

March 4 – May 1, 2009
Parsons The New School for Design
Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery
Sheila C. Johnson Design Center
66 Fifth Avenue, entrance on 13th Street
New York, NY 10011

PARSONS THE NEW SCHOOL FOR DESIGN



THE ARCHITECTURE

Positioning Practice



Architecture in the United States has lurched back and forth between social engagement and passivity since at least 1932. That was the year the Museum of Modern Art presented *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, which highlighted—or, according to some critics, triggered—a split within the field. Conceived by historian Henry Russell Hitchcock, architect Philip Johnson, and MoMA director Alfred Barr, the exhibition presented modern architecture as a new style that resulted from the evolution of form, instead of social conditions such as a need for low-cost, mass-produced affordable housing. The white walls, flat roofs, and rejection of ornament in the work of architects such as Ernst May, as depicted in the MoMA show, presented modern architecture as an aesthetic style—an abstract form in a landscape, photographed aerially and devoid of social relations. Arguably, the position espoused by Johnson, Hitchcock, and Barr defined the profession in North America from that time onwards. Iconic buildings, formalism, and a myopic obsession with the upper class: these became the hallmarks of much American architecture.

Today, changing populations, shifting borders, and uneven economic development—exacerbated by the explosion of migration and urbanization—have generated conflicts and conditions that question traditional architectural methods. In a milieu characterized by territorial and institutional deadlock, architects, urban researchers, and community activists increasingly must intervene in situations by “going beyond building.” This does not mean dispensing with the value of architecture per se, but rather acknowledging each situation’s unique complexity as the generative idea. This exhibition explores the original ways that today’s actors are designing the conditions from which new architectures can emerge. They are becoming activists, developers, facilitators of inclusive urban policies, as well as unique urban researchers. Their work expands upon diverse alternative practices of the 20th century, including the urban reformers of the Regional Planning Association of America, the research-based designs of Charles and Ray Eames, the humanistic modernism of Hassan Fathy, and the experimental installations of Art Farm.

(continues on back cover)

Post-Consumed: The Landscape of Waste in Los Angeles

The research project Post-Consumed explores the path of waste in Los Angeles from curbside to landfill. Unlike liquid wastes that drain downslope to the sea, these tiny tributaries of trash from millions of homesteads are collected by a fleet of thousands of trucks, circulating in constant motion. The trash is hauled to nodes for sorting, distribution, reuse, and finally disposal, flowing up canyons and crevices to be deposited at the edge of the Los Angeles basin.

The Center produces public exhibitions on land use for galleries and museums in Los Angeles, Houston, and outposts around the country. Regional exhibits focus on a geographic area, such as a state or neighborhood. Thematic exhibits are usually national in scope, and examine a particular land-use phenomenon or issue. The Center occasionally conducts innovative “tours” for school groups, museums, and other cultural organizations. Bus tours are usually full-day events that feature multiple stops, local briefings, and an onboard video program. CLUI also operates the American Land Museum, a network of landscape exhibition sites being developed across the United States, and the land-use database, an archive devoted to unusual and exemplary places.

Taking a broadly interdisciplinary approach to the investigation of land use, CLUI explores our society's complex formation and denigration of land through development. Their practice draws on the natural sciences, sociology, art, architecture, and history.
(centerfold image 1)

The Subsidized Landscape

The Subsidized Landscape (2003–05) deconstructs and diagrams the complex financial underpinnings and strategies of compromise that determine the construction of housing in the United States. As architectural research, the photomontage and interactive model explore the relationship between public and private spheres to understand how financial incentives flow among tenants, investors, developers, and builders. These teaching tools are mobilized in CUP's Affordable Housing Workshops, where tenants learn about government mechanisms and become better advocates for their interests.

In 2004–05, CUP worked with tenant organizers from Public Housing Residents of the Lower East Side to create Public Housing Television (PHTV), a series of videos about critical issues facing public housing residents in New York City. PHTV employs animation, direct address, and sketch comedy to inform residents of their rights and to challenge the architectural stigma associated with public housing. In another initiative, at City-as-School High School, a public school in Manhattan, students investigated how New York deals with its garbage. Youth met with people who make decisions that affect their lives—government officials, corporate bigwigs, visionary infrastructuralists, and neighborhood activists—while studying garbage technologies such as landfills and waste-to-energy incinerators, and created a multimedia installation called New York City Garbage Machine.

