

# CONNECTION

THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN JOURNAL OF THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM

This issue focuses on the topic of **RESOURCES**

Featuring architects, designers and emerging professionals serving as environmental stewards through initiatives in sustainability and sustainable development, energy innovation and environmentally responsive design, and disaster recovery and resilience.

November 2014  
VOL 12 ISSUE 06

**BACK TO ZERO**

# CONNECTION

THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN JOURNAL OF THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM

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#yafchat



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November 2014  
VOL 12 ISSUE 06

BACK TO ZERO

# BACK TO ZERO

## A WORLD WITHOUT ARCHITECTS

*As my two-year term as the Communications Director of the National YAF Advisory Committee draws to a close, so too does my role as Editor-in-Chief of this very publication; making this my final editorial in the pages of Connection.*

*Over the past two years, I've had the privilege of assembling and working with an extremely talented Editorial Committee and, together, growing this publication into the forum that it is today -- dedicated to the voice of our young architects; represented through their words, participation, and projects as much through their leadership, mentorship and fellowship. And as this generation graduates to the next career stage, the proverbial torch is passed into the capable hands of the next generation of young architect leaders within the YAF and our profession.*

I was honored recently to lecture at the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) on the subject of design collaboration and practice; sharing several projects that spanned the first ten years of my young architect career in a presentation titled CONFLUENCE ([CLICK HERE](#) to refer to last issue's editorial on the topic). The lecture was held at the de Seversky Mansion on the Old Westbury campus of Long Island and in that near idyllic rural setting, surrounded somewhat ironically by a palatial Georgian neoclassical architecture, I spoke on the necessary role of architects in *shaping the future*.

One distinct certainty about that future is that it will pose very real concerns for this next generation of architects -- concerns, I believe, of survival more than shelter and resilience more than aesthetic. The practice of architecture has changed considerably in the short fifteen years since I've been in the industry: from the personal derivations of rational modernism and capitalizing on sustainability in the 90s; to the academic idiosyncrasies of unconstrained geometry and parametric fabrications of the 00s; to the highly collaborative design processes and multidisciplinary project teams at present. These are necessary changes though -- adaptations-to and reflections-of the changes in the world in which we live.

### THE PERFECT STORM

These changes are particularly necessary in the context of a world already struggling with increasing population, urbanization, densification, and scarcity of resources -- our ever-expanding carbon footprint concocting a veritable manmade Molotov cocktail just waiting to be ignited. Mankind has seeded the cloud for an ensuing perfect storm. We have already been witness to the staggering impact of natural disasters amplified by climate change. Imagine then, in that already tenuous reality, the incendiary effect of intentional terrorism upon our cities -- digital or chemical warfare, infrastructural or resource attacks? All could lead to devastation beyond anything that we may currently have the conscious ability, or desire, to comprehend.

Now imagine these hypothetical futures and consider how our cities might rebuild *without* architects?

It's almost impossible to consider for those of us who know the world-envisioning, world-creating value that we architects provide. But to the general public, our value as architects often gets lost in our profession's own identity crisis -- that dueling imbalance between our severe ego and our self-deprecating modesty -- in one breath convincing clients why we (any one of us) are better than the other, and in the next breath defeatedly discounting our services to compete against one other. Identity crises, however, seems a part of our very being as architects, if not the genetics of our profession -- forever attempting to strike the balance between science and art, business and passion, collaborative processes and personal fulfillment, the necessity of keeping the doors open and the aspirational altruism of building better communities.

But a world without architects is much more than a world without architecture. As I mentioned to a ballroom of NYIT architecture students and faculty, the value of architects isn't in designing a building -- that one-off product that the general public equates to our services. Rather, the value of architects is envisioning our future built environments; each project, each building is simply one step in getting us there. And, as such, each is an opportunity to unshackle ourselves from the past, solve the problems of the present, and project the humanity that we desire.

As a point in case, on that very same trip to New York, I was fortunate to visit the National September 11 Memorial, as designed by architect Michael Arad with landscape architects Peter Walker and Partners, and the newly opened One World Trade Center (Freedom Tower) by David Childs/SOM and Daniel Libeskind. Taken as a whole, it is a powerful and spirit-moving architectural experience; subtly underscored by the wind-blown spray of the fountains, collecting on the brass placards like tears that stream from name to name, connecting the fallen victims in symbolic mourning. *Yet this is what we architects do. We take man's greatest dreams and eternal hopes, buttress them in steel, reinforce them in concrete, clad them in glass as immaterial as the sky, and we test the limits of physics as much as we test the ever-endeavoring heights of our human aspirations.*

▶ *Yet this is what we architects do. We take man's greatest dreams and eternal hopes, buttress them in steel, reinforce them in concrete, clad them in glass as immaterial as the sky, and we test the limits of physics as much as we test the ever-endeavoring heights of our human aspirations.*

### GROUND ZERO

Blocks away from the World Trade Center site, near Wall Street and Broadway, in the bell toll shadows of Trinity Church, exists another "ground zero" -- one which I incidentally and unknowingly stumbled upon, marked historically by an aged bronze wall placard. That placard, installed on February 23, 1957 and re-dedicated for posterity on April 13, 2007 in celebration, respectively, of the 100th and 150th anniversaries of the birth of our profession as we know it today, reads:

*The American Institute of Architects was founded on this site February 23, 1857 by thirteen architects of ideals and vision. Throughout the years its members have contributed to the advancement of architecture and have encouraged the development of the allied arts, expressing the aspirations of our people, bringing into their lives inspiration, beauty and comfort.*

Until this founding in 1857, anyone who wished to call him-or herself an architect in the US could do so; including masons, carpenters, bricklayers, and other members of the building trades. In fact, it wasn't until forty years later, in 1897, that the legal definition of "architect" was recorded; and with it the legal requirements concerning the use of the title and the provision of architectural services. That same year, Illinois became the first state to adopt an architectural licensing law. But it would take fifty more years for all of the states to follow suit.

Until this founding in 1857, no schools of architecture existed in the US. At that time, the Institute members debated the possibility of creating a national school of architecture based on the model of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Efforts to secure funding for such an ambitious undertaking failed, for better or worse. In response, the Institute chose instead to support the fledgling architecture programs then developing at universities across the country -- the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1868), Cornell (1871), the University of Illinois (1873), Columbia University (1881), and Tuskegee (1881). Today, 113 accredited schools of architecture serve our profession.

### BACK TO THE FUTURE

A number of my past editorials have focused on personal and professional milestones in the context of Career Advancement. As an industry, however, we too are at a milestone moment. Collectively, we are at the point of redefining the role of architects in our communities and repositioning both our Institute and the industry for that impending future.

So in similar fashion to those thirteen likeminded individuals who founded our Institute so many years ago, it is we Young Architects -- as the future generation of the AIA -- who are now tasked with elevating the standing of the profession and establishing the profession's new value proposition to the world. ■

Best to us all.  
Wyatt

#### Wyatt Frantom AIA

Wyatt is the 2013-2014 Communications Director of the Young Architects National Advisory Committee of the AIA, the Editor-in-Chief of YAF CONNECTION and a Senior Architectural Designer and Associate with Gensler Los Angeles.



## headlined

**CASH (OR CHANGE?) BY DESIGN**

by Beth Mosenthal, Assoc. AIA



Redefining everyday objects through inventive design is not a new idea. Just look at the now prolific approach of superstores such as Target, inviting famous architects such as Michael Graves to design teapots (among other quotidian household items.)

But to rethink bank notes? In America, this move would require rewriting history--and perhaps rap lyrics, one Benjamin at a time. Norway, however, is not afraid of change, or its associated lingo.

In an effort to create currency that is more difficult to forge, the Norges Bank asked eight designers to submit proposals for redesigned currency. Participants had to base their designs on the overall theme of "The Sea", representative of Norway's coastal geography and its significance to the nation.

With the intent of beginning circulation in 2017, one side of the banknote was awarded to Snøhetta, a Norwegian-based architecture firm, for their pixelated, colorful designs. The other side was awarded to a graphic design firm, The Metric System, which chose to feature more traditional cultural icons throughout Norwegian history.

## observed

**A DESIGNER FINDS PERSPECTIVE IN "PLACE"**

as told to Beth Mosenthal by Molly Lawrence, a Graphic Designer, MFA Candidate and Instructor, based in Ohio



Image by Molly Lawrence, 2014

"Here is a photo I took on my road trip from the Western United States to the East Coast -- somewhere in South Dakota. We [my boyfriend and I] were in desperate need of gas and water, so we took our chances and pulled off at the nearest exit. We drove up to this little gas station in the middle of nowhere with a sign that read "closed for the season."

I think travel and opportunities to see different landscapes gives me design inspiration rooted in seeing a different perspective. For me, the shapes and compositions I see when visiting a new place effect my designs, whether it be purposefully or subconsciously."

## experienced

**A TALE OF TWO CITIES PART I**

An account of two Western weekends -- two very different experiences. by Beth Mosenthal, Assoc. AIA

As a transplant to Colorado via Upstate New York, two recent trips in America's "Wild West" have felt both epic and enigmatic to me. The first was to the artistic and architectural mecca, Marfa, Texas, and the next to a place that Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown drew much inspiration from: Las Vegas. Here are my general impressions and recommendations for visiting Marfa; stay tuned for the next issue for my thoughts on Vegas ...



Donald Judd's Earthworks at the Chinati Foundation, Mosenthal, 2014

**Marfa is as quiet as Las Vegas is loud.**

**Upon arriving in Marfa on a Saturday afternoon in early spring, it was as if I could hear the tumbleweeds rolling through the empty streets. As my friend and I made our way to our tour of Donald Judd's works and studios, we eagerly sought art and culture amidst what felt like an avant garde ghost town from the 1950's.**

Located in West Texas (roughly 200 miles SE of El Paso,) Marfa is a small town that was literally transformed into a hub for art and design when artist and architect Donald Judd purchased many of its abandoned buildings and property in the 80's and 90's to create living, working, and curated indoor and outdoor spaces.

After participating in several hours of walking tours in which my friend and I were led into seemingly abandoned buildings (including a former bank and an old super market), we were shocked to find artwork, furniture, collections of works by master artists, eccentric living quarters, ranch and architecture offices, outdoor earthworks, and libraries, all carefully curated by Judd. My mind was simply blown by both Judd's prolific nature as well as his ability to literally create his own world.

In retrospect, Marfa has made me ponder how driven and passionate one must be in order to become prolific not only in the quantity of work being produced, but also in the energy it takes to shamelessly iterate -- and to treat each prototype as if it is a masterpiece. Also -- don't forget to stop at the Prada Marfa when there -- an installation on the side of a very remote highway of a faux Prada Storefront ...



Prada Marfa, 2014, Mosenthal



Marfa Water tower, 2014, Mosenthal

## involved

**CELEBRATING THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS OF 2014**

ON SALE NOW, the Young Architect Award Book provides a glimpse of different models of leadership for emerging professionals.



TO LEARN MORE, CLICK HERE

Each year the AIA College of Fellows presents the Young Architect's Award to "individuals who have shown exceptional leadership and made significant contributions to the profession in an early stage of their architectural career."

Once the recipients have been selected, a compilation of their work is composed, published, and offered for sale through the AIA.

Edited by YAF Connection's own Nathan Stolarz, the 2014 book is not to miss. With stunning graphics, this book provides an important look at how young architects are contributing to their profession in many different, impactful ways.

## tweeted

**TRENDS AND DISCOURSE****@AIAtrust**

Some important considerations for young #Architects @AIANational toward avoiding financial risks <http://ow.ly/w36WZ>

**@AIANational**

Want a sneak peek at the AIA Convention 2015 schedule? Sign up for an alert, <http://bit.ly/1mcmPwD> #aiacon15

**@AIACenterforEPs**

A2 Millennials in arch face challenge w/Boomers of "I did it (this) way, you should have to do it (this) way too." Ex: licensure #aiachat

**@huntertura**

One path to effective & transformative design is by clearly articulating the aims & defining how it will be used @designmilk #ModernMonday

## featured



Image Courtesy of Kasdan, 2014

**Ben Kasdan, AIA** is a senior designer with KTG Group, Inc. Architecture + Planning, currently serves as the AIA Young Architect Forum Regional Director for Southern California, and graduated with honors from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

In this issue, Ben shares his thoughts on professional organizations, academia, and mentoring ...

What organizations are you involved in as an emerging professional?

I'm currently serving as the AIA YAF Young Architect Regional Director for Southern California. That role also involves representing Young Architects on the AIA California Council (AIACC) Academy of Emerging Professionals (AEP) Council of Advisors. The AIACC AEP is a robust group of leaders (consisting of architecture students, Associate AIA members, and Young Architects) who focus on issues facing emerging professionals throughout California and the profession, such as the value of licensure and mentorship. I am also a member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI).

Not only are you involved in the AIA, but you also serve as a frequent design critic at several local universities. What value have you found in being able to share your professional expertise with the next generation of young architects?

Interacting with architecture students is invigorating! Not only is it fun to live vicariously through their refreshingly pure and idealistic vision of architecture (before considering clients' preconceived expectations, NIMBY neighbors, local politics, and value engineering), it is important to remember that the practice of architecture can, and does, change the world despite the real-world challenges facing our projects. Architects, and architecture, should act accordingly.

What are some of the important issues that Young Architects face in today's industry?

Mentoring is both the most important and, paradoxically, the least consistent aspect of contemporary architectural practice. Being mentored was historically the cornerstone of the architectural apprenticeship, but the profession has diverged from this model over the decades. While emerging professionals crave mentorship and veteran architects yearn to share their knowledge, an established method of connecting these groups is missing from the architectural community.



Image Courtesy of Kasdan, 2014

■ The possibility of closing the gap between digital input and physical output has created a paradigm shift in how we embrace complexity.

alternative practice(s) | **UNCUT**



**EMBRACING  
"OPPORTUNISTIC  
HAPPENSTANCE"**

An interview with **JONATHAN GOLDSTEIN** teacher-turned-architect-turned innovative Director of Exhibits at the Children's Museum of Denver

by Beth Mosenthal, Assoc. AIA

Goldstein outside the Children's Museum of Denver, currently undergoing renovation while remaining open to the public. Mosenthal, 2014

**BRM** What is your background academically and professionally, and how did it get you to where you are now?

**JG** I often wonder how young surgeons develop the gumption to cut into their first living patient. My design training claims vastly less dramatic and dire comeuppance.

With a B.A. in history from Cornell and an M.Arch from Wisconsin-Milwaukee, my formal education served more as a soft base, like furniture serves a fledgling walker, allowing me to wobble from safe idea to the next. Exposure to my initial "living patient" didn't occur until arriving on a construction site, faced with a demanding contractor, looking for my immediate and decisive answers. I was fortunate; my first design employers (La Dallman Architects in Milwaukee) threw me into the deep end on Day One, asking me to design and manage a fairly ambitious museum exhibit project. I had no idea what I was doing, but I embraced the opportunity to draw with consequences.

In architecture school, I had never set my sights on becoming a professional exhibit designer. Life before graduate school included a stint as a public school teacher. I suppose designing exhibits offers a natural bridge between education and architecture, but in truth, I hungrily accepted projects as they came. One exhibit led to another and then another. My current role of Director of Exhibits at the Children's Museum of Denver is a culmination of opportunistic happenstance.

**BRM** How did working at the Milwaukee-based design collective, Design Fugitives, prepare you to become the Director of Exhibits at the Children's Museum of Denver?

**JG** The creation of Design Fugitives was an act of optimistic desperation. This was 2009, when many of my young design colleagues and I suddenly found ourselves out of employment, as the Great Recession bloodied some noses. There we were, a few years after graduating, clawing and scratching each other for the opportunity to draw bathroom elevations and arrange prison plans. I'll cop to being jaded, but I wouldn't have been very good at that kind of work. So I persuaded seven talented, unsatisfied designers I knew from school to form what was essentially a designer co-op: we pooled our meager financial and technological resources to seek any and all design opportunities, as individuals or as a company. We rented a small, delightfully decrepit warehouse and filled it with home tools, old computers, basement couches, and desks made from doors. We scavenged. We invented our resources. Eventually, one of our members took on the task of building a CNC router (a computer controlled, cutting robot). The group pared down and ultimately transitioned into a specialty fabrication business. While I'm no longer professionally associated with the group, I'm very proud to say that Design Fugitives is alive and thriving (perhaps because I'm no longer associated?)

Building a company - especially doing so without any money and during the Recession - honed my persuasion and negotiation skills. Maybe those words aren't exactly accurate. Maybe it was more about communicating vision ... or converting skeptics? I'm not certain I actually accomplished any of that, but by gum, I tried. And I firmly believe that all designers in leadership roles absolutely must engender support and enthusiasm in their designs.

**BRM** What tools from architectural practice have you found to be most helpful in exhibition design?

**JG** More than anything, learning how to organize terabytes of information has been a crucial asset when managing bigger projects. One example of an immensely powerful tool, while not specific to exhibition design, is developing a clear organizational system for digital files and folders shared by multiple designers. Drawings, models, images, sketches, site photos, contracts ... all the things designers make and share everyday need to have a clear home. This becomes especially important, as collaborative digital design now typically involves the referencing of one file into the next - across multiple file types and extensions. Perhaps organization of this sort is a well-trodden path at most firms, but for me, I never had that taught. I learned by doing, thinking about how the software works, and conferring with my fellow designers. Organization has been a game-changer for us at the museum.

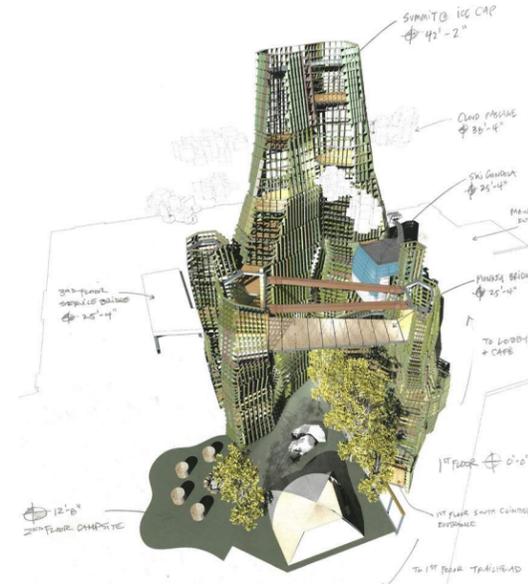
**BRM** Who are the stakeholders and clients? Who (and what) drives the decision-making and creative process?

**JG** Our primary stakeholders at the Children's Museum of Denver are the families that come and visit us. They are our audience, our agenda-setters and our reason for being here. We certainly also consult with friends in the community, parents, teachers, board members, and early childhood education advocates, in order to assess what experiential opportunities the museum is best suited to provide. We seek to be relentlessly relevant. For example, all our newest exhibits fit into one or more of the following four categories: Health and Wellness, Parent and Caregiver Engagement, The Arts, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). While these are broad content areas and can manifest into many different kinds of exhibits, it's comforting to know, as a designer, that the foundation upon which these exhibits are built has been soundly vetted by community needs.

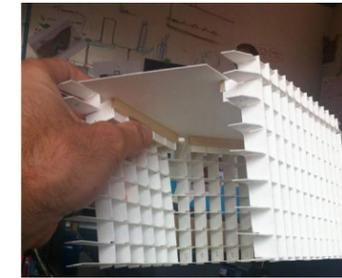
The museum's education team plays a vital role in determining an exhibit's specific educational framework, age and cognitive appropriateness, and eventual evaluation tools. There's a lot of parallel development, as educators, designers, and fund locators craft exhibit narratives through their respective lenses. Ultimately, a single story emerges when "what will guests be able to do in the exhibit" merges with "how is the exhibit made." The creative process of integrating or synthesizing action and material is truly collaborative, but the design team is typically responsible for framing the exhibit's physical parameters, which helps to evaluate the enthusiastic mélange of collegial suggestions.

