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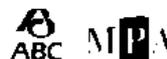
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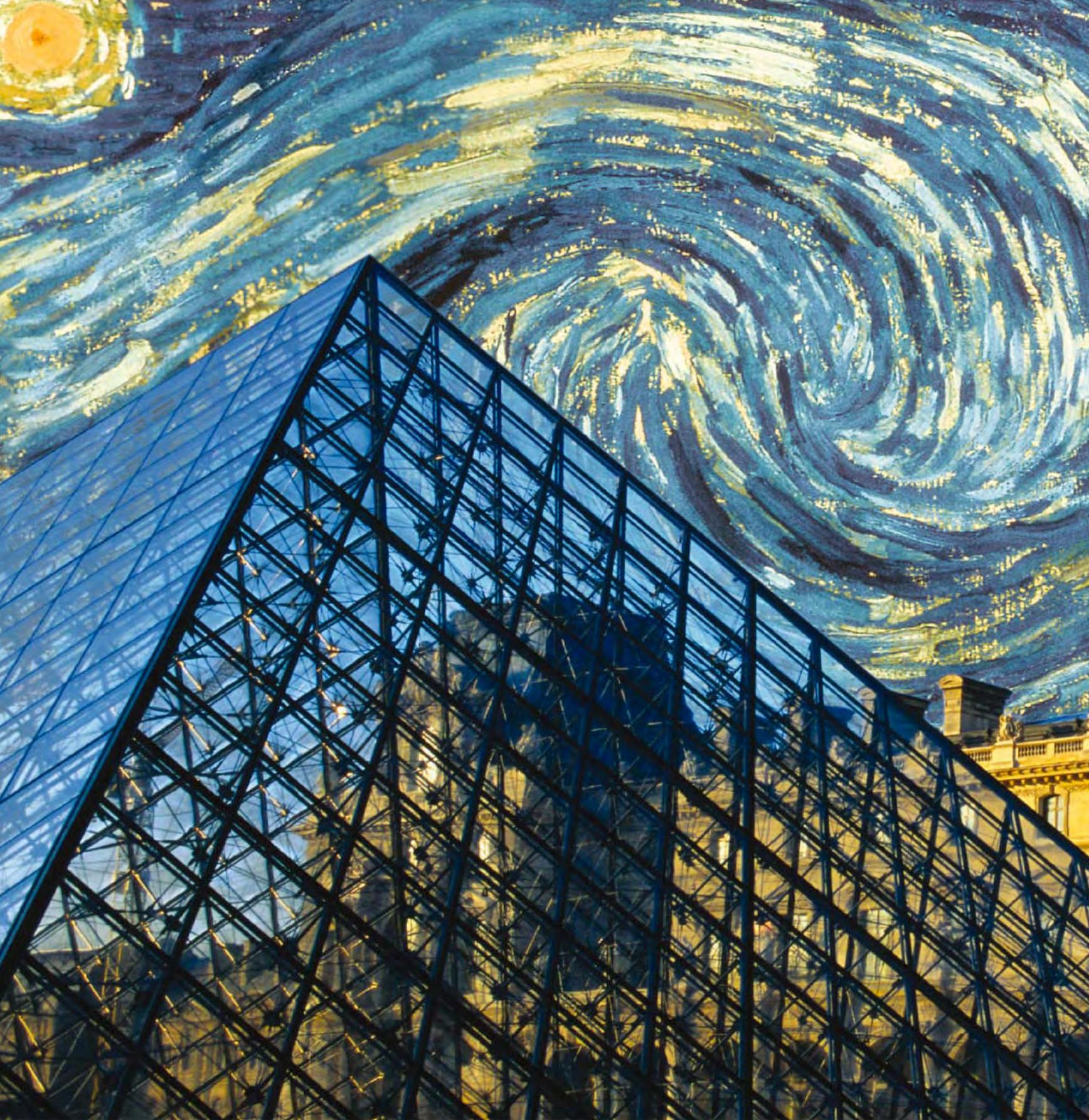
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# ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

## 02.2008

**On the Cover:** *The New York Times Building*, by Renzo Piano.  
Photograph by Nic Lehoux. **Right:** *Bowdoin College Museum of Art*,  
by Machado and Silvetti. Photograph by Facundo de Zuviria.



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## video

Visit our new library of videos featuring subjects of interest to the architectural community. Watch an interview with Sir Nicholas Grimshaw, a tour of the recently completed New Museum in New York City, and excerpts from a documentary about The Floating Pool Lady (left), in New York, designed by architect Jonathan Kirschenfeld.