A non-profit organization based in Brooklyn, CUP brings together art and design professionals with community-based advocates and researchers to create projects ranging from high-school curricula to educational exhibitions. Their public programs mix design, research, politics, and entertainment to connect people who are usually kept far apart. They promote a new kind of civic education by working with youth to create collaborative projects that explore the urban environment.
(centerfold image 2)

Migrant Housing and Bath House

Conversations with farm workers, community members, government regulators, and service agencies led Design Corps to study ways to improve bathroom facilities at labor camps. An estimated 12, 474 migrant workers in North Carolina live in housing without adequate plumbing and rely on groundwater polluted from faulty septic systems. Consequently, these workers are forty times more likely to have tuberculosis. New bathroom units improved conditions for the workers who use them and positively affected the health of the entire community.

Devastation from one of the most active hurricane seasons on record in Florida has complicated the lives of 300,000 migrant farmworkers. With annual family incomes of \$10,000 per year, affordable housing is typically restricted to dilapidated mobile homes. Meanwhile, hurricanes exacerbated the housing shortage and limited employment opportunities due to crop damage. Florida Legal Services began working with Design Corps, in consultation with migrant laborers, to design a manufactured housing unit tailored for hurricane resistance and the housing needs of Florida's farmworkers. Similarly, a migrant housing “camp” in Adams County, Pennsylvania, is designed for four single male workers who come to Pennsylvania to pick apples, peaches, and cherries from August through October. The unit dimensions allow for road travel, as well as effective natural cooling. Hinged shutters, like those of Pennsylvania tobacco barns, create both privacy and a sense of dignity.

Design Corps creates change in communities through hands-on architecture and planning services. Recent design graduates provide architectural and technical assistance to rural communities composed of low-income families, allowing these residents to shape their physical environment.
(centerfold images 3, 3a)

FireBreak

Detroit is a city defined by its shrinking population and continued disinvestment. FireBreak's guerrilla insertions investigate “shrinkage” and “decay” not as problems but as opportunities. The urban single-family home becomes an alternative public space, one that is different than the river-front park or the central square. In the Body Bag project, the exterior of a burned house on the west side of the city was wrapped in 8,070 linear feet of clear plastic. It marked the dedication of new affordable housing on the site by the Woodbridge Community Development Organization.

On Detroit's east side, residents occasionally fill in vacant land with agricultural crops. This inspired the Detroit Collaborative Design Center, along with neighborhood residents, to transform old “crack houses” into “hay houses,” with bundles of hay stored inside. At the FireBreak Hay House, three thousand nails were evenly spaced on all exterior faces; over one hundred surrounding residents then ritualistically placed small hay bundles on the house with Design Center staff.

By providing design consultation to urban neighborhoods, the Detroit Collaborative Design Center, University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture, strives to create inspired and sustainable spaces. Their practice goes beyond the usual paths of community-based design to create new forms of property development and urban action.
(centerfold image 4)

ESTUDIO TEDDY CRUZ (ETC)

Radicalizing the Local: 60 Linear Miles of Transborder Urban Conflict

A 60-mile swath of land traversing the Tijuana-San Diego border wall—the most trafficked check-point in the world—offers a striking opportunity to rethink architectural practice. This transborder “cut” begins 30 miles north of the border, in the periphery of San Diego, and ends 30 miles south of the border, in the outskirts of Tijuana. This region is a laboratory in which to study the politics of migration, labor, poverty, and surveillance. One finds along this trajectory a series of collisions between natural and artificial ecologies, sprawl and density, formal and informal urbanisms, as well as top-down development and bottom-up organization.

This territorial section is emblematic of Estudio Teddy Cruz’s search for a practice of intervention that engages critical thresholds, whether global border zones or local sectors of conflict generated by the economics of urban development and the privatization of the contemporary city. No intervention into the territory can begin without first exposing the conditions of ownership: Who owns the resources? Whose territory is it? Stretching across the entire 89-foot façade and courtyard of the U.S. Pavilion, Cruz’s border fence at La Biennale di Venezia became a metaphorical and actual threshold to the exhibition, encouraging visitors to consider these questions.

San Diego based Estudio Teddy Cruz explores dynamics of urban conflict on both sides of the U.S.–Mexico border, from the affluence north of San Diego to homelessness and neglect in Tijuana. The practice focuses on housing and its relationship to alternative land-use policies, modes of sociability, and economic processes. (centerfold image 5)

GANS STUDIO

Roll Out Houses

The current universal solution to refugee housing is a tarp that cannot withstand extreme climate conditions, and does not provide for basic domestic needs such as bathing and cooking. The lack of urban infrastructure at refugee camps also depletes natural resources, wreaking ecological havoc while disempowering refugee populations. The Roll Out House, manufactured of lightweight, flexible materials, provides a physical and social infrastructure, offering a humane solution to families uprooted from their homes. The prototype depicted here is intended for portable, scalable applications on refugee camps.

