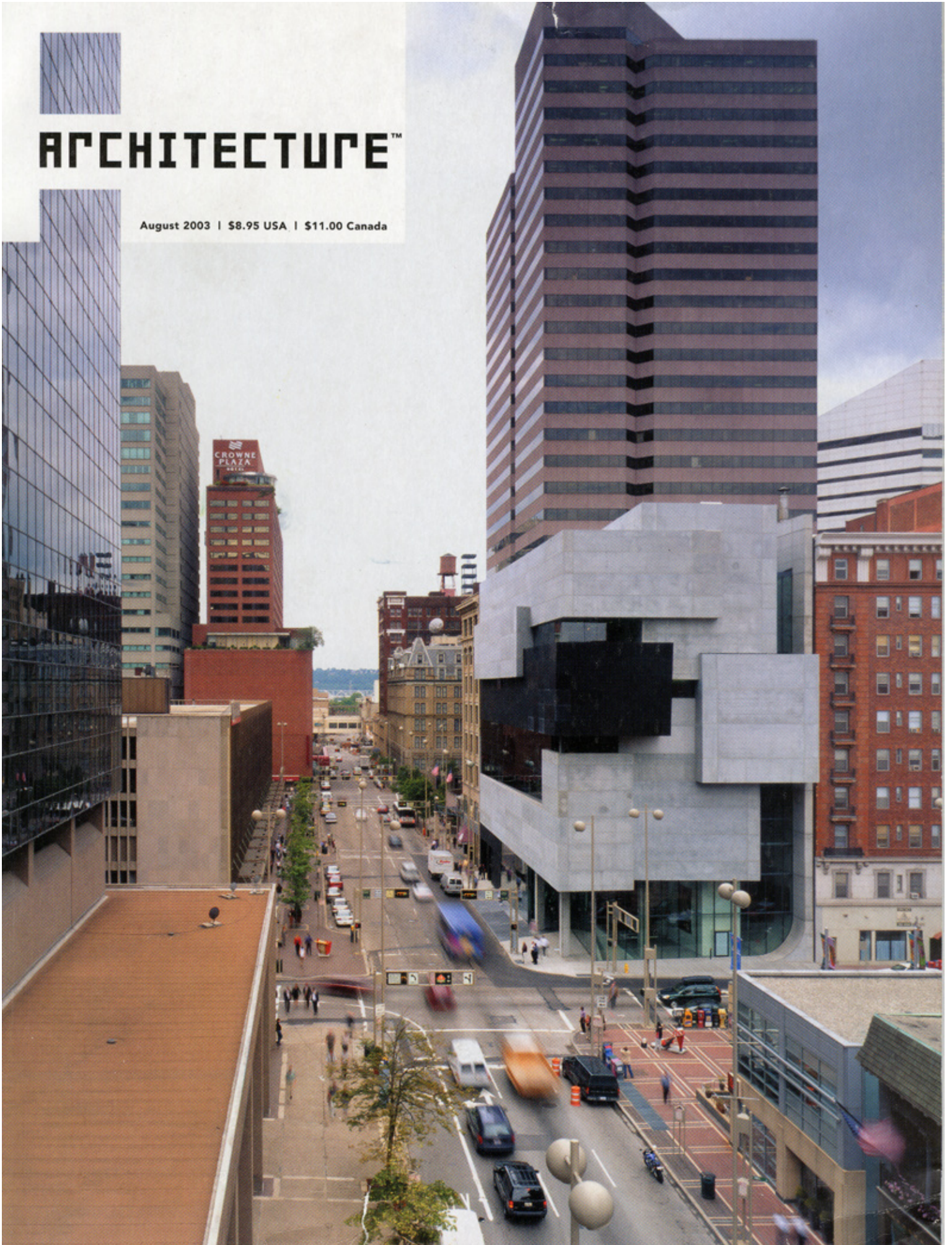


# ARCHITECTURE™

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exhibition spaces. "The project could be very relevant [elsewhere]," believes architect James Slade, adding "there are spaces similar to this in other cities that have a lot of unused space."

