

# BUILDING EXPECTATION

PAST AND PRESENT VISIONS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL FUTURE







# BUILDING EXPECTATION

PAST AND PRESENT VISIONS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL FUTURE

## COVER

**Katherine Roy, *View of Industria*, 2011**

This illustration, commissioned for the exhibition, depicts the great city of "Industria" as described by Comte Didier de Chousy in his 1883 novel *Ignis*. *David Winton Bell Gallery.*

## LEFT

**Margaret Bourke-White, *Futurama Spectators*, ca. 1939**

Visitors to the General Motors pavilion in the 1939 New York World's Fair are gently whisked past the *Futurama* in a track-based chair ride designed especially for couples. *Courtesy of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.*

**Nathaniel Robert Walker**  
**Curator and Author**

**David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University**

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THE CATALOG

Brian Horrigan

Dietrich Neumann

Kenneth M. Roemer

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THE EXHIBITION

Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College

Australian National Film and Sound Archive

Avery Architectural and Fine Art Library,  
Columbia University Libraries

Dennis Bille

Brandeis University Library

Brown University Libraries

Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society

Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

General Motors LLC, GM Media Archive

Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin

Historic New Harmony, University of Southern Indiana

Brian Knep

Maison d'Allieurs (Musée de la science-fiction,  
de l'utopie et des voyages extraordinaires)

Mary Evans Picture Library

Jane Masters

Katherine Roy

François Schuiten

Cameron Shaw

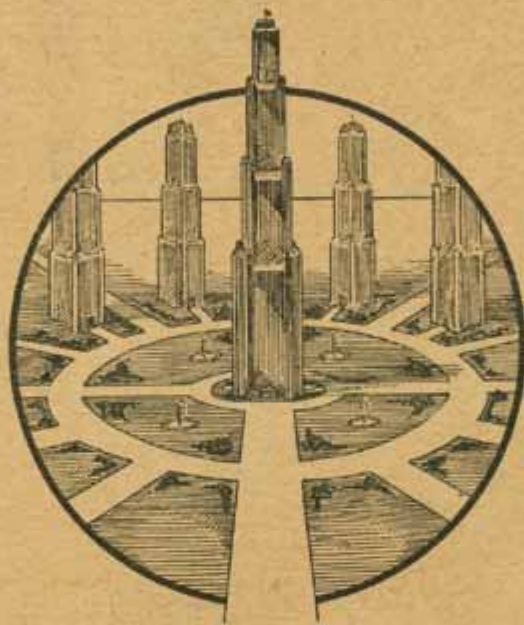
Christian Waldvogel

Pippi Zornoza



# THE NEW CITY

An American Plan  
of Social and Economic Reorganization



NEOPOLIS, a scientific, planned city to be built on the Pacific Coast, as the first of a constellation of such cities, offers to the people of America a way out of the present troubles which threaten the existence of orderly forms of government and of civilization itself.

It offers an American plan of social-economic regeneration—a method which may be put into operation within the framework of the present system, peacefully and quickly, without revolution or disorder.

It affords a means of setting the Machine to work in the interest of every member of society, and points the way to a richer, fuller form of human existence.

PRICE 25c

## INTRODUCTION

It is now plain and clear that neither past nor future are existent, and that it is not properly stated that there are three times, past, present, and future. But it might properly be said that there are three times, the present of things past, the present of things present, and the present of things future. These three are in the soul, but elsewhere I do not see them: the present of things past is in memory; the present of things present is in intuition; the present of things future is in expectation.

*The Confessions of St. Augustine Book 11: Time And Eternity, 398 AD*

LEFT

*The Neopolitans, The New City*..., 1938

This pamphlet, published in Seattle by a group called "The Neopolitans," advocated an "American alternative" to the fascist and communist recipes for social evolution: leveraging the power of corporate industry to remake society into one single political and economic organization, thereby eliminating wasteful competition and the vice and poverty it breeds. New planned cities such as "Neopolis" would be central to the scheme, and these would adopt a radial Garden City-like layout "Americanized" by stand-alone, step-back skyscrapers. On loan from the John Hay Library, Brown University.

It has been said that the past is a foreign country—but it is the future that remains undiscovered. Despite the obvious truth that no one has been to the future, that no one has even seen a photograph of it or heard a credible eyewitness account of it, the last three centuries have witnessed the rise and dissemination of a body of visual codes and tropes that are commonly seen and understood as "futuristic." These "progressive" or "forward-looking" attributes are derived from an entirely imaginary landscape, indicative of a destination that is impossible to visit. Yet nearly everyone can recognize the place where no one has been.

*Building Expectation: Past and Present Visions of the Architectural Future* offers a glimpse into this undiscovered country, presenting a collection of historic and ongoing visions of the future, expressed in architectural and urban terms, from the nineteenth century until the present day. The focus of the show is less on canonical designers or art-historical movements and more on broadly based, popular speculation in the public sphere. It aims to ask a number of basic but important questions: what do people stand to gain from designing "futures"? How do people, individually and collectively, decide what does and does not look futuristic, what is and is not permitted to inhabit

"the future"? Is it merely a process of *extrapolation*, in which we attempt to imagine the fulfillment of trends and patterns that are gaining power in the present—or is something more subjective, more arbitrary, more rhetorical, and/or more creative taking place?

*Building Expectation* also hopes to suggest ways of thinking about how popular expectation shapes what human societies understand as desirable, even as possible, in the real world of the here-and-now. Can speculative design liberate? Can an agreed-upon "futuristic" aesthetic also restrict and confine? These questions may seem particularly pressing in the portion of the exhibition which is dedicated to contemporary visions of the future, as many of these installations may not qualify as "futuristic" by the standards which emerge as dominant, even as a sort of orthodoxy, in our retrospective consideration of past futures.



THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

The “World of Tomorrow” has usually been imagined first and foremost as a *place*, in one sense or another—as the new Promised Land, the Millennial Landscape, as Utopia. And architecture, cast since the Enlightenment as the calling card for cultural and technological periods in the “grand narrative” of human development and progress, has always been one of the future’s most revealing and recognizable features.

It would probably be impossible to locate a single moment as the birth of “progressive,” future-oriented architecture, but one would perhaps not go too wrong starting such a search in the eighteenth century. During this time in France, for example, the influential architect, writer, and educator Julien-David Leroy (1724–1803) formulated a vision of history that used architecture to trace what he believed to be the rising trajectory of human progress. As Barry Bergdoll recounts in his book *Leon Vaudoyer: Historicism in the Age of Industry* (1994), Leroy separated architecture into two distinct components: the science of structural technology and the art of articulation and ornament. The quality of art might go up and down according to the health of any given society, argued Leroy, but science only accumulates and improves over time. Eventually, at least in the view of many of Leroy’s revolutionary compatriots, science would lead to a human triumph over nature, even over *human* nature—its story was a story with a destiny, with an ending.

Architecture, as a combination of both art and science, was from Leroy’s time increasingly seen by many as the best indicator of historical period, of evolutionary spirit, and of ultimate destiny. Such thinking begs the architect to understand his or her work not as merely art or as science, but rather as an indicator and /or harbinger of its “time,” or its slot on the ladder of human evolution. This framework for understanding cultural development as a series of movements, each unique but connected in a grand narrative, is called *historicism*, and a quest for the future grows naturally from it.

REFORMING THE FUTURE

A number of future-makers who understood architecture in this way—who saw it as a tool to articulate, frame, and advocate cultural and political development along scientific and technological lines—are presented in the first section of *Building Expectation*. Their futures were constructed for political goals, designed to literally remake the world in the scientific image of industry.

The British industrialist Robert Owen (1771–1858) is a very early example of a techno-utopian reformer, and the designs he created and commissioned speak volumes about the ways in which the early-nineteenth century imagination thought a progressive and futuristic world might take form. Owen was a highly successful factory manager who despised the effects that industrialism was having on traditional British society. He believed that “the character of man is formed *for* him, and not *by* him,” and that Britain’s typical polluted factory town was exactly the kind of place that formed bad character.

For these reasons Owen began to fashion an alternative paradigm for living in what he saw as the inevitable and desirable rise of the industrial age. Rather than reform industry, he sought to reform society: the factory town was transformed into a new sort of village estate, with the kind of architecture that would facilitate a totally new social fabric emphasizing equality, fraternity, healthiness, and a new set of scientific values to replace “backward-looking” institutions such as the family and the church. He designed a number of different versions of these factories-for-living in Britain, but his ultimate ambition was to start afresh somewhere completely new: the United States. Owen hired architect Stedman Whitwell to delineate for him a visionary town named “New Harmony.” A model was constructed and exhibited in the White House. After Owen outlined his plans to a joint session of Congress in 1825, he took scores of settlers to begin building New Harmony in southern Indiana.

