

Royal
Academy
of Arts

ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMME

September – December 2010





Curator's Comments

Architecture can have a range of both cognitive and emotional effects on those who experience it. The theme of this year's Venice Architecture Biennale, *People Meet in Architecture*, set by its Director and our Autumn Lecturer Kazuyo Sejima of architectural practice SANAA, explores how architecture can enable people to find out more about themselves. Sejima will describe in her lecture how she sees this as being intrinsically linked to the interaction of new social and natural environments.

The Royal Academy's Autumn Architecture Programme has many synergies with this theme, as we explore landscape as both a conceptual and physical phenomenon through a series of lectures, forums and an exhibition. We focus on the landscape in its numerous guises, and how it shapes and is shaped by the relationship between nature and man. This Autumn's lecturers offer insight into how they use landscape to expand the expressive and experiential potential of architecture.

Parallel to this, we explore emerging movements in both landscape design and urbanism. A new agenda has emerged that addresses the challenges and opportunities posed by environmental sustainability, ecological awareness and the advances of urbanisation that are reconstructing our understanding of landscape. This is further examined through a dialogue between artists and designers which continues to inform the unique approach to architecture at the Royal Academy.

— *Kate Goodwin & Jeremy Melvin*

Front cover Bodegas Bell-lloc,
Palamós Spain, 2007 by RCR
Arquitectes
Photo by Hisao Suzuki

Above 21st Century Museum
of Contemporary Art Kanazawa,
Japan, 2004, by SANAA
Photo by SANAA

LECTURES

PETER RICH

SANAA

RCR ARQUITECTES



Peter Rich
Landscape, Nature, Culture and Light

Monday 20 September

South African architect, **Peter Rich**, is one of the leading proponents of a contemporary African architecture that fuses modernism with a tradition born from a deep understanding of African iconography and vernacular. In his lecture, he presents an array of projects that are deeply embedded in time and place promoting a truly sustainable architecture with a lasting legacy.

Geological Society, Piccadilly, W1

6.30 – 7.45 pm

£10/£5 reductions (includes a drink)

JAPANESE CULTURAL EVENING

SANAA: Architecture and the Environment

Monday 11 October

Kazuyo Sejima, principal of acclaimed Japanese architectural practice SANAA and director of the 2010 Venice Architecture Biennale discusses how her practice's work both frames and echoes its natural surroundings. Of their highly experimental EPFL Rolex Learning Centre in Lausanne with its undulating, sloping floor, Sejima remarked that 'to crisscross a slope or to climb it with the funicular-like inclined lift is an experience close to being on a hill outdoors'. *Supported by the Japanese Committee of Honour of the Royal Academy of Arts*

Royal Institution, Albemarle St, W1

6.30 – 7.45 pm

£15/£8 reductions (includes drinks reception)



Background Rolex Learning Center, Lausanne, Switzerland, 2010, by SANAA
Photo by Hisao Suzuki

Left Rolex Learning Center, Lausanne, Switzerland, 2010, by SANAA
Photo by SANAA

Above Mapungubwe Interpretation Centre, Limpopo, South Africa, 2008 by Peter Rich Architects
Photo © Iwan Baan

Carme Pigem of RCR Arquitectes

Tuesday 7 December

The work of Spanish architectural practice RCR is characterized by a simple refined architectural language, born in response to the terrain of their local Catalan region of Olot and a sophisticated aesthetic sensibility. **Carme Pigem** discusses the practice's work including the much celebrated Bodegas Bellloc winery and the Library and centre for the elderly, Barcelona.

Geological Society, Piccadilly, W1

6.30 – 7.45 pm

£10/£5 reductions (includes a drink)



This page Casa Horizonte, Spain, 2007 by RCR Arquitectes
Photo by Hisao Suzuki

Right Rolex Learning Center, Lausanne, Switzerland, 2010, by SANAA
Photo by Alain Herzog



Landscape...

The term landscape and its meaning and significance, has come to encompass more than its sixteenth century origins as an artists' representation of natural or rural scenery. It now embodies both the physical qualities of a place as well as its human and cultural connections. For architects and landscape and urban designers, how these overlap, shape and inform one another is of direct relevance and forges the conditions in which their work functions.

