



Pulling a structure across the ice to Conche, Newfoundland. Resettlement Collection, Maritime History Archive, Memorial University, PF-317.488.

Journeys: How Travelling Fruit, Ideas, and Buildings Rearrange Our Environment

Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal
October 20, 2010–March 13, 2011

Bijlmermeer petting zoos share a gallery with EU-regulated cucumbers. One wall frames (literally) definitions of “bungalow” from 1855 to 1986. A few feet away, a digital slideshow documents transnational migration between Senegal and Italy. Japanese farm tools used to cultivate crops in Bolivia encroach upon Google Earth projections of the Arctic, cross-sections of buoyant wild coconuts, and stunning Max Belcher photographs recording the translation of architecture in the American South to Arthington, Liberia.

Journeys is an ambitious investigation of the flip side of global migration — a look at its impact not on people but on places. The ideas and themes are intriguing and provocative: Soon the visitor begins to understand that maybe there really are connections between cucumbers and petting zoos.

But *Journeys* is also a far-reaching, perhaps over-reaching, exploration of exhibition-making. A collaboration among curators, authors, a graphic designer, and an artist, the project includes a website

and a book. Which is appropriate, as the most experimental aspect of the installation is not its objects or images but its text.

Fifteen narratives take a cue from creative-writing teachers: Construct your essay by beginning with a concrete object and then bridge out toward the larger philosophical questions. And although each story has the potential to germinate thoughtful discussion on migration’s transformative consequences, the exhibition’s overall set-up and multimedia mishmash (albeit well-designed mishmash) provokes ADD-like agitation in the way of an ad-ridden, data-clogged website. Has the time already come for art museums to mimic the contemporary method of frenzied information intake? Is there a novel way we can mitigate sensory overload while providing loads of new data? I want more white space. I’m reading the book.

Online exhibition: www.cca.qc.ca.

Karen Moser-Booth is senior editor at the Boston Society of Architects.

2010 Bulfinch Awards

Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America, New England Chapter

State House, Boston
November 1–5, 2010
www.classicist-ne.org

The 2010 Bulfinch Awards are the ICA&CA’s first attempt to celebrate the classical tradition in architecture. Sixteen projects, mainly residential, were recognized. Big carried the day, with residences ranging from 5,500 to 30,000 square feet. The behemoths marched over their sites with an “if you’ve got it, flaunt it” air.

Still, there were gems. Ivan Bereznicki’s orangerie-like “Pavilion” house is a disciplined exercise in classicism. The “Champlain’s Bluff” house by Polhemus Savery DaSilva presents a human scale to arriving guests. The S/L/A/M Collaborative’s Church of the Sacred Heart introduces new ideas of ecclesiastical architecture with a traditional vocabulary. And Keith LeBlanc’s landscape for the Lowder Brook house is a marvel of refinement.

The Bulfinch Awards program deserves applause for promoting historical precedent in architecture. But for the standing ovation that surely awaits, it must recognize more projects that embrace proper scale, siting, and the use of regional materials.

Frank Shirley AIA is an architect in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the author of *New Rooms for Old Houses: Beautiful Additions for the Traditional Home* (Taunton Press, 2007).

Greek Revival residence by Dell Mitchell Architects. Photo © 2008 Richard Mandelkorn.



Typology Redux: Revisiting a Theoretical Framework for New Modes of Practice

Northeastern University

October 16, 2010

Typology is the study of building types — the classification of buildings by their form or use. With large-scale masterplans proliferating in the developing world and the increased densification of cities closer to home, should typology be reintroduced as a central focus of architectural theory and practice? This was the question posed at the recent symposium Typology Redux. Like many conferences Northeastern has sponsored in recent years, it focused on the architect's role in a market-driven economy.

The symposium featured three panels: pragmatics; history and theory; and hybridization of contemporary practice. The first discussion, led by conference chair Tim Love and Matthew Littell

(both principals at Utile and professors at Northeastern), provided an argument for type as a legitimate focus of research, practice, and academic study. June Williamson, co-author of *Retrofitting Suburbia*, outlined suburban types and showed examples of how they have been reconsidered through adaptive reuse — as in the case of big-box retail stores transformed into libraries and even churches.

In the second panel, Alan Plattus provided a comprehensive historical overview, and K. Michael Hays delved deeply and poetically into the role of Aldo Rossi in expanding the theoretical implications of typology. They were then joined by moderator John McMorrough and Roy Kozlovsky for a lively discussion that wrestled with the architect's relationship with type.

The last session was led by Ed Mitchell, and included Xavier Costa, the founding dean of Northeastern's new College of Arts, Media and Design, Ivan Rupnik, and Marshall Brown. While intended

to shed light on how — or whether — typology can again serve as a springboard for innovation, the session asked more questions than it answered. A more comprehensive view of how newer tools (e.g., landscape urbanism, performative building systems, and parametric modeling) have launched new ways of structuring form and space — and the ways in which these could be used to reinvigorate type — might have been a useful avenue of exploration.

Nonetheless, Typology Redux was a timely conference, echoing calls made by a growing chorus for a refocus on architecture, not architects. Typology, and its radical pragmatism, indeed deserves redux.

Kelly Hutzell AIA, LEED AP is an architect at over,under in Boston and an assistant teaching professor at Carnegie Mellon University.

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