

REBUILD BY DESIGN MOVES AHEAD AS LOCAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS ALLOCATE FUNDS AND ISSUE RFPS.



# REBUILD RESET

When Hurricane Sandy brought catastrophic destruction to New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut three years ago, government officials and designers seized the opportunity to shape space at an unprecedented scale through Rebuild by Design, a 2013 competition

sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD, in collaboration with local partners, including the Municipal Art Society and The Van Alen Institute, selected six teams (and one finalist) to create resiliency plans for seven coastal

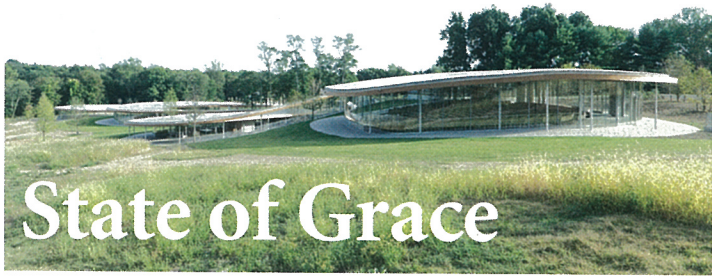
**Above: The New Meadowlands: Productive City + Regional Park in New Jersey**

areas in three states. HUD allocated \$930 million to implement the first phases of the plans. As of **continued on page 15**

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SANAA CRAFTS A WEIGHTLESS, WINDING COMMUNITY BUILDING THAT BLENDS WITH THE LANDSCAPE IN NEW CANAAN, CONNECTICUT



## State of Grace

If there were any architecture firm equipped to design a building with the ironic prompt to "make it blend in and draw people outside," it's Pritzker Prize-winning Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa of SANAA. Grace Farms Foundation, a private nonprofit organization, selected the Japanese firm to design a multipurpose building for an 80-acre farm property in New Canaan, Connecticut. "It was extraordinary that even though

they were halfway around the world in Tokyo, they understood that we were trying to create a place of porosity, while also being in harmony with the landscape," Sharon Prince, president of the Grace Farms Foundation, said.

The resulting 83,000-square-foot glass structure is divided into five volumes that curve through the property on slender columns. An anodized **continued on page 8**

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL RENOVATIONS FINALLY NEAR COMPLETION

## GOD IS IN THE DETAILS

Shrouded in scaffolding for three years, renovations on St. Patrick's Cathedral are nearly complete. Initiated in 2006, renovations **continued on page 5**



A radical glass addition to a historic brick home

A NOVEL PRESERVATION PROJECT TAKES SHAPE IN VIRGINIA

## Glass en Masse

Virginia is a house-museum mecca. It's the home of Colonial Williamsburg, Stratford Hall, and Monticello. What could another museum add to the state's cultural heritage infrastructure?

The Menokin **continued on page 9**



STUDIO VISIT > MATHEWS NIELSEN WORKS FOR THE PUBLIC SEE PAGE 12

## AN LANDSCAPE ISSUE

AN INVESTIGATES THE WAYS IN WHICH LANDSCAPE DESIGN IS BEING USED TO TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES. WE VISIT DETROIT FOR ITS APPROACH TO GRASS-ROOTS FARMING URBANISM THAT IS REVITALIZING THE CITY AND LOOK AT HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP CONNECT LANDSCAPES TO THE PUBLIC. SEE PAGE 26

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**BLOWN OVER IN THE WINDY CITY**

The number of projects in the Chicago Cultural Center right now is a bit dizzying, but we can only imagine what the place was like during the installation. It is a small miracle that it all fit, let alone got assembled correctly. The process was not without snafus, however. Multiple sources reported to *AN* that in the final hours before the preview opening on October 1, the large circular construction by Spanish architects Selgascano (of Serpentine fame) and **helloeverything** actually collapsed. Fortunately, it was sturdily put back together for the opening. The team recovered with an elegant tension cable design that worked quite well, and is to be commended under such a last-minute timeframe.

**BACK TO THE BENCH**

The city's newest subway station, 34<sup>th</sup> St-Hudson Yards, opened in early September, extending the 7 line over to the Far West Side. The station is squeaky clean, with stainless steel and glass that looks like it cost \$2.42 billion. (It did.) While it looks like a contemporary version of a subway station, the typical benches you will find in most stops have not changed. Apparently, there was no redesign for the trusty old wooden benches, which now contrast more than ever with their surroundings.

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The St. Patrick's Cathedral interior was previously renovated in the 1930s and 40s.

PHOTO BY AUDREY WACHS

Raymond Pepi, founder and president of Building Conservation Associates, led the forensic analysis of the Cathedral. That analysis enabled the design team to make restoration and conservation decisions on the basis of the strength and integrity of the building's woodwork, plaster, stone, and glass. So far, around 150 masons, painters, carpenters, and other builders have labored on the project.

