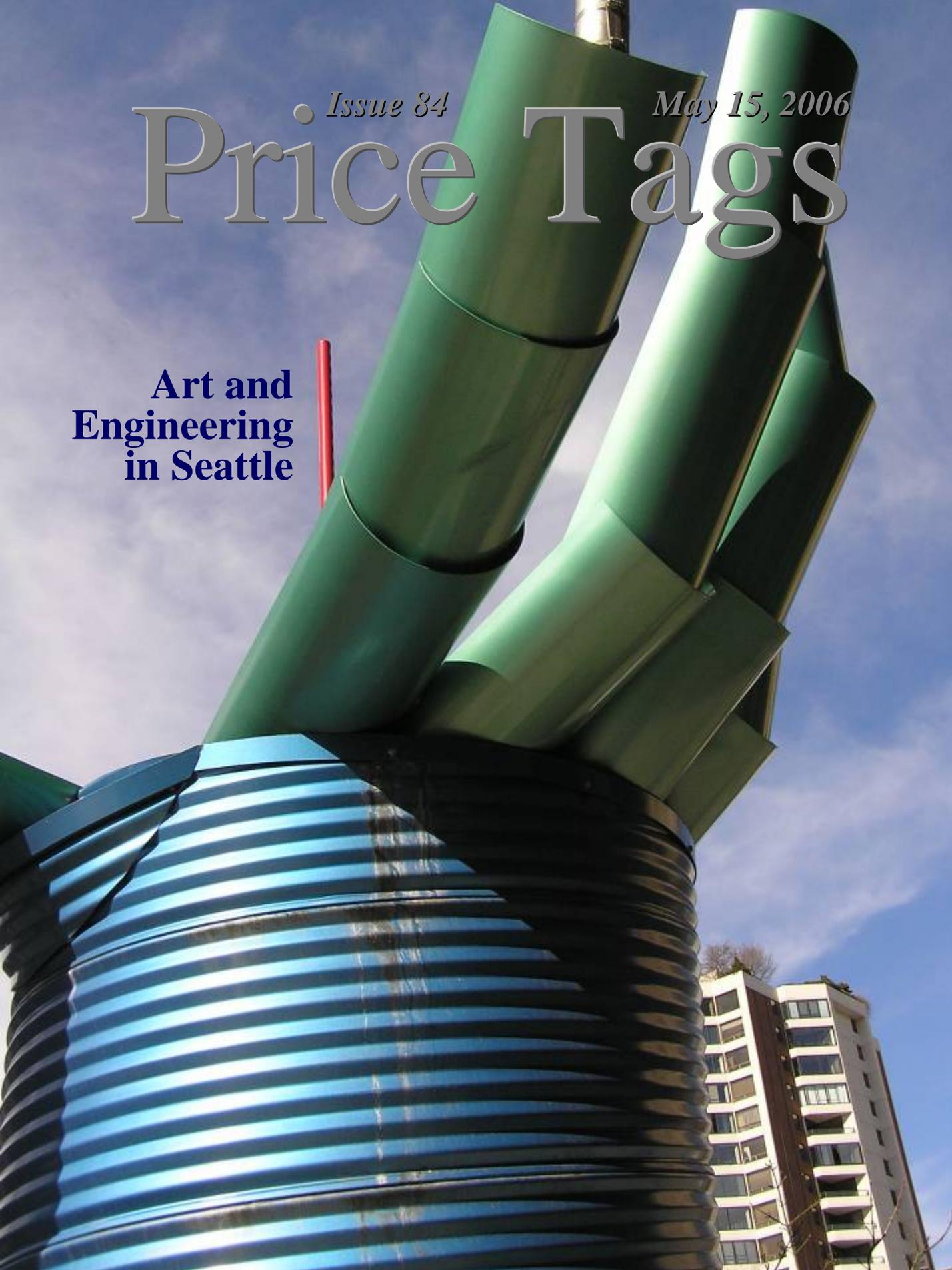


Issue 84

May 15, 2006

Price Tags

**Art and
Engineering
in Seattle**

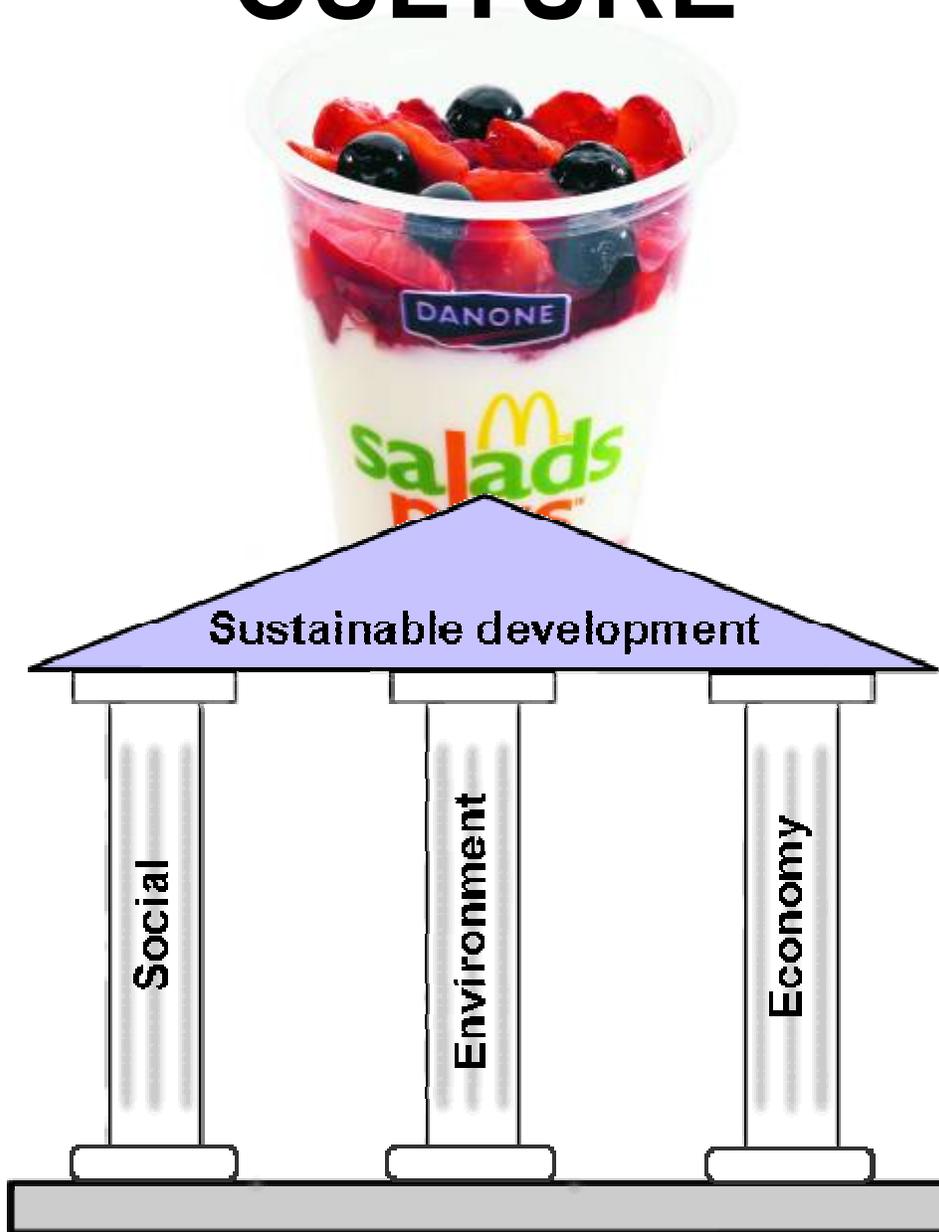


PEOPLEPLANETPROFIT

The “three pillars of sustainability,” as coined by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, are human well-being, natural life-support and economic growth.

Others feel there should be a fourth pillar:

CULTURE



Easy to agree with, hard to define.

Is cultural sustainability achieved by funding the arts, building performance spaces into complete communities, acknowledging multicultural realities? Well, sure.

But here's what I found on Seattle's **Vine Street**.

