



## GreenBuildingsNYC

### It's Alive: Figment Project Picks A Winner In "City of Dreams" Pavilion Competition



It won't do anything to diminish my love for the dorky stuff, but I'm aware that I've maybe been a little heavy on the urbanism-and-insulation stuff here, and correspondingly light on the eye-candy provided by the more aesthetically directed edge of green design and architecture. I suppose I could explain here that insulation is the eye-candy for me — so fluffy and efficient! — but even I have to acknowledge that the practical thrills of insulation don't hold a candle to the multiple coolnesses of Ann Ha and Behrang Behin's Living Pavilion, which was recently chosen as the winner of the City of Dreams Pavilion Competition, a sustainable design and architecture contest sponsored by Figment, The Emerging New York Architects Committee of the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter (ENYA, amusingly enough), and the Structural Engineers Association of New York. Pending the approval of the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation — and the not-insignificant matter of raising enough money to get the Living Pavilion built — Ha and Behin's structure will be on display on Governors Island this summer. So, what are we going to be looking at?

We'll turn it over to FIGMENT's website for the answer. "Living Pavilion is a low-tech, zero-impact installation that employs reclaimed milk crates as the framework for growing a planted surface similar to a green wall. The pavilion's assembly is simple and modular, relying on common materials such as heavy-duty packaging straps and weather-treated wood for its installation. Living Pavilion aspires to create a synthesis of form, structure, light and life. The shape and orientation of the pavilion create varying amounts of solar exposure at different parts of its surface. The combination of these factors provides a template of diverse conditions for planting: the surface underneath the vault is planted with hanging shade-tolerant plants that require little soil, while the flat extension of the pavilion ;onto the ground surface allows for deep-rooted plants needing direct sun."

Sure, sounds good. Ha and Behin are both Harvard Graduate School of Design alums — both got their

master's degrees in 2008, which means they've succeeded not only in making a cool-looking public structure, but in making your blogger feel old as hell — and Ha used Governors Island as the subject of her Harvard GSD thesis. With the development of Governors Island as something other than A Nice Place To Visit During The Summer looking more and more imminent — what will happen out there is obviously going to be something we watch pretty closely here at gbNYC — the sort of adaptive reuse of the island's many historic structures that Ha envisioned in her thesis will most likely be the order of the hour. With all the throwback architecture on the island, from Civil War-vintage forts to the New England college quad vibe of the officer's community, the very contemporary stylings of the Living Pavilion should make for a lively modern counterpoint to the frozen-in-time vibe that makes a visit to Governors Island such an intoxicating combination of strangeness (what are these buildings?) and familiarity (what are these buildings doing with lower Manhattan visible in the background?). Ha and Behin's Living Pavilion will be an attraction as an architectural showcase on the green near Governors Island's Liggett Hall, but it will also be cool in another, more literal way, as the evapotranspiration from the plantings that comprise the structure will cool the air around it. I can see past my pouting over not getting to write about insulation — again — to acknowledge that that's pretty neat.

If all that sounds like something you'd be into — and with the exception of insulation-news-only die-hards, the Living Pavilion seems like a pretty good fit for gbNYC's readership — you can make a tax-deductible donation towards its construction [here](#).