**BRM** How do you approach the design process of an exhibition?

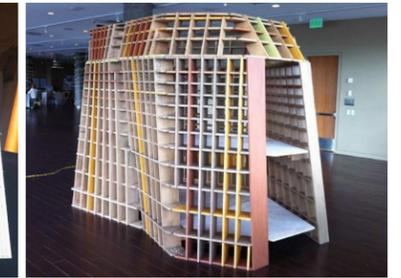
**JG** This is a beast of a question, but I'll try to answer it with an example. The topic for an exhibit is usually handed to me by museum leadership. Recently, we decided that we would develop an energy exhibit. As I was saying earlier, the education staff digs in and helps to identify relevant and appropriate content (*What is energy?*) as well as sought-after developmental opportunities (crawling, climbing, drawing, observing/effecting phenomena). This early process usually culminates with a list of things people can do (a program), but it doesn't really help establish the look and feel of the exhibit. How does an abstract concept like "energy" inform decisions about structure and materials, lighting, and circulation? If making art (and architecture by extension) is the selective recreation of reality, then it's a designer's job to make myriad decisions that hold together to form some sort of stance. After a good deal of thinking and speaking with collaborators, we hit upon this: finding, collecting, and storing energy is a quest filled with discovery, determination, and risk. The adventure of making and choosing how to use energy to power beautiful, unexpected, and remarkable things is a truly human endeavor. This sort of stance becomes the backbone for all design decisions. If the search for energy is a "quest," then what kind of circulation route lends itself to a quest? A maze formed by thickened walls that contain hidden elements that adventurers collect and use. Program now has a narrative or armature that begins to suggest physical qualities. For me, this is the most exciting part of design: To write a rough outline of a movie and then debate and test with collaborators what costumes, characters, and settings will best tell our story.



Rendering of the "Altitude" exhibit: A 3.5 story play structure, Goldstein, 2014



Paper egg crate model, Goldstein 2014.



Full-scale prototype, Goldstein 2014.

**BRM** You recently taught your staff the architectural software, Rhino. What role does fabrication and 3d modeling play in the current work that you're doing?

**JG** When we decided as an organization to in-source the bulk of our exhibit design and fabrication, I knew we had to ramp up not only our software and hardware capabilities, but our digitally-assisted fabrication tools as well. We had a very educated and talented team, but they were cutting with dull blades. Our first purchases were more powerful desktops, Rhino installs, and Adobe Creative Suite. This was a huge financial outlay, but to me this was like a carpenter purchasing a good hammer, screwdriver, and saw. From there, I brought in an old friend from Design Fugitives, Tuan Tran, to provide a targeted tutorial in Rhino. There are lots of online seminars that take you through basic, intermediate, and advanced operations, but nothing tailor-fit existed for our specific needs. I knew our team needed to be digital samurai - slicing and dicing 3d models into beautifully annotated construction drawings.

With our design tools upgraded, we could not only more efficiently document design, but through the use of digitally-assisted fabrication technology, we could also rapidly build physical proof of our work. We started with a heavy-duty vinyl cutter which could cut paper, cardboard, and plastic from any 2D file. This capability provided us with almost immediate, inexpensive feedback. We're fortunate enough to enjoy a nicely appointed woodshop, but we found ourselves, at times, designing to the limits of our confidence with a cranky table saw or suspect lathe. Our most recent purchase, a full-bed CNC Router, allows us to think, test, and build at exhibit scale with a few clicks of the mouse. The possibility of closing the gap between digital input and physical output has created a paradigm shift in how we embrace complexity.

**BRM** What advice do you have for students looking to alternative modes of architectural practice?

**JG** Do yourself a favor and Google "Johnny Costa." He was the musical director for Mr. Roger's Neighborhood and he was also one of the greatest jazz pianists that ever lived. There's a wonderful video interview where he explains that he found no conflict between being a serious "jazzier" and composing music for a children's television show. He essentially says, he played what excited him, Fred (Rogers) loved it, and so did the audience. I watch this clip often.

One of my master's thesis advisors predicted that I would never be an Architect. (Thanks, Don!) That sort of comment, proclaimed prior to a thesis presentation, most assuredly has an unnerving effect. But I think I now understand what he was trying to say. The world of design is BIG. Anytime an individual, company, or organization is trying to conceive of and articulate what could be, they need a designer. Tell a great story that excites you, then build it.

Thanks Jonathan!

For more info. about the museum, [CLICK HERE](#)

# BUILT BY DESIGN GLUCK+ AND DESIGN BUILD

*In the spirit of this issue's theme, going **Back to Zero**, we revisit our AIAS roots by looking at the value of architectural education, registration and the lost art of making in architecture.*

*CRIT Editor-in-Chief George Guarino III, AIAS recently spoke to Peter L. Gluck of GLUCK+ - as originally published in the pages of CRIT: Ideas by the Future of Architecture. CRIT is the official publication of the American Institute of Architecture Students.*



**Peter L. Gluck**

is Founder and Principal at GLUCK+ in New York, has taught at Columbia and Yale schools of architecture and received both a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Architecture from Yale University.

Over a 40-year period, **Peter L. Gluck** with GLUCK+ has generated a multi-faceted approach to the design of award-winning buildings, recognized for their inventive, conceptually unique and comprehensive design solutions; with most having been constructed by the firm. The practice is committed to pushing the boundaries of design together with real-world expertise to deliver the highest quality built result. The firm has designed buildings throughout the United States, ranging in type from houses, schools, religious buildings, and community centers to hotels, mixed use/housing, corporate interiors, university buildings, and historic restorations.

GLUCK+ was recently featured in *Fast Company's 'Making It'* video series for *The Stack*, the first steel and concrete mixed-use residential development to be built in New York City utilizing offsite modular construction. Current and recent projects include the Collegiate School in New York, Cary Leeds Center for Tennis & Learning in the Bronx's Crotona Park, a marine science and conservation genetics research building for Duke University Marine Lab, the Admissions and Financial Aid Building at Skidmore College, in Saratoga Springs, New York, and several residential mixed-use developments.

**Where do you think architects are most under or overvalued?**

**Where are architects needed most or wasting their valuable skills?**

I think architects are generally undervalued, though in their own minds they may overvalue themselves. I think the general perception of architects is that they are rather impractical; they are not actually capable of carrying out their ideas. A comment by Frank Lloyd Wright epitomizes the way the world thinks about architects: one of his clients is eating dinner with their family and water splashes down on the table from a leak in the roof. They call the architect and say, "Water is splashing down on the table!" and Frank Lloyd Wright replies, "Get a bucket!" That story symbolizes what the world thinks of architects. It is regrettable. It represents the kind of air-headed thinking that most people associate with architects.

**How can emerging architects increase their relevance as they enter the profession? How can they position themselves to have the greatest impact?**

They can begin to understand the entire process of the making of our environments. It is not simply abstract design; it involves construction, finance ... all kinds of issues beyond pure design. Architects and our roles are misunderstood. You are marginalized if you are not involved in all aspects of the construction. You are marginalized in terms of your value, and you're marginalized in terms of your understanding and comprehension of what needs to be done and how to do it.

**What are your thoughts on the massive student debt that many students of architecture graduate with?**

I think all students of today's world graduate with large debts. The question is: are we, as architects, going to be able to pay it back? Architecture is already an extremely low-paying profession, given the qualification, talent, and skills of the people doing it.

**What motivated you to begin practicing Architect Led Design Build?**

Well, when I was in school, several students would build houses over the weekends. We became familiar with construction. It wasn't presented to us as being a mystery or something that we should be afraid of, something with implicit liability. Over the last 30 years, the idea has been set forth that when you get involved in the real world, be it construction or other related facets of building, the way to stay whole as an individual and firm is to not take any risk -- to avoid liability, to avoid involvement in all of those critical factors involved in making things. That is ostensibly what architects are supposed to do, make things.

**How does communication among yourselves and other stakeholders differ at Gluck+ from a typical firm? Do you draw differently?**

We do everything differently. We don't make a set of drawings for a contractor. We make twenty different sets of drawings, one for each subcontractor. They are each prepared at different times of the process and each prepared to reflect the phase in which the work will be accomplished during the sequence of construction. Annotations are specific to the tradesmen they are intended for.

**Does your firm have any desire to grow or expand? Do you think it would harm the way you practice?**

I think we are expanding. I don't see it causing harm; we do the work that we like to do. The work is getting bigger and more interesting.

**Do you think all architects should practice architect-led design build? Do you think there's still a place for other practice models?**

I wouldn't say that all architects should practice design-build. I do think that all architects should expand and involve themselves more. I think we've lived through a period of time when the role of the architects has seen a series of limitations of their involvement. Architects used to supervise their work; it was standard practice. Now architects are told not to supervise their work.

**How do you think that shift took place?**

I think it was the mistaken view of the lawyers that architects relied on. I also think that it has to do with the schism between professionals and tradespeople. Somehow, architects like to think that they're artists, and therefore not involved in the dirty or demeaning business of building their work. It's very strange. ■

*Architect Led Design Build (provided by Gluck+)*

*Architect Led Design Build is single-source responsibility for the design, construction and commissioning of buildings. Typically, an owner hires an architect to draw a building and a contractor to oversee the subcontractors that will build the building. This separation is adverse for the quality and cost of building. Project stakeholders lose out.*

*Architect Led Design Build is an agile process in which the same people are responsible for an entire building project. Our architects are also construction managers, meaning feedback between method of construction and design is fluid and responsive. Priorities between design, cost and schedule are clear. Creativity is responsible.*



**George Guarino III, AIAS**

is a student in the final year of pursuing his B.Arch at Syracuse University School of Architecture. Having been involved with the AIAS since his freshmen year, George now serves as the Editor-in-Chief of CRIT. Upon graduation, he plans to vigorously pursue licensure and exciting opportunities beyond traditional practice.

# THE NEW NORRIS HOUSE

## AN EXERCISE IN SUSTAINABILITY

In 1933, the Tennessee Valley Authority constructed a model community - Norris, Tennessee - as part of the Norris Dam construction project. A key feature of this New Deal village was the Norris House, a series of homes built as models for modern and efficient living. In light of the 75th anniversary of the Norris Project, Samuel Mortimer and his team from the University of Tennessee College of Architecture and Design reinterpreted the Norris paradigm; creating a new Norris House -- a sustainable home designed for the 21st century. In partnership with modular builder Clayton Homes, the team was able to deliver the project as a design-build studio. Completed in 2011, a multi-year post-occupancy research period has since been conducted; with the project garnering various honors - including designation as an AIA COTE Top 10 Green Project in 2013 and a 2014 ASLA National Honor Award for Research.

Connection Contributing Journalist [Zach Farrell, Assoc. AIA](#), recently spoke to Samuel about his experience in the project.



**Samuel Mortimer**  
is an intern architect at Good  
Fulton & Farrell in Dallas, Texas.

Again, Tennessee doesn't have water shortage issues, so these types of questions haven't really come before most municipalities. In the case of greywater, even though Norris would stand to benefit from volume reductions on their aging sewer system, until the financial benefits to the city begin to outweigh the concerns of poor system management by the average citizen, it will likely be a difficult road towards larger implementation.

So it seems that it was an issue of scaling that the city was uncomfortable with. They understand the industrial scale as more economical.

Given their worries about pollutant control – yes, the industrial scale is still more economical unfortunately. We weren't able to use treated rain water as a potable source (which was an original project goal), but we were lucky to be able to collaborate and accomplish what we did. The circumstances certainly yielded a more comprehensive project from our point-of-view (the city and state's desire for shorter testing increments, larger pool of potential contaminants, higher quality control, etc) and the backing of The University of Tennessee (UT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added a level of legitimacy that we could not have achieved otherwise. Scaled solutions, like you mentioned, were actually a cornerstone of the larger design objectives although challenging in that it demanded support from the community.

What were some of the issues raised by the neighborhood in Norris?

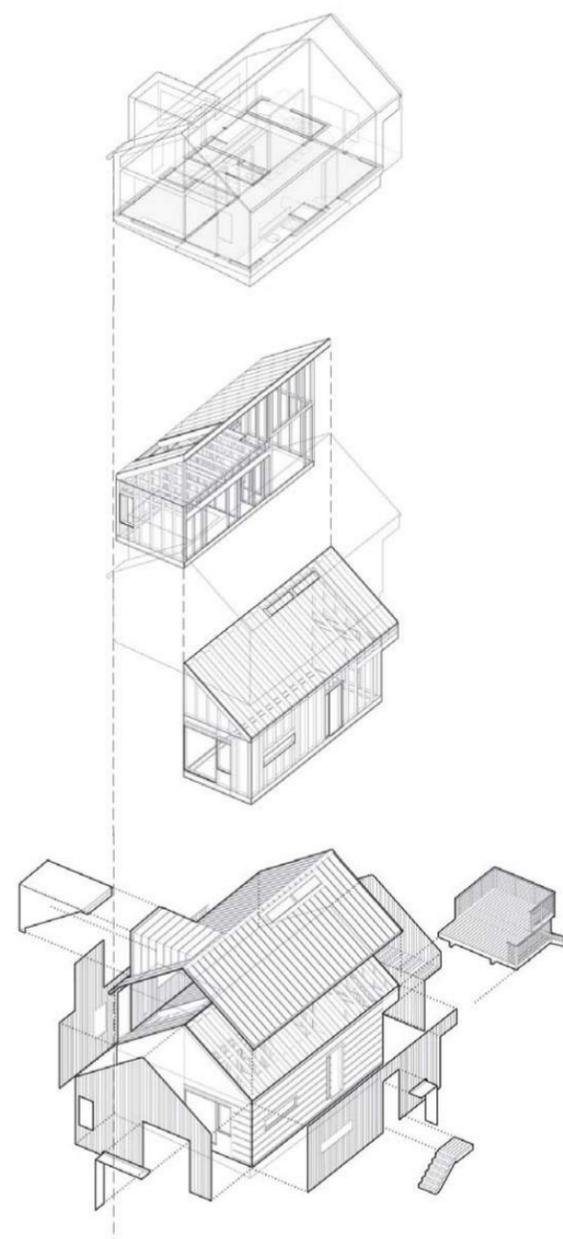
The community members were certainly never opposed to the project, but we knew what we were getting ourselves into – it's a historic community designed aesthetically around a very traditional style of homes. The New Norris House was something new and it made some people uncomfortable. We were easily seduced by slick modern boxes in the studio when we first started the project; but when we began holding neighborhood meetings to present various aspects of the project to the town, we found the lure to sometimes be a one-way street. We would walk through the project, explain orientation, spatial arrangements, the sustainable technologies, etc, but often the feedback seemed much more focused on the look and feel.

What were some of the issues that arose while attempting to integrate new sustainable technologies in a city like Norris, Tennessee?

I'll use our water collection and greywater infiltration systems as examples. Norris is a very small town and looked to state regulators for advice regarding proper regulations. Unlike our neighbors, North Carolina and Georgia, the state of Tennessee doesn't really have the same drought issues, and subsequently has never had to fully confront the issue of regulating these types of processes. It wasn't impossible, but it took a lot of extra time and still isn't 100% feasible for an average project.

In the case of obtaining a special permit for retaining and treating rainwater, can you explain why it took a year and a half?

Most regulating bodies (The City of Norris, the state environmental control department, etc) recognize that the technologies exist to solve these types of problems on-site, but were hesitant at first to distribute special permits. Even though the municipal water supply often uses similar industrially scaled safeguards – backflow prevention, filtration, etc – the issue is one of concentrating liability. The systems work and everyone acknowledged this, but would they be maintained by the average resident outside of a research setting?



New Norton House 'Onsite versus Offsite'. Image courtesy of UT CoAD.



New Norton House 'Clayton Factory Production'. Image courtesy of UT CoAD.



New Norton House 'Module Delivery'. Image courtesy of UT CoAD.



New Norton House 'Street View'. Image courtesy of Robert Batey Photography.

» The real turning point was during the open house when the neighbors were able to come into the house [post-construction] and experience the space for themselves.



New Norton House 'Winter Light in Kitchen'. Image courtesy of Ken McCown.

This was definitely a catalyst for tucking some of the technological features neatly away – the hot water panel on the dormer and the water system in a tight closet and underground, to name a few. I remember a few of the residents comparing the wood siding of earlier design iterations to corrugated cardboard. Needless to say, there were some cultural boundaries to cross and lessons that needed to be learned by both parties. The city of Norris is home to a lot of retired Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) engineers, so we actually did get a fair amount of comments on the structure, some of the systems, and constructability issues. Some of this was just an effort to poke fun at something new, but there was also a big desire to share their knowledge and urge us to solve problems. Overall it was a great learning experience.

#### How did you overcome some of the obstacles in gaining support from the neighbors?

The real turning point was during the open house when the neighbors were able to come into the house [post-construction] and experience the space for themselves. From the exterior elevations, they saw a typical gabled roof and assumed the interior spaces were like others they had seen in Norris – generally rather poorly lit with low ceilings. Putting together the drawings and the real thing, however, they were able to understand the intentions more and I'd like to think most people generally appreciated the design.

#### Clayton Homes makes a business out of mass production of homes. What was your experience in trying to alter standard designs?

We actually didn't use their standard designs as a starting point, but rather their production standards. Some of these we tried to tweak or otherwise adapt to what we wanted to do – insulated header design, advanced framing, leaving large portions of the home unfinished for students to complete later. Others efforts were simply not possible to change – an example here is our attempt to match the historical footprint of the original Norris Homes. While it didn't seem like a big deal to us when making the original request, the proposed dimensions would have required the fabrication of a large floor framing jig at the cost of many thousands of dollars. Thus, the home got bigger! There was definitely some push and pull that needed to be done from both sides and the project turned out better for it.

#### Was the pre-fabrication method of construction an effective and sustainable choice?

Clayton has been in the business for decades, and they are one of the largest pre-fabricated home builders in the country. They build all their homes in a matter of days, and the New Norris House was no different. Though not a typical 100% prefab effort, Clayton delivered to us sheathed walls, floor, and roof, wall insulation, and roughed in electrical and plumbing.



New Norton House 'Interior'. Image courtesy of Ken McCown.

There were a lot of material and time efficiencies realized by this and I would certainly consider it a sustainable choice, just not one made lightly. In our case, some of the efficiency is disguised by the on-site process we tackled as a more traditional design-build studio once the shell was in place. It was an incredible process to see them work in the factory though. I remember for the loft level we calculated the exact amount of wood needed to finish the flooring in order to minimize wasted construction material. We had a very complicated CAD drawing, but before we could figure out how to jigsaw it together, Clayton's team had practically already installed it. [Laughs].

#### Has Clayton homes used the Norris house design since 2009?

They have not. I dare to say they were as interested in our process as we were in theirs though. Several years before we finished the New Norris House, Clayton designed an environmentally friendly prototype modular home called the "ihouse" that was influenced in part by an earlier partnership with UT's CoAD program, but I am not sure the status of the design now. Clayton has the volume and power to push the market to a degree, but the market will also need to push them if more aggressive projects like the New Norris House are to become part of their offerings. ■

For more information on the Clayton's ihouse, [CLICK HERE](#)  
For more information on the New Norris House, [CLICK HERE](#)



**Zachary L. Farrell, Assoc. AIA**  
is an Architectural Intern at Good, Fulton & Farrell in Dallas, Texas, a contributor to AIA Dallas, and a continuing volunteer at Young Architects Forum local and national.

# HOW BIG IS YOUR (CO<sub>2</sub>) FOOTPRINT?

## CARBON ANALYSIS FOR COMMERCIAL OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainability in architecture has fast become part of our daily practice. Materials selection, indoor air quality, waste diversion, and recycled content are now among a variety of common considerations for architects during the design process. While the principles and practices behind these considerations are indeed making a difference in our profession as much as they are on our environment, there is currently no single agency (proprietary or otherwise) that establishes requirements for or regulates the carbon offsets of manufacturing, transportation and building. Be that as it may, there are some companies that have recognized the importance of carbon analyses and have themselves undertaken this endeavor.