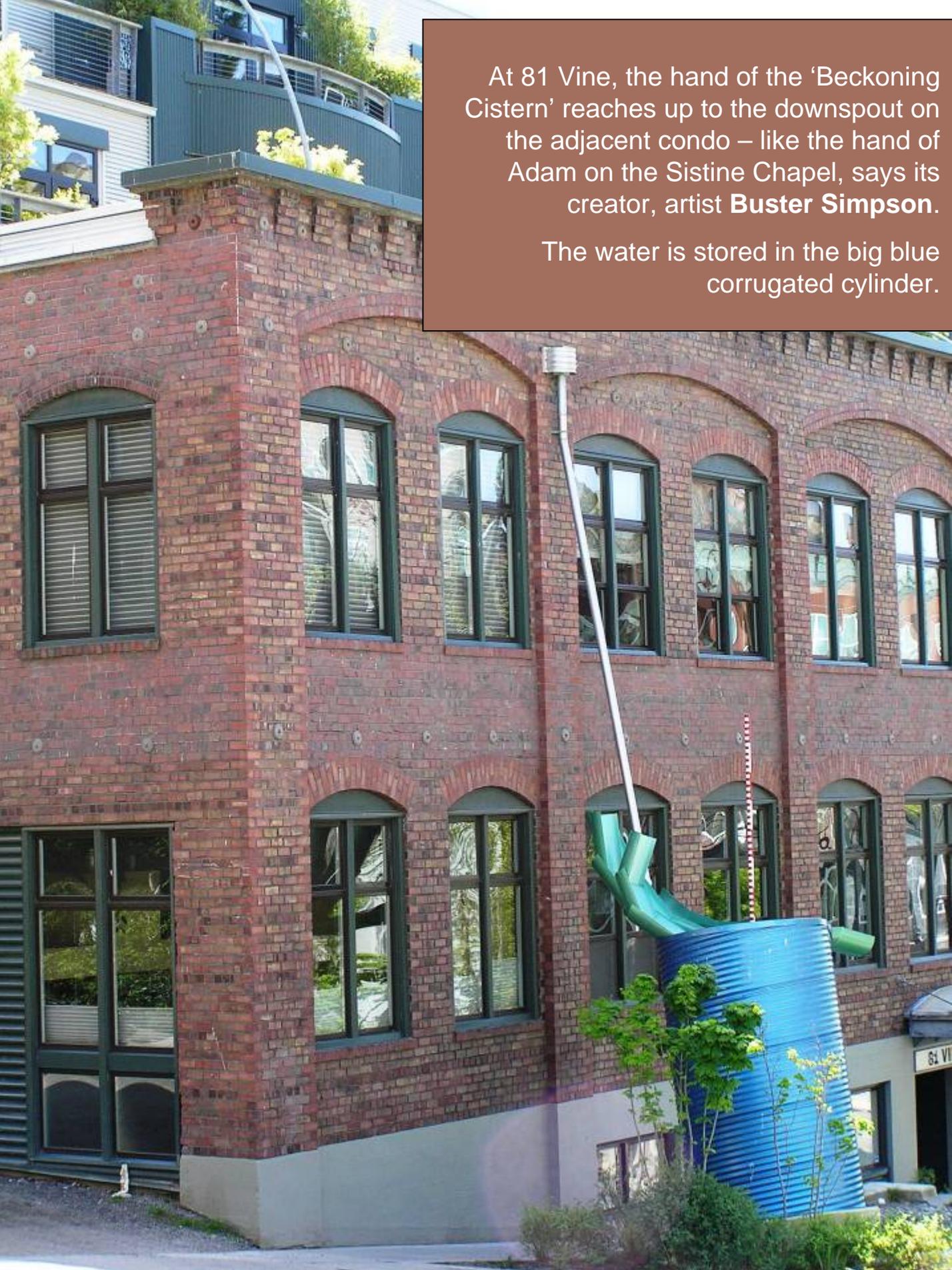


In Belltown (the emerging high-density neighbourhood just north of downtown on the slopes overlooking Elliott Bay), you'll find several cascading blocks where 'sculpture meets infrastructure.' [More here.](#)

"A laboratory of green solutions within an urban context" says the brochure. Roof run-off, biofiltration and green