In the Roll Out House prototype, commissioned for La Biennale di Venezia, one column holds a cistern, and the other a kitchen. Three hollow columns can support a roof or even a second floor. They also make possible a domestically-scaled infrastructure of waste, water, or heat. These houses can be assembled together to cultivate the structure of a town. Implementing “a better tent” requires that the designer respond not only to the needs of the refugee population, but also develop and test prototypes and promote the plan to potential non-governmental organizations.

Based in New York City, Gans Studio is devoted to rethinking how architecture can participate in new social forms by focusing on extreme situations that also yield insights for the general population. The studio has designed housing and infrastructure for those displaced by environmental and political disaster in Kosovo, New Orleans, and New York City. (centerfold images 6, 6a, 6b, 6c)

THE HEIDELBERG PROJECT

Heidelberg Street

Though once racially integrated, many neighborhoods in Detroit have become segregated urban ghettos defined by poverty, abandonment, and despair. The Heidelberg Project responds to these conditions by transforming a derelict Detroit neighborhood into a site of renewal. Armed with paintbrushes, brooms, and assorted refuse, volunteers have treated the vacant buildings and houses of Heidelberg Street as canvas for a massive public art project. Today, the Heidelberg Project is recognized as the third most visited cultural tourist site in Detroit, with over 275,000 visitors annually.

Despite numerous accolades, the city demolished parts of the Heidelberg Project installation in 1991 and again in 1999. Still, the project continues to evolve and grow, providing hope and inspiration to local communities facing similar challenges.

Bearing the name of the Detroit street on which it exists, the Heidelberg Project is a non-profit organization founded by Tyree Guyton that responds to the neighborhood’s urban decay and abandonment. Residents and stakeholders come together through art-based activities to rebuild the fabric of their community, creating a way of living that is economically viable and inclusive. The organization raises money for ongoing activities through a store that sells t-shirts, jewelry, posters, and books. (centerfold images 7, 7a)

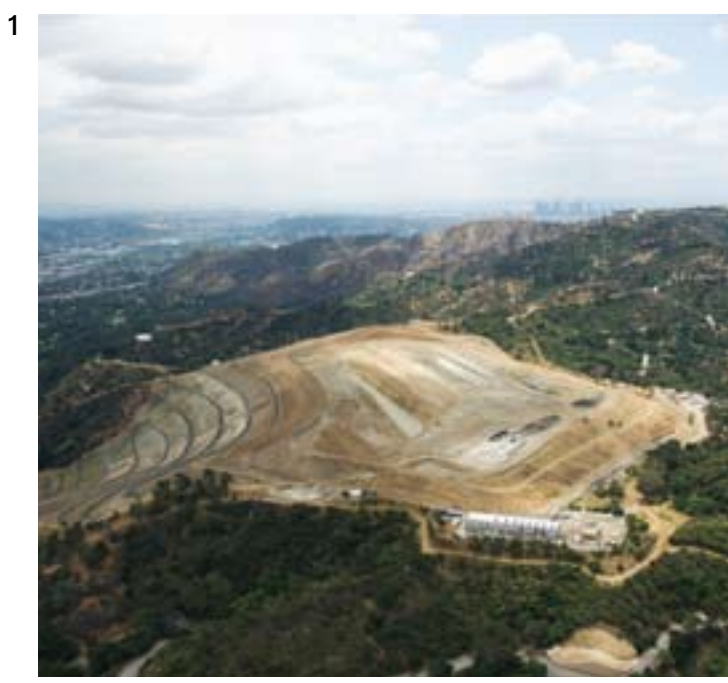
INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR URBAN ECOLOGY (ICUE)

The New Silk Road

The Old Silk road, a trade route through regions of the Asian continent, connected Europe to China and could be thought of as the first significant step towards globalization. It functioned not simply as a conduit for the trade of silk, but also as a facilitator for cultural and technological transmission, linking traders, merchants, pilgrims, monks, missionaries, soldiers, nomads and urban dwellers from China to the Mediterranean Sea for thousands of years. Over the past few years, artist and urban theorist Kyong Park has retraced the Old Silk Road, traversing today’s rapidly expanding and transforming global cities. The resultant photo essay sheds light on the changing geo-political boundaries, explosion of migration and urbanization, and shifting socio-cultural demographics in contemporary Asia.

