

# Newsletter

No59 November 2009

AIA UK



A Chapter of  
The American  
Institute of Architects



## London Southbank Team Wins Student Design Charrette

Brianne Page, Assoc. AIA

The AIA UK Student Design Charrette was a day of improvisational fun held at the Architectural Association. The brief challenged the teams to develop the four parcels of land at the base of Centre Point along Tottenham Court Road. The teams visited the site and were immediately hard at work and full of energy, which they maintained throughout the day. This was reflected in the quality and amount of work produced.

The day concluded with a juried critique of their work. Paul Finch, journalist and critic, chaired the jury with Kathryn Firth, architect and urban designer, and William Gordon, architect. London Southbank University received the top prize, with Canterbury School of Architecture coming in second and Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication in third.

Many thanks to CallPrint Reprographics, who annually sponsors the event. They provided materials and printing needs for all the students, which allowed them to express and represent their ideas very efficiently.

Continued on page 4 of insert

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## World Architecture Congress

Cityscape Dubai, October 5-6, 2009

Richard Spencer, Int'l Assoc. AIA, RIBA

Richard Spencer represented the Chapter at the Cityscape conference held at the Dubai Convention Centre earlier this autumn. The conference had been programmed by the international chapters of the AIA (UK, Continental Europe, Hong Kong and Japan) and the International Committee of AIA National and the driving force behind it was Steven Miller, a Continental Europe Chapter member who is managing director of the FxFlow Dubai office. A full two-day programme was followed by a boat trip around the famous Palm Island development.

Continued on page 5



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### CALLPRINT NEW SHOWROOM LAUNCH PARTY

Showcase of their new 3d printing facilities  
Fall 2009, Date TBC

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Herman Miller Showroom  
Elections for 2010 AIA UK Board  
Wednesday, January 13, 2010

### BUILDING TOURS

Kentish Town Health Center  
21 January 2010

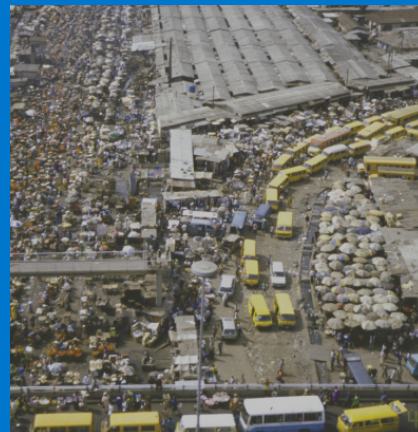
LSE New Academic Building  
18 February 2010

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The AIA UK will be holding their annual election of officers and directors at the 2010 Annual General Meeting. If you are interested in getting involved with the chapter, please consider nominating yourself for a position on the board. You are welcome to make nominations for the board of directors and also for the four officers, which include President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. For the four officer positions, we would ideally prefer US licensed architects, but would also accept foreign licensed architects for nominations. The board of directors can be both licensed or non-licensed and all members of the board would normally be willing to help with events coordination and other organization within the chapter.

If you would like to nominate yourself or another candidate please email Richard Spencer at [richard.spencer@hok.com](mailto:richard.spencer@hok.com).

The 2010 Annual General Meeting of the AIA UK will take place on the 13th January at the Herman Miller Showroom located at 61 Aldwych, beginning with drinks and nibbles at 6:30pm. The evening will include a brief overview of the Chapters activities over the past year as well as a discussion of what events are being planned for 2010. The AGM is also a chance to meet a wide range of AIA UK members and to visit the new showroom of Herman Miller, a long time chapter supporter.



## AIA UK Movie Nights

Andrew Wade, Assoc. AIA

On Friday, September 11 the AIA UK hosted its third film night of the year with a screening of *Lagos Wide & Close: An Interactive Journey into an Exploding City*. A collaboration between Rem Koolhaas and Harvard Project on the City, the film documents the city of Lagos, Nigeria, which is projected to be the world's third largest city by 2015 with a population of 24 million.

We were pleased to hold a post-film discussion with lecturer and author in landscape architecture and urbanism, Tim Waterman. Issues evident in the film such as the unique postcolonial context of Lagos, as well as the balance between top-down planning and bottom-up emergent organisation, were vibrantly discussed by the audience. All members in attendance earned two continuing education credits.