space are all elements of an eight-block urban stream – a *runnel*. But the fun part is the art.

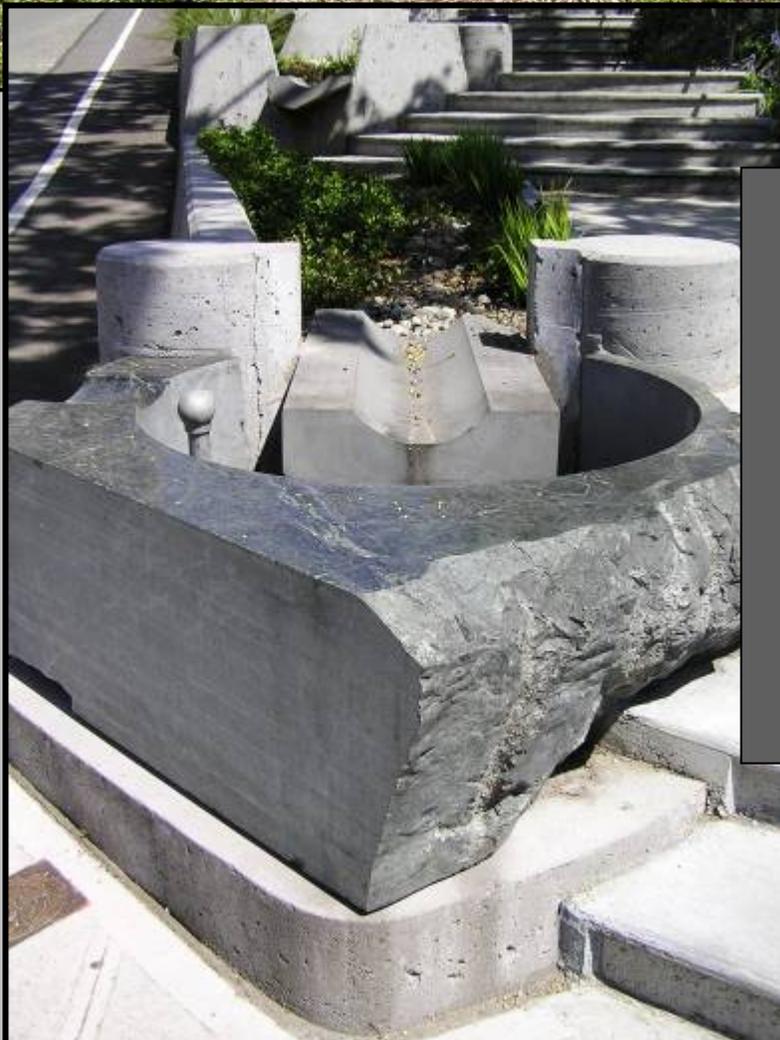
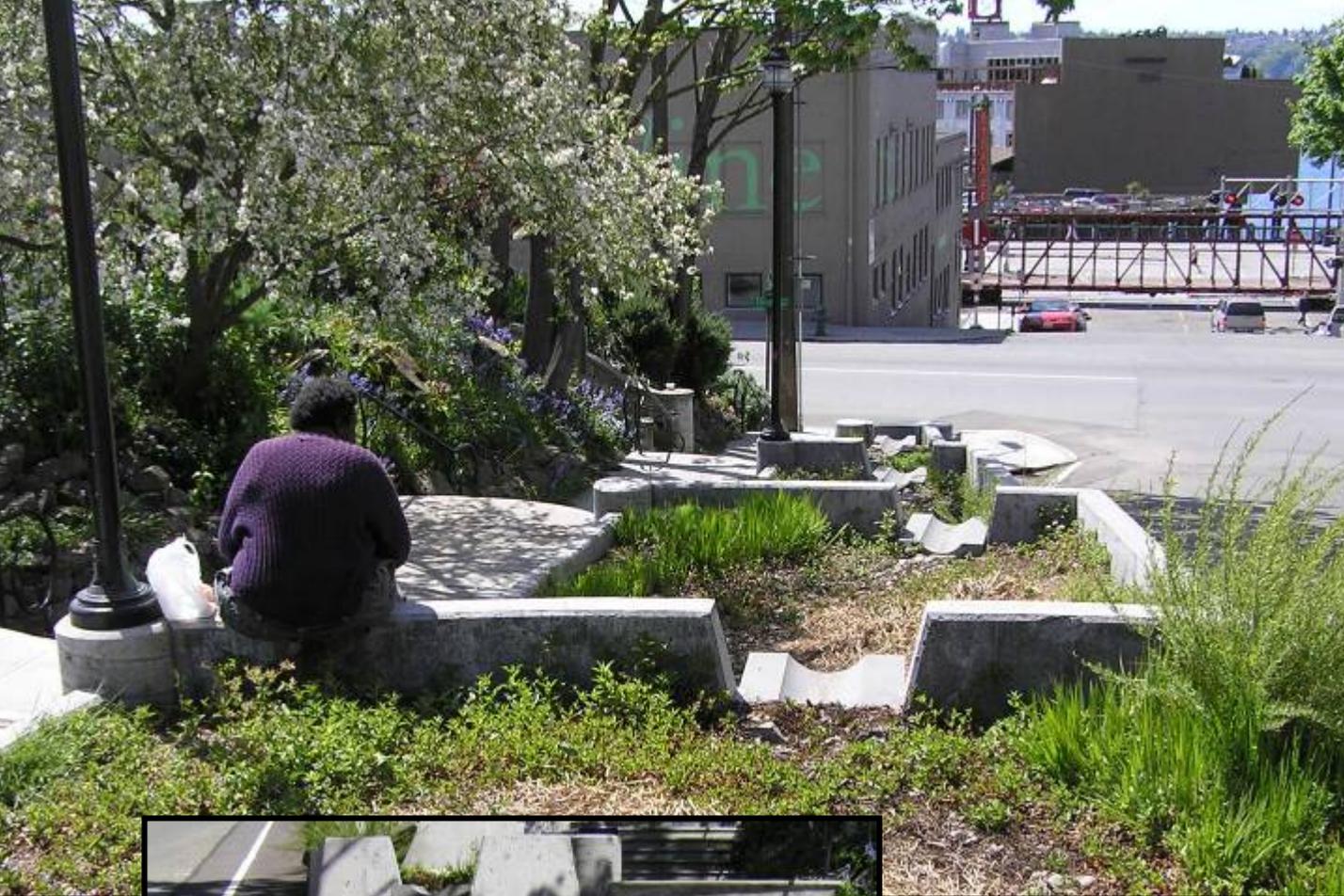
At 81 Vine, the hand of the 'Beckoning Cistern' reaches up to the downspout on the adjacent condo – like the hand of Adam on the Sistine Chapel, says its creator, artist **Buster Simpson**.

