

president's column

*David Epstein, AIA, leed ap
2005 president aiaVT*

aiaVT



The aiaVT newsletter is published by AIA Vermont,
the Vermont Chapter of the
American Institute of Architects.

Executive Director: Hanne Williams, Hon. AIAVT
aiaVT@madriver.com

1662 Mill Brook Road
Fayston, Vermont 05673
p 802.496.3761
f 802.496.3294

November was a busy month for AIAVT. We began the month with the ArtGate Competition. Spearheaded by board members John Anderson, Cleary Buckley and Jerry Bridges, Artgate was a design competition for a mixed-use development in the south end of Burlington. Partnering with the City of Burlington and Burlington City Arts, the ArtGate Competition challenged the entrants to combine a 600 parking garage with artist's housing and studios. While many of the entries stretched the imagination, the project is real. The City of Burlington plans to build a parking garage on the site, and now, as a result of the competition, has designated space on site for the artist's spaces.

Another great aspect of the competition was the tremendous support from the building professional community. As a result, AIAVT was able to award four \$1000 awards to each winner. They are:

- Michael Wisniewski
- Ted Montgomery
- Brian Mac, architect and Brian Malley, artist
- Jon Racek

Later in the month AIAVT sponsored our first annual Construction design competition. Construction is international community service project where architect-led teams design and build sculptures from canned food. The canned food is then donated to local food shelves. Developed by the Society of Design

cont.

excerpt from

<http://bad.eserver.org/issues/2004/65/cowan.html>

Street Protest Architecture - Dissent Space in Australia

Street protests appear suddenly in prominent public places - their effect is to stand out in public, in dramatic and symbolic contrast to a context. In their conspicuousness, they enliven and animate the city as a form of public theatre.

Gregory Cowan

Bad Subjects

Issue #65, January 2004

Street protests appear suddenly in prominent public places — their effect is to stand out in public, in dramatic and symbolic contrast to a context. In their conspicuousness, they enliven and animate the city as a form of public theatre. Berthold Brecht developed the idea of 'city as theatre' in his constructivist creative productions in modern Germany, and Frankfurt School thinkers Benjamin and Adorno theorized its modernity. In such theatre-cities, protest structures surprise and challenge both govern-

cont.

12.05:1

calendar

December 7, 2005

2005 AIA Vermont Annual Meeting and Design Awards Presentations

6:00 p.m. at College Hall on the Vermont
College Campus in Montpelier. Cash bar and
fantastic buffet by the New England Culinary
Institute.

December 15, 2005

Lavalley University Construction College

12:00-2:00 Lavalley Building supply, Inc.
Colonial Plaza, West Lebanon, NH. This is the
first in a series of presentations on current and
new product uses, installation techniques and
specifications. A hot lunch will be provided. AIA
CEU's available. Contact [Bob Monahan](#) or call
603-863-1050 x243.

December 16, 2005

Green Building Workshop Series: Towards Zero Net Energy Homes

Vermont History Center in Barre, Vermont from
8:30 AM to 4:30 PM with Marc Rosenbaum,
P.E. of Energysmiths, Inc. Learn about the plan-
ning and design of environmentally friendly homes
that can annually produce as much clean energy
as they consume. The workshop will include
useful handouts describing various design strategy
options.

Administration, Construction occurs every November in over 50 cities across
the continent. For our first event, there were six teams from local firms:

- Black River Design Architects
- Bread Loaf Corporation
- DEW Construction w/The Renaissance School
- The McKernon Group
- 12-22 North
- Truex Cullins & Partners Architects

The teams did a great job and the event was a huge success. Not only were
they sculptures inventive and whimsical, but we are pleased to announce that
this event donated over 15,000 cans to the Vermont Food Bank. This is enough
food (we are told) to provide supplemental food to over 20,000 people. There
was a lot of enthusiasm at the awards ceremony to make this a yearly tradition.
We are hoping our only problem will be finding a bigger venue. Big thanks
to Marsha Wilmot, Guy Teschmacher, Hanne Williams and Juliet Landler for
organizing this great event.

As outgoing president, this will be my last president's column for the newsletter.
I will be staying on the board next year to assist Michael Hoffman, the 2006
president of the chapter. Michael is a professor at Norwich University and long-
time board member. I am sure you will enjoy Michael's wit and insight in the
months to come.

Have a great holiday season and hope to see you at the Design Awards pro-
gram this month.

*ments and citizens, actively engaging them in public space as players in
the 'political' affairs of the city and state. These constructions are more
than mere physical phenomena, endowed with ideas and motivations
on a larger scale than the city. They represent more than buildings, and
however unsettling, they form a necessary part of the civic architecture.
Protest structures help to bring human and domestic elements into public
and political life. Architecture in western traditions connotes constructions
of authority and significance owing to its definition of the Greek origin of
arche tekton, original or authoritative making. As such, protest structures
are frequently misunderstood as the antithesis of architecture, but on the
contrary, their architectural role in democratic cities is significant.
This article suggests that conflicts and encounters between the ancient
continent of Australia and its more recent Western/global architecture and
culture are indicative of a process which gives rise to an architecture of
cont.*

12.05:2

ArtGate: A parking garage, studios . . . and that which, platonically speaking, never is.

