



BEHRANG BEHIN

Built on the Parade Ground on Governors Island, the Living Pavilion's planted milk crates were supported by an armature of CNC-milled arches

Emerging Architects Build Their Own Future

A competition to design a gathering space on Governors Island focuses on collaboration and repurposing
By Jessica Sheridan, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP



Light filtered through the pavilion while the hanging liriope grass cooled the interior

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When the economy hit its recent low, architects who survived previous recessions feared that another "lost generation" of young designers would be on its way. Emerging architects, however, are not leaving the profession. Even though work may not have picked up for many firms in the city, there are opportunities for designers to build. And emerging architects are taking full advantage.

One of these opportunities was entering the FIGMENT/ENYA/SEAoNY City of Dreams Pavilion Competition. Hosted by an arts collective (FIGMENT), the AIANY Emerging New York Architects Committee (ENYA), and the Structural Engineering Association of New York (SEAoNY), this international competition asked entrants to design a temporary gathering space for performances and impromptu events on Governors Island for the 2010 summer season. It also required entrants to consider the cradle-to-cradle impact their designs would have on the environment with a goal to create a net-zero impact.

The jurors for the competition were Illya Azaroff, AIA, Director of Design, The Design Collective Studio; Matthew Bremer, AIA, Principal, Architecture In Formation; Will Laufs, Ph.D., Vice President, Thornton Tomasetti; Aleksey Lukyanov-Cherny, Principal, Situ Studio; Martin Pedersen, Executive Editor, *Metropolis* magazine; Rob Rogers, FAIA, Principal, Rogers Marvel Architects; and Marc Tsurumaki, AIA, Principal, LTL Architects.

Out of 80 entries, jurors chose four finalists and then selected as winner The Living Pavilion by Ann Ha, Assoc. AIA, and Behrang Behin, Assoc. AIA. The designers are two years out of architecture graduate school and intern architects working for Workshop for Architecture and Ennead Architects (formerly Polshek Partnership Architects), respectively.



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The pavilion provided a platform for performances throughout the summer. Here, a belly dancer performs in the rain while audience members take shelter

Their design was a barrel-vaulted structure made from 437 milk crates and CNC-milled plywood. Liriope grass was planted inside the milk crates, creating an inverted green wall that provided a cool environment within due to evapotranspiration. At the end of the season, the structure was disassembled, and the crates and their contents recycled or repurposed.

"The Living Pavilion's image was so fundamentally routed in how it was going to be made, and it is so easy to repurpose," says juror Marc Tsurumaki, AIA. "The designers had a very convincing argument – environmentally, spatially, and architecturally – and a comprehensive pragmatism that made it successful."

Collaboration was another fundamental aspect of the project. Because Ha and Behin are relatively new to architecture, they reached out to consultants early in the design process for advice. Mingo Design helped with the green wall technology and plant selection. Yunlu Shen, of Buro Happold and SEAoNY, completed a structural analysis. Daniela Morell, a FIGMENT volunteer and recent graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Center for Architecture Science and Ecology, acted as pavilion foreperson to help coordinate the transportation and installation on Governors Island. "The thing that architects bring to the table is the ability to pull people from radically different backgrounds into a team and work together somehow," says Behin.

In fact, collaboration was integral to the competition from the start. "I don't think any one of the organizations could have pulled it off by themselves," reflects Morell. "FIGMENT provided a place and context and a theoretical point of view about participatory art. ENYA did an



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More than 70 volunteers helped the designers construct the pavilion



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Throughout the summer, people of all sizes engaged with the Living Pavilion

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