a dozen photos





of diverse shop exteriors and interiors from around the world, while a screen opposite plays a speeded-up film of the fit-out for his new store in Albemarle Street. The TV's backdrop is a classic Paul Smith touch, though — a whole wall of multicoloured buttons (70,000 of them, apparently).

Around the corner from this space is a room — just the one — dedicated to the clothes themselves: a parade of dressed mannequins on each side of a white, tunnel-like space with central spotlights illuminating the sumptuous craftsmanship and materials. Grouped according to his favourite enduring themes — colour, travel, pattern and tradition — they go way back to some of his earliest collections.

Given how interview-friendly Smith is, it's hard to know whether this show would offer any surprises for die-hard aficionados. There are some genuine insights (for non-fashion insiders) into the fabric technologies he deploys to get the right look for his famous photography-inspired textiles, for example. Or that those trademark stripes are developed by winding coloured yarns around cardboard, a strand at a time, to see how the hues work together. A couple of nice personal touches include a tribute to his wife and co-conspirator in his fashion empire, Pauline Denyer, who first taught him as a visiting lecturer (from the RCA) on Smith's fashion design course in Nottingham. There

4



are several photos of her scattered around, plus the confession that she actually designed his first range of menswear. There's also a touching gesture to his father, a keen amateur photographer, founder of a thriving local camera club, and the instigator of Smith's love of photography.

Smith's long-standing creative director Alan About worked with Richard Greenwood Partnership on the exhibition design and it does feel at times like a rather frenetic brand experience rather than a meaningful tribute to Smith's design ethos. It lacks the wit, the craftsmanship or the continuity which typifies Smith's own approach to his field.

My favourite spaces were the simplest: the mannequin room and the large hall at the exhibition's centre, whose walls are covered, floor to ceiling, with hundreds of paintings, drawings and photographs, from Smith's extensive collection. These spaces invite you to stop, to take your time and feast your eyes. Of that, Paul Smith would surely approve.

1 - Paul's office, a recreation of Smith's office in Covent Garden

2 - Inside Paul's head. A video installation created by Is This Good and About Creative

3 - The hotel room. Paul Smith showed his first collection in a hotel suite in Paris in 1976

4 - Central corridor of framed prints, pictures from Paul Smith's personal archive

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Book

Megastructure Schiphol

by Koos Bosma, Marieke Berkers, Iris Burgers, Karel Davids, Abdel El Makhoulfi, Heidi de Mare, Anna Nikolaeva and Jan Willem de Wijn
Published by nai010, £41
Review by Thomas Wensing

Schiphol Amsterdam Airport is a source of pride to the Netherlands. With 45 million passengers a year, it ranks as the fifth largest airport in Europe and yet is regularly voted as one of the best airports in the world. In the rapidly changing world of global air travel, this consistently high rating and its relative competitiveness is a remarkable achievement, even the more so when considering that the first civil flight went from Schiphol in 1920.

The book *Megastructure Schiphol* — Design in Spectacular Simplicity charts the design development of the airport, and reveals how Schiphol is both international in its orientation and as a result of the landscape and public-infrastructure planning tradition of the Netherlands. The various aspects of Schiphol's design, such as its growth over time, spatial impact and day-to-day operations, are effectively communicated through so-called visual essays, data visualisations, while the essays give more detailed historical, political and economic background information.

The attractive graphics and layout of the book reveal the intricacies of the airport in great clarity; they convey that an airport is a three-dimensional infrastructural and logistical puzzle of astounding complexity. The large body of visual information is organised in chapters dedicated to the different scale levels; at 1:10,000 scale Schiphol is presented as a megastructure, at

1:1,000 scale it figures as a node of air, rail and highway infrastructure, while at 1:100 and smaller, the architecture, interior and wayfinding is highlighted. The clarity of the book's graphic design and typography deserves special mention; it took its inspiration from the pictograms and signage of Schiphol and the result is a combination of visual legibility and wit for which Dutch design has become widely recognised.

The airport in its current location, officially opened in April 1967, was designed by a team prosaically named Schiphol Terminal Construction Office. Due to the demands of the design operation and programme it was decided to bring together an architect and two engineering firms. The architect Marius Duintjer, a functionalist, had the great foresight to bring the interior architect Kho Liang Ie onboard. The design sensibility of the two was closely

The clarity of the book's graphic design deserves special mention; it took its inspiration from the signage of Schiphol

aligned and complementary. Whereas Duintjer was interested in unravelling the logistics of traffic, goods and passengers, it was Kho Liang Ie who introduced the design concept of 'spectacular simplicity', in which all scale levels are jointly considered in an air hub which is both efficient and serene.

The black and white photographs of the Seventies show a light-filled and rigorous modular architecture that aimed to emphasise the efficiency and glamour of air travel. The latest pictures of Schiphol, by contrast, are testament to the explosive growth in passenger numbers, fuelled by the package holiday, low-cost airlines and unbridled consumption.

The single terminal concept, taken from Chicago O'Hare airport, has proved to be an efficient blueprint for Schiphol's uninterrupted growth, and continues to allow for relatively short distances between gates and brief transfers between flights. With the completion of a fifth runway, and talk of construction of a sixth, this concept appears to have reached its natural limits though, since there is no way to connect new runways satisfactorily to the single terminal without a shuttle or buses.

The current architects, Benthem Crouwel Architects, (involved since 1982) and interior architect Nel Verschuuren, (of Kho Liang Ie Associates), continue to follow the same design ethos of simplicity and efficiency, but they are increasingly accused of standing in the way of the commercial exploitation of the

terminal and its environs. It is to their great credit that they have managed these forces effectively while maintaining a consistently high design standard.

Megastructure Schiphol does not stop short at discussing the design aspects of Schiphol however. There were three essays that I found particularly topical when it comes to explaining the inner workings of Schiphol as a corporate machine: Air Money and Space, by El Makhoulfi and Davids; Two Generations of Functionalist Design for a Threshold World, by Berkers and Burgers, and Farewell to Spectacular Simplicity, by Bosma and Nikolaeva.

Schiphol is a company with a 76 % majority share held by the Dutch government, but this means that it can act as a private entity with little direct democratic accountability. In recent years it has become a major property owner and forceful regional actor. It has the economic power to compete with provinces and the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

The perverse nature of the relationship between national government and Schiphol becomes evident when you consider the track record of continually breaking the legal limits of noise and air pollution. These limits are, after all, set by the government itself. This makes clear that economic growth in the Dutch planning model has the upper hand, but I do hope that these essays are the beginning of a serious change to the skewed balance between the economy, quality of living and the environment.

1 - Schiphol Airport, now with five runways and talk of a sixth, has reached its natural limits with no way to connect the new runways to the single terminal



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Exhibition

Lebbeus Woods is an Archetype

SCI-Arc Gallery, Los Angeles
11 October – 1 December, 2013
Review by Pete Collard

This exhibition and public art installation explored the career and defining influences of the late Lebbeus Woods, who died in 2012 at the age of 72. A visionary thinker, strategist and speculator, Woods' ability to articulate architecture beyond the physical space saw him create profound scenarios that engaged directly with politics and ethics in the built environment.

The Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) occupies a quarter-mile long converted freight depot in downtown LA. To arrive at the institution's gallery, visitors must walk through raw concrete corridors frequented by the current faculty students. The walls are often used by the students in an ad-hoc fashion for temporary pin-up displays, appropriating the available surfaces to present current works-in-progress for discussion and dissemination by tutors and peers.

These impromptu displays of formative work by a new generation of architects was an appropriate introduction. Woods was an inspiring and passionate educator, a visiting professor at several universities, including SCI-Arc. The opening exhibition text had this Woods quote: 'Because we die, and because knowledge can't be transferred directly, each person has to reinvent the form of ideas all over again'.

The relationship between Woods and SCI-Arc was a long-standing one. During his first period as visiting professor in 2003, Woods recreated



his installation, *The Fall*, provocatively drilling 1,400 steel rods into the concrete flooring of the university, a clandestine exercise done at night with a team of students. In conjunction with the exhibition, assembled by a team from the Institute, a new public art installation *Earthwave*, designed in 2009 by Woods in collaboration with Christoph A Kumpusch, was constructed three blocks away. The 5m-high work features a series of steel frames that burst with swarms of metal rods, resonating against the backdrop of a busy downtown intersection.

The exhibition itself featured 38 works drawn from various private collections, and spanning almost 20 years of his career. Woods studied engineering before graduating in architecture, a period to which his

formidable skills as a draughtsman can be traced. Using simple pen, ink or pencil, Woods designed evocative, speculative buildings and fragments of cities that offered possible solutions to complex political or engineering challenges, built in remote or damaged terrain or extreme social conditions. At the centre of the gallery is a screening room that showed recently rediscovered archive video footage of Woods, recorded in Switzerland in 1998. Here he recounts his early influences and the recurring themes prevalent throughout his life.

Believing that all creative work is in part autobiographical, Woods' formative years were crucial in defining his career. Born in Michigan in 1940, he was the only son of an American army major, and the family moved frequently as his father was

deployed across the country. Woods' early experiences of placelessness are evident in his work — by his own admission an attempt to balance the overwhelming sense of transience that had permeated his childhood.

He has described himself as existing in a state of mourning — mourning for certain parts of his own existence but also for contemporary society. Embracing a deeply pessimistic expectation of the near future, his architecture often suggested that there are likely to be troubled times ahead, as he envisioned new cities built from the ruins of destruction. His work came from an understanding that it is more interesting to start with the darkness inherent in the world, the fallibility of the human condition, and to see what light can emerge from it.

Woods has been often described as an unbuilt or paper architect, yet the description would assume that his work was always intended to be constructed. As he admitted, there

Lebbeus Woods was an original, and the legacy of his vision can be found in the work of his friends and contemporaries

was a period in the early Eighties that he lamented the first successes of his friends and contemporaries, considering the idea that, as an architect, perhaps he should be building things as well.

Yet Woods soon acknowledged and accepted that his career would take a different trajectory, liberating him from the need to seek clients and traditional architectural commissions. With clients would come sacrifices and a moment of finality and completion to each project; Woods' intended his ideas to be only a starting point, a spark that others could respond to and reinterpret themselves. Like the Italian futurist Sant'Elia, an acknowledged influence, his work would instead offer fragments of architectural possibility, acting as a particular lens through which possible solutions to problems, real or imagined, might be found.

As the exhibition title suggests, Lebbeus Woods was an original, and the legacy of his vision can be found in the work of his friends and contemporaries, something acknowledged by Zaha Hadid, Steven Holl and others. His dogmatic pursuit of what a future architecture could or should be, free from the constraints of traditional practice, has had a significant and lasting influence on the built environment of the past 30 years.

1 – Woods' artwork *A City 1985-1986* displays his natural sense of design

2 – The video on show here contains footage of Woods taken in Switzerland in 1998





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Event

Sydney Architecture Festival

1–10 November 2013

Review by Marissa Looby

As the Sydney Opera House celebrated its 40th anniversary last year, the city was brimming with architectural events and symposia. The Sydney Architecture Festival, now in its fourth year, has become the largest public celebration of architecture in Australia and was devised for 2013 on the curatorial theme of 'Your City, Your Community'.