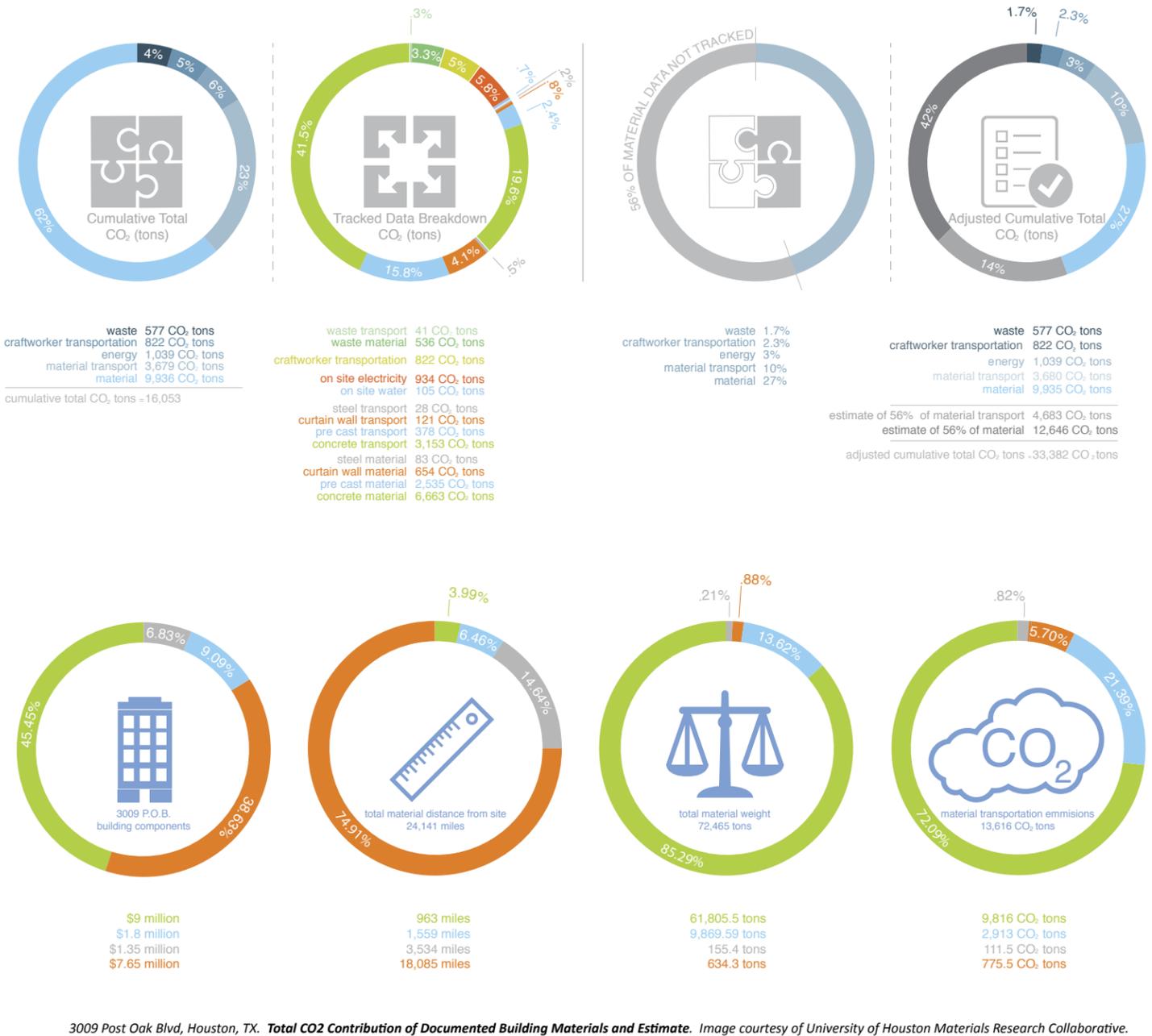
One such example is Skanska, a Swedish construction and development company founded in 1887 which has since grown to have a global presence; operating here in the states as Skanska USA. In Europe, Skanska has been conducting detailed carbon footprint analyses for the last thirty years while this practice has been going on here in the states for only about five. According to Maria Aimone, manager of development for Skanska in Houston, this is indeed important work as the vast majority of greenhouse gases affecting our atmosphere comes from carbon dioxide. In a 2012 study performed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the four major culprits in greenhouse gas emissions are methane, nitrous oxide, fluorinated gases and CO<sub>2</sub> which makes up a staggering 82% of the total emissions. Recognizing the importance of a reduction to carbon released in our atmosphere, Maria Aimone, Manager of Development Skanska USA notes:

*"The philosophy behind these studies is that we, as developers, are acting as good stewards of natural resources for future generations."*

Skanska USA has taken their commitment to sustainability even further by including a comprehensive carbon analyses as part of all of their new commercial office building developments. Here we'll look at the research and data of 3009 Post Oak Boulevard in Houston, Texas. For this particular development, the task of compiling the data and research was contracted out to the Materials Research Collaborative which is based in the Gerald D. Hines School of Architecture at the University of Houston.



3009 Post Oak Blvd, Houston, TX. Image courtesy of SKANSKA USA.

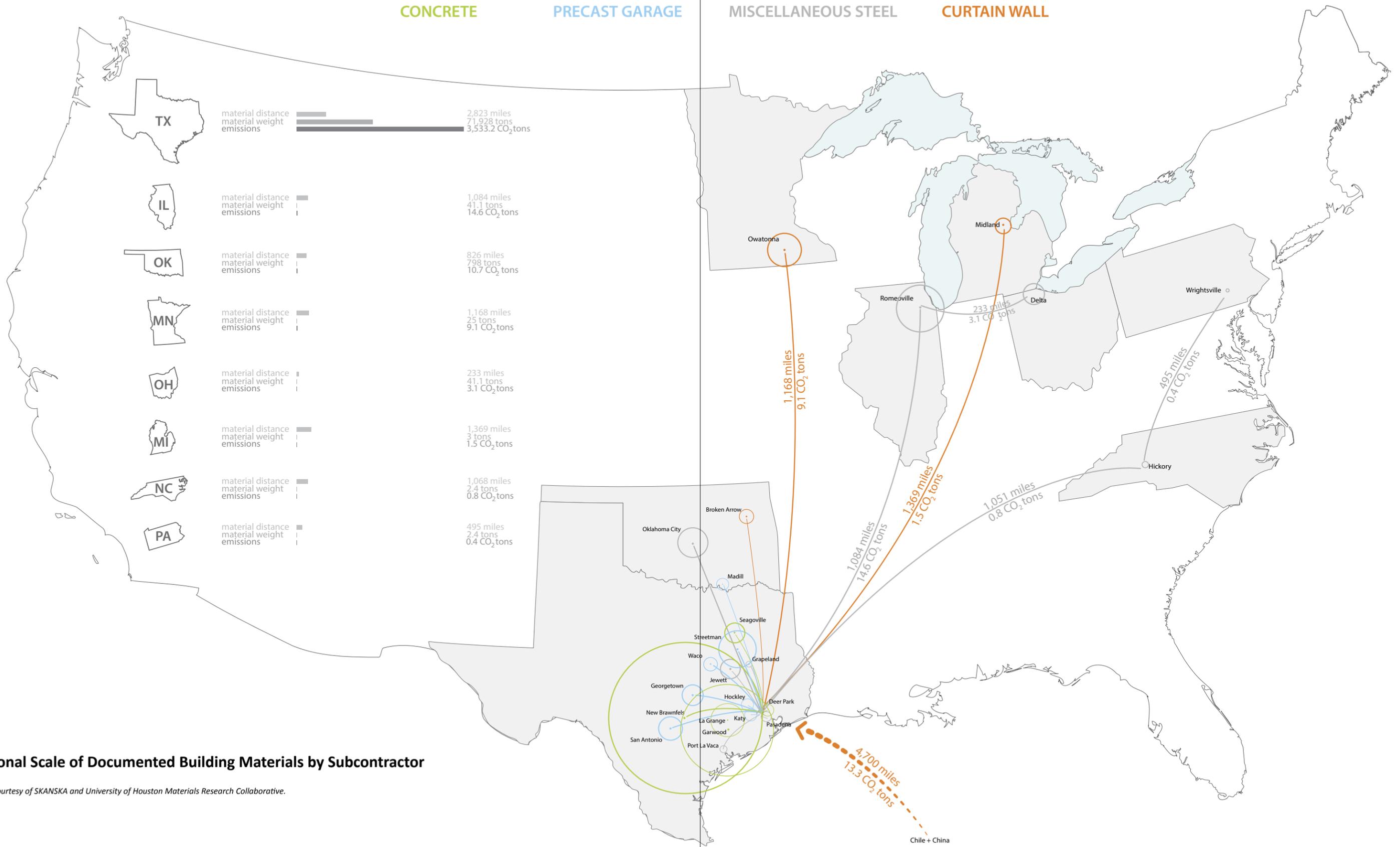


CONCRETE

PRECAST GARAGE

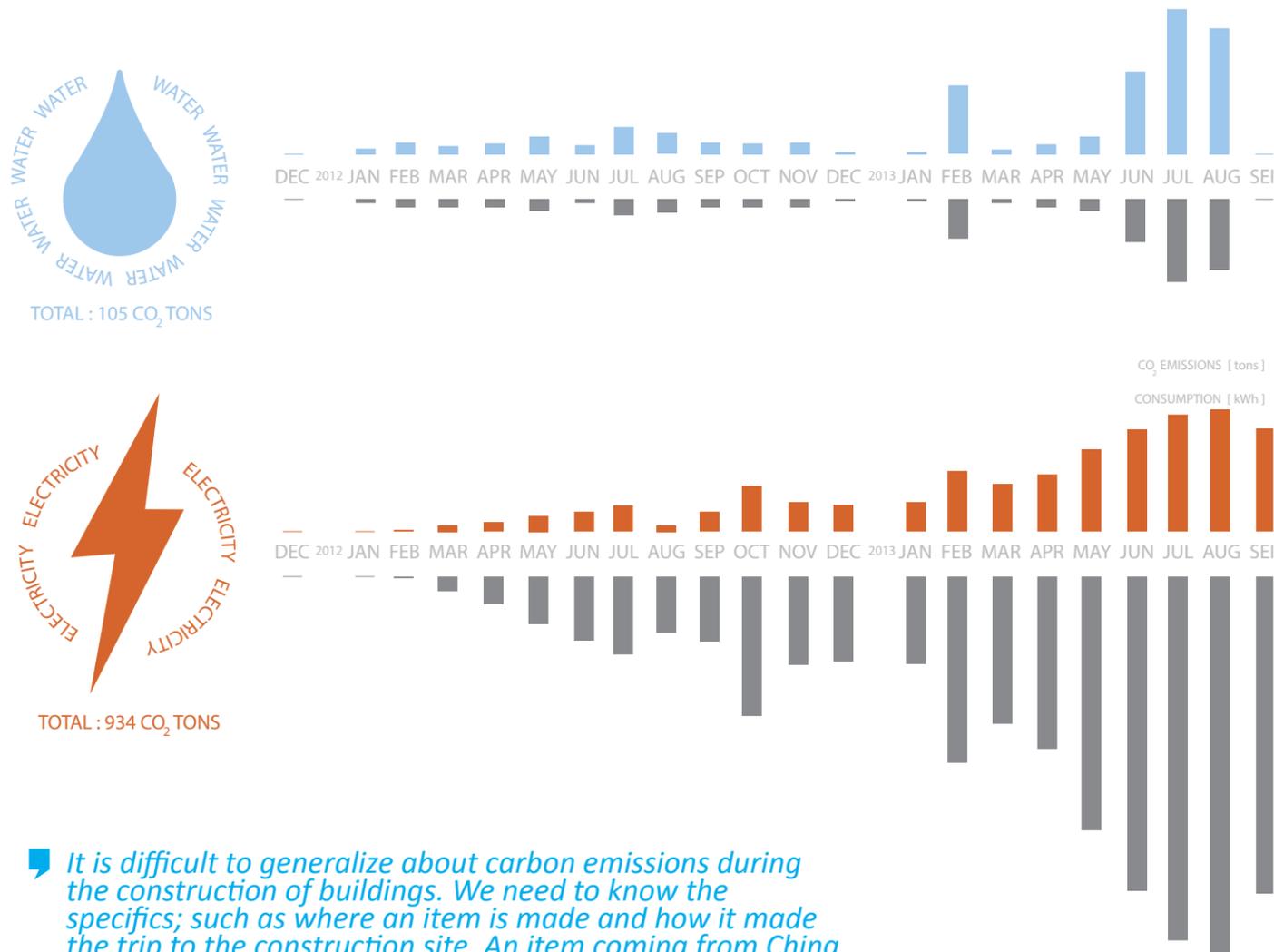
MISCELLANEOUS STEEL

CURTAIN WALL



National Scale of Documented Building Materials by Subcontractor

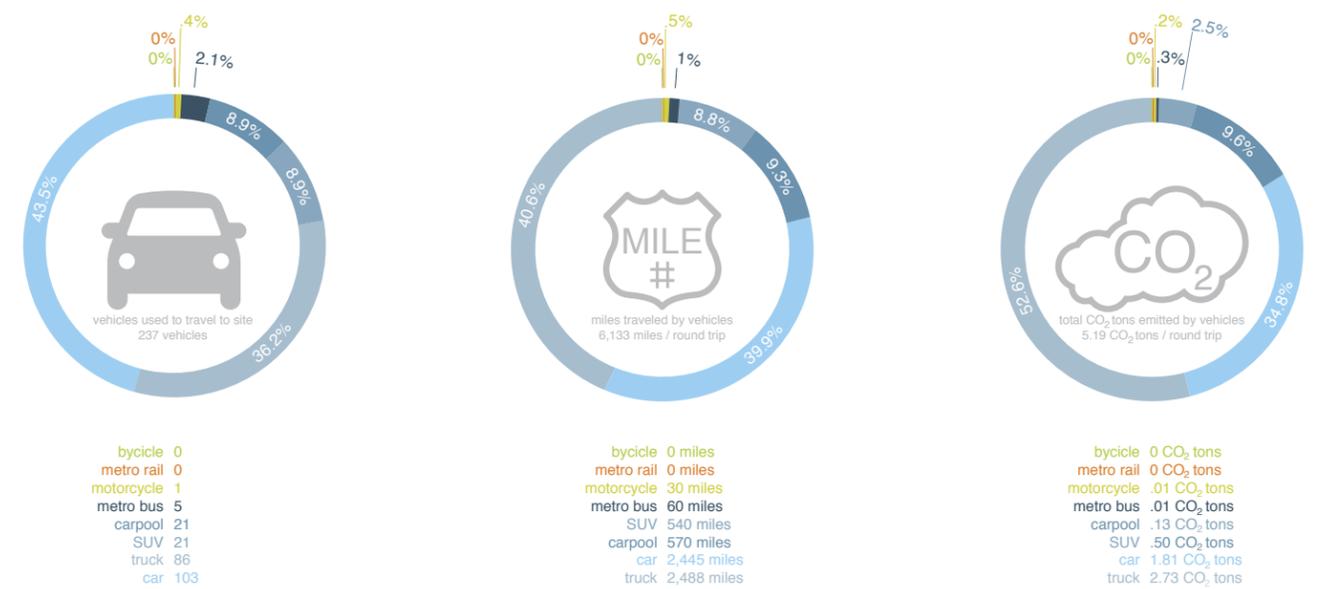
Image courtesy of SKANSKA and University of Houston Materials Research Collaborative.



It is difficult to generalize about carbon emissions during the construction of buildings. We need to know the specifics; such as where an item is made and how it made the trip to the construction site. An item coming from China by boat may actually emit less carbon during transportation than the same item of the same weight being trucked across the US.

- Donna Kacmar, FAIA, Director of the Materials Research Collaborative

3009 Post Oak Blvd, Houston, TX. Resources Consumption and Emissions. Image courtesy of University of Houston Materials Research Collaborative.



3009 Post Oak Blvd, Houston, TX. Craftworker Transportation. Image courtesy of University of Houston Materials Research Collaborative.

In order to conduct detailed analyses of carbon offsets emitted during construction there has to be a complete understanding of what will be required of the subcontractors during and after construction. Before the onset of construction, Skanska will administer a complete walk through of all information that this undertaking demands. For example, the subcontractor responsible for the curtain wall would be required to submit information on how many pounds of aluminum will be used in the assembly, and they will also need to give specifics on where it will be shipped from and by what method of transportation it will arrive at the job site. For 3009 Post Oak, this coordination of information took place throughout the entire construction process. Monthly reports on materials, point-of-origin and transportation were necessary to encourage timely participation and to guarantee the accuracy of data provided.

Julie Hendricks, AIA, Director of EcoServices at Kirksey Architecture noted that, "The data on how the workers arrived at the site is something we normally know nothing about. In the future this information is likely to become common knowledge due to corporate social responsibility programs. The critical area of carbon research that comes from anything other than energy usage is no longer neglected by clients such as Skanska."

As mentioned above transportation of materials plays a significant role in this process. However, for 3009 Post Oak the scope of research in this regard was not solely limited to materials but also included transportation data of the workers coming to the site everyday to construct the building. A survey was administered to the entire workforce on the job. Questions on how they were commuting to the site and whether or not carpools were being employed gave insight into the impact of transportation of the men and women responsible for making the design a reality.

Presently, another carbon analyses is being performed for a new office building in Houston. Once the study is complete, Skanska will use this new information to compare how the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint has and/or can be improved for future developments. ■



**A.J. Sustaita, AIA**  
is a Project Architect and LEED AP at Sustaita Architects in Houston, TX and Co-Chair of the Intern/Associate Network for AIA Houston.

# FENGSHUI

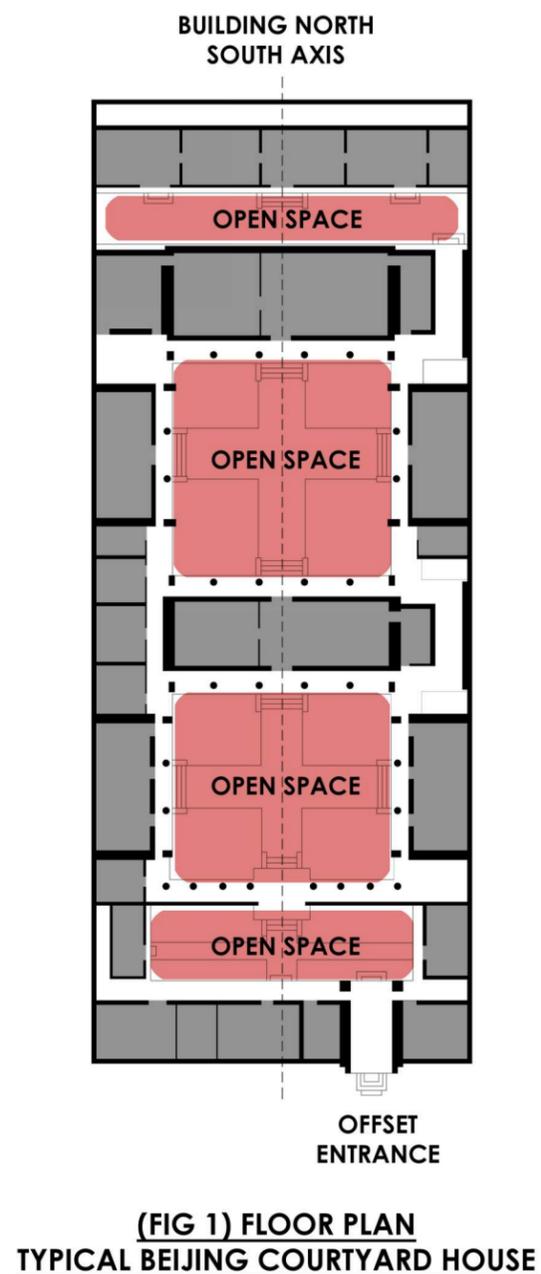
## AND THE ORIGINS OF SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

Substainability in architecture has become the trend in recent years -- and designing green is no longer an option but a requirement. Various industry sustainability metrics - such as CHPIIS and LEED - have been developed in order to establish the green building standards for our generation; with LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) leading the way as the most comprehensive system of measuring the "greenness" of buildings.

