

THE WORLD ARCH BRIEFING · DAILY BRIEFING

25 October: A Fairytale Pair of Houses, a Shed Reborn, and a Framework That Pays Nothing

A house designed to delight, a shed rebuilt as a serious arts building, a waterfront block facing four neighbours, a museum restored by subtraction, a shop with a workshop beside the till, and a framework whose promise never reached the fee note.

By World Arch Journal · Published 25 October 2026 ·



The former City Hall, London, with Tower Bridge behind it. Photo: Mjvdz98, via Wikimedia Commons — CC BY-SA 4.0. Photo source ↗ · CC BY-SA 4.0

This edition selects six reports published on 23–24 October 2026 and checked on 25 October. Each story links directly to its original publication, and every photograph is an independently licensed image — never a news outlet’s own picture — captioned to say exactly what it shows. “Our reading” is independent commentary, not on-site reporting. Estimated reading time: ten minutes.

DAILY BRIEFING · GLOBAL ARCHITECTURE NEWS

Sources checked 25 October 2026. Source statements and our interpretation are distinguished below. How we work ↗

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

What these stories mean together

Across these six stories, the most interesting architecture is not the loudest object on the site. It is the negotiation with what is already there: a pair of houses that argue for delight on an ordinary street, a shed rebuilt without losing its shed-ness, a waterfront block that turns a different face to each neighbour, a museum put back together by restoring a plan rather than adding a wing, a shop whose sustainability claim is a floor plan with workshops in it, and a framework whose diversity exists on the roster but not in the fee notes. The profession keeps announcing that context, reuse and access matter; this week, the evidence arrived from six directions at once, and so did the counter-evidence.

- Delight: when a house is designed to provoke a reaction, who gets to decide whether the street benefits — the architect, the neighbours, or the planning system?
- Reuse: what does a rebuilt shed owe the original — its form, its cheapness, its roughness — and what may it fix without betraying it?
- Waterfronts: is a building that faces four different neighbours with four different elevations doing urban design, or just dressing up a standard block?
- Access: if a framework appoints diverse practices but pays almost none of them, is the next version a reform — or a rerun?

This issue draws on six published reports from Dezeen, Architectural Record, The Architects’ Journal, ArchDaily and designboom. It does not independently verify the projects on site, and where no freely licensed photograph of a subject exists, the caption says so plainly rather than substituting a lookalike.

Six stories: a pink pair of houses, a shed reborn, a Glasgow waterfront block, a Bilbao museum put back together, a Bali store that shows its working, and a London framework that pays nothing

This edition pairs an architect's own pink, arch-covered houses in Gospel Oak with a shed reborn as an arts hall at Rice University, an 89-home scheme on Glasgow's Clyde waterfront, a competition-winning renovation for Bilbao's Basque Museum, a Bali store where dyeing and plastic shredding happen beside the till, and an investigation into a London procurement framework that has paid several small practices nothing at all. Each story links directly to its original publication, and every photograph is an independently licensed image — never a news outlet's own picture. "Our reading" is independent commentary, not on-site reporting. Estimated reading time: ten minutes.

01 / A “fairytale” pair of pink houses lands in Gospel Oak

Source published: 24 October 2026



Pastel-rendered terraces on Leverton Street, Kentish Town (NW5) — the north London streets around Gospel Oak. Photo: Nigel Cox, via Wikimedia Commons — CC BY-SA 2.0. This is not Cloud House itself; no freely licensed photograph of the house exists yet. Photo source ↗ · CC BY-SA 2.0

Peter Morris Architects has completed Cloud House in Gospel Oak, London: two offset, semi-detached residences in a single composition on the site of a demolished Victorian home, next to the Grade I-listed St Martin’s Church. One is a 133-square-metre home for the architect and his partner; the other, a 165-square-metre home for a neighbour, arranged upside-down with social space on the top floor. Building work finished in August 2026.

The houses are marshmallow-pink in render, with sweeping arches and turquoise detailing — a palette and a curve language drawn, by the architect’s account, from a Miami honeymoon, the city’s art deco

architecture and the arches of the neighbouring church. The structure is steel and blockwork; the decorative arches are dense polystyrene sprayed with a waterproof layer and a textured top coat, fixed in place by the architect himself. The architect's home has an open-plan ground floor with lounge, kitchen and studio, a bedroom and bathroom on each upper floor, and a roof terrace with an outdoor bath.

