

The Architect's Newspaper

January/February 2024

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In Columbus, Indiana, IwamotoScott clads Moravec Hall in white brick for Ivy Tech page 9

Siblings Nina Cooke John and Sekou Cooke speak about their life and work page 12



AN heads to Brooklyn to visit ARO's new office and see ongoing projects page 14

DEMOGO adopts a theatrical approach for a commission in Bologna, Italy page 16

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A COLLECTIVE ENDEAVOR

From Kansas City to London, architects take on the task of designing spaces and institutions that work for the people they serve. Read on page 21.



NAHO KUBOTA



PHILIP VILE



BRUCE DAMONTE

Alafia Under Construction

If you take the 2, 3, or 4 train to the end of the line at New Lots Avenue in East New York, you'll pass through a grid of industrial warehouses before Fountain Avenue bends along Betts Creek into Shirley Chisholm State Park. Previously a landfill, the park now tops a hill that offers views over Jamaica Bay. On this journey, just before reaching Seaview Avenue, you'll pass a 27-acre parcel that used to be the Brooklyn Development Center, which housed individuals with mental health issues. Today, it's a construction site for Alafia, a new wellness-oriented resilient development realized as the largest component of New York State's Vital Brooklyn initiative.

In a city starved for housing, Alafia will deliver 2,400 affordable units in addition to medical services, retail, recreational spaces, bike lanes, walking paths, and an urban farm to an underserved Brooklyn neighborhood. (The name Alafia means something like peace or health in Yoruba, continued on page 10)



SFAP

Archi-Tectonics Goes Big in China

Two stadiums and a park for Hangzhou. Read on page 17.

Co-op City Turns 50

New York City has 7,197 cooperatively owned buildings that contain a total 364,720 homes. Over the course of his 60-year career, architect Herman Jessor designed 40,245 of those limited-equity units, composing 11 percent of the city's total supply of cooperative housing. Jessor's buildings include the Bronx's Sholem Aleichem Cooperative Houses (1926) and United Workers' Association Houses (1926-29); East River Houses on the Lower East Side (1956); and Rochdale Village in Queens (1966), among many others.

In 2023, Herman Jessor's boldest feat turned 50: Co-op City. Here, 15,732 homes are spread across 35 high-rise towers and seven low-rise townhouses on a sprawling 320-acre site in the north Bronx. The Ville Radieuse-inspired ensembles coalesce around shared green space, bike paths, a co-op grocery store, shopping center, schools, and playing fields. The estate was built on top of a former amusement park, Freedomland, and was backed by Governor Nelson Rockefeller continued on page 48

AN FOCUS

At Home

Case studies and products. Read on page 33.



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All Together Now



After participating in Stratosferica's Utopian Hours conference in Turin, Italy, last fall, where *The Architect's Newspaper* was a media partner along with *Monocle* and *Bloomberg*, I had the chance to cross a site off my bucket list of architectural destinations. On an overcast Monday, I visited Ivrea, where the Olivetti campus is spread across the hills south of the town center. The company's factory buildings and social programs are impressive but not widely known, though the complex did become a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2018. The citation is clear about the rationale for recognition: "Ivrea expresses a modern vision of the relationship between industrial production and architecture."

Olivetti, founded by Camillo Olivetti in 1908, got its start manufacturing typewriters. The company first worked from one brick factory but eventually commissioned a series of expansions by rationalist architects Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, including a curtain-walled section that Le Corbusier envied.

The Olivetti brand flourished under the leadership of Camillo's son Adriano. Olivetti built architect-designed factories and showrooms around the world—from New York's 5th Avenue store by Milanese architects BBPR, featuring a sculpture by Costantino Nivola, to the Venice showroom along St. Mark's Square by Carlo Scarpa.

Olivetti was concerned with its employees' well-being. In Ivrea, it built housing for workers, a school, and a canteen complete with a library. Factory employees weren't fired, just reassigned. Adriano was a socialist and distanced himself from both the Fascist and Communist parties. As explored by Meryle Secrest in *The Mysterious Affair at Olivetti*, during World War II, Adriano was a CIA informant and plotted against Mussolini. After the war, he founded his own political party, Comunità, but it quickly foundered.