The images featured in the New Silk Road were captured during Park’s transnational expeditions across the Asian continent, from Istanbul to Tokyo. The horizontality of the digital panoramic scroll draws from the narrative capacity of moving images, while the linearity of the panning images reflects the New Silk Road as a linear, nomadic practice spanning territories, cultures and economies. The decision to employ digital photography over analog reproduction highlights the digital nature of the New Silk Road as compared to the physical nature of the Old Silk Road, an interconnected network of trade routes built around the exchange of physical goods. The New Silk Road, on the other hand, is a system of economic, cultural and information exchanges whose properties are defined by binary code; the passage of money and services are themselves weightless occurrences within an incorporeal network structure.

A nomadic laboratory for future cities, ICUE’s projects have examined the phenomena of depopulation, development, and change in developed cities around the world. The practice is one that engages the city at the intimate level of the pedestrian as a way to obtain an alternative reading of how cities are shaped. The International Center for Urban Ecology is founded on the concept of the city as an organism—an ecology of evolving and moving politics, economies, and cultures. (centerfold image 8)



1



2



9



11



3



10



11a



3a



3a



4



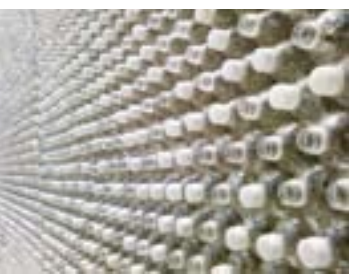
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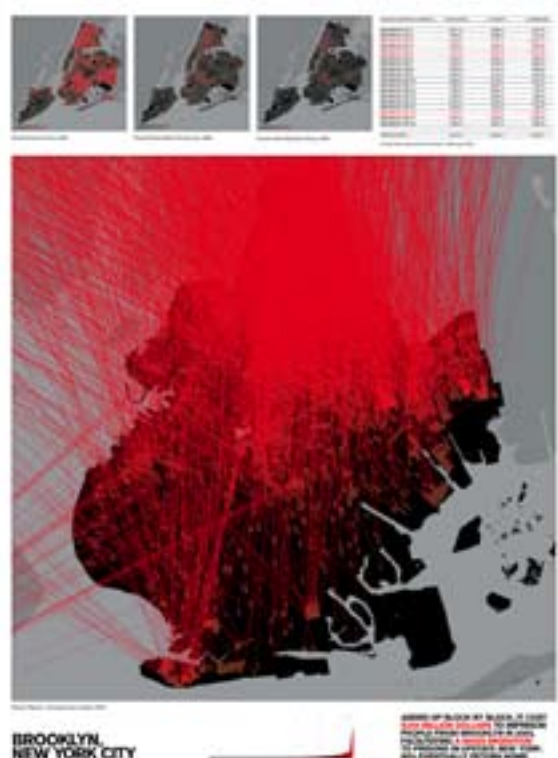
6c



6



7a



14



15



13



6a



6b



16



15a



16b



16a

1 THE CENTER FOR LAND USE INTERPRETATION (CLUI) *Active Landfill* Los Angeles, California photograph, 2008 courtesy of The Center for Land Use Interpretation

3 DESIGN CORPS *Migrant housing* Adams County, Pennsylvania photographs, 2003 3a *Migrant Bath House Prototype* Sampson County, North Carolina photographs, 2003 courtesy of Design Corps

4 DETROIT COLLABORATIVE DESIGN CENTER (DCDC) *House Wrap* Detroit, Michigan photograph, 2004 courtesy of Detroit Collaborative Design Center at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture 5 ESTUDIO TEDDY CRUZ *60 linear mile section, San Diego/Tijuana* Installation photograph from US Pavilion, La Biennale di Venezia, 2008 photography by Ryan Reitbauer/ Duggal Visual Solutions

6 GANS STUDIO *Alternative Urbanism for a Refugee Camp*, 2008 6a *House with roll out core* Interior rendering, 2008 6b *Roll Out House prototype* Installation in the U.S. Pavilion La Biennale di Venezia, 2008

6c *Assembly Instructions for the Roll Out House prototype*, 2008 courtesy of Gans Studio design and fabrication team: Miriam Peterson, Jocelyn Elliott; Camp plan courtesy of Gans Studio with Drs. Basily and Elsyad of Rutgers School of Engineering and Denise Hoffman-Brandt, Landscape Architect

7 THE HEIDELBERG PROJECT *Heidelberg Street* Detroit, Michigan, 1987–present 7a *The Heidelberg Project, demolished by city authorities* Detroit, Michigan, 1999 courtesy of The Heidelberg Project 8 THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR URBAN ECOLOGY *The New Silk Road*, 2008 courtesy of Kyong Park

9 JONATHAN KIRSCHENFELD ASSOCIATES *The Floating Pool docking at Brooklyn Bridge Park Beach* Brooklyn, New York photograph, July 4, 2007 9a *The Floating Pool at Barretto Point Park, Tiffany Street and Vele Avenue* Bronx, New York photograph, June 27, 2008 courtesy of Jonathan Kirschenfeld Associates