The community failed and his scheme was never realized on the American frontier, but Owen continued to refine his vision and advocate its implementation

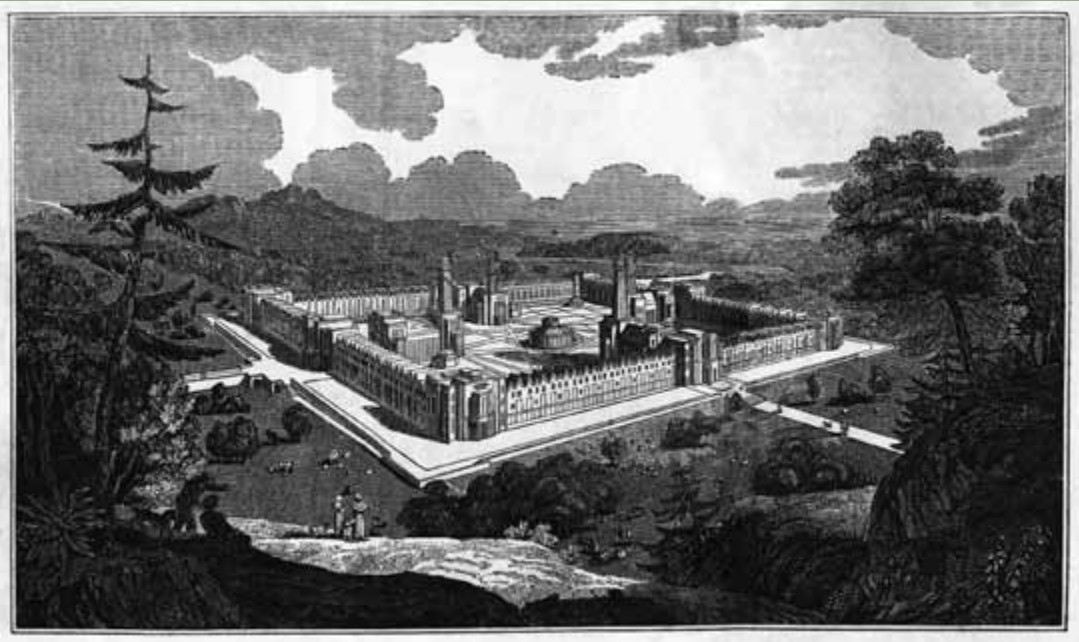


FIG 1  
Robert Owen (author), Stedman Whitwell (architect),  
*Engraving of [new buildings for the site of New Harmony] from  
The Co-operative Magazine and Monthly Herald*, January 1826  
A walled garden makes up this factory-for-living, with a central  
glass conservatory surrounded by four industrially-tuned  
communal buildings and Gothicized “cloister” walls of residences.  
On loan from the Archives and Special Collections Library,  
Vassar College.

FIG 2  
F. Bate (artist and engraver), Stedman Whitwell (architect),  
*A Bird's Eye View of a Community as Proposed by Robert Owen*, 1838  
The later scheme for Owen's ideal future town has kept the  
original conservatory and smokestack-sporting communal buildings,  
but the details and ornaments have been strangely transformed  
from a Gothic cloister garden into a Mughal paradise garden,  
including great domes, Persian or Indian arches, and roof terraces.  
The future, for Owen, may have been a place of cultural hybridity  
and eclecticism. Courtesy of Mary Evans Picture Library.



throughout the world. Many of the key architectural features of New Harmony persisted: an enclosed garden quadrangle emphasizing autonomy and community, glass conservatories as central meeting spaces, and enormous communal buildings shaped like industrial engines with smokestacks that served as observatories and doubled as light-beacons. But the details changed in important ways. In the beginning, Witwell's design referenced the Gothic cloisters of monasteries or medieval hospitals, evoking the *hortus conclusus* of Eden and the transcendent lives of devout ascetics [FIG 1]. But later, after the failure of New Harmony, the design was revised to take on a distinctly "Oriental" flavor, with broad, flat-roofed terraces and Mughal arches and domes of the sort one might expect to find in India or Persia [FIG 2]. It seems that the free use, and perhaps even the deliberate conflation, of global architecture styles appeared "forward-looking" to Owen.

But by the time the nineteenth century drew to a close, such hybridity of expression and ornament seems to have lost its ability to connote “the future.” Owen’s fixation upon science and industry, however—shared with Leroy and countless others—would prove more durable, and indeed took on explosive power in the visions of key figures such as King Camp Gillette (1855–1932) [see essay by Kenneth Roemer, *FIGS* 4–5], Edward Bellamy (1850–1898), and the Italian Futurists. The view that industrial, and indeed corporate, technological production should be embraced as the dominant power in the present and advocated as the only power in the future was held by many.

Of course, *many* is not *all*—techno-corporate “modernity” was also ridiculed mercilessly by skeptics, as revealed in satirical future visions published by newspapers and magazines such as *Punch* and *Judge* [FIG 3]. These critical exaggerations of high-tech, high-volume industrial trends were seen and understood by hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people all over the world, even if today their ephemeral nature has left them largely forgotten.

The tension between the popular power of industrial visions of the future and the apprehension some people held for these visions is perhaps most eloquently expressed in the 1883 novel *Ignis* by Comte Didier de Chousy.

Chousy, whose real identity remains unknown to this day, told the story of a group of European industrial magnates who joined together to drill a hole to the earth's core, where they could both tap the planet's limitless heat to power their industrial complexes and achieve the political autonomy needed to reinstitute slavery. Their economic might allowed them to build a swirling, luminous city of glass and steel called *Industria*. In this new metropolis, flowers glowed with ethereal light, streets coursed on conveyor belts, and Oriental palaces sprawled alongside glass villas. In the center of the city, floating over the chasm that led to the core of the earth, was a great temple—half-Parthenon and half-steam engine—where the city's elite converged to worship their own power and technology: *Coal*, *Electricity*, and above all *Fire*.

When slaves proved too good at sabotage, however, the city's leaders replaced them with steam-powered robots, and in doing so they sealed their fate. In time the robots—or *atmophytes* as Chousy called them—grew aware of their plight and rose up to annihilate the city, spitting electricity at their oppressors and broadcasting curses down every telegraph line.

The book *Ignis* was not illustrated, although some drawings were produced for the story several years later when it was serialized in the French journal *La Science Illustrée* [Science Illustrated]. For *Building Expectation*, American illustrator Katherine Roy has brought the city of *Industria* to life on a scale befitting the monumental comic tragedy of its fate [COVER]. It is, in one movement, both an ode to the bounty of industrial power and a dirge for its inescapable corruption—a paradise and a paradise lost.

**FIG 3**

**Grant E. Hamilton, *What We Are Coming To: Judge's Combination Apartment-House of the Future*, from *Judge*, February 16, 1895**

In this satirical take on the trajectory of urban evolution, Hamilton pokes some rather pointed fun at the tendency of capitalist industry to relentlessly intensify the scale of real-estate development. In this nominally residential building are found not only shops, living spaces, and a steam-powered mass transport system, but also religious institutions and the houses of government — the public realm has been totally absorbed by the monolithic power of the private. *On loan from the Maison d'Ailleurs.*





# BUILDING THE UTOPIAN FACE OF KING CAMP GILLETTE

Kenneth M. Roemer University of Texas at Arlington

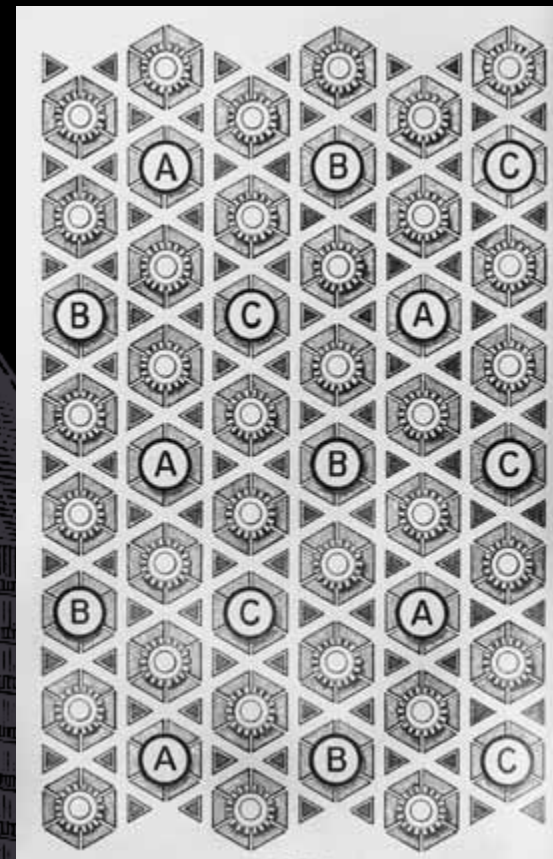
It is entirely possible that the face of America at the beginning of the twentieth century was not George Washington or Abraham Lincoln, but rather King Camp Gillette (1855–1932), whose visage was printed on millions of safety razor wrappers distributed around the world. To encourage the use of their relatively new invention, the Gillette Company distributed free razors in boxes of toilet articles and in the pockets of overalls, boxes of marshmallows, and packs of Wrigley's gum. Wrapped blades were sold to the US government for distribution to WWI doughboys, who displayed their Gillette-clean faces in Europe. In Czechoslovakia and Italy the blades were even used as currency—their green package illustrations resembled dollar bills, after all, with Gillette's portrait standing in for Washington.

Gillette had another profile, quite different from his image as a champion of American inventiveness and entrepreneurship. In the 1890s, around the same time he dreamed up his safety razor, he was inventing a model for a new world order. Like many other turn-of-the-century reformers, Gillette was disturbed by the inefficiencies, waste, corruption, chaos, and injustices of the current social and economic systems.

Again like many of his contemporaries, he had great faith that the corporate model of large-scale organization could make sense out of America's abundant energies and resources, curing both economic and social illnesses. Of course, this corporate engine for progress should be beholden to The People, not just to a few investors or magnates. Gillette believed the best model would be a global joint-stock company, which he variously labeled the United Company, the People's Corporation, or the World Corporation, and outlined in an article, "World Corporation (Unlimited)," *National Magazine* 24 (July 1906) and in a series of books: *The Human Drift* (1894), *World Corporation* (edited by the reformer and novelist Upton Sinclair, 1910), and *The People's Corporation* (1924).

