

COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATIONS

DIALOGUES ON ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

6.21.18 **TOM KUNDIG** FAIA + **ERIC OWEN MOSS** FAIA
IN CONVERSATION WITH **JAMES S. RUSSELL** FAIA
ABBY SUCKLE FAIA



COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATIONS DIALOGUES ON ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

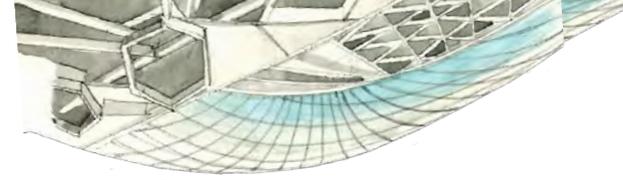
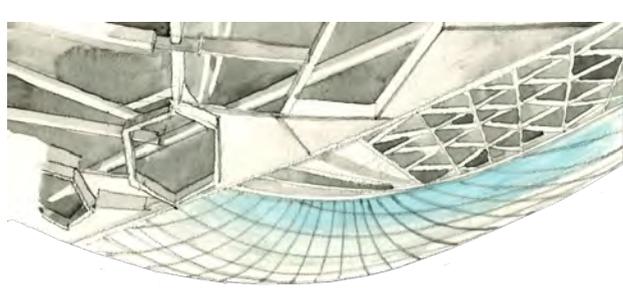
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CURATED BY **ABBY SUCKLE & WILLIAM SINGER**



About Cocktails and Conversations

The world may view architects' idealism and aspiration as idiosyncratic, hopelessly romantic, if not naïve. Architects are constantly browbeaten for daring to dream oversized dreams. Why this slavish devotion to Design and aspiration, the skeptic asks, when mean, cost-driven functionalism is all that's being asked for. Architects don't have too many venues to discuss what makes architecture meaningful, how to "practice" in a world determined to bury aspiration under mandates, and me-tooism. That's the genius of *Cocktails and Conversations* and the Center for Architecture in New York.

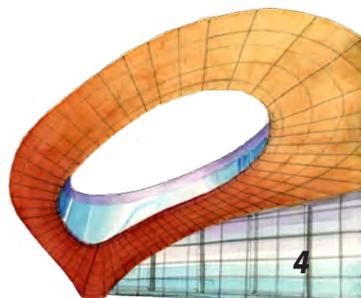
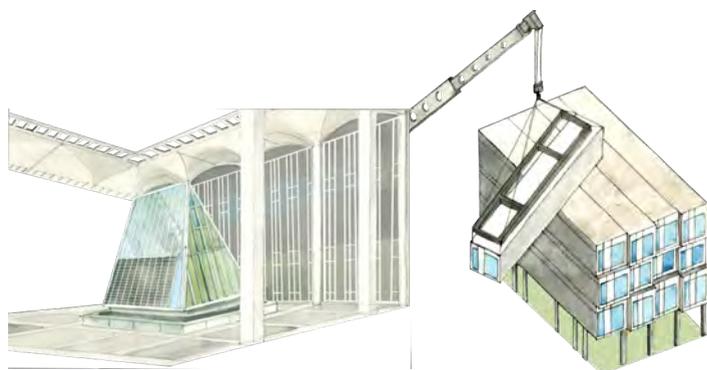
Audiences are happily liberated from such over-serious formats as academic lectures. Instead they are treated to rich back-and-forth between an architect and an insightful interlocutor that has proven to be both amusing and substantial. Architects too rarely let their hair down in such an informal format. A delicious drink aids the flow and takes participants and audience alike away from the day-to-day exigencies that designers confront—shrinking budgets, building codes, change orders. Participants in *Cocktails and Conversations* take a few minutes to ask, Why do we do this? How do we confer meaning? What's truly significant? How do you create meaningful places in the cacophony of competing interests and tastes?

This book shows, in many rich and diverse ways, how architects truly serve our societies and our cities. Pour me another, please.

— James S. Russell *FAIA*

One Friday night about six years ago, we found ourselves standing in the Center for Architecture's Tafel Hall sipping white wine from a plastic tumbler. We had just walked over from a late afternoon meeting at the Rubin Museum of Art where we sat in the atrium while the museum transformed itself into a party venue. Tables were moved, bartenders began setting out glasses, and the space began to fill up. We remarked that it was amazing that every cultural institution of significance in New York City seemed to have a fun Friday evening event involving drinks while the lights at the Center for Architecture, sadly, were turned off. Everyone standing around commiserated with us. We suggested that architects are fun and like to talk about design and they like drinks. Would it be possible to pair an architect with a journalist and have a bartender create a drink in the spirit of the architect's work?

Standing next to us was Charles Renfro of Diller Scofidio + Renfro, who immediately volunteered to be the inaugural guinea pig; he suggested a pairing with Justin Davidson from *New York Magazine*. Next to him was Andrew Pennington from Porcelanosa, who agreed to underwrite the first program – and in an instant, *Cocktails and Conversations* was born. We went on to invite architects and landscape architects who were well known, and should be better known, to share their ideas and their design processes with us. We paired them with people who "read" the built environment, the journalists and critics who distill it and explain it to us, the historians who frame it in time, and the clients who commission it. The programs have been lively and fun, but also provocative and inspiring.



Introduction

Since we happily sampled everything our bartenders concocted, it is very likely that we heard some of the conversations in a haze. Which meant that when it came time to curate this book, we turned to the videos. Sober, the scope and scale of what we had actually assembled was a revelation.

The Big Picture is extraordinary. It never occurred to us that what we had really done was to make a book about how to design. Architecture is about solving complicated problems with a lot of moving targets. While architects can be remarkably articulate in person, on the page they are often dead. Very little has been written about how to design, especially from those who are practicing at the highest level. The mosaic of conversations raised many of the issues that impact design. They raised them in thoughtful, intelligent, engaging, and provocative ways. All of the ducks have to be in alignment or the design won't happen. It's not enough to have a really good design; it can't be done in a vacuum. The client has to be on board. And the contractor has to really want to build it.

How do you become an architect? Many paths are laid out, some surprising and some straightforward. Bart Voorsanger was an orphan, Steven Holl, a hotheaded teenager, and Rob Rogers had architect parents. But growing up is only part of it. Every architect had someone who saw their potential, recognized their talent and passion, took them under their wing, and helped shape their thinking, who taught, nurtured, and mentored them. Sometimes it happened in school and sometimes at work. It is no surprise that the big names popped up; sometimes it was two degrees of separation. Charles Moore spent his life crisscrossing the country and spawning firms everywhere. Who knew that his mentor was Louis Kahn, and one of his early students at Princeton was Hugh Hardy. Morris Adjmi learned from Aldo Rossi and ran his U.S. office. Frank Harmon and Steven Holl worked for Richard Meier; Bill Pedersen for I.M. Pei. Richard Weller collaborated with Daniel Libeskind in Berlin.

If you do the math, winning a competition is an architectural lottery jackpot. They are winner take all; second prize gets you nothing. Wrong. Competitions launched multiple careers: David Adjaye (Idea Store Chiswick Street, London); Steven Holl (Kiasma Museum, Helsinki); Marion Weiss and Michael Manfredi (Seattle Art Museum Sculpture Park); and Louisa Hutton (GSW Tower, Berlin).

Where do clients come from? Andrea Leers and Jane Weinzapfl say they were given advice to go after public buildings early in their careers, when they were one of the only women-owned architecture firms in Boston. Belmont Freeman, Scott Marble, and Claire Weiss are some of the architects who credit commissions to New York City's Design Excellence Programs. David Piscuskas and David Adjaye started designing houses for artists. Tod Williams and Billie Tsien speak about how they got the Obama Presidential Center, crediting chemistry and being a couple. And some jobs are self-generated, when the architect sees a need or wants to study an issue.

Where does inspiration come from? The big takeaway is that it can come from anywhere, and that the important thing is to have an open mind, to be receptive. It begins with the voices of the stakeholders: the client, community, user groups, donors, etc. Frances Halsband points to her research in understanding the program and the setting, particularly when she's adding to a historic building. Deborah Berke says that she looks at the setting. Masimiliano Fuksas tells a story about a package that was wrapped in folded paper that inspired a roof design. For Todd Schliemann, it can come from the projects that didn't get built, or the failures. Audrey Matlock says something similar when she talks about her losers.

What role does drawing play? Frank Harmon uses it to understand a problem. For Daniel Libeskind, the drawing is the beginning of the design. Steven Holl talks about his conceptual sketches. At the other end, Jeanne Gang thinks about truth in renderings because, with virtual reality, renderings are getting so good, one wonders whether what is depicted accurately depicts the project.

What is the role of research? Traditionally, architectural research is focused on program and fabrication. Quite a few architects like the opportunity to explore a new program type, and learning everything there is to know about airports or museums. Brad Cloepfil describes developing the program for the Canada's National Music Centre. Scott Marble talks about experimenting with Building Information Modeling (BIM), and digital fabrication. David Benjamin is interested in zero waste, in using agricultural waste to grow a building material, in this case a brick for a temporary pavilion at MoMA PS1. Tom Kundig talks about using small projects to explore design issues. Research is also used as a tool to study an aspect of a project you would have done anyway.

To build a building, Peter Gluck acts as the general contractor because he feels that it is more cost-effective for his clients, and he can streamline the process. There is also a lot about craft. Tom Kundig talks about getting expertise in metal fabrication from a Texas hot rod culture. Gregg Pasquarelli discusses how SHoP Architects, designs computer programs to fabricate complicated forms, discusses technology, and how to get things built that are more innovative than existing building codes permit.

Many of the architects address preservation issues that come up on their projects. For Hugh Hardy, it was navigating the multiple challenges of preserving a portion of the Greenwich Village townhouse that the Weathermen accidentally blew up and no longer existed. Morris Adjmi addresses the Landmarks Preservation Commission itself in New York. Belmont Freeman talks about preserving modern architecture. At UC Santa Barbara, John Ruble updated Charles Moore's Faculty Club, which Ruble admits should have been a temporary building. Frances Halsband speaks of small insertions in historic buildings.

Architects talked about practicing globally. How do you maintain your voice and authenticity and still connect to a city you're not from? Rob Rogers still talks of a road trip across America after architecture school. Enrique Norten has offices in New York and Mexico City, and shares the differences of building in each place, David Adjaye moves between Africa, London, and New York.

Everyone mentions the value of having a good team, dedicated staff and consultants, and a strong office culture. They tend to hire consultants who help them push the envelope. We included landscape architects because boundaries are blurred and the conversations are broader, and because everyone is concerned about resiliency and sustainability.

What is the role of the Academy? Uniformly, the architects initially enjoyed teaching because it was a good source of income when they were just starting out and broke. They like the vibrancy, they like exploring different design ideas, and they like seeing students' different design approaches to a project. Richard Weller says it gives him the luxury of exploring an idea without a client, where he can head in any direction he likes.

The political process plays a role. Design is never done in a vacuum. There are always community groups and design review boards that need to be navigated for public projects. Two weeks after the 2016 election, Michael Murphy and Michael Sorkin devoted their evening to a hard look at architecture and politics, and talked about impact beyond getting whatever commissions are doled out by the Trump Administration.

This book doesn't give enough voice to those who were the other half of the conversations: the journalists, professors, historians, curators, clients, and people whose job it is to frame design issues for the public. They, too, were extremely articulate. Their voices are more muted because of space constraints more than anything else.

Architects tend to photograph their buildings at dawn the day before they open, when the buildings are extremely clean and nobody is around. The pictures are almost always visually stunning, but they tend to look very similar. Their buildings will never look this good again. We were searching for a way to frame the discussions and unify the presentations to give more personality and informality to the book and to reflect the spirit of programs. The watercolor illustrations, which are our interpretations of the architects' work, give the book cohesion; we placed the architects in their buildings.

Another unintended consequence of the book came as a big surprise. Who controls the architects' images? Even though we represent the American Institute of Architects, we really are colleagues, fellow architects, in other words, friends and family. These are really the architects' voices, very lightly edited from the conversations themselves. But we are definitely not a PR machine for the architects.

