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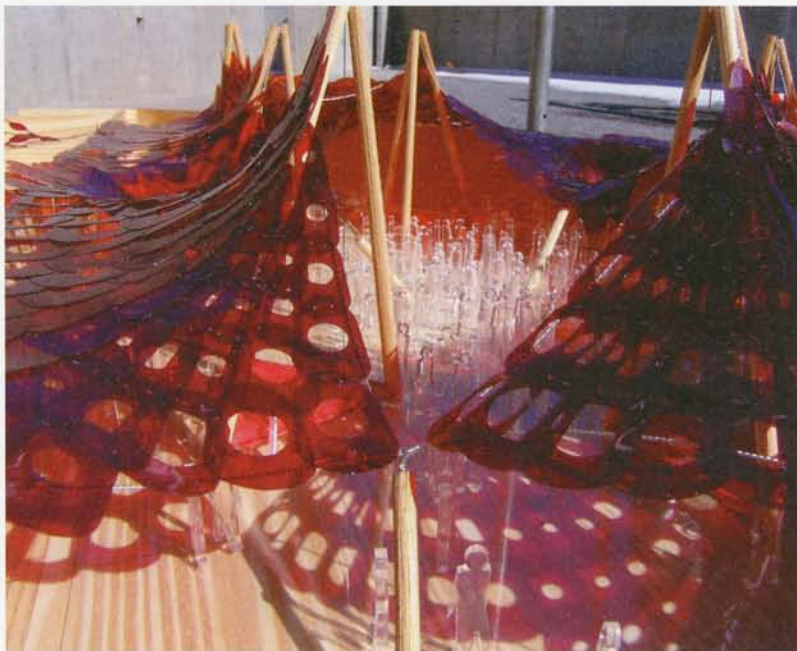
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DESIGN FROM THE INSIDE OUT

SUMMER'S HOT DESIGN

For the last eight years the Museum of Modern Art and its Long Island City, N.Y., outpost, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, have held an invitational Young Architects Program to discover emerging architects. Five firms were invited to submit ideas for installations in the outdoor courtyard of P.S.1, with the chosen proposal serving as a centerpiece for a summer-long series of hip evening programs. This year's winner is titled *Liquid Sky*, a canopied dreamscape created by Benjamin Ball and Gaston Nogues' firm Ball-Nogues. Shimmering scales of tinted Mylar are gathered into a translucent skin that drapes across the courtyard, held in place by six untreated utility poles that also act as supports for giant community hammocks. "When you step into *Liquid Sky*, you've set your mind and body free from the weight of the urban environment and are submerged into an atmosphere of soothing exhilaration, subtle stimulation and inspirational calm," says the architects' statement. So this is what a high-culture circus tent looks like. *Liquid Sky* was unveiled June 21. www.psi.org



DESIGNING DESIGN WRITERS

With design coverage embraced everywhere from *Newsweek* to *Vanity Fair*, no one can deny that design writers are in demand. But the flux of mainstream media interest doesn't necessarily mean qualified individuals are covering the design beat. A new MFA program at the School of Visual Arts hopes to add more experienced voices to that dialogue: The Design Criticism degree will be the first graduate-level program in the country dedicated to critical writing about design.

Founded by Steven Heller and chaired by Alice Twemlow (STEP's own Field Guide editor), the two-year program will prepare students for careers as design critics, journalists and curators, or even as-yet undefined roles in writing and design. In fact, graduates will be empowered to completely reinvent the industry, says Twemlow. "They'll be introduced to the organizations and the people who have defined the field so far and, with the benefit of their work to date, they can then go on to forge entirely new paths for design criticism."

Although tools dedicated to researching, analyzing and evaluating design will be taught, the program will also emphasize the importance of giving context to the role of design in culture, says Twemlow. "I'm keen on providing students with ways to use design as a lens with which to view the social condition more broadly. So it's not just about the formal analysis or connoisseurship of design objects or environments, it's actually more about evaluating the role and agency of those objects and environments in people's everyday lives."

Design writing luminaries like Kurt Andersen, Paola Antonelli, Michael Bierut, Karrie Jacobs and Julie Lasky will make up the faculty. Also incorporated into the program is a way for the students to take their work public: The first-ever conference dedicated to design criticism will be produced by the graduating class, with presentations of their thesis work alongside appearances by some of the world's leading design critics. Prospective students can begin applying in November of this year; the program begins in fall 2008.

www.sva.edu