Adriano was on a mission of expansion before he died suddenly on a train in 1960, followed by the death of Mario Tchou, the company's leading computer engineer, in a car crash the next year. Some, including Secrest and members of the Olivetti family, suspect foul play in both cases. A deal to take over Underwood left Olivetti in financial crisis. Still, after a series of its own takeovers and partial sales, Olivetti pressed on: It wasn't until 1968 when Ettore Sottsass's Valentine

typewriter became a hit. Still, it lost steam in the 1990s and ultimately was absorbed into an Italian telecommunications company.

Today, several businesses occupy the campus's buildings, but some remain vacant. I visited the nursery—featured in MoMA's 1952 exhibition *Olivetti, Design in Industry*—whose restoration was nearly complete. In another building, a cafe serves lunch next to a gym; old machines and archival material mingle with paper cups and placemats, as seen in the accompanying image, a still life that speaks to the promise of a bygone dream of cooperative existence.

In this issue, *AN* explores a similar spirit of collectivity, which is needed now more than ever. Our features take on recent housing projects from Nashville to London and organizational developments in both architectural practice and a long-running New York nonprofit. Our Focus section showcases four new dwellings—from a single-family home on a scenic site in Nova Scotia to an affordable housing complex in Los Angeles—in addition to an in-depth set of residential products. Up front, we visit ARO's new studio (page 14) and explore new projects in Bologna and Hangzhou (pages 16–19). Finally, we offer a preview of this year's exciting *Facades+* events (page 11).

The back of the issue contains three pieces closer to home in New York: an essay describes new additions to Levittown and contemporary real estate pressures (page 47); a portfolio by photographer Zara Pfeifer, with an accompanying essay by *AN*'s associate editor, Dan Jonas Roche, celebrates Herman Jessor's Co-op City at 50 (page 48); and Roche interviews Daniel Libeskind about his upbringing and work on affordable housing (page 50). Studio Libeskind's newest project, an affordable senior housing project in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, is due to open soon.

Our families shape us in deep ways. Last year, I spoke with architects and siblings Nina Cooke John and Sekou Cooke about their upbringing and work (page 12). We were fortunate to be joined by their parents, Leroy and Cynthia, who added their perspectives to the conversation. If any other architects are brave enough to be interviewed alongside their parents, my inbox is open. **Jack Murphy**

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Corrections



Our Best of 2023 issue printed the incorrect photograph of the *Facades: Structural System* honorable mention: ALUCOBOND EasyFix. An updated photograph is reproduced above.

The issue also omitted the names of two collaborators on *Another Seedbed*. The design team included Ignacio G. Galán and Jesse McCormick in addition to Future Projects.

The issue also misprinted EL Studio's name: It is EL Studio, not El Studio.

Sponge City Spaceships

Archi-Tectonics, !Melk, and Thornton Tomasetti deliver an intricate campus of stadiums, retail, and landscapes in Hangzhou, China.



Set atop an elevated greenscape, two new stadiums, built for the Asian Games, are now open to the public. Parks and waterways cover what was once a divisive corridor of the city crisscrossed by agricultural canals.

With almost 12,000 athletes from 45 Asian countries and regions participating in its latest iteration in Hangzhou, China, the Asian Games is the world's largest sporting event outside of the Olympics. Like the Olympics, the event's host cities have long struggled to activate their venues and sites after the festivities. Nobody wanted a repeat of Beijing 2008, where Herzog & de Meuron's celebrated "Bird Nest" now sits empty much of the year, or much less a rerun of Athens, where venues from the 2004 Games have largely been abandoned.

The most recent Asian Games, branded as Hangzhou 2022, took place last fall. (It was delayed a year due to COVID-19.) Hangzhou,

a city of over ten million people southwest of Shanghai, hosted 481 events in 56 competition venues, including an 80,000-seat, lotus-shaped main stadium by NBBJ.

One of the most effective clusters was devised by a New York-based team of architects, Archi-Tectonics; landscape architects !Melk; and engineers Thornton Tomasetti. On the northern edge of the city, the 116-acre, seven-venue Gongshu Canal Sports Park fuses flexible venues and inhabitable landscapes to deliver a site that will thrive in the city well beyond the games. "We said from the beginning that this park should be about the future of the neighborhood," Winka Dubbeldam, founder of

Archi-Tectonics and a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, told *AN*.