Architects are notorious for talking about how they sketch the essence of the idea on a napkin. So, we also asked every architect to send us a napkin sketch. These are presented in the back of the book—and will find their way to being a set of cocktail napkins soon.

Abby Suckle, FAIA and William Singer, AIA
Co-chairs, AIA NY Architecture Dialogue Committee

THE CONVERSATIONS

- 1 Nov 16, 2012 **MERGER: Bricks + Mortar + Pixels**
Charles Renfro AIA, *Diller Scofidio Renfro*
Justin Davidson, *New York Magazine*
- 2 Feb 22, 2013 **DESIGN DOES DRIVE CITIES**
Claire Weisz FAIA, *WXY*
James S. Russell FAIA, *DDC (Previously Bloomberg News)*
- 3 Apr 19, 2013 **THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY**
Audrey Matlock FAIA, *Audrey Matlock Architect*
Jason Sheftell, *New York Daily News*
- 4 May 17, 2013 **MAKING BUILDINGS**
Brad Cloepfil AIA, *Allied Works Architecture*
David van der Leer, *Van Alen Institute*
- 5 June 28, 2013 **DREAMSCAPES AND WAKE-UP CALLS**
Richard Weller ASLA, *Penn Design*
William Menking, *The Architects Newspaper*
- 6 July 26, 2013 **CROSS COUNTRY**
Robert Rogers FAIA, *Rogers Partners*
Susan S. Szenasy Hon. AIA, *Metropolis*
- 7 Sept 20, 2013 **LOSERS REVISITED**
Todd Schliemann FAIA, *Ennead Architects*
Clifford Pearson, *Architectural Record*
- 8 Oct 18, 2013 **SLOW ARCHITECTURE**
Calvin Tsao FAIA, *TsAO + McKOWN*
Karen Stein, *Design Consultant & Writer*
- 9 Nov 15, 2013 **SCALE & THE CITY**
William Pedersen FAIA, *Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates*
Carol Willis, *The Skyscraper Museum*
- 10 Dec 13, 2013 **THEATER OF ARCHITECTURE**
Hugh Hardy FAIA, *H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture*
James Sanders AIA, *Architect, Author, Filmmaker*
- 11 Jan 17, 2014 **THE LONG VIEW**
Belmont Freeman FAIA, *Belmont Freeman Architects*
Cathleen McGuigan, *Architectural Record*
- 12 Mar 14, 2014 **A TALE OF TWO CITIES**
Enrique Norten Hon. FAIA, *TEN Arquitectos*
Pedro Gadanho, *Museum of Modern Art*
- 13 Mar 28, 2014 **ARCHITECTURE AS A CULTURAL PRACTICE**
Joel Sanders AIA, *Joel Sanders Architect*
Barry Bergdoll Hon. AIA, *Columbia University*
- 14 May 16, 2014 **FINDING COMMON GROUND: Technology in Architecture**
Massimiliano Fuksas Hon. FAIA, *Studio Fuksas*
Gregg Pasquarelli AIA, *SHoP Architects*
Paul Goldberger Hon. AIA, *Vanity Fair & The New School*
- 15 June 20, 2014 **BUILDING ON HISTORY**
Morris Adjmi FAIA, *Morris Adjmi Architects*
William Higgins, *Higgins Quasebarth & Partners*
- 16 Aug 15, 2014 **CRAFT - SOCIAL SPACE - ECOLOGY**
Ken Smith FASLA, *Ken Smith WORKSHOP*
Alan G. Brake Assoc. AIA, *Writer & Critic*
- 17 Sep 19, 2014 **ICE CUBES & GLASS BOXES**
Frances Halsband FAIA, *Kliment Halsband Architects*
Michael J. Crosbie FAIA, *University of Hartford*
- 18 Oct 17, 2014 **ON DRAWING**
Daniel Libeskind FAIA, *Studio Daniel Libeskind*
Brett Littman, *The Drawing Center*
- 19 Nov 7, 2014 **FOREGROUND / BACKGROUND**
Deborah Berke FAIA, *Deborah Berke Partners*
Cathleen McGuigan, *Architectural Record*
- 20 Dec 12, 2014 **DESIGN RESEARCH**
Scott Marble AIA, *Marble Fairbanks Architects*
David Benjamin, *The Living*
Kenneth Frampton Assoc. AIA, *GSAAP Columbia University*

THE COCKTAILS

- 1 Carré Squared
- 2 The Clair Pool
- 3 Cross-Isle Expressway
- 4 The Cloepfil Rhubarb Gimlet
- 5 The Anti Southside
- 6 Dad's Gin and Tonic
- 7 The Esquiro
- 8 The Urban Intrusion
- 9 Buddhist Smile
- 10 Consider the Martini:
The Development of a Classic Drink
- 11 The Monty Daisy
- 12 Forgotten Conversation
- 13 Bramble Redux
- 14 The Erin
- 15 The Adjmi (non-traditional) Sazerac
- 16 The Garden Variety
- 17 The Frances Smash
- 18 The Wedge
- 19 The Perfect Lobby
- 20 New York Christmas Sour

- 21 Mar 27, 2015 **ARCHITECTURE BETWEEN CULTURES**
David Adjaye Hon. FAIA, *Adjaye Associates*
Thomas Campbell, *The Getty, previously Metropolitan Museum of Art*
- 22 Apr 24, 2015 **SENSE AND SENSIBILITY**
Louisa Hutton Hon. FAIA, *Sauerbruch Hutton Architects*
Barry Bergdoll Hon. AIA, *Columbia University*
- 23 Sept 11, 2015 **MADE TO MEASURE**
Andrea Leers FAIA, *Leers Weinzapfel Architects*
Jane Weinzapfel FAIA, *Leers Weinzapfel Architects*
Susan S. Szenasy Hon. AIA, *Metropolis*
- 24 Oct 2, 2015 **CULTURAL COCKTAILS**
Marion Weiss FAIA, *WEISS/MANFREDI Architects*
Michael Manfredi FAIA, *WEISS/MANFREDI Architects*
Julian Zugazagoitia, *Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*
- 25 Jan 29, 2016 **BEYOND THE BENCH**
Thomas Balsey FASLA, *SWA/Balsley*
Matt Shaw, *The Architect's Newspaper*
- 26 Apr 8, 2016 **FROM NORTH AMERICA TO HONG KONG**
Bing Thom FRAIC, *Bing Thom Architects*
Michael Heeney, *Surrey City Development Corporation*
Gina Pollara, *previously Municipal Art Society*
- 27 May 6, 2016 **DRAWING AS A WAY TO SEE**
Frank Harmon FAIA, *Frank Harmon Architect*
Suzanne Stephens, *Architectural Record*
- 28 Sept 23, 2016 **REDEFINING BOUNDARIES**
Shohei Shigematsu, *OMA New York*
Amanda Dameron, *Tastemade, previously Dwell*
- 29 Nov 18, 2016 **ARCHITECTURE IS NEVER NEUTRAL: On Politics, Space & Justice**
Michael Murphy, *MASS Design Group*
Michael Sorkin, *Michael Sorkin Studio*
- 30 Feb 3, 2017 **NEW SOCIAL CONDENSERS**
Steven Holl FAIA, *Steven Holl Architects*
Barry Bergdoll Hon. AIA, *Columbia Architects*
- 31 Mar 24, 2017 **TRUTH IN ARCHITECTURE**
Jeanne Gang FAIA, *Studio Gang*
Michael Kimmelman, *The New York Times*
- 32 June 16, 2017 **HOW ARCHITECTURE SAVED MY LIFE**
Bartholomew Voorsanger FAIA, *Voorsanger Architects*
Alastair Gordon, *The Wall Street Journal*
- 33 Sept 8, 2017 **IN THE FRAY**
Peter Gluck, *GLUCK+*
Inga Saffron, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 34 Dec 1, 2017 **COLLABORATION IN PLACE**
David Piscuskas FAIA, *1100 Architect*
David Hollenberg AIA, *University of Pennsylvania*
- 35 Jan 5, 2018 **CONTEMPORARY CRAFT IN DESIGN**
Tom Kundig FAIA, *Olson Kundig*
Cathleen McGuigan, *Architectural Record*
- 36 Mar 2, 2018 **THE SPACE BETWEEN**
Tod Williams FAIA, *Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects*
Billie Tsien AIA, *Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects*
Karen Stein, *Design Consultant & Writer*
- 37 Apr 27, 2018 **REDISCOVERING CHARLES MOORE**
Mark Simon FAIA, *Centerbrook*
John Ruble FAIA, *Moore Ruble Yudell Architects & Planners*
Paul Makovsky, *Metropolis*
- 38 June 1, 2018 **EQUAL TIME | INSIDE AND OUT**
Lee Mindel FAIA, *Shelton Mindel Architects*
Joseph Giovanni, *Author & Critic*
- 39 June 21, 2018 **THAT'S SO 20 MINUTES AGO...**
Eric Owen Moss FAIA, *Eric Owen Moss Architects*
Tom Kundig FAIA, *Olson Kundig*
James S. Russell FAIA, *NYC Department of Design & Construction*

- 1 The Adjaye Switchel
- 2 Devil and the Details
- 3 The Hartford
- 4 Negroni Sbagliato Blanco or
White Mistaken Negroni
- 5 The Uncommon Cocktail
- 6 The Ramos Gin Fizz
- 7 Harmon's Ti Punch
- 8 Brown Derby
- 9 The (Improved) Liberal Cocktail
- 10 Two Negronis
- 11 Gin And Phonic
- 12 The LaGuardia Control Tower
Swizzle
- 13 West Harlem
- 14 Banana Tickler
- 15 The Tectonic Shift
- 16 The mid Century Old Fashioned
The Kombucha Quaffer
- 17 The Mooretini
- 18 The Turrell Tonic
- 19 The Culver

BEGINNINGS

I started life as an abandoned child with an identical twin brother. The very first place that had a spatial impact on me was this amazing orphanage in the Bronx, which I think, at one point, was the largest building in North America. You go back and forth to homes and come back to a huge building that went on for blocks and blocks. My adoptive grandparents were first cousins of Herbert Lehman, the governor of New York and Arthur Altschul, a famous art collector. Edith Lehman, who was chairman of the board of the orphanage, called my parents and asked, "Do you want these twins?" And my parents foolishly said yes. They came to New York, took us to San Francisco, and introduced us, the two twins, to my older brother Eric, and we're supposed to be a happy family thereafter.

My cousin was president of the Sierra Club for many years. When I was 15, he said, "You have to go to the mountains and go on a high trip," and so we went to the mountains. Ansel Adams was a friend of the family and he asked me to carry his cameras. We would hike off to some location and Ansel would set up. at what seemed to me just neutral locations. He was very precise and very careful—I didn't drop his cameras, of course. I never saw the final product, so I never quite understood the strategy or why he was doing what he was doing. He would come to our cocktail parties and he always wore a red flannel shirt and drank vodkas, straight vodka. - **Bart Voorsanger** FAIA

You are marked by time, place and news events, what was on television when you grew up, what you drive by, and walk by. What was in the American landscape was not what we were looking at in architecture school. The world of architecture was completely, and hermetically isolated. We looked at spaces that, for those of us who grew up in the middle of the Prairies, had absolutely nothing to do with our prior experiences and natural environments. **Claire Weisz** FAIA

My advice to young people who are thinking that they want to go into architecture is to make sure that this is what you really, really, really, really want to do, because it's a very long haul and it's a difficult way to make a living. I would advise someone in high school to go to a liberal arts college and study everything and anything except architecture as an undergraduate. You should get the broadest possible background. I am fortunate that I got that advice my freshman year at Yale. Then go to graduate school and concentrate on professional education, because if you think about it, when you're out there and practicing, who are your clients going to be? They will be doctors, lawyers, and financial people, and you need to be able to understand their language. That will make you a better architect—to have the broadest possible education you can possibly get when you're young. **Belmont Freeman** FAIA



EDUCATION

Postmodernism and education in the early 1980s was a real soup, and there was a lot of that soup at Rice at the time. James Stirling had just done the new building [School of Architecture's Anderson Hall]. I had had always been a little bit frustrated with that as a direction. When I finished school, I decided: "**I'm an American architect and I'm going know my country as if it was my backyard.**" So I took my Datsun station wagon and I drove around the United States, Canada, and Mexico for the summer, and went to pretty much every major city, almost never on an Interstate, sleeping in the back of the car or camping. I was a kid, so I could drive for 12, 15 hours and love it. I think that also formed in me a love of the American landscape in all of its parts. A prairie is an exceptional thing, and Chicago is the quintessential American city.