The most interesting of these three is *The Human Drift*, which combines lengthy justifications for and descriptions of Gillette's People's Corporation, a fictional interview with a Mr. X (an avid supporter of Gillette's visions), and—of most relevance for this catalogue—a series of seven fully-annotated illustrations of the residential area of the utopian city, Metropolis, that would be the center of Gillette's re-invented America and a model for centralized

cities around the world. Actually, "centralized" is an understatement: most of the population of the United States would move to Metropolis, which would be located near Niagara Falls, the major source of its energy. Gillette grounded the design of the city in utopian shapes that hark back at least to Plato and certainly evoke the eighteenth-century egalitarian spirit surrounding the birth of American democracy: the beehive and the circle. Arranged on an uninterrupted grid and featuring underground pedestrian walkways and delivery systems, the urban layout insured access to education (see FIG 5, buildings marked A), entertainment (B), and public services (C) for all citizens. Structurally the buildings were quite modern, drawing inspiration from the "Chicago School" and recently constructed high-rise buildings in New York City. From the air the multi-story apartment buildings dominating Metropolis would look like huge gears: glass-domed atriums made up their centers; tiers of steel-framed apartments radiated all around. Gillette described these buildings as being "... six hundred feet in diameter, twenty-five stories in height, and consist[ing] of eighteen tiers of apartments, so arranged and connected at the back



that it makes a single building in a circular form, with an interior court four hundred and fifty feet in diameter, the central portion of which is occupied by a dining room that is two-hundred and fifty feet in diameter."

There would be 36,000 of these buildings in Metropolis, identical in shape and size with varying patterns of hygienic ceramic tiles on the exterior and interior walls. All these apartment complexes and the similarly designed and uniformly distributed educational, amusement, and public service buildings would rest atop three layers that accommodated sewage, water, electricity, hot and cold air distribution (lowest); transportation (middle); as well as storage and footpaths for walking, especially during the bad weather the Niagara area was sure to provide (highest).

Gillette's urban design celebrates his

faith, common in the late-nineteenth century, in large-scale organization, centralization, modern technology, and efficiency, as well as democracy and egalitarianism (each stock holder had one vote; each citizen, though not economic equals, was equidistant from the educational, amusement, and public service centers). The architectural landscape also celebrates a degree of uniformity and control that is bound to displease twenty-first century Americans, calling up memories of failed high-rise housing projects and numerous utopian cityscapes that look impressive from airplane views but are nightmares to inhabit. The modern viewer of these illustrations should, nevertheless, remember that Gillette and members of his generation were reacting, not only to the injustices of their era, but also to what they perceived to

be the frightening chaos of their times: the "future shock" of radical population shifts, challenges to religious beliefs and social hierarchies, violent swings in the economy, and the chaotic sights, sounds, and smells of burgeoning cities. As naïve and stultifying as Gillette's grand Metropolis might seem to us today, it is not difficult to imagine why this turn-of-the-century inventor would imagine a city that could bury all the chaos and confusion beneath three layers of control topped by thousands of gigantic domed gears filling an enormous beehive grid.

## BACKGROUND

King Camp Gillette, "a sectional interior view" from *The Human Drift*, 1894  
On loan from the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.



SELLING THE FUTURE

Visions such as *Ignis* are not merely political statements, designed to make a point about the non-negotiable failures of human nature and the dangers of industrial hubris. Stories about dramatic futures can also be entertaining and empowering, in the same sense that any tale of faraway places is exciting to hear, and that any scoop of “news” assembled by “experts” can help its readers feel informed and in tune with the world. Indeed, futures are not only designed and constructed to advocate ideals, they are also created as commodities to buy and sell. *Building Expectation* has framed a collection of such money-making visions — and while many of them do bear multiple meanings on multiple levels, there is no denying the fact that they were for sale.

It is an interesting fact that many people so enjoy reading about and seeing visions of the “World of Tomorrow” that they will purchase products offering little more than delightfully wild but totally implausible speculation. Typical of such products are the pulps and magazines, such as *Everyday Science and Mechanics* [FIG 6], that filled convenience store shelves in the 1920s and 1930s. These often purported to consult “specialists” in order to report on the future. As every story needs a stage, fantastic urban landscapes were among the most prominent features of these colorful and sugary visions — and as certain themes appear over and over again, they often seem less about creating new futures and more about signifying or reinforcing an existing “future” that has been pre-established in the popular imagination.

One of the tropes that repeats with almost infinite persistence is the violent collision of machines and cities, in which the latter are totally transformed, while the former, as the sacrosanct embodiments of high modernity, remain unmitigated and unapologetic. Cities are redeveloped along the factory model into great civic assembly lines [FIG 7], pushed underground or sealed under glass where technologies are used to create the very apotheosis of climate-control, and stacked in layers to created soaring platform-districts and bottomless

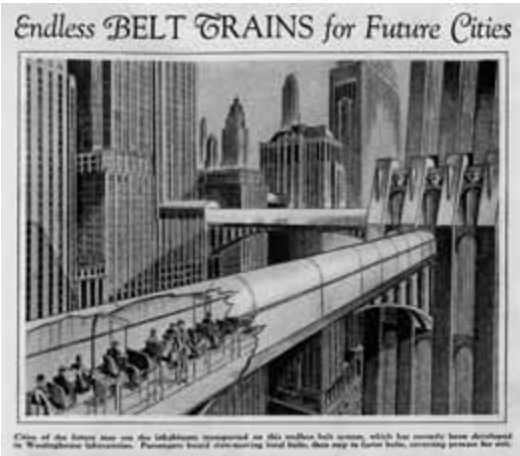


FIG 6  
Hugo Gernsback (editor), Frank R. Paul (artist), *Everyday Science and Mechanics*, December 1931

In one article glass bricks are heralded as the future cladding of translucent, radiant skyscrapers, and in another, urban conglomerations of the 1980s are imagined as efficient “super-cities” where machine and pedestrian traffic are totally segregated. On loan from the Maison d’Ailleurs.

FIG 7  
Jack Smalley (editor), “Endless Belt Trains for Future Cities” from *Modern Mechanix and Inventions*, November 1932

On loan from a private collection.

chasms. Among the favorite themes of pulp magazine publisher Hugo Gernsback (1884–1967) was the vexing question of how aircraft could successfully infiltrate urban fabric. This was also explored with equal rigor by leaders in the formal architecture profession such as Le Corbusier (1887–1965). Indeed, the latter’s vision of a “contemporary” urbanity equipped to accommodate gyrocopters had enough in common with pulp speculation that it was featured on the cover of Gernsback’s *Science and Invention* in January of 1930 [FIG 8].

The pleasure of speculation could be bought in many places. Postcard companies mass-produced photographs of real towns comically adjusted to connote their destiny “in the Future” [see essay by Brian Horrigan, FIGS 11–12]. Department stores gave away beautifully designed depictions of future landscapes to glamorize their brand, and consumer-goods companies included collectible “World of Tomorrow” cards with products such as margarine (itself a fruit of science), chocolate, and wine tonic [FIGS 9–10]. And of course Hollywood sold many tickets to tomorrow, often pandering to and occasionally challenging existing expectation. It seems that cities of the future could do a brisk business, managing to sustain something akin to a virtual tourism and hospitality industry.



FIG 9  
Echte Wagner Margarine, “Zukunftsfantasien: Eine neue Antriebskraft” [Future Fantasies: A New Driving Power], ca. 1932

In the future revealed by this trading card, nuclear-powered automobiles hurtle through modern cities on divided roadways at two hundred kilometers per hour — and on country highways, five times as fast. On loan from a private collection.



FIG 8  
Hugo Gernsback (editor), Frank R. Paul (artist), *Science and Invention*, January 1930

As the cover illustration suggests, the urban plan elucidated in H. Windfield Secor’s article “The City of Tomorrow” is that of Le Corbusier, “France’s Great Architectural Prophet.” On loan from the Maison d’Ailleurs.



FIG 10  
Kunstdruck-Freiberg for Hildebrands Deutsche Schokolade [Hildebrand’s German Chocolate], “Bewegliche Häuser im Jahr 2000” [Moving Houses in the Year 2000], ca. 1895

This humorous card suggests that by the year 2000, city dwellers who want to live on a more beautiful street or who grow tired of urban life can simply hitch a locomotive to their building and haul it to a more ideal locale. On loan from a private collection.





# POSTCARDS FROM THE FUTURE

Beginning in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, and continuing forcefully throughout the twentieth, the American definition of “the Future” was virtually synonymous with “the City.” The City—especially that archetypal metropolis, New York—was the future: dense with towering buildings and scurrying humans, criss-crossed and honeycombed with fast-moving conveyances, all of the world’s goods condensed into a few square (but always exciting) miles. If the principal model for popular-culture prognosticators was extrapolatory—taking current conditions and projecting and magnifying them into the future—then, indeed, what else could anyone at the turn of the twentieth century have foreseen but more densely packed, more frenetic, and even more dizzyingly vast urban agglomerations? Millions were moving out of rural areas and small towns; the world’s nations were being bound closer together by new, faster transportation and communication technologies; social and commercial networks were becoming vastly more complex but also more intensely concentrated—and the City was at once the inevitable and the intentional arena where all of this would happen.

Take one of the nineteenth century’s best-selling novels, for example: *Looking Backward: 2000–1887*, written by Edward Bellamy and first published in 1888. The Victorian protagonist of the story wakes up to discover he has slept more than a century, and that

Boston looks and feels rather different in the year 2000: “At my feet lay a great city....Public buildings of a colossal size and an architectural grandeur unparalleled in my day raised their stately piles on every side.” Or consider the case of the great 1936 movie adaptation of H.G. Wells’ (1866–1946) *Things to Come*, in which a machine-age, hermetically sealed metropolis tellingly named “Everytown” is cast not only as the embodiment of the future but also as its fountainhead, as the literal launching pad of our imperial cosmic destiny.

