

DESIGN IN FOCUS

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## Arresting Houses

Homes Around the Globe

**Marisa Yiu...**  
Design Advocate

**Alan Y. L. Chan...**  
New York Living

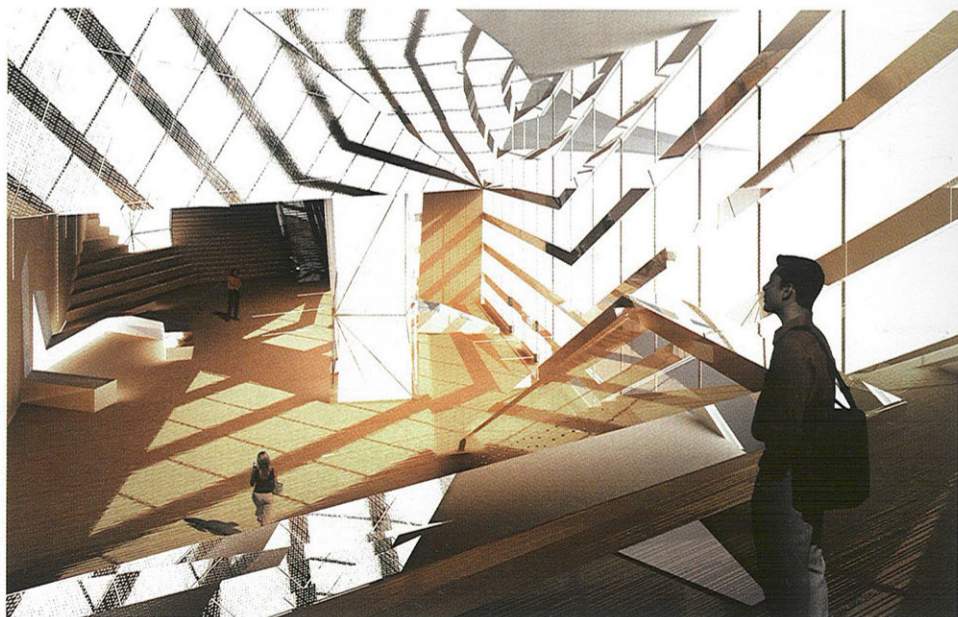
**FAT...**  
Rotterdammerung

## ST ANDREW SQUARE – EDINBURGH



Programmed with 100,000sq ft of sub-divisible office space and 60,000sq ft of shops, this project involves redevelopment of the site of the former headquarters of a large building society. An existing office complex vacated in 2004 became the site of a competition aimed at bringing this area of St Andrew Square back into active use. In such a historically sensitive location (with World Heritage protection), the retention and enhancement of existing listed buildings was necessary. Architects CDA and Gareth Hoskins Architects have therefore worked together to deliver a design solution acknowledging the constraints of heritage and conservation. Designed to complement the modernist icon of the square at No. 6/7, designed by William G Leslie of Rowand Anderson, Kinimonth & Paul, the new plans still follow the commercial imperatives of the location by including large double height shop fronts. Certain masonry facade features will be salvaged for potential reuse. Construction should complete by 2010.

## AVA TOWER – PARIS



Exterior: Platform, Interior: Arthur Coupré

This building – another striking addition proposed for the La Défense area alongside Le Projet Triangle etc. – is situated by the side of an elevated expressway. Architects Manuelle Gautrand hope not just to puncture the skyline with another bauble, but to aid conversion of the thoroughfare from characterless bypass to urban boulevard by 2011. Grouping all the programmes together – shops, restaurant, cafeteria, auditorium – the club building crests either side of the road in the form of twin pyramidal peaks cantilevering boldly; creating public space below. Sun breakers and light catching surfaces absorb solar energy and regulate the heat and illumination inside and out of the building. Dynamic geometric lines characterise the exterior with the verticals on the woven meshing of the facade beginning below the bypass itself. The vital stats on the main tower are that it will rise to a height of 140m and cover 65,000sq m. The effect of the external webbing on the structure can't help but put one in mind of an office block after Spiderman has been at it.