Donald Maurice Kreis

Virtue is its own reward, which is good news for Burlington architect Michael Wisniewski.

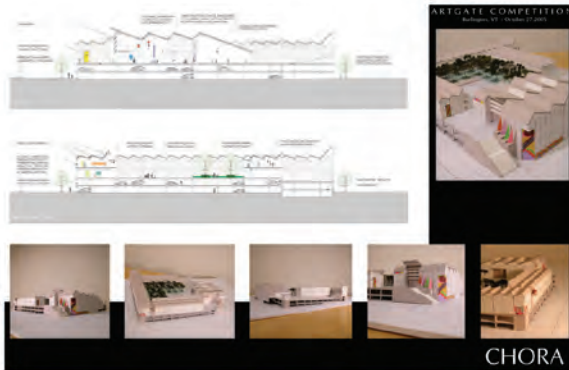
As one of four honorees in the Vermont AIA's recent ArtGate competition, Wisniewski pocketed a \$1,000 prize for his design scheme. Entrants grappled with a quasi-hypothetical commission for a combination arts center and public parking garage on a vacant site in his home town, between the proposed South End Connector highway and a small neighborhood known as the Lakeside Community.

Specifically, Wisniewski grappled for 75 hours – a fact he somewhat sheepishly confessed when competition organizer John Anderson publicly asked the entrants to estimate how much time they had put into their efforts. That works out to slightly more than \$13.33 an hour – plus virtue and any other inchoate emoluments.

By contrast, and even more sheepishly, Ted Montgomery admitted to whipping his winning entry into computer-assisted form in just a few hours in the days immediately preceding the deadline. Somewhere in the middle, presumably, were the other two winning entries: one by Jon Racek and the other a joint effort by Brian Mac and Brian Malley.

It might seem superficial, even insulting, to focus on hours of work rather than how the designers actually proposed to solve the architectural problem they confronted. In reality, the question of time goes right to the heart of things.

This was no mere competition, but a test of a longstanding design principle held by competition organizer, architect and artist John Anderson of Burlington. It is Anderson's view that great design begins with the exercise of the unen-



Michael Wisniewski ArtGate Submission

cont.

protest. Architecture has often been regarded as an edification of ideas, but importantly, it is also used experimentally. In the avant-garde traditions of art, the case of experimental protest constructions is of interest because it suggests where our unsettled society may be going, rather than only where it has been. In the unsettled world today, many Australians are looking for a direction. Protest architecture is not so much driven by the construction of materials and shelter as it is by the relations and tectonics of people and ideas. In the context of cultures of social debate and dissent mediated through television and the internet, street protest architecture is primordial, real, and tactile.

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12.05:3

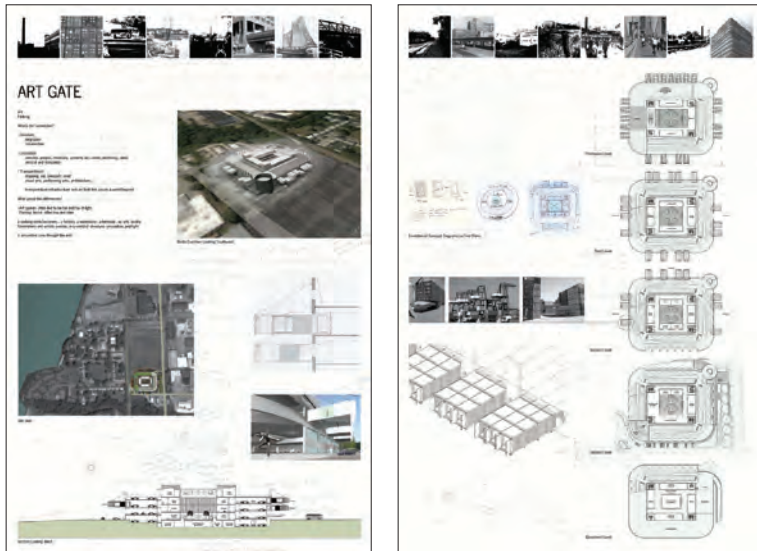
cumbered imagination, one not fettered by budget or skeptical evaluation by an architecturally conservative outside world. The way Anderson figures it, one should start with the whole universe of beauty and grandeur and let the irritating constraints impose themselves in due course.

Considered against that hypothesis, ArtGate seems to have proven two related and disheartening things: (1) Natural selection has leached the ability to disregard those constraints out of most Vermont architects, and (2) whatever the rewards of virtue, the prospect of a thousand bucks is inadequate to induce even the most brilliant Vermont architects to soar above practicality, given that such flight itself requires a prodigious output of energy and, most particularly, time. There were, after all, only nine designs competing for the four prizes.