The Festival's 60 events spanned across the central business district — through its laneways and public plazas — into the suburbs and satellite cities such as neighbouring Parramatta. It featured an array of different activities that included guided architectural tours, talks, open houses, installations, exhibitions, and children's activities including the popular ArchiKidz event, which invited children to redesign their city in 2050 by creating a 10m-long mural.

The festival may pride itself on its community-orientated initiatives, but to the architectural discipline it is much more prescient to engage in discourse as to where the profession finds itself and, more significantly, where it is headed. An example of

this was the Lloyd Rees Memorial Lecture, delivered by British-born, Mexico-based artist Melanie Smith at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA). Smith, who represented Mexico at the 54th International Venice Biennale in 2011, discussed how her art work is a reflection of the inefficiency of a chaotic political system and how her short films strive to identify the frustrations of everyday life in a 'collapsing post-colonial conurbation like Mexico City'.

Other highlights included the walking tours of the former convict settlement, Cockatoo Island — a World Heritage listed site — and an array of beaux arts buildings scattered across Sydney; the Rocks' Expanded Architecture exhibition of projected artworks created by collaborative artists working together to explore the theme of 'Reverse Projections'; the MCA presented (Wo)man With Mirror — a re-enactment of British expanded cinema artist Guy Sherwin's *Man with Mirror*; and, a series of cinematic works exploring social spaces and their influence on human behaviour, hosted by Melbourne collective, SIBLING in Surry Hills' Golden Age Cinema.

The festival's 60 events spanned across the central business district into the suburbs and satellite cities such as Parramatta

Of particular note was Michael Holt's short play, *Absolutely Relative*, staged in Paddington Reservoir Gardens. *Absolutely Relative* was a theatrical performance for architects, written by an architect. The perceived 'stage' was set within a sunken urban park, renovated in 2010 by Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, MD Design and the City of Sydney. The below-grade ruins of the old reservoir in effect create a pseudo-amphitheatre. The renovation project won the National Award for Heritage at the AIA's 2010 National Architecture Awards, and that the 'inhabited ruins' played host to a theatrical performance is nothing short of fascinating.

The narrative was based on ideology and flux; a return to the past in its metaphorical 1972 context, and a subsequent nod towards contemporary practice in the lead female character's role (Irene Carmichael, played by Sophie Fairweather). The play posits that architectural discourse may have endured its own ruinous period, and where Modern (Lewis Syzmanowski, played by Rowan Freeman) or Postmodern (Frankie Caruso, played by Jarrod Crellin) generations once had strong ideological positions and statements based on manifestos, the contemporary profession relies solely on a brief that is responsive to regulatory measures as opposed to informed critical comment on typologies or aesthetics. It is the

overbearing presence that informs the characterisation for the central character (Herb Hausmann, played by Panda Likoudis).

It was not a performance about architecture per se, but rather it was a performance in architectural space. The set design from Holt's Australian-based practice, Architects Untitled, consisted of white tape on the ground marking out the narrative context's funeral parlour floor plan. In the middle of the parlour was a table and four chairs — drawn two-dimensionally in plan — which gave visual cues to the type of character 'sat' in each chair. A subliminal subtext was there to be understood by the informed architectural audience member, but the script's narrative reached further than the architectural audience. It was a story about one game and three players, in one 'room'. A curious backdrop meets an intriguing plotline. As the programme noted: 'Is it a game of chance? Does fate rest in someone's hands? Instead, this is the collective struggle of individuals who together begin to forge a possible way of leveraging a position and changing course.'

As audience members, complicit to the game by simply being there, we were bearing witness to the events, the script and the space.

1 – Michael Holt's play *Absolute Relative*, held at the Paddington Reservoir Gardens, was one of the highlights of the festival





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Event

Adaptation Lab

Architecture Foundation, London

19–22 November 2013

Review by Shumi Bose

For a few days in November London's Architecture Foundation hosted Adaptation Lab, a programme of events, lectures and discussion on the relationship between technology and architecture. The topic already suggests some kind of exclusivity: just as 'sustainable' still connotes, mistakenly, a righteous horizon of green roofs and wind farms, the contemporary notion of technology can seem disconnected from the traditional practices of architecture, whose disciplines involve tradition and permanence as opposed to a digital-virtual lightness of being.

However, as evidenced by Adaptation Lab's brief programme — curated and run by Jeffrey Inaba and Benedict Clouette of C-LAB (the New York-based research studio hosted by Columbia University in New York) — the question of technology and its relationship to architecture is neither new nor exclusive. Inaba's thesis — laid out in the e-publication *Architecture and Adaptation*, appropriately distributed online — is that in the future, the success of architecture will be measured in its capacity to absorb technological innovations towards architectural ends; the question being how technology might alter or free up architectural thinking.

These 'architectural ends' could broadly be divided into two aspects; that of production and consumption — broadly speaking, of design and experience. Focusing on the former, Rick Robinson of IBM and Léan Doody of ARUP — neither from a design background — elucidated their research and work on Smart City initiatives, which seek to deploy technological amenities towards the development of more efficient urban environments. Robinson identified the massive increase of three conditions — urbanisation, inequality and [the availability of] information — as reasons why we should all be thinking about how technological thinking might be used to allow for more social and civic justice.

Whereas in 2007, there was much energy in large-scale physical upgrading or even new constructions which would seek to integrate the latest technological systems — in terms of sustainability and efficiency, for example, or internal communication — today, the balance has shifted in the direction of softer initiatives. These include programs to educate citizens to be able to utilise technology infrastructures in a

manner that would best suit their needs. Therefore constraints in finance have shifted the uptake of such 'solutions' from the production to the consumption, and in creating long-term arcs which would enable ad-hoc technological integration, rather than concretised, but unrealisable proposals.

Simon Allford, who spoke alongside Liam Young and Léan Doody on the second night of Adaptation Lab's evening panel discussions, echoed this position, and warned against building solutions which, in being too tailored to a particular moment, set themselves up to become quickly outdated. Allford is founding partner of the London practice Allford Hall Monaghan Morris, currently designing the Google headquarters in London. Despite working for the definitive giants of the internet, Allford's presentation came across as willfully luddite, including quotes such as 'technology is a black cab' and a frustration with the value placed on social media platforms such as Twitter. Instead, Allford insisted that technology should be subsumed into the general practice of architecture rather than being a driving concern; architects should focus on making memorable, meaningful places, to be experienced physically rather than virtually. Designs are still being debated for the Google HQ, but there will be a focus on allowing for chance encounters, unexpected exchanges and 'positive friction'. Countering this

Due to constraints in finance, the uptake of technological solutions seems to have shifted from production to consumption

was Liam Young's poetic, seductive, yet breathtakingly incisive readings of contemporary culture. Curator of the 2013 Future Perfect exhibition in Lisbon and founder of the think-tank Tomorrow's Thoughts Today, Young's observations of virtual and media culture reflect sharply on the physical world. For example, the reading of Google's cartoonish colour scheme promises frivolity against its draconian security and surveillance policies, for example, or of Chernobyl as the background for the blockbusting computer game S.T.A.L.K.E.R. Young's architecture and research practice operates on the borderline between reality and fiction, advocating the subversion and manipulation of virtual and physical interfaces. He reminded that the 'Cloud' is nevertheless anchored by anonymous data centres lurking on the edge of cities, and yet urban conditions can be engaged in the ephemeral space of 'glowing rectangles and dancing fingers'.

Lunchtime lectures with the architects Jürgen Mayer H and Philippe Rahm explored two totally divergent, yet undeniably 'technological' approaches to architectural production. The former's parametric Metropal Parasol in Seville was evidently designed using

sophisticated computational software, but more interestingly acted as the site of Occupy Seville — a claim to the urban fabric organised almost entirely through digital platforms, creating an interesting public relationship with the city. Meanwhile Rahm uses technology to modify behaviours within and towards architecture; his manipulation of the subject through clever climactic and atmospheric control is related to old-school phenomenological experience rather than indulgent gadgetry.

The imagery used in Adaptation Lab's accompanying digital publication refers back to the postwar era of SOM office buildings — to the introduction of dropped ceilings, HVAC systems, ubiquitous air conditioning — one is reminded of Cedric Price, whose unrealised designs, such as the Fun Palace, are still closer than most contemporary visions to a fully adaptable, integrated and responsive architecture. Price famously asked, if technology is the answer, what is the question — pointing to the absurdity of technological determinism in architecture, as much as other aspects of life. Doody also underlined this point in her incisive presentation; rather than solving problems, technology is simply the context that we live in.

1 – Jeffrey Inaba of C-LAB uses a mid-century SOM designed office interior to demonstrate an architecture symbiotic with technology



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Book

Concretopia

John Grindrod

Old Street Publishing, £25

Review by Ruth Lang

As anyone who has awoken in the middle of the night to scrawl down that 'big idea' will know, dreams are by nature ephemeral things — to try to capture them in any form is to destroy the delicate fibre of their being. They thrive on a diet of half-light and fuzzy uncertainty, starved of definition — to face them again in the full blaze of the morning is to have their flaws and our folly all too brutally revealed. Yet this was the very situation faced by the planners and architects John Grindrod follows in *Concretopia*, whose aspirations for a post-war society — rendered in steel, concrete and glass — redefined our residential and commercial landscapes from Plymouth's Hoe up to Glasgow's Gorbals.

Among the devastation wrought during the war, these dreamers saw an opportunity to free Britain of the

knots of unplanned transport links, sprawling slums and poorly distributed industry it had slowly been winding itself into for centuries. The public seemed ready too — with the return from war came a new open-mindedness and a desire to build. 'They'd built new towns on the Ardennes; why wouldn't they build one here?' says Jim Griffiths, quoted on page 51 of the book.

Our judgment of the resultant schemes with which we are so familiar — of places such as Park Hill, Elephant and Castle and Cumbernauld, for less than favourable reasons — is often based upon image rather than experience, and the stories of those who used them have predominantly gone unheard. It is these stories that reveal not only what is seen but what goes unseen; not only the buildings themselves, but also the networks of communities that built up around them. Much like the intentions of the buildings and schemes described, the stories told by Grindrod are by the people, for the people, and as a result allow scorchingly incisive anecdotes to colour his historical research and

contextual narrative. These revelations are as boldly unapologetic as the projects they recall.

Contemporary experience tells us to be wary of the aspirations of such schemes, yet among the hulking great asbestos riddled slab blocks of Glasgow's Red Road blocks — intended to be taller, better, faster, safer and which took five years to build but only six seconds to fall — there are the small voices in the dark telling of neighbourliness. They tell of the joy that a well-proportioned balcony affords, of a small boy learning to ride a bike in the sky [in Basil Spence's Queen Elizabeth Square] in the Gorbals, or of the way a residential development blossoms into a community in Kent's non-towns when given the opportunity to mingle and chat amid 'green wedges' and low fences. These projects which state their hurried, pre-fab construction with brutal honesty may be far from ideal to our contemporary aesthetic sensibilities, but they embodied a real necessity of hope for the future which plays upon our heartstrings, however misguided that may have been.

