



04 2010

THE BROADSHEET OF THE AUCKLAND BRANCH OF THE NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

BLOCK

The Charm School

Sarosh Mulla Reflects on Charles Renfro's March Lecture

Charm is possibly the most lucrative asset an architect can have. If mustered at the right times it can create great spaces and can keep the progressive architect employed. Charles Renfro demonstrated this within the first two minutes of his talk in Auckland recently. Renfro, who is the youngest partner of the New York based practice Diller Scofidio + Renfro, has a disarming humor and charisma about him. Walking to the podium, following his very concert-like introduction, Renfro instantly put the audience at ease. Offering a brief quip about the tightness of his pants and the level of discretion needed while wearing a remote microphone, he took a photograph of the audience. This might not be out of place for a touring rock band, but for a visiting practitioner it showed a genuine excitement that is exceptional.

His manner in those opening minutes set a tone for his presentation, which masked the high level of rigour in the projects with a playfulness and candor, without coming across as smarmy. It became apparent that the disarming manner was not simply a fortunate personality trait, but also a useful tool in convincing clients to consider ideas and approaches to design which could be thought of as 'unprofitable'.

The audience, now suitably relaxed and flattered, were shown a collection of the practice's projects (delivered in roughly chronological order) along the theme of "wet". While the linkage to water within each design was often tenuous and once non-existent, it was an interesting position from which to view the work. Diller Scofidio + Renfro has a long history of projects which

deal with sensation rather than stimuli. As became clear through the presentation, it is not the water that is the real concern to the designer, but instead it is the feeling of wetness that is important.

This step away from arms-length contemporary practice is somewhat nostalgic and rejects the homogeneity of the white containers bounded by (unused) lap pools that have dominated the architectural discourse for the last few years. It seems that these designers want the patrons of their buildings to feel cold, wet, hot and dry amongst other sensations. Regulators will be shocked by the gall of it.

The removal of challenging sensations from architecture through increasing regulation of design and construction means that these moments when the users can feel the building interact with them are even more powerful. Highline, arguably Renfro's most important recent work, demonstrates this clearly. It is not simply a park, or a walkway but instead it is considered as a place to experience New York, in terms of light, texture, heat, cold and sound (and in a particularly "New York" way, weaving through the city above street level). In the hands of less convincing individuals the introduction of sensations that challenge the human body would almost certainly be rejected by the powers that be.

Renfro and his partners have no shortage of interesting material to show. What is most interesting though is that the enthusiasm and humor of the speaker can be felt in the projects, making them all the more successful as spaces. *SM*



Diller Scofidio + Renfro's *Blur Building* Lake Neuchatel (Swiss Expo 2002)

Akihisa Hirata Lecture

Akihisa Hirata has established himself a leader among the new generation of Japanese architects. The latest in an illustrious group of young architects to emerge from Toyo Ito's office (including Astrid Klein, Mark Dytham, Mokoto Yokomizo and recent Pritzker Prize-winner Kazuyo Sejima), Hirata established his independent practice, Akihisa Hirata Architecture Office, in 2005. Since then, he has produced a series of highly original buildings and projects that explore innovative structural systems and new ways of dividing space. These include Showroom H (2005), the Ie-no-Ie housing prototype (2008), and exhibition installations for Canon (2009). Hirata has already published a book of his work and ideas entitled *Animated*, and been on the cover of *The Japan Architect*, one of the most important international architecture magazines.



Hirata has received numerous awards including the SD Review Asakura Award in 2004, the SD Review Award in 2007, and the 19th JIA New Face Award 2007, and has participated in the Lisbon Architecture Triennale, the Yokohama Triennale, the Frieze Art Fair and the Milano Salone.

www.hao.nu

Communiqué 2010 EXTRA Lecture

Akihisa Hirata
6pm Thursday 13th May
Engineering Lecture Theatre, 22 Symonds Street
10 CPD points, free entry
www.creative.auckland.ac.nz



Hirata's Tree-ness House, Tokyo 2009



Go See Something Common

Quotidian (def: everyday, commonplace) invites 11 New Zealand designers to talk about examples of everyday design, uncovering how design ideas are recycled, leveraged, refined and can in turn inspire new design. Using the exhibition as a forum for designers to think globally while advancing local design discourse, each participant will showcase an everyday design object alongside an object of their own design and write about their understandings - and discoveries - brought about through considering the vices and virtues of "everyday" objects.

Participants featuring in Quotidian cover a broad range of design fields, from industrial designers like Katy Wallace through to fashion designers Cybèle Wiren and Adrian Hailwood.