## building types study: libraries

We look at libraries across the U.S. that are helping bind their communities together through context-sensitive design. View slide shows of projects by HGA, Will Bruder, and Line and Space (Cesar Chavez Library, left), as well as a video tour of a library by Rogers Marvel Architects. Plus, in our exclusive online coverage, see images of additional projects around the world.



## lighting: museums

In addition to the four dynamic projects featured in print, visit our lighting section on the Web to read stories and see slide shows about the Cooper-Hewitt Museum's exhibition *Provoking Magic: Lighting of Ingo Maurer* (left) and the effective lighting scheme employed at the Gardiner Museum in Toronto.

### community

#### photo gallery

View more than 2,000 images submitted by readers from all over the world in 10 categories, such as the Residential Showcase (right). You can also send us your own photos at [construction.com/community/gallerylist.aspx](http://construction.com/community/gallerylist.aspx).



#### blogs

**In the Trenches:** Architect Chris Harnish shares the real-life story of community planning and architectural humanitarian work in an impoverished and AIDS-affected rural town in South Africa. Harnish is an Architecture for Humanity Fellow on sabbatical from Deborah Berke & Partners in New York City.

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#### comments

"What is the intent of the rocks around the pool? It looks like a tripping hazard to me."

[and more ...](#)

### residential: house of the month

Stern McCafferty's Franco residence (below) in Massachusetts recalls the simple, stuccoed homes found on a small island off the coast of Portugal where the owners were born. View a slide show of the project, among many others, in this Web-only section.



### archrecord2

See Web-exclusive slide shows featuring the work of two maverick firms: LeanArch and Techentin Buckingham (Glassell Park Housing, below). We also explore the strategy of a small firm joining forces with a larger one, exemplified by Demonica Del Muro Associates in Chicago.



### continuing education



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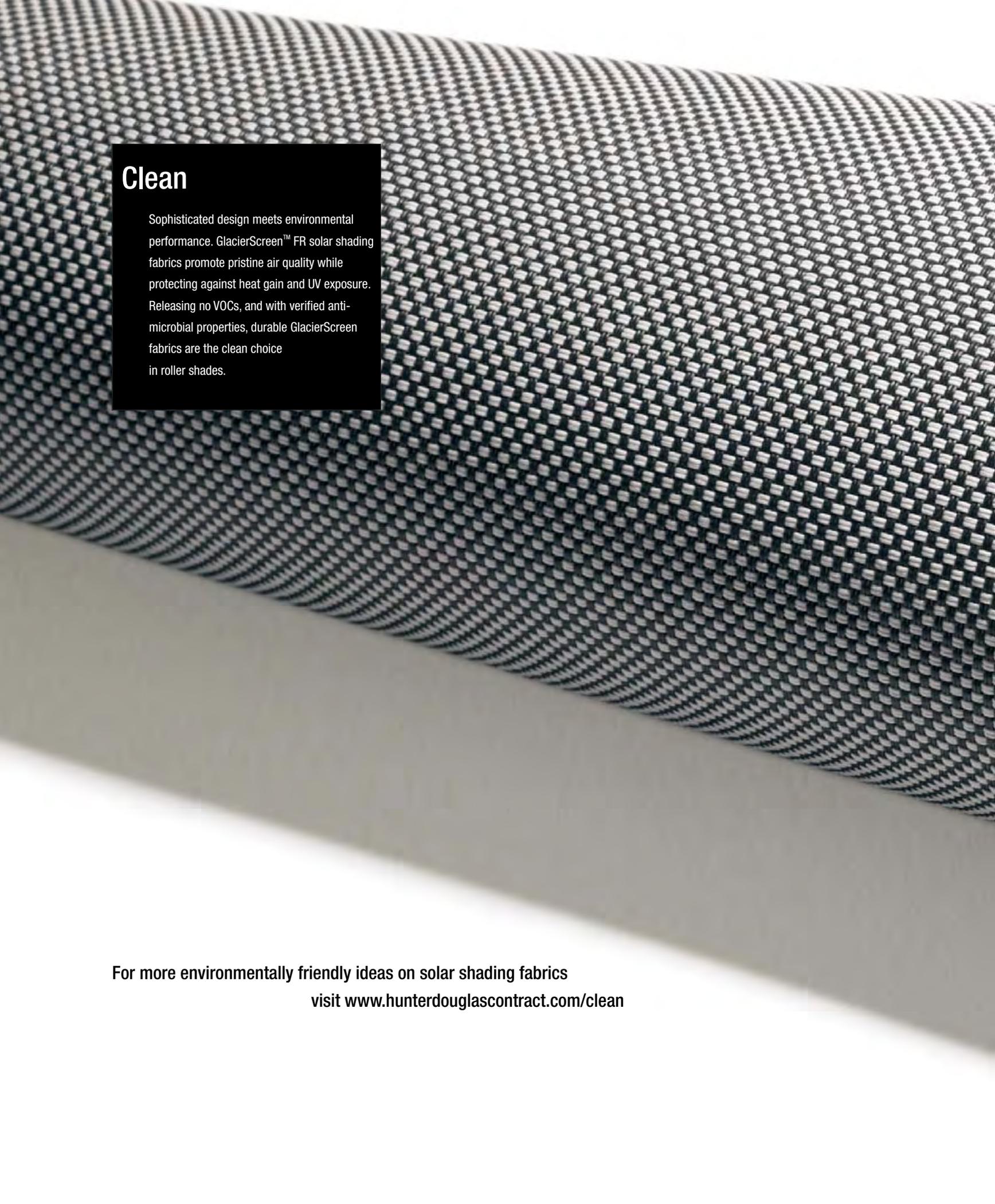
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# Has the boom gone bust?