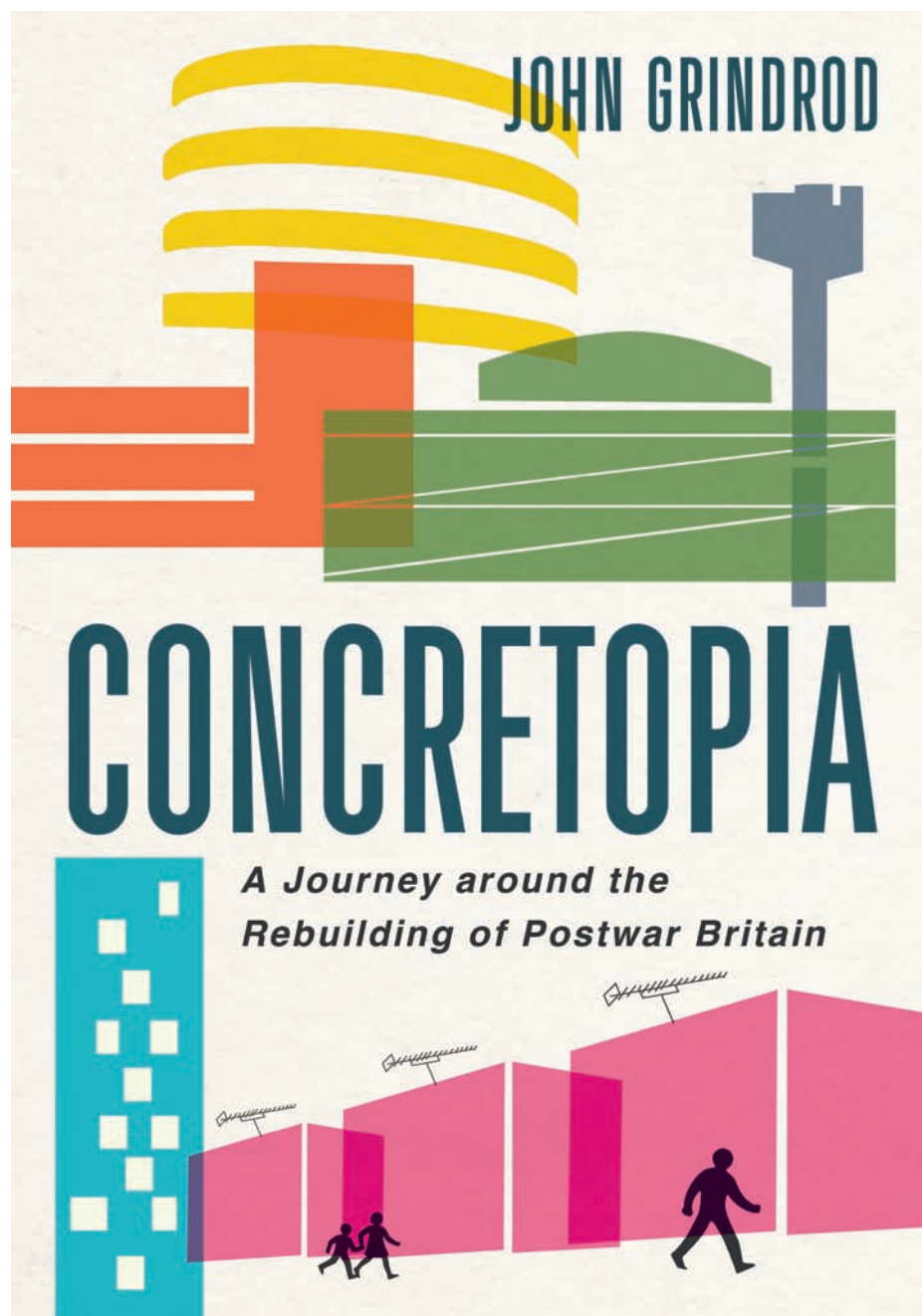
At times, syncopated introductions to key characters belie the process of the narrative compilation, which may be due to the transformation from blog posts to book, or the timescale to undertake such a journey. But this does not detract from the insight of these inhabitants, who open our eyes to the importance of less notorious schemes as well, from the reinterpretation of the garden city at New Ash Green in Kent, to the author's hometown of New Addington — still both 'New', you'll note, even now, like aging debutantes desperate to retain their first flush of youth, aspiring to be thoroughly modern. On the whole these first-hand accounts are predominantly and surprisingly positive, even for the much maligned estates — a warning that it's just as dangerous to make assumptions in their assessment as it is in their design — and reveal a genealogy of intention, if not aesthetic.

Yet we can only see these schemes in retrospect, knowing that they proved insufficiently flexible to the ravages of reality. The flaws revealed are often not confined to the architecture but rather the disjunction

They embodied a real necessity for hope for the future which plays upon our heartstrings, however misguided that was-

between overall government policy and intentions of local scale development. Those Jetsonian visions of a future were not meant to be, trapped, as they were, in the dichotomy between private ownership and public intention, between the desire for space and the benefits of high-density communities. The turning circle of human behaviour was too wide to cram into this small window of opportunity before the technical and financial structures crumbled beneath them.

The 'Concretopian' dreams featured in Grindrod's book were borne of times when the term 'austerity' had palpable meaning and consequence, yet this condition seemingly spurred on rather than hampered the architectural and urban aspirations they contained. But their failings have led us to aim our sights less high in this regard, and to acquiesce to the endless, inadequate cut-and-paste developments buoyed up on banal promises. In the intervening years, we may have adapted the aesthetic approach to something more commercially acceptable, but we seem to have again forgotten the social imperative. So the moral of the story is morality itself, and one which we cannot adopt too quickly given the current climate of dissatisfaction. It seems that we need to stop doing and start dreaming again.



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A tribute to light

Elliott Erwitt, 2013

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Feature

Maurice Brill Lighting Design spent more than five years working on the lighting scheme for this month's cover star, the Zaha Hadid Architects-designed Heydar Aliyev Center, in Baku, Azerbaijan. To open our architectural lighting focus, Carl Gardner dissects the project

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Study: Lighting the Heydar Aliyev Center

Given that it is illuminated 24 hours a day, the lighting for the Heydar Aliyev Center is a crucial part of its visual effect. Carl Gardner talks to the UK lighting designers who spent more than five years creating the building's lantern-like illusion, in which nearly all the lighting equipment is integrated with the architecture

London-based lighting design consultancy Maurice Brill Lighting Design (MBLD) had never worked with Zaha Hadid Architects (ZHA) when it was commissioned to design the lighting for the Baku Cultural Center in 2008. But even then it could see that this was not going to be any ordinary scheme. 'Our initial brief was that the lighting would be fused with the fabric of the architecture...to enhance the flowing nature of the single surface that

encompasses the whole building,' MBLD managing director Rob Honeywill explains. For most areas, this immediately ruled out many staple lighting solutions for museums and exhibition spaces, such as surface-mounted spotlights, pendants or track-mounted fittings.

Due to the complex geometry of the spaces, all aspects of the lighting had to be visualised in 3D, using ZHA's models — and to ensure that light sources were invisible, everything had to be examined as if one was walking through the space, so the lighting was literally (or rather virtually) viewed from all possible angles. Unusually too in projects like this, where often contractors or clients take financial short-cuts by asking lighting designers for a concept design and leaving some of the final design to others, 'here, everywhere, everything we did was detailed', Honeywill stresses.

In the early stages of the design, MBLD realised that the only way to create the necessary lantern-like 'glow', when viewed from outside, was to use the ceiling surfaces as secondary reflectors. So in the larger spaces, the design team created the concept of a 'light shelf' discretely mounted along the highest glazing transoms. Each of the custom-made units contains double rows of T5 fluorescent asymmetric reflectors, to throw light across the ceiling, supplemented by another T5 row, to make the vertical trough louvres glow. There are five or six dimming

circuits on each run, so the light output can be balanced to achieve a uniform effect, even where the distances to the ceiling vary.

To supplement the top-lit effect, using the light shelves, additional concealed lighting was provided at the base of the building, where the internal skin meets the floor. MBLD proposed the use of custom-made floor-troughs, set at an angle, again using overlapping T5 lamps. These follow the organic footprint of the building, separating the floor and wall planes and projecting a wash of light up the lower walls. Today, linear LEDs would almost certainly be used, but the designers point out that at the time when most of the design was done, LED fittings were not yet powerful enough to achieve many of the desired effects.

But due to the tight ceiling geometry of many of the smaller spaces, light shelves were impossible to incorporate into the fabric, so here a curvilinear T5 ceiling slot was proposed, in varied lengths, covered by a flush diffuser. ZHA agreed that this was an acceptable way of expressing the sculptural nature of the ceiling while providing integrated lighting. Achieving it was tricky, however. 'The ceiling bends in three directions and there is no product on the market that does that, while also being maintainable from the front, using clip-on diffusers,' says MBLD lighting design associate, Aniket Gore. So a special expanding, or folding, metal-trough system was

'Our initial brief was that the lighting would be fused with the fabric of the architecture...to enhance the flowing nature of the single surface'

2



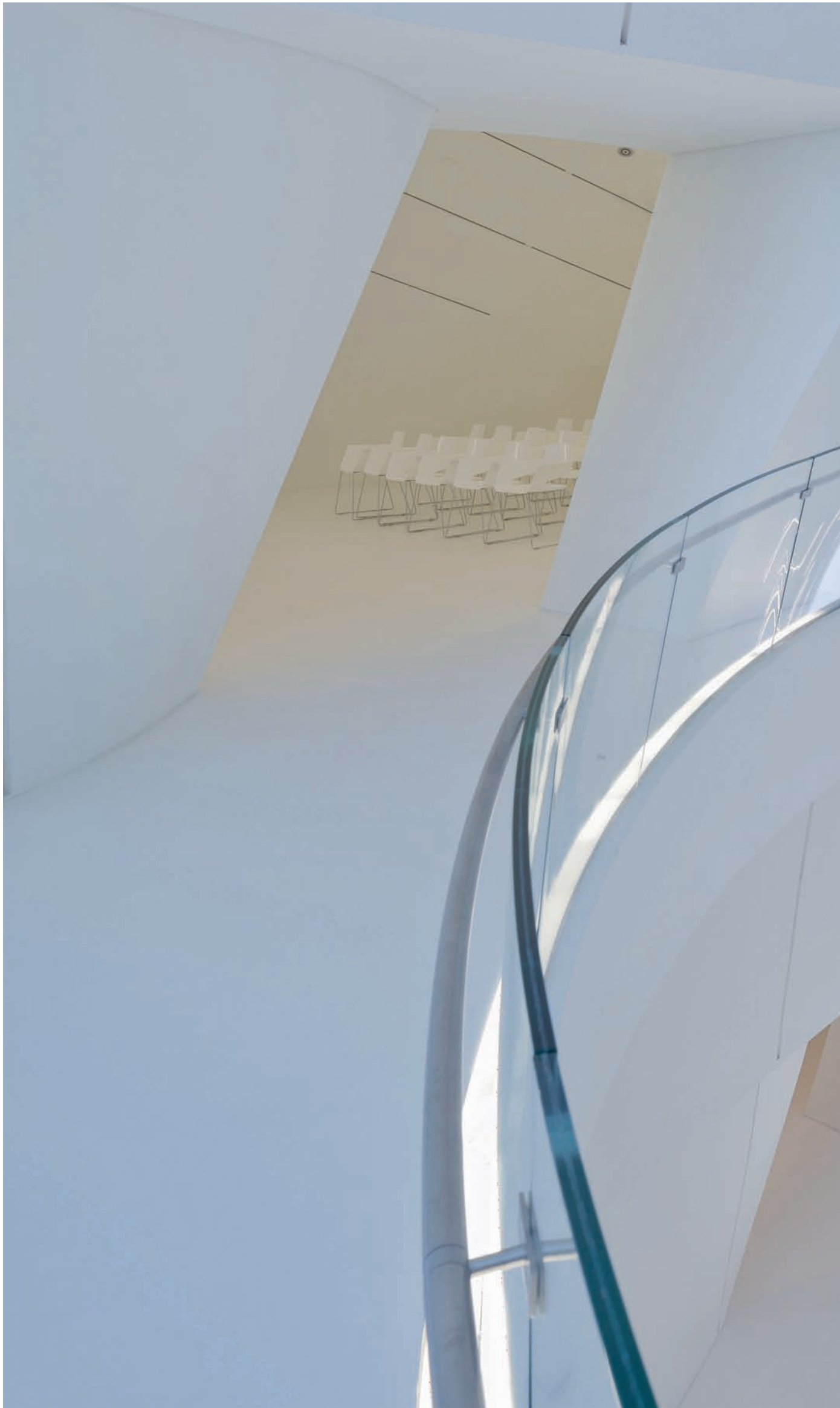
1 - Integrating the lighting was quite a task as the ceiling bends in three different directions
2 - The glowing lantern-like effect that the scheme exudes at night