The water is stored in the big blue corrugated cylinder.



During heavy rain, the overflow cascades into a water garden.

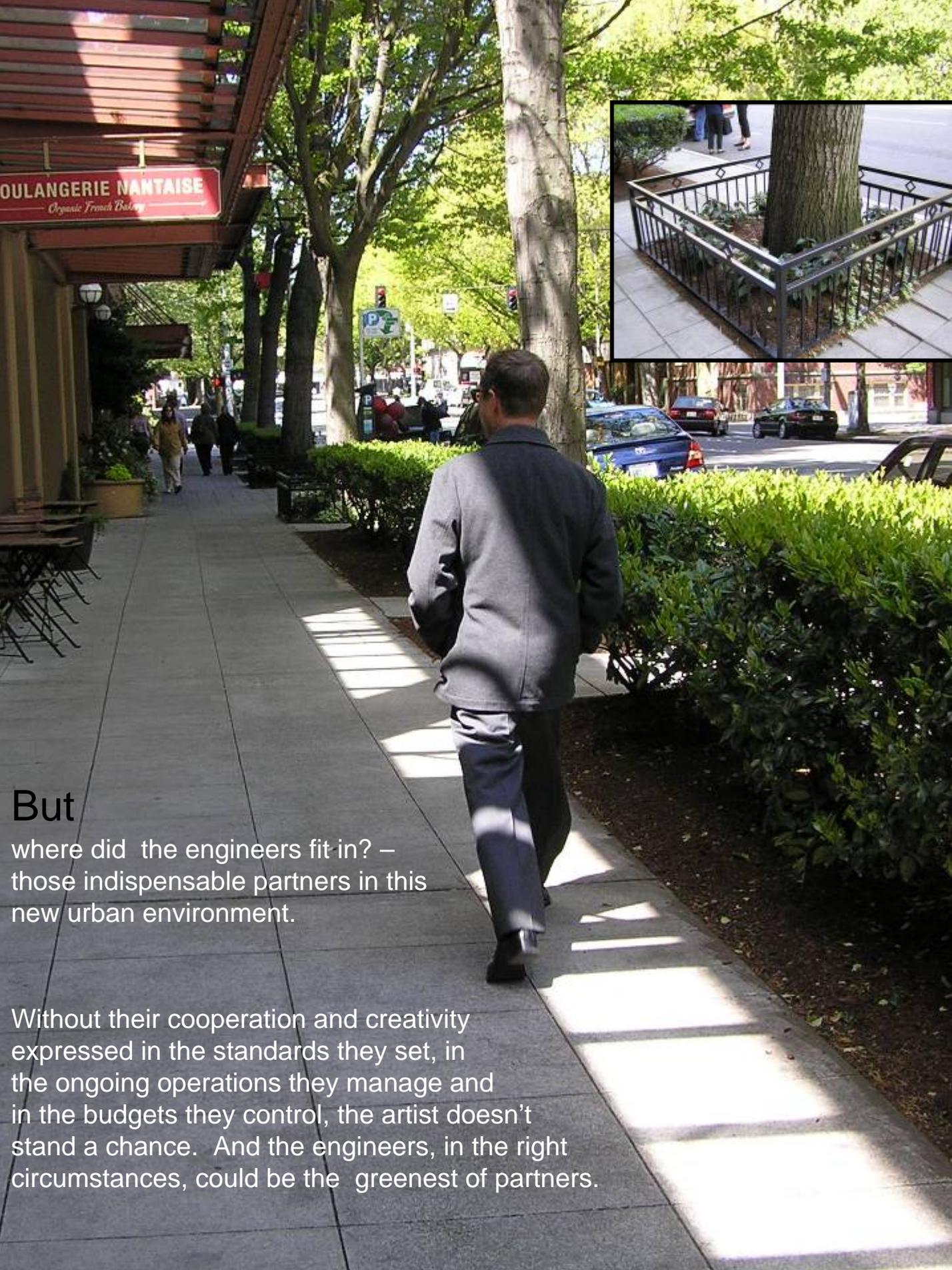




From the garden, the water flows through three shallow planters, under the lane to the Cistern Steps adjacent to the P-Patch, eventually to a small jade pool at Elliott Avenue. The effect is enchanting.



The P-Patch is a community garden and much-needed green space, where water and earth are the paint and pallet of the gardeners.



BOULANGERIE NANTAISE
Organic French Bakery



