



THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS USA
California Chapter

**Building A Sustainable World: Life in the Balance:
Global Challenge, Global Solutions!**

**Architects, designers, city planners, engineers, students and builders taking
leadership roles in Building A Sustainable World!**

For Immediate Release

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**FROM FIJI TO PHILADELPHIA: VISIONARY DESIGN TEAMS TAKE
TOP HONORS IN INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DESIGN
COMPETITION**

**Multidisciplinary Teams Tackle Climate Change with Innovative Plans for Healthy,
Sustainable Communities**

Los Angeles — June 12, 2007 — At a symposium at the A+D Museum, Architecture Plus Design Museum in Los Angeles on June 8 through 10, four winning teams were selected from among twelve finalists who presented proposals as part of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)–USA California chapter’s competition, **Building A Sustainable World: Life in the Balance**. The competition, sponsored by Autodesk, Inc. attracted more than 50 entries from around the world. It challenged participants to develop concepts for healthy, vibrant communities designed to address climate change and reverse, rather than add to, environmental damage.

First Prize for \$10,000 was awarded to a team from Fiji, Toby Kyle, Chris Cole and Kamineli Vuadreu. Their project, **Sustainable Urban Housing in Fiji – Vakabauta Village**, focuses on the needs of low-income Fijians living in dilapidated temporary housing in Suva, the country’s capital. The design concept addresses global problems with local solutions, including growing bamboo within the village to green and rejuvenate the site and create revenue opportunities for residents. The team drew on traditional Fijian values such as working together and sharing resources, to create a model sustainable urban community relevant not only to Fiji but to many developing Pacific nations that are likely to be particularly hard hit by the effects of climate change.

Second Prize for \$5,000 went to an Australian team, Gall & Medek Architects/Team DES of Brisbane. Jim Gall and Tony Fry presented the **Boonah Two Development**, a proposal that focuses on climate-adaptive strategies, technological innovation, and socio-cultural change projected over a

50-year period for the city of Boonah, about 100 km inland from the east coast of Australia. Although the Boonah Two Development proposal targets a particular city, the team's design methodology is meant to be universally applicable. The design approach involves 10 key principles, including operating communities as closed-loop systems that produces no waste, creating foodscapes to reduce "food miles" and increase nutritional quality, and moving from reductionist linear thinking to relational thinking that aligns with ecological processes.

Third Prize for \$2,500 went to **The Urban Kidney — Revitalizing Forgotten Bottom**, presented by Stephen Gibson from the United States design team of Wallace Roberts and Todd, LLC of Philadelphia. This proposal addresses the distressed, polluted Philadelphia neighborhood known as Forgotten Bottom, so called because residents feel the city has virtually forgotten that they exist. This multidisciplinary team developed a comprehensive plan for restoring a long-abused wetland as the centerpiece of a new neighborhood built on abandoned industrial brownfield. This project shows how the environmentally sensitive reclamation of post-industrial waterfronts can be used to meet other urban goals such as stormwater management, sustainable housing development and economic revitalization.

Bonus Prize for \$5,000 was awarded to the entry that demonstrated the most imaginative use of building information modeling (BIM) and the Autodesk's Revit platform for BIM. This prize was awarded to Liu Di of China for his entry, **Seasonal Flood Threatened Community**. This entry proposed innovative architecture and engineering solutions designed to reduce the global warming impacts of buildings while also protecting communities from the ravages of major floods. The proposal, which focuses on a flood-prone community on the Changjiang River, includes a concept for zero net energy homes as well as safe temporary housing for those people made homeless by floods.

Honorable Mention went to the United Kingdom team of Phil Garlick, the Sustainable Construction Team with DGP International and Scott Wilson Ltd. for their innovative, outside-the-box proposal, **Tankers Converted to Village**. This entry proposes transforming decommissioned oil tankers into sustainable communities, and docking them to replace city blocks as they become submerged with rising sea levels. The lower levels of the ship's hull contain rainwater, grey water, freshwater, waste and food storage, as well as desalination and mechanical plant equipment. Mid-levels include space for commercial, educational and other public functions plus mezzanines that provide animated streetscapes. Residential units stack vertically to the top, with roof gardens provided for agriculture and recreation.