In an increasingly globally aware world, landscape can conjure emotions and responses which are simultaneously universal and intrinsically local, with a very particular sense of place. Architecture can exploit and highlight this characteristic. For instance, the experience of standing beneath SANAA's Serpentine Pavilion last year – an undulating, floating fluid-form glass canopy – was very moving, reframing one's view of nature, the surrounding man-

made park and our place within it. The practice's Rolex learning centre pictured above makes a similar contribution. The architecture and its undulating form – roof and ground surfaces – creates a unique building which belongs both to the city and the nearby mountainous landscape.

In many instances the intersection between landscape design and architecture is being blurred, as practitioners work closer together or are informed by one another's thinking. Some urban designers and theorists are also looking to landscape practice for ways of tackling the spatial and temporal challenges demanded by the scale of their projects. Many of the emerging approaches have stronger affinities with contemporary art than that of conventional architecture, in that they embrace randomness and evolve over time.



RA FORUM

Diana Balmori
Landscape Manifesto

Monday 18 October

Landscape is an art of the present, fundamental to how we shape and understand both the built and natural environments. In this event, internationally acclaimed landscape and urban designer **Diana Balmori**, proposes a twenty-five-point Landscape Manifesto that seeks to 'realign' landscape's role as a transformative and potentially transgressive art, and presents it alongside specially devised work of Japanese video artist **Mami Kosemura**.

Geological Society, Piccadilly, W1
6.30 – 8 pm

£7/£4 reductions (includes a drink)

Landscape Urbanism

Monday 15 November

The scale, forms and inevitable indeterminacy of landscape all fit well with the challenges of working in today's urban environment, and is thus a source of ideas and inspiration for architects. This event looks at this emerging movement, called landscape urbanism, and how it promises to connect nature and culture more deeply than ever before. Speakers include **Eva Castro** and **Alfredo Ramirez** both of Groundlab and the Landscape Urbanism unit at the AA.

Reynolds Room, Royal Academy

6.30 – 8 pm

£7/£4 reductions (includes a drink)



Left Shanghai Bun,
Shanghai, China,
Competition Finalist, 2008
By Balmori Associates
with Beyer Blinder Belle
Rendering by Balmori
Associates

Top Deep Ground,
Longgang, Shenzhen
China by Groundlab
Image © Groundlab

Above *Underwater*, 2007
by Mami Kosemura
Animation / Installation
BD 14min (endless
repeat), color, sound
Courtesy of the artist and
Yuka Sasahara Gallery

THE ARCHITECTURE SPACE

Free Entry
Daily 10 am – 6 pm (until 10 pm Fridays)

The Brandhorst Museum
by Sauerbruch Hutton
25 June – 7 November

Berlin-based architectural practice Sauerbruch Hutton are acutely aware of the importance of colour and its ability to delight. This exhibition illustrates the practice's newest building, the Museum for the Brandhorst Collection in Munich. Highly individual, with a signature façade, the museum is typical of the extraordinary work of Sauerbruch Hutton. Its distinctive exterior is clad in vertical ceramic louvres and glazed in families of eight colours that envelop a folded metal skin of two different hues. The effect is a kaleidoscope of pixelated colour that oscillates as you walk around the building.

