

aiaVT



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

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education

*lauren davis, assoc. aia
2007 president aiaVT*

As August approaches, the temperatures outside are finally starting to feel like summertime, but I've begun to notice signs that fall is just around the corner. These signs are more in the way of advertisements for the new academic year than the changing of the leaves, but nonetheless the start of classes means the start of a new season. With a new school year in mind, I would like to ask you to focus your attention on the next generation of architects.

For the past few years, the Learning by Design (LBD) committee of aiaVT has been trying to engage children in architectural awareness and design projects through collaborations with architects and designers. These partnerships can benefit the students, their schools, and their communities. By involving children in various community-based design projects, LBD hopes to enable children to become critical thinkers to actively shape the world around them.

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loud paper/Volume 3, Issue 3

Existence Minimum/Maximum - Jennifer Doublet

<http://www.loudpapermag.com/article.php?id=13>

We'll start with the flies. In 1927, as the only female designer on Ernst May's team for the Neue Frankfurt housing developments, Grete Schutte-Lihotzky created what came to be known as the Frankfurt Kitchen. A tightly framed workroom, it was a place of optimal efficiency and order. Nary was there a chance for a hair out of place or any flies in the soup. In her article, A Revolution in the Woman's Sphere: Grete Lihotzky and the Frankfurt Kitchen, Susan R. Henderson describes the kitchen finish materials. She wrote, "The Linoleum work

8.07:1



Vermont Planning Conference 2007 Healthy-Efficient-Vibrant 21st CENTURY COMMUNITIES

Sustainability: a concept we're hearing about in every field, from energy, business, health care to growth and environment. Whether through concern for climate change, questioning our dependence on fossil fuels or planning for great neighborhoods, Vermonters are seeking ways to live and work more efficiently while enhancing the health and vitality of our communities for future generations.

At the 2007 Planning Conference, we'll celebrate examples of planning and implementing sustainable solutions for Vermont, hear inspirational speakers and discuss ways to conduct our local and regional planning activities within a framework that leads to more sustainable practices. See you there!

Friday, November 30, 2007
Vermont College & Union Institute
Montpelier, Vermont

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Last year, the Learning by Design committee of aiaVT began what we hope to be an annual Student Design competition. Although we only had four schools from across the state enter the competition, it was obvious that the 48 entries we received were bursting with creativity and enthusiasm.

This year we hope to build on that success and increase the collaboration between schools, students, teachers, and architects. The theme of this year's competition is Livable Communities: The Community Center. The goal of this project is for students to understand how design can make their communities a better place to live. The competition is open to all students in grades 4-12 as either individuals or teams. The students are given approximately 10 weeks to design and document their solutions. The program brief will be sent out to all educators throughout the state by the end of August.

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surfaces, the stove top and tile floor were black, and the enameled cabinet fronts were a deep blue, a color that Lihotzky understood repelled flies."

Whether or not the colored surface actually repelled flies is debatable. However, the intent, the act and the desire to sanitize and restrain all extraneous activity from taking place is clear. This kitchen, at the forefront of the modernist-minimalist frontier strove with a singular purpose to domesticate Taylorism, right down to the elimination of dipterous insects. (It should be noted that dipterous insects, of which the common house fly is one, are in part defined by their larvae which feed on decaying matter such as flesh and rotting food.)

When the artist Candy Jernigan opened her Cape Breton, Nova Scotia summer cottage one year, she found it overrun with bug carcasses. Rather than purge them in a fit of hygienic hysteria, she gathered them up and set out to draw their tiny

8.07:2



It is our hope to help educate children in exercising their analytical and problem solving abilities. Throughout the course of the competition the LBD committee intends to arrange for a local architect to visit the participating classrooms. This meeting could be in the form of a group discussion, a presentation of your own design, or even a site visit. If you are interested in becoming involved with this program through planning or a classroom presentation, please contact me at: lad@gvvarchitects.com.