The three firms developed their scheme for the project competition before working with local offices to complete most of the landscaping and engineering. The key venues—stadiums for field hockey and table tennis—sit at either end of the mile-long, rectangular site, which was previously crisscrossed by agricultural canals and bisected by a six-lane roadway. The canals were rerouted into a new river that spills into a new lake, freeing up land for buildings and green space, but the roadway remained intact.

To cross this divide, the team proposed the Village Valley Mall, a recessed canyon that

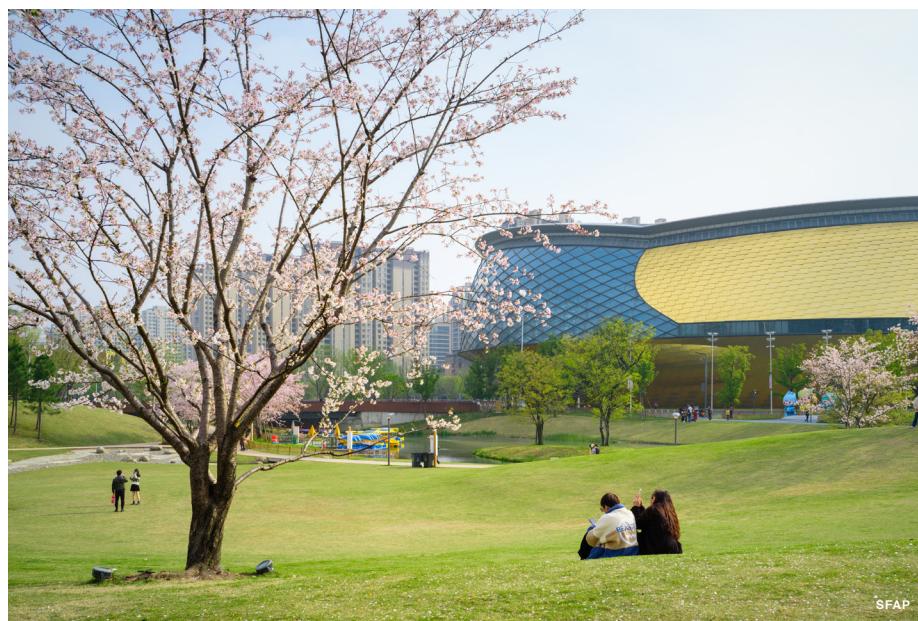
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Top: The landscape master plan offers a variety of multitiered pedestrian pathways.

Above right: Sunken below park-level, shops sit beneath green roofs.

Above left: The stadiums become active venues for programming but also striking architectural backdrops for parkgoers.

meanders for a half mile between the stadiums and beneath the street. It is dotted with circular, green-roofed pavilions that incorporate shops, restaurants, and cafes. All of this is supplemented with plant-filled outdoor gathering areas. This has become the project's social heart, and the site's divisions have been further linked via snaking pedestrian bridges—two over the roadway and six over the river—that inject a sense of kinetic excitement.

