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The New Shapes of New York

By **MATT A.V. CHABAN** NOV. 17, 2016

The soaring spires, the sloping shores, the strait-jacket of the street grid — many things give form to the great metropolis. The skyline may be our most recognizable feature, despite how unrecognizable it can often be.

Its transformation has been nothing less than astonishing over the past decade. Even when it seems as if there were nowhere left to go, the city, with its manifold appetites, could not be contained. Thanks to new concrete technologies, we have witnessed an eruption of very slender, very tall (some might say very crass) buildings. But for every heroic skyscraper, there are more than a few more humble, human-scale ventures — a salt shed, a library, a residential hyperbolic paraboloid.

Today, apart from the Empire State or Chrysler Building, there are few icons of the skyline. The buildings outlined above, however, may someday be worthy of appearing in a Times Square souvenir snow globe. These are the projects that have captured



Credit Robert Deitchler for The New York Times

the imagination of more than a dozen shapers and observers of the city consulted by The New York Times for their perspective on the new standouts.

You may not recognize these silhouettes, but in time, you will.

WYTHE HOTEL

Brooklyn, 2012
Morris Adjmi Architects

The 70-room hotel has also become a cultural hub. It goes well beyond lobby art to promoting residency programs with new pieces

for each room, as well as hosting openings and film screenings.

“If you get off the subway at Bedford, it can almost feel like Stockholm or Paris because of the tourists. This hotel is an entry point for a lot of folks, even those coming from Manhattan. Reclaimed wood and exposed bricks may be played out, but the designers got it just right. As far as a beacon, you could do far worse. It’s not fake, either, but an exemplar of adaptive reuse. Most people who are visiting the Wythe, they have no use for an old barrel factory. You’re not displacing people, but you do have this very industrial-ish waterfront area that is very recognizably Williamsburg. Here they maintained the old brick facade and the beautiful old wood beams, but by and large, the entire building is very new. It’s elevated to a place that doesn’t just feel like Brooklyn pastiche. When you’re working with beautiful, heavy, honest materials, I’d wager to say this building will stand the test of time.”
— Kelsey Keith, Editor in chief, *Curbed*