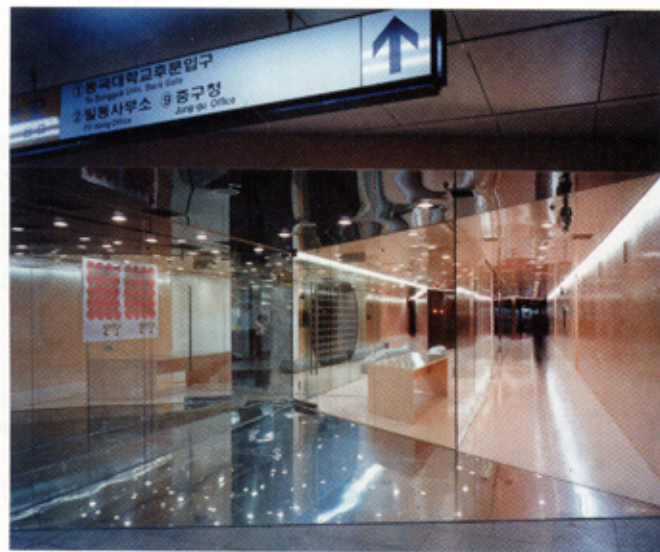
Another transportation-centered project incorporates Ponte Parodi, an 1886 pier in the harbor of Genoa, Italy, designed by engineer Adolfo Parodi. In 2001, Amsterdam's UN Studio won an international competition to transform it into a social and cultural hub and link it to the rest of the city. Architect Ben van Berkel and his partner Caroline Bos envisioned a "three-dimensional" piazza, in which the ground plane is landscaped into various levels, inhabited by a range of uses. Employing their method of "deep planning," the pair first analyzed existing circulation patterns emanating from neighboring sites—the harbor is the city's entry point for cruise ships and ferries, and a university lies nearby—and strategically located new points of access to channel the traffic flow. The project will include sporting facilities, exhibition areas, movie theaters, nightclubs, shops, restaurants, an auditorium, and offices. "There is a direct connection between projects like the World Trade Center and the Ponte Parodi project," says van Berkel. "I'm interested in the industrial model of Manhattan's harbor areas, which is also to be found in the way harbors are organized throughout the edges of rivers in Europe. Today, you have to work in a new way to connect these areas to the rest of the city."

On a very different scale, architect Jorge Jáuregui has introduced the beginnings of urban planning into over 20 favelas, or shantytowns, in his native Rio de Janeiro, through a series of subtle interventions. The undertaking, called the Favela-Bairro Project, is a city-run nine-year project, for which Jáuregui won a competition

in 1995. The program's goal is to integrate the favelas with the rest of the city by introducing infrastructure—roads and footpaths—and facilitating services, such as water, power, and communications. The architect's approach focuses on the favelas' existing potential, rather than starting a new layout from scratch, by introducing elements such as plazas for public gathering, community centers, a samba school, a healthcare center, and a skateboarding park. Jáuregui believes that his design process—which includes extensive meetings with residents and consultations with experts from various fields—could be translated to projects such as the World Trade Center. "Public space today is the number-one factor of urban regeneration," he states. "There are public spaces that have a 'symbolic extension.' This is the case with Manhattan as a whole, and in particular with the vacuum left by the twin towers. New York is a 'world place,' and in this sense it belongs to humanity and not only to New Yorkers."

**PUTTING IDEAS TO WORK**

"The important role for an exhibition like this, which is showing mostly high-end public space, is to raise people's expectations for what is possible in the public realm," says Sorkin, who participated in a series of roundtable discussions in connection with the exhibition. While the show has been generating conversation among a steady stream of visitors from various sectors, one hopes that the dialogue will not be limited to high-profile developments like the World Trade Center site, but that the smattering of smaller-scale, socially conscious projects like Favela-Bairro and the Bogotá cycling path will also inspire consideration of needy areas worldwide. ■



A diagrammatic plan maps circulation in the long, narrow space of Chungmuro Intermedia Playground, a nonprofit, digital-media learning center in a Seoul, Korea, subway station designed by Cho Slade Architecture and architect Kwang-Soo Kim (top). Glass and mirrored walls create the illusion of spaciousness in the center's entrance (above left) and lounge area (above right).

