

# sustainable DESIGN REVIEW

### Spring 2007

For more information or to contact any of the people listed in this book, please visit or email:

help@whysustain.us http://whysustain.us





# INTRODUCTION

I fought with myself when presented with a relatively narrow arena to spark dialogue about sustainability with other students at The New School. Moreover, I saw interest in "sustainability" by other students but never any action. So, I thought to myself, what is missing? What I found is this student based initiative, a place to express and defend ideas about what sustainability means when formulating concepts and ideas.

#### Most recently, we have seen

"sustainability" as a term be used and abused by others, and therefore take on many meanings. This first incarnation of The Sustainable Design Review asked students to define sustainability in their own creative way, and present a concept that exemplifies their unique notion of sustainability. This contest is not meant to define it for you, but rather to reflect upon varying and creative student perceptions and interpretations of sustainability. Our mission is to foster an overall awareness and dialogue for topics relating to social, environmental, and any other form of sustainability in the formation of school projects and consequently the development of student perceptions. By harnessing the progressive and creative mindsets of New School students, we provide a basis to move forward in exploring sustainability, with student body interaction, involvement, and dialogue.

We are all very excited about this inaugural year's turnout in submissions. We received a wide array, from almost every school at The New School, which made it all the harder to narrow it down to our 30 semifinalists, and 10 finalists. Presented here are only a few of the many excellent submissions we received. Please read through this book and then reflect upon your own interpretations of sustainability. Thank you.



Rishi Desai Founder and Chairperson

### THE SUBWAY LIGHT PROJECT first place

#### CAROLINE PHAM Integrated Design Curricului

Caroline's winning conceptual submission is a public art piece that encourages biophilia and, in effect, promotes energy saving technology while providing sunlight to sun-deprived underground subways. By using fiber optic technology and patented sunlight collection panels, she plans to introduce sunlight to one of the most frequently enclosed urban environments: The Subway. The technology would be used to illuminate windows and sitting areas, which are graphically designed to illustrate elements of natural and urban landscape integration.

Caroline's basis for this work is inspired by her observation of sun-deprived urban residents and its effects on their lives. Sunlight, as opposed to artificial light, contains a full spectrum of colors, which when absorbed by people helps control the body's hormonal system, improve mood, enhance morale, lower fatigue, and reduce eyestrain, amongst its myriad of beneficial effects. She invites interaction with people in the subways by extruding a series of benches from the sunlightflooded frosted glass art pieces, further enhancing the experience.

"Sustainability precisely means that we, as human beings, must sustain ourselves by perpetually providing a healthy and enjoyable environment to inhabit." -Caroline Pham



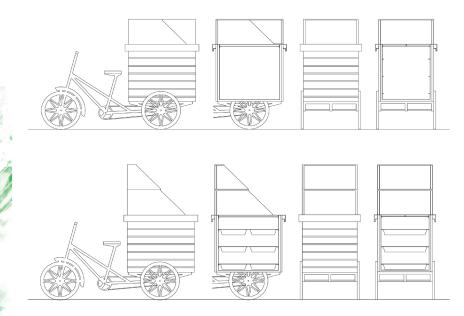
"This is a well thought out and complete presentation of a great idea.....that also happens to be totally achievable within today's technology. It has tremendous benefits to subway users and will significantly increase their awareness of the world around "I love the idea of underground wit ground and such installation could emotional and ir stressed-out sub -Juror Susan Sz

"I love the idea of connecting the underground with sunlight above ground and such a beautiful art installation could make a huge emotional and intellectual imprint on stressed-out subway users." *-Juror Susan Szenasy*  Bench integrated with design.

-Juror Guy Geier

them."

# **TERRA BITES: MOBILE CART UNITS** second place



#### HAE JEONG CHOI Product Design

"I liked this because it is simple and direct and addresses the sustainability issue at a level that everyone can understand and digest (literally and figuratively)—food. I think there is demand for healthy food alternatives in the city, and that this project could help advance the broader sustainability agenda."

#### -Juror Kira Gould

"It's fantastic that Choi saw sustainability as fundamental to social, as well as environmental issues. In addition, the simplicity of her project has exponential effects. It also seems that she has a very pragmatic proposal that could realistically be executed soon. " -Juror Chelsea Holden Baker Hae's definition of sustainability plays hand in hand with the systemic solution she provides to unhealthy eating habits and economic deficiencies of local farmers. Hae worked under the guidance of the Council on the Environment of New York City's Greenmarkets for her project. Her second place submission is a modular mobile cart unit that serves two primary functions. Firstly, the cart unit will provide the delivery of fresh ingredients from greenmarkets (an urban supplier of local and seasonal products) to a sanitary central kitchen.

Here, the ingredients are prepared and packaged for delivery. At this point, the carts are reversed to be used as vending carts, delivering the now prepared foods to various locations around the city. Terra Bites strongly encourages the consumption of local farmer foods, an important element to their economic sustainability and organic and healthy eating alike. Terra Bites also provides and educates consumers with a convenient and better alternative to eating typical urban fast food from already existing vendor carts.