What: Quotidian: finding inspiration in everyday design
Where: Objectspace, 8 Ponsonby Rd, Auckland
When: Saturday 15 May – Saturday 26 June 2010 Gallery
Hours: Mon – Sat, 10am – 5pm.

Free admission (a print publication will be available for sale)
Image above: Leaner shelf by Katy Wallace

Get Naked

An exciting show opens shortly at Jensen Gallery, 11 McColl Street, Newmarket.

Entitled *Naked*, the group show has works by major international heavyweights like Tracy Emin, Louise Bourgeois, Robert Mapplethorpe and Man Ray alongside a small slice of the equally fine Jensen stable, including Jude Rae and Winston Roeth.

Jensen has always curated intelligent and provocative shows, and this one looks to be a ripper. Runs from May 4th to July 16th.

www.jensengallery.com

The Fine Print

Combined Excerpts from the Reports to NZIA Auckland Branch meeting of March 2010.

Chair's Report: Harry Street

For the first meeting of the new committee, there are a few things to organize: welcomes and introductions; portfolio allocation, and the events calendar.

There is a proposal for a Spatial Plan workshop supported by all the Urban Design Forum disciplines to take place in May/June to debate/propose what a spatial plan is. In early March Christina along with Graeme Scott and Will Thresher went to see Nikki Kaye as part of a UDF team to discuss Auckland Governance and to lend our support in terms of a professional reference group. Nikki was very supportive of the idea of a workshop, although since that meeting, she's gone quiet. Will update you on any progress.

A Branch-supported talk was presented at Auckland Library by Professor David Pike. About 80 people attended - a good mix of the public (mainly) and architects.

Andrew Barrie has requested input from the Branch on Architecture Week(end) 2010. This will follow the pattern of the 2008 Architecture Weekend, and be arranged around the launch for Julia Gately's book on The Group and the opening of the related exhibition. The main need is for a liaison with Linda Tyler at the Gus Fisher. The NZIA Council approved our contribution towards the exhibition. We will also soon need to laying the ground work for Architecture Week 2011.

I am hopeful that the Branch can put some thought and energy in the issue of co-operation with related industry groups.

Technical Issues Group: Jerome Buckwell

The Last TIG seminar was held on 23rd March. The seminar was the first in a series of talks focusing around all aspects of the 'Building Envelope'.

We had Mark Bassett of BRANZ delivering a talk on 'understanding the physics of how cavities work'. Mark is a principal scientist at BRANZ having worked on aspects of building energy efficiency, ventilation and weathertightness for over 30 years. He is the original author of the ALF passive solar design guide for residential buildings and worked at the National Research Council in Canada on their ventilation research program. Mark developed a passive ventilation guide for NZ homes and has been working on weathertightness issues in NZ.

The talk was quite technical focusing on the science of construction rather than specific products. The lecture was well patronised with over 30 people in attendance and feed back from Branch Members has been very positive.

HERITAGE PORTFOLIO: Adam Wild

1. WORLD HERITAGE DAY

International Day of Monuments and Sites 2010 - 18th April
International Day for Monuments and Sites, known as World Heritage Day, was first celebrated on 18th April, 1982, by ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) with the support of the UNESCO.

The 2010 Theme: Agricultural Heritage
Agricultural practices, systems and landscapes the world over have been shaped and maintained by generations of farmers - responding to challenges of nature, climate and geography, as well as conserving and using available local resources. Agricultural heritage goes beyond just production of food. It is reflected in rural landscapes, the patterns of small towns on the

land, in the A&P Show grounds, in the wheat-fields and grain elevators, in the sheep and cattle runs, in the architecture of agriculture - farm houses, shearing sheds, dairy factories and freezing works, as well as in the lifestyles that people have led.

2. EXHIBITION

Miles: A Life in Architecture

23 April - 29 May 2010, Opening Friday 23 April, 5.30pm

Graduate Professional Education: Sarah MacKenzie & James Pearce

CV/Interview Workshop

This year's CV/Interview Workshop was held on April 7th at D72. We had a great turnout and three fantastic speakers: Nick Moyes (Jasmax), Brad Luke (Peddle Thorp Architects), and Pip Cheshire (Cheshire Architects). The speakers gave helpful advice and tips regarding CV and portfolio preparation, interview techniques, imparting amusing anecdotes and revealing insights.

Study Group Workshop

The next event in planning is the study group workshop. Currently scheduled for Wednesday June 2nd the workshop presents an opportunity for graduates looking to sit registration to form groups for study, as well as providing ideas as to how such study may be structured.

Further Topics

Arrangements are being made for a meeting with Beverley McRae to discuss suitable topics and dates for additional seminars/workshops.