In the fifty-odd years spanning these two similarly scaled and detailed visions, the theme of the “City of the Future” had become a standard trope not only of melodramatic novels and hyperventilating cinema, but also of modern commercial culture, as amply evidenced in *Building Expectation’s* collection of “in the Future” postcards.

These cards were designed and produced from the 1900s to the 1920s—mostly in Germany or Austria (like many American postcards), but a fair number were detailed and manufactured domestically by the Frank W. Swallow Publishing Company. A New Hampshire businessman of sundry talents, Swallow (1864–1927) was also a photographer and sometime automobile salesman who drove around New England capturing townscapes and publishing the pictures as postcards, sometimes tinted by hand. Some of these urban portraits were altered by way of “futuristic” additions. Transforming a sleepy New

England mill town such as Northampton, Massachusetts, into a bustling futuristic metropolis had obvious comic effects—and seems to have resonated with pre-existing popular expectations enough to be both intelligible *and* funny.

The blatant and almost reflexive commercialism of these postcard images also points to another axiom of American culture—the swift appropriation of “high-art” (or high-minded) imagery by the engines of popular commerce. Seemingly within moments of the publication of, for example, such serious tomes as *Looking Backward* or H.G. Wells’ dystopian *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1899), these volumes’ sensational descriptions of the “World of Tomorrow” were translated into popular images (usually while ignoring their polemical or political meanings) in postcards such as these, in magazine illustrations and cartoons, burlesque shows, and even amusement park attractions.

The additions that the publishers chose to make to these picture postcards are instructive. Architectural backgrounds are left unaltered—in one “Boston in the Future” card, there’s a recognizable Copley Square; in another, there’s South Street Station. In “Northampton Mass. in the Future,” there are the landmark First Church and county courthouse. The “futuristic” additions layered onto the extant streetscape are almost entirely related to transportation: small zeppelins, one-man hot-air balloons, motorcycles, electric streetcars, automobiles (all

Brian Horrigan Minnesota Historical Society,  
Co-Curator of *Yesterday’s Tomorrows: Past Visions of the American Future*,  
Smithsonian Institution, 1984



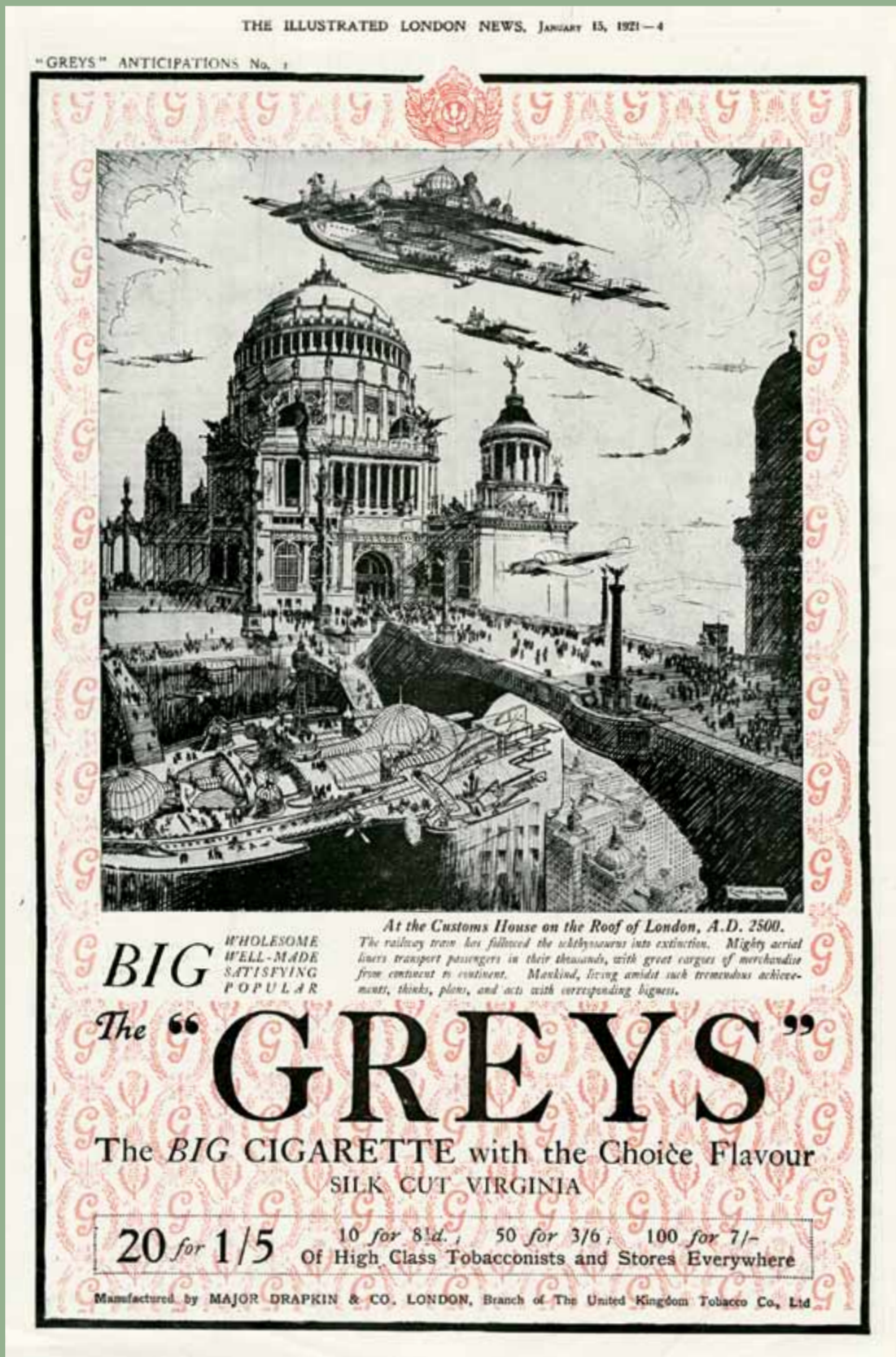
FIGS 11–12 (ABOVE)  
Reichner Bros. Publishers, “Boston in the Future.  
‘Bigger. Better. Busier,’” ca. 1909,  
and “Northampton Mass. in the Future,” 1909  
Private collection

TOP (ROW OF CARDS)  
Frank W. Swallow Publishing Co. & other publishers,  
various “...in the Future” postcards, 1909–1925  
Private collection

with a contemporaneous rather than speculative look), and, most dramatically, a monorail with bus-sized cars suspended from towering rails (news of the 1901 *Schwebebahn*, or “floating train,” in Wuppertal, Germany, seems to have traveled quickly to America). Often these machines seem to exist in the city at the expense of the city. The hastily cut-out “futuristic” ingredients are shoe-horned into ill-prepared traditional streets and squares with an almost deliberate violence (perhaps to enhance the comic effect), and pedestrians are seen being mowed over by automobiles and motorbikes. Airborne thieves make quick getaways (with airborne policemen in hot pursuit).

Aside from this plethora of clanging and soaring transportation options there are few other surprises. In Northampton and Gardner, Massachusetts, the future seems mostly about driving and flying and getting nearly killed. Occasionally, one does glimpse what might be a vision of a “New Woman”—the independent, free-thinking, soon-to-be politically enfranchised woman of the turn of the century. And one or two examples hint at another favorite comic prediction of tomorrow’s cities—that is, that advertising, plastered all over buildings and vehicles, will become all but unavoidable in the future. (Imagine that!)





## MARKETING THE FUTURE

If cities and landscapes of the future are desirable in and of themselves, they are also prestigious places to do business of a more common variety. As the promise and excitement of speculation on the techno-cultural future of human destiny attracted an increasingly large portion of the public's imagination in the early twentieth century, companies and personalities began to leverage popular expectation of the future to attach prestige to products and services that existed very much in the present.

Some of these products could not have been more distant from the traditional themes of expectation gaining ground since the time of Robert Owen—Seagram's Canadian Whisky, for example, or Greys Cigarettes [FIG 13]. But companies that sold the sort of goods tied to futuristic discourse in the popular view—namely, industrial materials and machines—were perhaps a more “natural” fit. They used visions of the future to contextualize their products in the consumer's imagination, selling a tire, engineering services, or asbestos, but promising access to a new, progressive world. The future cities from which these goods were “imported” were designed to promote the products in question—and of course, many of these companies had every reason to glamorize a view of tomorrow that was heavy on technology and light on everything else.

Detroit-based Bohn Aluminum and Brass capitalized on the “futuristic” qualities of aluminum to add shine to their products, imbedding their brand in a landscape of Modernist skyscrapers and cutting-edge kitchens [FIGS 14–15]. Shell Motor Oil Company hired streamline designer Norman Bel Geddes (1893–1958) to produce a 1937 print advertising campaign featuring photographs of a model of the “City of Tomorrow,” which was so attuned to the needs and speed of automobiles that motorists could imagine racing through it with impunity [FIG 16].

Bel Geddes' work for Shell was hailed as a marketing success, and he was immediately contracted by General Motors to create the *Futurama*, a huge model



FIGS 14–15

Author Radebaugh for Bohn Aluminum and Brass Corporation, “What Is This?,” 1945, “Beauty and Utility in the Modern Kitchen,” 1947

To tap into the excitement of explosive post-war growth in the United States, the Bohn Corporation commissioned a series of futuristic visions that positioned their products as indispensable components of the emerging landscape. On loan from the Maison d'Ailleurs.



FIG 16

Norman Bel Geddes for Shell Oil Company, “This is the City of Tomorrow...,” 1937

The prediction that in future “machine-age” cities motor traffic would be unimpeded by messy intersections and completely segregated from pedestrian traffic was not new, but here it was given plausible form, as well as the endorsement of both the automotive industry and a leading “modern” designer. Other ads in this campaign promised speeds of up to fifty miles per hour in the heart of tomorrow's downtowns, and an assurance from Bel Geddes that “Tomorrow's children will not play in the streets.”

