

Editorial

David Theodore

But the flowers that bloom in the spring, tra laa.



Ah, architecture. What's a student to do? The profession is thoroughly *québécoise* and the academy is, well, academic. Academic study of architecture has reverted to a seesaw between embryotomy and anastomosis. At least my recent foray into ivy covered ivory towers had all the markings of a David Lodge novel and none of the profits. Is architecture ailing? It's difficult to know. When I try to put my finger on the pulse of architecture I come to the same conclusion about my patient as Hackenbush in *A Day at the Races*: "Either he's dead or my watch has stopped" (go figure).

Anyway, I wanted to report to you a conversation I overheard in the Arms and Armor rooms of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. I was pondering the efficacy of Carolingian armour after a weekend architecture conference/tournament at the Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania (motto: "Laws without morals are useless") where it seemed all my steel-tipped lances were dulled, all my lambent jousts repelled, all my champions unseated by Unconquerable Indifference—or was it merely a "disinterested professorate?" Anyway, I was wandering around imagining Jennifer Bloomer and Christine Boyer encased from sollerets to gorgets about to be hoisted onto surly mounts when suddenly I heard the sound of one hand clapping. A young man was talking and laughing with two young ladies. I remarked their Southern accents and listened vaguely to their conversation:

"Hey!"

"Hey what?"

"No, just hey!"

"No just hey what?"

"Be nice!"

"Be nice what?"

Looking out over the Schuylkill I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned etc. Man, I hate it when that happens.

Ah, well, if you've read this far you're probably thinking I'm cynical, and you'd be correcto mundo. But it's justified, all right, well-founded and justified. Next issue we plan to feature the work of recent Québec design school graduates [subscribe now! ed.]. What are their prospects in a town chockful of good, imaginative, engaged (in the Sartrian sense) architects who have absolutely no work (disengaged in the Captain Picardian sense)? Well, they can teach! These young latterday Polyphilios (and fifty per cent Polyophilias) are finalists on *The Price is Right*—let's see what you could have won behind door number one—Beauty; door number three—Truth (ooh, aah); and what did you win behind the middle door number two? Congratulations! A tenure track position at an ivy league school! As quipster Jamie Smiley used to say: "Ha ha. Very funny."

As Freud used to say, dream on.

But I trust you won't find this cynicism distressing. I don't. I've merely adopted a new motto: whatever's worth doing is worth doing, period. And this issue, she's a-done. Cynics have the last laugh, the last word, and, at least in this case, they get to sing the finale.

*You've had your share of tears and trouble
But every care will be a bubble
If you can face the setting sun and say
Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow is another day.*

Yo! Word up. Check this out.

You're hooked to the same crew that brought you Vol. 9.2. We would like to send a big shout out to Erica Goldstein, J. Kent Fitzsimons and Eric Majer, whose superhuman efforts smoothed out the administration and production of Vol. 9.2 allowing us to bring down the issue you have in your hands.

Even if we're always bigging up the idea of continuity, at the same time we've been kicking to new flavours, and new flavours make change. Make sure to let us know what you think. (Donations and comments are always welcome.) You keep it locked; we'll keep it flowing. It's all real.