



ED'S NOTE

If there is one issue that sets the agenda in architecture at the moment, it is sustainability: "green" building. The very term green building almost inevitably turns into a debate about what makes a building "green" and how you measure it. That's one of the reasons awards like this month's AfriSam-SAIA Awards for Sustainable Architecture + Innovation are so interesting and important. Since the awards' inception, the criteria have become more complex as our architectural responses to the issue have become more diverse and complex. This

issue of *Leading Architecture*

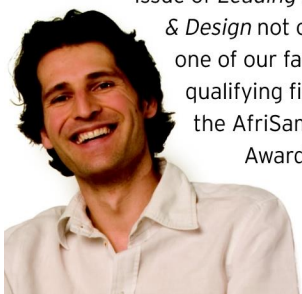
& *Design* not only features

one of our favourite

qualifying finalists for

the AfriSam-SAIA

Awards, but



also reflects the ongoing debate about sustainability. Part of the reason greening has gained mainstream traction is that improved energy efficiency is cost effective, even profitable. See what Clay Nester of Johnson Controls, who spoke at this year's GBCSA, has to say about refurbishing the Empire State Building on our back page. Gary Crawford refers to the same building when discussing life cycle costing and introducing Sasda's new app, designed to help calculate the efficiency of materials over the entire life cycle of a building, from the extraction of materials from the earth, to decommissioning of a building at the end of its life and recycling the materials it's made of. Another, much smaller building in this issue, made from recycled materials, captures how the issue of sustainability is also linked to the broader question of changing lives,

and the social and economic future of individuals. Skateistan SA is a simple building made from donated shipping containers, for award-winning non-profit organisation Skateistan, which aims to help low-income youth with various after-school programmes, using skateboarding as a hook. Not only is the building made from recycled materials, its interiors are also fitted out with materials from Saint-Gobain. It is a remarkable case study in how buildings themselves can improve education, through creating conducive environments in which students can be warm and comfortable, can hear and see teachers better, breathe clean healthy air and feel safe. Wouldn't it be great if some of those kids got to spend time in UCT's New Engineering Building, beautifully designed by SAOTA?

Enjoy the issue.

Graham