FIG 13 (LEFT)

Cunningham for the Greys Cigarettes, “Greys Anticipations No. 1: At the Customs House on the Roof of London, A.D. 2500,” 1921

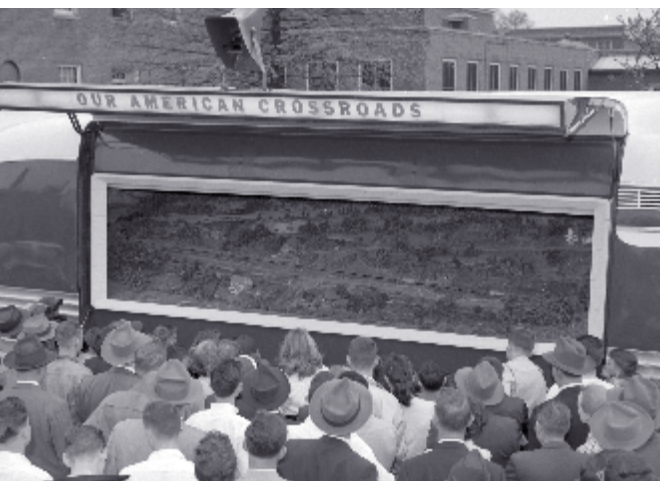
This strange view of a future London full of high-rises and glassy aircraft was part of a series of “Anticipations” published as advertisements for Greys Cigarettes. Distinctly Beaux-Arts in its forms and details, this future vision seems inspired by the Classicism of Chicago's Columbian Exposition, and as such it represents an unusual, and perhaps unusually creative, departure from the dominant glass-and-steel theme of most twentieth-century speculative design. On loan from the Maison d'Ailleurs.



FIG 19

Syd Mead for United States Steel, “Megastructure” from *Interface: A Portfolio of Probabilities*, 1969

In this America of 1990, the western landscape has been marked by an enormous steel high-rise comparable only to the dramatic rock formations rising above the Grand Canyon’s floor. The resulting drama is accessed with all the convenience of a drive-in theater. On loan from Dennis Bille.



FIGS 17–18

General Motors Corporation, Futurliner photographs, ca. 1953

Special streamlined buses called “Futurliners” were manufactured by General Motors to take their awe-inspiring “Parade of Progress” to small-town fairgrounds across North America in a “miniature world’s fair on wheels.” After setting up camp, GM’s Futurliners would open up to reveal sophisticated displays. A few of these displays featured architecture and engineering exhibits (including portions of the 1939 Futurama) designed to make the case for more and better highways and car-friendly urban planning. Courtesy of General Motors LLC (used with permission, GM Media Archives).

of the American landscape of 1960, coursing with miniature limited-access freeways and peppered with automobile-friendly central business districts. Experienced by viewers as a sensuous and intimate narrated chair-ride, it became the sensation of the 1939–1940 New York World’s Fair [FRONTISPIECE]. GM later decided to make the most of the *Futurama* by putting sections of it on display in equally sensational buses designed by Harley Earl called *Futurliners*, which toured North America in the aptly named *Parade of Progress*, building popular expectation and support for a national highway system and car-focused city planning reform [FIGS 17–18].

It was not only companies that stood to gain from tapping into the popular imagination and framing their products with visions of “forward-looking” cities and buildings. Individual architects and artists, such as Arthur Radebaugh (1906–1974) or Hugh Ferriss (1889–1962) [see essay by Dietrich Neumann, FIGS 21–22],

built entire careers by both leveraging and influencing expectations regarding the future. Syd Mead (born 1933), an artist and visionary who has worked with equal potency for both Hollywood and heavy industry, made a name for himself by designing conceptual automobiles that seemed to have been brought, at great expense, from the “World of Tomorrow.” In 1969, when aluminum began to overtake stainless steel as the cutting-edge detailing material of choice for automobile designers, United States Steel hired Mead to design a series of vibrant images of the future issued as *Portfolios of Probabilities* [FIG 19]. USS hoped that Mead’s hand would restore some of the futuristic polish to steel, and by Mead’s own account, it worked. He continues to support efforts by industrial corporations and other clients to present a progressive face to the public, in 2007 providing Qatar Steel with a striking image of a future Doha [FIG 20].



FIG 20

Syd Mead for Qatar Steel, future DOHA : QATAR, 2007

Commissioned to represent the urban future of the Persian Gulf capital of Doha in the industrial, high-tech spirit of the Qatar Steel Corporation, this vision incorporates both existing architecture and speculative possibilities including conical, garden-capped apartment towers inverted to deflect the heat of the sun. Courtesy of and copyright Syd Mead, Inc. (all rights reserved, www.sydmead.com).



# NIGHT IN THE SCIENCE ZONE

## THE URBAN PROPHECIES OF HUGH FERRISS

Dietrich Neumann Brown University

When the *New York Times* published Hugh Ferriss' illustrated essay "The New Architecture" on March 19, 1922, it created a sensation. His four dramatic charcoal drawings illustrated the "evolution of a city building under the [new] zoning law" and were intended to help architects visualize the impact of the setback stipulation in New York's 1916 Zoning Code. This stipulation had been designed to allow more light into the streets and into the interior spaces of adjacent buildings by forcing a new structure to recede above a certain cornice height, under an angle determined by street width and urban density. Moody and theatrical, Ferriss' four chiaroscuro drawings seemed to suggest a crystalline formation over the course of a day, from early morning light, to sunrise, noon and night. They were instantly reproduced in journals around the world and celebrated for their daring new style of architectural illustration and as a new voice in American architecture. Ferriss explained, "the new law permits a building to rise vertically to only a certain moderate height; above this, roughly speaking, it places a pyramid over the property within which the building must remain... Our future buildings with their superimposed, receding stages will produce as definite a sense of strength and unity as did the medieval cathedrals..." While uniform cornice lines would create a "city of harmonious vistas," the receding upper portions of buildings would be seen from all sides.

Before, architects merely designed the street façade of a city's building block—now, they were invited to give the upper portions a "treatment more individual than anything we have yet seen." Triumphant, Ferriss exclaimed: "The day of the box is ended...architecture comes into her own....We are not contemplating the new architecture of a city—we are contemplating the new architecture of a civilization."

As hyperbolic as Ferriss' claims may sound, the impact of the zoning code on architecture in the US could hardly be overestimated. Ferriss himself embarked on a stellar career as the most celebrated architectural draftsman of the twentieth century, and his vision of a city of setback skyscrapers became the guiding imagery for high-rise architecture in the US through the early 1960s.

In his 1922 text Ferriss had singled out steel frame construction as ideal for the setback skyscraper. In response, the American steel industry commissioned him to design their advertising in 1930, at a moment when the Great Depression had drastically slowed skyscraper construction and simultaneously inspired visionary projects for a better future. Ferriss' view was reflected in countless commercial illustrations and even film sets (beginning with the film musical *Just Imagine* in 1930). The architectural historian Francisco Mujica had by 1929 recognized striking similarities between Ferriss' pyramidal setback forms and ancient Mesoamerican temples—proof that a truly American style of architecture had been found. Countless cities across the US adopted the New York City setback code throughout the 1920s—not because their streets were as dark as those of lower Manhattan, but because the setback skyscraper had become a symbol of an American modernity, and of its architectural sovereignty. Providence, Rhode Island, adopted



the setback provision in its zoning code of 1923, and it was applied when the Industrial Trust (today Bank of America) Building went up in 1928.

Ferriss' vision of the future of the American city culminated in his 1929 book *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*. It contained a series of his typical charcoal drawings in three sections, entitled "Cities of Today," "Projected Trends," and "An Imaginary Metropolis" with images of present and future New York. In his 1931 article "Architecture: The Bright Lights," critic Douglas Haskell of *The Nation* focused on the book's emphasis on moody night views where skyscrapers reflect the bright streetlights at their feet, or are directly hit by strong floodlight projectors. Indeed, architectural illumination had made enormous strides through the 1920s: countless historical buildings and new skyscrapers were lit at night, their setbacks frequently providing positions for uplight projectors. Haskell considered the nocturnal modernity in Ferriss' book to be specifically American: "It is the habit to speak of a 'modern

manner' as if there were just one, but already it is divided right down the middle. The Europeans get the Day; we get the Night....In [Ferriss'] 'Metropolis of Tomorrow' are sixty stations, among which a bare ten seem to represent daylight....There are a few sunsets and mists and the rest is solid night. Here is modernism indeed. Thousands of years went by with their changes of style, but not until this century was there electric light, which, far, far more than the familiar triad of steel, glass, and concrete, has changed the basis of all architecture. This is us."

Ferriss' visions of the future of the American City went beyond the achievements of the 1920s to offer a view of modernity that in many ways persists to the present day. His book offered a prophetic prose poem:

**BUILDINGS** like crystal.  
**Walls** of translucent glass.  
**Sheer glass blocks**  
**sheathing a steel grill.**  
**No Gothic branch:**  
**no Acanthus leaf:**  
**no recollections of the plant world.**  
**A mineral kingdom.**  
**Gleaming stalagmites.**  
**Forms as cold as ice.**  
**Mathematics.**  
**Night in the Science zone.**

### BACKGROUND

**Hugh Ferriss, Isolated masses: towers of steel and glass, 1931?**

On loan from Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University.

### FIG 21 (LEFT)

**Hugh Ferriss and the American Institute of Steel Construction, "Steel Reaches Into the Future," 1930**

This advertisement, part of a series, was published in the August 1930 issue of *American Architect*.