OUR ANALYSIS

Colour is treated as frivolous until a street full of it proves otherwise. The test of this house is not whether everyone likes pink — by the architect's own account, reaction has split sharply between enthusiasm and dislike, with nothing in between — but whether planning and neighbours will tolerate a building whose main argument is delight. Cheap, lightweight arch elements over a conventional structure make the flamboyant silhouette affordable; the harder question is whether a street can absorb one house arguing loudly while the rest whisper.

Read source: Dezeen — Peter Morris completes “fairytale” Cloud House in London, 24 October 2026 ↗

02 / Diller Scofidio + Renfro rebuilds the shed — as a better shed

Source published: 23 October 2026



Rice University campus in Houston — Herzstein Hall (left) and Lovett Hall (right). Photo: Harry Walker, via Wikimedia Commons — CC0. Sarofim Hall itself is not pictured; no freely licensed photograph of it exists yet. Photo source ↗ · CC0

The Susan and Faye Sarofim Hall at Rice University in Houston, by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, is a 94,000-square-foot, three-storey visual and performing arts building holding studios, galleries, photography and film-editing labs, workshops and a cinema. It opened in autumn 2025 on the site of the former Art Barn, the pre-engineered steel “Butler building” shed that served the university’s art department from 1969 until its demolition in 2014.

The new hall reworks the shed type rather than quoting it: corrugated aluminium facades, largely windowless, with two end facades set back to form a west front porch in steam-treated bamboo decking and an east loading dock and outdoor work area. A glazed breezeway cuts through the building on two intersecting glass planes, with an ETFE roof over the passage, an expandable gallery and performance space at ground level, an open-air “living room” on the second floor and a crit hall on the third. Studios stay deliberately utilitarian — high ceilings, concrete floors, pinboard walls — and the front facade is designed so student work can be bolted to it or projected onto it.

OUR ANALYSIS

The most respectful tribute to a legendary shed is not a replica but a better shed — one that keeps the cheap, flexible, industrial DNA and fixes the one thing the original never had, which is a public face. The angled glass wall is oriented to channel Gulf breezes so open-air circulation stays comfortable in Houston heat; the gamble is climatic as much as formal. A building that treats art production as something to be seen happening, not hidden behind a gallery facade, is a curriculum decision drawn in plan and section.

Read source: Architectural Record — Diller Scofidio + Renfro reimagines the humble metal shed as an arts hub at Rice University, 23 October 2026 ↗

03 / Glasgow Waters gains an 89-home block that faces four ways

Source published: 23 October 2026



Sunset across the River Clyde by the Riverside Museum, Glasgow — the river setting of the Yorkhill Quay site. Photo: Midwich Cuckoo, via Wikimedia Commons — CC BY-SA 3.0. The proposed HAUS Collective building is unbuilt and not pictured. Photo source ↗ · CC BY-SA 3.0

HAUS Collective has submitted plans for an 89-home mixed-use block at Yorkhill Quay, Glasgow Waters, on the River Clyde between the Riverside Museum and the Clydeside Distillery, for developers Urban Pulse and Peel Waters. The six-to-seven-storey building would hold one-, two- and three-bedroom private apartments plus commercial space at ground level fronting the river, with private balconies, rooftop terraces, around 786 square metres of resident amenity space, green roofs, renewable energy technologies and a flood-resilient design strategy. Outline consent for Yorkhill Quay was granted in 2024.

The building is designed with four different elevations responding to its four surroundings: distillery to the east, quay to the west, River Clyde to the south and city to the north. It also aspires to carry a large-scale public art installation on its northern elevation, drawing on Yorkhill Quay's maritime heritage and its Anchor Line shipping connection. It is the second residential application at Yorkhill Quay after a 526-home co-living scheme, with infrastructure works including a 400-metre waterfront promenade under way.