Each entry tackled environmental and social challenges of enormous scope and offered engaging, inspiring solutions. In addition to the winning entries, the finalists included:

EcoSystemic Restoration: A Model Community at Salton Sea, a plan for healing the environment and living sustainably in this extremely hot, arid and ecologically scarred region of the southern California desert.

Adaptation to Climatic Disaster, innovative physical and cultural survival strategies for the Republic of Maldives, a nation whose highest elevation is 2.4 meters above sea level.

Urban Model for Coal Country, a vision for transforming Appalachian hilltops decimated by coal mining into vibrant, pedestrian-friendly hill towns - taking advantage of an already scarred landscape which can be used for building, and reducing infringement upon needed forest for settlement.

Wall City, addressing rising waters in the Netherlands port city of Rotterdam with a proposal for a compact community based on a huge vertical walls that contain the city's infrastructure.

Suburban Renewal/Green Sacramento, a proposal to reclaim and reuse an abandoned strip mall and transform suburbs into dense, carbon-neutral communities for living, working, raising food, replenishing groundwater and rebuilding local ecologies.

Algae City, responding to the challenges of energy consumption and urban sprawl with a concept to establish cities on modular platforms suspended above the ground and powered by clean hydrogen energy produced from algae.

Redeveloping the Ninth Ward, addressing environmentally and socially responsible community rebuilding designed to bring back local residents displaced by the Hurricane Katrina disaster.

Opening the symposium at an evening reception on June 8, RK Stewart, president of the American Institute of Architects, emphasized the role of design professionals in addressing global environmental challenges. “Architects and associated design disciplines are in a powerful position to help lead us out of our global environmental crises,” said Stewart. “We need them to educate their clients about sustainable design and to lobby to our government bodies to enact smart energy and climate-change solutions. There is no time to lose.”

The competition called for deep thinking, intricate analysis and careful consideration regarding future generations. Entrants were asked to directly address current and impending environmental problems, including projected shifts in weather patterns due to accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, water scarcity, dwindling natural resources and accumulation of toxic materials.

“I would very much prefer to live in the world offered to us by these talented designers, rather than continue on the destructive path we have taken up until now,” said Caroline Davies, competition’s co-director.

Tim Clark, the competition’s other co-director is Founding Chair of the competition’s host organization, RIBA-USA California. He added, “These great works offer an entirely new set of visions for rebuilding our ailing communities, on a sustainable basis, while dealing with extreme weather conditions, rising water levels and energy shortages.

Not surprisingly, the general consensus from this collection of works and gathering of people from all around the world is that architects and associated design disciplines are in a powerful position to take leadership with our global environmental crisis and must do so. This includes further education from architects and designers to their clients, intense lobbying to our government bodies, a rapid change in the way permits are granted which will necessitate city officials learning and understanding sustainable building techniques and materials - many well intentioned people cannot get permission to build “green” because of lack of knowledge by their various local building inspectors. All architects and associated disciplines must simply say no to anything but sustainable building, and take our current standards far beyond that of LEED certification because we can and we must!

Philip Fraser Andrews, director of RIBA–USA California and National Board, and vice president and principal of MCG Architects, Pasadena, California, announced the winners at a special ceremony at the A+D Museum on Sunday, June 10.

A prize-giving ceremony and exhibition of the entries will be held the weekend of September 21–22, 2007 in Los Angeles. For more information: www.riba-usa.org

LIST OF AWARD WINNERS AND FINALISTS

FIRST PRIZE

Fiji: Toby Kyle, Chris Cole and Kamineli Vuadreu. Project: *Sustainable Urban Housing in Fiji*.

SECOND PRIZE

Australia: Gall and Medek Architects and Team DES. Project: *Boonah Two Development*.

THIRD PRIZE

United States: Wallace Roberts Todd, LLC (George B. Bryant, Stephen M. Gibson, Kyle Gradinger, John Keene, Adam Krom, Lauren W. Leatherbarrow, Jamie R. Ober, Anthony C. Okoye, Yogesh Saoji, KaMan E. Skinner, Devinder S. Soin, and Michael J. Tweed Jr.). Project: *Urban Kidney Project — Revitalizing Forgotten Bottom*.