10 PROJECT ROW HOUSES *Row house in flames, Third Ward* Houston, Texas photograph, 2007 courtesy of Project Row Houses and photographer Danny Tisdale 10a *New Row House renovations, alongside old row houses, Third Ward, Houston, Texas* photograph by Danny Tisdale, 1998

11 REBAR *Panhandle Bandshell* Panhandle Park, San Francisco photographs, 2007 courtesy of Rebar, The Finch Mob, and CMG Landscape Architecture, San Francisco, California 11a *Bandshell Flyout* digital print, 2008

12 RURAL STUDIO, AUBURN UNIVERSITY *Hale County Animal Shelter* Greensboro, Alabama photograph by Timothy Hursley, 2006 12a *Architectural drawings* 2005 courtesy of Rural Studio at Auburn University and Timothy Hursley 13 SMITH AND OTHERS *The Essex* San Diego, California photograph of rental apartments, 2002 photographs of wood model, 2002

14 SPATIAL INFORMATION DESIGN LAB/LAURA KURGAN *Architecture and Justice: Million Dollar Blocks Prisoner migration patterns, Brooklyn, New York*, 2003 courtesy of the Spatial Information Design Lab and Laura Kurgan 15 STUDIO 804 *Sustainable Prototype/Arts Center for Greensburg, Kansas* photograph, May 2008 15a *Greensburg, Kansas After the Storm*

16 YALE SUSTAINABLE FOOD PROJECT *The Yale Sustainable Food Project* New Haven, Connecticut photographs, 2007–2008 16a *Model schoolyard garden with corn, Washington DC* photograph by Doug Hamilton, 2006 16b *The Edible Schoolyard* King Middle School, Berkeley, California courtesy of The Edible Schoolyard and the Yale Sustainable Food Project

JONATHAN KIRSCHENFELD ASSOCIATES

The Floating Pool

At the turn of the century, New York had as many as fifteen floating bathhouses moored along the East and Hudson rivers, usually near tenement districts. Inspired by these historical structures, The Floating Pool Lady, a mobile swimming pool, adaptively reuses a decommissioned barge to bring summertime recreation to underserved populations. It opened in 2007 at Pier 4 in Brooklyn, hosting over 50,000 swimmers during its first season. The pool's success and visibility in the media has helped provoke action to improve waterfront access, water quality, and recreational and educational activities in New York. It is now integrated into the city's Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Neptune Foundation commissioned Jonathan Kirschenfeld Associates to create a new type of movable swimming pool facility, constructed using conventional shipyard technology. The infrastructure of the floating pool is meant to create an "instant waterfront," inspiring communities to reconnect to the marine environment. The project team hopes that through renewed attention to the waterfront, children will one day swim again in New York Harbor.

Over the past twenty years, Jonathan Kirschenfeld Associates have built urban housing, childcare centers, and recreation facilities, acting not only as designers, but also as advocates and developers. The practice is dedicated to accommodating underserved populations of New York City through cultural and social services. (centerfold images 9, 9a)

PROJECT ROW HOUSES

Row House Community Development

Unprecedented development in the Third Ward neighborhood of Houston, Texas has resulted in the demolition of blocks of single-family bungalows and the dislocation of residents. Nearly 25 houses mysteriously burned down in the Northern Third Ward last year alone. This photograph documents the burning of one such house, marking the otherwise unacknowledged transformation of the neighborhood. In response to such developments, Project Row Houses initiated a series of renovations with local African-American artists and community activists to reclaim the neighborhood and create a positive presence.

Since their inception, the Project Row Houses "campus" has grown from the original block and a half to six blocks, and from 22 houses to 40 properties, including twelve exhibition and residency spaces, seven houses for young mothers, office spaces, a community gallery, a park, and low-income residential and commercial spaces. In 2003, Project Row Houses also established the Row House Community Development Corporation to address related community and economic development needs by providing low-income rental housing. RHDC has designed and built nine low-income housing units and is in the process of building and acquiring additional property for rental and home ownership.

The work of Project Row Houses demonstrates how residents can fend off commercial development through neighborhood restoration. The organization, founded by Rick Lowe, develops housing, public space, facilities, and programs for low to moderate income residents to preserve and protect the historic character of the Third Ward. (centerfold images 10, 10a)

REBAR

Panhandle Bandshell

The Panhandle Bandshell is a full-scale performance stage constructed almost entirely out of repurposed materials that was installed in San Francisco's Panhandle Park from June to September 2007 for impromptu and scheduled performances. It included nearly 65 automobile hoods, hundreds of computer circuit boards, three thousand plastic water bottles, French doors, reclaimed wood, and recycled structural steel. As a fully modular structure, it can easily be dismantled, moved, and reassembled anywhere. The bandshell was dismantled in September 2007 and moved to Treasure Island for storage.