- **Rob Rogers** FAIA

I was completely naïve. I mean really naïve! I was not a sensitive architect. I don't have any family with money, I'm not a Blue Blood nothing, just a kid from Bremerton, Washington. By the way there's not a single work of architecture in Bremerton. So luckily, I got to go to Rome as one of the first students in the University of Washington's Rome Architecture program.

When I went to Rome, it absolutely changed my life. I learned how to cook and make a Negroni. That's why Rome and the Negroni is so important. I lived behind the Pantheon. I made a deal with the guard to let me in every day before he opened the doors, before the tourists could come in. Every day was different. I could see the change of the angle of the sun and, when it was raining, the silver droplets would come down. Cuts in the marble where the drains would go and how the light would work. That was like a wordless education at the Pantheon, and that changed my life. It still took me 15 years to not be sleeping on a plywood shelf over my office, teaching for a living.

- **Steven Holl** FAIA

RESEARCH

We're a small practice, so we don't have a huge R+D budget. In each project we look for an opportunity to explore something that is completely beyond the brief. So in an extreme way, you could say that, **for us, projects are an excuse to do research.** We satisfy the client's needs, and our research is in the interest of the client, too. It's not something we're just doing as an esoteric side thing. It's something that we feel strongly about, as important for us to be thinking about as architects in terms of our profession, and also for a particular project.

- **Scott Marble** AIA

We're thinking a lot about **design as an ecosystem with interconnected loops of things** like ideas, technology, culture, street life, humans, non-humans, the natural environment, all kinds of interacting and mixing together. For our project called Hy-Fi, for the Museum of Modern Art and MoMA PS1, the idea was basically to do two things. The first was to create an exciting, interesting space for people to be in, both for the weekly summer parties and just as a museum visitor. And the second was **to explore what we thought could possibly be a new paradigm for design and manufacturing, with almost no waste, no energy, and no carbon emissions.** We wanted to experiment with **taking low-value raw materials instead of high-value raw materials, and spending almost no energy to convert the raw materials into building elements.** Create a building that was functional. And then, at the end of its life, take all that material and return it to the earth in a usable way within 60 days, instead of sitting in landfills for hundreds or thousands of years. **How do we do this?**

MENTORS + INFLUENCES

When I lived in Berlin, I did quite a lot of competition work with Daniel Libeskind, including Potsdamer Platz. I think that Libeskind drew one of the bravest drawings I've ever seen for that site. Irrespective of what you think of his work now, back then, he was on fire. And doing such risky, intelligent work. **Richard Weller**

I first got to know **Morris Adjmi** and Aldo Rossi as the Scholastic project was starting, and going all the way through. It's been my pleasure and my privilege to not only witness, but to participate in the continuity of an architectural practice, an architectural style and attitude, and to see how somebody creates under the influence of a really powerful mind and a powerful creative force, a cultural force, which is what Aldo was. Then, that force dies. Morris had to figure out where to go from there. This was a kind of sped-up version of what happens with a lot of architectural firms, where the founder is a big name and a powerful influence. Then the founder retires, and the partners are left to figure out who they are and what is their style. When that really works, it seems to me that what happens is that an architecture evolves in which you can clearly read the influence and the continuing presence of the founder, but the architecture continues on. It's not, just as Morris says, Aldo's greatest hits over and over again. It is a new architecture that is familiarly connected to the old. - **William Higgins**

I didn't get permission from the Planning Department for the first house I designed, the Elektra House. I built it. It was a classic moment where my clients basically said they had no money. And I said, Well, I have this radical idea: let's do this house that just has nothing, but I forgot to tell the planners. I published it. Then I got a phone call from the planners, saying, "Hi, what do you think you're doing?" Actually, it was very serious. I lost my license and I nearly had a criminal record. That was my first outing. But, I was very lucky. A dear friend, **Richard Rogers**, saw the house in *Domus*, and wanted to know about it. I explained it to him, and said, "But Richard, I have this very difficult problem. I'm probably going to go to court for making this piece of architecture." So he said, "You can't go to court for making a piece of architecture." I remember that conversation to this day. He wrote a letter to the council saying, You can't prosecute a young architect for making a good piece of architecture, which is being published around the world. The head of planning called off his attack dogs and brought me in for a meeting. "Richard says you're a good architect. Oh, by the way we're doing a competition for a new idea about libraries. Are you interested? We think you should be on the list." - **David Adjaye** Hon FAIA

Josef Albers remains a particular influence, with his research into what he called the difference between *the actual fact and the factual fact*, as well as **the deception of color—the way that colors can, and do, create space**. We take inspiration from painters, like Bridget Riley, who are working very much with one's corporeal as well as one's visual perception of color. - **Louisa Hutton** Hon FAIA

I was always a modernist. My heroes of the time, in the 1970s and even the '80s, were Lawrence Halprin, Dan Kiley, and M. Paul Friedberg. We all loved what they preached, but they didn't always practice a public process that would have created a meaningful park. We've transformed failed spaces from each and learned lessons along the way. But they were my heroes. They were breaking away from everything that was traditional about open space design. I came to the city with that same attitude, but it was a desert. Nobody was really interested in contemporary landscape architecture, so we had to just keep scratching and looking for opportunity wherever we could find it. - **Thomas Balsley** FASLA

I had two mentors; Arthur Erickson and Fumihiko Maki. Arthur Erickson served in Asia during the war, and he actually was a Canadian who wished he was Japanese or Chinese. Fumihiko Maki is Japanese who wished he was more Western. So, working for the two of them was very interesting, and I am a so-called banana as I am in between. I drew inspiration from both by working with them.

In their own way, they are both very different. Arthur was a form-maker, much more exuberant. He was much more wedded to the landscape, everything is more horizontal and everything grew from the earth, history and culture, glass and concrete. Maki is much more about layering of spaces, the ethereal aspect of Japanese cultural architecture. **You have to grow past your masters to become yourself.** - **Bing Thom** Hon FAIA

I then worked in New York for Richard Meier, who was a great influence on me because I learned what it took to do something really good. He had a passion. He had a fire that whatever he did, he was going to do it in the best way possible. We would design something, then, all of a sudden, the building code would come down on us, and the building inspector would say we couldn't build it. Richard was determined to find a way, whether it took a lawyer or a writer or something else. He was going to find a way to get around it. I learned then what it took. Hunger, I would call it. **There's a lot of talent out there, but if you can combine talent with hunger, like Richard did, it is remarkable.** - **Frank Harmon** FAIA

Charles Moore was born in Michigan. At some point he was the head of architecture at Berkeley, and formed Moore Lyndon Turnbull Whitaker. Everybody who worked with him in the San Francisco Bay Area era referred to Charles as Chuck. Years later, he went to Yale to head up the architecture program. There, everybody called him Charlie. Many years later, he came to Los Angeles, where I met him, then he headed up to Berkeley. Everybody in LA called him Charles. He moved to Texas in 1986—this was the last phase of his career—where he was known as Doctor Moore. He would answer the phone: "Hello, my name is Moore, Charles W." - **John Ruble** FAIA

Charles himself would make a distinction between what he thought of as his principles and his enthusiasms. Specific projects like Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans had to do with both. But I think a lot of people looking at the work saw only the enthusiasms and missed the deeper underlying principles. Look at Piazza d'Italia and you could see a lot of shiny metal interpretations of the orders of classical architecture or the colors, or you could see the fact that it needs to be rebuilt every four years- **Mark Simon** FAIA.

It's very important to understand that Charles's view of architecture was really his view of the world. He had a way of looking at the world, and I think it influenced the way he thought about architecture. But the way he thought about architecture was, by no means, the only aspect of what he had to offer as a mentor and a teacher. - **John Ruble** FAIA

I worked at Pei's office for 10 years. I was moonlighting on a house. It was actually a good experience with clients who berated each other, and I was sort of the mediator between the husband and wife—you knew they were going to break up; it was just a matter of weeks or months. We photographed it, and I remember someone said, "Why don't you submit it to an award program?" I thought, "Oh, why not." So I submitted it to the AIA. It won a national award, which was given at the annual meeting in Atlanta.

When I got to LaGuardia, there was I.M. waiting to board the airplane. I said, "I.M." He turned to me and said, "Why are you here?" I said, "Well, I.M., why are you here?" And he said, "Well, I'm going to pick up an award for the Mile High Center in Denver." And I said, "I'm also picking up an award." I thought he was going to fire me right on the spot, but he didn't. He was very gracious, incredibly gracious. Wonderful guy. - **Bart Voorsanger** FAIA

As **Eliel Saarinen** so aptly put it: **"Always design a thing by considering it in its next larger context—a chair in a room, a room in a house, a house in an environment, an environment in a city plan."** - **Lee Mindel** FAIA



WHY?

I think architecture does have its rewards, which is why we all stick with it. Architecture is endlessly fascinating. You never run out of things to think about, new experiences, new challenges, new things to dig into. You know we brush shoulders lightly with politics, with economic issues, social issues, artistic issues, construction issues. That's why it's interesting. I think that's why we do it, since it has greater rewards than just money. There are so many other things we could have chosen to do to make all that money we should be making. - **Audrey Matlock** FAIA

For me, you either seek an architectural challenge or you're offered an architectural challenge. You ask the question about what the building can reveal about things, what understanding can it serve. How many times do we go into a building of any era that reveals something to us, whether it's a sense of place, a sense of ceremony, a sense of awe, or a sense of beauty? Or something that could contribute to a conversation about our culture or lives or the way we gather or the way we build? That it's cool is just not enough for me. - **Brad Cloepfil** FAIA

