

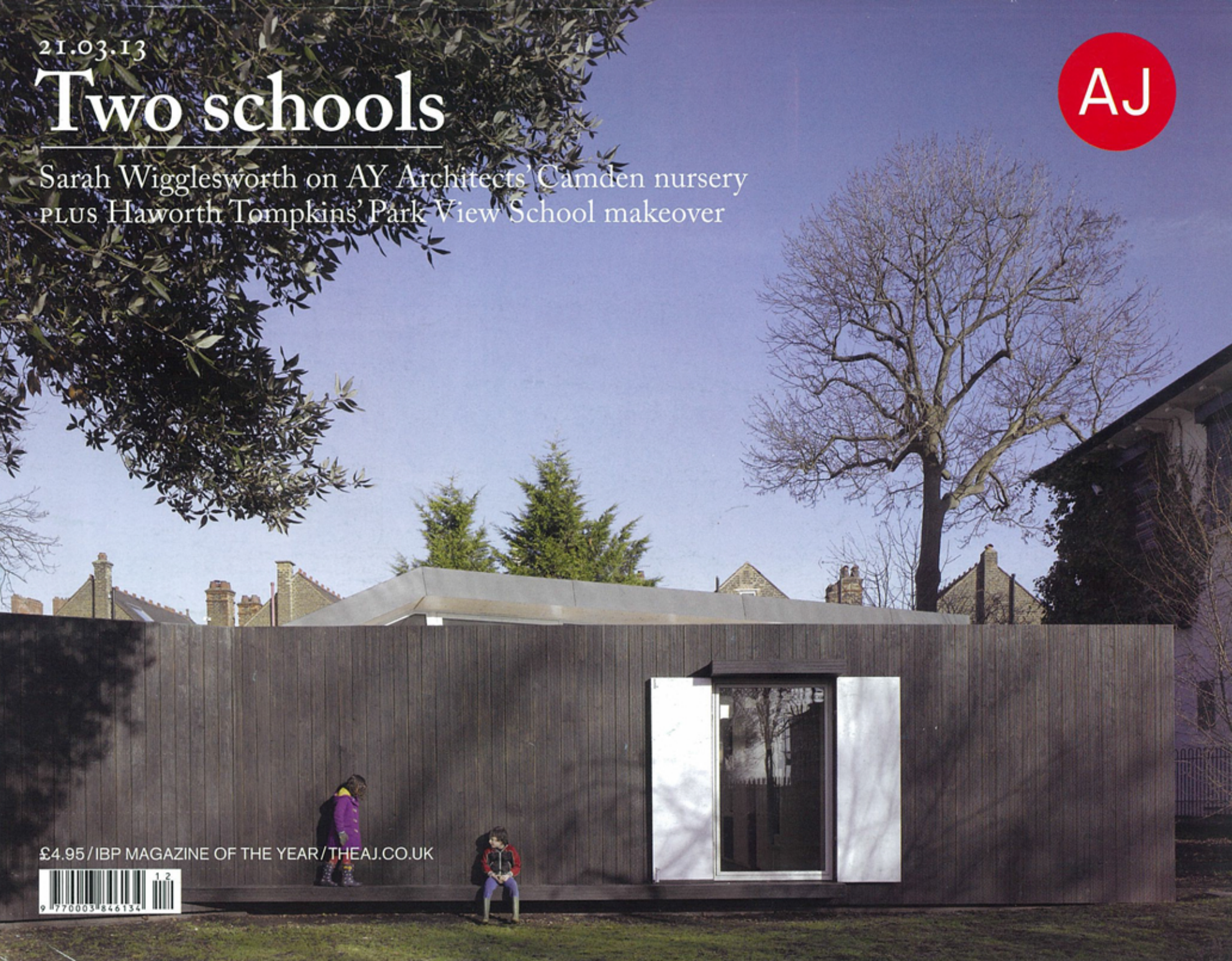
21.03.13

Two schools

Sarah Wigglesworth on AY Architects' Camden nursery
PLUS Haworth Tompkins' Park View School makeover



£4.95 / IBP MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR / THEAJ.CO.UK



Last issue
AJ 14.03.13
Established 1895



Letters should be received by 10am on the Monday before publication. The AJ reserves the right to edit letters.

The letter of the week's author will receive a bone china AJ mug.

Post your letters to the address below or email letters@architectsjournal.co.uk

Exciting Detroit



I read your article 'Detroit City: What's Going On' (AJ 28.02.13) with great interest. Having visited the city in January 2010 as part of a pioneering collaboration between architecture students at Oxford Brookes University (OBU) and the University of Detroit Mercy (UDM), I had to agree with Lizzie Hines' comment that Detroit is one of the most exciting cities I have visited in recent years.

While arguably not one of the world's top travel destinations as a result of its much documented crime, vandalism and racial tensions; Detroit is a playground of potential for creative minds.

During our three-day design charrette with architecture students at UDM, we split into groups and explored design options for particular areas and sites in and around the city.

At the culminating crit, design proposals ranged from utilising existing infrastructure to connect Detroit with the cities of North America using high-speed rail links in order to attract young professionals to live in Detroit

and capitalise on the low cost of living; to cultivating the acres of vacant land downtown and developing biofuel within the city's obsolete factories.

Reading articles such as this three years later, I am reminded of the vision and optimism shared by those architecture students we met who were committed to living and working in Detroit to bring about change, with or without financial backing from central government. This post-industrial city is an exciting example of experimental community-led regeneration and as the article suggests, it is well worth a visit.

Biba Thacker, by email

Gallery or warehouse?

Looking at your double-page spread of the new Louvre at Lens (AJ 21.02.13), I was struck with the thought that if I was the author of one of these masterpieces, worthy of the Louvre collection, I would be less than delighted to find my work displayed in a gallery whose articulation of space and light has all the drama of a retail park carpet warehouse.

Maybe you have to be there, but to me it looks like everything

is for sale.

Simon Gill, by email

Great expectations

The feature about Accordia (AJ 14.03.13) is apparently presented dispassionately, but I feel that in my case at least it has suffered from some unfortunate editing. I am quoted saying that the 'residents are disappointed', but this misses the point I was making in the interview.

As an architect working in Cambridge, I have encountered a lot of professionals and clients who are disappointed when – due to hype – their expectations are not met when they visit. Accordia is an exceptional place, but at the same time it is quite ordinary, with its own issues like many places. Accordia is not a monument, it is a real place – perhaps not an idyll, but that doesn't mean residents love it any less – warts and all. Most publications on Accordia to date have covered the earlier phases and less has been published on the later phases, which are more modest – in this context, the article make some interesting points.

Jimmy Simpson, by email



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