3 – ZHA saw the curvilinear T5 ceiling slots as an acceptable way of expressing the sculptural nature of the ceiling

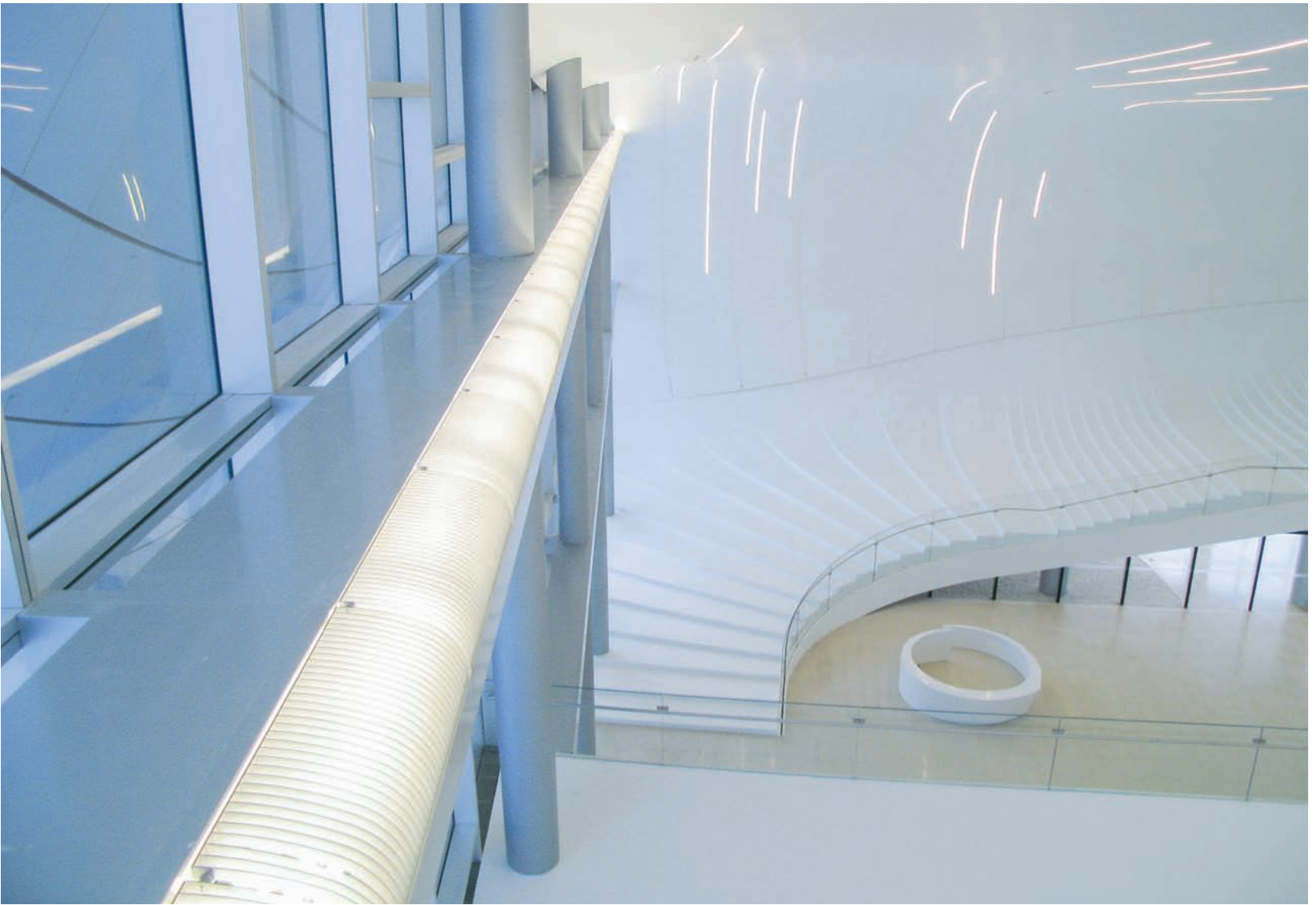
conceived, in which the metal-plated sides overlap and allow a sufficient degree of flexibility to fit the varied ceiling curves.

‘Of course, there are some spaces higher up the building, such as the president’s suite and the multipurpose hall, where art and cultural artefacts need lighting to higher levels than can be achieved by T5 fluorescent sources,’ Honeywill admits. ‘Here we specified low-voltage tungsten halogen pin spots to achieve the heightened light levels.’ On the upper floors, the 1.5m gap between the inner and outer skin of the building means that these directional spotlights can be maintained by rear access from within the void.

At the heart of the centre is the gloriously sculpted, womb-like auditorium, where the walls are completely constructed from curvaceous, overlapping timber ‘fins’. The gaps between these curved, asymmetric elements vary from almost zero to 1.5m. Within these gaps, MBLD inserted chains of flexible, surface-mounted linear LED fittings, most notably the 3D LED Flex 100 by Highgate-based Radiant Lighting, and which was specially developed for the project. Working closely with ZHA, which revised the timber housing details to accommodate the LED modules,







At the heart of the centre is the gloriously sculpted, womb-like auditorium, where the walls are completely constructed from curvaceous, overlapping timber 'fins'



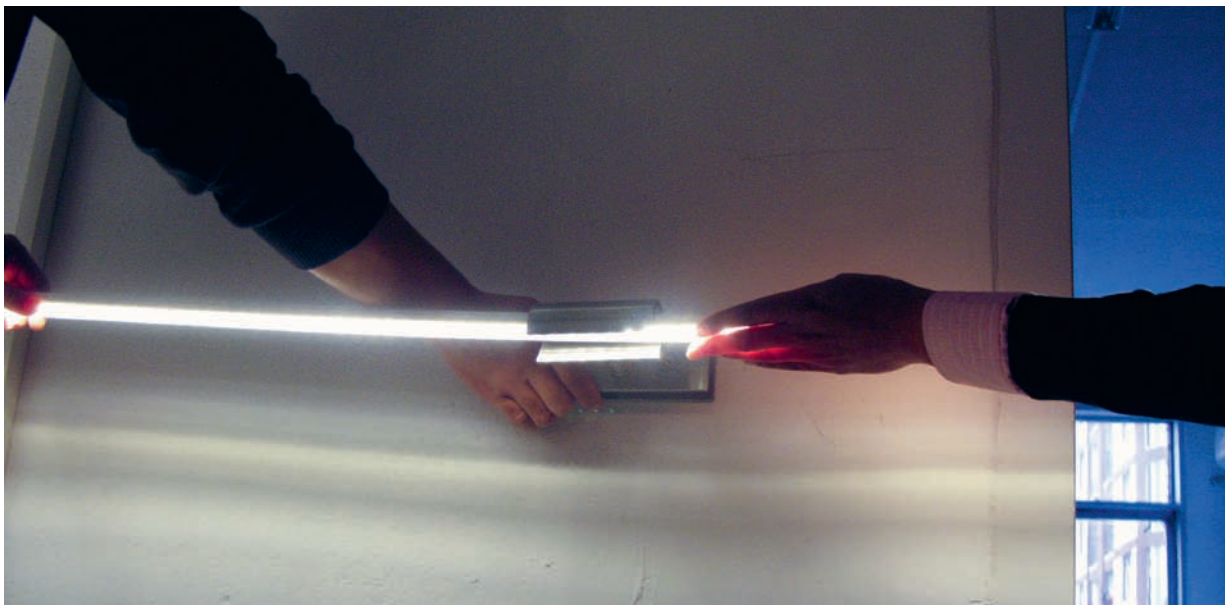


- 4 - A close-up of the lighting shelf from above
- 5 - One of the light shelf unit ready for fitting
- 6 - Spots and slots in the core of the building
- 7 - Floor troughs for uplighting the walls
- 8 - Fitting a handrail

the scheme again achieves the desired lighting levels while fully concealing the light sources. A DMX dimming control system ensures that the lighting is smooth and uniform, by varying the light outputs to compensate for the different distances between the timber surfaces and the LEDs.

And so to the exterior views of the building and illusionistic lighting effect the building required. 'We wanted to achieve a glowing, lantern-like effect in which it appears that all the lighting is emanating from inside... even though it isn't,' Honeywill explains. Gore goes further: 'It had to appear as an incidentally lit building, so wherever the lighting couldn't feasibly reach it from inside, we didn't light the outside.'