Apart from those dreary realities, the competition must be deemed a success for having generated some ideas that could, if developed, qualify as both art and architecture. The four award-winners are indeed the most promising in that regard.

The two Brians took the counterintuitive path of burying the art spaces below grade, presumably yielding comfortable skylit lairs. They celebrate the lunacy of the automobile era by turning the parking garage into an iconic cantilever bridge-to-nowhere crowned with wind turbines. The turbines' purpose is to recharge electric cars while their owners are out and about.

Racek wittily morphed ArtGate into AggreGate and literally treated the commission as an opportunity to aggregate cars and artists, the former untethered from the customary Cartesian parking grid and the latter mixed in via round studio towers. The top of the cake is decorated with an iconic winter garden, featuring (presumably only in cold-weather months) a skating pond that also eschews homage to Descartes (or, for that matter, to skaters and their pesky aversion to obstacles). The result is a compellingly stark beauty, somewhat like the roof garden at the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno (well worth a look, by the way, since Will Bruder is to Reno what Frank Gehry is to Bilbao – see www.willbruder.com/workcultural_NMA.htm).



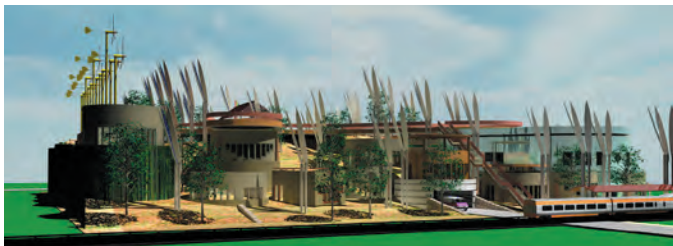
John McLeod and Domingus Palling ArtGate Submission

cont.

This article highlights a series of Australian case studies of protest constructions, from the 1970s and the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra to more recent protest constructions for Sydney 2000 and Perth 2003, noting that the architecture of protest construction is ephemeral, mobile, and highly collaborative. The essay traces from states of invasion to illegal occupation, to federation, world games, and global protest. A new movement of convergence activism is a mode of organizing and building a movement that recognizes the affinities and connections between land rights, environment and spatial freedom of many kinds.

cont.

12.05:4



Ted Montgomery ArtGate Submission

Montgomery was the only winner whose design offers a friendly face to the Lakeside Community, whose kids pass by or through the site on their way to school. This proposal beckons with a rolling hillside of structures in a forest of rotating photovoltaic panels designed to resemble trees. Montgomery took the cars and did what anyone who truly cares about the future of the planet would love to do: He buried them.

Which brings us back to Wisniewski's entry, which he calls "Chora." Prominent on the architect's boards – indeed, upstaging the photographs of Wisniewski's model, the creation of which surely accounts for most of his 75 hours – is this declaration: "I propose a building so industrial, regular, rational and boring, so unremittingly dull, that it can only serve as base matter for artists to weave their tawdry human passions into every element, surface and void. The building becomes the chora, from Plato's *Timaeus*: unconscious matter from which arise the forms."

This attracted the attention of the jury – itself not immune to human passions. Because jurors were sensitive to the concerns of the adjoining residential neighborhood, Wisniewski's apparent disregard for those needs loomed large. Chora rests on a two-story plinth comprised of a very conventional parking garage – a kind of acropolis for the automobile age but hardly friendly to kids passing by on their way to school.

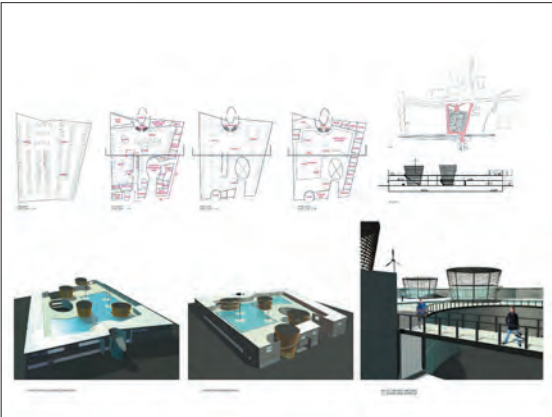
In a sense, Chora seeks to reverse the course of history. Where ancient Greece created colorful buildings that have weathered to paleness over the centuries, Wisniewski proposes to start his acropolis out white and watch it gradually gain color year after year. Specifically, his unremitting dullness takes the form of translucent white Kalwall as the ubiquitous cladding, with the artists encouraged to cover or replace this material with colorful art and even design the railings in the garage. The only departure from plainness as the parti is a playful parody of the traditional sawtooth skylight roof, oriented southward to accommodate solar panels.

cont.