In the meantime, keep an eye out for the program brief that will be sent through email by late August, and feel free to pass it along to anyone you think may be interested.

**FEATURED ENERGY-EFFICIENT PROJECT:
UPPER VALLEY HAVEN
WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VERMONT**



"The Haven was a great opportunity to provide the owner and community with a building that promotes sustainable and energy-efficient design while reducing operating costs."

Mr. M. Hunter Ulf, AIA
Principal, UK Architects, P.C.

www.encyvermont.com



rise to the occasion with projects that range wide in scope and ambition. Both Joel Sanders' "Five Minute Bathroom," entitled "Ablution Control," in Wallpaper October 1999 and any undertaking in Martha Stewart's Living, inhabit similarly extreme edges of domesticity. These projects refine, define and potentially confine sensory experience to and by task. They relish the long-standing seduction of containment, classification and cleanliness of modern man's seemingly eternal search for control and efficiency on the home front.

While architects imagine lives in surfaces and space, criminal medical examiners reconstruct lives from the final chalk trace of existence. Design for living and documenting the dead make coincident bedfellows because both share a fervor for gathering, noting, photographing and cataloging bits of human activity. In Baltimore there is not only the coming and going of bodies from street to morgue at the Chief Medical Examiner's Office, but there is also a fixed collection of

8.07:3



National Association of Counties Adopts AIA Challenge of Carbon Neutral Public Buildings by 2030

Resolution follows similar endorsement from U. S. Conference of Mayors

Washington, D.C., July 30, 2007 — With local governments being in an ideal position to advance the green building movement, the National Association of Counties (NACo) has adopted a resolution supporting the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Sustainability 2030 Challenge that calls for public buildings to be carbon neutral by 2030. U.S. buildings account for nearly the same amount of carbon emissions as the economies of Japan, France and the United Kingdom combined, and if designed in an energy-efficient manner they can significantly reduce energy consumption, energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions, and slow the effects of climate change.

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corpses. One by one these anonymous death portraits are replete with the attentive detail of amateur natural history studies or carefully pressed flowers. Originally published in The Dead Bug Book, the images are now arranged in a deck: dead bugs grace the surfaces of clean little white cards packaged in a tight wood box.

Domestic obsessions in the form of modernist organizational systems or Victorian classification carryovers provide equally fertile and surprisingly related grounds for investigating our relationships to life, death and dwelling. Fin-de-siecle mannerists of all sorts continue in the spirit of these traditions and

8.07:4

aiaVT welcomes back

robert melik finkle, *aia of Rochester*



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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.

Paul Mendelsohn, AIA vice president, Government and Community Relations, said, "The momentum for more eco-friendly building design is continuing to gain steam. NACo has been a strong supporter of climate change and green initiatives, including the creation of the Green Government Advisory Board and other programmatic actions. We will continue to work with NACo and offer support and tools, such as the SustAIAnability 2030 Toolkit for local governments to pursue energy efficient buildings." Visit www.aia.org to access the Toolkit.

NACo Commissioner Shannon Staub stated, "It was important to pass this initiative because this will help further support of the 2030 Challenge. The U.S. Conference of Mayors has already done this and it is timely to show that the counties support the goals of this initiative as well."

The Resolution Urging Counties to Adopt the "2030 Challenge" Goals for Public Buildings also asserts that NACo supports federal efforts to promote green buildings. The resolution also highlights the outsized benefits of green, high performance school buildings and the need for greater emphasis to be placed on "life cycle costs" of all buildings rather than just on the initial capital costs.

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mixed-media miniature dioramas depicting nineteen scenes of unexplained death.

Meant as study models, these dollhouses articulate the particulars of individual death scenes in order to provide training in typological case interpretations for investigators. As such, the scenes both refute and reinforce the power of domestic order. Mayhem found in the tableau reveals the banal vulnerability of supposedly secured worlds while their fine detail sparks our faith in forensic truth.

