

Mix Masters

In *Tropic*, we write about housing. To be sure, the lion's share of what we cover focuses on the middle to higher end options. In some ways, South Florida cities are crazy diverse. In both Miami and Fort Lauderdale for example, you have people living at the very highest end of the market, as well as the lowest. While one lives in a penthouse on



Miami Produce, by Bjarke Ingels Group.

ON3RD, by Glavovic Studio



family house listed at \$24 million, the housing crisis for those at the other end of the spectrum has become all too real. Workforce housing, lower income housing and housing for the homeless are concerns that should be at the very top of our priorities as a city. We are *all* one people, and these projects, each in their own way, prove that we are far, far better together than we are apart.

John T. O'Connor
Editorial-Director-At-Large

Miami Beach, another lives in Allapattah sewing jeans in a warehouse workshop. Maybe they never cross paths, but perhaps they do, say on an afternoon out strolling through Wynwood. They both deserve a good life, no matter the family they were born into, where they came from or their income level. The guy living at the bottom rung though, sometimes needs a hand to help him up.

That's where two entirely different projects — each covered in *Tropic* this month — could come into play.

The first is a breathtaking design by Danish architect Bjarke Ingels called Miami Produce. It is due to rise in Allapattah, just West of Wynwood. But instead of the typical solution offered by a developer, bulldozing what exists to wipe the slate clean of imperfections as well as character, Ingels and his developer, Robert Wennett, chose to restore all the warehouses on site, bringing in food establishments, retail and a school, then lifted a new, eight-building, mixed-use project up on stilts to rest above. The analogy — one of lifting up — is not lost on us. Instead of creating a project limited to housing, they intend to create a living campus — an economic driver that, if done right, has the potential to not only employ locals but also *lift them up* financially.

In Fort Lauderdale, The Healthy Housing Foundation and the AIDS Healthcare Foundation have teamed up to create a gorgeous new campus to offer quality shelter to those needing it most. ON3RD, as the project is called, is a visually stunning complex offset by plazas and micro-gardens and more. Designed by the team at Glavovic Studio, ON3RD is part of a new generation of social housing; a generation that believes that quality shelter should not be seen as a luxury, but rather a *human right*. In a city where one can quite literally find a single-

IMPOSSIBLE
THINGS
DECOR.COM



LIGHTWEIGHT CONCRETE SPHERES
Perfect for home, garden, landscape, pool & balcony
Free delivery to Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties

impossiblethingsdecor.com • 760.920.1234



Glavovic revives the Mid-Century screen block or breeze block at ON3RD, to create brise soleil walls and railings overlooking landscaped plazas.

TAKING CARE OF THE **OTHER** 1%

GLAVOVIC STUDIO DESIGNS INSPIRED HOUSING FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST

EMBEDDED SOMEWHERE deep in the crevices of the human psyche — or at least the American psyche — are images of what lower income housing has been in the past. Row upon row of dismal brick buildings built to store and segregate the least fortunate among us. Happily, those days are far behind us as a growing contingent of socially forward-thinking architects and designers around the globe have

begun to take on this problem in earnest, sometimes working with private real estate developers, sometimes in public-private partnerships to build housing not as emergency aid, but as a long term — attractive — solution. Eye-catching, community-building social housing has sprung up in places as diverse as Madrid and Brussels, much of it often, and rightfully, confused with high-end condominiums. It's now

making its way to Fort Lauderdale bent on easing both the impossibility of finding local housing for the working poor as well as homelessness, thanks to the Healthy Housing Foundation and the award-winning architectural practice known as Glavovic Studio.

Called ON3RD, this visually stunning project is the exact opposite of the 1960s approach to



Located near the downtown core, ON3RD will be pedestrian and transit-friendly... walkable to public transportation, while creating an affordable neighborhood that becomes part of the fabric of a growing, diverse city.

housing. Here, townhouse units topped by micro-units will offer — to those whose incomes allow them to qualify — a neighborhood that will engage residents, become part of the social fabric of our city and upend, once and for all, the long-held notions of what lower income housing looks like or how it should perform.

Recently, we met with Margi Nothard, president and director of design at Glavovic Studio to learn a bit more about ON3RD. On these pages is much of that fascinating conversation.

Tropic: Backing the construction of this project is AHF, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, which has done amazing work providing medicine and advocacy to over 1,000,000 people in over 40 countries. But now AHF seems to have greatly expanded their outreach, creating the Healthy Housing Foundation. It looks like their goal is to provide exceptional workforce housing, lower income housing and housing to address homelessness. Is that right?

Margi Nothard: That is absolutely right. The objective is to address the housing crisis holistically in the United States by looking at it as

broadly as possible. Without safe and healthy places to live, resilient communities cannot develop. It's not possible to sustain any quality of life if the foundation of daily life — the home — is not available, attainable and affordable. AHF and HHF focus on a range of affordable housing issues, including rent control legislation, renovation of existing buildings and new affordable housing projects. The organization's goal is to address this at multiple scales and with varying approaches.