The Panhandle Bandshell provides a freely available venue for performers who live and work in the area. It enhances community-building through creative interaction, and shows how recycling, repurposing, and reuse can raise public awareness of our society's impact on the environment. The Panhandle Bandshell was built with The Finch Mob, and CMG Landscape Architecture.

A collaborative of creators, designers, and activists, Rebar is based in San Francisco. Their work challenges urban conventions and reimagines social relations. Their projects engage social, ecological, and cultural processes as they unfold materially in space and time. (centerfold images 11, 11a)

RURAL STUDIO, AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Hale County Animal Shelter

Students in Rural Studio are invited each year to leave the typical university environment and take up residency in Hale County. Roughly one third of the residents of Hale County in rural Alabama live below the poverty level, and more than one quarter of the population receive food subsidies from the government. The percentage of unemployed residents, roughly 13 percent, is more than double the recent average for the state. Used trailer homes and dilapidated housing are common in the county. Such units are four times more likely to lack kitchens, and five times more likely to lack plumbing. Through architectural improvisation and social responsibility, the students "share the sweat" with a community that lives far below the poverty level. Recent projects include The \$20,000 House, a lamella truss animal shelter, and a single-family house built with repurposed carpet tiles.

Samuel Mockbee conceived Rural Studio and current director Andrew Freear has built upon its founding principles, which emphasize the use of innovative materials and construction techniques in an effort to stabilize families and strengthen communities. The studio has built over 75 houses and other structures, including the Hale County Animal Shelter, undertaken in part to satisfy Alabama laws requiring that every county humanely regulate animal populations. An important aspect of the project was the formation of a Humane Society to oversee and sustain the shelter, which contains a series of pods to house cats and dogs. The large lamella structure is also raised from the ground, so natural airflow can provide ventilation.

By providing dignified, community-based housing and municipal structures, Rural Studio contributes to the development of rural Alabama, mitigating the effects of a poverty-stricken region. Students are taught an ethic of service and engagement, and work closely with the client and local welfare agencies. (centerfold images 12, 12a)



Merrimac Building

At Smith and Others, architects develop their own projects, reshaping the way the city grows and changes by emphasizing quality of life for residents over maximum profit for developers. The Merrimac building, one such development, is an important example of an alternative housing model that can be built in an open market with limited capital. Offering live-work opportunities for residents with limited resources, the Merrimac points towards the success of the architect developer as catalyst for urban redevelopment in San Diego.

In 1995, the Centre City Development Corporation, a non-profit agency created to implement redevelopment work in the central area of San Diego, requested proposals to develop an entire block in the Little Italy district of the city. The Corporation wanted to avoid the big apartment projects typical to most inner city projects built by large developers and, instead, sought to promote a series of smaller, independent projects in keeping with the spirit and scale of the original land use. The block was divided into several different-sized sites with shared gardens and off-street parking. The Merrimac Building was built on one of these sites. The absence of underground parking, the combination of live/work atelier spaces with more-or-less typical apartments, and the spatial complexity of the interiors are all trademarks of the work of Smith and Others.

Since the 1980s, Smith and Others has experimented with affordable housing models. They have helped to transform the city of San Diego into an epicenter of alternative housing prototypes produced by collaborative groups of architects acting as developer-builders. They are committed to producing alternative densities, inclusive of diverse economies and types of dwelling. (centerfold image 13)

Architecture and Justice: Million Dollar Blocks

Spatial information design takes as its raw material the vast quantity of available data about the contemporary city. By reorganizing statistical data and locating it geographically, disparate patterns and the networks they create can be identified, opening new spaces for action and new options for intervention. The Architecture and Justice: Million Dollar Blocks project uses these techniques to study the geography of incarceration in the United States. New York City and Wichita, Kansas, are among the many cities in which the state regularly spends more than one million dollars to incarcerate prisoners who live within a single census block. Advocacy organizations, city planners, and community groups working with released prisoners are asking: what if more resources were organized around settlement than displacement? By analyzing the money spent on incarceration as compared to the investment in housing and infrastructure, the Lab hopes to transform the urban conditions from which prisoners come and to which most of them ultimately return.