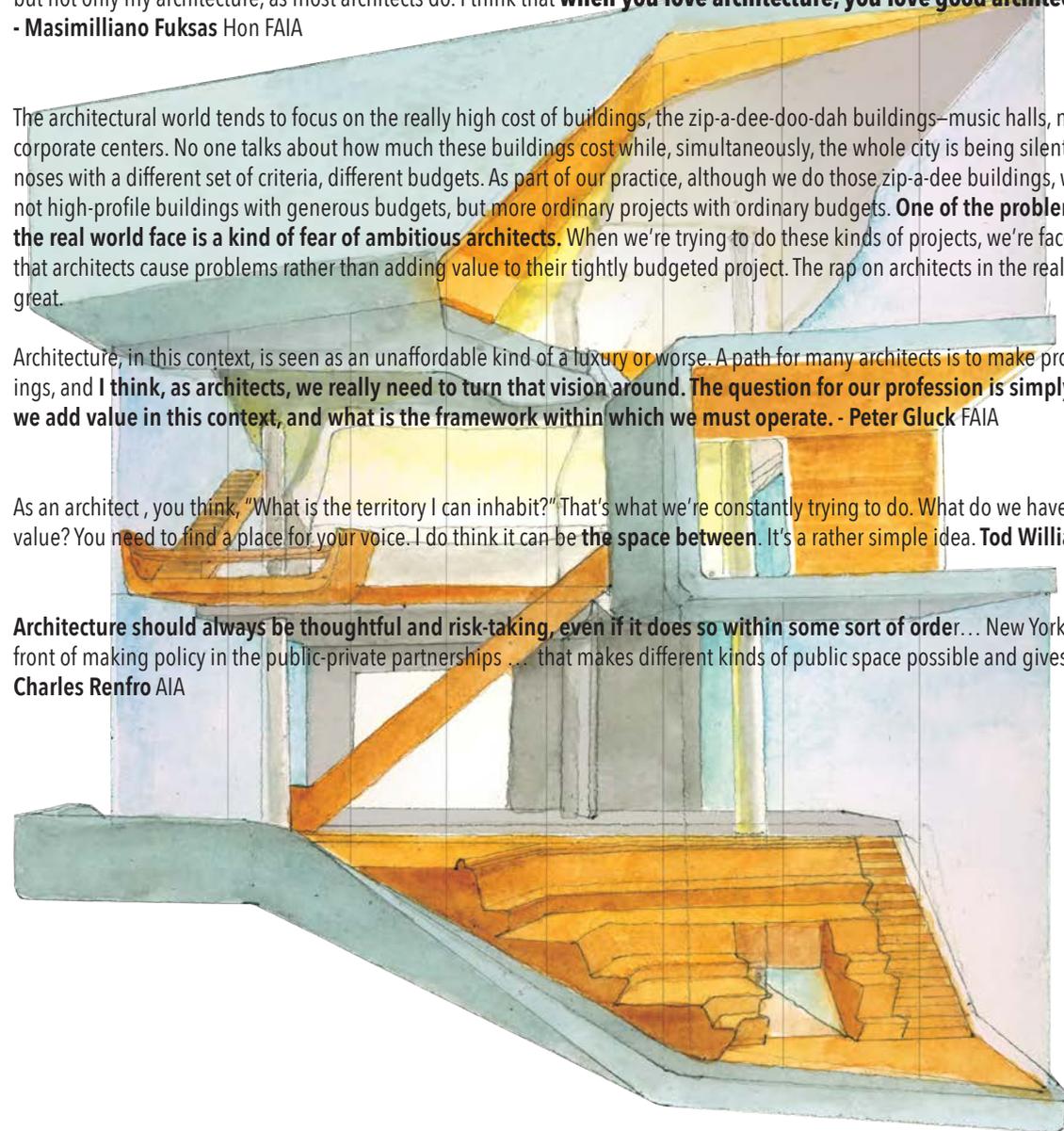
For the past 15 years, I have had a column in *L'Espresso* magazine in Italy. I speak about this only for one reason: I published the Barclays Arena in a column last year. Why? Because I felt, finally, New York is a little bit more courageous, more brave, after a very long period. I love architecture, but not only my architecture, as most architects do. I think that **when you love architecture, you love good architecture.** - **Masimiliano Fuksas** Hon FAIA

The architectural world tends to focus on the really high cost of buildings, the zip-a-dee-doo-dah buildings—music halls, museums, luxury condos, corporate centers. No one talks about how much these buildings cost while, simultaneously, the whole city is being silently rebuilt under our noses with a different set of criteria, different budgets. As part of our practice, although we do those zip-a-dee buildings, we seek projects that are not high-profile buildings with generous budgets, but more ordinary projects with ordinary budgets. **One of the problems that developers and the real world face is a kind of fear of ambitious architects.** When we're trying to do these kinds of projects, we're faced with the assumption that architects cause problems rather than adding value to their tightly budgeted project. The rap on architects in the real world is really not so great.

Architecture, in this context, is seen as an unaffordable kind of a luxury or worse. A path for many architects is to make problematic, costly buildings, and **I think, as architects, we really need to turn that vision around. The question for our profession is simply how do we, how can we add value in this context, and what is the framework within which we must operate.** - **Peter Gluck** FAIA

As an architect, you think, "What is the territory I can inhabit?" That's what we're constantly trying to do. What do we have to say that's of any value? You need to find a place for your voice. I do think it can be **the space between.** It's a rather simple idea. **Tod Williams** FAIA

Architecture should always be thoughtful and risk-taking, even if it does so within some sort of order.... New York has been at the forefront of making policy in the public-private partnerships ... that makes different kinds of public space possible and gives it a creative (edge). **Charles Renfro** AIA



PROGRAMMING

Every project is an excuse to get to know about something that you had no clue about before and I think that's a great thing. It's hard to convince people of the idea that architecture teaches everyone something during the process; it's something we still have to get over. - **Claire Weisz** FAIA

I ask them questions. **What do they hope for the architecture? What are they striving for? What's their aspiration for the building? Why are they doing this project?** It's very interesting. Often when clients hire architects for museums, they don't talk about the fact that they want to make beautiful galleries. They say: "We want to hire an architect because we want to raise money." Or, "We want it to be an icon." There are a lot of architects who can make icons, whatever that is. Or because such-and-such a city needs a new museum. To turn it around, I ask them to begin an exercise of being introspective, because you have to be introspective to do a building. I need that information to do a building. I can't come in with, "We will take care of you, no problem. Call us in a couple of years and we'll have the design done and it'll be great." - **Brad Cloepfil** FAIA

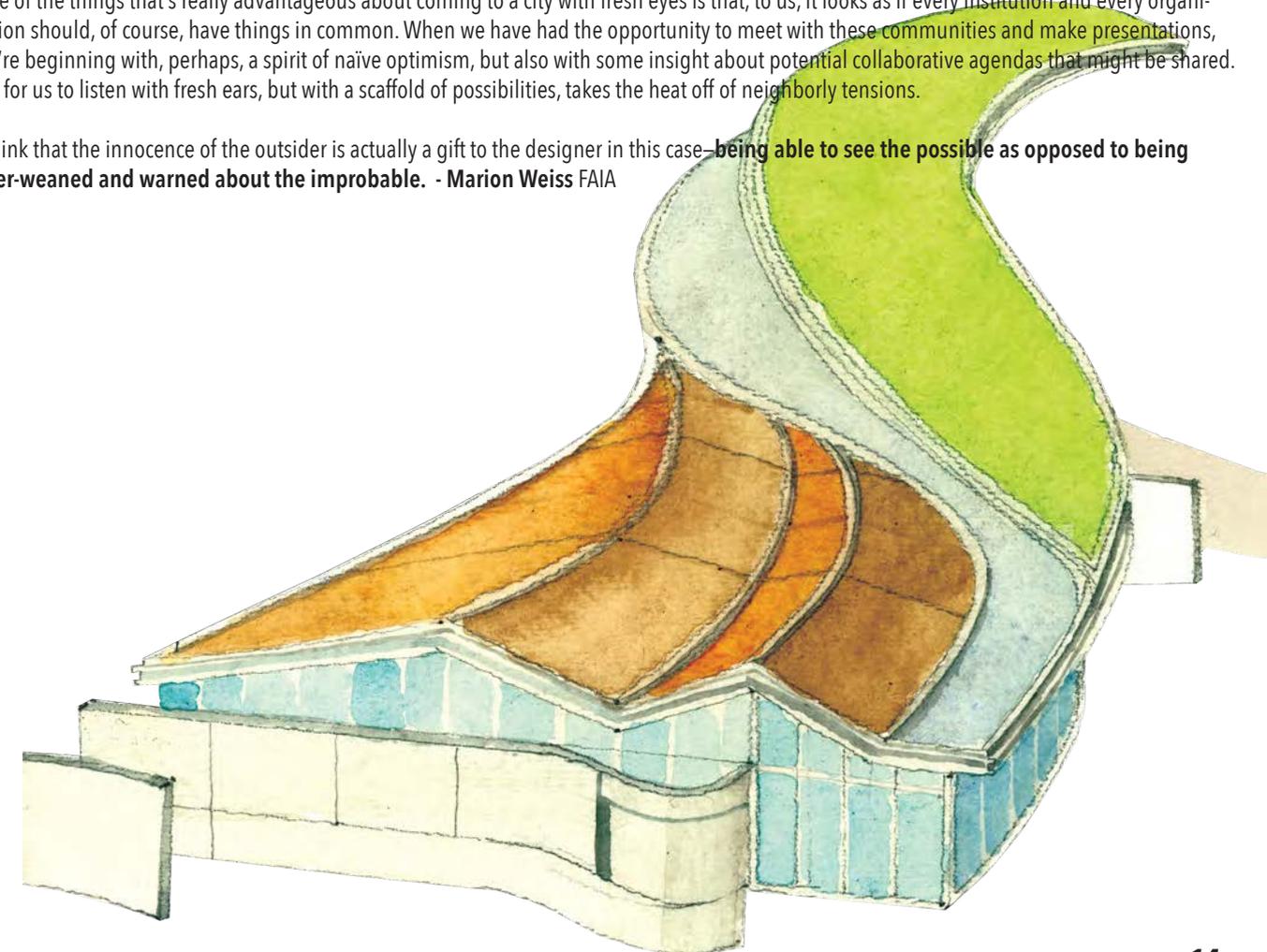
Massimiliano (Fuksas), you said something that I thought was so great, about never having done an airport, and it's where we are still in our careers—that we were completely unqualified for every project we've ever done. I find that to be a terrible business model, that as soon as we become an expert at something, we don't want to do it anymore. But it is a wonderful way to live life, in the fact that we want to constantly challenge ourselves. I think if you're willing to do that, you stay forever young, in a way. - **Gregg Pasquarelli** AIA

I am not a dreamer. I can't even remember my dreams the next morning. I am completely inspired by what's right here. It's fabulous when you get into a problem and go with it. You don't really know who your clients are going to be. The fun of it for me is that you really don't know what comes next.

You don't know that a private school in New York is suddenly going to engage you and involve you in the whole life of that school. You don't know that a federal judge is going to explain to you why he's a judge and what that means. We want to know everything that's there, and how do we tinker with it to come up with something that's right for them. **The excitement for me is seeing a culture through someone else's eyes.** You can realize other people's dreams. - **Frances Halsband** FAIA

One of the things that's really advantageous about coming to a city with fresh eyes is that, to us, it looks as if every institution and every organization should, of course, have things in common. When we have had the opportunity to meet with these communities and make presentations, we're beginning with, perhaps, a spirit of naive optimism, but also with some insight about potential collaborative agendas that might be shared. So, for us to listen with fresh ears, but with a scaffold of possibilities, takes the heat off of neighborly tensions.

I think that the innocence of the outsider is actually a gift to the designer in this case—**being able to see the possible as opposed to being over-weaned and warned about the improbable.** - **Marion Weiss** FAIA



DRAWING

We began to realize that the traditional notion of plan, section, and elevation was actually not a very good way for us to communicate, and that, in fact, as architects, we say we build buildings. We built this building, we built that building. But the truth of the matter is, that's not what we do. **What we do is make instruction sets for other people to build buildings**, and while we are very good at thinking about things in 3D, 4D, 5D, if you will, we convert everything down to this two-dimensional system of plan, section, and elevation, and then hand it to people who have to think and bring it back out into a more complicated reality.