The key idea was to illuminate the faces of the building closest to the glazing and accentuate the effect of light fading away as the eye moves further from the windows. So a series of Lumascape inground uplights were mounted close to the window walls — and the space between them increased with distance. In addition, the colour temperature of the uplights is warmer at the glazing, to match the interior, and cooler further away. On the west side, where the building rises to 70m, with overlapping fins, asymmetric projectors were fixed inside the





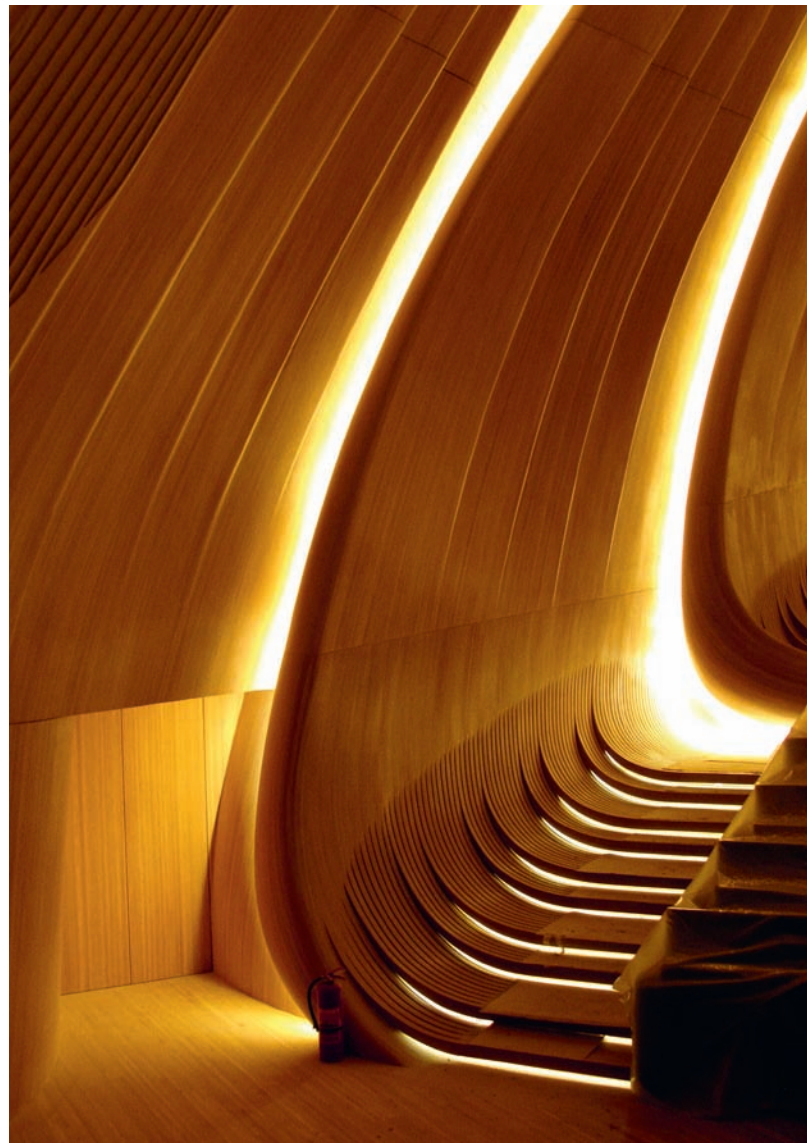
mechanical slots to hide them from view, while achieving a smooth fade of light.

Further out in the landscape, which steps up to the main entrance with a series of planar water features, the lighting had to be safe for pedestrians, while not detracting from the building itself. Continuous lines of IP68 (submersible) recessed linear lighting are used to wash vertical surfaces, including some hefty 3m/4m-high wall sections close to the building — and integrated rows of LEDs pick out the three ‘water walls’ from concealed positions. LED wall slots and integrated LED handrails help to make the stepped approach safe while avoiding foreground clutter. As the images show, the final lit effect is quite ethereal and visually subsumed by the building’s interior-exterior glow.

You might think that working with the same architects for five years on a difficult, sensitive scheme like the Baku Center could have frayed relations, but Honeywill and Gore have nothing but praise for the ZHA team. ‘The interesting thing about working with ZHA is that it does challenge you and test your boundaries — it is a very intense process,’ says Honeywill... and Gore adds: ‘Whoever has a passion for design should do a project with them at least once’.

The interesting thing about working with ZHA is that it does challenge you and test your boundaries

9, 10, 11, 12 – various views of the lighting scheme for the wooden auditorium





Lasvit Light design experience



Far left: Shangri La Istanbul

Left: Shanghai Shangrila Ballroom

LASVIT

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Above: The lobby at the Langham Chicago

Right: Nodulles designed by Ross Lovegrove

The Lasvit Group, founded in 2007 and based in the Czech Republic, is a leading designer and manufacturer of bespoke contemporary light fittings, feature architectural glass installations and lighting collections.

Leon Jakimic founded Lasvit with a single vision - to create the perfect experience through the quality of light, glass, and design. The range of Lasvit's art pieces includes hand-blown objects situated in private residences, public spaces, luxurious hotels as well as in high-end boutiques and extraordinary interiors. Lasvit is currently developing and producing an innovative range of uniquely shaped glass panels for the exclusively for the architecture industry.

Lasvit commitment to creativity and innovation has resulted in creative collaborations with some of the world's most celebrated designers including Ross Lovegrove, Nendo Studio, Arik Levy, Fabio Novembre and Michael Young. Lasvit is pleased to provide opportunities to young designers and connect them with Czech master glassmakers. Lasvit is launching Czech glass to the world while protecting its identity and authenticity and is proud to be a follower of the old traditions of Bohemian glass making.

The company has 12 international offices in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, North and South America. Lasvit projects span the globe and vary from glass sculptures for private residences, to large-scale installations for luxury boutiques and hotels.

Lasvit glass art designs combine the finest traditions and craft in innovative Bohemian glass making with world-class research and development facilities for design, engineering, lighting technology, and metal manufacturing, all under one roof.

The company receives big recognition in the United Kingdom with a number of great realisations. In London they are now finishing installations in the capital's new symbol - the Shard. Lasvit has embellished one of the world's most exclusive hotels - the Shangri-La at the Shard which occupies 19 floors of the building, as well as working on the refurbishment of the All England

Club. Other projects include Four Seasons in Park Lane, four shops of Boodles - traditional British luxury jewellery maker, Sake No Hana restaurant and private residences in Kensington Palace Gardens, One Hyde Park and Mayfair.

PROJECTS: Lasvit describes some of their latest projects as follows.

Some of our latest glass installations have been recently completed at the Shangri-La Bosphorus, the Langham Chicago and the Shangri-La Jing An hotel.

A new creation of contemporary luxury glass lighting experiences crafted with extraordinary attention to detail has arrived in the form of glass sculptures that adorn the opulent Hotel Shangri-La Bosphorus. We've created a breath-taking light and design experience within the lobby, atrium and bar of the Hotel.

Combining traditional Bohemian glass making with innovative design and technology, we've put in place a new and exciting lighting experience in the lobby of The Langham, Chicago. Our in-house designers in collaboration with London's Richmond International have developed two elegant and expansive glass art installations, contemporary in their design, that reference the grandeur of the original Langham, London, while also celebrating the modern Mies van der Rohe building and city of Chicago. Inspired by the movement of the Chicago River, which flows through the city into Lake Michigan and neighbours the property on the south side, the sculptural installations feature coloured glass pebbles chosen to represent the reflective and fluid qualities of the water.

The Shangri-La Jing An hotel are proud of the beautiful glass art installations we have made for them that brighten up and add to the unforgettable atmosphere of the building. The hotel glistens with more than four million pieces of crystals. The grandeur of Grand Ballroom, the largest in West Shanghai, is accentuated by a 10-metre-high ceiling dressed with glittering glass rods and more floating crystal clouds.



PJC Light Studio (formerly PJC Lighting Design) was founded in 2004 and has built a strong portfolio of prestigious international projects including retail, hospitality (hotels/restaurants), art galleries, residential, building exteriors/landscapes and commercial office buildings. PJC's approach to lighting is to collaborate closely with the Client and Architect/Designer to develop lighting solutions that consider the function of each space and integrate seamlessly into the architectural design. A knowledge of the latest lighting technologies, products and regulations combined with creative lighting design techniques are essential to reach a considered, pragmatic and cost effective lighting scheme that greatly enhances the end project.

PROJECT REFERENCES

Citco Pavilion, Milan

The Pavilion alongside the three centerpiece stone works was designed by Zaha Hadid during Milan Design Fair 2012 to celebrate the innovative achievement established by Citco. According to the architect's description, the composition of each of the three showcased works is derived from the intricate beauty of organizational systems in the natural world. These fascinating scenarios are established when energy is applied to geology-developing a geometric set of repeated growth and erosion cycles.

Given the temporal nature of the project and situated within a residential courtyard, the lighting design approach was developed with easy to install, discrete integration and low glare in mind. A linear light detail was concealed at the base of the pavilion to create a halo of light and float the pavilion from the ground. The showcased works were accented by groups of compact spike-mount light projectors carefully situated at locations barely visible by the visitors when walking through the space. By the very nature of the light finishes of the pavilion, these light projectors also contribute ample, yet soft ambient light to the space. Subtle landscape lighting compliments the journey to the pavilion.

Selfridges 1/F Men Shoes & Accessories, London

The Belgium architect, Vincent Van Duysen has created a stunning high coffered ceiling with clean and bold architectural lines within the newly refurbished space. To maintain the clarity of this architectural language, the lighting in the ceiling had to be discreetly integrated with minimal visual impact. In such a large store it was also critical to keep the customers interested by creating a visually stimulating environment using contrast, different layers of light, points of interest and special features. This ceiling approach allows very specific focussing to the furniture displays in contrast to the circulation areas.

The result is a discreet light installation using compact and concealed fittings with low brightness optics creating a simple, sympathetic and effective system that celebrates the unique and stunning interior and high coffered ceiling. Visual interruptions to the architectural design were reduced to a minimum and combined with seamless integration of lighting into the furniture units to provide layers of visual interest and depth - particularly in the perimeter units.





Above: Selfridges London -
Men's Shoes and Accessories
(Van Duysen Architects)
Bottom left: Galeries
Lafayette, Beijing (HMKM)

Left: Citco Pavillion, Milan
(Zaha Hadid Architects)
Below: BP4 Canary Wharf,
London (Kohn Pedersen Fox
Associates)



Damla LED® is one of Europe’s leading supplier and manufacturer of LED lighting with over 10 years of experience and a product range covering more than 100 LED lighting products and control systems. We offer a professional service of project design, manufacturing & installation for a broad range of LED lighting applications in both the commercial and public amenity fields.

We have been dominantly active in LED Lighting Industry since 2001. Over the years, Damla LED® brand has become a pioneer in the production of LED Lighting, we are proud to be the first and the leading company serving Europe and Middle East to fully integrate all aspects LED lighting internally such as; design, manufacturing, and application. Our 3500 m2 manufacturing plant is equipped with state-of-art production lines. Each and every process from design to manufacturing is carefully coordinated by our team of professionals. We provide the highest world standard quality”, henceforth we are derived to solely use internationally recognized and approved LED components as raw material such as OSRAM®, NICHIA®, CREE® and SEOUL® brands. 90% of our finished product is manufactured in our state-of-art manufacturing facility. Our products are produced under TS EN ISO 9001: 2000 quality guaranty. Majority of our products are Patented, Registered and Certified locally and internationally. Our Products backed with a 2-year guarantee and Damla LED® Technology ensures maximum performance and lifetime. In addition to the standard products for manufacturing, a wide range of opportunities are offered for a special design and manufacture to the customers by our company. Our company’s aim is to expand the opportunities so as to use LED Technology in a way that will meet our customers’ needs. Keeping up with high technological developments closely occurring rapidly in the LED manufacturing sector of the world market by its electrical- electronic engineers and technician personnel, our company offers its customers solutions of good quality, appropriate and long-term in light of Research & Development

works. Our service and products are available to our partners and integration specialists in more than 30 countries from small to large scale applications. Sales activities are concentrated on the major European markets, Middle East, South East Asia, North Africa and North America. DEL International supplies these markets with products specifically designed to suit regional needs.