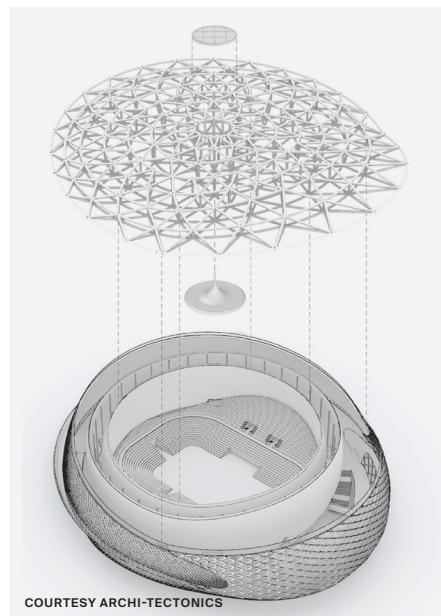
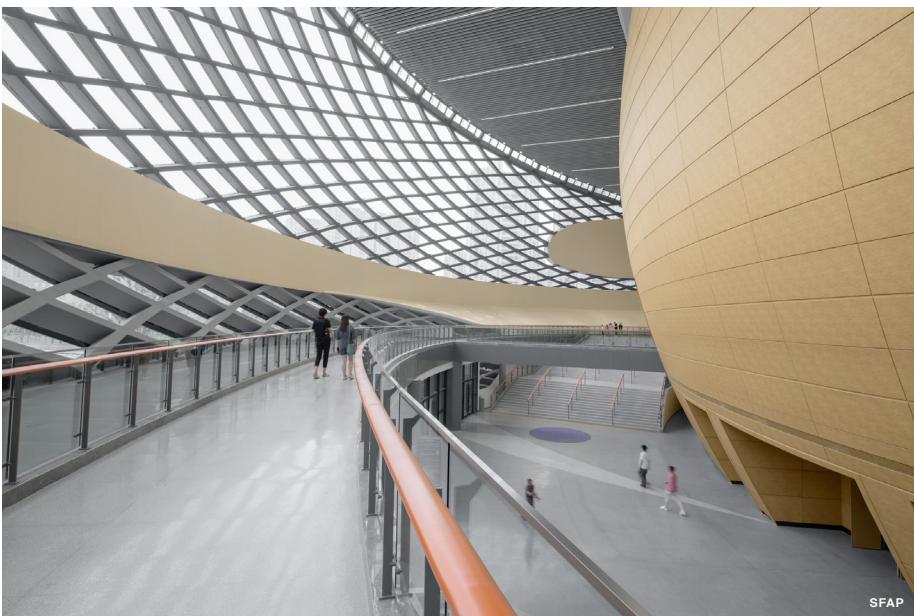
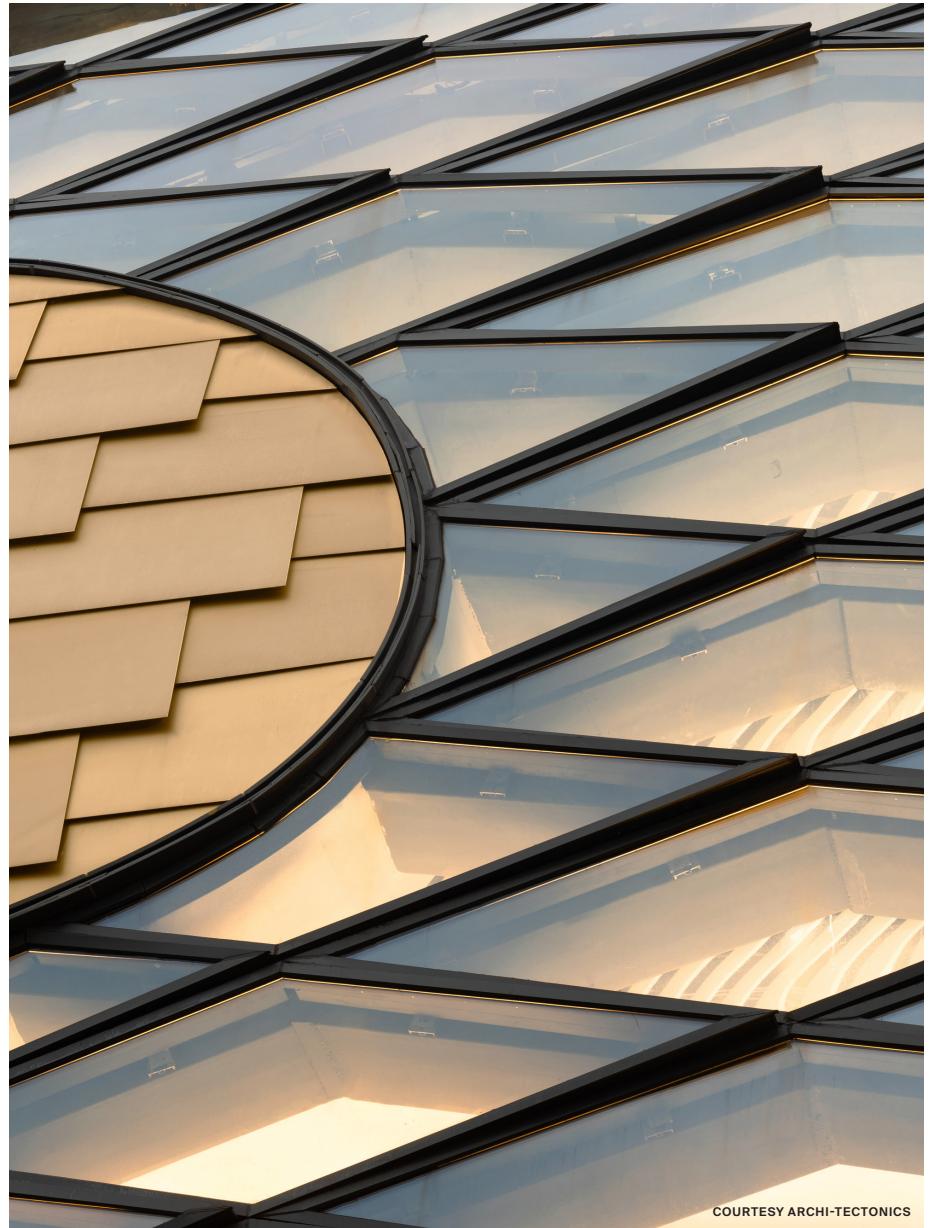
The Valley Mall, noted !Melk founder and principal Jerry van Eyck, was inspired by Rotterdam's Beurstraverse, a sunken, 1990s shopping complex that helped connect that city under a major road. "After growing up in Rotterdam and

