When we asked Carlo Ratti and Alex Haw – who created the image of their incredible project The Cloud for our front cover - what needs to change in 2010, they replied: “the dire drabness of our public spaces; our allergy to energy, passion and the word “yes”; our risk aversion and preference for mediocrity over experiment.” I couldn’t agree more.

Ratti was invited by Mayor Boris Johnson to present a design for the Olympics Observatory. The Cloud did not win, but what’s significant is that the design team is more determined than ever to build the tower on another site in London. It is not just a remarkable structure, it is the first public monument to incorporate digital connectivity into its content, form and finance. A true maverick, Ratti has arranged with Google to direct people searching for London 2012 on the internet to be offered the chance to sponsor The Cloud, “$1 for one pixel”.

At the time of writing, we don’t know the ultimate winner of the Observatory competition. Unlike all the carping critics who think this is just the Mayor’s monument to himself, I happen to think it’s a fine idea for celebrating the Olympics. I just hope the winning design has as much (or as many) balls as The Cloud. See pages 32-41 for our feature on other inspiring people who will be changing things in 2010.

Continuing the change theme, we publish James Whitaker’s series of photographs of redundant architects (page 28). In fact, the label ‘redundant architect’ isn’t fair to any of them, including Whitaker: people who have shown huge resourcefulness and imagination in turning their talents to new areas. Also for this issue, Tim Abrahams met the former mayor of Curitiba, architect Jaime Lerner (page 44) who has been reinvented by environmentalists as a paragon of sustainability. In fact his actions were driven by a humanistic and progressive vision for change and have little to do with the constrained Green agenda.

As part of our feature on change, James Woudhuysen, a founding contributor to Blueprint, puts forward Roger Pielke as someone who will make a difference in 2010. A scientist at the University of Colorado, Pielke proposes that instead of limiting the scale of human population and economic development, as most people now argue, society should invest in the machinery to capture CO2 direct from the atmosphere. The implication is that the more the world economies develop, the greater our capacity for controlling the effects of climate change will be. That’s the kind of thinking we need if we are to see real and positive change.

2010 has already been dubbed a year of change, but who do you think will really make a difference? Join the debate on our website as we head into the new year:

Vicky Richardson, editor
AFTER REDUNDANCY
Architecture has been one of the worst affected industries in the recession. After being made redundant James Whitaker took the opportunity to go full-time with his hobby of photography. Whitaker became interested in the stories behind newly redundant architects and began a series of portraits: we present a selection of his photographs of architects who are taking on new careers and drawing on their unique skills.

CHANGE IN 2010
There will be many people claiming to change the world in 2010, not least the British politicians canvassing for our votes in the first half of the year. But real change is harder to implement, and can come in unexpected forms. We have compiled a list of 25 people and groups who will really change the way we work and think about architecture and design in 2010: from writers and graphic designers to council planners.

COMMENT
The undemocratic process behind the GLAs competition for an Olympic tower has revealed the closed-mindedness of the organisers, argues Tim Abrahams.

INTERVIEW: JAIME LERNER
The former three-time Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil, meets Tim Abrahams and talks about urban policies and innovations in transport infrastructure that have made the city one of best examples of urban planning.

SPANISH DESIGN SUPPLEMENT
Spanish bathroom company Roca has implemented a new innovation lab to investigate the way we use bathrooms through anthropological analysis. Owen Pritchard visited its new gallery showroom in Barcelona, designed by Carlos Ferrater of OAB, through which the company wants to show its commitment to all facets of design. We also bring you the best in new Spanish design from the leading manufacturers.
25 WHO WILL CHANGE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN IN 2010

BLUEPRINT HAS GATHERED 25 DESIGNERS, ARCHITECTS AND CAMPAIGNERS WHO WE THINK ARE CHALLENGING CONVENTIONAL THINKING. FROM ARCHITECTURE TO TEXTILES, TOWN PLANNING TO GRAPHIC DESIGN, THE PEOPLE WE FEATURE HERE ARE TAKING MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS AND REFUSING TO CONFORM TO THE CULTURE OF LOW HORIZONS

PORTRAITS BY MARIA BAZIAN

In the run up to the general election, the term change will be much used and abused at Westminster. As Brendan O’Neill, editor of the independent political site, Spiked, points out, Gordon Brown used the word nearly 50 times in his speech to the Labour Party Conference; Peter Mandelson used it 38 times, and David Cameron has claimed to be launching a ‘movement for change’.

“Change” has become the buzzword of our age because the parties are no longer rooted in a clear set of values,” says O’Neill.

With that in mind, we decided to launch a search for the people we felt are really making change: being proactive, maverick and challenging, rather than simply waiting for a change of government. We enlisted the help of many contributors and friends to compile a list that includes well-known names and complete newcomers. We also invited three experts in the fields of architecture, innovation and product design – Tomorrow’s Thoughts Today, James Woodhuyse and Ben Hughes – to put forward names of people they think are changing the world.
// WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO MAKING OPPORTUNITIES. AND TO THE SEAMLESS INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY INTO OUR LIVES, FACILITATING RATHER THAN DEADENING EVERYTHING WE DO; TO HUGE PROGRESS IN THE BIOTECH FIELDS AND THE ACCELERATION OF OUR EMERGENCE AS A TECHNOLOGISED SPECIES //

**THE CLOUD DESIGN TEAM**

Architect Carlo Ratti (pictured below) of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his team may not have won the Mayor’s competition to design an observatory for the London Olympics, but they plan to build The Cloud (above and left) independently on a different site. The team will start fundraising (or ‘cloud-raising’) for the project in 2010, working with members of Barack Obama’s campaign team, and with support from Google, which will provide free advertising and the structure for a micro-donations site where the public will buy into the project.

The vision for this incredibly ambitious idea was conceived in Milan with advice from the writer Umberto Eco. Others on the team – which is spread across five continents – include artist Tomas Saraceno; architect Alex Haw, and engineer Jürg Schlaich. The Cloud consists of a 120m-high, cable-net tower, with observation deck and inflatable spheres, each containing a lattice of LEDs. Ratti describes the design as ‘light as air itself’ – a tribute to a digital age of bits and atoms beyond the antiquity of steel and glass – a structure which reveals the connected networks of a common humanity fuelling the Olympics, its 2012 host city, and the world itself.