The concept of standardizing green buildings owes much of its popularity to its systematic and scientific approach and cost saving benefits. However, this idea of "green" and "sustainability design" might not be as new as everyone thinks it is. Environment-friendly and energy-efficient architecture has been around for centuries, especially in ancient China when buildings were designed and constructed with the surrounding environment fully in mind. Sustainability, in that context however, was delivered through the practice of "Fengshui" -- an architectural "guideline" focused on the balance between human living and Mother Nature. As a prerequisite for builders at the time, Fengshui as a practice was even included as part of the imperial scholar examination.

"Fengshui" is a mysterious theory that has no scientific proof whatsoever. However, It is a comprehensive record based on observations, experience and primitive astronomic calculations. It not only dictated the ideal building location/orientation and spatial configuration, but also the ideal construction start date, furniture layout, choice of material, etc. Although most of the "recommendations" described in Fengshui make no sense in today's scientific world, strangely, some Fengshui practices are proven to be very relevant in terms of green and sustainability architectural designs.

Building orientation in Fengshui practice was highly influenced by the cultural and social practices of the ancient time. It refers to Confucianism theory that encourages North South orientation. It is believed that the habitants will be blessed by orientating the building facing south. The location of the building is also important. It should be surrounded by mountains/hills on three sides of the building (except the front side of the building where the entry is forming a protective screen. Another important element is the courtyard, also known as skywell. According to Fengshui, it is the building's window to receive happiness from the heaven.



Vegetation is also documented to bring wealth to the building when planted in pairs at strategic locations. However, they shall not cast any shadows on building walls. A "shadow wall" shall be placed on either the inside or outside of the entrance to prevent demons from spying the house.

A typical Beijing Courtyard house layout is basically a "result" derived from the Fengshui practice. It is a perfect example to illustrate how this mystery theory is strongly tight to sustainable architecture. The North South orientation of the building maximizes its exposure to natural sunlight. It also provides natural heating for the occupants. It is especially important because in a climate such as Beijing with heating days significantly greater than cooling days throughout the year. Limited tree heights also avoid blocking sunlight entering the building and in turn increasing the daylight quality of the spaces. The courtyard is directly tight to the well being of the inhabitants many ways. It provides a platform for exercises and other social activities. It also increases the overall daylight level of the surrounding spaces. The "shadow wall", the hill surrounding the building and the offset of the entrance actually reduces the velocity of the infamous northern wind in winter.

There is no doubt that most of these guidelines, rules and standards written in the Fengshui practice are not justified by any means of scientific researches or experiments. However, it is amazing how this unproven theory was passed on generations after generations. Some of the rules actually make sense and yet to be proven by today's science. For example: the Fengshui practice recommends that a house warming ceremony shall be performed prior to occupancy. That involves burning paper money to the building God and worshipping all building corners. It certainly is an odd idea not to mention that it would definitely trigger the fire sprinkler system nowadays.

However, this might not be a complete nonsense. Some researchers suggest that the burning process actually chemically reduces the Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) released by certain building materials and in turn contribute to a healthier living space. A typical Beijing Courtyard house that uses no energy would definitely be qualified for Platinum if LEED existed thousands years ago. ■



**Yu-Ngok Lo, AIA**  
is the principal of his own firm YNL Architects, Inc., serves on the AIA LB/SB Board of Directors and the AIACC COTE committee since 2013. His works have been recognized by the AIA Inland California, AIA Long Beach / South Bay and featured in AIArchitect.

# GRADUATION DAY

## EMERGING PROFESSIONALS IN EMERGING COUNTRIES

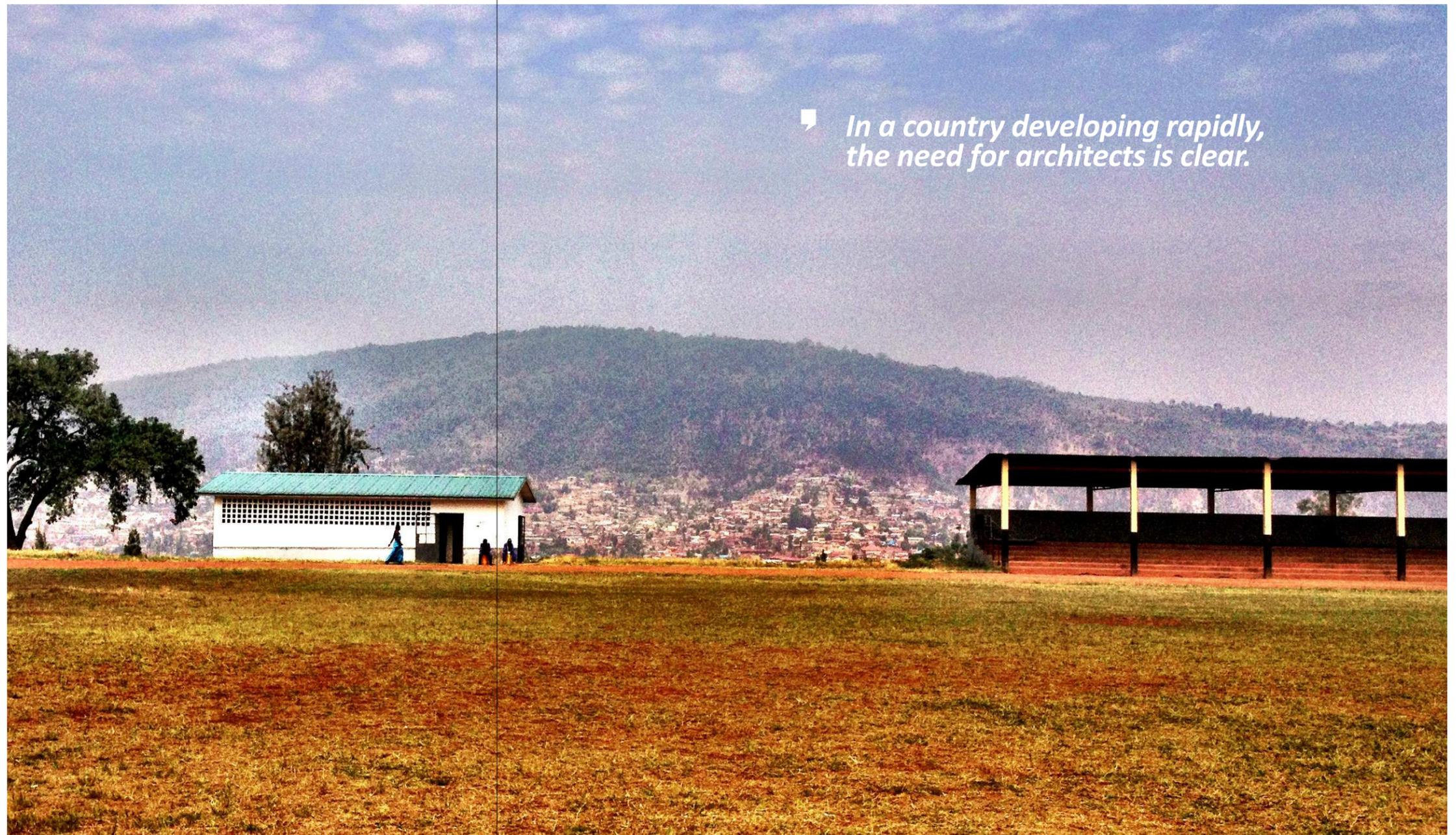
In August 2013 the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology, KIST, graduated the first 19 architecture students ever to be educated in Rwanda. As young practitioners working in the country, we had the opportunity to bear witness and participate in this moment.

African voices are a growing part of the global architecture conversation and the KIST graduation marks an important milestone of professional development for Rwanda. More importantly, it means the beginning of a legitimately Rwandan architectural culture and that is something to celebrate.

The ceremony took place on a clear, Kigali morning - the kind that befits any important first. Approaching the stadium gates, friends and families dressed to the nines buzzed with the excitement of a meaningful moment. Under white tents on an open football pitch, soon-to-be-graduates waited whilst spectators fanned themselves in the grandstand. Taking in a typically grand view of the city from on high, that pitch seemed a backwards field of dreams: they had come, but would they build it?



KIST Graduation Day. Photo courtesy of Uwase.



“In a country developing rapidly, the need for architects is clear.”

Rwandan development. Photo courtesy of Rivard.

Anyone who has visited Rwanda understands the state of confusion that characterizes its built environment. There is Chinese tile everywhere, disused half built homes, and deserted buildings from the 90's - it's kind of a mess. The government repeatedly uses the same building design for a variety of ministries and most people in the country cannot explain what an Architect does. And yet, it is a nice place to live. You will not find the cleanliness and safety Kigali offers anywhere else in East Africa. With that said, the vast majority of the population lives in mountainous villages where buildings are made of earth by the people who inhabit them. But that is quickly changing. In a country developing rapidly, the need for architects is clear. Nineteen graduates now stand positioned to fill that void.

For Rwandans, having an architecture school in-country means the ability to cultivate local architecture practices based on self-sufficiency. Today a huge gap exists between the built environment of Kigali and that of the rural villages that dot the rest of the country. The international, imported styles and materials that pervade the capitol have yet to reach the countryside where the word architect does not exist. In these villages the vernacular still dominates, and wood, soil, and stones are the stuff of life. **As a small generation of architects emerges, the task ahead is to determine how these conflicting influences should balance in shaping contemporary Rwandan architecture. The answer holds significant economic, social and cultural implications for Rwandans' future.**

Beyond the question of progress versus tradition remains the difficult work of teaching Rwandans the role of architecture in society. One way forward is to emphasize local participation - using materials familiar to communities to elucidate the creative problem solving approach of the design process. A central question persists: how can architects teach and impact the communities around them? In a country with so much rural poverty, architecture cannot serve only the wealthy. A more sensible approach would focus on building understanding within the community and embedding these first architects back into the education system that produced them. Cities in Rwanda should not look like imported materials - they should have their own character that comes out of the local cultural context. **Rwandan architects now have the chance to preserve the country's cultural identity by injecting it into the built environment.**



KIST Graduation Day ceremonies. Photo courtesy of Uwase.

What exciting contributions will these nineteen young architects make to their rapidly evolving country?

For the few muzungus - local parlance for white folks - in the crowd that day, the KIST graduation was a moment to peek behind the curtain of another culture and share a feeling of connection and understanding. Rwanda is a culture the rest of the world has a lot to learn from - and the opposite is also true. The country clearly desires development in the western sense of the word - to be the first developed country in East Africa - as the saying goes. One wonders whether certain local traditions will be sacrificed in the name of "progress." For any rapidly urbanizing populace, the transition from a mud home to a concrete one seems like real progress. **Yet in more developed countries, people are increasingly returning to the vernacular building techniques that so often are abandoned in that transition. They are rediscovered as contemporary sources of inspiration.**



KIST Graduation Day. Photo courtesy of Uwase.



KIST Graduation Day ceremonies. Photo courtesy of Uwase.

The Rwandan government has gone so far as to outlaw specific, traditional architectural practices in favor of bland, modern alternatives. Thatched roofs, planted fences, and in Kigali, homes of earth block are all strictly prohibited under the banner of development. The imported styles and materials that prevail in Kigali foretell a future in which Rwandan architecture is indistinguishable from that of any other developing country. But it does not have to be that way. One needs look only as far back as China in the last two decades to understand the cultural destruction development can wreak. Rwandan architects must protect and preserve their own traditions as they develop a national design identity of their own.

And so it begins, an architectural culture born before our eyes. What exciting contributions will these nineteen young architects make to their rapidly evolving country? Only time will tell, but one thing is for sure: it is the opportunity of a lifetime. What a pleasure to witness. ■



**Jean Paul Sebahuyi Uwase** is a Design Fellow at MASS Design Group in Kigali, Rwanda and the valedictorian of the first graduating class of architecture students at KIST.



**Nicolas Rivard** is a Design Fellow at MASS Design Group in Kigali, Rwanda, an artist, writer, and craftsman in his free time.

# BACK TO SCHOOL

## PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY

### COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

**Can you explain what a MOOC is and what the strategy has been for Philadelphia University to enter the online market?**

**RF** The word, or acronym itself, M-O-O-C, stands for Massively Open Online Course. There are four variables there: 'massive' meaning more than fifty or more than one-hundred. There is no set definition of what constitutes massive, but the goal is to have thousands of people in your course. That's when it becomes massive. There have been courses with as many as ten to twenty thousand students in them. The 'open' portion is a nice way of saying 'free' or open to society and is meant to be shareable. The 'online' is online and the 'course' is the course. That's the origin of the idea and meaning of the word.

**BK** It's been a highly disruptive concept in higher education because it opens courses up to the masses. Courses that were previously only the privilege of certain people who could enroll in the class are now more accessible. It offers free education to individuals who don't live near the university and allows them to take it anywhere in the world as long as they have digital access.

**RF** That starts to answer the second (strategy) part of the question: "Why would you give your course away for free?" It sounds counterintuitive on more than one level and it's a mixture of what Barbara said. The idea that you can reach a broader audience is both selfish, in the sense you can promote your programs, and altruistic because you can give something back to society at large. As an architect you have an opportunity to do more than just building. I should note that we don't give away our whole degree for free. We're looking at giving one course or three credits out of thirty-three or so that we would normally require. Students who would like to get credit have to pay for it. It's not completely altruistic, but there was a huge number who received a free education.

**BK** This is just the first time starting a MOOC. A fair number of individuals were actually interested who took the MOOC and participated.

**Do you have data about the participation that you can share with our readership?**

**RF** Out of the 500 people who expressed interest, we registered 300 students. Out of that we had 60 people actively engaged –watching videos, etc. Then we had a subgroup of ten to twelve students who were doing all the assignments as if they were a graduate student. Two ended up paying for the course and received graduate credit.

We had three types of students who self identified: grazers, or students who popped in and out and watched videos now and then; students committed to all videos and content; and scholars who watched videos, read content and did all of the assignments.

Students would self identify with one of the categories at the beginning of the course, but would move from group to group as their interest increased. The scholar group even received attention directly from me. I reviewed some of their papers and we had conversations throughout the year. Depending on the level of engagement, they got more time from the professor, which is an interesting model. This was great for me because the students who were interested in the content held high level conversations; I didn't have to motivate them or force them to produce. It's a different model of education.

**BK** The numbers mentioned, i.e. who enrolled and who finished, are in-line with MOOCs taught by *Coursera*, *Udacity* and other really large platforms.

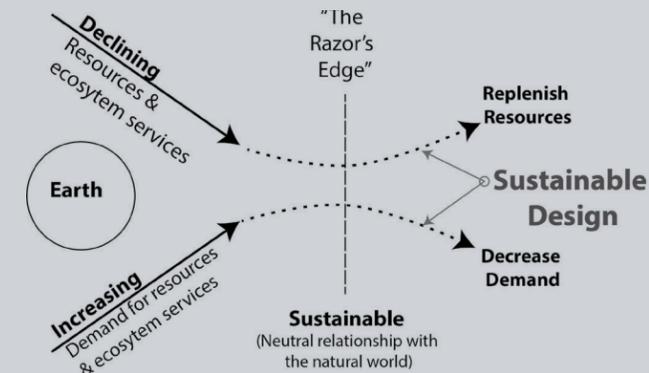
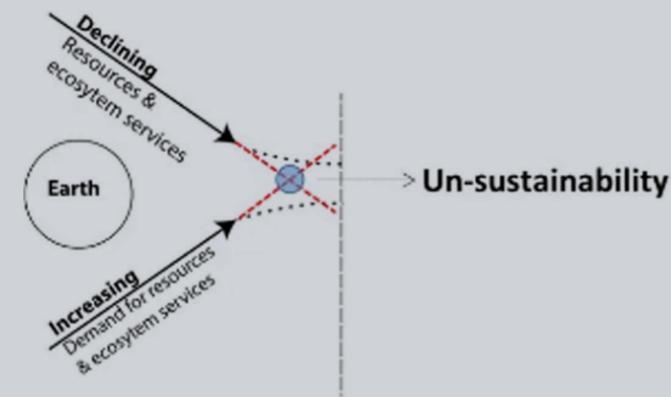
**Did you feel this is a delivery method you can see the school scaling up to offer more courses?**

**BK** This has been an experiment for us. This was the first MOOC that Philadelphia University offered and we did it through a non-traditional way. We didn't teach it through a big MOOC platform such as *Udacity*, *Coursera*, etc. It was also an experiment for us to see how we fund the types of courses that we offer for free to the public. We might get a few students interested in our program, but we still have to come up with the funding ahead of time. We intend to teach the same course again and we will evaluate the pros and cons (They are actually more labor intensive than we thought). We will focus on offering other MOOCs that spread who we are as a University and as the College of Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). The main goal is to increase our visibility and focus on the core areas of our college: sustainability, innovation and collaboration.

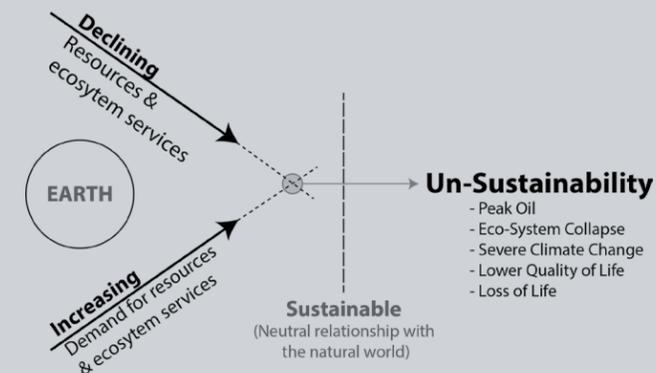
**RF** The MOOC has made my on-campus course a lot better. The materials are of a higher level because I had to make sure my course was organized properly and the learning objectives were communicated clearly. Therefore, it forced me to raise my game. I looked at what I was already teaching and tried to take the next step. It has been beneficial to me, which is why I am interested in continuing to do this in some fashion.

**Is there anything you can teach better through an online medium? Or are you constantly trying to translate what you teach on campus into online. Has anything gone back upstream?**

**BK** Online teaching has made us take a much more organized approach to teaching. You separate the development of the course, the assignments and also the writer/developer and the teacher. In Rob's case, it is the same person, but many providers do it the other way. It's a way of having courses developed up-front, but leaves little room for alteration while you are teaching it. In the classroom you can constantly reevaluate what you are actually teaching. But the written and predetermined layout makes that tough. The challenges we have right now with online courses, specific to Philadelphia University, is our Nexus Learning approach. This is an active, real world, collaborative learning environment. We are actively figuring out how to bring these types of projects to online learning. We have been successful with that, since we are teaching studios online.



The Natural Step Funnel  
Source: The Natural Step Program (accessed 2012) Adapted by Author

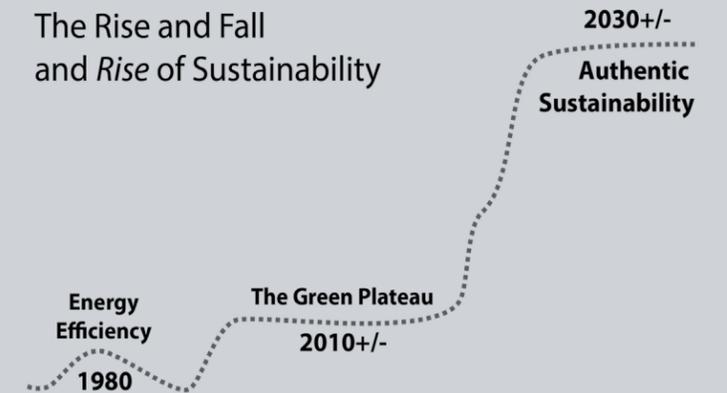


The Natural Step Funnel  
Source: The Natural Step Program (accessed 2012) Adapted by Author

**RF** There are some strategies we use to help with updating. Most of my videos are 10-12 minutes long. So if I have to change a lecture, I'm only redoing 10 minutes instead of 45. This helps to update content pretty cleanly.