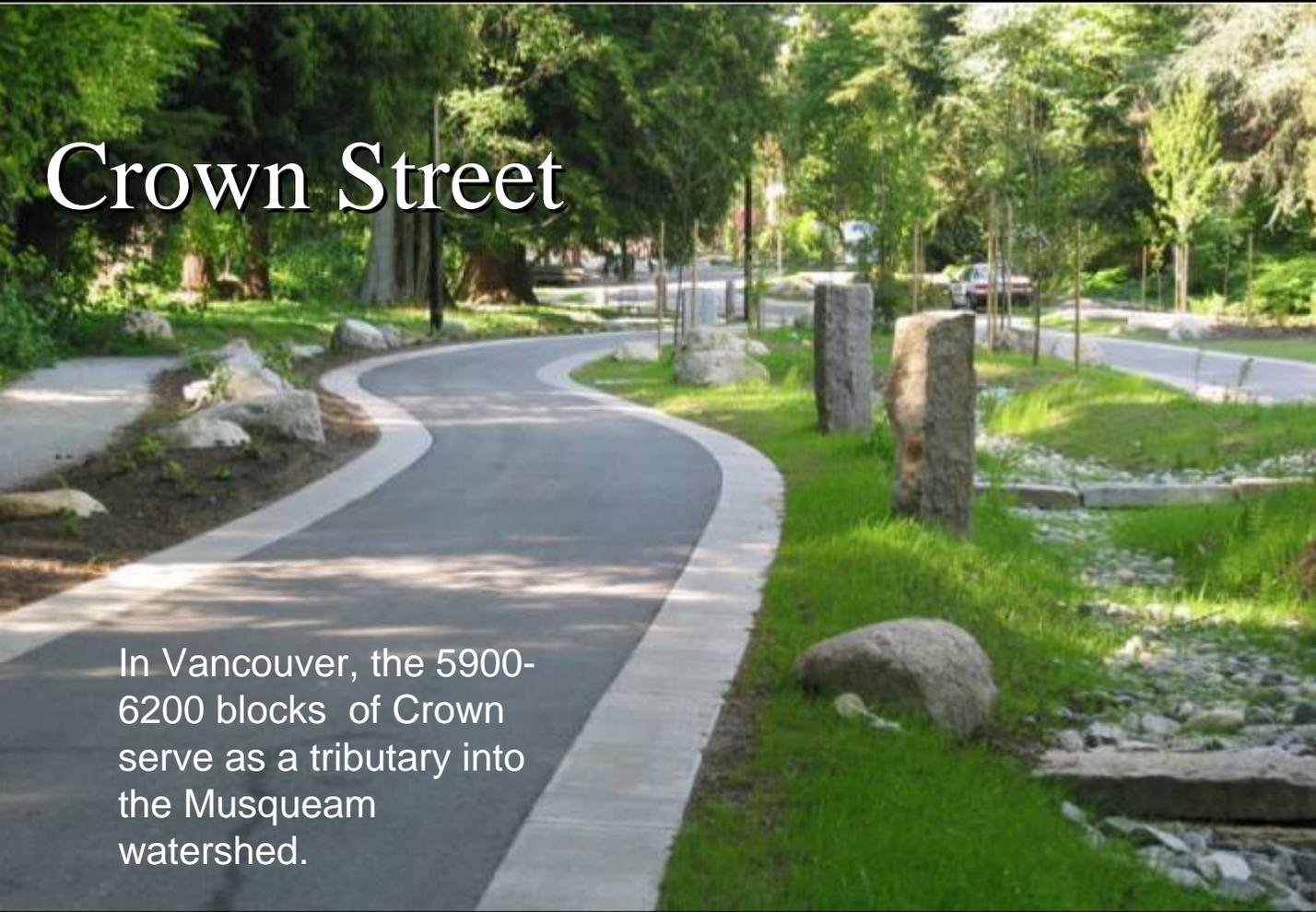
But

where did the engineers fit in? — those indispensable partners in this new urban environment.

Without their cooperation and creativity expressed in the standards they set, in the ongoing operations they manage and in the budgets they control, the artist doesn't stand a chance. And the engineers, in the right circumstances, could be the greenest of partners.

These days, the treatment of storm-water run-off is where creative engineers get to play – and there are lots of examples. (Send yours to PT.)