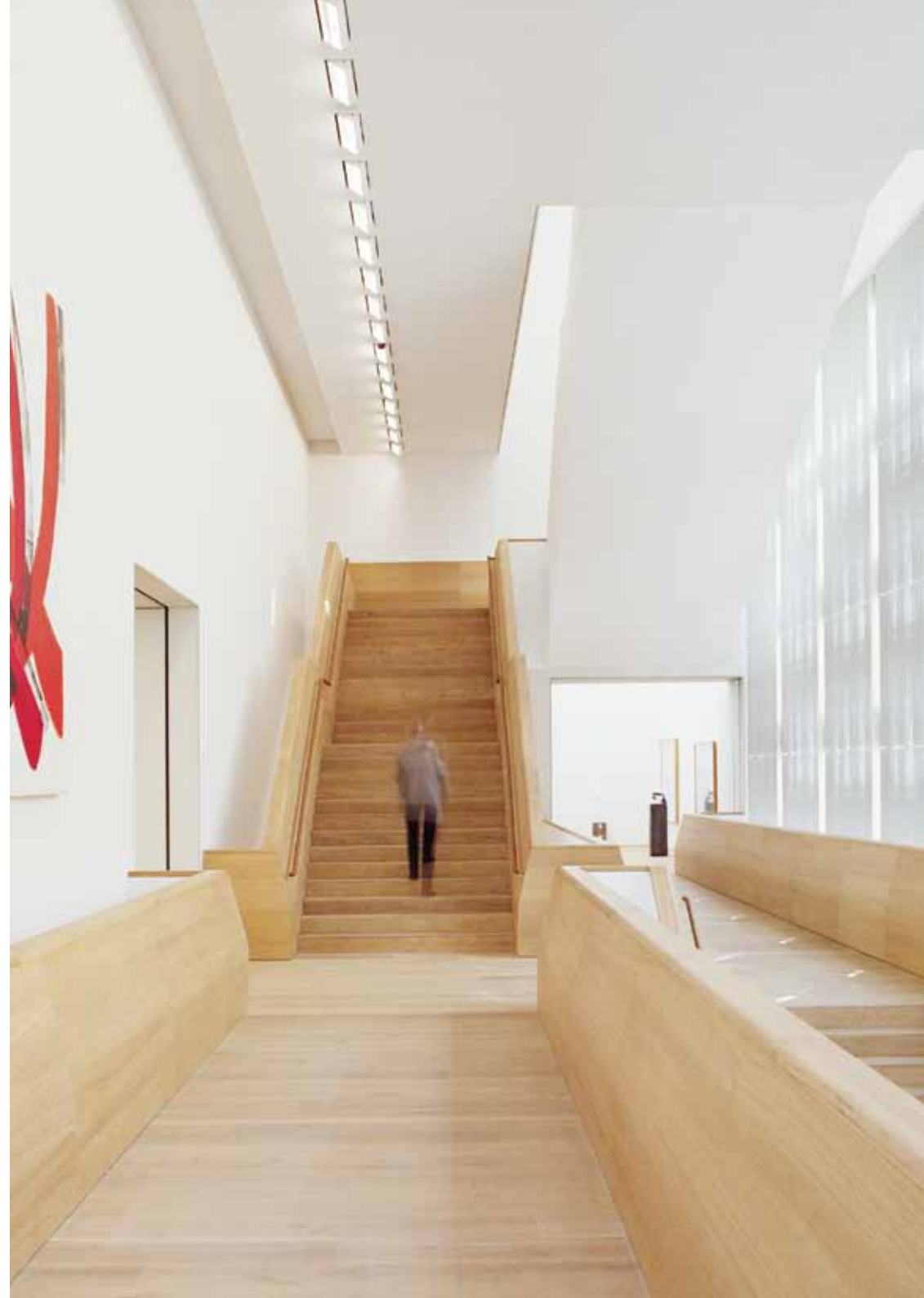
Right Brandhorst
Museum Munich, 2008
by Sauerbruch Hutton
Photo © Annette Kislung

Below Parque de Piedra
Tosca, Les Preses, Spain
2004 by RCR Arquitectes
Photo by Hisao Suzuki

Constructed Landscapes

10 November 2010 – 9 January 2011

Landscape is the physical and conceptual framework by which humans mediate their space within nature, and make their own place in it. Landscape derives from and evokes fundamental emotional responses, and conjures connections to history, memory, identity and belonging. This exhibition explores the ways that artists and architects can reframe our perceptions of, and relationship to, landscape.



Reviews

Full recordings and films of the events can be found at www.royalacademy.org.uk/architecture

Annual Architecture Lecture by Sauerbruch Hutton

On July 5, Berlin-based architectural duo Louisa Hutton and Matthias Sauerbruch delivered the 20th Annual Architecture Lecture. Talking in tandem, they focused on two concerns which have been informing their practice over recent years—sustainability and the relationship between artists and architecture.