8.07:5

Benefits of Purchasing Environmentally Preferable Computers - Teleconference

Please join the Northeast Recycling Council, Inc. for a free teleconference about calculating the benefits of purchasing environmentally preferable computers, as well as reusing and recycling computers.

*Thursday, September 6, 1 – 2 p.m. (Eastern)
Presented by Patty Dillon, co-developer of the
Electronics Environmental Benefits Calculator
Pre-registration by September 4 is required to reserve a space*

This teleconference will demonstrate:

- How to use the new Electronics Environmental Benefits Calculator, developed with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Calculator is available online and at no cost.
- The environmental benefits of purchasing EPEAT® - registered products including savings in greenhouse gas emissions, energy, toxic material use, and hazardous waste generation.
EPEAT® is an easy-to-use rating system to help purchasers identify and select environmentally preferable - “green” - computer products. The searchable EPEAT® products database now contains almost 600 products offered by 20 manufacturers. To learn more about EPEAT®, visit www.epeat.net.
- The environmental benefits of reusing and recycling desktops, monitors, and laptop computers.

To register, send your name, affiliation, email address, phone number, and address, by email (info@nerc.org) or fax (802-254-5870). Confirmation will be sent by email to all registered participants along with the teleconference number and access code. A web address will be provided for participants to access the PowerPoint presentation and other resources for the teleconference.

This teleconference is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through a grant to the Northeast Recycling Council, Inc. For more information, please contact: Lynn Rubinstein, Northeast Recycling Council, Inc., lynn@nerc.org

“It is great when organizations of the caliber of NACo and the AIA can work together on this important issue,” added Commissioner Kenn Gardner, AIA. “The county level is where the rubber meets the road because local government is closest to the people, and this is where you solve land use, planning, and so many other important issues. Citizens don’t generally call the federal government when they have a problem, they call their local government.”

About the National Association of Counties

The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation’s 3,066 counties. NACo advances issues with a united voice before the federal government, improves the public’s understanding of county governments, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit www.naco.org.

Known as the “Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death,” the dollhouses were built by Mrs. Frances Glessner Lee in the 1940’s. They were a critical part of her crusade to establish sound criminal investigation skills for police officers and medical examiners. A woman with more than the proverbial “room of her own,” she endowed Harvard University with \$500,000 to found the nation’s first Department of Legal Medicine and actively participated in the Harvard Association of Police Science. Her wealth, position and keen criminal mind fueled her determination and interest; at the same time her unusual talent for model building guided the execution of these havoc ridden sites.

8.07:6

Education in the New Environmental Economy – VEC Fall Conference

Saturday, November 3, 2007
Norwich University, Northfield

A new world of challenges requires a new generation of environmental professionals. Vermont can lead the way; education is the key. Education in the New Environmental Economy is:

- *A day-long conference exploring the state of environmental education in Vermont and the crucial role of our colleges and universities in growing the emerging green economy, building durable communities, and developing a workforce that's prepared for 21st century challenges*
- *A vigorous exchange of ideas; a catalyst for creating new models of environmental education and practical solutions in the classroom and on the ground*
- *A day of constructive thinking about education in an era of energy uncertainties, global warming, and natural resource depletion — and about ways Vermont colleges and universities can develop more dynamic, relevant programs through inter-institutional collaboration*
- *Breakfast, lunch, networking, exhibits, resources, student posters*

VEC invites you to attend this ground-breaking conference, to exhibit, and to help sponsor the event.

For information on registration, exhibit space, and sponsorship opportunities, contact:

*Delaney Meeting & Event Management,
(802) 865-5202 • janice@delaneymeetingevent.com.*

*For information on agenda and presenters, contact :
VEC at vec@norwich.edu • (802) 485-2455 •
www.VECgreenvalley.org*

Calling All Green Building Homeowners and Businesses

The Northeast Sustainable Energy Association's Green Building Open House will take place on Saturday, October 6. This is an opportunity to tour green homes and buildings in the Burlington area and learn about the latest technology in efficiency and renewable energy. We are seeking homeowners and businesses who would like to include their buildings on the tour. Hosts commit to opening their homes or buildings to the general public (for a minimum of three hours) between 10-3 on October 6. Most tours are self-guided and participants will arrive on their own during your hours of operation.