LED It Be®
GROUP COMPANIES

DEL® International - A Damla LED ® Company is an industry leader in state of LED Lighting solutions, delivering sustainable dynamic lighting experiences. Full solution provider offering a comprehensive range of products from software packages for designing to sophisticated and dynamic lighting schemes. The company offers a professional service of sales, project design -247and installation.

PROJECT DESIGN & PLANNING

Our team of design professionals provides full project design support using the latest software and engineering tools. Our team is equipped with the latest software, enabling them to produce accurate 2d and 3d simulations and visualizations of proposed installations.

A Damla LED® visual lighting designer can help turn your project into a reality. Our talented team member provides proper lighting show design assistance for projects in which Damla LED® products are specified...

CUSTOM DESIGN

We develop custom-designed special concept LED lighting luminaires. These luminaires are developed for a specific application - with the same high level of quality as our standard range.

“We work hard continuously to develop our business with the awareness of the huge responsibility we have been engaged by getting involved in bench mark international projects...”
Director of Sales - Mehmet Kemalolu



Above: Atlanta Shopping Center, Antalya - Türkiye

Left: Kapitaly Shopping Cente, Moscow - Russia

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Right: Damla LED®
Headquarters & Factory,
Ankara - Türkiye



FUTURE Designs

FUTURE Designs builds and provides best quality luminaires and bespoke lighting solutions with a proud heritage of meeting the exacting demands of diverse clients from the commercial sector, education, healthcare authorities, financial institutions and retail groups.

Investment in the development of our products and new innovations is continuous. Working in the most up-to-date facilities we offer specialist lighting design and manufacturing bringing projects from concept to complete realisation. Our bespoke light division takes concept to reality from a sketch to fully functional installation, bespoke products are becoming a key element of the work space. Architectural detailing and feature lighting mean lighting has become key to working the environment.

There is little doubt that LED is now the medium of choice for every sector that requires illuminating whether that is commercial space, retail, social healthcare or residential. The advent of LED within lighting fixtures represents a greater leap than that of moving from incandescent lamps to fluorescent in the 1950's and 60's.

However, the technology isn't new within commercial lighting, it was originally introduced forty years ago to show us an emergency fitting was healthy. So, whilst the technology itself isn't revolutionary, it's refinement is. It has taken massive technical and financial investment to



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harness and develop LED to become a viable alternative to fluorescent lamps. FUTURE Designs has partnered with three of the biggest component providers in the world to test and develop products, to ensure what we supply is fit for purpose and has the required after sales backup that ground breaking technology requires.

The application of LED in the lighting manufacturing and design sector has now reached its tipping point; where every luminaire that previously utilised fluorescent lamps can be not just replicated but actually enhanced and improved upon with an LED version. The benefits range from the reduction in carbon usage, as well as the aesthetic attributes in terms of its ability to produce a seamless light and the capacity to change colour between the spectrum from cool to warm white. LED is an extremely flexible lighting medium and can be manipulated in terms of length, width and shape whilst maintaining the quality of light output.

EXEMPLAR-LED - marking an evolutionary step in office lighting. Utilising high transmission foils and micropism optics to produce even illumination in the workplace, this product has been designed to get the best performance from LED whilst controlling glare within the CIBSE recommendations.

BEEM - a family of LED downlighters. The range uses the most efficient LED light engines to

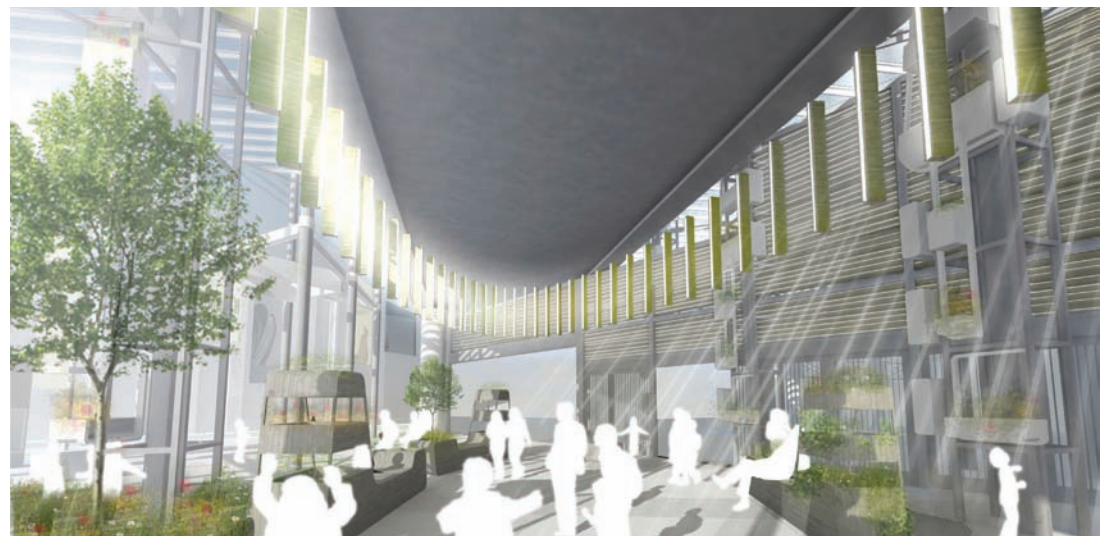
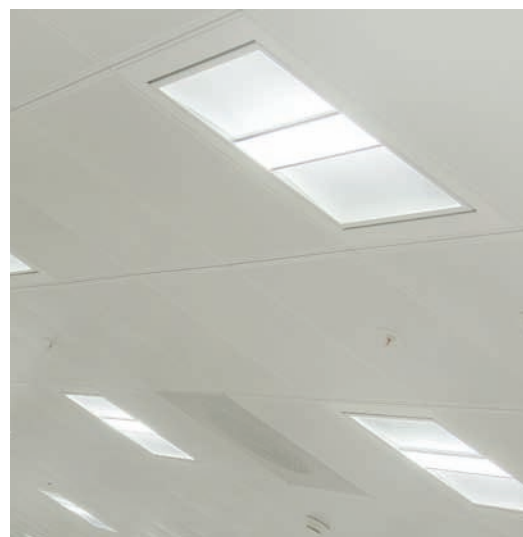
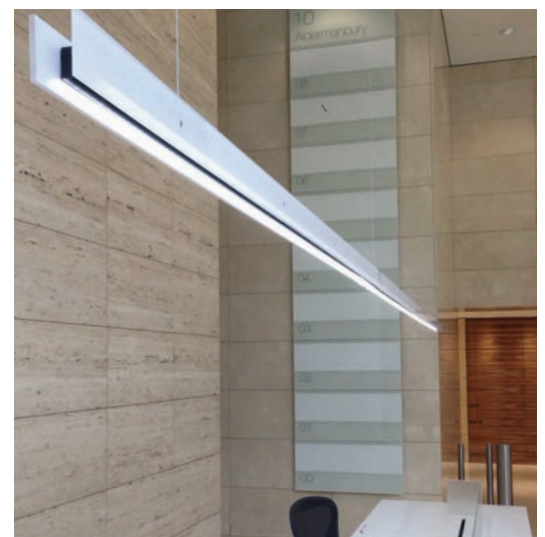
create efficient and aesthetically appealing luminaires. The design has been developed as a result of FUTURE Designs responding to client requirements for a simple clean product that complements any modern commercial or residential interior. The range utilises Zhaga Book 3 fixings specifications to ensure longevity of life.

SHEER - an architectural suspended luminaire developed with simplicity and visual impact in mind. This linear fixture has been designed to enhance reception and entrance facilities.

BOROUGH MARKET

As part of the overall Market Hall development at London's Borough Market, FUTURE Designs was approached by Sherman & Co (Ealing) Ltd, to bring to life the lighting scheme envisioned by DLA Architecture. The final design - 'VANE -VERTA' offers over 50,000 hours typical life time vs. the 20,000 hours and represents an approximate energy saving of 40% compared to the comparable T5 lamp per luminaire.

The project was a finalist in the 2013 FX International Design Awards in the Public Space Scheme category and is shortlisted for a Civic Trust Award in 2014. The Market Hall's light and airy glazed structure, situated at the entrance to the historic Borough Market in central London has a multitude of uses such as an information hub, city garden, demo kitchen and a dining hall.



Anolis - LEaDing Lighting solutions

ANOLIS was established to design and manufacture top-end LED lighting products.

Since its conception, ANOLIS has gone from strength to strength, producing a constantly expanding range of products with a well balanced mix of innovation, imagination and experience. This, together with state-of-the-art lighting technology, has created a market leading range. Reliability is the first priority. ANOLIS uses only the highest quality components and precision manufacturing techniques, ensuring that the brand offers all the benefits associated with LED lighting: extreme efficiency, long life, low maintenance, low heat and no UV output. Combining these characteristics with industry standard dimensions and flexible control options, true specific class lighting systems can be created. ANOLIS products can be seen in a wide variety of applications worldwide, and embrace many market sectors including architectural, commercial, industrial, transport, retail, domestic and entertainment lighting. From discreet white colour-controlled accent lighting to full RGB or RGBW building illumination, ANOLIS products

present lighting designers and architects with creative solutions for the most demanding client requirements. All ANOLIS products meet the relevant product directives and bear the CE mark. Some also bear the ETL Mark, and approval for the remaining products is currently pending. Maintaining a close working relationship with the leading component manufacturers ensures that ANOLIS stays at the forefront of the ever-evolving LED market. New technologies are constantly allowing higher output and greater efficiency which continues to open up new market opportunities. ANOLIS is the professional choice - both now and for the future.

Anolis products have now been installed in a huge variety of application world wide. The reliability and quality of the Anolis range of LED fixtures ensures impressive results every time, whether they are used to provide the correct working environment within an office space or to produce dramatic colour change effects to a buildings exterior facade Anolis's comprehensive range offers a solution in the most demanding of circumstances.