The World Trade Center reconstruction has given architects an opportunity to rethink the value and challenges of public space in New York City's financial district, but many of these issues have worldwide relevance as well. Michael Sorkin—architect, critic, and director of graduate studies in urban design at the City College of New York, in Manhattan—defines the three most pressing issues for public space today as security, globalization, and privatization. "The introduction of ever-greater possibilities for surveillance robs public space of one of its principal components, free gathering; the production of a global public, which can be approached in the same way all over the planet, has led to a whole series of surrogate public spaces like airports and shopping malls," he contends. "And privatization of places that used to be called public has implications for the control of public space: who can use it, and what you can do there."

In an increasingly urban world, public space is vital not only to political well-being, but to the infrastructural, social, and spiritual health of our multiplying cities. In 2000, according to a study by the Population Reference Bureau (an independent, nonprofit organization), 47 percent of the world's population was living in urban areas. By 2030, this figure is projected to reach 60 percent, with no sign of slowing down.

This summer, Van Alen Institute in Manhattan—a think-tank devoted to the exchange of ideas on public architecture—unveiled *Open: New Designs for Public Space*. The exhibition profiles 20 international case studies, most of which have yet to be completed. The show grew out of the World Trade Center discussion, says Van Alen director Raymond Gastil, and was conceived as a second chapter to the institute's 2002 exhibition *Renewing, Rebuilding, Remembering*, which looked at how different cities

have dealt with catastrophe. With *Open*, Gastil and curator Zoë Ryan, a program associate at the institute, take a broader look at public space—from an 11-mile network of pedestrian and bicycle paths carved into the informal shanty towns of Bogotá by local firm MGP Arquitectura y Urbanismo, to a massive, wacky-looking, ultra-modern culture hub on the historic harbor of Liverpool by London-based Alsop Architects. The show pursues the idea that common threads can be found in a diverse array of projects, and that these threads can be applied to discussions about the World Trade Center site, as well as public places throughout the United States. During its opening, large crowds of people swarmed the exhibition, giving the gallery itself the feeling of a public space—an effect that was enhanced by a local hot-dog vendor hired to hand out street food at the building's entrance. The show is on view through October in the Van Alen gallery, and will then travel to cities both in the United States and abroad.

**TRANSIT AND SPACE**

A number of projects in the show involve transportation, including the Chungmuro Intermedia Playground, a nonprofit, digital-media learning center located in a subway station in the film-industry district of Seoul, Korea. Initiated as part of a city-run program for the development of underused public spaces, the center was designed by New York City- and Seoul-based Cho Slade Architecture, with local architect Kwang-Soo Kim, and opened in 2002. It inhabits a 210-foot-long space in the station's circulation area, leaving a still-ample commuter corridor adjacent to it. Surfaced in mirror and glass that produce a kaleidoscopic effect, the center's walls enclose a lounge, video viewing area, study rooms, an editing suite, and



UN Studio's Ponte Parodi turns a pier in the harbor of Genoa, Italy, into a cultural hub. A section (top), bird's-eye view (above left), and a cutaway (above right) illustrate what the firm's principal Ben van Berkel describes as a "three-dimensional" piazza, with various levels and ground planes animated by interior and exterior programs.

## EVERYMAN'S LAND

A new exhibition challenges our notions about what public space can be. by Anna Holtzman



Brazilian architect Jorge Jáuregui's Favela-Bairro introduces the barest elements of an urban plan into shanty towns in Rio de Janeiro, including new service buildings (top left and right), a skateboarding park (above left), and a soccer field (above right). Other programs include a samba school, a healthcare facility, a laundry, and community centers.