OUR ANALYSIS

The four-elevation brief is the honest way to design a waterfront block. A building that turns a different face to the river, the distillery, the quay and the city is already doing the urban design work that a single repeated facade cannot — and waterfront housing is never just housing: the ground floor, the flood line and the public realm are the project, and the apartments sit on top of them. The question for the planning committee is whether four elevations survive value engineering as four designs, or collapse into one design with four trims.

Read source: The Architects' Journal — HAUS Collective submits 89-home latest phase of Glasgow Waters, 23 October 2026 [↗](#)

04 / Bilbao's Basque Museum is to be put back together, not rebuilt

Source published: 23 October 2026



Plaza Unamuno in Bilbao's old town, with the Basque Museum building visible at the left. Photo: Javier Mediavilla Ezquibela, via Wikimedia Commons — CC BY 2.5. Photo source ↗ · CC BY 2.5

VAILLO + ARCHITECTS has won the competition for the comprehensive architectural and museographic renovation of the Euskal Museoa Bilbao, the Ethnographic Museum of Basque Culture in the city's old town. The museum complex occupies a city block originating in the 17th century as Bilbao's first Jesuit college, founded in 1600, and its layout has been altered by successive renovations over the centuries.

The proposal reorganises five volumes using the historical floor plan from 1867 as a reference, restores the cloister to its original dimensions, and gives each building a specific museum function: administration, permanent collection, temporary exhibitions and immersive areas. Connections between the buildings are restored and lime mortar cladding is applied to unify the complex. The design concept is "aritz bizia" — the tree as a metaphor for Basque culture — expressed in a longitudinal wooden box conceived as a tree trunk and roof trusses evoking a tree canopy and the traditional structures of farmhouses and shipbuilding. Materials are stone, wood and black steel.

OUR ANALYSIS

The bravest move in a museum renovation is often subtraction. Restoring a cloister and a plan, rather than adding a signature wing, lets the building itself become the first exhibit — and the tree metaphor does real work here, giving the museum a spatial idea (trunk, canopy, farmhouse and shipbuilding frames) that connects the building's structure to the culture it exhibits, instead of decorating a neutral box with ethnographic content. The risk is the opposite: a metaphor so complete that it smooths over the very accretions — centuries of alteration — that made the complex interesting in the first place.

Read source: ArchDaily — Basque Museum Bilbao / VAILLO + ARCHITECTS, 23 October 2026 ↗

05 / In Bali, a store that shows its working

Source published: 23 October 2026



Petitenget Beach, Seminyak, Bali — the resort town where the Good Times General Store stands. Photo: jpatokal, via Wikimedia Commons — CC BY-SA 4.0. The store itself is not pictured. Photo source ↗ · CC BY-SA 4.0

OMA, with Ade Herkarisma of Potato Head, has designed the Good Times General Store at Desa Potato Head in Seminyak, Bali: the brand's first permanent store, doubling as a craft centre selling Indonesian-made objects, fashion and furniture alongside hands-on workshops. The building uses an alang-alang thatch facade, rammed-earth walls from local clay, reclaimed wood, and terrazzo floors incorporating recycled bamboo offcuts, with fragmented earthen blocks organising the interior.

Inside, five interconnected bays trace stages in the lifecycle of objects: artisan souvenirs and independent makers; Potato Head's clothing and travel collection; the Wasted collection by Max Lamb, turning discarded plastics into furniture and homeware; a natural dye studio using pigments from plants and food waste collected across the resort; and a workshop for plastic moulding around a wall of shredded HDPE plastic recovered through collectors and upcyclers in Bali and Java. Further ateliers for weaving, upcycling and sewing are planned for 2027. The store connects to the resort's existing Waste Lab and Follow the Waste Tour.

OUR ANALYSIS

Circular design fails when it is a label; here it is a floor plan. The most convincing sustainability claim in retail is a workshop next to the till, not a slogan above it — a visitor can follow an object from discarded plastic to finished product in a single visit, and the architecture backs the argument with local, low-processed materials used plainly rather than dressed up. It only works because the resort behind it already runs the waste infrastructure the store describes; a standalone shop importing the same story would be set dressing.

Read source: [designboom — OMA designs Potato Head's Good Times General Store in Bali, 23 October 2026 ↗](#)

o6 / “We’ve earned £0”: is London’s architecture framework failing small practices?