**Can you talk about some of the highlights of the content? What is it about this course that is attractive to architects and the public? What is it you are teaching specifically?**

**RF** I have a mantra called Beyond Green. Right now in the country, we are on what I call the Green Plateau. Architects design buildings that save 10-15%, shake hands and declare success. But if we look at what's going on in the world and the way climate is changing and how energy impacts it, we have to go beyond green. We have to look at authentic sustainability that evaluates performance and aesthetics: If it's not beautiful, it's not sustainable. We should have social responsibility and any work should be economically viable. The one thing we don't want is to send sustainability experts into the field who have no idea about money or budgets. We have also brought financial sustainability into the equation. We are trying to give a holistic entrenchment of sustainability that serves as a foundation of professionals going forward. We hope our students will be change agents when they graduate and educate the senior leadership of firms to stay on task. This course is the foundation for the curriculum.



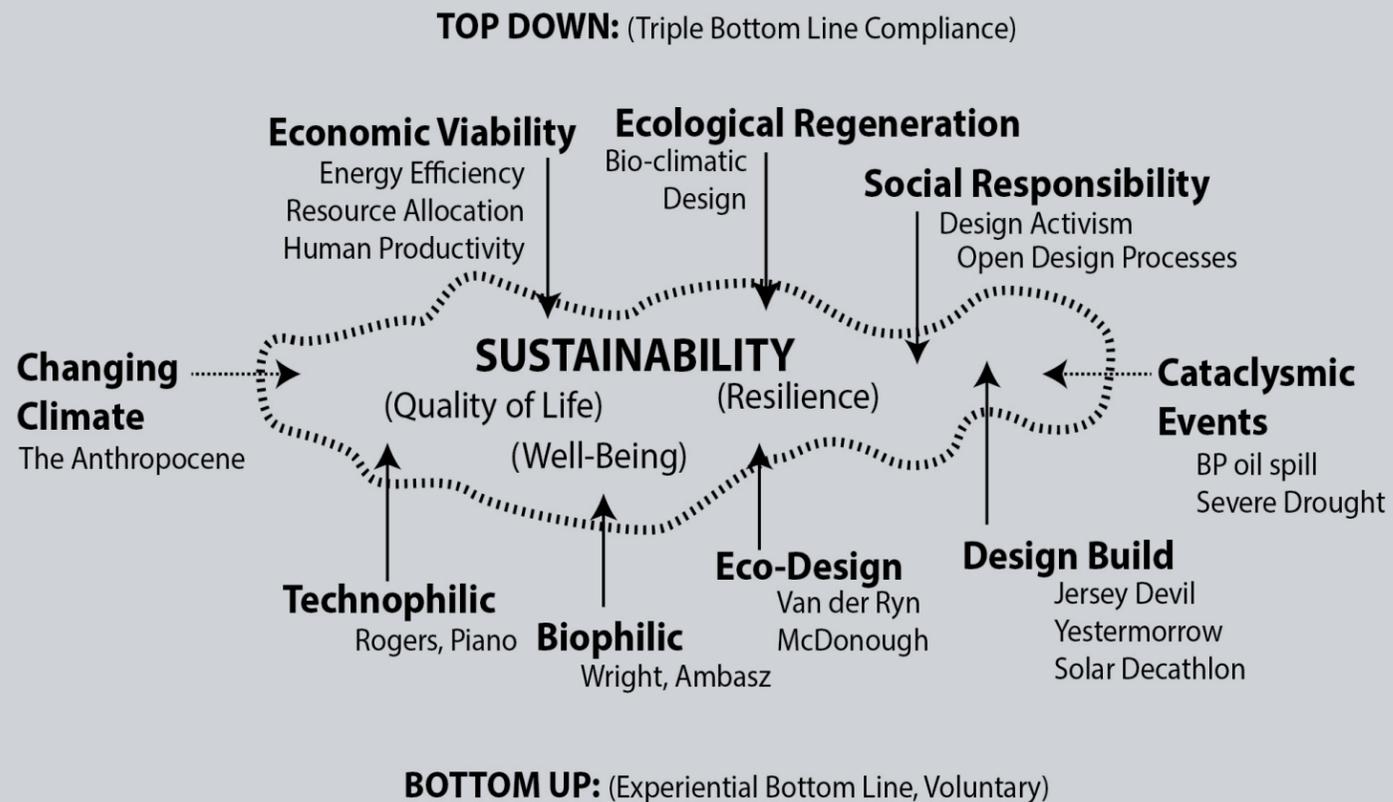
**How does the course fit into the broader goals of the program?**

**RF** We notice that every architecture school teaches green design at some level. However, when I ask students how green design fits into the larger framework of sustainability. It is difficult to get answers. We think this Master's degree is giving them that broader framework or foundation they need. So when they go to meetings and have doubters, they can make informed arguments.

**How does this program teach sustainability better than others?**

**RF** It's something I call casual greening. At a crit, students have great work on the wall, but when someone asks, "What's green about it?", students will point to their green roof. However, they can't answer the question as to why it's important. That scares me about where our education is heading. Luckily, at the Philadelphia University Architecture program, I think we are doing a pretty good job. The students are beginning to answer those questions. In sustainable design you have to be able to give the metrics of how much water a green roof is able to save. What I'm afraid of is that Green design is being used like wallpaper; I have PV panels all

over my roof. "How much energy do those PV panels generate and how does it relate to the base energy load". We have to get away from this plateau and think about Green, not as something applied, but something intrinsic from the beginning of the design process. As Barbara mentioned, we are big on collaboration. The idea of working with engineers, builders, and interior designers at the beginning through the integrated design process, allows students to see a much broader vision on how sustainability can be a driver of design and not applied at the end. One of our tenets is "If it's not beautiful, it's not sustainable". We are not talking about trading beauty for performance. We are leveraging performance and beauty together to create a more powerful form of architecture.

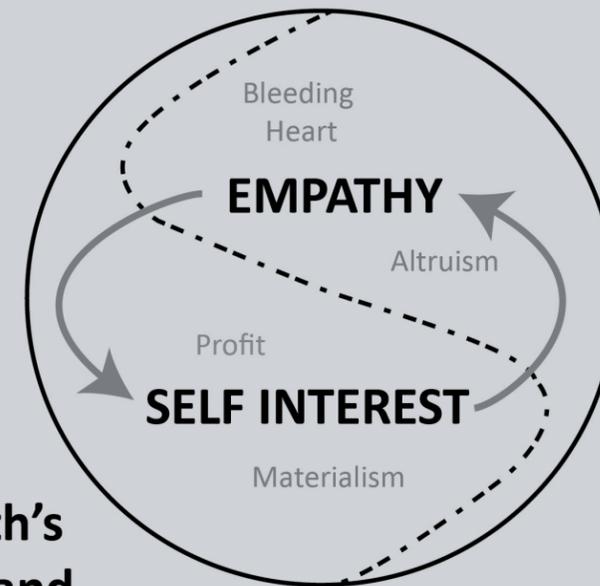


**Barbara Klinkhammer** is Executive Dean and Professor of the College of Architecture and the Built Environment at Philadelphia University. She has taught at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she served as Associate Dean, Chair of Interior Design, and Chair of the Graduate Architecture Programs, and prior to coming to the United States in 1999, Professor Klinkhammer taught for five years at the Bauhaus University in Weimar, Germany. She currently serves on the executive board of the Architectural Research Centers Consortium (ARCC), holds a degree in architecture from the RWTH-Aachen, and is a registered architect in Germany and Europe.

**Sustainability**  
*The Great Resolution?*

The Second  
Invisible hand  
**WE**

**I**  
Adam Smith's  
Invisible Hand



**You are currently offering the course through the PhilaU website. Do you have any plans for a broader platform?**

**RF** There is a group we are working with called the Open Online Academy (OOA) out of New York. They have a platform they have built using the EdX model. EdX is one of the established platforms for MOOCs. EdX has put out a free platform that other people are using to launch their own. The OOA has one of the most interesting groups of courses. They have a course on designing resilient schools (5000 enrollees) and designing emergency shelters (10,000 enrollees). The latter just had their jury for the top 12 projects, which I sat on, and had projects from all over the world. This diversity has been one of the most satisfying things about teaching online. I have had students from almost every country in

the world talking about sustainability. The Australians, for example, are so far ahead of us because they are getting hit directly with climate change on a daily basis. They educated the other students about resilience. Other enrollees hailed from Africa, Germany, Brazil, England, Turkey, and India. The Designing Emergency Shelters MOOC formed design teams halfway through the course to actually design shelters, which the UN has pledged to build prototypes. It's really interesting and good work that I would like to put against the work from traditional studios. If you can't tell the difference, at one level that means the quality is equivalent. The experience will remain different, but the objectives need to remain consistent. ■

*All images courtesy of Rob Fleming.*

**Rob Fleming** is a LEED Accredited Professional, a registered architect with over 15 years' experience of teaching, research and practice in sustainable design, and co-creator and Director of the award winning Master of Science in Sustainable Design Program at Philadelphia University. Rob is a Sustainability Fellow at Re:Vision Architecture in Philadelphia where he consults and facilitates integrated design charrettes.

# PASSIVE HOUSE

## THE OBSTACLES OF EXCEEDING EXPECTATION

*In the January issue of Connection, I wrote about the **Passive House** -- covering the technological means and methods by which this new level of sustainable craft may be achieved. I wish that I could say that the process since that time has been a seamless one, but the future of sustainable design is sometimes a harder reality to achieve in the present.*

*Given that passive design is not yet a wholly recognized practice, I'd like to take this opportunity to address the potential roadblocks in pursuing a level of design that exceeds standard energy codes and the difficulties of getting "Back to Zero".*

I now have two projects that are designed to approach Net-Zero Energy consumption, but taking theoretical drawings and models into reality has been anything but simple and straightforward. Both projects are in construction as of this publication, but energy detailing, construction budgeting, and client compromises have led to long delays from both original schedules. I had hoped to have a great many pictures from the various stages of construction from January to now, but I have to apologize to you, the reader, that not much has transpired on site, except for the hope that we will not give up and maintain optimism for the completion of each project by early spring 2015.

The Phoenix House that had been featured in the January issue of *Connection* has, in fact, received Passive House Institute US PHIUS+ Pre-Certification; allowing us to proceed with construction in confidence that the performance criteria are met in the design. Over the past ten months, however, construction has been limited to foundation and basement work, and the installation of the prefabricated exterior shell panels.

The on-site delay experienced by the contractor, in this case, was due to the proprietary panels, the fact that this integral product could only be sourced in Germany, and that Germany had been plagued by recent dock strikes. Of course, a worker strike could happen anywhere. [The unfortunate aspect of this lesson, however, is that Passive House approved products are difficult to source in the States; not only taxing projects \(our clients and contractors\) with international freight, but with longer lead times in the procurement of products that are necessary to achieving high-performance standards.](#)

In the end, the panels arrived a whopping eight-weeks after the expected delivery date. And it was only after the panels were in-

hand and installation begun, that the contractor noticed additional complications: first, in not having the required number of panels and second, that a number of the received panels would require refabrication as they were not to specification. In both cases, the issues had been caused by mistranslation of the shop drawings into fabrication of the panel system; resulting in newly and refabricated panels that again required transatlantic shipping and further delaying construction.

[Prefabricated construction promotes a variety of benefits; not the least of which is precision fabrication and ease of assembly through the controlled environment of skilled craftsman in a factory setting. The final on-site assembly, on the other hand, remains a challenge for framing crews \(particularly those in the US\) that are largely unfamiliar with the process and craft of constructing prefabricated structures.](#)

Presenting these few lessons-learned is in no way meant to discourage architects, clients, and builders from pursuing Net-Zero projects. On the contrary, reducing the carbon footprint of our built environment is a necessary part of creating sustainable communities. It is by sharing our lessons learned that we can avoid future such pitfalls and, hopefully together, create an industry in the US that is conducive to developing high-performance projects.

[One common dilemma of any project -- that could have led to fewer problems on the Phoenix Passive House -- is more transparent communication.](#) There was a point in the contract documents phase for instance, when the bid process was completed, that our client came to terms with costs that were not anticipated due to the premium placed on high performance building products and systems. There has been a breakdown in communicating both the value and the premium associated with such projects.

It is by sharing our lessons learned that we can avoid future such pitfalls and, hopefully together, create an industry in the US that is conducive to developing high-performance projects.



All photos courtesy of Don Johnson/ Johnsonimages.com

Since that point, when the team encountered critical issues in the project, communication immediately broke down because that trust had earlier been eroded. Every attempt to value engineer the project seemed to widen the trust gap. [Managing client expectations for budgets is most often not in the scope of our architectural services and market prices are certainly not in our control -- we can make no guarantees -- but we can advise our clients based on past experiences with the intent of aligning expectations.](#) In this way, when we go beyond the design phase approvals of colors and finishes and encounter value engineering issues, we can proceed as a team with the same goal in mind.

I can positively say that the other Net-Zero project, the Lake Michigan house, benefitted greatly from what had been learned from the Phoenix House experience; starting from the first team meeting with a foundation of clear and consistent communication.

The Lake Michigan house is, however, not without its own constraints. In this case, the client lives primarily out of state, has a builder from another state, and wants to build a Net-Zero house at a site on Lake Michigan that is a seven-hour drive from my office. So it goes without saying that a transparent approach and open lines of communication are absolutely necessary. With a positive attitude among all parties involved, we are working through the projects specific issues, and by the time you read this, we will have an enclosed shell on site ready for a winter of interior framing and finishes.

What I hope might be taken away from this article is the lesson that getting "Back to Zero" is much more complex than one might think; certainly more complex than when the Cliff Dwellings at Mesa Verde were built by the Anasazi as early examples of passive residence. When a new practice (or one that has been lost) has to be learned, there is no single path to success. I am hopeful yet that I will continue to meet clients that are willing to take the trip down the path together, and with collaborative communication, the way "Back to Zero" will only get easier. ■



**Kurt Neiswender, AIA**  
is a Project Architect at Sedgewick & Ferweda Architects in Flint Michigan and holds the position of 2013-2014 AIA Young Architect Regional Director - Michigan and 2014-2015 AIA Flint Chapter Director.

# NOT A ZERO-SUM GAME

## QUANTIFYING THE PREMIUM FOR (AND RETURN ON) NET-ZERO BUILDINGS

As architects try to meet the 2030 Challenge of carbon-neutral facilities for projects built just 16 years from now, they often must rely on imprecise information on how to reach carbon-neutrality and the goal of the net-zero building. A new report commissioned by the District of Columbia's Department of the Environment provides some meaningful guidance.

The District of Columbia is home to more green buildings per capita than any other large U.S. city. The District's stated goal is to reduce building energy use to half of what it was in 2010 by 2032. The District Department of the Environment (DDOE) commissioned a study exploring how the city can best craft policy and create incentives to build net-zero energy and net-zero water buildings and facilities that qualify as Living Buildings. [This report is intended as an aid to further advance the building industry toward more resilient, restorative facilities.](#)

The DDOE had two goals: first, to investigate the costs associated with upgrading existing buildings from LEED Platinum to zero-energy, zero-water, and Living Building standards. And second, to collect data to advise policy makers on deep-green buildings and incentives. The findings are published in Net Zero and Living Building Challenge Financial Study: A Cost Comparison Report for Buildings in the District of Columbia.

The study was conducted by New Buildings Institute, International Living Future Institute, and Skanska, and conceptually transformed three LEED v3 Platinum-designed buildings to net-zero energy, net-zero water, and Living Buildings standards. Its scope focused on common building types in the District: office new construction, multi-family new construction, and office renovation. The study summarizes the cost premium range for each building type, uncovers challenges associated with the large size of commercial buildings in the District, and provides policy recommendations for addressing them.

### The Research Team Quantified Net-Zero Costs

The team applied a set of efficiency measures to each building's envelope, lighting, HVAC, operations, occupancy, and direct loads, along with rainwater harvesting techniques, in order to achieve reduced energy and water usage, before adding photovoltaics and water-reuse strategies.

Costs for achieving net-zero standards are difficult to distinguish from overall project costs. However, through analysis the team identified costs connected to energy and water conservation, as well as the photovoltaic and water-reuse systems necessary for such a project.

The study found that the initial cost for energy efficiency is approximately 1-12% higher, varying by the building type. This rises to 5-19% in net-zero energy buildings when considering the added cost of a photovoltaic power supply. But the benefits make the added cost worthwhile: the energy efficiency measures alone offer a return on investment of 6-12%. After factoring current tax and renewable energy credits into these figures, the return on investment in net-zero buildings is approximately 30%.

### The Study Looked at Investments and Policy Options

Among the key financial and return on investment savings, the study found that:

- *For a 1-3% added initial cost of construction, new developments in the District could save up to 60% of their energy consumption.*
- *The return on investment for deep energy efficiency is 6-12% and rises to 33-36% when modeled for net-zero energy using solar power.*
- *Advanced water conservation measures to reduce water consumption and storm water runoff from the buildings cost 1-3%, conserve 45-60% of the water usage, and have a return on investment of 5-10%.*

The report quantifies the investment needed to move the District closer to a more resilient, net-zero future and recommends that District officials take a number of actions. First, they should define net-zero energy, and require disclosure of measured energy use and renewable energy projects annually to verify actual net-zero energy performance.

■ *The agreement between the architect and owner should establish the owner's anticipated sustainable objective ... [the] benefit to the environment, enhancement to the health and well-being of building occupants, or improvement of energy efficiency.*

The report suggests promoting the evolution of energy codes, in part by continuing to update current codes to follow the most stringent standards. Officials should advance incentives for deep-green buildings to encourage the inclusion of building measurements with significant societal benefits. It is recommended that city officials identify and remove regulatory impediments to deep-green and Living Buildings.

### Communication Up-front Is Critical to Achieving Project Goals

The agreement between the architect and owner should establish the owner's anticipated sustainable objective for the project, which may include a project sustainability certification, benefit to the environment, enhancement to the health and well-being of building occupants, or improvement of energy efficiency. In addition, the agreement should identify any incentive programs the owner intends to pursue for the project, including those related to the sustainable objective and any deadlines for receiving the incentives, including those that are dependent on the architect's services.

The report recognizes that having a net-zero goal is not appropriate or feasible in every case. The most important factor in preventing claims based on the underperformance of a sustainable design is that all parties involved understand, and acknowledge in writing, the inherent risks with such a project, the factors that make the outcome unpredictable, and the limits and responsibilities of each stakeholder to manage risks.

**Establishing reasonable expectations at the beginning of the project is vital. One way to avoid unreasonable contractual provisions and unrealistic expectations is by informing the client that design services are recommendations that the client has to understand and, once satisfied, accept.**

As the standard of care evolves, clients will expect a higher level of services. As the value of green projects increases because of financial benefits, clients will demand contractual assurances that they will realize a commensurate return on their investment in a high-performance design.

As the measurement of performance increases, clients will look more closely at the differences between design requirements and the actual use of energy, water, and other operational measurements.

The report also acknowledges that achieving net-zero is not only a matter of design; it also requires careful attention in such areas as operations and maintenance. But it gives facility owners something tangible to consider when looking at high-performance buildings.

A copy of the report is available through the New Buildings Institute website - [CLICK HERE](#). ■

*The AIA Trust serves as the risk management resource for AIA members; visit [www.TheAIATrust.com](http://www.TheAIATrust.com) for information about member benefit programs and a wide range of free resources to help your practice.*



**Frank Musica** is a Senior Risk Management Attorney at Victor O. Schinnerer & Company, Inc. in Chevy Chase, Maryland and an architect, attorney and a frequent speaker at the AIA Convention and other AIA component programs.

# #yafchat

Moderated by the  
**AIA Center for Emerging Professionals** and  
hosted jointly by the **AIA Young Architects  
Forum (YAF)** and the **AIA National Associates  
Committee (NAC)** the yafchat for the month of  
October focused on **Professional Development**.