In addition to her work at the Spatial Information Design Lab, Laura Kurgan has explored possibilities for new teaching environments and school design. The Luling Land Lab, a project from 2006, combines 21st-century science teaching with community engagement and service learning. The Living Wall provides a teaching environment within which students can co-exist with living things—plants, animals, and insects—while they interact with local ecosystems and draw from global resources. In 2005, Laura Kurgan worked as the lead design, planning, and process consultant for six high school buildings in New York City being transformed into campuses of small schools, part of the New Century High School Initiative of New Visions for Public Schools. At stake is a dramatic shift in school reform policy, and a basic reorganization of the existing infrastructure of many inner city schools.

An interdisciplinary research unit, the Spatial Information Design Lab at Columbia University specializes in the visual display of information about contemporary cities and events. The lab links social data with geography to help us envision ways in which the design of the built environment (the places where we live, work, and play) might interact with governance (expressions of our collective obligations) to produce different patterns in our cities. (centerfold images 14, 14a)

Sustainable Prototype for Greensburg, Kansas

The town of Greensburg, Kansas was destroyed when a major tornado struck in the middle of the night on May 4, 2007. Stretching 1.7 miles wide, the tornado took 10 lives, destroyed nearly 1,000 homes, and caused over \$1.1 billion in damage. In response, Studio 804, a design/build program at the University of Kansas, collaborated to construct a visionary prefabricated arts and culture building. Produced in a large warehouse, the building was deconstructed, shipped in modules to Greensburg, and completed in time to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the tornado. The sustainable prototype used reclaimed lumber and other building materials from the retired Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant, as well as photovoltaic arrays, wind turbines, and geothermal heating and cooling systems.

For over twelve years, the studio has created architecture that is accessible in cost while engaging the pre-existing context of its neighborhood through creative use of materials. In an effort to work as expeditiously as possible, they employ methods of prefabrication by building modular units in Lawrence, Kansas, and then shipping the final product to its final destination. This process limits construction waste, requires unique design solutions, and, importantly, allows students to continue to live in Lawrence through-out the process. As a non-profit organization, Studio 804's projects are funded entirely through the efforts of its students.

A non-profit organization, Studio 804 provides students with the opportunity to design and develop affordable and sustainable prefabricated buildings. Through these projects, students explore architectural solutions to reclaim forgotten, blighted, and environmentally challenged neighborhoods in Kansas—some of which have not seen new construction in over 30 years. (centerfold image 15)

The Edible Schoolyard / Yale Sustainable Food Project

Edible education is a growing movement in the United States. In public and private schools across the country, students are learning how to grow, harvest, and cook nutritious seasonal produce in school gardens through programs such as The Edible Schoolyard and the Yale Sustainable Food Project. They shape and plant beds, amend soil, turn compost, and harvest fresh fruits and vegetables, while learning environmental stewardship as they make the connection between what they eat and where it comes from. These programs form the basis of a new model of education, intended to revolutionize both the classroom and the national school meal program.

The cooking and gardening program at the Edible Schoolyard grew out of a conversation between Alice Waters and former King Middle School principal Neil Smith. In 1997, an acre of asphalt parking lot was cleared, a cover crop was planted to enrich the soil, and the school's unused 1930's cafeteria kitchen was refurbished to house the kitchen classroom. Today the organic garden is flourishing, plants outgrow the adolescents who nurtured them, and the kitchen is filled with delicious smells, music, and enthusiastic young students. By gathering people around shared food, shared work, and shared inquiry, the Yale Sustainable Food Project similarly fosters a culture that draws meaning and pleasure from the connections among people, land, and food. In 2006, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, the Edible Schoolyard and the Yale Sustainable Food Project created a model schoolyard garden on the National Mall in Washington, DC, spurring policy-makers to discuss the National School Lunch Initiative, a proposal for a garden and lunch program that would inspire change in every public school across the country.

Begun by Alice Waters, the Edible Schoolyard integrates gardening and cooking into the daily activities of the King Middle School in Berkeley, California. Across the country at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, the Yale Sustainable Food Project directs a sustainable dining program, manages an organic farm on campus, and supports academic inquiry around food and agriculture. Both teach the origins of food, principles of ecology, and respect for all living systems. (centerfold images 16, 16a, 16b)

DESIGN NOTES

"Into the Open: Positioning Practice" expands upon the participatory nature of the Kellen Gallery's mandate. The design is conceived as a multi-layered installation comprising several components: chalkboard painted walls, large stenciled texts, informally-arranged images, multiple digital projections, text banners and display furniture. Through their juxtaposition, these elements dynamically articulate current alternative architectural, artistic and educational practices and methods.

Large-scale artifacts and objects are placed specifically to highlight the multiple social perspectives contained within the exhibition. Given this complex spatial situation, the gallery visitor is invited to actively occupy multiple positions in order to engage with the form and content of the show.

