

**THE
ARCHITECTURAL
REVIEW**

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Shape-itecture is dead. In Cannes they debate the low-carbon future

RORY OLCAYTO

The end of 'shape-itecture' and 'iconitis'. Community-driven developments. Loose-fit office design. A return to medieval building techniques and making green design a client's must-have. These were just some of the topics discussed at the AR/Protek roundtable at the MIPIM property fair in Cannes in March.

The focus was tall buildings, but the debate soon mutated into a free-for-all on how the recession and climate change might reshape the profession. Stephen Reinke of Woods Bagot wondered if Dubai, badly hit by the global downturn, might soon resemble the ending of *Planet of the Apes*, which shows the Statue of Liberty half-buried in sand. 'Will we see the tip of the Burj poking out of the desert? I don't

think so. But the architecture in the Gulf might just become a bit more rational, and the urbanism a bit more connected. Shape-itecture is dead.'

Lebanese architect Nabil Gholam said environmentally aware developers were emerging in Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia who were no longer afflicted by 'iconitis'. Karen Cook of KPF said projects such as Foster + Partners' under-construction zero-carbon Masdar City in Abu Dhabi were evidence of the shift from shapemaking towards 'quality urban placemaking'. Clients are responding to ideas about habitation, according to Cook, where before the visual image was king. But Cook was unsure of the project's impact on office



design. 'You can't save the world by making one office building greener... you have to fundamentally change the whole idea of thousands of people working together in a building.' Allford Hall Monaghan Morris director Simon Allford suggested a loose-fit approach to office design. 'Create big, raw spaces and put in the M&E and other services only when the building is let. We need to design buildings we can add to.'

Backing Allford, developer Roger Zogolovitch called for architects to lead a new approach to development. 'Most people feel most comfortable in their own neighbourhood. We need a mechanism to allow a community to invest in their own place - to create genuinely mixed-use environments.'

Architect Jourmana Arida called on architects to eschew technology-based solutions in the drive for low-energy design, while RIBA president Sunand Prasad urged the profession to calibrate existing stock ahead of energy-conscious new-build ideas. Then Alex Tosetti of engineer URS issued a warning: 'There is now only one concern for architects, low-carbon design. If that is not your starting point, we're all doomed.'

AWARDS

Copper in Architecture Awards

CATHERINE SKERSON

www.copperinfo.co.uk/arch

The 2009 European Copper in Architecture Awards have just been launched. These biannual awards recognise architectural excellence and celebrate the use of copper and its alloys, such as bronze and brass.

The last two decades have

seen the transformation of the awards from a UK-based programme into a multi-design-led award for projects across Europe (AR November 2007).

This evolution reflects the increasing popularity of copper

from an aesthetic, technical and environmental standpoint. Winning and short-listed projects will be featured in a special issue of the AR, which will be available at the World Architecture Festival (WAF), due to be held in Barcelona

during November. Entries will be judged by a panel of architects chaired by Paul Finch, editor emeritus of the *Architectural Review* and programme director of WAF. The closing date for entries is 1 May.