Crown Street



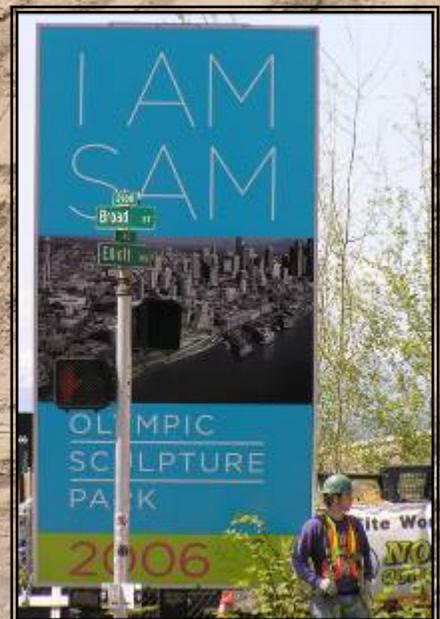
In Vancouver, the 5900-6200 blocks of Crown serve as a tributary into the Musqueam watershed.

The City of Vancouver's engineers reduced the road width and bordered it with structurally reinforced grass. They calmed the traffic with a meandering alignment. In doing so, they created a beautiful composition in a naturalized landscape.

The swales and retention ponds are vegetated with native plants selected in consultation with local residents. Pollutants are filtered by the vegetation. The rainwater runoff – designed for a 10-year storm - infiltrates into the ground naturally, and then spills over into the adjacent park.

SCULPTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

Meanwhile, back in Seattle, a few blocks north of Vine Street
ART is defining a new urban community. Big Art.
The Seattle Olympic Sculpture Park is being molded
out of earth and concrete over four blocks
– nine acres in all.





In 1999, the Seattle Art Museum, in partnership with the Trust for Public Land, purchased downtown Seattle's largest and last undeveloped waterfront property.

The site adjoining Myrtle Edwards Park is to become an art-filled, gently-graded outdoor room. And all around will be thousands of new residents, for whom this will be their front lawn, living room, meeting place and gym..

Already you can see the best (and not so good) of contemporary urban design in Seattle.

Much could be done better – particularly the way the buildings meet the street on the east-west slopes. Too many blank walls, too few townhouses, no finesse of the dropping grade.



But wait ... it won't be long to see how it turns out.

The park is due to open this Fall.

Prediction ...



This combination of art and urbanity, spectacular views and a waterfront seawall may create one of the most extraordinary urban neighbourhoods in the U.S.

[Click here](#)

Coffee Substitute

Click to activate and use this control

More Smart Growth ...

The New York Times May 7, 2006

A Community Comes to a University



UniverCity, built by Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, is on 200 acres of densely forested land.

Located atop Burnaby Mountain, a forest conservation area, Simon Fraser has hovered like an ivory tower above Burnaby, a Vancouver suburb, since it was founded in 1965. Forty years later, the community is coming to the university.

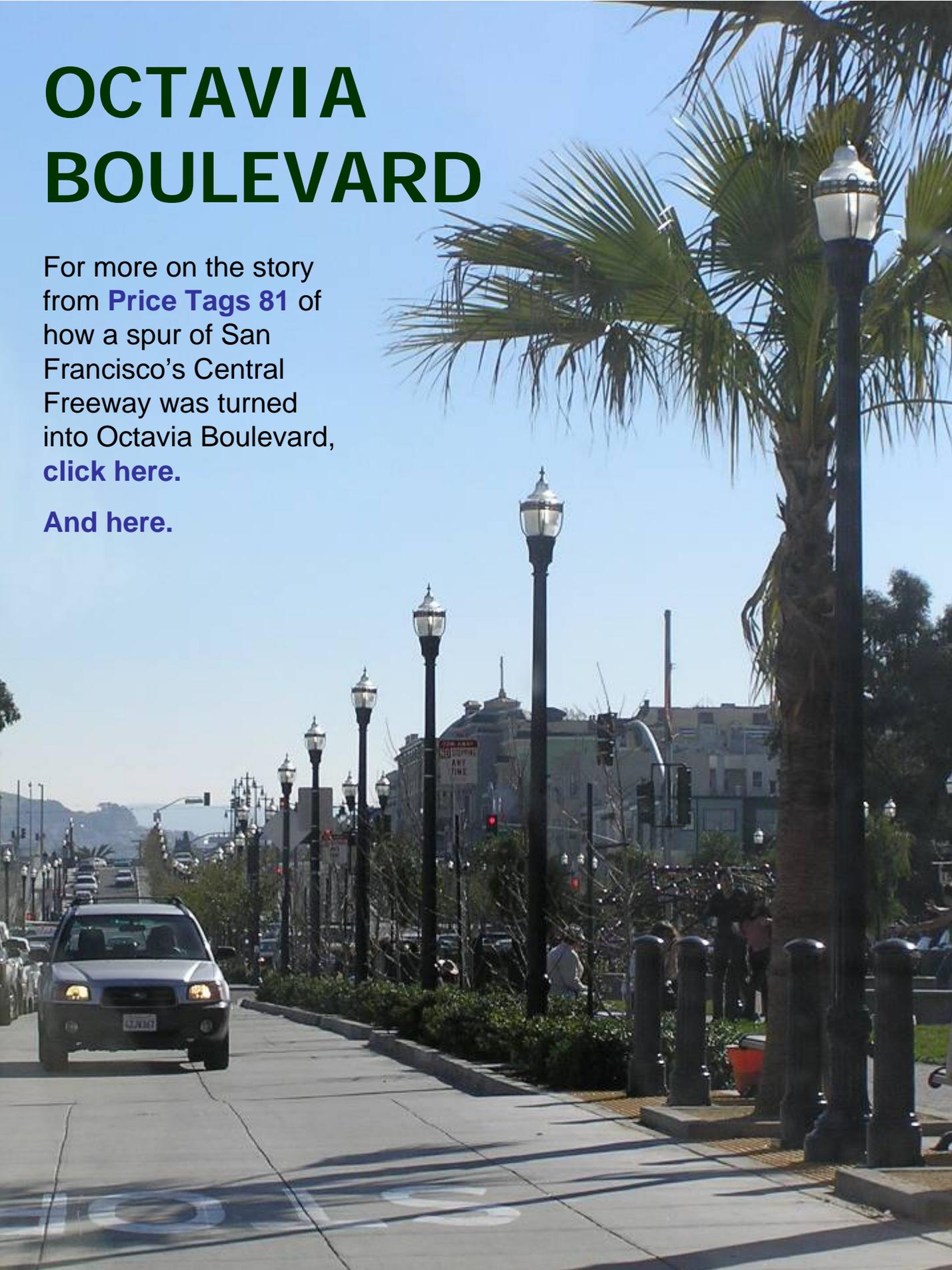
What distinguishes UniverCity from other high-density developments in the United States and Canada is its link with a major university and a slate of policies not typically associated with a suburban development.