### FIG 22 (BELOW)

**Hugh Ferriss, Looking West from the Business Center from *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, 1929**

On loan from the John D. Rockefeller Library, Brown University







FIG 23 Pippi Zornoza, *The Dirt Palace Façade*, 2011 Courtesy of the artist

## THE FUTURE, HERE AND NOW

The final section of *Building Expectation* contains a collection of contemporary architectural visions of the future, some of them specially commissioned for the show. In a number of cases, the artists involved had little or no prior experience working with architecture, but found themselves nonetheless prepared to comment upon orthodox modes of urban and architectural “modernity,” and to offer alternative futuristic paradigms that “disrupt” or otherwise critically engage with the themes of industry and technology, machines and progress that have so dominated the past few centuries of speculative design. A few other contributions were provided by urban designers and conceptual architects who have spent many years questioning the standard definitions of rhetorically charged words such as “progressive,” “futuristic,” and “avant-garde.”

Providence-based artist Pippi Zornoza has used fiberglass board, smoothly polished stones, and paint to create a prefabricated mosaic panel façade inspired in part by the legacy of Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí (1852–1926) [FIG 23]. It reveals an unabashed, even darkly profound affection for nature, and deploys a sensuous but nonetheless formal and meticulously composed body of iconography, populated by both flora and fauna, that might be described as an arabesque-laced illuminated manuscript transformed into a spatial order by way of Gothic symmetry. Importantly, Zornoza also seems to share with Gaudí a love of precision which is made self-conscious, and perhaps even urgent, by a reluctance to submit to the machine. Her piece argues that a nature-oriented aesthetic can be a meaningful and rewarding starting point for artists and architects practicing today, and in so doing Zornoza proposes a unique take on future possibilities.

Beloved in continental Europe but woefully neglected in most of the English-speaking world is the work of Belgian graphic novel artist François Schuiten, who together with writer Benoît Peeters has produced a series of fantastic visions of alternative urbanity entitled



FIG 24  
François Schuiten (artist), Benoît Peeters (author), *Pièce No. 11*  
[Piece No. 11] from *L'Archiviste* [The Archivist], 1987  
A city rises in shimmering glass, filled with green growing things, after the population is struck by a “fièvre des jardins” [garden fever] following a great botanical exposition. Courtesy of François Schuiten.



FIG 25  
Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, *Drawings for Southlands, British Columbia*  
from *Theory and Practice of Agrarian Urbanism* (forthcoming book), 2011  
DPZ starts with the walkable, traditionally informed (but progressively oriented) principles of New Urbanism and grafts an “agrarian sociability” throughout: the community’s carefully planned edges and its public spaces are enlivened by “the organizing, growing, processing, exchanging, cooking, and eating of food.” Agrarian Urbanism promises to offer a new network of relationships to economy and to ecology as an alternative to suburban consumerism. Courtesy of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company.





FIG 26  
**Christian Waldvogel**, *Baustelle im Orbit* [Building Site in Orbit] from *Globus Cassus*, 2003–2011  
Satellites, connected to the planet's surface by elevators, are linked together to form a webbed network around the Earth. Then, magma is pumped from the planet's core to fill in the spaces between these orbiting construction nodes, eventually turning the planet into a hollow sphere with an inhabitable interior. *Courtesy of the artist.*

*Les Cités Obscures* [The Obscure Cities]. Schuiten's stunning dreamscapes of glass, stone, wrought iron, and sunlight are by many accounts the result of his background not only as a student of architecture, but also as the son of a prominent Modernist architect practicing in 1950s and 1960s Brussels [FIG 24]. His father took part in what the stories of the *Les Cités Obscures* later characterized as *Brüselisation*: the senseless destruction of warm, human-scaled buildings and the erection, in their place, of ugly, disorienting, dehumanizing nonsense. In Schuiten's imaginary cities resistance is not only possible, it is productive—and alternative architectural traditions inspired by Victorian glasshouses or the Art Nouveau grandeur of Brussels' own Victor Horta (1861–1947) often confront, and even displace, the capitalist-friendly monolithic tendencies of totalitarian Modernism.

The Miami-based urban design firm Duany Plater-Zyberk has provided *Building Expectation* with images from their forthcoming book *Theory and Practice of Agrarian Urbanism* [FIG 25], as well as drawings from the 2010 *Sprawl Repair Manual* written by Galina Tachieva. The former reveals a careful consideration of the relationships between productive agrarian land and individual houses, neighborhoods, districts, and larger urban bodies, while the latter offers practical and indeed elegant solutions to the deep problems intrinsic in America's overabundance of single-use, car-dependent, aesthetically bankrupt suburban development. Collectively the body of DPZ's work suggests future paradigms

of walkable, nature-engaged urbanism that reject Modernist technological triumphalism of the sort promoted by General Motors in the *Futurama* and attacked, more than a century ago, by Chousy.

Christian Waldvogel's *Globus Cassus*, on the other hand, pushes industrial, high-tech doctrine to its furthest logical extreme by suggesting that the entire planet could be transformed into a construction site of cosmic proportions, in which the natural and cultural legacies of Planet Earth could be used as building material for a new world, greatly expanded and turned literally inside-out [FIG 26]. Such a vision gives new and powerful meaning to the notion of the “global citizen.”

These unorthodox visions of the future, and others like them, shine light on the processes—sometimes mysteriously elusive and sometimes utterly predictable—that have been shaping the way humans imagine the “World of Tomorrow” for centuries. They challenge the dominant themes, forms, and even the value systems that have come to be accepted as “futuristic” by broad swathes of both the general public and the design professions, and in doing so they ask, “who has the power to decide what the future can, or cannot, be?” Ultimately they use architecture, in different ways, to articulate new paradigms for social, political, economic, spiritual, and cultural life, and show that sometimes *building expectation* requires more than mere speculation along lines old or new—it also requires reflection, sometimes even demolition and, more often than the term “progressive” may have implied in the past, restoration.

# WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Dimensions are given in inches, height precedes width, and are sheet sizes unless otherwise specified.

## REFORMING THE FUTURE

- Katherine Roy**, American (born 1982)  
*View of Industria*, 2011  
digital print (pencil on paper and digital color), 48 x 72  
David Winton Bell Gallery
- Comte Didier de Chousy**, French (active 1883–1879)  
*Ignis*, 1883  
book, 7 1/4 x 4 3/4  
“Des barques aériennes attendent...,” [Airboats waiting...]  
from *Ignis* as serialized in *La Science Illustrée*, Vol. 18, 1896  
journal, 5 x 3 1/2 (image)  
Maison d'Ailleurs
- William Davidson**, author, Scottish  
**Artist unknown**  
*New Lanark from History of Lanark, and Guide to the Scenery...*, 1828  
book, 3 x 4 1/2 (image)  
Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College
- Robert Owen**, author, Welsh (1771–1858)  
**Artist unknown**  
*A View and Plan of the Agricultural and Manufacturing Villages of Unity and Mutual Co-operation*, from “A New View of Society,” 1817  
broadside, 12 1/2 x 15 1/2  
*Two Discourses on a New System of Society; As Delivered in the Hall of Representatives of the United States...*, 1825  
book, 7 3/4 x 9 (open)  
Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College
- Robert Owen**, author, Welsh (1771–1858)  
**Stedman Whitwell**, architect, English (1784–1840)  
**Plate I** (“block and ground plan”) fold-out print, 29 x 18 1/2  
**Plate II** (“ground plans”) fold-out print, 11 1/8 x 16  
from *A Development of the Principles and Plans on Which to Establish Self-Supporting Home Colonies...*, second edition, 1841  
*Engraving of [new buildings for the site of New Harmony] from The Co-operative Magazine and Monthly Herald*, January 1826  
journal, 6 3/8 x 10 3/4 (image)  
Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College
- Artist unknown**  
*Six and One Quarter Cents*, 1840  
labor note, 2 1/2 x 6  
*One Hour, Labor in Teaching Music, or Twenty Cents*, 1842  
labor note, 2 1/2 x 6 1/4  
Historic New Harmony/University of Southern Indiana
- F. Bate**, artist and engraver  
**Stedman Whitwell**, architect, English (1784–1840)  
*A Bird's Eye View of a Community as Proposed by Robert Owen*, 1838  
digital print, 14 3/4 x 21  
Mary Evans Picture Library
- King Camp Gillette**, author, American (1855–1932)  
**Plate V** (“a perspective view”) from *The Human Drift*, 1894  
book, 7 1/2 x 5 (image)  
Brandeis University Library  
**Plate VI** (“a sectional interior view”) from *The Human Drift*, 1894  
book, 5 1/4 x 6 1/2 (image)  
Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society
- Hudson Maxim**, author, American (1853–1927)  
**William R. Leigh**, artist, American (1866–1955)  
*That Great City of the Future Will Be One Enormous Edifice*, from “Man's Machine-Made Millenium,” *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, November 1908  
magazine, 9 1/2 x 14 (open)  
John Hay Library, Brown University