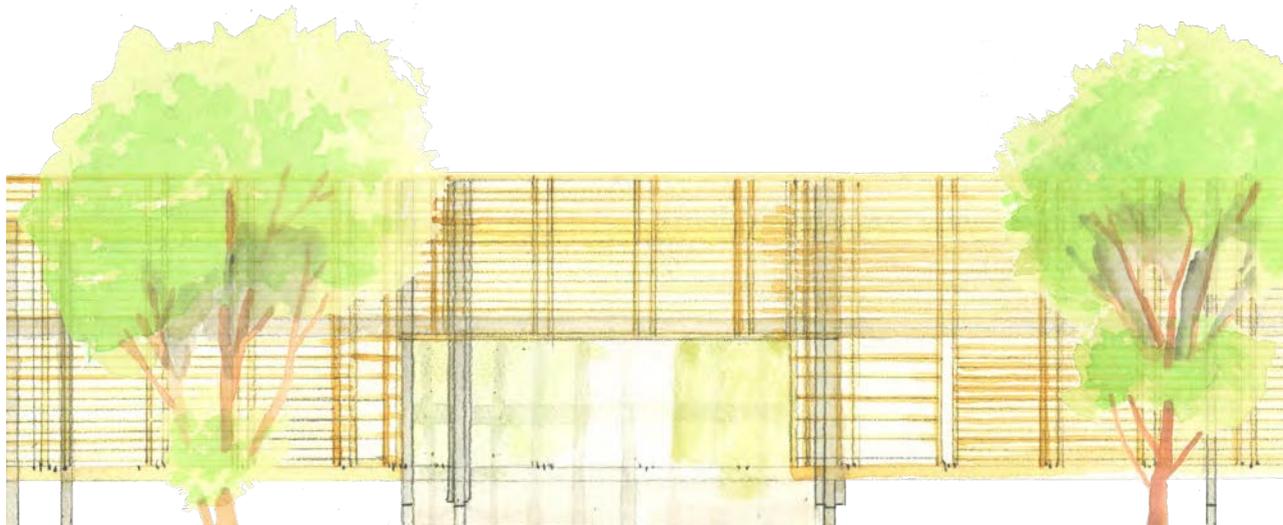
Drawing became an incredibly important thing for us, as we started to think about how to execute these complicated buildings, so that they would be easy to build and our projects wouldn't get value engineered as we put them out into the world.
- **Gregg Pasquarelli** AIA

I love to draw. Everything I've done and have been lucky to build came from drawing. I didn't start by apprenticing myself in an office. I never even worked in an office before, so I actually apprenticed to drawings, and **drawings are a mystical thing**. How did I get involved in drawings? Well, I was a musician and, as you know, music is based on musical notation, which is a kind of a code which anyone studying music universally understands and can perform. Of course, the performance doesn't just depend on the code; it depends on how you interpret and how you are able to respond to the instructions of a score. For me, architecture is very musical. Architecture is a musical operation because whether you're drawing a building, a representational drawing of a building or of a plan, or even if you're just meditating through drawing, it has the power to infuse one's mind with a path. I always think that the **drawing is the soul of a building**, because no building just starts with a building. It has to start with an idea and something that is graphic, because that's how we communicate in the tradition of architecture.
- **Daniel Libeskind** FAIA

I'm an architect, but I've been a drawer most of my life. I've been a drawer because when I studied the works of Le Corbusier I learned that from the time he was 18 years old, he always had a sketchbook in his pocket. So, from the time I was 20, I've kept a sketchbook in my pocket. I would submit to you that to this day, in our world of digital technology and computer-aided drafting and all the marvels that we love, still, the single most effective way to generate an idea and to puzzle over it is with a pencil and a piece of paper. And underneath the drafting table is a trash basket, which is also a very important part of the relationship. - **Frank Harmon** FAIA

It's not as if we're sitting there sketching out buildings. I think where the hand now comes in is that drawings are printed out. Then Tod is always saying, "Where's my scale? Where's the scale, and where's the magic markers, and where's the white-out?" So we're drawing and using our hands on top of drawings that have been printed out. Understanding space is still, for us, through small perspectives, which Tod is usually scribbling around the edges. - **Billie Tsien** FAIA

I think that drawings are not about beauty, they're about trying to find the answer. That's all there is to it. I do think that every person who has the capacity to draw on the computer and work with Revit has a more powerful muscle than we have. It's a muscle that doesn't even exist in my body. At the same time, they all actually have the ability to draw. I only urge them all to continue to use their hand. - **Tod Williams** FAIA

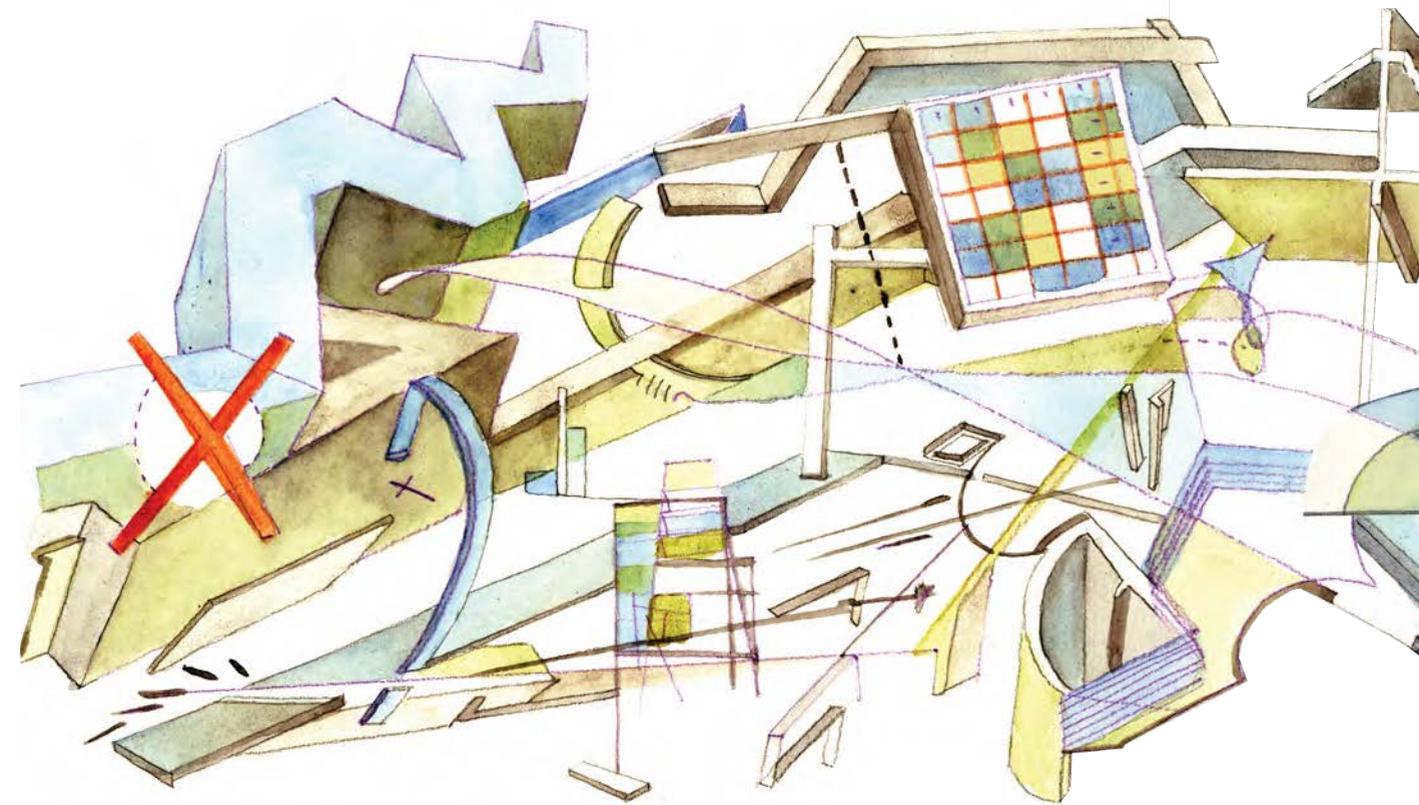


COLLABORATING

I always say, "Architects are my best friends," which is true. I am kind of an architect myself. **As one gets a little older, it's a little easier to put the egos in check and work with people if you've become a little more comfortable in your own skin, your own talents.** I think that we can collaborate. We don't always agree on everything, but it works both ways. I've seen in my career a kind of breaking down of professional boundaries. It's happened between the art world and the design world. All the boundaries are much more fluid than they used to be. It produces hybrid circumstances that are actually kind of interesting. I think that is a very contemporary notion. - **Ken Smith** FASLA

Diana Balmori opened my eyes to this completely other world that I was unaware of. I would say that **it was through the exposure to the discipline of landscape architecture that completely changed the way I think about architecture.** Rather than consider landscape an afterthought in the design process, which architects are often prone to do, Groundwork encourages cross-disciplinary design teams to come together, from a project's very inception, at the very beginning, to come up with unified design concepts that tap into the formal and the programmatic potential of sustainable design principles to create robust spaces that are provocative and integrate people, buildings, and sites.
- **Joel Sanders** AIA

In working with a team or a committee or a group, **it is critically important to be open to new ideas.** You can't put a lot of energy into thinking about yourself. Learn about things outside of yourself. The real fun of teaching, for instance, is to put a problem out there and get 15 or 20 different responses, just like that. To be able to see that many different approaches is tremendously exciting. - **Frances Halsband** FAIA



CLIENTS : GETTING WORK

Architecture is a dialogue. If you don't get emotional about it because you care about it and if someone out there on the other side doesn't care about it too, you are toast. Any project where you see an architect putting something up in the public realm, there are a lot of people who championed it in order for it to happen. - **Claire Weisz FAIA**

I believe they think we're, at best, someone who makes a beautiful commodity. We can. But that's selling ourselves short and we're not looking at what we can offer. I think we can offer so much more, and I think we should claim, with great diplomacy, that we could do so much more.

When we get a client, we channel them, we inhabit them and we become them. It might be my background in the theater, but when you take a script, you're Hedda Gabler. When someone comes to you and says, "I want you to design my home," it has to be a home for them. You ask: What would I do if I were living in this house, if I were them? Inevitably, you can't have a style because you're someone else.

- **Calvin Tsao FAIA**

Almost **every client has a level of aspiration that can be discovered and then turned to architectural advantage.** I think that the desire to discover it is part of the game. - **William Pedersen FAIA**

I would say that very often we share the values of our clients. We're looking for clients who have aspirations, who are committed to their communities, who are often professional clients, and who see the value in the long term. **Making to measure, then, is to serve the highest aspirations and the most functional performance.** - **Jane Weinzapfl FAIA**

We had a good piece of advice from **Joan Goody**, who was one step ahead of us and one of the very few people who we could look to for this experience. She counseled us to **do some public work**, to do some work for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Any kind of work at all. She said, "Repair roofs, fix a mechanical system. **Just let them know that you're responsible and clever people.**" And that was really good advice. So we started applying for all these public projects. The first one we got was a tiny garage. - **Andrea Leers FAIA**

There was this moment when Mimi Gates, the Director of the Seattle Art Museum, was in a helicopter with a number of trustees. They crash landed. And survived. One of the board members was with the Trust for Public Land. They all wondered if they could get out of there alive, what would they do? And, as a group, they decided that the most amazing thing would be to create a sculpture park that was free and open to the public in downtown Seattle. - **Marion Weiss FAIA, Michael Manfredi FAIA**

"How do you get this job?" is always a question architects ask when we show this kind of project. We do not sit by the phone waiting for it to ring. We go into the community to understand what the needs are. - **Peter Gluck FAIA**

If you think of the life and death of a project as being from birth to ribbon cutting, a lot of decisions are made before the architect is hired, in some cases, 50% or 60% of the way into the life of a project. We have a phrase that I invented when we put in our request for proposals: "Come to the interview with your,"—here's the phrase—"inclinations of design"—as opposed to bringing models and renderings. Because when you do that, it suggests, "We don't really need a client. We already have it figured out. We don't need you, and here it is." We've had people come to interviews with walkthroughs that they thought were going to blow us away. But it's really offensive when you get renderings and animations of a completed building, and all that's left for the client to do is pick a carpet. It just doesn't work. If you're good, you give an indication of the likely direction without pinning it down. And that helps. **David Hollenberg AIA**

It's about **making our clients our collaborators**, merging their voices with ours, their concerns with ours. What I love about it is that within all of these different methodologies of communication and attitude and practice, there's a deep sense of commitment, history, integrity, and when you immerse yourself in it, you can't help but respect it.