2,025 Twitter Followers

AIA YAF Monthly Tweet-up  
15 October, 2-3:00pm Eastern Time

Theme: **Professional Development**  
Hashtag: #NACYAF

 **@AIACenterforEPs** [Moderator] Welcome to the monthly AIA YAF Tweet-up. Today's chat, on the subject of **PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT** is hosted jointly by the AIA YAF and the AIA NAC and will be featured in *Connection*. #NACYAF

**@AIACenterforEPs** [Moderator] I'll post questions with Q1, Q2, etc - tag your responses today with A1, A2, etc #NACYAF

**@AIACenterforEPs** [Moderator] **Q1:** Why did you choose to become an architect, and where are you in the process? Still on licensure track, or not? #NACYAF

-  **@ianmerker** (Ian Merker) A1 - I needed a career that welcomes big ideas and lets you doodle all day. #NACYAF
-  **@BKasdan** (Ben Kasdan) A1 - I decided that I wanted to be an #architect when I was in the 2nd grade; #licensure was always assumed to fulfill that goal. #NACYAF
-  **@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A1 - I liked art and buildings so I checked architecture for a major when I applied to college. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A1 - I got into #architecture for the art and design aspect and fell in love with the social impact it can have. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A1 - I'm somewhat on licensure track. Got sidetracked by starting my own firm with some partners. @propelstudio #NACYAF
-  **@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) A1 - Architects shape spaces and places; currently on licensure track #NACYAF
-  **@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A1 - Architecture is always a different challenge and never gets old. I became licensed 4 years ago in MT, 4 yrs after my M.Arch. #NACYAF
-  **@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A1 - Also, once in Arch School I stayed in the major because of the creative freedom the coursework allowed with a definitive career. #NACYAF
-  **@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A1 - I recently renewed my license and realized I have been licensed 5 years already! In my mid-life YAF crisis. #NACYAF

**@AIACenterforEPs** [Moderator] **Q2:** What does the term "Emerging Professional" mean to you, and do you self-identify as an Emerging Professional? #NACYAF

-  **@ianmerker** (Ian Merker) A2 - That you're reaching your comfort zone in the industry. We all have to keep learning but there are basics that EPs are trying to grasp. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A2 - #emergingprofessionals means we will soon take over the world. #NACYAF
-  **@BKasdan** (Ben Kasdan) A2 - #EP's are #YoungArchitects (licensed 10 years or less), #NotYetLicensed professionals, and #ArchStudents ... so yes, I am an EP. #NACYAF
-  **@AIACenterforEPs** [Moderator] A2 - @AIANational's definition of #emergingprofessionals: "students, recent graduates, and recently licensed architects, less than 10 yrs". #NACYAF
-  **@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A2 - Definitely an #emergingprofessional - learning, growing, pushing things forward, not afraid of change. For a long time to come. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A2 - What is the opposite of emerging professionals? Retired? #NACYAF
-  **@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A2 - Another way to look at it - Pushing the professionals ahead of us or stepping around them so we can move forward. #NACYAF

 **@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A2 - @Talkitect "Established professional" in some organizations. I like the term "cotton top". #NACYAF

 **@AIACenterforEPs** [Moderator] **Q3:** Can (or should) @AIANational be more inclusive as alternative careers attract more #architecture graduates? #NACYAF

-  **@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A3 - YES and YES. There are so many ways architecture can effect our community and built environment. #NACYAF
-  **@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) A3 - Maybe. But we need to understand our value as a membership organization to them. #NACYAF
-  **@ianmerker** (Ian Merker) A3 - AIA must promote all of us and celebrate the trailblazers. Give us tools to succeed on many paths (we're all architects). #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A3 - Yes. @AIANational can & should be more inclusive. The more members the larger our voice. The larger our voice the more influential. #NACYAF
-  **@BKasdan** (Ben Kasdan) A3 - The #AIA should be more inclusive. Dispelling the notion that #AssociateAIA is some sort of guest membership is the first step. #NACYAF
-  **@associateAIA** (Devin Little) A3 - Yes. It would drive our membership and broaden the outreach to the community. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A3 - This is where I would like to offer a single membership model. One profession. One AIA. #NACYAF
-  **@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) A3 - One membership category and decouple the license and 'title' of architect. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A3 - Also the more members the more revenue. It is essential to the survival of the institute. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A3 - @kurtneiswender @HaleyGipe Meaning that AIA doesn't mean Licensed Architect. And Architect doesn't mean Licensed Architect. #NACYAF

 **@AIACenterforEPs** [Moderator] **Q4:** How can we better engage students and @AIASorg members? How can we capture prospective members to become Associate AIA members? #NACYAF

-  **@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A4 - Continue to advertise free/graduate dues for Associates. Continue streamlining the path to licensure. #NACYAF
-  **@ianmerker** (Ian Merker) A4 - Lose the gray ceiling! AIA Leadership must reflect our member stats - EPs are at least 20% and should be 20% of the board. #NACYAF
-  **@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A4 - Invite them to participate! How about free admission to Convention and Grassroots for all Architecture students? #NACYAF
-  **@associateAIA** (Devin Little) A4 - Create some sort of welcome package that students receive upon graduation - maybe an app for Associates. #NACYAF
-  **@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) A4 - Be the place to go, the resource, the hub for career advancement and innovation. #NACYAF
-  **@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A4 - Get involved w/ students! I am a member of the @MontanaState #SchoolofArch #AdvisoryCouncil to connect students & the profession. #NACYAF

# #yafchat



**@AIACenterforEPs [Moderator] Q5:** How can Emerging Professionals support existing AIA initiatives to attract more diversity (personalities, people, opinions)? #NACYAF



**@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A5 - Raise our hands and volunteer to take on responsibility. Many established professionals tell me they are waiting for our generation to take it! #NACYAF



**@associateAIA** (Devin Little) A5 - Get involved and engaged. When you do that you'll feel empowered and be able to enhance the profession. #NACYAF



**@ianmerker** (Ian Merker) A5 - Find an interest in the AIA Knowledge Communities beyond EP specific. Many KCs need a fresh perspective. #NACYAF



**@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A5 - Agreed @kurtneiswender! Encourage others to get involved. Ask, and if they don't know, tell. #NACYAF



**@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A5 - This is so true @IanMerker. Too much of our participation is secluded within our own peer groups. We need a stronger voice at more tables. #NACYAF



**@PlusLab** (Illya Azaroff) A5 - Transparency and open platforms for engagement. We must demystify our national AIA structure and embrace repositioning. #NACYAF



**@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A5 - One issue I see is that we select our committee participants based on previous AIA activity. This doesn't engage new people and opinions. #NACYAF



**@ENYA\_AIANY** (EmergingNYArchitects) A5 - Lowering the cost to participate in events will allow for more diversity and inclusiveness. #NACYAF



**@AIACenterforEPs [Moderator] Q6:** What is the most effective way for @AIA\_NAC and @AIAYAF to communicate with #emergingprofessionals? Email, social media, web...? #NACYAF



**@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A6 - All of the above. #NACYAF



**@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A6 - Social media! I can barely keep up on all my non-work emails. #NACYAF



**@BKasdan** (Ben Kasdan) A6 - Multiple formats are necessary to disseminate info: email, social media, real-life conversations, everything else, etc. #NACYAF



**@ENYA\_AIANY** (EmergingNYArchitects) A6 - Use ALL #SocialMedia. Blogs, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn to communicate. #NACYAF



**@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A6 - Agreed. I prefer platforms that push links to a feed rather than flood my inbox. I use RSS readers for blogs, twitter and facebook. #NACYAF



**@AIACenterforEPs [Moderator] Q7:** How do you currently find your mentors? #architecture and beyond ... think career development. #NACYAF



**@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A7 - I don't seek out formal mentors, but I try and learn from every interaction whether it be a building dept official or an architect. #NACYAF



**@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A7 - Informal architectural, personal, and career mentors. In the office and outside of the office. People I respect and value their input. #NACYAF



**@BKasdan** (Ben Kasdan) A7 - I found my #mentors at my office mainly, but also through #AIA local & state. #NACYAF



**@nyvarch** (Venesa Alicea) A7 - Lets think beyond mentors and start supporting sponsors for career development. [CLICK HERE](#) #NACYAF



About the Moderator  
**Ashley Respecki, Assoc. AIA**

Respecki is the Director for the AIA Center for Emerging Professionals Engagement in Washington, DC where she manages the social media presence and works closely with collateral organizations to advance the future of the profession. Respecki holds a Master of Architecture from Ball State University.



**@ianmerker** (Ian Merker) A7 - There are folks in my local chapter that do awesome stuff. I chat them up. Who cares if we compete for work? #NACYAF



**@JojoVArbaugh** (Josephine V. Arbaugh) A7 - Through informal interactions at work and professional development events. #NACYAF



**@AIACenterforEPs [Moderator] Q8:** What can the @AIA\_NAC and @AIAYAF do to provide support for career advancement? #NACYAF



**@BKasdan** (Ben Kasdan) A8 - @AIAYAF and @AIA\_NAC should continue their efforts to provide opportunities for leadership, fellowship, mentorship, and exposure. #NACYAF



**@AIAnwpr\_YAF** (Shannon Peterson) A8 - Be nimble and flexible. Everyone is taking a different path and we need to reach out to support all. #NACYAF



**@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) A8 - Let #Emergingprofessionals know who we are and that we're here for them. #NACYAF



**@JojoVArbaugh** (Josephine V. Arbaugh) A8 - Focus on mentorship programs that not only guide EPs through their careers but also allow them to become good mentors. #NACYAF



**@AIACenterforEPs [Moderator] Q9:** What can @AIA\_NAC and @AIAYAF do to support the advancement of the profession while increasing public awareness of architects? #NACYAF



**@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A9 - We can get out into our communities. Do great work. Join neighborhood associations. Run for government positions. Volunteer. #NACYAF



**@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) A9 - Partner partner PARTNER!! The @AIA\_NAC & @AIAYAF working together with @AIACenterforEPs @AIANational as a team for the profession. #NACYAF



**@nyvarch** (Venesa Alicea) A9 - @AIA\_NAC @AIAYAF can encourage #Architects & #NextGenArch to get involved with community social impact by design. #citizenarchitect #NACYAF



**@AIACenterforEPs [Moderator] Q10:** What resources and tools do you use to track the latest and greatest related to the #architecture industry? #NACYAF



**@kurtneiswender** (Kurt Neiswender) A10 - Archdaily, Buildings of Detroit, Archinect, Architizer, and Curbed is always fun. #NACYAF



**@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) A10 - RSS feeds, blogs, summary emails, apps, word of mouth, articles, social media. #NACYAF



**@Talkitect** (Talkitect) A10 - I use blogs, RSS feeds, Facebook, magazines - but mostly blogs. That is the best source of up to date news on architectural news. #NACYAF



**@HaleyGipe** (Haley Gipe) @AIACenterforEPs @AIA\_NAC @AIAYAF Thank you!!! Great tweet up today. Hope it's the first of many in the future!! #NACYAF

# A PLACE IN THE SUN

## PART 1: DESERTSOL

### A Look at the University of Nevada Las Vegas Solar Decathlon Entry



#### Westin Conahan

is currently serving as the Past President of The American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), a graduate from The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) with a Bachelors of Science in Architecture and a minor in Solar and Renewable Energy Policy. Westin is currently residing in Washington, DC.

#### Why is the Solar Decathlon important for the building industry today?

The Solar Decathlon is important for the building industry today because it helps educate contractors and future home owners that there are practical ways of living comfortably in a sustainably designed home. Often many people think that living sustainably means one has to sacrifice certain comforts, but this simply isn't true. The competition also helps to promote innovate sustainable home designs and systems.

#### What did you learn about your project/design based on the other entries you saw in Irvine?

We learned that our design was well received by the public and our target market after winning First Place in *The Market Appeal* category. There were many great designs on site in Irvine and the team was proud to be selected first for Market Appeal.

#### How has your experience designing, constructing and entering the DesertSol house in the 2013 affected the way you approach Architecture?

It has taught me to think small. The Solar Decathlon doesn't permit designs larger than 1000 square feet (sf) and DesertSol is no larger than 800 sf. American homes continue to grow larger and larger, but this project taught me to design smart space rather than just more space. All of the spaces in the house focus on utilizing every square foot of space. The house has instilled in me the desire to consolidate my things and live small for many years to come.

#### How integral (if any) is the competition to the UNLV Architecture program?

Entering the Solar Decathlon was huge for UNLV. It allowed students and professors of Architecture and Engineering, as well as many other majors, to collaborate together to design and fund an actual project. Most projects in Architecture school never get built, but the Solar Decathlon provided an exception to the rule. Being a somewhat younger and lesser known program, winning Second Place Overall in the competition helped to put UNLV on the map, and demonstrated the robustness of the Architecture and Engineering programs there.

#### How were you able to use design features to influence the performance of the building?

One of the crowd-favored designs of the house were the sliding custom-cut screens on the outer patio that help to shade the house. When viewed from the right angle, the outline of the mesquite tree, a tree native to the Mojave Desert, can be seen. The cool thing about these screens is that they not only help to shade the house, but also produce the appearance of a canopy of trees shading the house overhead.

#### How effective was the collaborative effort? It looks like there were a lot of team members involved, which is typically larger than a typical professional team. Were you able to maximize the effort of all?

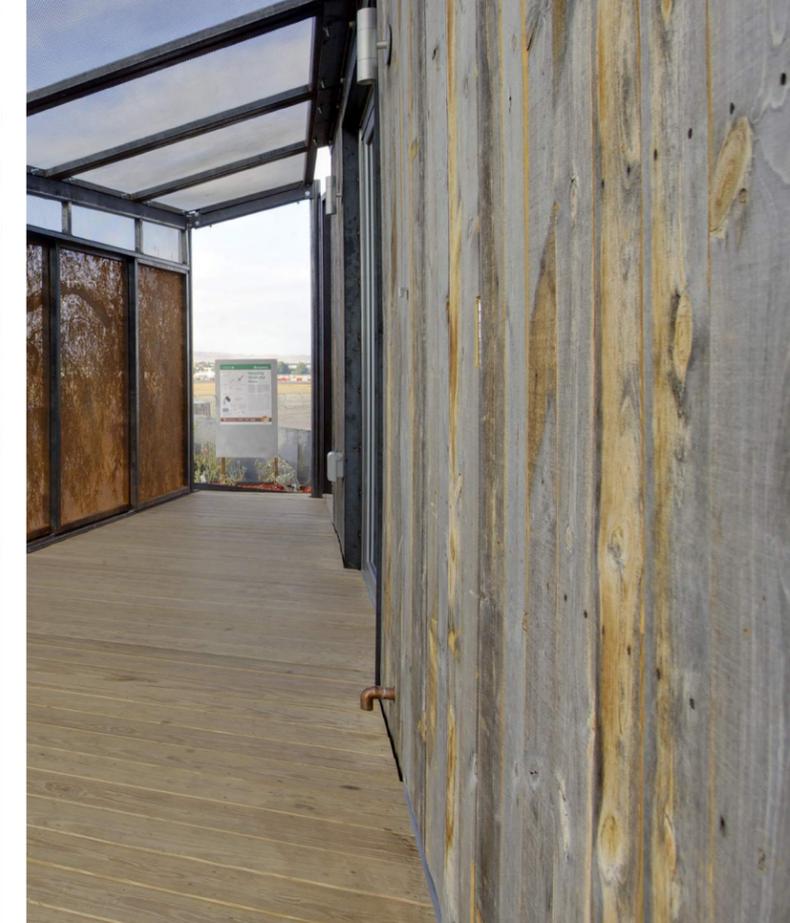
Team Las Vegas was a very collaborative and effective team. We had students and professors participating from the colleges of Architecture, Engineering, Business and Communications, Graphic Design and Marketing as well as a few others. The team was composed of more than sixty members and more than eighty students participated in the project over a two-year span. Over the two years, there are a series of deadlines set for the competition and UNLV was able to meet each deadline on-time and with very few notes for correction. I believe it was ultimately the hard work of our project managers and team that led us to Second Place.

#### What were some of the sacrifices or compromises you made in order to balance aesthetics, performance and marketability?

The cost assessment for DesertSol did not originally come in as low-cost. Compromises were made with some of the systems and interior features that called for more elaborate wood materials and details. Also, I did already mention the custom-cut outdoor screens; originally all the screens were supposed to come with custom perforations, but we had to opt to only cut the sliding screen doors adjacent to the bedroom, using standard perforation screens on the overhead shade structures and the screens that are attached to the ramps leading up to the house entry. There was also a cooling tower on the patio that was supposed to provide evaporative cooling all along the deck, but this feature was also cut from the final design.

#### What is the long term life span of the final design? Will it ever be made available for public consumption?

At this point, DesertSol is not scheduled to come to market. The house currently resides at The Springs Preserve in Las Vegas, NV, a 180-acre community center that has various exhibits and events to educate the public on sustainable design and smart water use in the Mojave Desert. The house is now educating the public there and it is our hope that the principles developed in the home will translate into smarter and more sustainable future home designs in the Las Vegas Region. ■



All photos courtesy of Westin Conahan

*The house is now educating the public ... it is our hope that the principles developed in the home will translate into smarter and more sustainable future home designs in the Las Vegas Region.*



Photo courtesy of Westin Conahan

# A PLACE IN THE SUN

## PART 2: FLUXHOME

### A Look at the University of Southern California Solar Decathlon Entry



**Gary Paige** is a principal of Gary Paige Studio (GPS) in Los Angeles, has taught in the undergrad and grad programs at SCI-Arc, was recently the Howard Friedman Professor of Practice at the University of California Berkeley and a Visiting Professor at Kyoto Seika University. Gary currently teaches in the undergrad and grad programs at the USC School of Architecture.

#### Did you have a hand in selecting the student participants, was it administrative, advisory, participatory etc?

Our approach was to make the project open and accessible to as many different groups within the university as possible. Not only did this mean undergraduate and graduate students from the SOA working in the same design studio and/or seminar, but also included collaborations with faculty and students from USC Cinema Arts and Viterbi Engineering, and, in the SOA, the Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Building Sciences programs. Moreover, several students from the SOA formed a Solar Decathlon club comprised of students from the SOA and Viterbi School of Engineering. All told, over the course of the two-year period we had over 150 USC students participate and contribute in various ways.

Additionally, we worked diligently to build relationships with industry professionals from the building industry and related disciplines such as engineering. This included strategic partnerships with Ove Arup, Buro Happold, RJC Builders, Bernards, Hathaway Dinwiddie and many others.

#### Why is the Solar Decathlon important for the building industry today?

Several things come to mind: it showcases the creative efforts of the next generation of designers by giving them the opportunity to materialize and test ideas; it bridges the gap between the university and building industry through experimentation and application and demonstrates the value of interdisciplinary educations, collaboration and teamwork; and, for an industry often concerned with bottom lines and profit margins, it proves (in the best cases) that innovation and experimentation can be affordable.

#### How has your experience designing, constructing and entering the fluxHome affected the way you teach design?

I don't think it has affected the way I teach design but it has certainly renewed my belief in the importance of working at full-scale as an integral part of an architecture curriculum. Given the comprehensive and challenging nature of the ten contests, it provides faculty and students alike a unique opportunity to test their ideas through application as well as demonstrate that architecture is an expansive discipline that requires a broad-based knowledge and skill set. Moreover, in a broader sense, it offers educators an opportunity to re-think the role and focus that current design-build and community-outreach programs have in light of recent advances in technology, culture and design education.

For the USC SOA, through the efforts of Dean Ma, Assoc. Dean Gail Borden, former Undergraduate Director Alice Kimm and, a host of others, this has taken the form of workshops and an ambitious design research and fabrication program that makes design and building innovation through research and experimentation a hallmark of the curriculum.

#### How integral (if any) is the competition to the USC Architecture program?

My sense is that it is an important component of the program. The USC SOA has a rich legacy of building experimentation beginning in the 40s with key faculty members such as Pierre Koenig's (and others) involvement with Art & Architecture magazine's Case Study Houses program and, continued with Konrad Wachsmann's Institute for Building Research, Ralph Knowles' pioneering work with energy systems and conversation to the recent Top Fuel design-build workshops. This year, the SOA launched The M Studio, a multidisciplinary design-build studio to conceive-of and realize innovative architectural projects at full-scale in real-time. This includes providing pro bono design services for local non-profit and community-based organizations as well as performance-based research, branding strategies, and fabrication.

Also, I should add that given the rather large undertaking of the Solar Decathlon project, it has the potential to become a rallying or unifying point for the various schools or programs within a university—a place of convergence for sharing resources and knowledge, discussing different approaches and points of view and, collaborating with a diverse group of individuals.