Affordable is a word bandied about often and one that often gets people to scoff in disbelief. I know this part of the job is not your purview, but can you shed a bit of light on the housing

"THE REASON THE PROJECT HAS MICRO UNITS IS TO ENSURE THAT FOLK WHOSE INCOMES ARE LIMITED, CAN STILL AFFORD TO RENT AT ON3RD."

mix at ON3RD, and just who might qualify to live there?

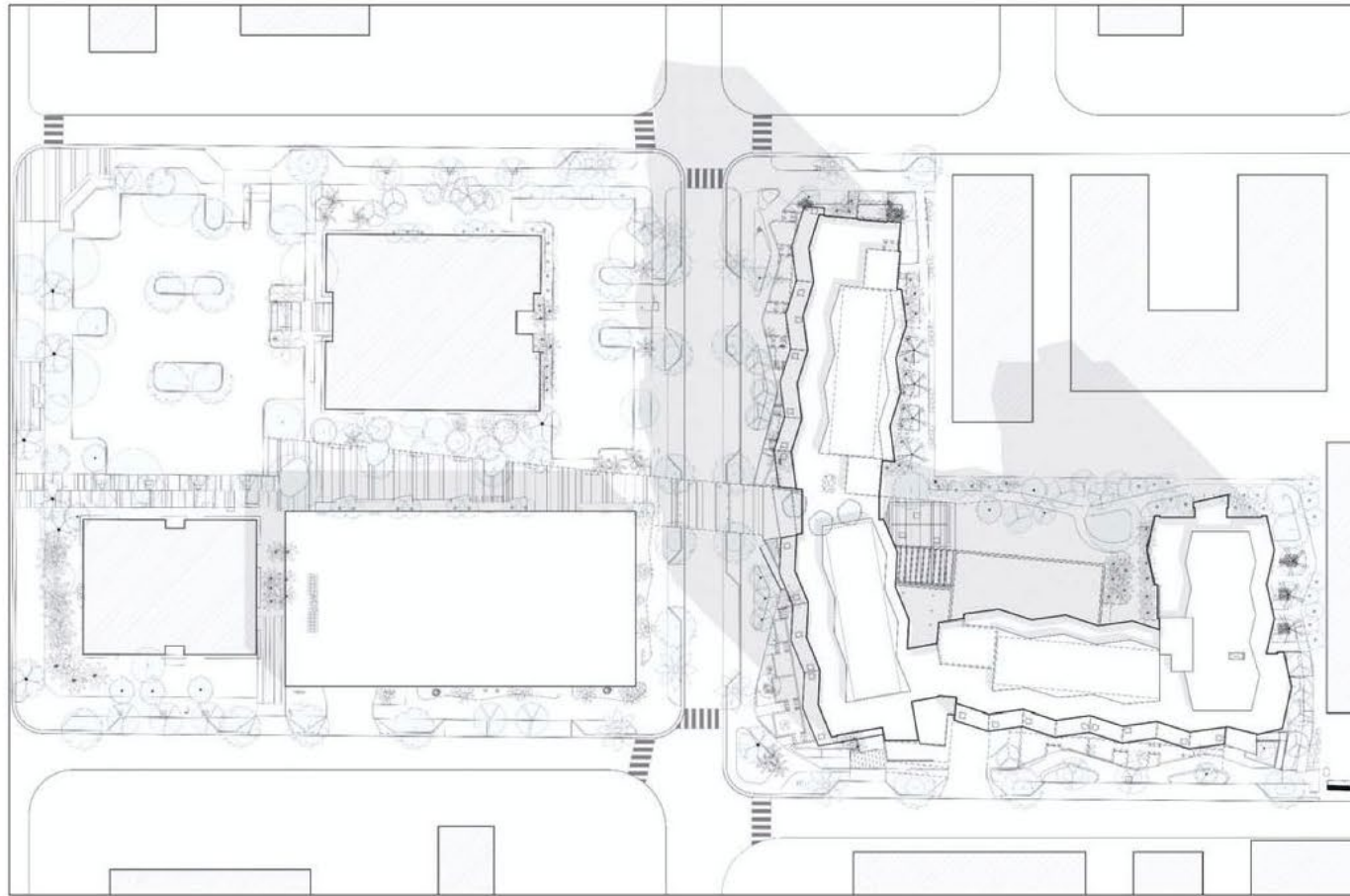
The goal on this project is to provide quality affordable housing, where no more than one-third of the prospective resident's income will be apportioned to rent. The reason the project has micro-units is to ensure that people whose incomes are limited, can still afford to rent at ON3RD.

What we find both fascinating and commendable is Glavovic's stand on this issue. Glavovic seems more in line with the notion that housing is a human right. Do you find work like this, which has a deep social conscience, is a more difficult path, and if so, what keeps you going?

With each of our projects, we see a moral imperative, not only to fulfill the client's brief,

Elegant and captivating, the buildings that comprise ON3RD will contain small, townhouse style units on the bottom floors with upper levels containing micro units, each with its own balcony.