As Louisa Hutton illustrated how the Jessop Building for the University of Sheffield combines environmental and social sustainability, and Matthias Sauerbruch unfolded the relationship between art and architecture that underlies the Brandhorst Museum in Munich, the profound thoughtfulness that they bring to bear on all their projects became apparent. This was evident even in the small exhibition they designed and curated at the Royal Academy (on display until 17 November).

Louisa Hutton described the innovative solutions and perspectives that make the Jessop building truly sustainable. Sustainability is a multifaceted issue that requires integrated thinking, from the urban scale to the detailing- and with a long-term view of the buildings architectural contribution, upkeep and its use.

The building's three-pronged plan

enables urban repair across a difficult site. On one corner it can act as an urban landmark, and on another can be integrated into the smaller-scale streets of the university campus. Planning the interiors economically, they minimized the space for individual professors and gave it over to public and communal areas, facilitating greater faculty interaction. The façade is integral to naturally ventilating the whole building, and the patterning has both a practical and a very specific aesthetic rationale.

What was most gripping about this part of the lecture, was how they defined a language of sustainability that both inspires through scientific innovation, but most crucially seduces, creating spaces that enhance well being and as Louisa said “sustains the soul”.

Matthias Sauerbruch presented the highly acclaimed Brandhorst Museum in Munich. It achieves a rare double, a building for displaying works of art – including Cy Twombly's *Lepanto* series of paintings and numerous major Warhol's, and has the status of a work of art in itself: the rich colouring (and sophisticated construction) of the façade impressed the many artists present. This project is illustrated in more detail in the exhibition in the Architecture Space. — KG

Right Megalith, No.2, 2002
by Dan Holdsworth
152cm x 122cm, c-type print
Courtesy the artist and
Patricia Low Contemporary

As Dan Holdsworth pointed out Ballard said... “Rather than fearing alienation, people should embrace it. It may be the doorway to something more interesting... We need to explore total alienation and find what lies beyond. The secret module that underpins who we are and our imaginative remaking of ourselves.”



Ballardian Architecture: Inner and Outer Space

Throughout his career as a writer, JG Ballard threw out many tantalising allusions to architecture. In *Ballardian Architecture* on May 15, we tried to pinpoint some of those allusions and examine the perceptions that underlie and develop out of them.

Though Ballard's partner Claire Walsh recalled how moving he found a visit to Le Corbusier's grave, Ballard never accepted modern architecture's simple utopianism. Instead he opened up areas for intellectual speculation. Referring to his incisive ability to see modernism's negative effects, Nic Clear characterised him as an enemy not of architecture, but of the architectural profession and its relentless optimism. For Nigel Coates he represented the correct place for architecture within culture, where ideas are more important than buildings, with all their inevitable compromises.

For many speakers, the nexus of inner and outer space lay in Ballard's interest in the relationship between latent and manifest content. He could, recalled Walsh, intuit a psychological world from observing outward appearances. John Gray discussed his ability to see through the veneer of celebrity and entertainment that characterises contemporary political and

public life, to deeper currents beyond – a parallel to the ideas of Guy Debord.

Chris Hall brought that insight back to architecture. Spaces which are “under-imagined” – like car parks – allow us to confront aspects of ourselves that the fictionalised narratives embedded in apparently more important buildings conceal. And these liminal spaces have a parallel, argued David Cunningham, in what Ballard called “invisible literatures”, such as press releases and medical reports. By incorporating such modes of writing in his novels he gave that recalcitrant but recurrent genre contemporary relevance.