University of Auckland Student Report: Jordon Saudners

A slightly shorter first quarter has gone past quickly, with design well under way working towards mid semester in the weeks to come. With a large group of students shipped off to Spain, studio life has been a much subdued environment, although this ends with the beginning of the new term.

The second half of semester looks like it will bring some exciting events including 'S-Tutes', the Athfield screening, and the potential for an exhibition of third year design work.

S-Tutes, which will be held at UoA Architecture building in May, has a great outlook, and if confirmations prove correct a great line up of practicing architects should be ready and waiting. If any would like to be involved please don't be afraid to get in contact with either myself or Rachel.

Reasonably standard and short-lived beginning of semester, yet the pace as always will pick up as soon as the semester kicks off again on the 19th.

Unitec Student Report: Rachel Dawkins and Stu Penno

The first quarter has gone past very quickly, all studio projects are well under way and crits were recently held for all year groups.

Two BBQ's were held in the first quarter and were enjoyed by all that attended. Efforts will continue to have these every quarter.

A presentation was given to final year Masters students by Marshall Cook, Gary Lawson and Dave Strachen on job opportunities and CV preparation. This was found incredibly valuable by all students.

A free Archicad workshop has been organised for SANNZ students. This is hosted by Unitec and offered to UoA and Unitec students. Interest by the students for this course has well exceeded places available, so another course for next semester is being considered.

The Fine Print Continued

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UoA : School of Architecture and Planning Report: Uwe Rieger

1. With the support of our new Public Program Team the school continues to work successfully on the internal and external interface of the school. Our lecture series Communiqué is well attended, we are running a series of internal school exhibitions and the new `Expert Series` format allows for an effective school internal exchange of specialist knowledge, giving visiting guests a flexible platform of exchange.
2. Under the title of `Architecture of Knowledge` the Focus of the curriculum for 2010 is on the cooperative integration of all subject areas in the design programme.
3. A group of 68 students is currently on a field trip in Portugal and Spain, with a joint design studio at ETSAB in Barcelona. A group of 15 masters students is on a visit of the Pearl River Delta in coordination with the South China University of Technology in Guangzhou. In cooperation with the University of Queensland we are running a joint design project with a student exchange from both sides.
4. For the second time, over mid semester break, the school is successfully running the Open Desk Programme. The programme is organized by Prof. Andrew Barrie in cooperation with Auckland architectural firms. It offers motivated students a chance to gain practice-based experience.
5. The School is expanding the digital fabrication workshop. Next to 2 Laser Cutters, a 3D printer, and a 3D scanner, we will run a large format 3 Axis Router and small size 4 Axis Router.

Tokyo Tales

Continued from p.5

Needing to attract customers to SuperDeluxe, KDa started running an event they called PechaKucha Night (PKN). "Pechakucha", an onomatopoeic word for the sound of people talking, translates from the Japanese as 'chit chat'. The format of the event is simple - the evening consists of around a dozen presentations, each presenter having 20 slides, each shown for 20 seconds. Each presenter has just 6 minutes 40 seconds to explain their ideas before the next presenter takes the stage. Fast paced, entertaining, and often hilarious, the PechaKucha format allows architects, artists, designers and even students to present themselves and their work, network, and exchange ideas.

In 2004 PKN began running in a few cities in Europe, and since then has become a global phenomenon, now running in more than 300 cities around the world - there is now a PechaKucha event somewhere in the world every single day. PKN recently started in Auckland in 2007, and is now running in nine New Zealand towns and cities. Klein and Dytham expanded the potential of the PKN network earlier this year when they were moved to help raise money, build awareness, and generate ideas for the reconstruction of Haiti following its devastating earthquake. They ran an event in which over 100 PKN cities combined to run a synchronized event spanning both a whole day and the entire globe in order to support Architecture for Humanity's plans for rebuilding in Haiti. The event is being recognized as the world's biggest single distributed conference to date, and raised enough money to build a school in Haiti. AB

Klein and Dytham will visit New Zealand in May, delivering lectures in Auckland and Christchurch. www.klein-dytham.com

Continue that PD!

NZIA CPD Days are impending:

The mini-conference will host a boatload of Australians including Roger Wood of Wood/Marsh, Domenic Alvaro from Woods Bagot, and Angelo Candalepas.

CPD: 80 Pts
When: 14 - 15 May 2010
Where: Level 5, New Zealand Room
SKYCITY Convention Centre, 88 Federal Street

NZIA Architect, Academic and Provisional Members \$250.00 (including GST)
NZIA Student Members \$50.00 (including GST)
NZIA Graduate and Affiliate Members \$100.00 (inc GST)
Non Members \$350.00 (including GST)

Visit the NZIA website or email info@fp2.co.nz for more info and to register

NZIA APL Graduate Development Programme Experience Area Seminars / Workshops 2010

For ALL GDP members these are the most important seminars/workshops to attend as they explain the professional areas that you need knowledge of and experience in to become a registered architect as per the requirements of the New Zealand Registered Architects Board, NZRAB. If you have attended the Experience Areas weekends before, I would suggest you come along again, as we will be presenting the revised Experience Areas announced in April 2010.

