

TWEET, TWEET

Eco-artist and designer Sarah Turner, the winner of *Inhabitat's* 2010 Spring Greening Contest, has channeled her considerable creative powers into light installations. And she's generating quite the following.

Known for her decorative lighting products made from discarded plastic bottles, Turner's latest project, "Twitter Ball," is a giant sphere made from 562 re-used bottle ends, each one meticulously cut and attached by hand. An LED was placed inside each bottle and connected to Twitter. When certain words were tweeted, such as "recycling" and "ocean," the Twitter Ball flashed in different colors.

Besides its visual and artistic appeal, the project has a heart too: it was created for a nonprofit organization researching ways to reduce the Plastic Vortex, a patch of plastic the size of France and Germany combined, floating in the North Pacific.

The project was streamed live and each time the message was re-tweeted, \$1 was donated to the organization and its noble ecological cause.



VISUAL FEAST

A provocative exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago ending July 20 reimagines the term "hyperlink," broadening its definition to apply to the increasingly blurry lines between architects and designers. The exhibit conveys how these professionals are using new technologies and materials to transform the landscape in imaginative and sustainable ways.

Outlandish creations from avant-garde architects and designers from around the world comprise the exhibit, and several of the showcased projects have an environmental tilt, including L-shaped units from Japanese architect Shigeru Ban made of recycled paper and plastic that morph into anything from a bench to a table. Digital renderings from Parisian artist Matali Crasset depict a cluster of white buildings reminiscent of trees humanizing an otherwise desolate stretch of highway. Definitely food for thought.



TOP: Ross Lovegrove's Alpine Capsule Project. Animation: Ross Lovegrove. BOTTOM: Matali Crasset's Spring City in Mexico. Image: Achille and Colombe Cahen Salvador and Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac.



SECRET GARDEN

What do secret gardens look like today? This is the question inspiring entries for the 12th edition of the Jardins de Métis competition in Quebec, which calls for designers and architects to create temporary gardens that exemplify the latest in landscape design and environmental art. A total of 194 proposals were submitted to answer this year's question, the brainchilds of more than 500 architects, landscape architects, designers, and artists representing 33 countries. Their "answers" ranged from gardens made of salt to gardens created by visitors' smartphones, as shown above. The festival began this past June and ends on October 2011.

ABOVE: Francis Bitonti and Andrew Zientek's ingenious proposal utilizes guests' smartphones.

HIVE REVOLUTION

The concept behind Houston's HIVE village is as ambitious as it is altruistic: to design and build a sustainable, inhabitable, living work of art—and architecture—created out of recycled steel shipping containers. A whopping 486 of them, to be exact.

Spearheaded by creative director Nestor Topchy, an early champion of the concept of social sculpture, where artists would live and work in special communities, Topchy was struck by the "Lego block practicality and austere beauty" of shipping containers back in the '90s, when he saw rows of containers stacked high in the Houston Ship Channel and begin contemplating the promise of such a utilitarian structure.

The village, inspired by artists and environmentalists, will be built in four phases and will ultimately comprise office, studio, retail, restaurant, and residential spaces. Is this the prototype for the future of responsible building and living practices?