We go on a journey with our clients, exploring our perspectives, our influences, and our values. We encourage them to communicate and we listen with great attentiveness. That's how we put the stuff together. With whomever we're working, we want to **communicate to them in the language that they understand.** - **David Piscuskas FAIA**

We, as architects, are often so invested in what we're making, our designs, that we actually think that people who aren't architects really understand what we're showing them. I think that's a mistake. **Most of what we show to other people is somewhat lost on them, but what they feel or do not feel is a connection with how you're presenting it and who you are.** - **Billie Tsien FAIA**

DESIGN

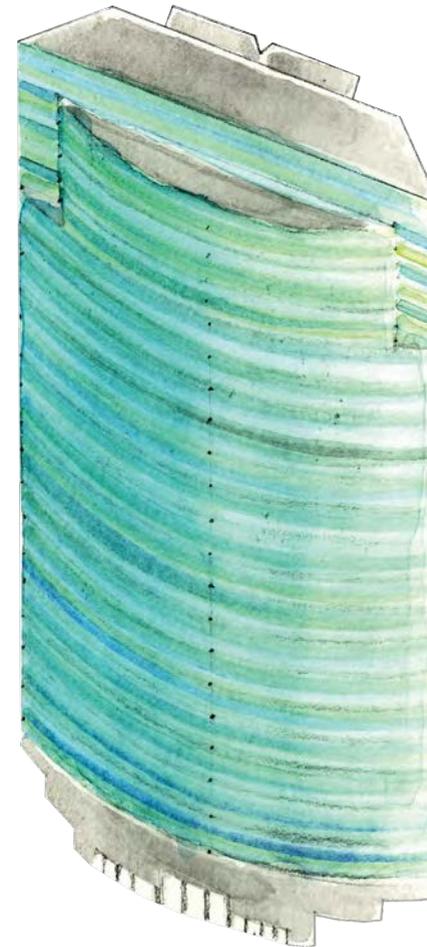
James Stirling said a long time ago that he knows a lot of chairs that have great, great presence. And that word, "presence," is possible at all scales. Size sometimes makes presence more difficult to achieve simply because of its lack of connectedness to anything around it. So when one is designing something of a scale, from a chair to a very tall building, one has to search tirelessly for a means of connecting to a place so it seems to flow naturally from it. **William Pedersen FAIA**

We take clues from what's around us because **none of our work is what we call spatula architecture—the kind of building that you can slide a spatula under, lift up, and put somewhere else.** That is profoundly what we don't do. Obviously with adaptive reuse, one cannot do spatula architecture, but in new buildings we get our initial creative inspiration from the things around us—whether it's a built or natural context or the story or the smell of the place. **Deborah Berke FAIA**

Part of me regrets that we don't have such naïveté and bravura anymore. I mean, I hope we still have the bravura, but with experience, you drop the naïveté. I hope that we nevertheless retain a sort of childish enjoyment of place, of spaces, animated by light, color, and texture.

I think that, **as an architect, you're never working in isolation. You're somehow aware, or should be aware, of the history of architecture, and of modern architecture in particular.** **Louisa Hutton Hon FAIA**

The **idea of "making"** is very important to us. We care about the detail of things—what they feel like, their durability, their cost, their availability, and the joy of experiencing them. All of that making is in service of providing spaces for human activities and social interaction, tailored to a very specific moment and aspiration. - **Andrea Leers FAIA, Jane Weinzapfl FAIA**



FAILURES

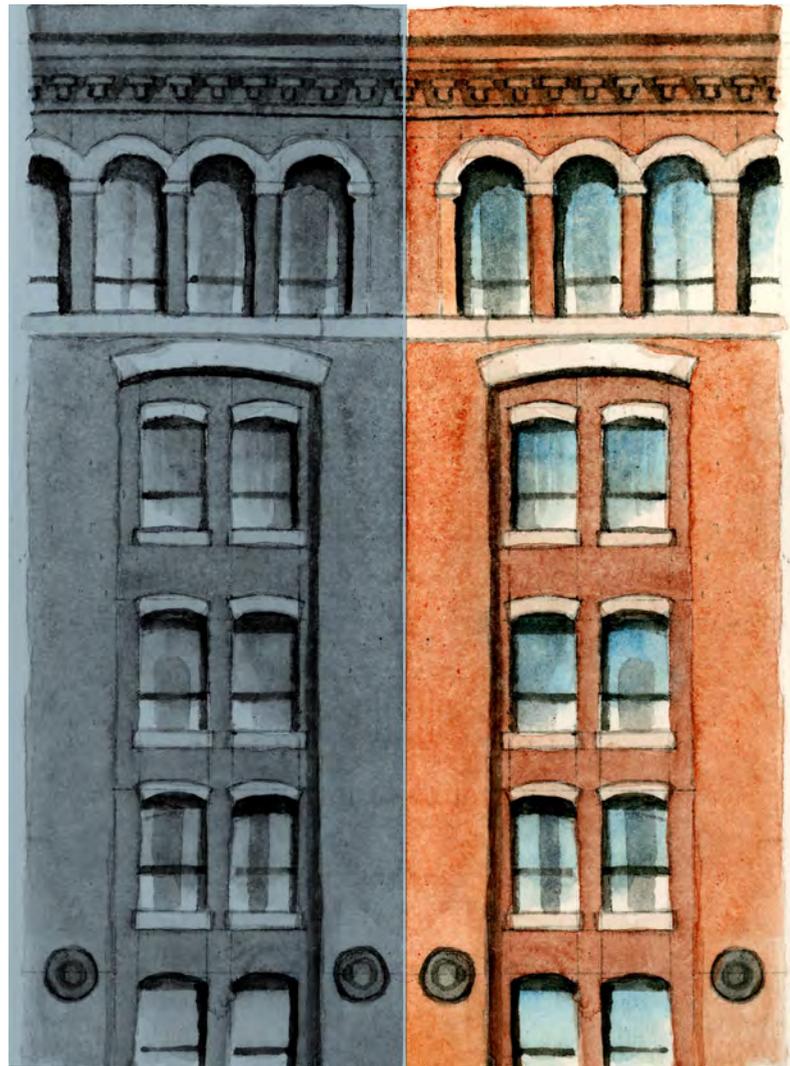
Sometimes lost competitions spawn ideas that resurface in later projects. Sometimes they come back in another form, so some good comes out of these losses. Sometimes we lose the battle, but we build the project. - Audrey Matlock FAIA

When an architect makes a mistake, it lives for a long time, so you have to be very, very careful. The one thing you have to be is honest with yourself, and realize that what you did was wrong. Don't wonder what the circumstances were under which you could blame someone else or blame a circumstance, or bury it. We do have a tendency to bury our failures. You have to figure out a way to build on it somehow, not to correct it necessarily, but to stand on it to move forward. Because if you don't, you're just going to repeat what you're doing now over and over and over, and progress won't get made. And sometimes you have to plant ivy on your building, as Frank Lloyd Wright said. - Todd Schliemann FAIA

When you work for someone like Rem Koolhaas, there are so many projects that get cancelled for so many different reasons. When I started in 1998, there were so many projects that never made it to completion. We are, by origin, a European office and European offices do a lot of urban projects. Urban projects have a huge exposure to politics, economics etc. Even with taking out our slightly more radical side of architecture, architecture is always vulnerable to those influences, and there are always a lot of heartbreaking moments. I try not to really expect that it will happen until construction starts. For younger architects, the great thing about architecture not being realized is that you can still make an impact, as Rem has done. Of course, building and seeing architecture are the most rewarding moments. But maybe young people shouldn't have that as a goal—to create something that one is happy about is more important. - Shohei Shigematsu

One in 25 is what is what we went forward with—24 times you fail and just get up and do it again.

I think you go for the best, you go for the ideal, and just hope that somebody on the other side of the table can see it, too. So it wasn't me, it was the fact that somebody, who's on the client side saw the vision. Every project that goes forward that has this kind of intensity and breaks the rules, there's somebody besides the architect completely behind it. - Steven Holl FAIA



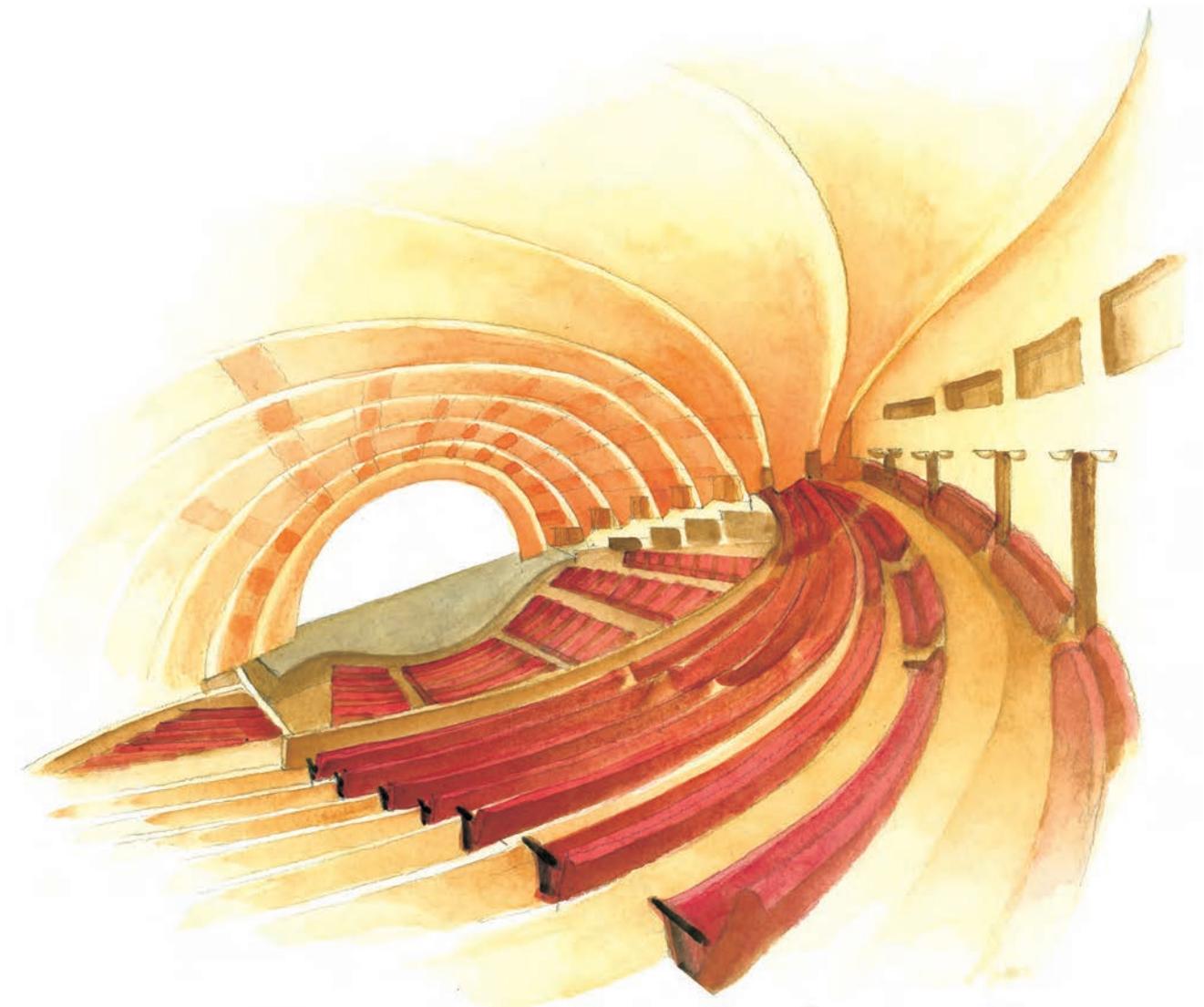
PRESERVATION

18 West 11th St was, for me, a talisman in many ways. When is history, history? I think history is very much a part of architecture. The past and the future join in the present. Why does it have to be either old or new; why can't you have both; why can't you celebrate the contrast between old and new? When we began working on the Greenwich Village Townhouse building, the top 15 feet of it were missing. The windows were not those of the original house. The city had repossessed it for back taxes, and it was turned into a school, and the public space was divided into five classrooms. And there never was a canopy. So having to restore the façade is a story in and of itself. When the need came for a true canopy, how on earth could you recreate something that never existed? The answer was to make it as contemporary and as light-hearted as possible with the details. They all come together—a contemporary version of the past. - Hugh Hardy FAIA

A lot of people, developers or architects, dread the whole idea of going through the Landmarks process, but I've completely embraced it. I've found that it forces you to make really great architecture. The additional scrutiny and attention that you have to put into the project yields a much better product. Morris Adjmi FAIA

What I do is not preservation. It is transformation of the past into forms that are relevant for today.