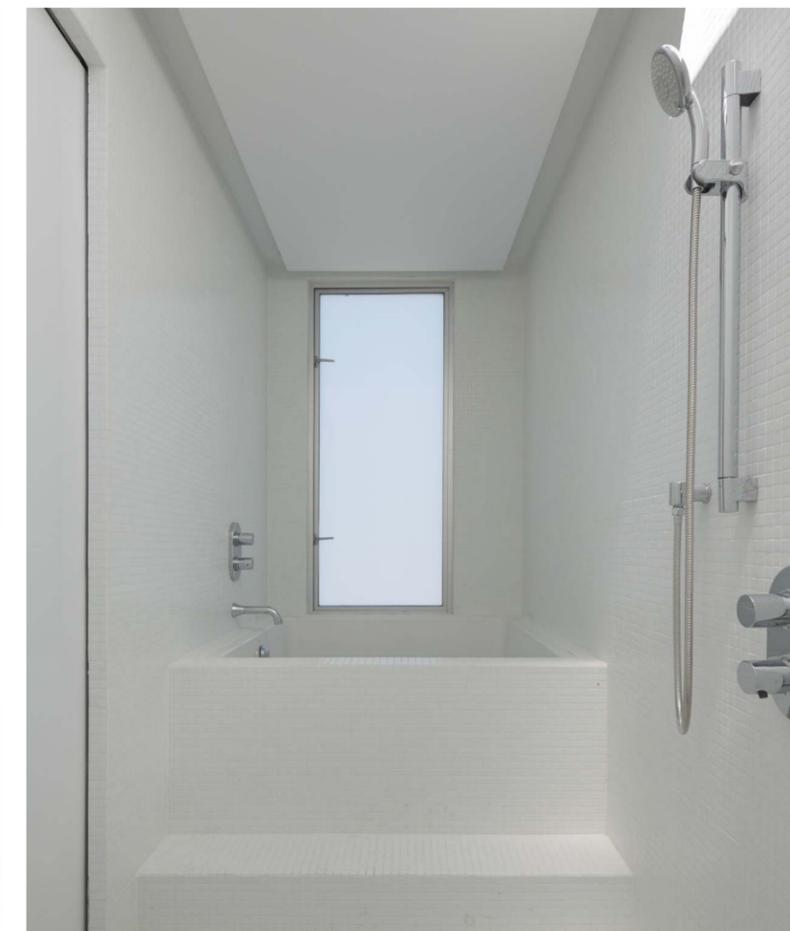
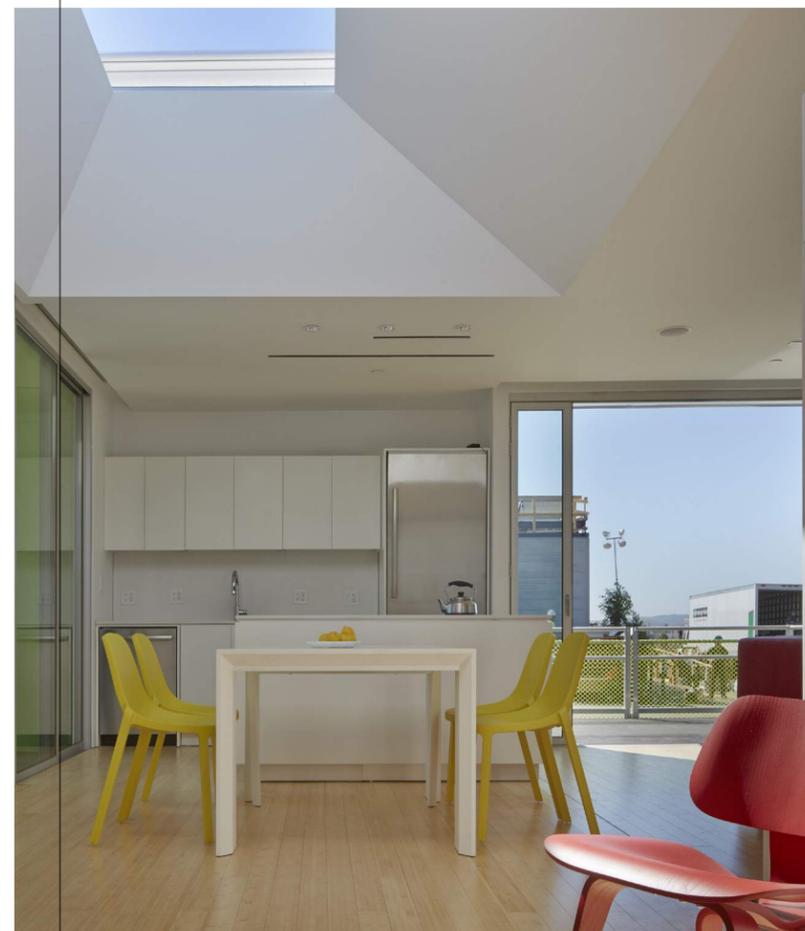
#### What were some of the sacrifices or compromises made in order to balance the aesthetics, performance and marketability?

I don't think we made any significant sacrifices in this regard. The process of value engineering that the team went through is typical of projects of this scale and type. In my opinion, Team USC did an exceptional job of designing, constructing and delivering a net-zero house for an appraised cost of \$279,000.

Having said that, there was a more ambitious envelope system as well as few pieces of furniture that were not fabricated. However, this was undoubtedly due to a dearth of resources necessary to fabricate the elements on campus. Reflecting back on the experience, I would say that the schedule for producing and testing the house is probably as challenging if not more so than the budgetary constraints.

#### What is the long-term life span of the final design? Will it ever be made available for public consumption?

With the proper maintenance, I don't see why the house wouldn't have a 100+ year lifespan. It was carefully detailed and very well built. A well-known Los Angeles architect purchased the house to be guesthouse for property he owns north of Los Angeles. And, while it currently isn't open to the public, USC SOA will have the opportunity to monitor the various systems and collect data in order to test and evaluate the performance of the house. ■



All photos by Fotoworks / Benny Chan

*It has the potential to become a rallying or unifying point for the various schools or programs within a university—a place of convergence for sharing resources and knowledge.*



Photo by Fotoworks / Benny Chan

# THE (ALMOST) ALL-AMERICAN HOUSE

## AN INTERVIEW WITH KAREN LANTZ, AIA



**Karen Lantz, AIA** is a Young Architect located in Houston Texas. She runs her own firm, Lantz Full Circle, where she is able to follow projects through from conception to construction, while implementing design-build strategies. Additionally, Karen is the founding president of Houston Mod, a non-profit organization that seeks to promote the appreciation and preservation of modern architecture in Houston and throughout Texas.

12 years ago, with plans to build their future home, Karen and her husband purchased a lot with a small ranch style home on it, just north of the Houston museum district. Since their purchase, this area has been undergoing a transformation. What was once a community of smaller one-story bungalows and ranch style homes has evolved into a showcase of larger modern homes. Many are by notable regional and national architects. Several of the modern homes range up to 4,700 square feet, enveloping the entire lot, and towering over the existing low slung ranch styles homes. Karen, however, has taken a different approach, **“I wanted to be considerate of neighboring scale... This house looks much smaller than it is and I like that a lot.”** She completed her home in late 2012, and the project has been featured in several articles in Texas Architect, Architect Magazine, and even the New York Times Magazine. She received the Texas AIA design award this year, and has recently been added to the Phaidon Atlas.

The style of Karen’s home has more in common with the original homes in the area, rather than it’s contemporary counterparts. The aesthetics have clearly been influenced by Karen’s involvement in Houston Mod and her love for mid-century modern design. **“My design objective was to make a home that used local materials and looked like it belonged in Houston... I was inspired by local modern design in addition to the Case Study Houses Program. I had a strong desire to make a visual connection to outdoor rooms.”** In fact, this was a type of “Case Study House” of Karen’s own. Karen, while having completed several commercial and even residential renovation projects, had not previously designed a home from the ground up. She utilized this opportunity to showcase her abilities not only as an architect, but also as a builder. **“Design-build, to me, is the most rewarding delivery method because not only do I problem-solve as an architect, but I also understand the sourcing, cost, and methods of construction needed to make it happen. Building makes me a more grounded and knowledgeable architect.”**

The first challenge Karen confronted was the removal of the existing home on the lot. After renting it out for several years, Karen assumed most of the existing structure would have been unsalvageable. While there was not a straightforward salvage solution available, she took it upon herself and through a series of donations and different salvage companies, Karen was able to divert the entirety of the former house from landfills.



Photo courtesy of Lantz Full Circle

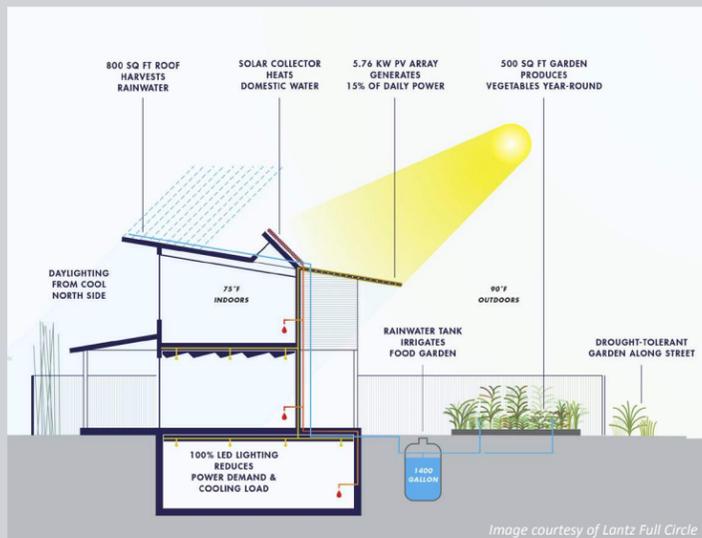
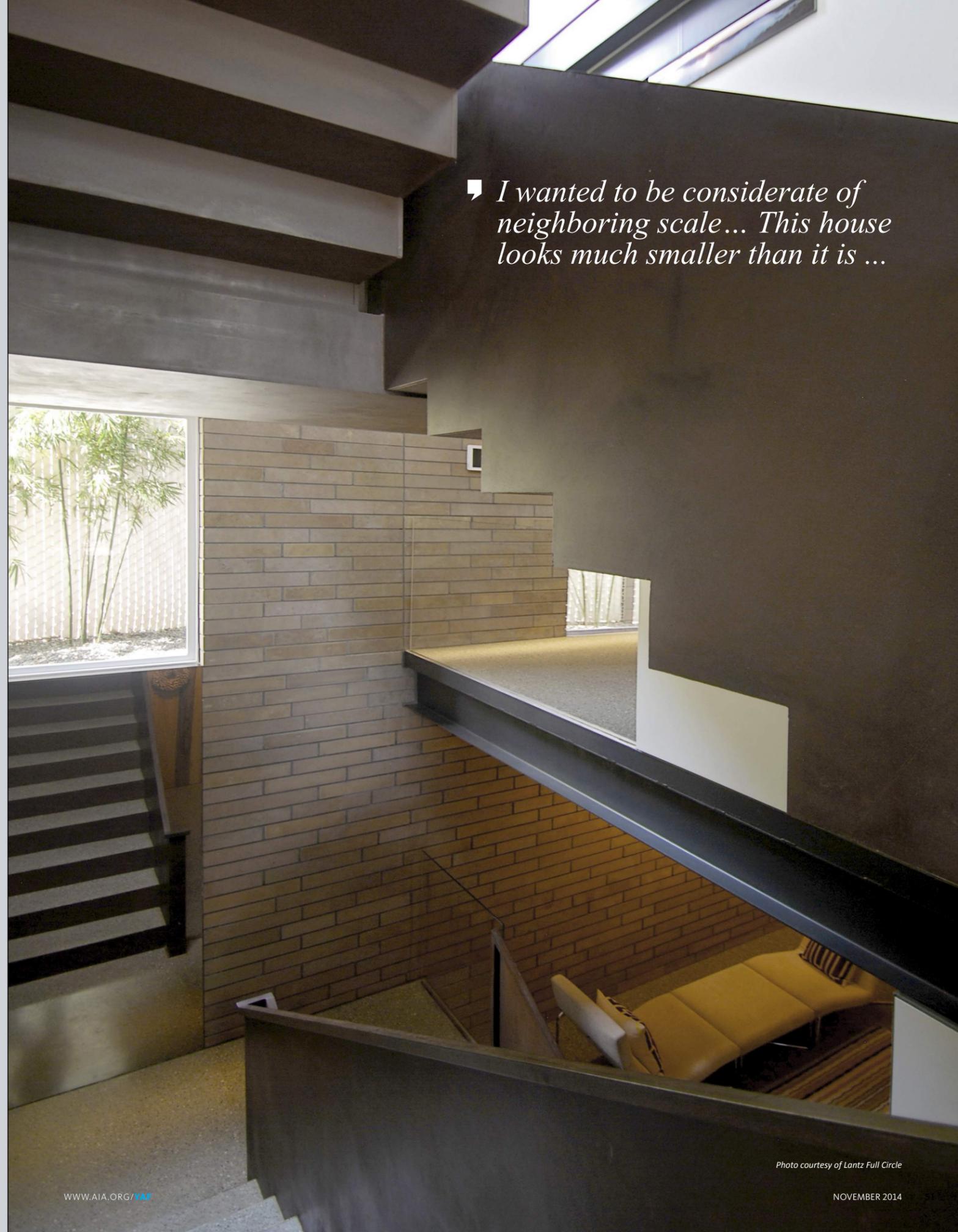


Image courtesy of Lantz Full Circle



Photo courtesy of Patrick Bresnan



*“I wanted to be considerate of neighboring scale... This house looks much smaller than it is ...”*

Photo courtesy of Lantz Full Circle

*... local materials*

*... looked like it belonged*

*...inspired by local modern design*

*...strong desire to make a visual connection to outdoor rooms*



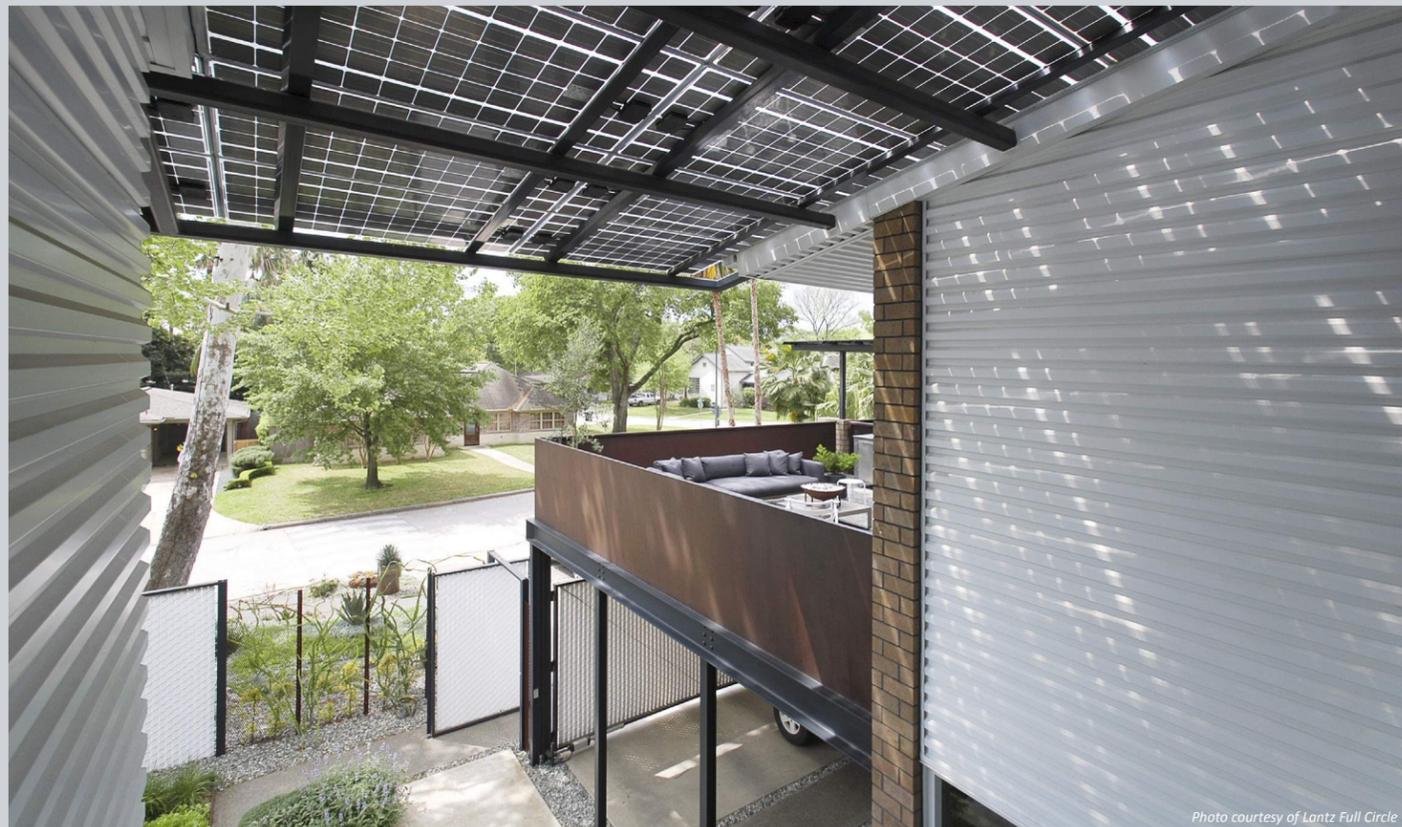


Photo courtesy of Lantz Full Circle

During the design process one limitation Karen imposed on herself was that of sourcing materials as locally as possible. "I spent hours and hours searching on-line and referencing the University of Houston Materials Research Collaborative's 'Made in Houston' catalogue." Karen has even started a section on her website "Made in the USA & Beautiful" where she posts domestic specification that she uses in her design. However, Karen's objective ran into some limitations. As she discloses in a New York Times Magazine article by Mimi Swartz published in October 2012, which featured Karen's home material selections, there were some items that pushed the limits of "American Made". There were low profile drawer pulls from Italy, sculptural sinks from Germany, and a thin film solar array, which while designed in Colorado, is only manufactured in China. However, the other ninety percent of Karen's home is sourced domestically, leading the author to dub the home "The (Almost) All-American Home"; a name which has stuck, and which Karen now has adopted.

When considering the possible limitations that "Made In America" might set, Karen's home is full of great and amazing details. "This self-imposed restriction yielded better options because I looked harder and longer for everything. I found a lot of bad domestic design, so it was like discovering gold when it hit the mark of finding great design that was also locally made."

The central staircase of the house consists of steel, glass, and terrazzo, and makes for a striking progression, that serves to carry a consistent materiality thought the three interior levels of the house. The ceiling on the ground level of her home intersects these stairs and carries a zig-zag pattern across the entire level. Karen received inspiration for this from while visiting the work of Francisco Mangado during a trip to Spain as part of a Rice Design Alliance tour. "It was a lighting bolt of inspiration for the zig-zag ceiling,

washing the walls with light and taking moments of solid sheets of steel, while balancing them with frameless sheets of glass. Francisco Mangado visited the house while in Houston and said I did the zig-zag better than he did, but I would argue that point."

Karen's favorite feature of her home is the interplay of light and shadow throughout. "I love the way it the hits the zig-zag ceiling, leaving light and dark faces, and the way it filters through the thin-film PV array from outside to inside on the walls and floor." Large expanses of glass running almost entirely uninterrupted along the southern and northern face of her home enable the amount of natural light in the house. Also, since her house is setback a distance from the adjacent road in order to preserve a mature sycamore, this space has allowed Karen the opportunity to create an edible garden that provides a sequence of spaces that are experienced before entering the house. The vegetable garden is irrigated using collected rainwater, and the landscaping beyond the garden features succulents and native plants that require limited attention throughout the year.