David Morrell

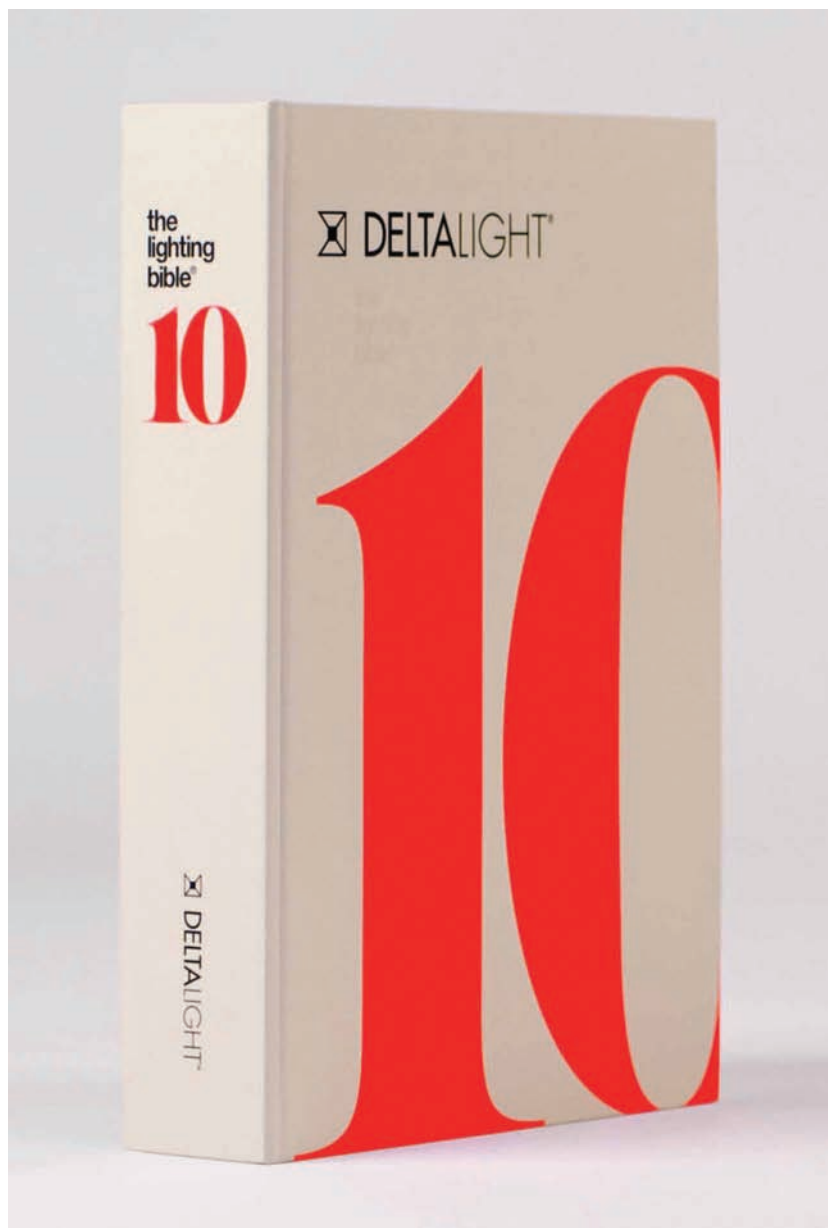
Above: Anolis LED installation for Somerset House designed by Patrick Woodroffe

Below left: ArcSource Outdoor 48MC and 24MC Integral light range



ANOLIS

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Top: the Deltalight catalogue remains the definitive reference source for all lighting decisions

Above: Innovative shades add focus to any room

The new "The Lighting Bible" 10' catalogue from Deltalight® is extremely ambitious in its scope: over 1,000 inspirational pages packed with new designs, colours and materials, as well as countless technical innovations and project photos. For the first time, it can also be downloaded as a free app on itunes.

Edition 10 of The Lighting Bible®; demonstrates how Deltalight® designs creative and functional lighting solutions, with a strong emphasis on innovation and creativity. The catalogue presents a new generation of powerful LEDs and striking new shapes, colours and materials. Plus, the outdoor lighting collection has been vastly expanded with brand new wallwash and downlighting solutions, as well as highly efficient innovations in energy consumption, which makes The Lighting Bible® 10 a practical guide filled with technical information and delightful inspiration.

Technology is pivotal in the design process at Deltalight®. With the strength of its authoritative in-house knowledge behind it, Deltalight® combines a new generation of powerful LEDs with optimised optical systems and reflectors, creating new downlighters, wallwashers and customised LED profiles that push boundaries based on their efficiency and energy consumption.

Carefully selected outdoor lighting adds a huge amount of value to a project. Deltalight® has had a wide range of outdoor lighting products for several years - and it's a collection that has been significantly extended even further in The Lighting Bible® 10. Going for uplights under a tree to create a theatrical effect? Want to play with endless lines of light? Or maybe you're choosing LEDs with lenses to bring walls and structures to life? Over a hundred fittings for walls, floors and ceiling offer endless possibilities thanks to innovative technology in various styles for recessed or surface-mounted lights. The new colour range for outdoor fittings still creates the perfect integration between trees and plants, the new dark grey option allows the lights to be barely noticable.

Deltalight® has always focused on design and technology. A look at the company's range immediately demonstrates that innovation is the central driving force behind the business.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

February 1999

In 1999 dRMM's Alex de Rijke travelled the UK to photograph some of the country's most impressive motorway systems, underpasses and car parks. de Rijke captured extreme examples of the car-orientated planning vision that was central to the post-war reconstruction of British cities, from Patrick Abercrombie's congested composition of a ruined church, multistorey car park with bus terminus underneath, to London's elevated Westway and Birmingham's multilevel interchange on the M6. Our love/hate relationship with the urban car park continues in this month's issue, as architects and designers attempt to refurbish, repurpose or reinvent these relics of the Seventies and Eighties (see *Park life*, page 156).

In the same issue from 1999, artist Dorothy Cross presented a tribute to lightships, the engineless boats that were anchored to the sea bed to warn against underwater reefs around the coast of Ireland. An old lightship coated in luminous paint was moored in Dublin's Scotsman's Bay for two weeks, glowing at 20-minute intervals before being allowed to slowly dim and vanish each evening. For Cross, it marked a farewell to a particular piece of industrial-era equipment for Dublin's seamen.

For an altogether different, not to mention newer, maritime development, see *Two cathedrals*, the new Lacaton & Vassal-designed art gallery in Dunkirk, in this issue (page 188). **SB**

BLUEPRINT

EXCLUSIVE PICTURES

Helmut Newton shoots Sottsass



Inside

Vertigo: tales of
the Asian city

Future Systems
in New York

Louis Vuitton's
new skyscraper





The latest project by the Irish artist Dorothy Cross, left, is a tribute to lightships, the engineless boats tethered to the ocean floor to warn against underwater reefs. Cross's father photographed the lightship Daunt, opposite, in the 1930s. The same boat is now being painted with luminous paint for use in Cross's own project, opposite below

Memory vessel

Artist Dorothy Cross this month unveils her most ambitious project to date, a monument to the lightships which once marked out hazardous reefs around the coast of Ireland.

By Raymund Ryan

The monument, whose historical or literal meaning lies in its appeal to memory, is today prone to populist kitsch (Dianabilia) and the overly personal or narcissistic (much postmodern art). Arriving this month to the south shore of Dublin Bay, Ghost Ship promises to be an unusually convincing synthesis of private themes and public symbolism.

Ghost Ship is the most ambitious achievement to date for Irish artist Dorothy Cross and is the recipient of the annual £40,000 Nissan award for non-permanent public art in Dublin. On 3 February, an ancient lightship will be moored for two weeks in Scotsman Bay, between the great arms of Dun Laoghaire harbour and James Joyce's tower at Sandycove. And start to glow. Every evening, the ship will appear and disappear in that watery atmosphere, like a phantom or mechanical wraith. At 20-minute intervals the vessel – coated in luminous paint – will be bathed in UV light before being allowed to

glow by itself and slowly dim and vanish into the night air.

The Flying Dutchman, The Marie Celeste – spectral ships have long had a special place in maritime legend. Once a common sight around Ireland's more treacherous shores, the lightship has disappeared in recent years to be replaced by satellite buoys. Cross's project brings the lightship back to public viewing as a kind of communal curtain call, a farewell to a particular piece of industrial era apparatus for Dublin's yachties and promenaders and lifeboatmen. This is public art as the mysteriously familiar, a fastidious proposal to merge the mechanical with the mnemonic.

Engineless machines loosely tethered to the ocean floor, lightships were dispersed in rota around the coast to signal especially the invisible presence of underwater reefs. Lightships were known not by their own names but those of their temporary sites and were painted accordingly, so that these neutered hulls were emblazoned with such enigmatic names as Barrels, Lucifer and Daunt. Ships with a message.

For Cross, this ostensibly abstract project has assumed an intensely personal aspect. Raised in Cork, where her family passed long summer holidays in a wooden hut overlooking the Atlantic, Cross remembered photographs her father had taken in the 1930s of lightships in the area. In particular, a lightship moored above the wonderfully named Daunt Reef. By curious coincidence, the vessel to be used by Cross – long resting in Dublin's inner harbour and used by sea

scouts – turns out to be that photographed by her father six decades ago.

Born in 1956, Cross studied industrial design and jewellery at Leicester before immersing herself in art practice at graduate school in San Francisco and later at the PS1 centre for contemporary art in New York. Her exhibitions have included recycled material and equipment from a former studio at Dublin's Pigeon House power plant; blunt, strangely sexual objects wrapped in cowhide complete with teats; and delicate talismans made from snakes and metal entwined with a precious craftsmanship. Multiple reference and wit have always been characteristic of the artist's work, together with a complex understanding of environment.

In 1990 at Artpark near Niagara Falls, Cross installed 30 thin steel sharks tumbling down a polluted overflow chute into the Niagara River to corrode and never reach their destination. An unrealised proposal from the mid-1990s involved mounding Fool's Gold in a protective greenhouse at Nottingham's Inland Revenue headquarters – without the glass architecture, the gold's apparent value would have literally disappeared. And in April, in Galway, Cross will project onto the floors of twin handball alleys dramatic film of a rectilinear ocean-sucking blow-hole as a soprano and tenor enter the "real" architectural space and sing merging arias.

According to Cross, "the Irish coastline is being neutralised and automated and Europeanised". Ghost Ship reminds us how oddly poetic machinery and nature can be. **B**



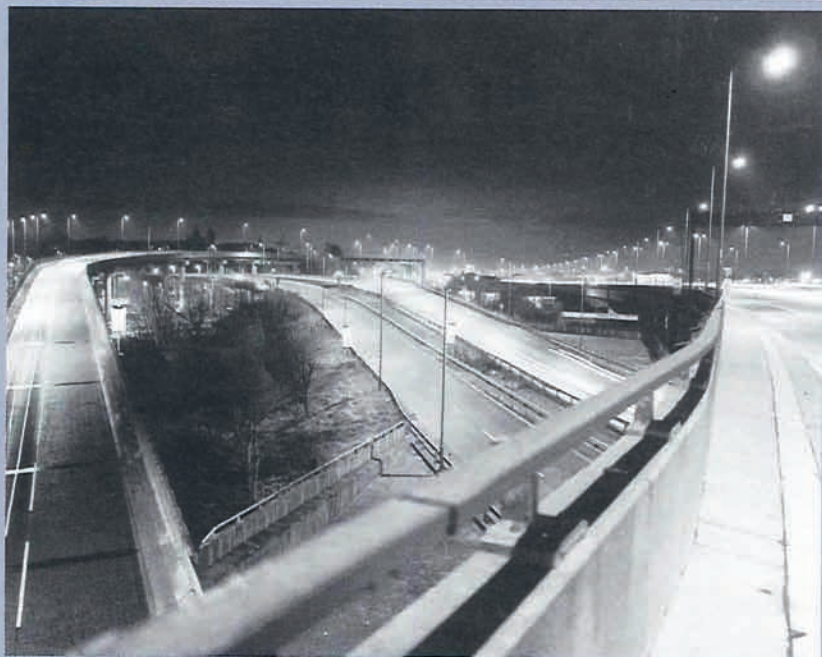
T. FERGUS CROSS, 1934

This is public art as the mysteriously familiar, a fastidious proposal to merge the mechanical with the mnemonic



road rave

Architect Alex de Rijke has travelled the UK to photograph some of the country's most spectacular examples of road-related engineering. Here, in a preview of the resulting exhibition which opens this month, he introduces his favourite projects



Spaghetti Junction, Birmingham, 1972 (Engineer: Sir Owen Williams & Partners)

The multi-level interchange on the M6 at Gravelly, Birmingham – Spaghetti Junction as it is known – is the nearest thing in the UK to the heroism of the Italian motorway system, but without the spectacular topography. Here, in the industrial urban context of Jaguar and Dunlop factories, railways and canals are skilfully sliced, passed over and framed. Hundreds of columns support a variety of structural solutions in steel

and concrete. Speed and stasis co-exist on different levels; the driver is not normally aware of the peace below.