- Milo Hastings**, author, American (1884–1957)  
**Edgar S. Chambless**, architect, American (1871–1936)  
“Roadtown: A Multiple Home,” from *The Independent*, May 5, 1910  
magazine, 9 1/2 x 14 (open)  
Private collection
- The Neopolitans**, American  
*The New City: An American Plan of Social and Economic Reorganization*, 1938  
pamphlet, 7 1/2 x 5 3/8  
John Hay Library, Brown University
- Albert Robida**, French (1848–1926)  
“Maison Tournante Aérienne” [Rotating Air House] and “Le Nuage-Palace” [The Cloud-Palace] from *Le Vingtième Siècle* [The Twentieth Century], 1883  
book, 12 x 19 (open)  
*La Sortie de l'Opéra en l'An 2000* [Departing the Opera in the Year 2000], ca. 1882  
print, 12 1/2 x 18 3/8  
Maison d'Ailleurs
- Grant E. Hamilton**, American (1862–1926)  
*What We Are Coming To: Judge's Combination Apartment-House of the Future* cartoon from *Judge*, February 16, 1895  
magazine, 19 7/8 x 13 1/4  
Maison d'Ailleurs
- H. A. Petersen**  
*The Department House of the Future* cartoon from *Judge*, 1910  
magazine, 13 3/4 x 20 1/2 (two-page spread)  
Maison d'Ailleurs
- Frederic Burr Opper**, American (1857–1937)  
*The New Era in Seaside Hotels* cartoon from *Puck*, August 4, 1880  
magazine, 9 1/2 x 13 1/2  
Maison d'Ailleurs
- Harry Grant Dart**, American (1869–1938)  
*Some Day* cartoon from *Life Magazine*, March 4, 1909  
magazine, 11 x 17 1/2 (two-page spread)  
*New York in 1920* cartoon from *Life Magazine*, November 30, 1916  
magazine, 10 3/4 x 17 1/2 (two-page spread)  
Maison d'Ailleurs
- SELLING THE FUTURE**
- Mentor Huebner**, American (1917–2001)  
*Exterior Police Headquarters, Spinner Overhead, for Blade Runner*, ca. 1982  
*Exterior Overpass, for Blade Runner*, ca. 1982  
*Exterior Gotham, Fascisti Sculpture, for Blade Runner*, ca. 1982  
sepia sketches on tissue, 40 x 30 each  
David Winton Bell Gallery
- Bryan de Grineau [John Bryan]**, British (1883–1957)  
“Things to Come” from *Modern Wonder*, December 11, 1937  
magazine, 14 1/8 x 10 1/2  
Maison d'Ailleurs
- Hugo Gernsback**, editor, American, born Luxembourg (1884–1967)  
**William Walsh**, author  
“The Glass City of To-morrow” from *Science and Invention*, December 1921  
magazine, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2  
Private collection
- Hugo Gernsback**, editor, American, born Luxembourg (1884–1967)  
**H. Windfield Secor**, author (active 1917–1953)  
**S. Laverne**, artist  
“The City of Tomorrow” [Le Corbusier] from *Science and Invention*, January 1930  
magazine, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2  
Maison d'Ailleurs



**Hugo Gernsback**, editor, American, born Luxembourg (1884 – 1967)  
**Frank R. Paul**, artist, American, born Austria (1884 – 1963)  
“The Glass Skyscraper” from *Everyday Science and Mechanics*, December 1931 magazine, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Hugo Gernsback**, editor, American, born Luxembourg (1884 – 1967)

“Cars Will Drive Up 2300-foot Tower” and “Sunlighting for Home Interiors” from *Everyday Science and Mechanics*, August 1933 magazine, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2

“In the Year 2026” [Von A. B. Hennings] from *Science and Invention*, May 1927 magazine, 11 3/4 x 8 1/2

“Our Cities of the Future” from *Science and Invention*, October 1923 magazine, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2

““Depthscrapers” Defy Earthquakes” from *Everyday Science and Mechanics*, November 1931 magazine, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2  
Private collection

**O.A.**  
“XXXe Siecle” from *Le Mirior du Monde*, Christmas 1933 magazine, 14 3/4 x 10 3/4  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Raymond J. Brown**, editor, (active 1932 – 1939)  
“Cave Cities of Tomorrow” from *Popular Science Monthly*, June 1934 magazine, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2  
Private collection

**Richard Rummell for Moses King, Inc.,**  
American (1848 –1924)  
*King’s Views of New York*, 1911 book, 14 3/4 x 10 1/8  
Maison d’Ailleurs

“Future New York, ‘The city of Skyscrapers,’” ca. 1920 postcard, 5 1/2 x 3 1/2

“Future New York, ‘The City of Skyscrapers,’ New York,” ca. 1923 postcard, 5 1/2 x 3 1/2  
Private collection

**Ron Turner**, artist, British (1922 –1998)  
**Walter H. Gillings**, editor, British (active 1937 –1974)  
“The World of To-morrow: Startling Forecasts” from *Tales of Wonder*, Summer 1940 magazine, 9 1/4 x 6 5/8  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Jack Smalley**, editor, American (active 1922 – 1932)  
“Endless Belt Trains for Future Cities” from *Modern Mechanix and Inventions*, November 1932 magazine, 9 5/8 x 6 3/4

“Marvelous Movie Miniatures Portray Cities of the Future” (Just Imagine) from *Modern Mechanix and Inventions*, January 1931 magazine, 9 3/8 x 13 1/2 (open)  
Private collection

**Les Ateliers A.B.C. for BYRRH Wine Tonic**, French  
“24 Regards Sur L’Avenir” [Twenty-Four Views of the Future], 1920s collection of trading cards, 5 1/2 x 3 1/2 each  
David Winton Bell Gallery

**Rodolphe Simon** (textile store), French  
“Rubans, Tulle, Escharpes, Voiles, Fantaisies: Rudolphe Simon” [Ribbons, Tulle, Scarves, Fabric, Fantasies: Rudolphe Simon], ca. 1899 postcard, 3 1/2 x 5 5/8  
Private collection

**Michael Schrøder for Hjemmet** [Home] magazine, author **S. Hagsted**, artist  
**K. Weischner**, artist, Danish  
“Teknik og Tempo” [Technology and Time], ca. 1960 collection of trading cards, 3 5/8 x 2 5/8 each  
Private collection

**Kunstdruck-Freiberg for Hildebrands Deutsche Schokolade** [Hildebrand’s German Chocolate], German  
“Bewegliche Häuser im Jahr 2000” [Moving Houses in the Year 2000], ca. 1895 trading card, 2 3/4 x 4 3/8  
Private collection

**Echte Wagner Margarine, German**  
“Zukunftsfantasien” [Future Fantasies], ca. 1932 collection of trading cards, 2 3/4 x 4 3/8 each  
Private collection

**Villemard, French**  
“En L’An 2000” [In the Year 2000], ca. 1910 collection of trading cards, 2 5/8 x 4 1/4 each  
Private collection

**Mitchell’s Cigarettes**, British  
“The World of Tomorrow”, ca. 1931 collection of trading cards, 2 3/4 x 1 1/2 each  
Private collection

**Various manufacturers**, American and German  
“...in the Future,” 1909 – 1924 postcards depicting the future of various American and German cities, 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 each  
Private collection

## MARKETING THE FUTURE

**Cunningham for Greys Cigarettes**, British  
“*Greys” Anticipations No. 1: At the Customs House on the Roof of London. A.D. 2500* advertisement, 1921 magazine, 15 5/8 x 10 3/4  
“*Greys” Anticipations No. 5: A Hive of Industry. A.D. 2500* advertisement, 1921 magazine, 15 5/8 x 10 3/4  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Arthur Radebaugh for Bohn Aluminum and Brass Corporation**, American (1906 – 1974)  
*What Is This?* [skyscraper city] advertisement, 1945 magazine, 14 x 10 7/8  
*Beauty and Utility in the Modern Kitchen* advertisement, 1947 magazine, 13 x 10 3/8  
*Solving Traffic Congestion* advertisement, 1946 magazine, 14 x 11  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Bushells Tea**, Australian  
*The World of the Future* advertisement, ca. 1941 video, 1 minute 39 seconds  
Australian National Film and Sound Archive

**Jack Binder for Seagram–Distillers Corporation**, American, born Austria–Hungary (1902 – 1988)  
*Men Who Plan Beyond Tomorrow Like CANADIAN Whisky at its Glorious Best* [amphibious roads] advertisement, 1943 magazine, 14 x 10  
*Men Who Plan Beyond Tomorrow Like the Lightness of Seagram’s V.O.* [kitchen of tomorrow] advertisement, 1944 magazine, 12 x 9 1/8  
*Men Who Plan Beyond Tomorrow Like the Lightness of Seagram’s V.O.* [healthy tower housing] advertisement, 1944 magazine, 14 x 11  
*Men Who Plan Beyond Tomorrow Like the Lightness of Seagram’s V.O.* [home of the future] advertisement, 1943 magazine, 12 x 9

*The Super Market of the Future by Men Who Plan beyond Tomorrow!* advertisement, 1944 magazine, 14 x 10 3/8  
*Men Who Plan Beyond Tomorrow Like the Lightness of Seagram’s V.O.* [seaside “Hotel Futura”] advertisement, 1943 magazine, 14 x 10 3/8  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Utah Radio Products Company**, American  
*Each Worker Has a Part in Utah’s Future* [future city] advertisement, 1943 magazine, 13 7/8 x 10 7/8  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Keasbey & Mattison Company**, American  
*Let’s Put Wings on Tomorrow* [future city, asbestos] advertisement, 1942 magazine, 11 5/8 x 8 3/4  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Firestone Tire & Rubber Corporation**, American  
*The Tire of Tomorrow Is Here Today* [future roads] advertisement, 1945 magazine, 13 3/4 x 10 3/8  
*The Tire of Tomorrow Is Here Today* [future home] advertisement, 1945 magazine, 13 5/8 x 10 1/2  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Franklin Booth for J. Gordon Turnbull, Inc., Consulting Engineers**, American (1874 – 1948)  
*Tomorrow’s Future is “Inked-In” Today* [future city] advertisement, 1944 magazine, 13 x 10 1/2  
*Tomorrow Builds on Today’s Foundation* [future city] advertisement, 1944 magazine, 14 x 11  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Norman Bel Geddes for Shell Oil Company**, American (1893 – 1958)  
*This is the City of Tomorrow...* advertisement from *Life Magazine*, July 5, 1937 magazine, 14 1/8 x 21 (two-page spread)  
*In Average City, U.S.A...* advertisement from *Life Magazine*, August 30, 1937 magazine, 14 1/8 x 10 1/2  
*Tomorrow’s Children Won’t Play on the Streets* advertisement from *Life Magazine*, August 9, 1937 magazine, 14 1/8 x 10 1/2  
*Motorists of 1960...* advertisement from *Life Magazine*, October 11, 1937 magazine, 14 1/8 x 10 1/2  
Private collection