[Click here](#) for full story. [Registration required.]

OCTAVIA BOULEVARD

For more on the story from [Price Tags 81](#) of how a spur of San Francisco's Central Freeway was turned into Octavia Boulevard, [click here](#).

[And here](#).



Vancouver - healthy, happy and high density

Making space for families to live downtown is central to Vancouver's innovative approach to urban renewal, writes **Frank McDonald**, Environment Editor

"Living First" became the city's strategy. In other words, downtown was no longer seen as merely as a location for office blocks, hotels and shopping malls.

[Click here](#) for full story.

Guidelines that make city centre a good place for children

The guidelines say that there should be a sufficient number of family units in a project to give children peers to play with, to encourage a sense of community and to support the provision of adequate amenities for families with children - located and designed to maximise sunlight, especially in winter.

[Click here](#) for full story.

If you don't have Toronto's **spacing** magazine in your list of preferred web sites, well, you really should. As well as its blog – **spacingwire**.

Spacing is about “understanding Toronto’s urban landscape” – but it’s not parochial. Here’s a recent piece from Montreal:

spacing



The New Beautiful City

A divided highway

The graffiti of Roadsworth has Montreal's politicians and police contemplating the differences between art and vandalism

a great pic a day from Toronto



[Click here](#) for
[Click here](#) for

spacingphoto
Joe's NYC



a great pic a day from New York

Closer to home, you'll want to [click here](#) for the beautiful work of **Michael Elkan** - trained in the United Kingdom, worked in the office of Norman Foster and later with Richard Rogers in the Tokyo office. Michael is now based in Vancouver.



Pacific Central #2

Railway Terminal, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
Digital image: Canon EOS 5D, 24-105mm zoom, 13sec at f/22, ISO 100

NAME THAT SKYLINE



Oh sure, Toronto's skyline – or New York's or Hong Kong's – are well known. But an explosion of highrise towers in the past decade in Asian cities has transformed - even created - some significant new cityscapes.

Can you name the ones on the next page? 



From the top:

Shenzhen, China (*Metro Population: 4.2 million*)

Tokyo, Japan (*Metro Population: 32.0 million*)

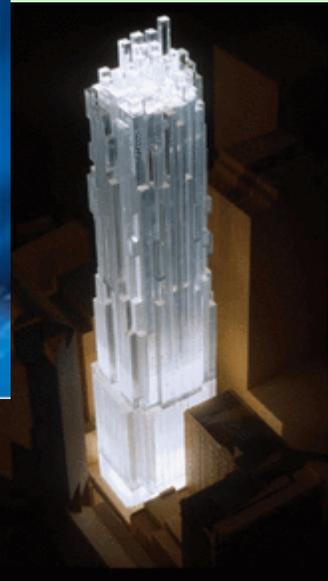
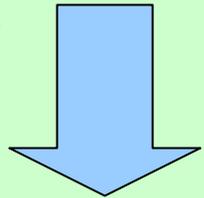
Guangzhou, China (*Metro Population: 4.1 million*)

Seoul, South Korea (*Metro Population: 20.8 million*)