Abby White of VGBN and NRG Systems is the local organizer. She will send hosts signs, fliers, and visitor information in advance, and will also publicize the tour in local media outlets.

We are looking for homes that meet the type of criteria outlined in the Vermont Builds Greener scorecard, http://www.bs-rvt.org/vbg/VBG_Scorecard.pdf. If you are an architect or builder, please get the word out to owners of showcase homes. If you or someone you know is the owner of a green building, please have them contact Abby White with information about your home, including key features of its energy efficient and environmental design. (250 words or less is ideal.)

*For more information contact Abby White at:
aw@nrgsystems.com.*

Mrs. Lee's vignettes are derived from a range of actual case histories. Murder, accident or suicide scenes are palpably identifiable. They are detail laden and atmospherically intact realities of particular characters and situations. Disguised just enough to be untraceable to specific crimes in their own time, they eerily replicate any number of exposés in today's daily news media and docudramas. As such, the houses sit squarely in line with the history of investigation and the darker side of urban observation and speculation. The existence of

8.07:7



the flâneur/voyeur/connoisseur is threaded in and out of each marvelously fetishistic scene via the stories they evoke, the participation they solicit and the materiality they harbor.

*While the real-life stories of the dollhouses link them to Edgar Allen Poe's precursor to the modern detective novel, *The Murder of Marie Roget* (inspired by the murder of Mary Rogers), the detail of each scene links them to the atmospheric poetry of Charles Baudelaire. The models are custom made for comparison with Bataille's essay "X Marks the Spot" in *Documents* 2, Number 7, a discussion of forensic photographs of Chicago's gangland murder victims. Lastly, their uncanny, callous criminality touch on themes similar to Benjamin's essays on photography, the city and the ever-present potential for crime.*

But perhaps they are closer to the hermetically-sealed paranoia of the female agoraphobic rather than the misogynist flâneur. While the domestic setting bared public though criminality might list these houses as among an agoraphobic's worst nightmare - however warped the logic may be - their complete self-containment registers them as secure worlds. Thus, outside is bad and inside is good. Whether the murderer is friend or foe, stranger or lover, the structure of the carefully placed, physical interior relationships built into the dollhouses promises vindication if not salvation through identification. Like any popular mystery novel, the premise of these studies is that the clues can be traced, the crime can be found out, made safe, contained. As it happens, Mrs. Lee was home schooled and denied a college education by virtue of her family's attitudes toward women in society. With something as seemingly innocuous and traditionally feminine as dollhouses she advanced in a male-dominated field.

In case #13 from the Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death, criminal investigators attending training seminars in Baltimore are presented with the following scenario for the Parsonage Parlor.

*Reported to Nutshell Laboratories, Friday August 23, 1946:
Dorothy Dennison, High School student dead . Mrs. James*

Dennison, mother questioned Police Lieutenant Robert Peale reporting.

Mrs. Dennison's statement:

On Monday morning, August 19, 1946, about eleven o'clock, Dorothy had walked down town to buy some hamburger steak for dinner. She didn't have much money in her purse. When she failed to return in time for dinner, her mother telephoned a neighbor who stated that she had seen the girl walking toward the market but had not seen her since. Mrs. Dennison also telephoned the market and the proprietor said he had sold Dorothy a pound of hamburger some time before noon but didn't notice which way she turned upon leaving his shop. By late afternoon, Mrs. Dennison, thoroughly alarmed, notified the police.

Lieutenant Peale's statement:

On Monday afternoon, August 19, 1946, at 5:25 pm, he received the telephone call from Mrs. Dennison at Police Headquarters, and at once took charge of the matter personally. The customary inquiries were set afoot without results and by Wednesday, August 21, a systematic search of all closed or unoccupied buildings in the vicinity was undertaken. It was not until Friday, August 23 at 4:15 PM, that he and Officer Patrick Sullivan entered the Parsonage and found the premises as represented by the model. Temperatures during that week had ranged between 86 and 92 degrees with high humidity.