"Sustainability fulfills and improves upon the economic and social requirements of humans without harming environmental or human health." -Hae Jeong Choi







### **PROVEN, A RAINWATER HARVESTING CANOPY**

#### JEREMY GOODWIN

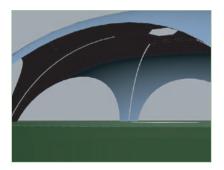
Integrated Design Curriculum

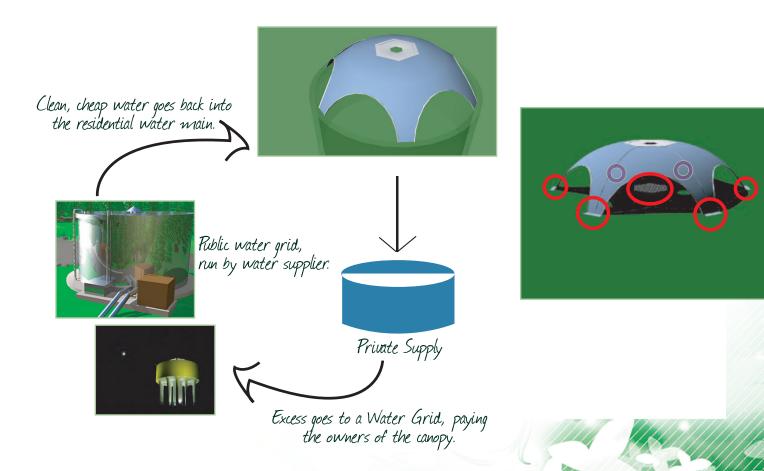
Jeremy's interesting concept is a rainwater harvesting canopy which aims to supply inexpensive and clean water to financially or environmentally disadvantaged communities. The canopy directs the rainwater to a local cistern, made of ferrocement, and thereafter redirects its excess supply to the regional water grid. His concept would inculcate standard water diverters, to help collect more rainwater into the infrastructure. His overarching solution includes the usage of excess collected community rainwater as credits.

This can feasibly help the economic stability of that community itself, similar to energy credits. The canopy would be a communal purchase by the community, further enhancing the collective and adaptive spirit implied in his definition. "If this concept were to be implemented I think it would bring much needed social change for countries that cannot afford water systems. It is extremely hard to find solutions for problems that deal with a community's incomplete infrastructure and because of this I'm particularly impressed with this idea, it's simple yet provides so many different advantages for both parties. " -Juror Tracy Chow

"The value of this project is in finding opportunities that are both passive and aptly situated to environmental concerns. The implementation of this structure is both metaphysically and performative in nature. It organizes and collects water and human activity. As an idea it holds tremendous promise, especially in the ability to help societies progress in places that are devastated by the lack of water." *-Juror Douglas Diaz*  "Sustainability is a conceptual ideal of how the human race should be interacting with the world, as we are seeing that there are negative consequences for not dynamically coexisting with our environment. This is why it is our responsibility as designers to work toward a positive global ecosystem."

#### -Jeremy Goodwin



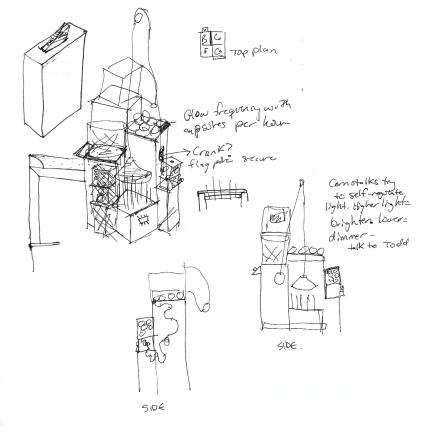


### HOLON A., EXPERIENTIAL INSTALLATION

### **REBECCA STERN**

Design & Technology

The word "holon" signifies a collection of nested systems. Based on the writings of Michael Pollan and Arthur Koestler. Holon A. reflects the holons of American industrial agriculture through an interactive miniaturization. Five integrated modules invite the visitor to ask questions about the efficiency of our industrialized ecosystems. Diorama-style modules cover such topics as E. coli contamination during fabrication of beef, the varying public uses of the term "chicken," traditional fiber arts, and the government's role in the American corn economy. Holon A. utilizes a wide variety of industrial and hand-made materials from electronic components and wood to handsilkscreened plush steak.





"Sustainability is about observing and working within the constructs of a self-supporting ecosystem." *-Rebecca Stern* 





"I was most struck by the cleverness of this concept, and in its capacity to engage and educate the viewer/participant about interconnections that are not obvious on the surface. I love the interaction between the corn stalks light and the radiation level in the meat."

### -Juror Jackie Brookner

"I deeply appreciate the level of conceptual and aesthetic creativity that went into this project. I recognize that this is not an enterprise designed for large scale implementation, and as such, succeeds beautifully. This project conveys the multifarious food shed issue in a very effective way because it begs exploration from the user."