HONORABLE MENTION

United Kingdom: Phil Garlick and Sustainable Construction Team. Project: *Tankers Converted to Village*.

SPECIAL AUTODESK PRIZE

China: Liu Di. Project: *Seasonal Flood Threatened Community*.

FINALISTS

Brazil: Vinicius Hernandez Andrade and Marcello Henneberg Morettin of Andrade Morettin Associates. Project: *Algae City*.

Greece: Vasileios Kioussis and Konstantinos Dimas. Project: *Wall City, Rotterdam, Netherlands*.

United States: John Manaves and Alice Kriegel. Project: *Redeveloping the Ninth Ward*.

United States: Ilaria Mazzoleni, Yvonne Lau, Philip Ra, Sareen Proudian, Sky Milner, Harold Portillo, Amitabh Barthakur, Vanessa Zajfen, Shauna Price, Sunil Varma, Bungane Mehlomakulu. Project: *Ecosystem Restoration: A Model Community at Salton Sea*.

United States: Geoffrey Holton and Associates (Geoffrey Holton, Gretchen Bigsby, David Waldorf, Gavin Ross). Project: *Suburban Renewal/Green Sacramento*.

United States: Center for Sustainable Cities Design Studio (Richard S. Levine, Michael T. Hughes, Casey Ryan Mather). Project: *Urban Model for Coal Country*.

United States: Junya Oishi. Project: *Adaptation to Climatic Disaster*.

SPONSOR

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COMPETITION PUBLISHER

Gibbs Smith, Publisher

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

The symposium weekend was hosted by the Architecture + Design Museum in Los Angeles, with a reception sponsored by Delta Faucet.

JUDGES

Sunand Prasad — President 2007–2009 of The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Principal, Penoyre-Prasad, London.

RK Stewart — President of The American Institute of Architects (AIA). Principal, Gensler, San Francisco.

Prof. Thom Mayne — Pritzker Prize Laureate, 2005. Principal, Morphosis, Los Angeles.

Dr. Ken Yeang — author, *Ecodesign Instruction Manual*. Principal, Llewelyn, Davies, Yeang.

Jennifer Roberts — author, *Good Green Homes, Good Green Kitchens, and Redux: Designs That Reuse, Recycle, and Reveal* (Gibbs Smith, Publisher).

Erin Rae Hoffer — AIA, Industry Programs Manager, AEC Solutions, Autodesk, Inc.

Pavel Getov — Observer. Sustainable Development Advisor to Morphosis.

Edmund Einy — Observer. Los Angeles Chapter of the AIA.

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COMPETITION BACKGROUND

The **Building A Sustainable World: Life in the Balance** competition was announced June 2006, with a February 2007 deadline for receipt of the entries. Sixty-five submissions were registered, which encompassed over 200 people working individually or in teams. These included architects, city planners, engineers, students and designers from 18 countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, China–Hong Kong, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Spain, Thailand, U.K., and U.S.A.

Building a Sustainable World: Life in the Balance was an open competition to develop concepts for a maximum-capacity sustainable community or an urban subdivision to address shifts in global climate, that have been so vividly demonstrated by increasing numbers of flooding and drought catastrophes. The community must be “off the grid”, in other words as autonomous and self-sustaining as possible. And, beyond this, participants were invited to propose ways of making the community a positive contributor to the natural ecology. Alternative energy solutions needed to be fully researched and integrated to identify advantages and to be realistic about risks and disadvantages. The competition premise is that the sustainable community should start to reverse environmental damage and not add to it. The community can include new industries, which must be clean and considerate to the quality of life for future generations. We want to create healthy, vibrant, non-toxic communities with a positive relationship, respect and regard for nature and our natural resources.

Eligibility: The competition was open to any individual from any country. However, an entrant who is not an architect had to team up with an accredited (licensed or registered) architect from the locality of the submitted project. Participants were encouraged to engage in teamwork with and between architects whether the entrant is a member of the general public, a writer, visionary, movie maker, engineer, city planner, designer or from the construction industry at large.

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