## Sustainability Lectures

Anna Maria Orru, RIBA & Josye Utick, Assoc. AIA

The AIA UK chapter will be organizing a series of lectures centered around sustainability to coincide with the COP15 United Nations Climate Change Conference which is taking place this December in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The COP15 conference will potentially result in an ambitious global agreement incorporating all the countries of the world, as a new agreement is needed when the Kyoto Protocol (negotiated in 1997) expires in 2012. For further information on the conference, please visit <http://en.cop15.dk/>

The main lecturers on the series will include experts in the field ranging from topics on energy, water, waste, biomimicry, legislation and food. The intention of the lectures is to give design professionals a holistic and innovative glimpse of different methods explored in the area of sustainable design, with attention on a multi-disciplinary approach in tackling climate change.

## World Architecture Congress 2009, continued

Richard Spencer writes: Whilst I was the only representative of the UK chapter there were at least a dozen delegates from the other chapters and a total attendance of around fifty. Immediately prior to the conference the four chapters held a joint meeting to review progress on the formation of an International Region and debate the re-designation of International Associates. A joint strategy was agreed.

I was only able to attend the first day of the conference due to other commitments but I enjoyed a number of very informative presentations ably chaired by the engaging Peter Rees, Chief Planning Officer of the City of London. The highlight was undoubtedly a discourse by Will Alsop on the design process behind a number of his recent and current projects in which he emphasised the importance of being there in person and building on what is there, embedding a place's history into the solution. He also suggested a new measure of a project's success – how many people post photos of it on Flickr! There was, however, no comment on the shortness of his recent 'retirement.'

The other presentations that day started with James Law's review of his practice, based in Hong Kong, which merged interactive computerisation into buildings to create what he termed Cybertecture. We heard Sudhir Jambhekar of FxFowle's description of the beautiful new bridge he has designed for Dubai and a witty speech by Peter Rees emphasising the importance of gossip to the life of cities. There was a discussion of the impact of the recession on different economies and a report on the challenges of achieving LEED ratings in the Gulf. The afternoon concluded with a dissertation on how to prevent the current obsession with defensible design from turning our cities into a collection of fortresses by Continental Europe Chapter member Thomas Vonier.

October is a great time of year to visit Dubai - the outside temperature reminds one of a fine summer day in London - it is just a shame it is still so difficult to walk between venues that are actually only a few hundred metres apart. Finally, thanks must go to sponsors Grace Construction Products and Solartube who provided respectively a pre-conference drinks reception and first night dinner for AIA members.



Dubai Cityscape



LSE New Academic Building



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## 2009 AIA UK OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

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Kristy Sels, AIA



Student Charrette Second Place Team



## Student Charrette Winners, cont.

### First Prize:

London Southbank University : Beatrix Frankfurt, Alex Cox, Kiku Simcoe, Muzzammil Dadabhoy, Albert Suen, Mattia Donati, Ahmad Said, Jonathan Telkamp, Ziyang Xing

### Second Prize:

Canterbury School of Architecture : Andrew Dabamprez, Amado Dantes, Urszula Witkowska, Frankie Bainbridge, Alec Wilson, Sam Kazemzadeh, Jordan Marsh

### Third Prize:

Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication: Katrin Kaprina, Hege Groholt, Pavla Krescova, Ziya Mustafa, Simon To, Petr Esposito, Yong Suk Lee, Kang Yong Ok, Dishita Turakhia

## Living Landscapes

Richard Spencer, Int'l Assoc, AIA, RIBA

The first two lecture evenings in the Living Landscapes series have now taken place at the Building Centre on Store Street, W1. On Monday 5th October a packed house (standing room only) heard three distinguished speakers in Dr. Luis Arena, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Zaragoza, the architect and thinker Uriel Fogue of Architecture Agency in Madrid and Dr Malcom Miles, professor of Cultural Theory at the University of Plymouth discuss the broad relationships between public space, politics and democracy.

On Monday 2nd November a well attended two-way debate on art and the creative city heard from the distinguished public art curator Vivian Lovell of Modus Operandi on the many different ways artists and their work can be engaged with the public realm and from Jean Francois Proust, an architect and artist based in Montreal, on participatory interventions, both 'guerrilla' and commissioned, in cities from Miami to Madrid via Detroit, Montreal and London. It was an evening with no shortage of humour.

Please keep an eye out for announcements about future Living Landscapes events!

## 2009 Summer Bike Tour

Josye Utick, Assoc. AIA

One Saturday morning in mid-July, members and friends of the chapter with bikes and cycle gear in hand, gathered for an early start at Victoria Station to explore a few architectural jewels, new and old, of the West Sussex countryside.