So this is an essay about transformations of historic buildings by adding tiny glass boxes, which completely change what's there. These are small interventions that transform an old building into something modern and useful. Thinking back on that image, I see that the power of one small ice cube to permeate and transform a drink is exactly how I was describing a series of several buildings. . But what I'm really talking about is how you can add one little dot and everything changes. Frances Halsband FAIA



GLOBALIZATION

One of the reasons I decided to establish myself in New York is because I've always believed very strongly that we were moving into a condition of globalization. That was absolutely important. That is what characterizes our generation, and I don't speak for myself, I speak for many of my colleagues—we grew into this moment of globalization. On the one hand, there is the desire to be part of a global discourse; on the other hand, and probably what distinguishes all of our work, is the importance of understanding the particularities of the poetry of the location.

- **Enrique Norten** Hon FAIA

The problem with global architecture is that we are still craftsmen. So yes, you can import a modernist office building and it doesn't matter where it is. **The question is, how do you retain your authenticity when we are all now living in a global world?** I have to learn how to bring my particular way of working to another place. We did a building in Spain. Before I even started designing, I travelled the country for a few weeks just to understand Spanish craftsmanship so that when I design a building, the Spanish craftsmen can build it.

Since I'm in New York I want to tell a New York story. We work with Robert Heintges as a glass consultant. We had a project in Vancouver, so he flew to Vancouver. I'm trying to do this glass screen for a house. He said "Well, Bing, I'm not sure." So I called up this guy and said, "I've got Mr. Heintges here. We want to see you. Do you think you can come down in 45 minutes?" He said okay, and shows up half an hour later, and I explained the project. I said, "It's never been done before." He said, "No, I've never done it before." I said, "Well, can I get a sample next week to see if it works?" He said he would do a sample, and leaves. Bob said to me, "This is amazing. It just never happens in New York, where you can call somebody to come in 45 minutes, ask him to do something for you that has never done before by next week, with no money, and he says yes." I said, "Well, that's Vancouver." But **we are a city of hippies, a city full of vice presidents who don't want to be presidents because they want to live in Vancouver.** - **Bing Thom** Hon FAIA



POLITICS

Bureaucracy is bad everywhere, in different ways. The problems are different. Here, this probably comes back to the issue of democracy. I just came from a meeting with a community board—a very direct democracy. **Anybody, without any knowledge, has the right to tell you you're an idiot.** In our countries [Portugal and Mexico], you elect your governors, you elect your officers, and they elect their advisors and they make decisions. They've also been difficult, but you don't need to convince every person on the street of what you're doing. So that also creates a different way of achieving architecture. These are our political processes. They are super interesting, and super important to the creation of architecture.

- **Enrique Norten** Hon FAIA

Infrastructure is generally considered to be a thing that is underneath and invisible and purely an artifact. **We must consider not simply physical infrastructure, but social and intellectual infrastructures, those "things" which contribute to the definition of what it means to build as a society.** During the great moment when America created more infrastructure than any other nation, the New Deal, it wasn't called infrastructure—it was called Public Work. It's urgent decree was that we return to the idea that we are a constituency of Publics who control this country. **We must stop looking for solutions that are hermetic to the profession.** There are 150,000 architects for 300 million people. That's it! Clearly, the task of raising consciousness about the environment and equity does not fall exclusively to architects.

- **Michael Sorkin**

The equivocating that we may have done as practitioners between choosing something of ethics and something that is just neutral is not really a choice at all. That **architecture is never neutral.** Our great challenge is to determine which decisions that we're making are helping people and which are hurting people. It's a very hard thing that we have to reckon with, and it is not easy to manage. It's something that forces many practitioners to leave the profession.

Architects are paralyzed by the requirements to address social and economic inequality. The election has done a lot to reproduce the argument that we have a choice. The reproduction of that debate is dangerous theoretical work, and we have to call it out for what it is and not allow it to fester. We reproduce the idea that we aren't responsible and aren't accountable to the community that we serve.

The call-out that we heard this week from all over the country in the wake of the election is that—**we care about the communities we're serving.** - **Michael Murphy**

The New York Times is currently running a campaign: "**Truth, it's more important now than ever.**" Today, in what some are calling our "post-truth" world, the question of truth is something we confront in many different parts of architectural practice. In addition to materials, we also engage it in terms of information, criticism, and representation—whether it's renderings that are so realistic they could fool us, or the diversity (or lack thereof) of the people who are represented in our images. Finally, there is also the question of truth in architectural history, which has traditionally been so narrow. There are many more architectures than those we learned in school. - **Jeanne Gang** FAIA

DIVERSITY

I actually think the low number of women in architecture is more likely diminished by a thousand cuts of little insults and minor difficulties, and more complicated insults and more profound difficulties, as opposed to a single thing that's like a gigantic roadblock to being a woman in architecture. **Things will be better in architecture when one no longer has to say "woman architect."** I think architecture faces perhaps an even bigger problem in terms of underrepresented populations in this country and in architecture, whether it be race, economic background, religion, educational background.

- **Deborah Berke** FAIA

ERIC OWEN MOSS



As principal of **Eric Owen Moss Architects**, Moss is an unrelenting voice in the search for new form and content in architecture. Building, writing, lecturing, and teaching around the world, he continues as a salient advocate of non-allegiance to those who forever attempt to standardize the definition of architecture.

Principal of **Olson Kundig** over the past three decades, Tom Kundig has received some of the world's highest design honors, from a National Design Award for Architecture from the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, to an Academy Award in Architecture from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

TOM KUNDIG



JAMES S. RUSSELL



James S. Russell is the director of Design Strategic Initiatives at the **NYC Department of Design & Construction**, where he produced *Guiding Principles on Equity, Sustainability, Resiliency & Healthy Living*. He is an architecture journalist, author & consultant, and for nine years, was the architecture critic for *Bloomberg News*.

June 21, 2018

THE CULVER

By Eben Klemm & Toby Cecchini

Stir ingredients over ice 20 times:

2 oz. **London Dry Gin**

0.5 oz. **Kummel**

Pour over large 1 1/2 cube into a rocks glass

Garnish with large **grapefruit** peel cut into a triangle, **orange peel** cut into a rectangle, **lime peel** twisted into a curl.

1 1/2 cube: Cut large cube in half with ice pick. Place pinch of salt on corner of another cube and press half cube together with second cube.



THAT'S SO 20 MINUTES AGO...

The point has to do with how culture moves and how architecture moves—not in a Darwinian sense, increment by increment—but sometimes cataclysmically, as an attack by one culture or one architect on another.

Eric Owen Moss is famously known for the challenging and angular constructions he's built in Culver City, an LA neighborhood that's practically inseparable from his work. He mentioned to me that he really only does his drinking in Berlin at 3am, and this gave me a good opportunity to annoy Toby by asking him for some Kummel.



TOM KUNDIG



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CATHLEEN MCGUIGAN



Cathleen McGuigan is the editor-in-chief of **Architectural Record**, & a former architecture critic & arts editor of *Newsweek*. She has taught at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism & has been a Poynter Fellow at Yale & Loeb fellow at Harvard. Under her leadership, *Record* has won the Grand Neal award (2012).

CONTEMPORARY CRAFT IN DESIGN

Architecture is that wonderful intersection between the rational and the poetic. Working with different clients, working with different climates, working with different craftspeople, local craft, that's what gets me going.

1.5 oz. **Blanche Armagnac Pellehaut**
1.5 oz. **Lustau Vermut Blanco**
Spritz of **Del Maguey Vida mezcal**
Twist of **Pomelo** as garnish

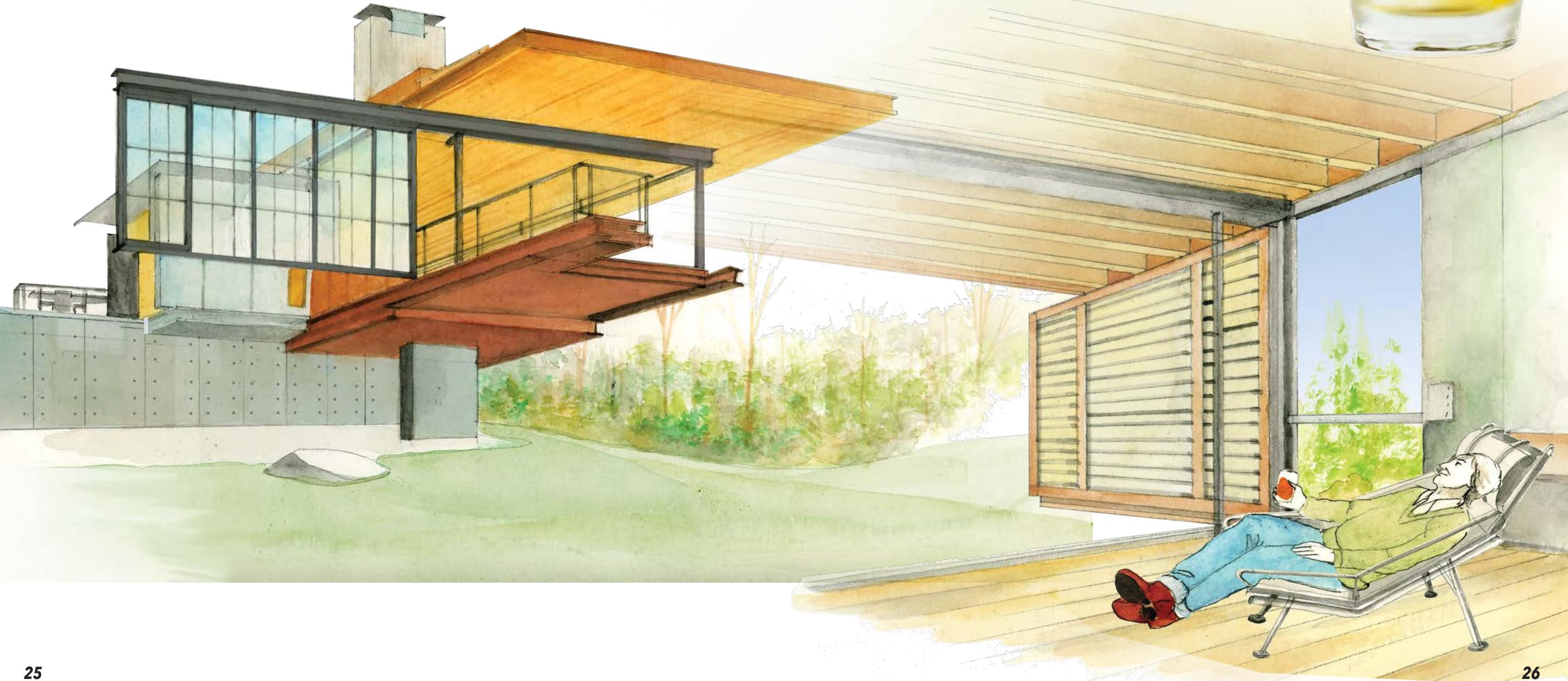
In a mixing glass over ice, combine all ingredients and stir until well chilled. Strain into a double rocks glass with one large ice cube. Garnish with a twist of pomelo or grapefruit.

Tom's immense planes and Western scope demanded equally large and decisive flavors in a simple, forthright drink with varying thrusts. Marrying a white Armagnac to a Spanish vermouth, with an overlay of mezcal and citrus, brought the kind of surprising beauty Tom's magnificent structures conjure.