*The suggestion through these examples is that we appear to be dealing with an endemic Australian condition, which, however marginal, is a noteworthy model of democratic architectural process. Subverting the official and institutional state architecture, which is massive white and permanent, this architecture of counterculture is instead light, colourful and spontaneous. In *The Temporary Autonomous Zone* (1991), the poet Hakim Bey expands the idea of uprisings — the beginnings of which are found in upsurging protest movements. An alternative term is the Latin form *insurrection*, a term some historians use for failed revolutions. Rather than being socially ineffective, Bey argues, these 'failed revolutions' are*

cont.

12.05:5



Jon Racek ArtGate Submission

The *Timaeus* concerns itself with the formation of the universe, a discourse that begins with this query: What is that which always is and has no becoming; and what is that which is always becoming and never is?

The insight ArtGate contributed to this quest for wisdom is that Vermont architecture, even as the state's architects are invited to conjure it, lies mired in "is" and, indeed, has no becoming. The honored projects offer insight to those seeking to implement the program in reality, and a juror whose only qualification is enthusiasm could not fail to be grateful for the opportunity to discuss these designs volubly and evaluate them critically. But caution still binds all four proposals to the earth of Vermont, leaving unexplored the universe of architecture that is always becoming but, sadly, never is.

The jury included Sara Katz of BCA; Art Schaller and Alisa Dworsky of Norwich School of Architecture; Lars Fisk, Burlington Artist, Don Kreis, architectural critic and Jeff Hodgson, landscape architect.

It was a "CANTastic CANstruction!"

Marsha C. Wilmot, SDA

Burlington, VT -- aiaVT hosted its first annual CANstruction® design-build competition on November 5, 2005 at Union Station.

Six teams of architects, engineers, students, and members of the design field competed to design and build sculptures made from canned food products. At the close of the exhibition all of the canned food used in the structures was donated to the Vermont Foodbank.

Competition rules dictated that the structures be built within a certain space, but within the square footage imaginations were allowed to run wild. The same professionals that design our schools, hospitals, houses, and all kinds of

cont.

liberating — providing an escape from the direct conflict of the protest culture with the state, and from what he describes as the "Hegelian spiral of that 'progress' which is secretly nothing more than a vicious circle". Through uprisings, culture is liberated beyond "progress". Such protest constructions, it is argued here, are effected by an architecture that operates beyond this circle of progress; a thinking and practice that operates 'outside the square'.

cont.

12.05:6



12-22 North
Photographer: Carolyn Bates



DEW Construction with
The Renaissance School
Photographer: Carolyn Bates



Truex Cullins & Partners Architects
Photographer: Carolyn Bates

facilities were challenged to transfer that ability to stacking cans into structurally self-supporting objects that are held together with only tape, cardboard as leveling mechanisms, rubber bands and in some cases a prayer.

Headlining an impressive panel of judges were, Melinda Moulton, Redeveloper – Main Street Landing Company, Bobbe Maynes, Director of Communications – Make A Wish Foundation, Ed Koren, Cartoonist for the New Yorker magazine, and Sparky Potter, President of Wood & Wood Sign Systems.

The teams won awards in these following categories:

12-22 North – Structural Ingenuity

Black River Design Architects – Best Use of Labels

Bread Loaf Corporation – Juror's Favorite & People's Choice

The Renaissance School – Best Meal

The McKernon Group – Honorable Mention

Truex Cullins + Partners Architects – Honorable Mention

As a major sponsor of this year's event, President Phil Daniels of TD Banknorth welcomed everyone to the Awards Ceremony and Melinda Moulton announced the winners. Deborah Flateman, CEO of Vermont Foodbank closed the ceremony with many enlightening words that expressed how over 20,000 Vermonters will benefit from all the cans donated.

CANstruction® is a trademarked charity competition of the Design and Construction Industry to give back to the communities it helps build while focusing on the problems of hunger. The event is the brainchild of the Society for Design Administration sponsored in conjunction with chapters of the American Institute of Architects and other professional industry associations. Over 50 cities across the United States and Canada hosted their own competitions on November 12th.

Collapsible Architecture

The notion that architecture might be collapsible, tentative and ephemeral developed especially in the political climate of the 1960s. In Paris in 1968, inflatables played a key role as architecture for protest. The structures were theatrical, colourful and transportable, well suited to a new culture of mobile and global people's movements that came to a flashpoint in Paris in May 1968. The situationists' mapping and idea of the city as human centred, erotic space influenced the farthest reaches of the newly mediated Western world.

The notion of architecture with minimal means was well known in indigenous Australia. The range of applications of architectural design extended to tombs, hunting hides, animal traps and landscape enhance-

cont.

12.05:7



Black River Design Architects
Photographer: Carolyn Bates



The McKernon Group
Photographer: Carolyn Bates



Bread Loaf Corporation
Photographer: Bread Loaf

aiaVT - Housing Committee Created!