While every material has been meticulously selected, and the construction is detailed with precision, the beauty of Karen's house does not only run skin deep. Descending into the basement (a feature that is rarely seen in Houston), the inner workings of her home are located in a central location. They involve rainwater collection, a solar heated water system, a fully integrated AV system, and even an HVAC system that is not commonly used in residential design. "We use small duct high velocity air conditioning which dehumidifies the air with faster movement through the system. There are several two-inch diameter outlets in every room that spread cooling or heating evenly." Since Karen's home is primarily lit with natural lighting, and LED lighting serves the rest of the home, she is able to supply 20% of her home's power through solar panels that are architecturally integrated into the design of the home.



Photo courtesy of Jack Thompson

"We use two thin-film PV arrays, one as an integrated part of the roof slope and one as a free-floating canopy. There is nothing better than the filtered light below, or the thinness at the edge." When considering the value of performance over aesthetics, Karen responds, "Both, always."

All of the cutting edge innovation and thoughtful implementation of environmentally conscious elements led Karen to achieve LEED Platinum home certification. "At the end of the day, team members are held accountable for designing and constructing in a way that makes a better home that will last longer and is more comfortable to live in. The (LEED) process requires patience and diligence, but I would urge designers to not be dissuaded. I've seen firsthand how the independent testing forces subcontractors to verify performance."

While initially taking design influence from some of the original homes in her community, Karen finds her home having an opposite effect and is beginning to influence others in the community, especially inspiring others towards more thoughtful and sustainable designs and practices. "My neighbor is taking up their front yard to make an edible garden and asked ask my advice. It's a grassroots effort to make change, but someone has to start somewhere. Seeing the grass go, along with the amount of water and chemicals they use, makes me happy."

Karen also encourages other young architects to design and construct their homes as well. "One of the best things an architect can do is to take their talents and change not only their client's lives, but also their own. Living in your design is truly enlightening. It can be a tiny house on wheels; just dream and draw!" ■



Photo courtesy of Lantz Full Circle

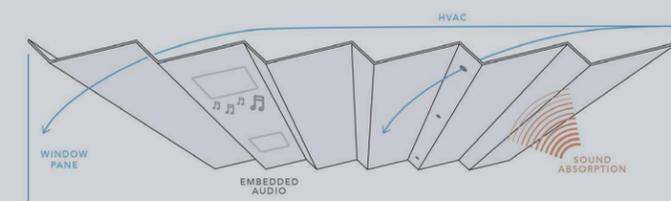


Image courtesy of Lantz Full Circle

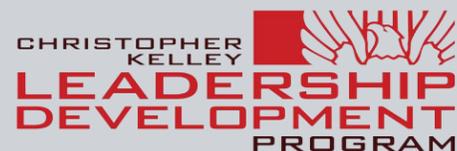


Nicholas Banks, Associate AIA is an Associate at Studio RED Architects in Houston, TX and graduated from Texas Tech University with a Master of Architecture degree.

## CHRISTOPHER KELLEY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



CHRISTOPHER  
KELLEY



LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM

Leadership Development Program scholars demonstrating their knowledge of which side to place their nametags.

### AIADC PREPARES THE NEXT GENERATION OF YOUNG ARCHITECT LEADERS, IN MEMORY

One of the most commendable actions of any young architect leader is in mentoring the next generation of leaders. Therefore, a primary goal of the Young Architects Forum is to provide its members with the mentorship necessary to excel at those leadership opportunities. Occasionally, an individual comes along and exceeds those expectations such that the influence of their leadership takes on a life of its own -- **Christopher Kelley, AIA** was one of those individuals.

By age 39, Christopher Kelley, had completed an education in architecture, married a colleague and started a family, and held positions at prestigious firms as well as national leadership roles in the AIA. With "a wicked sense of humor" and creativity in design and communication, Christopher built lasting friendships with his fellow young architects.

As the chair of the AIA Young Architects Forum in 2009, he was inspired to create a nationwide leadership program for young architects; modeled after the Georgetown Leadership Program, the YAF program would assist professionals in meeting their executive goals in the industry. When the YAF reflected on strategy at their 15-year summit, Christopher Kelley pushed for leadership training for architects as a priority. It turns out that Sean Stadler, AIA would be his greatest ally in this effort.

Sean Stadler succeeded Christopher as the YAF chair in 2010. They served together on the national Young Architects Forum and found that they had a synergistic work ethic and passion for the profession. Although the national leadership program hadn't gained much ground, Sean and Ryan McEnroe, AIA forwarded the idea with the AIADC chapter and their firms to assemble a template of workshops through which emerging professionals would teach each other the tools to lead. In a June 2010 podcast with the AIA, Christopher noted that networking had been critical to his YAF involvement - "each YAF committee member is a resource for issues."

Christopher died in early 2012. By the end of that year, however, the leadership program that he initiated would become a reality - with sixteen DC-area emerging professionals about to embark on a nine month journey towards exploring their potential as the next generation of people making a difference.



Christopher Kelley, AIA

Young architect leadership programs exist in other cities -- Dallas, Portland and Kansas City for instance -- but the Washington DC program is distinct both in its strategy and implementation. The program starts with the Executive Committee establishing a series of topics deemed relevant to the future of the profession. A group of "scholars" are then appointed to the program based on their leadership potential and pledged commitment to the necessary time and effort.

The scholars are then put through a bootcamp, primed with motivational discussions, and paired off and tasked with turning one of the topics into an informative and engaging one-day workshop. Those with a workshop scheduled at the beginning of the program may have weeks to prepare, while those at the end have months. There are workshops once a month for nine months.

Community involvement supplements your architectural training, and you get to deal with the general public who could be your future clients.



The 2014 inaugural class. Photo courtesy of AIA DC staff.



The 2014 inaugural class. Photo courtesy of AIA DC staff.



The 2014 inaugural class. Photo courtesy of AIA DC staff.

Scholars learned how to set up pro bono work in their practice, various methods of project delivery in volunteer work, and how to measure the benefits of that work.

Greg Holeyman, AIA was assigned the 'Serving Communities' workshop in the inaugural program. "We were cold calling to find venues for the workshop, but with help from Sean and Ryan, we were connected with [speakers] we wouldn't normally be able to access." The workshops created by the scholars are robust, with an emphasis on quality of speakers and panelists, venues and topics. "There are three stages to the development of the workshop- first is pre-planning, making calls and securing venues. Next is making sure the logistics are working, projectors are on, and sandwiches are delivered. The last step is being able to celebrate your achievement, enjoy the presentation and relax."

The topics of the workshops will remain from year to year but evolve as a product of feedback from post-session surveys. Ryan advised "This year's naming of 'Beyond Green' has changed to 'Industry Trends'." The culmination of the workshops occurs with a celebration where scholars are encouraged to invite their mentor or firm principals that encouraged the time commitment. According to Ana, "It really closed the loop."

The workshops are documented in a yearbook format with each scholar featured with summary of the workshops they led. Greg added, "Ryan and Sean set up a sustainable system. The yearbook is a great form of documentation, and I hope to see more yearbooks down the road to follow the topics."

"My firm was supportive in my becoming a scholar," said Ana Baker, AIA, one of the scholars of the inaugural class. "My firm principal had to sign a letter with the understanding that I would be involved with workshops for four hours, once a week. It was an appropriate time commitment." Part of that time commitment included leadership of the 'Beyond Green' workshop. "I was interested in learning about the skills it takes to be a leader in green architecture ... taking a step back and realizing we can apply nature to our buildings."

As a result of Ana's participation in the program, she has become more involved with AIA|DC; participating in the Custom Residential Architects Network (CRAN), an AIA Knowledge Community that she didn't know existed before participation in the program. Connection with other scholars endures as well. "We keep in touch, meeting once a month for happy hour."

In the 2010 podcast, Christopher Kelley shared his insight on getting involved. "Community involvement supplements your architectural training, and you get to deal with the general public who could be your future clients." The 'Serving Communities' workshop emphasized how architects can effectively use their abilities to serve in leadership roles within their communities.

The Christopher Kelley Leadership Development Program at AIA|DC has enhanced networking among emerging professionals, increased involvement in AIA programs and knowledge communities, as well as fostered the next generation of leaders. "We saw the program as a multi-year project from the beginning," said Sean Stadler. "This year we set up an advisory committee to groom the next level of leadership of the program." ■



Ian Merker, AIA

is an architect at Rainforth Grau Architects in Sacramento, CA and YAF Regional Director for Northern California.



# COFFEE WITH AN ARCHITECT

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*In this installment of COFFEE WITH AN ARCHITECT, Jody Brown takes us back to that moment when we young architects, through donning of black-rimmed glasses and an air of ambivalence, found cultural investiture in our profession.*

Jody Brown is just an Architect, standing in front of an ideology, asking it to love him.

## THE MOST INTERESTING MAN IN THE ROOM

***I'm an Architect.***

***I'm the most interesting man in the room.***

*I'm wearing all black.*

*I'm near sighted, but have compensated with extremely attractive and/or expensive eyewear.*

*I have radical mood swings. But, only on the inside. You'd probably never know what I'm thinking. And, I'm sure I wouldn't tell you.*

*I have excellent taste in ... almost everything. Just ask me.*

*I am brooding right now. Over in the corner, sipping my cosmo (because I can pull that off). I'm not approachable. I've worked on that for years.*

*I seem like I know things. Dark things. Perfectly aligned symmetrical things. But nothing about things that you want to talk about.*

*I would rather talk about Richard Serra or Edward Hopper, or we could discuss Diebenkorn if you'd like.*

*No, I am not going to talk about architecture. I never talk about architecture. We can talk about television. Mad Men? Yes... Inside the Actors Studio? Of course. But ideally Inspector Morse circa 1988. Or we could just discuss cars.*

*Could you get me another Cosmo?*

*I have a beautiful wife, but I have no family, no children, no history, no connection to anything domestic.*

*I don't play golf. I have clubs, just in case. In the trunk of my Alfa Romeo.*

*I work hard. No, really. I work very hard. You think you work hard? You're wrong. In fact, I'm working right now. I haven't slept since 1984. I'm on my second decade of an all-nighter. You have no idea. Your job is easy compared to mine. You don't create, you produce. That's easy. Right?*

*I spent a year in Europe studying under someone you've never heard of, who won a very prestigious award which you've also never heard of. This was my foundation for the "practice" that I run today.*



Photo courtesy of John McNab's photostream on Flickr and used under the Creative Commons license.

*I worked on a famous building you have also never heard of. I won an award for that too. I have a plaque with my name in fancy lettering in my office.*

*I have a turtle neck. Not a "mock-turtle-neck". Those are for writers or journalists. Your tie is crooked. I noticed that when you first came over. I could fix that, but what's the point really.*

*Also, there were seventeen canapes on that tray and only sixteen had tooth picks in them. The mirror on that wall is slightly tilted. And, this part of the flooring is not original to the building. And, that sprinkler head is slightly off center.*

*And, seriously, go get me another cosmo ...*

***I'm an Architect.***

***I'm the most interesting man in the room.***

*Stay thirsty my friends  
J*



### Jody Brown AIA

Brown is an Architect and principal of Jody Brown Architecture pllc., in Durham, NC. His interests and the firm's portfolio is focused largely on urban infill, mixed-use, urban design, and urban renewal projects. In his 18-years of practice, he has built on his passion for planning and urban design; working on enhancing, adding-to, re-using, renovating, and sometimes creating-from-scratch the places where people meet, learn, play, and become inspired. His work is grounded in the belief that Architecture can save cities.

When he's not doing that, he can be found making fun of himself and his profession, and blogging about his ideals at – [Coffee with an Architect](http://Coffee with an Architect). Or, you can find him sipping coffee with someone at a cafe near you, blathering on-and-on about Le Corbusier, while looking aloof and interesting at the same time.

# CONNECTION

THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN JOURNAL OF THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM

## 2014 EDITORIAL CALENDAR

### JANUARY PLUGGED-IN

This issue focuses on the theme of **INFORMATICS**.

Featuring architects, designers and emerging professionals through endeavors in computational design and information or data-based design solutions (i.e. evidence-based design, performance-driven design, etc), building systems and management, and digital technologies for prototyping and fabrication that are redefining our craft.

### MARCH WE THE PEOPLE

This issue focuses on the theme of **ADVOCACY**.

Featuring architects, designers, and emerging professionals serving as advocates in the community, in politics, and for the profession. This issue is a follow-up to the Emerging Professionals Summit held in January and a lead-up to AIA Grassroots in Washington DC (March 19-22), the annual AIA conference for leadership and legislation.

### MAY CHANGE ENGINE

This issue focuses on the theme of **ADVANCEMENT**.

Featuring architects, designers and emerging professionals that are changing the face of the profession. As a lead-up to the theme of CHANGE for the National Convention in Chicago (June 25-28), this issue will feature articles on upcoming Convention programs and interviews with speakers.

### CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

#### WE ARE CURRENTLY SOLICITING CONTENT

**CONNECTION** welcomes the submission of ARTICLES, PROJECTS, PHOTOGRAPHY and other design content. Submitted materials are subject to editorial review and selected for publication in eMagazine format based on relevance to the theme of a particular issue.

If you are interested in contributing to CONNECTION, please contact the Editor-In-Chief at [Wyatt\\_frantom@gensler.com](mailto:w Wyatt_frantom@gensler.com)

### JULY EXHIBITIONISM

This issue focuses on the theme of **IMAGE**.

Featuring architects, designers and emerging professionals working in branding and identity, materials research and product design, and exhibitions and installations. As a follow-up to National Convention in Chicago, this issue will feature articles from Convention activities, the exhibit hall and interviews with speakers.

### SEPTEMBER TOPO GO>GO

This issue focuses on the theme of **GLOBALIZATION**.

Featuring architects, designers and emerging professionals offering a global perspective through global projects and articles on global firm cultures, travel photos, mapping studies, and speculative articles on the trends of urbanity, super-mega projects and the future of architecture at a global scale.

### NOVEMBER BACK TO ZERO

This issue focuses on the theme of **RESOURCES**.

Featuring architects, designers and emerging professionals acting as environmental stewards through initiatives in sustainability and sustainable development, energy and global warming, and disaster recovery and resiliency.

CLICK HERE for past issues of **CONNECTION**

### SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All submissions are required to have the attachments noted below.

#### Text

Submit the body of your text in a single, separate Word document with a total word count between 500-1000 words.

Format the file name as such:  
[yourlastname\_article title.doc]

#### Images

Submit all images in JPEG format at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi RGB mode. Include captions to all images in the body of your e-mail transmittal.

All images must be authentic to the person submitting. Do not submit images with which you do not hold the rights.

Format the file name(s), sequentially, as such:  
[yourlastname\_image1.jpg]

#### Author Bio

Submit a brief, two-sentence bio in the following format:

[ yourlastname ] [ AIA or Associate AIA or RA ] is a [ your title ] at [ your company ] in [ city, state ]. [ yourlastname ] is also [ one sentence describing primary credentials or recent accomplishments].

Format the file name as such:  
[yourlastname\_article title.doc]

#### Author Photo

Submit a recent headshot in JPEG format at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi grayscale in RGB mode.

Format the file name as such:  
[yourlastname\_portrait.doc]

#### WHAT IS THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM?

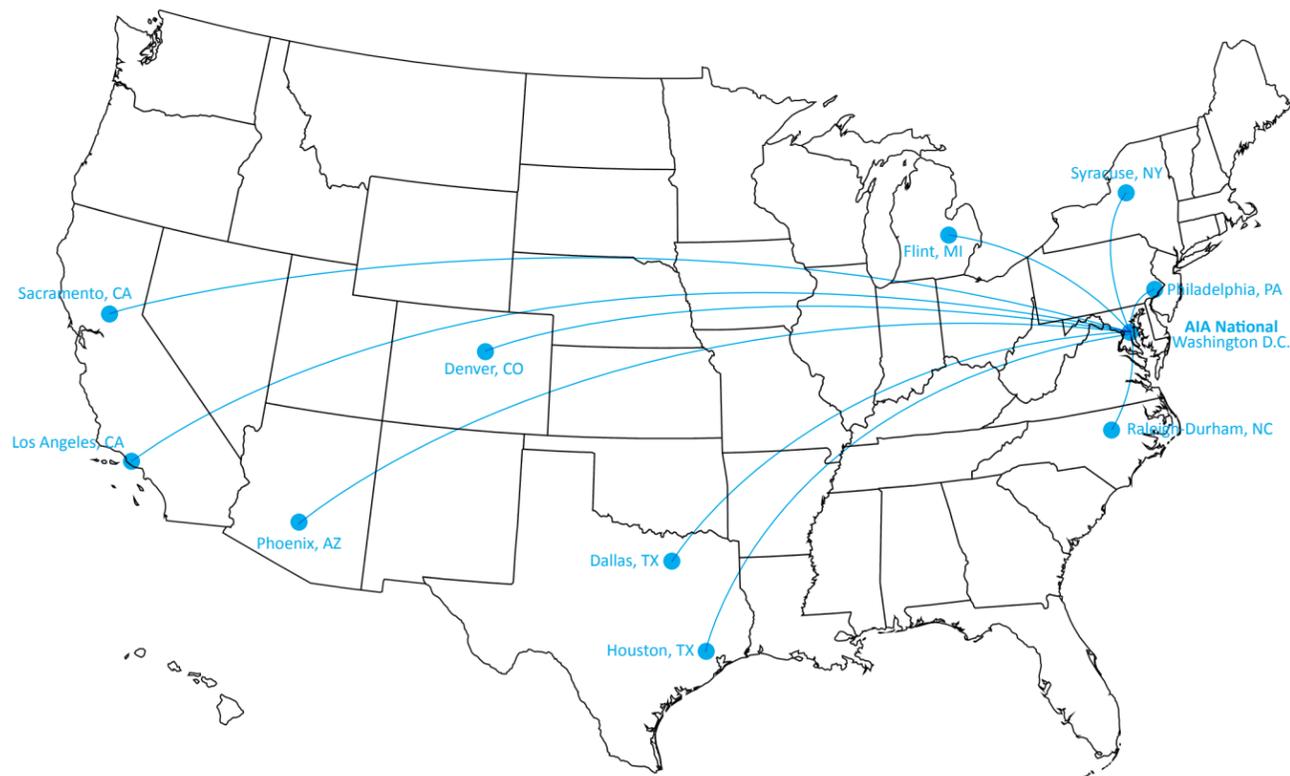
The Young Architects Forum is the voice of architects in the early stages of their career and the catalyst for change within the profession and our communities. Working closely with the AIA College of Fellows and the American Institute of Architects as a whole, the YAF is leading the future of the profession with a focus on architects licensed less than 10 years. The national YAF Advisory Committee is charged with encouraging the development of national and regional programs of interest to young architects and supporting the creation of YAF groups within local chapters. Approximately 23,000 AIA members are represented by the YAF. YAF programs, activities, and resources serve young architects by providing information and leadership; promoting excellence through fellowship with other professionals; and encouraging mentoring to enhance individual, community, and professional development.

#### GOALS OF THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM

To encourage professional growth and leadership development among recently licensed architects through interaction and collaboration within the AIA and allied groups.

To build a national network and serve as a collective voice for young architects by working to ensure that issues of particular relevance to young architects are appropriately addressed by the Institute.

To make AIA membership valuable to young architects and to develop the future leadership of the profession.



**GET CONNECTED PUT YOURSELF ON THE MAP**  
THIS ISSUE FEATURES CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES FROM THESE MAPPED LOCATIONS.



## Elevate your career path.

As an AIA member, you have access to professional resources that provide the tools you need to enhance and sustain your practice at every stage of your career. Whether it's government advocacy to back your practice, continuing education programs to keep your skills and knowledge current, or the invaluable support of a professional network of more than 81,000 colleagues, AIA membership is an essential investment in your career.

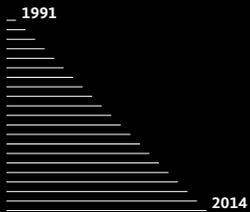
Seize the opportunity and see what happens.

[www.aia.org/join](http://www.aia.org/join) · [www.aia.org/renew](http://www.aia.org/renew)

Tamarah Begay, Assoc. AIA  
Member Since 2005



**YAF**  
GET CONNECTED



**YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM**  
CELEBRATING 23 YEARS OF ADVANCING THE CAREERS OF YOUNG ARCHITECTS