Audi
Urban Future
Initiative
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„Audi Urban Future: Project New York" – Architects' quotes

Ingolstadt/New York, 9 May 2011 – Five up-and-coming New York architecture practices have been thinking about urban planning, traffic and ecology in the year 2030 for the Audi Urban Future Initiative. The project is part of the Festival of Ideas for the New City, an event held by the New Museum in New York from 4 to 8 May for which the Audi Urban Future Initiative is a sponsor. In cooperation with the architecture community Architizer, a model has been created, known as the Audi Urban Future: Project New York. This installation illustrates the ideas of the architects on a scale of 1:1200 in the Openhouse Gallery, New York, from 7 to 9 May.

Hudson Yards, west of 10th Ave.
Dominic and Chris Leong of Leong Leong

"We chose Hudson Yards because it is the largest underdeveloped area in Manhattan. We are trying to introduce biological interventions that take over the streets and sidewalks. So one idea is that cars could be like bees and could pollinate different areas of the city."

"Another idea is that there will be a bunch of towers, tall and slim, oriented toward solar exposure, and they'll have wild organic plant life growing on them. These would be more like a sponge tower with open cavities for vegetation. These towers are more like trees than buildings. They are organic."

Turtle Bay near the UN Headquarters
Emily Abruzzo and Gerald Bodziak of Abruzzo Bodziak Architects

"We picked this area because it has a lot of leftover space within the zoning regulations and we want to figure out to fill up that space. How could we envision the future that wouldn't destroy the fabric of the city? Where can you build in Manhattan? Up. We will fill these vertical spaces with different kinds of technologies that will allow energy production."

"One thing that produces energy well is algae, the single-cell organism. It grows fast and needs a lot of light, so these leftover building spaces high in the air lend themselves to that kind of production. We'll build these tube systems filled with mucky-looking water with algae. It's a system akin to a hydroponic farm that is all enclosed so the water never evaporates."

Lower Manhattan from the Holland
Tunnel to the Manhattan Bridge Peter Macapia of LabDora

"We picked this area of Manhattan because we were looking at the major inlets and outlets of traffic. We're looking at info structure between roads and bridges. In 20 or 30 years, we believe networking logic will allow the road to expand and contract. Roads and sidewalks and plazas can blend into one another. Congestion can build up and then you can pull it apart."

"The most efficient way to change a road is to embed in it sensors, tiles that are constantly communicating with each other and your car. So it will reroute cars like a certain kind of autopilot. Its vector will be determined by many factors, like in a flock of birds. Tiles would also provide porosity that will allow for less of an eco impact."

Upper West Side lining Central Park
Marc Fornes of TheVeryMany, LLC.

"We chose a very specific part of the upper West Side, the 49 blocks that line Central Park, because we wanted to work on a neighborhood that was residential. What we specialize in is solving complex geometry so that it can be realized in the physical world. So we took the brownstones and reinvented them. They'll look like a mix between buildings as we know them and organic growth in the middle of the block itself. We will include openings in the facades that will basically be private parks."

"The brownstones will morph from a hard surface into something much more organic, so the more you go inside the block, the more private it gets. The boxes that we live in nowadays are not necessarily the best use of space. We want to rest in a space that is much more organic. The rooms could grow as needed, like a nest."

Washington Heights
Alfred Zollinger and Sandra Wheeler of Matter Practice

"We chose Washington Heights because 300,000 cars and 810 buses pass through the George Washington Bridge expressway every day, making it one of the busiest arteries in the world. Urban mobility with a car is big there. Our proposal is less physical and perhaps more perceptual."

"We feel what would be really exciting would be to bury that expressway and put it back into the tunnels. But that's not realistic. Cars are like capsules. You don't hear or smell anything. You are in your own universe. On the other hand, you have this tech that connects us to any part of the world. So combine these two ideas of cutting yourself off from the world and at the same time to be anywhere you want, and that's what we are playing with. We are evoking air rights to build on top of the expressway."