There are few if any Vermont architects who are unfamiliar with the joys and challenges of residential design. Whether it's an occasional single family home, a vast multi-unit development or the reuse of an historic mill building, residential design is a regular concern for most Vermont practitioners. For that reason, the Vermont Chapter of the AIA is excited to announce the formation of a state Housing Committee. *And you are invited to take part!*

At the national level, the AIA has demonstrated a fresh enthusiasm for residential design, incorporating a series of "networks" to focus on the different aspects of this building type. Specifically these networks are creating resources for:

- Custom Single Family House
- Multi-Unit and Merchant Housing
- Affordable Housing
- Green Housing

Each of these networks has a special page on the national web site and a national constituency working on relevant issues. Typically, these efforts lead to programs at the National Convention as well as other locations around the country and throughout the year.

Within our state there are already several excellent organizations focused on housing issues, including NAHB, NESEA, Forum on Sprawl, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation just to name a very few. Lamentably, these organizations rarely collaborate among themselves and almost never with their national counterparts. The AIA hopes to correct this situation. Funding is available to bring local Housing Committee chairs to various roundtables occurring about the country from time to time.

cont.

ments from windbreaks to firestick farming. Materials were sustainable and in many cases regenerated between use because of the passive and mobile-extensive use of resources.

*Urban public space was part of a culture new to Australia with the invasion. Roads streets and market squares were developed ancillary to private space, while places of worship and government institutions held great importance as civic spaces in the nineteenth century. As Peter Murphy observed in *Civic Justice: from Greek Antiquity to the Modern World* (2001) concerning the new world in the context of North America, Protestant colonial communities were motivated by the idea of a divine obligation to settle a new homeland.*

cont.

12.05:8



If housing, in any of its many formats, is a significant part of your practice, I urge you to let me know of your interest. This newly formed committee needs a chair and as many interested architects as possible.

Interested parties should contact:

John Connell, AIA
Connell@madriver.com
Warren, Vermont
Advisory Group National Housing Committee

Better Buildings by Design Conference Returns to Vermont

Efficiency Vermont's 2006 Better Buildings By Design Conference returns to the Sheraton Burlington on February 8-9, 2006. Presented in partnership with AIA, this two-day event is the region's top conference on building durability, efficiency and value. More than 40 workshops, presented by leaders in the industry, will offer information about design and construction approaches and technologies that are being used to create today's high performance commercial and residential buildings. The conference will offer four simultaneous tracks on building envelope, lighting, mechanical systems, and innovations/high performance.

The conference keynote address – *Global Warming Today – How we can make a difference* -- will be given by Bill McKibben, author of numerous books addressing the natural and human environment. Mr. McKibben will explore the ways that energy efficiency, along with other changes in technology, can begin to shift the global warming dynamic. Mr. McKibben is scholar in residence at Middlebury College, a former staff writer for *The New Yorker* and a regular contributor to *House and Garden Magazine* on environmental homes.

cont.

In Australia this obligation to settle was ironically reversed by the Aboriginal Land Rights movement. The cooption of the ephemeral, portable, collapsible architecture, with the example of the beach umbrella and the camp tent in the establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy 1972 was a brilliant strategic use of what had become leisure icons in middle class Australian culture. These elements were used as much in their strategic placement on the land as they are inherently symbolic. The ambiguous forecourt space in front of 'Provisional' Parliament House was an English lawn. The neatly mowed green lawn, so environmentally foreign, yet so colonially familiar to Australia suggests the natural environment tamed and controlled, in the same way that the national emblem features the kangaroo and emu astride the crest. In the insignia of the Royal Australian

cont.

12.05:9



Among the many presenters this year will be John Straube, Ph.D., Faculty Member, Department of Civil Engineering and the School of Architecture, University of Waterloo. Mr. Straub will present *Notes From The Field* detailing recent successful applications of specific materials and techniques in commercial and mixed-use buildings. Mark Biedron, LEED AP, of Sustainable Growth Technologies, will discuss the value of commissioning, and Marc Rosenbaum, P.E., of Energysmiths, will present *Zero Energy Homes*.

Other highlights will include two panels; *Vermont's New Commercial Energy Guidelines and Examples of High Performance* and *Making It Work: Managing an Integrated Design Project*. Also featured will be the annual Best of The Best exhibit of plans, drawings and photos of the year's top new buildings, including winners of the ENERGY STAR® homes competition and the commercial building design competition.

Once again, an evening reception will offer you the opportunity to connect with other design professionals and construction trades people in a casual atmosphere. This event will feature live music, hearty refreshments, and more. Even if you can't make it to the conference, stop in to join your colleagues for the reception on February 8th.

Conference attendees will be eligible to earn AIA continuing education credits.

Call 1-877-248-9900 for more information or to register for the 2006 Better Buildings By Design Conference.

