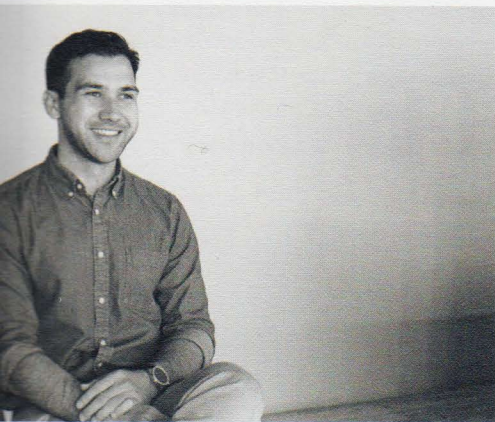


BRAIN TRUST

AR ASKS A PANEL OF INDUSTRY EXPERTS THEIR RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION:
WHAT QUALITIES AND PARTICULAR SKILLS DOES YOUR PRACTICE LOOK FOR WHEN HIRING NEW ARCHITECTS?



/ JOE LOH SENIOR ASSOCIATE, SJB

In the last 10 years, SJB has doubled in size, driven largely by the increasing scale and complexity of mixed-use projects. The way our team has grown is indicative of the way architectural practice has evolved and projects are put together. Increasingly, the simple single client-architect agreements are being replaced by multi-headed stakeholder groups with various funding arrangements, represented by third parties. Planning is becoming more uncertain and complex, in contrast to delivery, which is rapid and challenged by an overseas workforce that is highly skilled with seemingly unlimited capacity. We now require a broader range of specialists that can manage the growing demands of our projects.

Our profession requires us to be simultaneously specialised

and diverse, which is what we look for in our candidates. Revit or Vectorworks matter less than the person using the program. We choose to focus on employing people who are naturally curious, creative and decisive. Certainly, technology and knowing how to use it is important, and we rely upon the early adopters to introduce us to new ways of working. At SJB, our belief is that good open communication, diversity of backgrounds and experience can foster an environment that allows leaders to emerge.

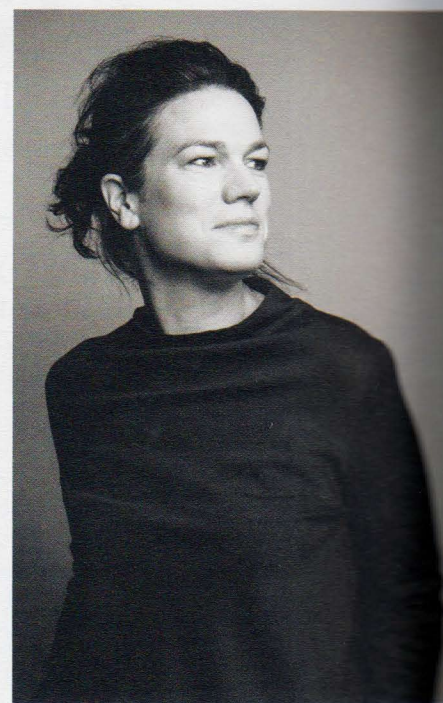
A successful architect can be an expert relationship manager, a deft negotiator, a technical guru or many other things, but they do not need to be all of these at once. Creative thinking, design and a desire to create amazing spaces can bind a diverse set of people and so, ultimately, all we are looking for are people we enjoy spending time with.

/ MEL BRIGHT DIRECTOR, MAKE ARCHITECTURE

We look for durable designers who can handle robust design discussions, as we like to stand around and debate design, so egos will need to be left at the door. The best people are just trying to work towards finding the right design solution and it gets done as a team in a collaborative manner. It doesn't matter so much who did what, but that we got to the right answer.

We believe that a supportive design culture is the key ingredient to the success of any practice, far more than individual talent. As such we strive to create an environment where feedback is constructive and challenges are construed as learning opportunities.

The MAKE studio is like a little family, so it is important for us to find the right people who fit in with the studio culture. For MAKE this consists of graciousness and being conscientious, in giving credit where it's due, and a readiness to impart knowledge and skills. We have moved away from an organisational structure based on hierarchy, instead recognising that knowledge and skills can flow both ways from students to more experienced project architects, and vice versa. An equitable level of respect for



our colleagues and a generosity to provide assistance are thus qualities that are hugely important to us.

Additionally, we want to employ people that we like spending time with, outside of the context of a studio. We do many things together as a team apart from designing buildings – daily office lunches, sessions with our personal trainer and attending industry events. In short, passionate, enthusiastic, friendly people are the sorts of architects that we want to be part of our team.