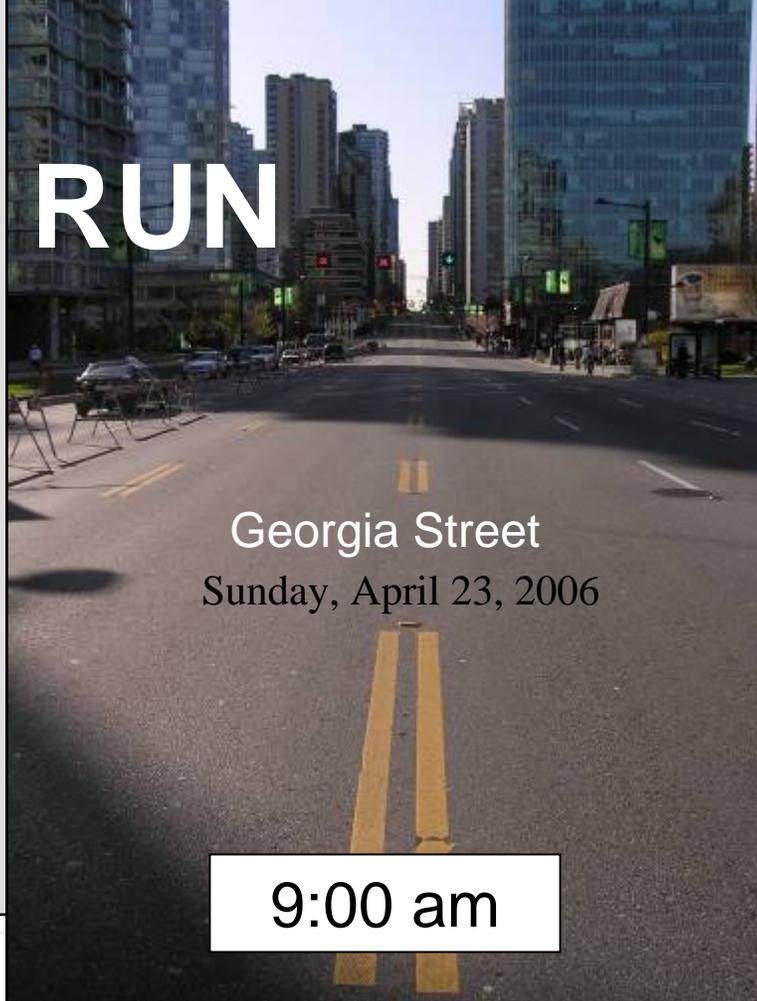
You can check out Luigi Di Serio's pick for the **Top 15 Sky-lines in the World** by clicking [here](#).

Thanks to Ephrem Cheng, who also provided a link to Emporis's list of the **Tallest Buildings in Vancouver** (from 61 to 12 floors, in order, whether built or not).

[Click here](#).

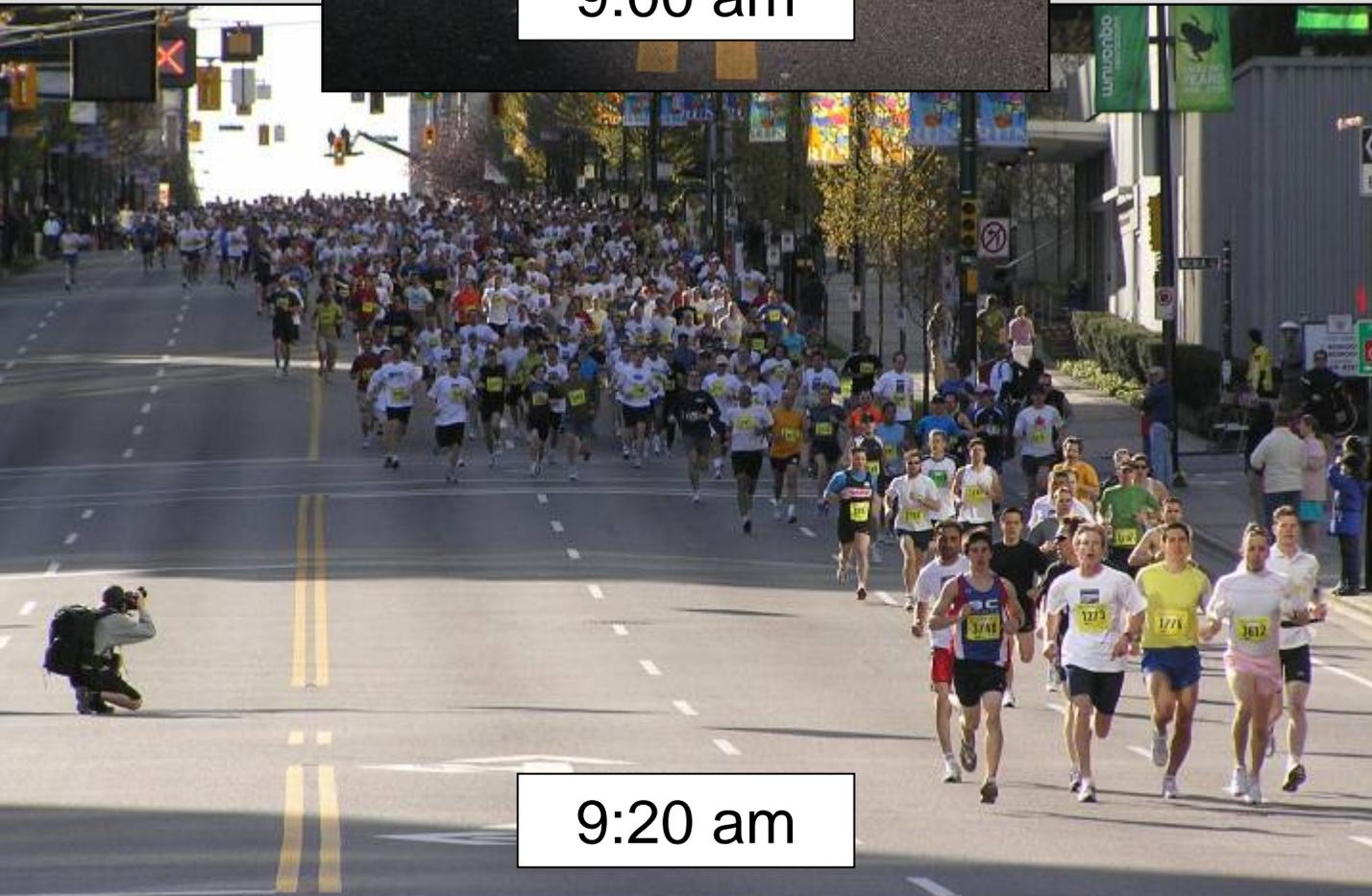


SUN RUN



Georgia Street
Sunday, April 23, 2006

9:00 am



9:20 am



9:25 am



Seattle City Hall lower lobby

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