Institute of Architects, two kangaroos are featured for symmetry, but they also wear collars — suggesting the loss of freedom of the wildlife which tragically accompanies the operation of civilizing the wilderness. The Aboriginal Tent Embassy appeared at Federal Parliament, symbolically reclaiming land for Aborigines, a dramatic architectural symbol of the need for reconciliation. With the social justice activism, and the global perspective increasingly afforded to Australians in the 1960s, the tent embassy provided an architecture that allowed a group of Aboriginal land rights activists to represent a nascent Aboriginal nation. It was formed to represent a downtrodden and decimated group of people, who were being treated as foreigners in their own country. For the first time, a national Aboriginal flag was flown. The flag may be regarded in itself as an act of reconciliation-of a Western world symbolism of national flags, combined with the new political reality of federal Aboriginal nationhood.

cont.

12.05:10

Expanding the Used Building Materials Industry – Conference Update

Carolyn Grodinsky



This note is for those that attended the November 3rd *Expanding the Used Building Materials Industry* conference and to bring others to speed that did not.

We have posted speaker presentations on our Construction and Deconstruction Reuse Web Page as well as the brainstorming session on collaborative strategies and next steps.

<http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/recycling/workshop.htm>

During the morning sessions, speakers addressed the challenges and opportunities facing deconstruction businesses, salvage and used building material stores as well as those facing contractors and architects. In the afternoon, participants brainstormed about strategies to collaborate in order to expand the use of used building materials by looking at:

- supply side
- point-of-sale
- end markets

This included developing lists of stakeholders involved in providing the materials (supply), providing the ways to sell or donate them (point-of-sale) and providing the end markets for materials. Lastly, we provided participants with five dots they used to identify the strategies, opportunities, and challenges (from the brainstorming exercise) that would be best to address collaboratively. The most points went to activities concerning **education**, next **legislation**, and thirdly, **networking**.

cont.

The mobile, temporary, and collaborative construction and maintenance of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy represents the advent of a rich architecture of land rights activism. Activists for Aboriginal land rights are deploying the architectural structure and symbol of the tent to reclaim the freedom to dwell nomadically across the Australian continent.

Reconciliation Place and Protest Space

The Government of the time reacted quickly to pass new legislation to prevent camping in public space in Canberra, allowing the Government to evict the peaceful protesters. However, the Tent Embassy was later restored and is now an enduring landmark in Canberra. Despite the National Heritage listing of the Embassy, its maintenance is an ongoing

cont.

12.05:11

Next Steps

1. Identify who is interested in working collaboratively to identify strategies to address these top three activities of education, legislation, and networking. (at the meeting we started a list of conference participants interested in working collaboratively)
2. Convene meeting with interested participants to identify strategies, steps needed to reach them, and the stakeholders that need to be involved.
3. ANR would convene the first meeting and afterward this subcommittee can identify the best plan to continuing their work.

Here's your chance to get involved

So, if you are interested in playing a part in the subcommittee, please respond to this e-mail to let us know. We will contact all interested people and set up a meeting date and time to get started.

All in all, this meeting was a great networking opportunity and chance to meet all of the players involved in trying to keep this material out of our landfills, create jobs, add value to materials, conserve energy, reduce greenhouse gases, etc!!

Lastly, I wanted to forward information from the Agency of Transportation regarding learning about potential deconstruction projects and becoming eligible ("prequalified") to apply for projects. All this information can be found on the AOT web site at: <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/conadmin/prequal.htm>

(It includes an FAQ link, the questionnaire itself, and a standard form CA-82 which is required of prime contractors when requesting biddable proposals & plans. The bidding information can be found within the third link down on the lefthand side, "Construction Contracting.")

issue, and the most recent controversy surrounds the institutionalisation of Reconciliation Place as a permanent monument which some fear is intended to usurp the Embassy. In doing so, the Australian Government fails to recognize, accept and respect the values and life pattern embodied by the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. The Gungalidda Elder Wadjularbinna, a custodian of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, has condemned the National Capital Authority's plans to build Reconciliation Place in Canberra as part of "a conspiracy to undermine and eventually replace the Tent Embassy." Wadjularbinna has described the plans for a reconciliation place as a refusal "to recognise, accept, and respect our living system, which is a unique, complex and balanced system of law/lore, spirituality, religion and social organisation." Maintaining the temporary Tent Embassy is therefore

cont.

12.05:12

Expanding the Used Building Materials Industry – Conference Update

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ATLANTA, Nov. 10, 2005 -- The Home Depot® Foundation presented its Awards of Excellence for Affordable Housing Built Responsibility at the GreenBuild International Conference & Expo sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council today. Rural Development, Inc. of Turner Falls, Massachusetts received the award in the Homeownership category, and Housing Vermont from Burlington, Vermont won the award in the Rental-Housing category. Each award winner received a grant of \$75,000.