working there for many years, this came as a sort of natural move," van Eyck said. Dirt from the excavation helped create hills and other landscape features across the site, keeping the overall project "zero earth," meaning no soil left the site.

The site's athletic venues anchor opposite ends of the promenade. The centerpiece is the 5,000-seat table tennis arena, which also functions as an entertainment venue. Its oblong form, Dubbeldam said, is the result of two intersecting ellipses, creating a "wobbly" design that carves out surprising interior spaces.

One diagrid facade of flat glass units looks out toward the park, while the opposite is

covered in overlapping brass shingles evocative of fish scales, suggesting a mysterious object like Hans Scharoun's Philharmonie Berlin, Dubbeldam's favorite building. At the center of the arena, a long-span, steel-trussed "suspension-dome" structure creates an uninterrupted central space faced in bamboo that can be transformed from arena to amphitheater seating. The "suspension-dome" tapers beyond this core to cover the flanking support spaces, including lobbies, ramps, stairs, and a VIP viewing area. Beyond table tennis, the facility was used for breakdancing, marking the first time the sport has appeared at the Asian Games. It's also designed to host cultural events and performances.



Above left and right: Two facade conditions—one glazed, one faceted—offer textural variety and a visual connection to the park.

Far left: Internal circulation spaces are filled with natural light and create a buffer between facade and inner stadium.

Left: An exploded diagram of the stadium's "suspension-dome" roof system.

At the opposite end of the site, the oval-shaped, 5,000-seat field hockey stadium is set about 16 feet into the ground, so it appears to be emerging out of the landscape. A soaring mesh roof covers the seating area and shades the field beyond. This is supported by a single arched steel beam, and concrete abutments keep it in tension. The gesture gives "drama and emotion," observed Scott Lomax, senior principal at Thornton Tomasetti. "It's a symbol of the importance of this project." The cast-in-place concrete seating area is accessed via a glass-wrapped lobby. Its openness, combined with that of the unwallied playing field, helps the venue connect more intimately to the site.

Sustainability is built into most of the plan. The wetland landscape, crisscrossed by boardwalks, porous pathways, playgrounds, and elevated areas, is filled with local vegetation—as part of a required "sponge city" approach, it is designed to absorb runoff and prevent flooding. The river and lake, which serve as sites for kayaking and other recreation, help collect water. Islands in the river are scenic elements that also clean and oxygenate the water by speeding up currents. From above, one can see that 85 percent of the site is covered in planted surfaces or water.

The buildings are green, too. The table tennis stadium achieved Green Building Evaluation Label 3 Star, the highest level of sustainability in

China, equivalent to LEED Platinum. Its diagrid structure and planar glass helped remove 1,130 tons of steel from the effort, according to the team. The park's several green roofs total about 690,000 square feet and can release around 83,000 kilograms of oxygen and absorb nearly 115,000 kilograms of CO₂ annually.

The neighborhood around the project, which was already humming, now sports many high-rises, and real estate values have soared, Dubbeldam observed. Locals, who got to know the project before the games commenced, regularly use the park and the venues, she added. The size of the complex and the designer's prioritization of visual and physical connectivity

help it feel like part of the city. There is no concern that this will become a left-behind area. "If you give people something precious, they will treat it as precious," said Dubbeldam. "They treat it like a permanent inhabitant of their city."

Sam Lubell is an editor at large at *Metropolis* and has written more than ten books about architecture for Phaidon, Rizzoli, Metropolis Books, and the Monacelli Press.