Each study is accompanied by a scenario sheet, similar to the one above, which has more or less information depending on the case. Investigators are given a time frame in which to study the houses and learn from the clues as much as much from what is given as what is missing. Although I am

no Nancy Drew, I managed to notice something key in the Dorothy Dennison scenario: the contrast of the plump pinky freshness of the dead girl's skin and the brown-black pockiness of the maggoty hamburger meat. This visceral bit of epidermal observation just happens to be key in establishing time of death. As neatly as a stopped watch, the existence of maggots in the hamburger but not on the girl suggests there is a difference in the time of death between the meat and the body. We know when the hamburger was ground and we know when the girl was found. She is considerably less dead than the hamburger. Searching the scene and the body for more clues one can begin to speculate on what happened between Monday and Friday. In this case maggots are good; they are pointers if not full-fledged informants.

Each scene is as much as much about the living as the dead; they are detailed down to piles of micro cigarette butts, end-burned to invoke an inhabitants' sleepless night or replications of tiny splattered blood patterns to match gun-shot wound results from a particular weapon at a certain distance. While the houses pretend to serve only as simple problem solving tools their elasticity of form and content beg a wider reading. However noble, practical and educational the cause of their creation there is something profoundly engaging and delightfully disturbing about the ordered mania of dollhouses run seriously amok. Visions as far flung as Hunca-Munca running rampant in Beatrix Potter's Tale of Two Bad Mice, to Hans Bellmer's surrealist poupees, Cornell's boxes and David Levinthal's toy soldier cult classic Hitler Moves East all easily begin to occupy the same territory.

Thus, if their overall visual tenacity ties the houses to real-life crimes and investigators then it is the uncanny mis-en-scene of the 1"=1'-0" scale models represented in carefully constructed photographs by Corinne Botz link them to high art.

Akin to the Cindy Sherman's film stills, the dollhouse collection and images is as precisely and self-consciously staged as her Old Master series. In both, the reproductions are made from the omniscient artist as detective point of view. These representations are tweaked to provoke the viewer's complicity in unraveling the scene. Similarly, Sherman's untitled series from 1986, which, like the Nutshell dollhouses, fetishizes scattered bits and pieces of debris: valuables, waste, evidence. These still lifes challenge the voyeur to conduct a point to point analysis of the events in play.

Still lifes have always held that peculiar air capable of both life and death in one breath: violence and calm, fresh and rotting produce, live bugs and dead meat, mixed season cut flowers, flayed bulls and even a Goya Plucked Turkey. David Lynch's Blue Velvet and Peter Greenaway's Drowning By Numbers, among others, effectively highlight the power of this imagery. Tightly framed scenes of suburbia gone awry in the former and everything from flies on fruit in a murdered husband's potting shed to the carefully accumulated daily count of roadkill by a

coroner's son are poignant illustrations.

Still life sequences in art and life demand pause. With piercing intensity and disjunctive scale, they are out of sync with their surroundings. Like turquoise blue kitchen cabinets in a modernist housing development, a sudden zoom draws us into the temporal power of the piece and inherently limits our focus. Yet, as The Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists notes "objects portrayed [in still life] have a significance beyond their individual appearance and are heightened by their associations." Similarly as quoted by Ralph Rugoff in Scene of the Crime, Philip Kerr's A Philosophical Investigation states that "For the detective, nothing is ever truly itself and nothing more." The Frankfurt Kitchen is not just about which bin holds grain the best, just as the Parsonage Parlor is not just about a dead body. Details of the dollhouses are not mere objects but are avatars. They seem capable of articulating paths, both taken and forgone. In the end, what the minutia reveals is as frightening as what it hides and what is interpreted is as compelling as what is intended.