**General Motors Corporation**, American  
**Norman Bel Geddes**, architect, American (1893 – 1958)  
*Futurama*, 1939 (two copies) souvenir booklet, 7 x 16 1/2 (open)

“The City of the Future” from *The General Motors Exhibit Building*, 1939 souvenir pamphlet, 9 x 8 1/2 (open)  
*This General Motors Exhibit certainly shows a bright future for the Motorist of Tomorrow*, 1940 postcard, 3 1/2 x 5 1/2  
*The Opportunity for Youth in Building the World of Tomorrow*, 1940 booklet, 8 1/4 x 5 3/8  
Private Collection

Two children playing on the *Futurama* (148517), ca. 1939 digital photograph, 20 x 16  
Couples leaning towards the *Futurama* (TB-21255), ca. 1939  
Woman pointing at skyscraper in the *Futurama* (DN219B-0213), ca. 1939

Woman gently silhouetted by the *Futurama* (148519), ca. 1939  
Highrise building from the *Futurama* (148553), ca. 1939  
River flowing through city in the *Futurama* (148529), ca. 1939  
Group of curved skyscraprs in the *Futurama* (148554), ca. 1939  
Man working on highway model in the *Futurama* (148513), ca. 1939  
Life-sized intersection at the end of the *Futurama* (148544), ca. 1939  
digital photographs, 18 x 14 each  
Courtesy of General Motors, LLC. Used with permission, GM Media Archives.

**General Motors Corporation**, American  
**Albert Kahn**, architect, American, born Germany (1869 – 1942)  
*W.F.29—General Motor Exhibit, New York World’s Fair 1939* postcard, 3 1/2 x 5 1/2  
Private collection

Crowd waiting in line to experience the *Futurama* (100368), ca. 1939  
Bel Geddes discussing the 6M fair exhibit building (150238), ca. 1939  
digital photograph, 18 x 14 each  
Courtesy of General Motors, LLC. Used with permission, GM Media Archives.

**General Motors Corporation**, American  
*Things to See at Highways and Horizons*, 1940 souvenir map, 5 x 7 3/4  
*I Have Seen the Future*, 1940 (three copies) Steel souvenir buttons, 1 (diameter)

“Science Frees Women from Drudgery” and “A New Design for Living,” from *General Motors Parade of Progress*, ca. 1936 souvenir brochure, 7 7/8 x 21 (open)  
*General Motors Parade of Progress on Location*, ca. 1933 postcard, 3 1/2 x 5 5/8  
*General Motors Parade of Progress Exposition*, ca. 1939 postcard, 3 1/2 x 5 5/8  
*Caravan: A Film Story of the General Motors Parade of Progress*, ca. 1941 video (excerpts), 6 minutes 41 seconds  
Private collection

Futurliners in the Parade of Progress (POP1-0239), ca. 1953  
Futurliners (POP4-0683), ca. 1953  
*Science Marches on Parade at the General Motors Parade of Progress* (POP3-0620), ca. 1953  
Regional traffic planning exhibition in a Futurliner (POP1-0036), ca. 1953  
Urban design exhibition in a Futurliner (POP4-0370), ca. 1953  
digital photographs, 14 x 18 each  
Courtesy of General Motors, LLC. Used with permission, GM Media Archives.

**Artist unknown for New York World’s Fair Commission**, American  
*New York World’s Fair 1939* ticket book cover, 2 1/2 x 5 1/2  
Private collection

**Margaret Bourke-White**, American (1904 – 1971)  
*Futurama Spectators*, ca. 1939 digital photograph, 28 x 22  
Courtesy of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin

**Stadler**  
Photograph of Ferriss at work in studio for Titan City Exhibition, 1925 photograph, 10 3/16 x 8  
Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

**Hugh Ferriss**, American (1889 – 1962)  
Study for Philosophy, 1928 graphite on tracing paper, 38 1/2 x 20  
Study for the Business Center, 1927 graphite on tracing paper, 28 3/4 x 35

Study for vista in the Business Zone, 1927 graphite on tracing paper, 21 7/8 x 19 3/8  
Study for a skyscraper spanning street, 1930 graphite on tracing paper, 26 3/4 x 16  
Isolated masses: towers of steel and glass, 1931? graphite on tracing paper, 25 1/8 x 16 1/8  
Mooring mast, an airport of the future, 1930? graphite on tracing paper, 28 3/4 x 16 7/8  
Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

*Looking West from the Business Center from The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, 1929 book, 12 1/4 x 18 (open)  
John D. Rockefeller Library, Brown University

**Hugh Ferriss for the American Institute of Steel Construction**, American (1889 – 1962)  
*Steel Reaches Into the Future* advertisement in *The American Architect*, August 1930 magazine, 12 x 8 1/2  
*The Future is Written in Steel* advertisement in *The American Architect*, April 1930 magazine, 12 x 8 1/2  
Private collection

**H. H. Windsor, Jr., editor**, American (1898 – 1965)  
**Artist unknown**

“Do Prophecies About Inventions Come True?” [after Hugh Ferriss] from *Popular Mechanics Magazine*, March 1935 magazine, 9 1/2 x 6 3/4  
Private collection

**Artist unknown for United States Steel and the Kingdom of Bhutan**  
Postage stamp depicting city of the future, 1969 ink on paper and steel, 1 3/4 x 2 1/8  
Private collection

**Leon Carron for Brunswick Radio, American**  
“Under the Control of One Hand” [after Hugh Ferriss] advertisement, 1930 magazine, 13 x 20 1/4  
Maison d’Ailleurs

**Syd Mead for United States Steel**, American (born 1933)  
*Interface: A Portfolio of Probabilities*, 1969 Set of eighteen prints, 11 1/4 x 27 1/8 each  
Collection of Dennis Bille

“In Architectural Forms...The Trend is Lighter and Brighter” from *Concepts*, ca. 1960 book, 10 7/8 x 28 3/8 (open)  
David Winton Bell Gallery

**Syd Mead**, artist, American (born 1933)  
**Nicole Yorkin**, author, American  
*L.A. 2013: Techno-Comforts and Urban Stresses...* from *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, April 3, 1988 magazine, 10 3/4 x 8 1/4  
Private collection

**Syd Mead for Qatar Steel**, American (born 1933)  
*future DOHA : QATAR*, 2007 digital print (gouache on illustration board), 34 1/2 x 48  
Courtesy of and copyright Syd Mead, Inc. (all rights reserved, www.sydmead.com)

## THE FUTURE, HERE AND NOW

**Pippi Zornoza**, American (born 1978)  
*The Dirt Palace Façade*, 2011 stone, glass tile, rhinestones, fiberglass panel, paint; 14 feet x 35 feet  
Courtesy the artist, funded in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts

**Jane Masters**, American (born England 1964)  
**Folly for Archimedes**, 2011 etched, plated and stained brass, metallic paint, and vinyl; 9 3/4 feet x 49 3/4 feet overall  
Courtesy of the artist

**Brian Knep**, American (born 1968)  
*Healing Series #2*, 2004 interactive video installation, 15 feet x 11 1/2 feet  
Courtesy of the artist

**François Schuiten**, artist, Belgian (born 1956)  
**Benoît Peeters**, author, Belgian (born France 1956)  
*Pièce No. 11 [Piece No. 11]*/from *L’Archiviste* [The Archivist], 1987  
*Pièce No. 18 [Piece No. 18]*/from *L’Archiviste* [The Archivist], 1987  
*Cernovada: La Foire de l’Électricité* [Cernovada: Fair of Electricity] from *L’Archiviste* [The Archivist], 1987  
*Brûselisation: le chaos* [Brusselization: chaos] from *L’Écho des Cités* [The Echo of the Cities], 1993 digital prints, 29 5/8 x 20 each  
Courtesy of François Schuiten

**Christian Waldvogel**, Swiss and American (born 1971)  
*Globus Cassus*, 2003 – 2011 digital animation film  
*Globus Cassus*, 2003 – 2011 sequence of eight digital images  
*Globus Cassus*, 2003 – 2011 book, 8 1/2 x 6 3/8  
Courtesy of the artist

**Cameron Shaw**, American (born 1956)  
*Bloom Series White*, 2011 laser-cut no. 8 steel and lights, 9 3/4 feet x 14 feet  
Courtesy of the artist

**Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, American**  
Drawings for Southlands, British Columbia digital composite print, 32 x 20  
Drawings for Goodbee, Louisiana digital composite print, 32 x 21  
from *Theory and Practice of Agrarian Urbanism* (forthcoming book), 2011  
Courtesy of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

**Galina Tachieva**, author, American, born Bulgaria (born 1963)  
**Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, American**  
Stripmall rehabilitation before-and-after digital composite print, 32 x 23  
Shopping mall rehabilitation before-and-after digital composite print, 32 x 27  
from *Sprawl Repair Manual*, 2010  
Courtesy of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

Published on the occasion of the exhibition  
September 3 – November 6, 2011

DESIGN Malcolm Grear Designers

ISBN 0-933519-53-2  
ISBN13 978-0-933519-53-4  
Copyright © 2011  
The Artists and David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University





DAVID WINTON BELL GALLERY, BROWN UNIVERSITY