A central spatial element in the exhibition is Estudio Teddy Cruz's billboard-like representation of the Mexican-American border. In its original presentation in Venice, this scrim subverted the façade of the U.S. Pavilion: it served as a literal barrier through which the visitor had to pass in order to enter the national space. In New York, this banner has been repurposed to create a meeting and screening room. Within this new context, Cruz's piece is not a literal border crossing but rather a psychological space where the public can gather to exchange ideas about ever-shifting border situations.

Another primary object on display are planters for the Yale Sustainable Food Project, designed specifically for this show. These asymmetrical constructions respond to the Kellen Gallery's architecture and also to its street presence. This indoor "demo garden" is a departure from Venice; it now highlights urban food production that can take place on stoops, rooftops, fire escapes, window boxes or inside homes. The ongoing gardening of the containers will add a social component to the daily life of the exhibition.

Full-height banners visualize and spatialize the numerous discourses that inform the show. Foregrounding the exhibition's textual components encourages a conceptual understanding of the participants' approach and process -- often as important as their finished works. Through their scale and strong graphic presence, the banners allow the curatorial texts to make their case directly.

Cool Wool, designed by Alessio Leonardi and Priska Wollein in 1994, serves as the display typography for oversized associative phrases. The typeface merges a rational grid-like structure with an exceptionally imprecise form. Due to its matrix construction, Cool Wool can be spray painted by hand as an inexpensive stencil. This combination of typographic languages, contrasting refinement and rawness, speaks to the diverse mix of approaches within the show.

Immersive, bold, and interactive, the design of "Into the Open" seeks to emphasize the urgency and insight of these 16 practices' work. The curatorial intent is to inform -- but commentary and participation are essential. The gallery space, painted completely with green chalkboard paint, is an open forum for spontaneous feedback by visitors and students. We hope that you will take this opportunity to respond to the exhibition and add yet another layer to the mix: your thoughts, marks and voice.

Ken Saylor, Saylor + Sirola and Prem Krishnamurthy, Project Projects
Exhibition and graphic designers



(continued from front cover)

We are also proposing that social, cultural, and spatial boundaries that characterize the American landscape be understood as a new framework defining architectural problems. Accordingly, we have identified a heterogeneous and dispersed series of practices that are empowered by the inventive ways they work and with whom they engage. These intellectually entrepreneurial practitioners are reaching creatively across institutions, agencies, and jurisdictions to negotiate hidden resources in the private, public, and non-profit sectors to invigorate social activism and environmental policy.

In the absence of large-scale public infrastructure projects in the United States, local initiatives are necessarily becoming empowered, dynamic arenas for exploring and generating new forms of sociability and activism. We hope this preliminary showcase of America's alternative architectural practices acts as a stimulus that encourages new forms of social participation to flourish beyond our current imaginings. With a little knowing irony, we like to label *Into the Open: Positioning Practice*, which opened in September 2008 in the United States Pavilion at



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Into the Open: Positioning Practice is presented by Parsons The New School for Design, in collaboration with Slought Foundation and PARC Foundation, with media partner *The Architect's Newspaper*. Generous support for the project has been received from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C., in cooperation with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

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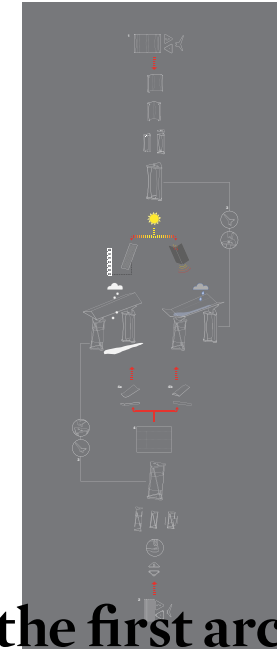
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La Biennale di Venezia, "the first architectural endeavor of an Obama presidency."

Setting aside the fact we were commissioned by the U.S. State Department under George W. Bush, and that the exhibition opened some weeks before November's election, we believe that the present moment will redefine the meaning of social space in today's American cities and neighborhoods. With Obama's new mandate in the U.S. election and the current world wide financial crises acting as forceful agents for change, maybe the stars are finally aligning in a propitious way. Perhaps they will force architecture to mitigate its current celebrity obsessed approach, encouraging instead a new type of collaborative thinking about design and space that highlights local, periphery, and even edge conditions.

To remain relevant, architecture must find ways to respond to the cultural fluidity, socio-economic challenges, and environmental rifts that define our times.

William Menking, Aaron Levy, and Andrew Sturm
Curators