These seminar/workshops are presented by leading architects John Coop, Director Warren & Mahoney, Craig Moller, Director Moller Architects and Christina van Bohemen, Director of Sills van Bohemen Architects (and past Chair of the Auckland Branch of the NZIA)

When: Friday 11th June 2.45 pm - 7.30 pm and
Saturday 12th June 9.30 am - 1.30 pm
Where: SKY CITY Convention Centre

Register on the NZIA website:
www.nzia.co.nz/content.aspx?c=68&t=Upcoming-Events

Each Block is laid by a dedicated editorial team, spread between Cheshire Architects and the University of Auckland's Architecture School :

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Tokyo Tales

Andrew Barrie Anticipates the Impending Touchdown of Klein Dytham

During the 1980s, Japanese architects ran wild, a massive economic boom prompting extravagant and wildly experimental designs. In the 1990s, however, a series of social, natural, and economic disasters – the Kobe earthquake, the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack, and the prolonged recession that followed the bursting of the economic bubble – extinguished the optimism and confidence that had previously fuelled both life and architecture in Japan. The generation of architects now in their 40s began practicing in the post-bubble era, and were denied the opportunities taken for granted just a few years earlier. For many, this lack of easy opportunity forced a shift in ambition and approaches; it prompted a more flexible view of the profession and of the architect's role in society.

Mark Dytham and Astrid Klein are among the leaders of this supple post-bubble generation in Japan. The pair arrived in Tokyo in 1988 – the height of the bubble – intending to stay only a few months. After landing a job in the office of Toyo Ito, they stayed on. After a couple of years, with the economy looking strong and exciting commissions easy to come by, the couple went out on their own and established Klein Dytham Architecture (KDa). Within a few months, however, the bubble burst; not so much a big bang as a slow deflation that eroded confidence and ended big-budget experimentation.

The early 1990s were tough years for young architects in Japan, and the search for work led Klein and Dytham down some unusual paths. They not only explored new ideas and forms in their design work, but sought new outlets for their talents, many of which didn't involve making buildings. While limited budgets and tight schedules created less-than-favorable circumstances for innovation, the duo has a seemingly magical ability to transform unpromising commissions into stunning designs. Asked to design a construction hoarding intended to stand for three years, they made a virtue of its longevity by covering it with plants that grew significantly over the construction period.

Dytham has described their "displacement" – their foreign-ness in Japan – as a key source of inspiration. Stimulated by the invention and adaptation they see in their surroundings, the energy of Tokyo itself powers their design work. Dytham cites as an example the interior of Tokyo taxi cabs, describing how they often contain such remarkable – to Western eyes, at least – amenities as drink vending machines, sweets, boxes of tissues, or a vase of flowers. "We see a completely different Japan to the Japanese," Dytham explained. "The Japanese see nothing. This is completely normal for them."

Harnessing Japan's innovative use of technology and love of color and new forms, KDa endow their projects with wit and vigor. The façade of their Uniqlo store is a grid of one thousand illuminated panels. This computer-controlled screen is brought to life with chunky, low-res animations and images. Asked to re-clad

two hotel towers in a beautiful alpine setting, KDa decided to use camouflage to reduce the impact of the towers, but the difficulty was that the surrounding natural environment changed with the seasons. KDa's solution: camouflage one tower to suit winter conditions and the other to suit summer - one tower fades from black to white, and the other from green to white.

Often drawing on ideas normally the province of graphic design, advertising, and multimedia art, KDa have looked for support and opportunity by engaging with the wider creative community. In 1998, they established Deluxe, an office shared with several other design-related firms – graphic designers, interior designers, a DJ, and a micro-brewing company. Converted from a taxi garage, Deluxe was for Tokyo an unusually large space, and KDa often made it available for exhibitions, fashion shows, and other events. As these events became larger and more frequent, they threatened to engulf the office, so the Deluxe cooperative established SuperDeluxe, a bar and venue specifically geared to the creative community.

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Communiqué 2010 Lecture

Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham on 6pm Wednesday 19th May
Engineering Lecture Theatre, 22 Symonds Street
10 CPD points, free entry, see www.creative.auckland.ac.nz

PechaKucha Night

Wednesday 19th May at Shed10, 90 Wellesley Street
Doors open: 7.30pm, start 8.20pm, \$9 entry
www.pechakucha.co.nz





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