Source published: 23 October 2026



City Hall, More London, with The Shard behind it — the Greater London Authority’s headquarters from 2002 to 2021. Photo: N Chadwick, via Wikimedia Commons — CC BY-SA 2.0. Photo source ↗ · CC BY-SA 2.0

The Architects’ Journal reports that several small and minority-run practices appointed to the Mayor of London’s Architecture + Urbanism (A+U) framework have earned little or nothing from it. Nimtim Architects reports £0 invoiced from the framework to date; Office Sian, part of a Karakusevic Carson-led consortium, received around £2,500 of the consortium’s £2.1 million and has resigned from the framework; PUP Architects had four invitations to tender and submitted one proposal in three years; McCloy + Muchemwa won no fee-paying work. The framework, launched in 2023 as successor to the ADUP2 panel with 65 appointed practices, expires at the end of February.

The numbers tell the structural story. The AJ contrasts the predecessor panel, where six practices each won over £2 million, with A+U, where only the Karakusevic Carson consortium has passed £2 million and only five members have topped £1 million; jobs commissioned through A+U so far total £15 million against

£41 million for its predecessor. The framework was launched to open public-sector work to a wider range of practice sizes and backgrounds, and 57 per cent of places went to diverse-led enterprises. The GLA says more than half of projects using the framework went to diverse-led suppliers and 46 per cent to small suppliers, and that the next framework will include significant changes after feedback.

OUR ANALYSIS

Diversity on a framework roster is not diversity of work. Being named to the roster cost small practices months of rigorous, labour-intensive bidding, yet the actual tenders — judged on experience, track record and personnel — repeatedly favoured larger, established firms on the same lots. With expiry four months away, the question is not whether the idea was good but whether the next version changes how lots are tendered, or simply re-runs the same competition with a new name. Appointment, on this evidence, is just a certificate on the wall until a small practice can win without first outbidding the firms the framework was meant to balance.

Read source: The Architects' Journal — Getting on the framework but missing out on the work, 23 October 2026 ↗

The editor's test: what delight, reuse and access are worth

Read together, the six stories share one test: does the architecture earn its claim in built form, or only in its announcement? Cloud House earns its delight argument with cheap, buildable arches and pays for it in neighbourly friction. Sarofim Hall earns its shed argument by keeping the shed's virtues and fixing its public face. The Glasgow block earns its waterfront argument only if four elevations survive as four designs. The Bilbao museum earns its tree argument by letting subtraction do the work. The Bali store earns its circularity argument with workshops, not words. And the London framework fails its access argument precisely where it counts — in the fee note.

That is the test to carry into next week's stories: not whether a project's idea is good, but where its cost falls — on the neighbour, on the structure, on the public realm, on the small practice — and whether the building, rather than the press release, pays it.

Further reading

- Browse the previous briefing (24 October)
- How to read a floor plan like an architect: symbols, scale and red flags
- Small bathroom design: layout, storage and light in a tiny bathroom
- What good dense housing looks like: 8 lessons from the 2026 Stirling Prize winner
- Adaptive reuse: keeping the buildings worth keeping
- Carbon budgets for buildings: how architects set a CO2 target and hit it
- Browse every dated architecture briefing

Source notes

Official announcements and source reporting are linked below. Interpretations labelled “Our reading” are World Arch Journal commentary, not claims made by the source organisations. No sponsored placement is included in this edition.

1. Dezeen — Peter Morris completes “fairytale” Cloud House in London, 24 October 2026 ↗
2. Architectural Record — Diller Scofidio + Renfro reimagine the humble metal shed as an arts hub at Rice University, 23 October 2026 ↗
3. The Architects’ Journal — HAUS Collective submits 89-home latest phase of Glasgow Waters, 23 October 2026 ↗
4. ArchDaily — Basque Museum Bilbao / VAILLO + ARCHITECTS, 23 October 2026 ↗
5. designboom — OMA designs Potato Head’s Good Times General Store in Bali, 23 October 2026 ↗
6. The Architects’ Journal — Getting on the framework but missing out on the work, 23 October 2026 ↗

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