The winners were selected from projects submitted by nonprofit housing developers throughout the country. An advisory committee of experts from a variety of affordable housing, community development, building sciences and environmental organizations participated in the selection process. The committee included representatives of organizations such as the US Green Building Council, the National Association of Home Builders Research Center, the Funders Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, Southface, Global Green USA and Tellus Institute.

Housing Vermont managed \$7.2 million Waterfront Housing initiative overlooking Lake Champlain in downtown Burlington, Vermont. The building design for this 40-unit development included one-, two- and three-bedroom units, required extensive brownfield site remediation and incorporated such features as high efficiency building envelope, hardwood flooring manufactured and extracted within 500 miles of the project, state-of-the-art storm water run-off treatment system, advanced heating and cooling systems, and direct line of site to daylight for over 90% of occupied space. This housing development is LEED-NC certified. The national runner-up in the Rental-Housing category was First Community Housing from San Jose, CA. They received a grant of \$25,000.

cont.

critically symbolic for Australia. Its culture of democratic activism, avoiding the Western tendency for architecture to become monumental and institutionalized, suggests a significant space for reconsidering architecture in the Australian environment and articulating the contrast between "White" and indigenous cultures.

The encounter continues between the Aboriginal Tent Embassy activists and the 'state' — the Australian Capital Territory authorities. Late in 2002, a sculpture was erected and removed by police. A Tent Embassy activist was arrested for reclaiming the Coat of Arms from Provisional Parliament House, arguing that indigenous permission had not been granted to use the kangaroo and emu in the Australian coat of arms. When in 2003,

cont.

12.05:13

aiaVT welcomes

*Diane Gayer, AIA or Burlington
James Wasser, AIA or Norwich*

aiaVT is edited by Andrea Murray, AIA. Published views are the author's and not necessarily the views of AIA Vermont or any other organization.

Please send articles, notices, letters, and graphic submissions to:

*Andrea Murray, AIA
Bread Loaf Corporation
Architects, Planners and Builders
1293 Route 7 South
Middlebury, Vermont 05753
802-388-9871 ext. 239
amurray@breadloaf.com*

AIA Vermont reserves the right to edit articles for available space and determine appropriate content prior to inclusion. Submissions must be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Rural Development built five houses through its Affordable Green Homes project located throughout rural Franklin County Massachusetts. The building design incorporated advanced framing techniques, state of the art hydronic heating systems, recycled and natural content building materials, and photovoltaic systems that generate a significant portion of each homes' energy needs. The national runner-up in the Homeownership category is Claretian Associates, Inc. from Chicago, IL. Claretian received a grant of \$25,000.

"Our primary mission is to encourage the production of healthy and efficient homes that are affordable over the long term for people of low to moderate incomes to own and operate," said Kelly Caffarelli, executive director of The Home Depot Foundation. "We created the Awards of Excellence for Affordable Housing Built Responsibly program to identify, recognize and showcase the outstanding and innovative work being done by nonprofit housing developers. Our hope is that by sharing information about how the Award winners successfully combined affordability with healthy, sustainable measures, we will not only offer insight, but also inspiration, to others developing housing for those of modest means."

The Home Depot Foundation was created in 2002 to further the community building goals of The Home Depot by providing additional resources to assist nonprofit organizations building affordable, efficient and healthy homes throughout the United States and Canada. The Home Depot Foundation administers grant-making programs in the areas of "Affordable Housing, Built Responsibly" and "Healthy Community and Wildland Forests." Since its formation, The Home Depot Foundation has granted more than \$15 million to nonprofit and government organizations throughout North America.

**For more information, please contact: Ron DeFeo, The Home Depot,
770/384-3179**

electrical power was cut off to the information office — one of the oldest parts of the Tent Embassy, the environment group Greenpeace supplied Photovoltaic Panels to provide adequate energy. More recently, the office was burnt in a fire and when authorities seemed about to use the opportunity to remove the structure, a safety fence was constructed and there was an altercation leading to the removal of the fence by the police when the National Capital Authority deemed it illegal.

cont.

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Protest Architecture as a Democratic Tool

A “die-in” protest was held at the busiest intersection of Perth, Western Australia on the middle of Saturday the 22nd of February 2003, after war was declared on Iraq. In reclaiming the street intersection from the usual vehicular traffic, about ten thousand peace protestors, in the largest known gathering of its kind ever held in the city marched around the central city and to the United States Consulate and a newly established Peace Tent Embassy, opposite. The Perth Peace Tent Embassy had been established two days earlier following an immediate march on news of the attacks on Iraq without a United Nations mandate. Hundreds of citizens of the comparatively affluent community of Perth had responded to a campaign including e-mail and text-message communications to join the spontaneous protest march, only hours after the new allied bombing campaign had started.

