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Adapt, Transform, Forget...

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The modernist dictum that "form follows function" does not appear a viable equation in adaptive re-use where function must follow form. Take, for example, the re-purposing of the ubiquitous and increasingly unappealing big box. *Texas Architect* asked a group of artists and designers to do just that, to consider the fate of a vacant Circuit City building. Their responses are diverse, and can be grouped into three distinct categories—adapted, transformed, and forgotten.

1 Jay Smith's Big Box Opera, a re-interpretation of Sir Norman Foster's Winspear Opera House in Dallas, seeks to dignify the purpose of the box. 2 Dawn Finley and Blair Satterfield submit Boom Box, an assembly of "plug and play" assisted-living facilities for aging baby boomers with wry allusions to Circuit City's iconography and the products it once offered.

3 Chris Taylor and 4 Taeg Nishimoto both advocate greener speculation. Taylor slices live/work spaces into the box and plants a vegetable paradise in the parking lot in a search for "multivalence after utopia." He says, "We need to learn how to make shoes again." Nishimoto turns the box and adjacent land into a giant greenhouse and "fields of flowers and vegetables."

5 Robert Gay discards the box, which he says "failed and depleted the American landscape," and replaces it with a multi-dimensional grid of interlocking surplus containers shaded with photovoltaic panels, "nurturing land, creating community in a more responsible way to reach the American dream." 6 The art collective Legge Lewis Legge proposes to forget the emptied shell altogether, masking it with a "cloak" of vinyl mural depicting a pastoral landscape as if the building "had never been there."

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