January 5, 2018

THE TECHTONIC SHIFT

By Toby Cecchini



As I get older, I realize that those formative years are sometimes the most informative years for a lot of the work. They become your library to borrow things and be inspired by. I was lucky in many regards. I grew up around a lot of architects in an architectural community in a small town in Eastern Washington, and, frankly, I left that experience not wanting to be an architect. In fact, it was the last thing in the world I wanted to be. I found the architects kind of entitled and arrogant, and not particularly interesting people to be around. But I was also around a lot of artists. Harold Balazs was a sculptor; I was able to work on his sculptures. I learned a lot about materials. I learned a lot about working hard. I learned a lot about doing the things that you're actually thinking about. In other words, as architects, we draw things but somebody else actually builds them. If you're an artist and you're actually making your work, you're actually making the work as you're thinking about it, and that was hugely important to me.



BERKSHIRE RESIDENCE, BERKSHIRES, MA

We try to make architecture out of everything we work on, regardless of whether it's a super fancy house or really tough places that have all the cultural meaning in the world. Social meaning. Super important stuff.

Probably one of my biggest influences is working with craftspeople. I learn more from those people, or at least as much, as from my academic years at the University of Washington.

Harold Balazs, the artist I grew up with—he did it in his 50s and 60s. He did it with paper, graph paper, folding, shaping metal, just like a hod-rodger, basically, and he made these unbelievably complex shapes.



DELTA SHELTER, MAZAMA, WA



MARTIN'S LANE WINERY, KELOWNA, BC

The biggest mistake large firms make is turning their back on small projects, because **small projects are where you can experiment.** You can also take kids who come out of school and don't know anything about what we do as practitioners, and put them on a team with a principal. With all the wisdom the principal brings and with all of the energy the kids bring, you can begin to help them understand the cycle of what design means, all the way through to the technical parts of a project. We're old school. We do not have a design department. We do not have a specification department. We do not have a construction administration department. Everybody in the office is expected to follow their projects all the way, from soup to nuts, and we expect people to draw, obviously, by hand. Unbelievably beautiful drawings come out of these kids, who are also super skilled at digital work. We insist that they follow the projects from beginning to end. You can do that with small projects.



STUDHORSE, WINTHROP, WA

The big thing about rural sites is that they can be fragile. High deserts are fragile, mountainscapes are **fragile**, so you have to figure out **ways to assemble a building that are relatively light on the land**, and relatively small. That's another reason I like small buildings. I don't like doing big buildings in natural landscapes. I always try to convince clients that might think they want something large by saying, "No, you bought this place because of the landscape, you didn't buy it because of the architecture." So, how do you do an architecture that unfolds in that landscape and is light on that land?

Architecture is an unbelievable universe of possibilities because you can get training in architecture and take that training virtually anywhere you want to. Nicholas Negroponte, who started MIT Media Lab, got an undergraduate and a graduate degree in architecture. He said to me, "At MIT, there's a discussion about **architecture being possibly the most important, grounding education for kids in the future**," because of that rational and poetic overlay. Being on the West Coast, of course, we're hugely affected by Steve Job's legacy and his technology legacy. Steve was really the guy who came into the whole technology-engineering arena, and very clearly stated he didn't want to work with engineers, he wanted to work with architects. People would ask, "What do you mean?" And he would say, "I want to work with people that can think both as engineers and as artists."



SAWMILL, TEHACHAPI, CA

The idea that everything has to be computer generated is really not true. There are people who have been making complex shapes for a long time. We've seen it. Noguchi's work is like that. Sometimes the fascination with the computer as a tool is, to me, uninteresting.

I've gone to places where they've actually said to me, "No, we don't have any craftspeople here. We don't have any steel workers here." I would ask, "What do you mean? I've heard that in Austin, Texas, you guys have this hot rod culture, this culture where people take cars and completely personalize them in very bizarre, strange ways, very personal ways. That's an unbelievable skill right there," and they would say, "Well, I guess that's true ..." It was in their own backyard. We've actually hired some of those hot rod builders.



SHINSEGAE INTERNATIONAL, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

THE PIERRE, SAN JUAN ISLANDS, WA

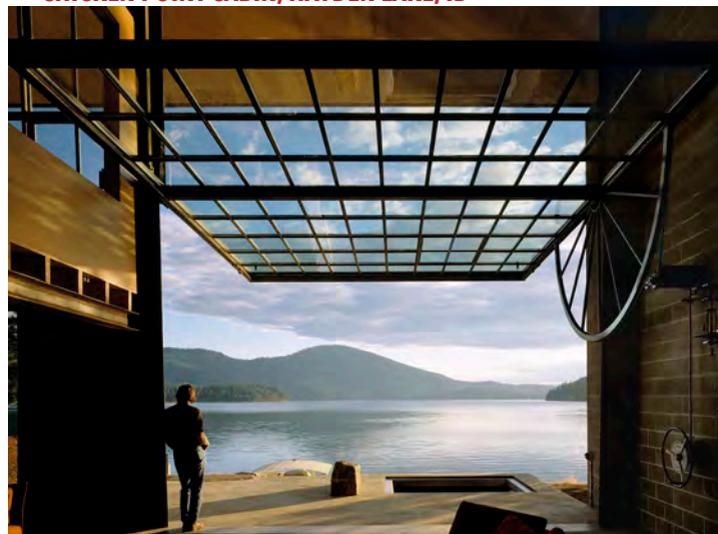


The architect's first rule is that we are professional voyeurs.

We look at things and we try to understand things. That's why we have a research and development process on all our projects. What's the cultural research, what's the geographic research, what's the climatic research—what is happening there. Sometimes you can come in as an outsider and, if you have an interest and a discipline to understand a place, you may actually understand that place a little bit better than people that have been living there for 10-20 years.

When we worked in Switzerland, in the mountains, the Swiss architects said that the farmers had it figured out. A farmer had to get a building up. They were there to farm, not to do architecture. But their buildings are really beautiful buildings, conceptually designed with super sustainable ideas about using material efficiently, engaging the climate efficiently, to lower maintenance.

CHICKEN POINT CABIN, HAYDEN LAKE, ID



One of our favorite friends, Paul Schneider, interviews me about a house for two days. And at the end of two days he said, "I actually don't like anything you've done. But I want to hire the brain that came up with that..." I knew immediately that he was going to be a great client, because that's exactly the kind of client I want. I want a client to actually push back and say, "OK, that's great. Now let's go on our own journey."

Those are the best clients, I think.

I was just ruminating a little bit about the ubiquitous Friedrich Nietzsche, which is not to dump a lot of esoterica on anybody. But sometimes, notwithstanding reputations, people like that are of some use to people like us. And there was a line from Thus Spoke Zarathustra that went something like this: "Nobody tells me anything new." So I tell myself my own story. All of these discussions about art, and architecture, and what it means—there are many more discussions than there are progenitors. And the question is: If we try to talk to each other—because this is an exchange—is life private and personal and introverted, or is it exchangeable, transferable? Can we talk to each other? Can we hear a story?



VESPERTINE, CULVER CITY, CA
This is New Workplace stuff, where people who are engaged in that field welcome this kind of venue.

When we bent this glass panels for the canopy of the Umbrella, a performance and recording venue also in Culver City, everybody said, "You can't bend the glass. You can't draw it. You can't fabricate it. You can't install it. It will break. It will leak. And they'll sue you." That's what they said.

Every one of those things happened.
But the lawyers are gone. The owner is smiling.
And guess what?
It's up.

I have to acknowledge a very particular fascination with glass, and with the biblical admonition—I think it's an admonition—that life is understood not so clearly, but as if through a glass darkly.

The idea of glass, which is there and not there and can play both roles, and the tension between the possibilities is of great interest to me. The hypothesis is to have planning obligate architecture. And reciprocally, have architecture do the same with planning.



SAMITAU TOWER, CULVER CITY, CA
I should say that Los Angeles probably has its own area for discourse in terms of what it is and how it's made.

One of the issues is that there is Hollywood, West Hollywood, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, Burbank, and Culver City, etc. So it's not a homogeneous jurisdiction. It's multiple jurisdictions.

The often used, not to say abused, term "fragmentation" probably applies to any attempt to plan what that city might be in a consistent way over long distances.



UMBRELLA, CULVER CITY, CA

I think we can hear a story.

The Pterodactyl, an office building for an advertising agency in Culver City, California, raises a very interesting question about form and shape and space and utility. Because if you actually go into this damn thing, whatever your sense of it is, when you look at the building, and the meaning of the form, and the shape, it's incredibly efficient and operationally super-intelligible.

It works.



PTERODACTYL, CULVER CITY, CA

The (W)rapper office tower in Los Angeles is a difficult project because there's no building code that can account for it. It has no columns. It has no beams, in a conventional sense. So we have to write the program. We have to walk into a room with people from Arup and the City of Los Angeles Building Department. There are 21 people in the room and 22 points of view. And to make a case that this is intelligible in a constructional way and a structural way—we've now done that.

The way it works is that the curvilinear pieces on the exterior, which we call the "ribbons," are connected with elements we call cords. The cords run from ribbon to ribbon. Sometimes they run into the core. An open plan, no internal structure. The girders are supported by the cords. The ribbons curve not only in one plane, but in two planes. There are very substantial questions about how to build this, how to put it up.



STEALTH, CULVER CITY, CA

There are other questions here.

For a multi-city master plan located outside of Nanjing, China, there were topological issues, organizational issues that, in a sense, were a *priori*. That means they exist without form. They become topologies that have a form, but haven't yet landed at the site. Then they add the typography. So somewhere between the topology and the typography and the topography of the site, we integrated those pieces and began to develop the four very different areas.

Los Angeles is zoned. But it's zoned, in fact, with river beds, concrete river beds, and freeways, and railway rights-of-way, and power line rights-of-way. The premise here is that there is no single infrastructure.

The infrastructure belongs to the architecture.

And the architecture belongs to the infrastructure.

In a Hippodamus of Miletus sense of what the grid might be, the one thing that it doesn't seem to indicate is, in Yeats' old phrase, "The center cannot hold."

The grid has no center, although it might imply one with absence.



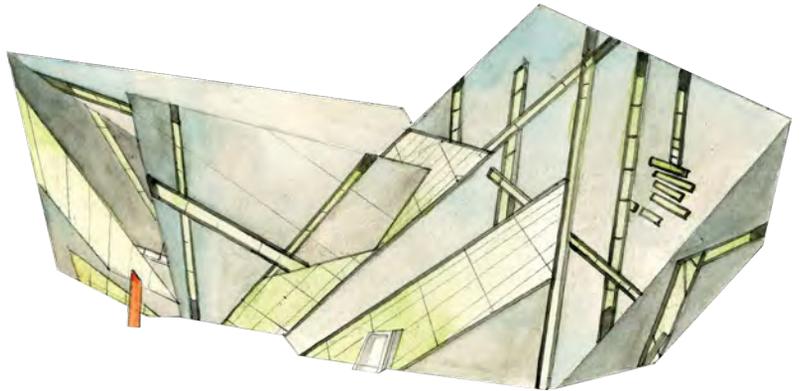
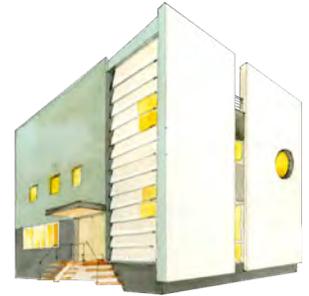
CACTUS TOWER, CULVER CITY, CA

Over the past six years, the AIA New York Architecture Dialogue Committee's "Cocktails and Conversations" series has hosted some of the most interesting and provocative practitioners we know to discuss what informs their design.

They shared insights about how to create form, how to relate new to old, what they learned from their built projects and ones unrealized. They talked about designing at all scales, from the macro to the micro, the role of drawing, and that of the client, politics, and the economy. They discussed aesthetics, color, and form.

They were paired with journalists, curators, historians, critics, educators, and their clients—those who create the narratives that frame an intellectual discourse about the built environment for the profession and the general public. The conversations focused on the most compelling and consequential issues that designers currently face. To lubricate the discussion, a mixologist invented a cocktail in the spirit of each designer's work.

Cocktails and Conversations intends to inspire and delight, while distilling the ideas presented.



\$ 25.00

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