Although Perth is known as the most isolated capital city in the world, there has been sense developing in the post September 11, 2001 era that important allegiances are being developed globally at two extremes. At the elite political level, there are national interests prosecuted by the Prime Minister internationally in the name of national security and economic growth. But at the street level, there are allegiances built by social justice communities and activist groups, coming together at meetings and rallies, supported by an enormous Internet network available to the ubiquitous middle classes. The tent embassy goes a step further, providing a memorable physical form and a noticeable physical street location to accommodate debate and dissent about what seemed a physically remote set of issues — the cooperation of the Australian leadership in invading Iraq — as the campaign developed. As the government policy and the tax expenditure flowed toward aggression, the Perth Peace Tent Embassy made a stand. It continued well into April, for over thirty days, as the official war continued, and despite the onset of some very wet weather as the local weather changed towards winter.

The Tent Embassy represents a conveniently ambiguous form of architecture: it is sometimes an information stall, a storage place, sometimes a picket, displaying signs and placards, and sometimes a place to sleep secretly. It is assembled and disassembled quickly at will, but it is makeshift and therefore invokes dismissal by the cultural mainstream as ‘inferior’ and ‘pathetic’. The Tent Embassy phenomenon is remarkable as

an architectural expression of an element of the civic community for at least three reasons: it is ephemeral, appearing and disappearing rather unpredictably, and without adherence to the restrictive long term planning protocols of local councils; it is moveable and transportable, making practicable its assembly by diverse activists in small private cars or public transport; and it is a collaborative construction to which additions and subtractions are made organically and collegially. The Tent Embassy form effectively defines a focus and a forum for public debate through the attention activists draw and provides an unmediated face to face nucleation point for building the activist collective and community.

Tent Embassies have developed in Australia especially since 1972 as an effective and useful activists’ tool, owing a great deal to the Australian Heritage Commission-listed Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra. Like the architectural strategies of the Archigram and the Utopie Group in May 1968 impressed the European and global avant garde architectural scene, the tent protest at provisional parliament sowed the seeds of a new way of thinking about architecture, to humorously subvert institutions and bureaucracy. Global activist groups such as [Reclaim the Streets](#), [Critical Mass](#), and [Space Hijackers](#) continue this idea, with ideas emanating from their ideological and activist centres through networks of virtual solidarity to the corners of the globe.

The notion of justice both locally and globally is of interest to a large number of citizens in the modern city, despite the apparent lack of a place for these issues to be aired, according to Peter Murphy. Murphy holds that the American republic is founded on a compromise between resistance to authority and civic rituals of justice. As the first great republic to disavow the city, the lack of the classical city’s equilibrium of contending forces has enduring and tragic effects on political and social life. The humanist legacy of civic pride, proportion, symmetry, and moral beauty is reflected in the great Italian city-republic with a great influence on Europe and the New World.

Reconciling Nomadic and Sedentary Civic Architectures

The spontaneity and collapsibility of the civic protests are significant features of the protests discussed above. The humanity and humility of these structures are a poignant architectural expression of the individuals and collectives behind organizing them and temporarily emplacing and

these structures are a poignant architectural expression of the individuals and collectives behind organizing them and temporarily emplacing and inhabiting them. Like the ideological structures which have above been compared with the activist thinking of Hannah Arendt, these activist spatial occupations of the city can be seen as attempts for the New World city to reclaim the citizen’s expression of the freedom of the peripatetic and peregrine in the classical city. The Greek peripatetic denotes the wandering scholar, studying and learning on the path, while the Latin peregrini were those free to wander in public places. For there to be a freedom to walk (let alone to dwell and to protest) in a public space, there must be public spaces in which to wander, and a social belief in their importance. However, in reference to this public space *res publicae* Murphy suggests the American republic lacked, this could be extended to Australia. The street protests described above rely on their ephemerality, mobility and collaborative construction and maintenance for their effectiveness. The appearance of temporariness both theatricalises the Tent protest and gives it a modesty and humility. The movement of these protests allows them to be assembled and relocated with minimal equipment and unskilled erectors. (It has also been interpreted by zealous law enforcement personnel in the past as read as an invitation to dismantle structures.) The collaborative nature of the protest encampments reinforces the shared “power” of the collective of people supporting them.

Within a broadly social-justice related protest moment around the globe — a movement which is not uniquely Australian — there appears to be a culturally ‘Australian’ architecture developing — both political and physical — as an agency of protest occupations in public space. This model suggests a potentially valuable strategy for building the city by addressing the equilibrium of forces of the sedentary and the nomadic. It suggests there is hope for the democratic and popular use of architecture rising from communities and sustainably expressing their dreams visions, and desires.

[Gregory Cowan](#) is an educator and architect from Perth, Australia, currently teaching in London. He recently studied community development in India and is beginning a major project on urban cultures and street architecture.

Credits: [Reclaim The Streets](#), King Street, Perth, 31 August 2002 photos Copyright ©2004 D Narbett/Perth Indymedia, compiled by Gregory Cowan
Perth Peace Protest Embassy, March 24, 2003 Photographs and photographic collage Copyright ©2004 G. Cowan