At times, there were over 100 people working at once on the Cathedral. To coordinate the activity, MBB partner Mary Burnham said the team used Autodesk's BIM 360 Field, an app that allows each team member to identify problems, flag repairs, suggest conservation methods, and also allows the design team to follow up on the work as it's completed.

Transparency, inside and out, is a salient feature of the new design. Monsignor Ritchie is emphatic that the Cathedral keep its doors open to all. New programmatic elements include sliding glass doors at the main entrance on Fifth Avenue so that, even in winter, the 9,000-pound double bronze doors flanking the entrance may remain open without letting in the cold.

Pollution, particularly candle soot, turned the ceiling and parts of the walls army green (low smoke candles are the norm going forward). The renovations reveal the original tri-colored, plaster cast ceiling that Renwick cleverly designed to look like stone. The interiors were curated to increase the space's comfort and reduce visual clutter. The design team worked with the clergy to reposition signs and statuary to harmonize with the space. Preservationists restored the glass and glazing on 3,200–3,300 stained glass panels *in situ*. MBB vented the bottom of the windows to improve air circulation, and maintain a more even temperature around the delicate glass. While most of the glass would have been severely damaged by removal, approximately five to six percent of panels in need of intensive repair were removed and shipped to master glass restorer Ettore Christopher Botti of Botti Studio.

The exterior received the same level of scrutiny and care. The renovation team blasted the facade with a mixture of glass and water to reveal any damage to the building. The original structure, said Murphy, was supposed to look as if it was "poured into a mold and deposited on the sidewalk." Uneven aging of the stone and grout caused the exterior to appear more variegated than intended. The current, cleaned facade recaptures the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century look of the building.

AUDREY WACHS

**GOD IS IN THE DETAILS** continued from front page stalled due to the 2007 economic recession, but began again in earnest in 2012. Pope Francis' New York visit on September 24<sup>th</sup> advanced the project time line.

The Archdiocese of New York commissioned New York architects Murphy Burnham & Buttrick (MBB) to spearhead the renovation. Opened in 1879, the original structure was designed by James Renwick, Jr., one of 19<sup>th</sup> century America's preeminent architects. MBB's Jeffrey Murphy, the renovation's lead architect, stresses that the St. Patrick's Cathedral project is about "conservation, not restoration." While restoration brings a building back to a specific style or time, conservation incorporates features from multiple time periods to display a full history of the space. St. Patrick's Cathedral is beloved locally and protected nationally: the Cathedral, as well as the Rectory, Lady Chapel, and Cardinal's Residence on the same block, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Commenting on the renovations, Reverend Monsignor Robert T. Ritchie referenced Cardinal Timothy Dolan's opinion that "the conservation of St. Patrick's Cathedral is about spiritual renewal." During renovations, the church continued to welcome tourists and worshippers. Priests held their usual seven masses per day, calibrating their voices to be heard over the construction noise. The project is also a financial commitment for the Archdiocese, which estimates that interior and exterior renovations have cost \$175 million so far.

Over nine years, approximately 140 designers and consultants, along with a team of 20 engineers, oversaw more than 30,000 interior and exterior repairs and modifications to the structure. Sustainability plays a major, and visible, role in the conservation process—the Archdiocese of New York invested in green energy, with ten geothermal wells planned for the site. The wells extend 2,200 feet underground and will provide 30 percent of energy for cathedral.

OPEN> RETAIL



> **KITH BROOKLYN**  
233 Flatbush Ave  
Brooklyn  
Tel: 347-889-6114  
Designer: Snarkitecture

COURTESY SNARKITECTURE

750 all-white Air Jordan 1s hang from the ceiling at apparel retailer Kith's new store in Brooklyn. Actually, they are 1:1 plaster-cast replicas, senior associate for Snarkitecture Ben Porto said, claiming that real shoes would strain the ceiling.

Complete with a cereal bar, per the request of owner Ronnie Fieg, the firm has created alternative sensory experience with cereals being served in Mylar bags that fit into small shoeboxes.

Working with Kith for a second time, Snarkitecture has installed a linear monochromatic, reductive interior emulating the original New York City store, solidifying Kith's visual identity and reinforcing the Snarkitecture aesthetic. The white canvas supplied by lead designer Daniel Arsham allows the colors from Kith's product range to do the selling while a clever use of mirrors and metal supports blend into the background.

When asked if Snarkitecture's style would limit them in terms of the amount of different retailers they could design for, potentially compromising brand identities, Porto argued that each approach was different. With Kith they worked with Fieg to produce a unique aesthetic—something they aim to do in the future.

For now, Snarkitecture are happy to continue working with Kith and have said to expect more cereal bars. JS



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