It is interesting to note that Birmingham City Council has colonised the labyrinth below. The forest of columns has recently been complemented by the adaption of the canal to form a beach where locals now swim in a surreal version of Romans at play beneath the Pont du Gard.



Westway, London, 1969 (Department of Transport)

"The sky is sliced into a series of curving wedges, by the aerial carriageways. They form a basketry in the air that is at one and the same time free floating and unbearably heavy." Will Self

Thirty years on, the elevated extension of the A40 remains a principal route into central London from the West of England.

Originally conceived of as part of a ring road for central London,

incompleted spurs to Kensington and Chelsea remain as a testament to the controversy and protests surrounding its construction at a time of sea change in road-building politics.

For the motorist, the Westway provides one of the most exciting entries to London, a cinematic experience marked by famous contemporary buildings such as the Trellick Tower housing block by Erno Goldfinger.



Newport Transporter Bridge, Newport, Gwent, 1906 (Engineer: F Arnodin)

One of only two transporter bridges in Britain, and the only one with a suspension-type superstructure. This lateral but economic design – a section of road is transported through the air, providing a suspended platform for vehicles and people – anticipated the metamorphosis from simple truss to hybrid design in twentieth century engineering.

The Borough of Newport invited the French engineer Arnodin, who had previ-

ously worked with Eiffel and who had built a similar bridge in Marseilles, to adapt his design for the River Usk. As well as a span of 197m, the Newport bridge also required 54m headroom to allow large shipping to pass beneath it.

The impressive scale of so slender a structure has justified its other public function: as a dock landmark and symbol of local industrial achievement and enlightened patronage.



Torpoint Floating Bridge, 1838 (Engineer: James Rendle)

"You don't necessarily need a bridge, you just have to reach the other side."
Cedric Price

The Torpoint "Ferry" is a floating road rather than a bridge, a section of road pulled from bank to bank. Public ferries have plied the River Tamar, connecting Devon and Cornwall, for 800 years.

Technically simple, Rendle's floating bridge offered a solution for crossing a

busy river without disrupting shipping. It required low initial investment and little skill to operate. A bridge is replaced by two parallel chains on the river bed, connecting the banks, picked up by drive wheels within the flat-bottomed ferry.

Although the original equipment has long since been scrapped, subsequent replacements continue to use the same form and method.

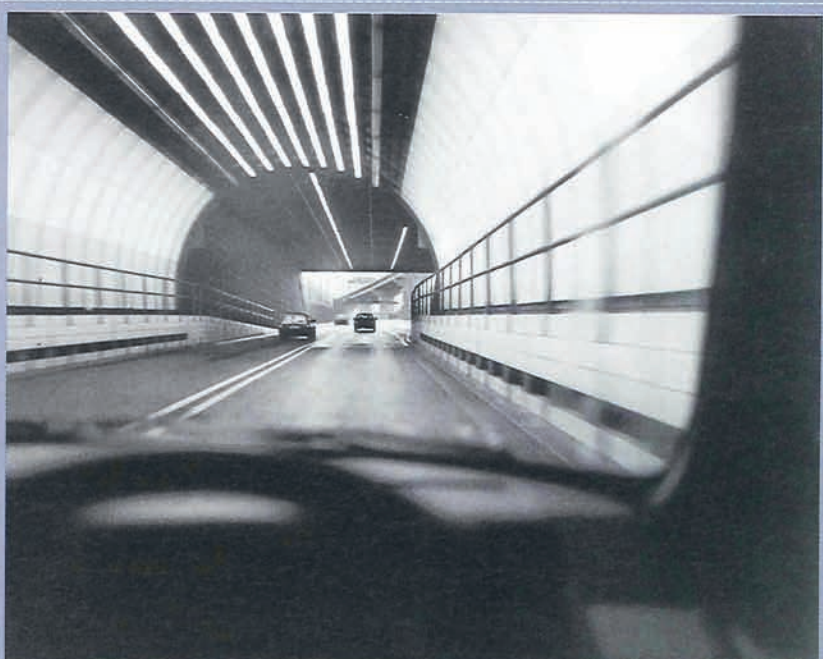


Humber Bridge, 1981 (Engineer: Freeman Fox & Partners)

At the time of its opening, the Humber Bridge was the longest suspension bridge in the world. Lincolnshire and Yorkshire were linked with a seemingly effortless structure 2.22km long. The slenderness of the prefabricated steel deck profile, only 30m above the water, creates an impression of hovering. From a distance the bridge appears as a second horizon drawn across a flat landscape.

The process of commissioning and

construction, however, was far from effortless. A multi-span truss bridge was first proposed in 1927 but political and technical concerns delayed commissioning until 1971. The extended nine years construction time was also beset with delays and spiralling costs. On-site construction included casting 48,000 tons of concrete for the tower piers and anchorage, and spinning 15,000 5mm wires to form the cables.

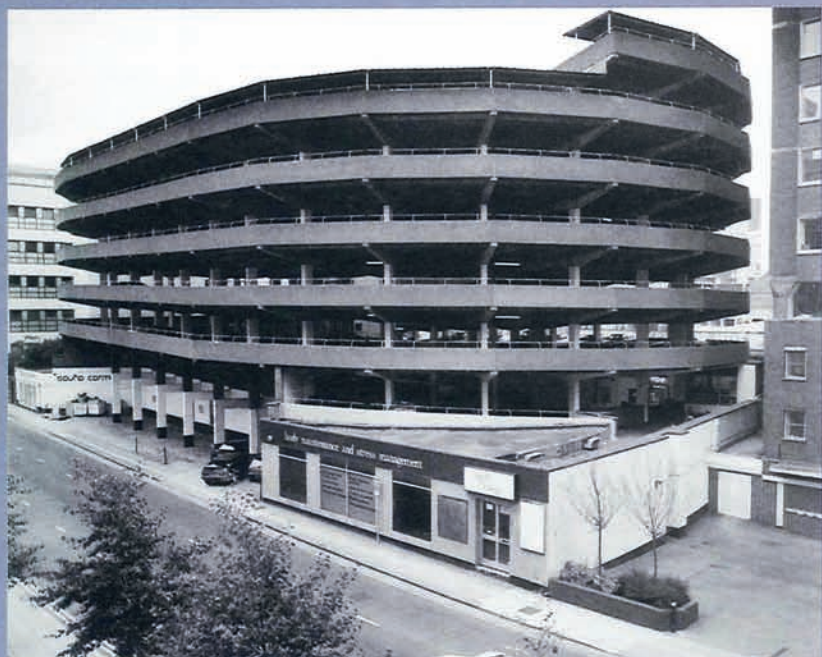


Dartford Tunnel, 1963/1978 (Engineer: Mott Hay & Anderson)

The Dartford Tunnel lies 27km east of Central London, forming the vital link under the Thames for the capital's orbital motorway. The need for a tunnel was recognised as early as by 1930, but economics and war meant that work did not begin until 1957.

The tunnel design shows particular attention to the movement of the car user. In contrast to previous tunnels, for example, the Rotherhithe, which needed

a shallower incline to accommodate horse-drawn traffic on a zig-zag route, Dartford takes a straight, plunging course. Sound and especially light are moderated through finishes, and on the north bank the road emerges gradually from a cutting with the new southbound bridge overhead. This extended threshold gives a dramatic entrance to Essex, where Lakeside is soon in view as an enormous car-based shopping destination.



Rupert Street Car Park, Bristol, 1960 (Architect: R Jelinek-Karl. Engineer: GC Mander & Partners)

This was a set-piece design collaboration between a European architect and an English engineer. The car park is conceived as a continuous helicoid spiral, rising as a vertical exit from the city centre road system which allows cars to "drive to the sky". Integrated facilities extend the parking programme to include fuel, servicing and a showroom.

Each structural deck has an inclined camber, like a racetrack. The famous

precursor of this form was the Turin Fiat factory, where cars ramp up to an elliptical rooftop test track.

The continuous inclined ramp has been, and is still, an obsession for twentieth century architects. Examples include Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum in New York, begun in 1943, where visitors take a lift to the top of a spiral and trickle down, the inverse of the car-parking exercise.



Charles Cross Car Park, Plymouth, 1972 (Plymouth City Council)

The congested composition of a ruined church, which is retained as a roundabout, complete with en-suite circular petrol station, adjacent multi-storey car park and bus terminus underneath, make this group an extreme example of the traffic-oriented planning vision that was central to the post-war reconstruction of Plymouth. The overall strategic plan was the work of Patrick Abercrombie.

The car park, while not elegant in construction, has an important presence due to its scale and role as a marker on the ring road and at an entry to Plymouth. The continuous "D" shaped perimeter parking ramp encloses the compact circular exit ramp. This creates a spiral within a spiral of Piranesian proportions. Pedestrian circulation is in a separate tower, attached to the outside as a counterpoint to the church spire opposite.



Newbury Park Station, Essex, 1950 (Architect: Oliver Hill. Engineer: Considère Constructions Ltd.)

"An extraordinary bit of bravura from an architect who designs in every style, an old style romantic in an age which wants its romanticism rough." Ian Nairn

Designed in 1937 but not built until after the war, the bus and tube station was conceived as an interchange for commuters. Even in its part-realised form it still comes as a surprise among rows of conventional Victorian terraced

houses. It is a celebration of structure and transportation, marking the place where ground connects with underground. The semi-circular ribbed vault can be read as a reference to the shape of the tube tunnel below, but it is constructed in concrete, the material of twentieth century architecture and engineering, rather than steel, which had been used for all the great nineteenth-century structures.



Stockwell Bus Garage, London, 1954 (Architect: Adie Button & Partners with Thomas Bilbow. Engineer: AE Beer)

This structure enjoys a simple paradox: a heavy material (concrete) appears weightless and is flooded with daylight. This is achieved with deceptively simple engineering. Repeated, parallel rows of Y-shaped beams have wide arched arms which lock together to form vaults. Cast glass is substituted for cast concrete where possible and there is no extraneous detailing.

The opportunity of a "tabula rasa" bomb-site and a far-sighted client in London

Transport, together with a shortage of steel, created the necessary conditions for this inspired design. **B**

On the Road: the art of engineering in the car age (curated by Alex de Rijke with Michael Hadi and organised by the Hayward Gallery in collaboration with The Architecture Foundation) is at Queen's Hall Art Gallery, Hexham, Northumberland from 13 February to 13 March, tel 01434 606787

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