The emergence of contemporary consumer culture out of the monocular modernist conceptions of time, social relations and space forms the backdrop to much of Ballard's writing. Shanghai fascinated him, said Tim Abrahams, because it eluded such straightjackets. Not surprisingly, whether in Matthew Taunton's analysis of *Chronopolis*, his vision of the collapse of the Fordist project to control time, or in his engagement with the witty and insightful Independent Group of artists – outlined by Joanne Murray – Ballard found the ebbs and flows between different forms of modernity fascinating and fecund imaginative territory. — JM

In brief

The Royal Academy of Arts is participating in **Open House London** on the weekend of the 18–19 September. Tours at 2 & 4 pm on both days provide the opportunity to explore the architecture of Burlington House, including the Sackler Wing of Galleries designed by Foster + Partners and the often unseen Royal Academy Schools. www.openhouselondon.org.uk



RA Schools student Blue Firth explores alleged **paranormal phenomenon** and spectatorship in the **Norman Shaw designed studios** on the evenings of the 1 & 2 October. Be prepared to take an active role in one of the vigils within this supposed haunted site. www.royalacademy.org.uk/vigil

On the 6 October, as part of a lecture series on the **Learned Societies in Burlington House**, Charles Saumarez Smith, Secretary and Chief Executive of the Royal Academy, explores the Academy's foundation, examining the ideas and

Right Yuli Toh in the Sackler Wing of Galleries, for the London Festival of Architecture
Photo © Angus Young



beliefs of George III, Joshua Reynolds and William Chambers. He discusses the Academy's constitution and system of governance in relation to the other learned societies. www.burlingtonhouse.org

The Royal Academy has launched an introductory **guide to the architecture of its home, Burlington House**, charting its growth from a town-palace on the then outskirts of London to one of the capital's major cultural buildings. It has been refaced, enlarged and added to by almost all of its various occupants and famous architects over the centuries.



The guide is given out free to students and teachers and available for purchase at the RA Shop.

See the unique thin shell, timber vaulted structure called the **'Earth Pavilion'** designed by **Peter Rich** (lecture on 20 Sept), Michael Ramage and John Oschendorf at the HRH Prince of Wales **'Garden Party to Make a Difference'** in the grounds of Lancaster House, as part of an exhibit by **The Earth Awards** of which the pavilion is a finalist. www.theearthawards.org

As part of the **London Festival of Architecture**, the RA held a day of activities for all ages including discussions between artists and architects, tours of the architectural campus, plus sketching and making workshops. Toh Shimazaki Architects led a workshop with families who each created imaginative portals that transformed the Sackler Wing of Galleries. To see a film of the workshop visit www.royalacademy.org.uk/architecture

BOOKING DETAILS

By telephone: 020 7300 5839

Online: www.royalacademy.org.uk/architecture

Or post booking form to:

Architecture Programme Bookings
Royal Academy of Arts
Piccadilly, London
W1J 0BD

Evening Lectures

Peter Rich	<input type="checkbox"/> £10	<input type="checkbox"/> £5*
Kazuyo Sejima/ SANAA	<input type="checkbox"/> £15	<input type="checkbox"/> £8*
Carne Pigem/ RCR	<input type="checkbox"/> £10	<input type="checkbox"/> £5*

RA Forum

Diana Balmori: Landscape Manifesto	<input type="checkbox"/> £7	<input type="checkbox"/> £4*
Landscape Urbanism	<input type="checkbox"/> £7	<input type="checkbox"/> £4*

Total (+ 50p booking fee)

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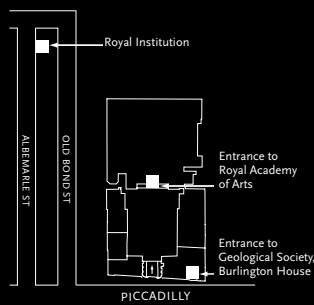
with recognised proof of status. Please indicate your status if relevant.

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AT A GLANCE

Date	Event	Price
Mon 20 Sep	Peter Rich Landscape, Nature, Culture and Light	£10/£5*
Mon 11 Oct	Kazuyo Sejima/ SANAA Japanese Cultural Evening	£15/£8*
Mon 18 Oct	Diana Balmori: Landscape Manifesto RA Forum	£7/£4*
Mon 15 Nov	Landscape Urbanism RA Forum	£7/£4*
Tues 7 Dec	Carme Pigem RCR Arquitectes	£10/£5*
BOOK ONLINE	WWW.ROYALACADEMY.ORG.UK/ARCHITECTURE	



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