Benedict O'Looney, RIBA, who has in the past lead a number of interesting tours for the chapter, again headed this cycling trip from Chichester to Littlehampton. The day began with a stroll through the Roman medieval centre of Chichester, eventually ending up at Chichester Priory. The group took the opportunity to break for lunch, enjoy the amusements of the local church festival (complete with an electric train for kids), cricket tournament, a tour of the Roman ruins housed in the priory and even belly dancing!

Next on the agenda was a visit to Chichester Cathedral whereupon the group noted the Norman and Gothic elements of the cathedral and admired the interior embellishments, including a Marc Chagall stain glass window. Before departing Chichester, the group made a quick trip to Pallant House Gallery, to review the architectural features of the new addition to the gallery, originally built in the 18th century (Benny was a student of one of the designers of the new wing).

Since the program for the day was quite ambitious and the enthusiasm exceeded the allotted time for the day, the group raced by bike quickly from Chichester to Littlehampton for the last appointment of the day, but of course, being admirers of any architectural curiosities, the group made a quick stop at a randomly located windmill along the route.

At last, the group arrived to the charming town of Littlehampton, with a quick cycle through the narrow streets, quaint marina, and boardwalk. The staff of the East Beach Café warmly welcomed the group after café hours. The hospitality of the café staff, along with provisions of hot beverages and baked goods for warmth and rejuvenation, in an unusually overcast and chilly summer day, were greatly appreciated. Inside the cozy and bright environ of the café, Peter Ayres, a member of the Heatherwick Studio team who designed the café, led the group through a discussion of the design and construction process of the very unusual seaside cafe.

Weary but intellectually stimulated by the visits of the day, the group headed back together by train to London.

The chapter would like to extend a big thanks to Benny, Peter, and the East Beach Cafe for an excellent day in West Sussex!



Chichester Cathedral



Pallant House Gallery, Chichester

# LSE Building Tour

Josye Utick, Assoc. AIA

Early August, members of the chapter met with Andrew Milward-Bason, an associate at Grimshaw, for an intimate tour of the newly and extensively remodelled New Academic Building of the London School of Economics.

The existing Edwardian building formerly housed the Public Trustees Office and now has now been reconfigured as a university building with academic, social, and departmental space across ten floors totalling 12,700sqm. Situated at the northernmost point of the university's central London campus, the project faced many challenges, one in particular being the issue of accommodating building access from both the west face of the building on Kingsway and the more courtyard-like east entrance, adjacent to Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Andrew provided a wonderfully in-depth explanation of the design process, the demands of the complex program, and the insights of the integrated project strategy. Sustainability was integral to the New Academic Building's development and a range of strategies have been employed to help achieve the building's aim of an 'Excellent' BREEAM rating.

The chapter would like to express their appreciation to Andrew for an excellent evening tour of the New Academic Building and look forward to another one early next year.



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# Noel Hill Scholarship Winner Visits Mozambique

Lorraine King, AIA

The 2009 winner of the AIA UK Chapter Noel Hill Travel Scholarship was Paulo Moreira, from the Department of Architecture & Special Design, London Metropolitan University. Moreira has been commissioned by a Portuguese NGO to design a primary school in Angola and he has been developing this as a combined design and research project for his MA in Cities Design & Urban Cultures. He has used his £1,200 scholarship fund to make an African, pre-design expedition.

Part of Moreira's MA has been investigating and evaluating architecture and urbanism in the context of Africa's colonial and post-colonial past. At the same time, he has been researching his own family's African roots and he has uncovered an intriguing family legacy that parallels his current experiences with the Angolan school.

In the 1950s and 60s, Moreira's grandfather and grandmother worked for the National Health Service in the then Portuguese colony of Mozambique. In 1957, his grandmother started the long, complex process of building a nursery for 75 children in Xai-Xai. The nursery was completed a few years later and – despite all the odds – is still in operation today as a school for 120 students. Through site visits and intensive research - including personal reminiscences of relatives, staff and students – Moreira was able to trace the building's survival, its development and adaptations and to assess its current, precarious condition.

It is a compelling story of one building's survival, and touches briefly on the affects of colonial authoritarianism, independence and civil war (1 million killed; 4.0 million displaced), experiments in communism, environmental catastrophe and misplaced, even contra productive, humanitarian aid – the same issues that have influenced all of developing Africa at some point during the 2nd half of the 20th century.

But it is also a story of the enduring aspiration for education and how a school designed as a nursery 60 years ago supports or detracts from that purpose. It is Moreira's intention for his own, new school to be "an engine for social and cultural development." But – in the meantime - he also speculates on the possibility of building a simple extension for the crowded, old school and following up on his grandmother's dream.