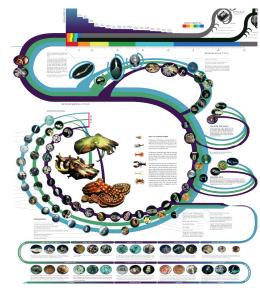
-Juror Ryan Joseph Wood

# MAPPING CEPHALOPODS

### JESSICA LOUIE

Communication Design

Jessica Louie graphically represented the 'life-cycle' of Cephalopods from the Natural World to Human Consumption. Her efforts in this museum exhibition panel are to destroy the preconception that there is a distinct difference between the animal world and our world. Her beautifully designed panel illustrates the struggles and successes of the journeys, using quantitative and qualitative information to portray different aspects of a Cephalopod's story (community, predators, prey, defense, reproduction, growth, and death). She hopes to present a story that allows humans to empathize with their plight. through millions of years of survival, and thus further connect us with our natural world



"This is an excellent submission the definition of sustainability is the best of any submission, and the execution of the concept is gorgeous, extremely thoughtful, and very well researched. The emphasis on biodiversity is a breath of fresh air in this context."

-Juror Jackie Brookner

"My idea of sustainability is allowing biodiversity to flourish, so that the natural environment and artificial human environment can co-exist in harmony. "

-Jessica Louie

## **ACTIVITY CRAFT BOOK**

### STEVEN BAUGHMAN

Design & Technology

Steven's unique take on sustainability was well expressed in skill and craft. Reusing certain garbage as raw materials for creative projects helps to inspire readers to look within their own lives for room for personal change. We saw the value of this book in affording readers to reflect on their own consumption patterns and consider personal accountability, as he defined. The playful and fun way the book is presented helps to encourage projects.

"Sustainability means we must be accountable for prodigal ways, by individually finding the will and means to initiate change." -Steven Baughman



"The most compelling aspect of this project for me was its creation of an opportunity that lies at the intersection between creativity and waste, while encouraging each individual to investigate his/her own habits of waste. The designer creates a critical, creative opportunity without chiding or reprimanding us about our excesses. "

-Juror Loretta Staples



### THE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN REVIEW JURY 2007

"Sustainability is a work in progress, as no product, on its own, can be truly sustainable. A sustainable system is a flow of materials and energy that supports the eco-systems it depends on and those that depend on it. Sustainability is a on-going web of relations."

Amelia Amon, Industrial Designer, Alt-Technica

"Fundamentally, sustainability means life. All life is cyclical, which means a sustainable system is one that renews itself."

#### Chelsea Holden Baker, Assistant Editor, DWELL Magazine

"Sustainability is about human beings learning to live in ways that provide mutual benefit between ourselves and earth's systems and its inhabitants upon whom our survival depends. Sustainability demands that human beings come to a new understanding of what it means to be human—that we see ourselves as only a part of the larger fabric or earth's systems and inhabitants-- and that we learn to celebrate our dependence upon them, and interdependence with them. Then, perhaps, we will be able to sustain our own species while benefitting rather than depleting others."

Jackie Brookner, Eco Artist, New York City

"Sustainability is when the natural environment and the human environment function in unity and a cycle allowing all outputs to equal inputs."

Tracy Chow, Student, Parsons The New School for Design

"Providing for the current needs while not compromising the future." Guy Geier, Principal, FXFOWLE Architects



"The concept of sustainability is quite problematic. On the one hand it is a systematic approach to thinking, being and doing that enables continuity between the now and the future. As such it does not necessarily account for the changes we must enact if we want to sustain life as we know it. And this is precisely the problematic of sustainability, our current way of living is not a desirable model to sustain. We must change, the question is towards what and how will this be a model for sustainability from both humans and non-anthropomorphic points of views?"

#### Douglas Diaz, Professor, Parsons The New School for Design

"Some are unsatisfied with the terms we use to describe our effort to align human intention with our planet's systems. Yet "sustainability" has stuck and I see them in simple terms: Sustainability is life." *Kira Gould, Chair AIA COTE, Director of Communications William McDonough + Partners* 

"The ability to endure, appropriately and ecologically." *Loretta Staples, Professor, Parsons The New School for Design* 

"Sustainability is being aware of the fact that we are not alone in this world, that our generation is not the only one to think about out, that we are all connected and need each other, now and through the generations." *Susan Szenasy, Editor In Chief, METROPOLIS Magazine* 

"Positive reinforcement of the natural construct." Ryan Joseph Wood, Student, Eugene Lang The New School for Liberal Arts

Thank you for participating... Please log on to **http://whysustain.us** and click **"Open Resource Blog"** to continue the conversation that has been started with this contest.

We are excited to read what you have to say about sustainability and the future of student involvement.

http://whysustain.us help@whysustain.us

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### Credits

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### Thank You

The Sustainable Design Review would like to thank the following people for their contributions and efforts to help make this a successful contest:

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