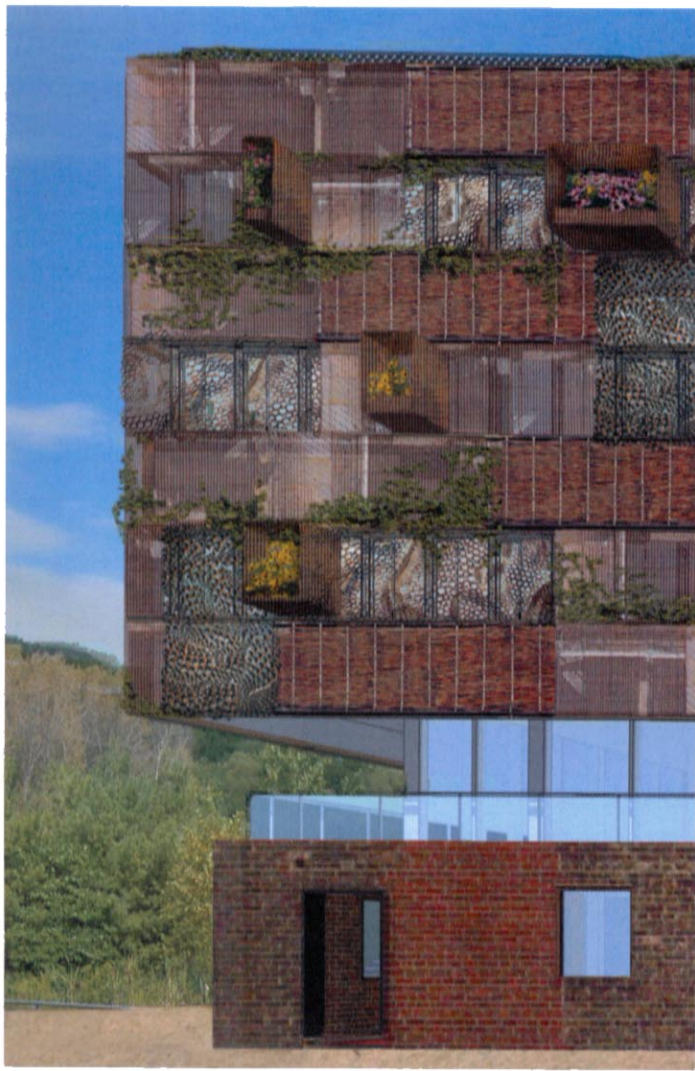


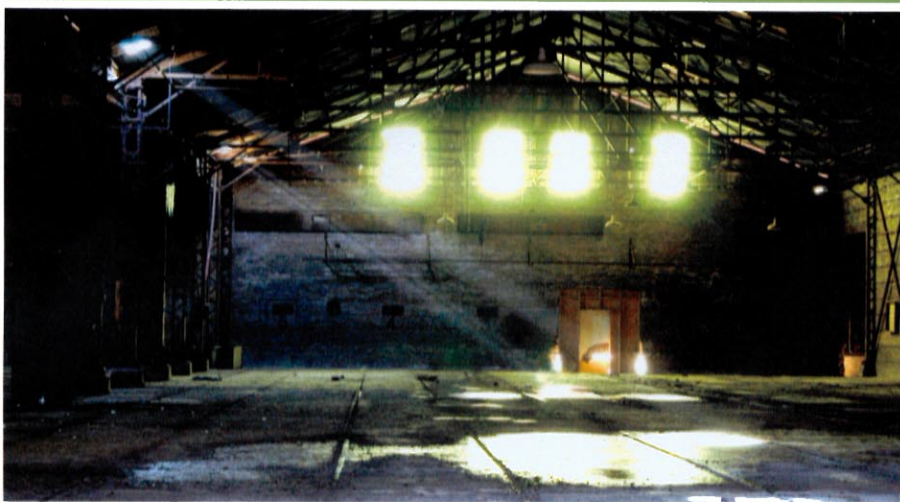
AS CITIES GROW WITHIN EVER MORE CONSTRAINED FOOTPRINTS, DESIGNERS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, DEVELOPERS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS ARE COMING UP WITH EVER MORE CREATIVE WAYS TO REDEVELOP FORMER INDUSTRIAL SITES, OR BROWNFIELDS. HERE ARE FOUR OF THE MOST CUTTING-EDGE

RACHEL PULFER



Old bricks, green fix

From 1889 to 1984, the Don Valley Brick Works provided most of the red blocks that built Toronto. Today, the brick works is a 16-hectare industrial relic in the Don Valley, one of the city's largest ravines. Back in 2005, Evergreen, a non-profit organization that promotes nature in cities, decided to breathe new life into the brick works by calling for proposals; its efforts yielded rich fruit. Amid the site's 16 buildings, Quebec landscape designer Claude Cormier is working on a native garden and market nursery. Toronto architecture firm Diamond + Schmitt is inserting a new building within the base of a historic storage facility. Built to LEED Platinum standards, it will house Evergreen's new offices, as well as those of other community organizations. Furthermore, Vancouver's AldrichPears will provide a series of interpretive exhibits to help visitors pull together the site and its history and ecology. "We call it a design of light touch and loose fit," says project coordinator and lead architect Joe Lobko of du Toit Allsopp Hillier. "We want the site to reflect the touch of many hands."



Soccer for all

Villa Tranquila is a 25-hectare settlement of 7,000 souls, living informally on the site of a former Unilever plant on the outskirts of Buenos Aires. Since 2004, it's also been the subject of intense study by local architects Max Rohm and Flavio Janches.

In 2005, they began to develop plans to transform the villa's in-between spaces into a series of children's playgrounds, soccer fields, plazas, pathways and drainage conduits. Thanks to funding from the Playspace Foundation, a Dutch private organization, two such sites are now under development. "We have funding for this phase," says Rohm, "but the idea is to continue until the proposed network is complete."