ON3RD includes a landscaped, east/west axis leading to the connected buildings. Termed as a "living campus" the design of the buildings, parks, plazas and associated buildings are meant to elevate the quality of life for its residents.

but also to create work that elevates the quality of life for all who will interact with it, both inside and out. The idea that thoughtful architecture can strengthen social bonds, can help make connections, while at the same time creating new segments of an urban fabric. That's what underlies much of what we do.

Glavovic was responsible for the new, award-

winning Dr. Kennedy Homes on Broward Boulevard, a successful, lower income development that also had a different take on what housing could be for everyone... not just the well off. Some of what you experimented with there (open spaces, programming, private balconies) reappears here. Can you tell us a little about what worked well at Kennedy that may have made its way to ON3RD?

Our goal at Dr. Kennedy was to create a community that cared for each other, which imparted a sense of dignity and belonging to each resident. We also worked to build in sustainability that would last through the life of the project. This was done with an adaptable architecture, as well as a view toward aesthetics. Our feeling is that exceptional architecture should not only be the purview of the wealthy.

Everyone has the right to live in a place that imparts comfort and beauty.

What do you think are the biggest lessons learned from previous housing projects — not privately funded — compared to what you are able to do under the auspices of AHF?

The call to design more and more quality affordable housing in our communities continues to be urgent. The crisis is only growing with every passing day. There is more discussion about affordable housing now, and some additional willingness to fund it, such as a \$100 million fund for housing and economic development grants in Miami, but much more is needed. Affordable housing projects include

"IT'S A CAMPUS PROJECT THAT INCLUDES LANDSCAPED PLAZAS, A MAJOR EAST-WEST PROMENADE, AND MULTIPLE MICRO-GARDENS AND LANDSCAPED TERRACES."

the most mission driven teams who, in spite of the challenges, are determined to implement and advocate for quality projects, especially where resources are limited.

This project, like so much of our work, is mission driven. Every person on the team is passionate about solving this crisis and getting to a solution. Every day is important. It has been an inspiration to work with this client and a privilege to work with Michael Weinstein. His vision and passion are remarkable and inspires us.

Let's talk about the design of the project. From what I can see it looks to be more of a campus than a housing tower or two. Was that the intent?

Yes, it's an entire campus, not just a building. It includes three landscaped plazas, a major

east-west promenade, and multiple micro gardens and landscaped terraces. The project is conceived as a series of active and passive spaces — a living campus really, that links all four buildings together and creates a healthy, walkable urban space. There are multiple "neighborhoods" within the project and this, along with the emphasis on walkability, leads to a sense of a city within the city.

The buildings themselves have such a great street presence, with a folded plate exterior and wonderful screen block walls that not only give the façade a visual excitement, but passively cool the interiors, is that right?

The smaller units are designed to have the floor plate extend directly to the edge of their balconies, extending the interior of the room visually to those balcony edges. But each façade is different. The size of brise soleil we use in each unit depends on that façade's orientation to the sun. The fifth level has larger terraces with potted trees.

These screens harken back to the best Mid-Century Modern brise soleil elements used in South Florida like those on Charles McKirahan's Bayview Building here in Fort Lauderdale, and recently revived in designs like Allan Shulman's Soho Beach House on Miami Beach. What was your goal or objective with this treatment?

Those 12" x 12" blocks are custom fabricated in the tradition of those of the 1950's. They're inexpensive, but amazing — both functionally and aesthetically. They offer a passive form of cooling through the shade they provide, and that means reduced air conditioning costs for tenants. They beautifully articulate the surface, and the "folded plate" as you describe it creates a visual continuity and interest as well as allowing for privacy.

How do you intend to "green" this project?

I believe firmly that any responsible project today must be sustainable in every way. We go beyond just trying to answer the brief — we want to create an environmentally sustainable project that is passively cooled, that feels like an urban oasis, and that endeavors to be responsible both materially and process-wise. We have cisterns that will capture rainwater. The water collected will be reused for irrigation and public bathrooms. Photovoltaic cells will provide electricity offsets. We are using recycled and modular building materials to reduce our

"THE CHALLENGES OVER THE PAST DECADE TO DESIGN MORE QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN OUR COMMUNITIES CONTINUES TO BE URGENT."

carbon footprint — among many other energy-saving and environmentally efficient approaches to the project. Our landscape is indigenous, and the lighting is LED. This is truly an amazing project when you look at all the moving pieces.

What has been the biggest challenge on this design project for Glavovic?

We were, and continue to be, happily challenged to make an exceptional, beautiful housing project that will be a catalyst for redevelopment in this neighborhood. Our goal is to work with the community to develop this project for all of us. Our vibrant city needs it.

What I most want the community to understand is that a project like this can benefit us ALL, not just the residents it serves directly. If we succeed in creating a dignified, beautiful, and sustainable housing campus for an underserved population, if we can give them a sense of belonging and community, everyone in our city will win. ■