## Editorial

By Robert Ivy, FAIA

**T**he Slowdown Is Upon Us! Recession Looms! If you happen to practice architecture within the housing market, those terms might literally apply to you. The subprime-lending crisis subjected residential investment to the harsh glare of prime time, leaving the entire housing industry stranded like a deer in the headlights. Pick up today's paper, and it might seem that all design professionals will face bleak times in 2008. What's an American architect to do?

Before you consider standing in the bread line, consider the following facts: For all our fascination with China and Dubai, the United States remains the most vibrant and active economy in the world. McGraw-Hill Construction economist Robert Murray says, "The pullback for nonresidential building in 2008 is likely to be gradual, especially when compared to the sharp correction that's already been experienced by housing." Gradual, not precipitate.

You have to know where to look for opportunity. According to Murray, "the loss of momentum will be measured" for nonresidential construction. Measured, not decimated. For example, America needs more K-12 schools to meet the rapidly evolving needs of a new generation. In higher education, buildings represent commitment to students and faculty, and a \$100 million research facility can give an institution a competitive edge. In corporate America, office workers and management radicalized by digital technology require safer, more energy-efficient workplaces (see cover story on the New York Times building, page 94). Whatever the pundits may pronounce, the boom has not yet gone bust: In Las Vegas, the budgets could break a Middle Eastern thermometer, despite economists' predictions of a slowdown in hospitality.

For proof, fly into the sprawling desert valley and watch this new city of 2 million and growing that compares to Dubai in scale and scope. Awash in wealth, the Strip and its environs are transforming themselves into a new kind of good-time urbanity, ersatz perhaps, but characterized by real (as opposed to cardboard) architecture. In today's Las Vegas, urban density and mixed-use developments blend together hotels, condos, retail, and transportation, with more work on the way.

The numbers stagger the imagination. According to Southwest Contractor, a McGraw-Hill Construction publication, the total value of work in Las Vegas approached \$9 billion in 2007-8, with \$35 billion in new developments anticipated by the end of the first decade of the 21st century.

At the 76-acre City Center, purportedly the largest ("most significant"—their term) private development in the United States, the total tab for owners MGM Mirage and its partner Dubai World (there goes Dubai again) will run to almost \$8 billion dollars. When the dust has cleared, City Center will have employed a who's

who of architecture firms: Pelli Clark Pelli, Kohn Pederson Fox, Foster and Partners, Helmut Jahn, Daniel Libeskind, Gensler, HKS, Leo Daly, and Adamson Associates. Overall, 7,000 people or more will have been employed in the total construction. And that's just a single development, albeit a whale of a development, in a single city.

Look around the country and find similar stories. Take a look at Chicago, site of Calatrava's dizzying Chicago Spire, an unreal 150-floor spiraling wonder rising not far from Adrian Smith's 90-plus-story Trump International Hotel and Tower along the Chicago River. In nearby Minneapolis, the riverfront development now includes loft conversions, condominiums such as the 42-unit Portland complex, museums, arts organizations, and a fanciful music school called the MacPhail Center, all spiced by trendy restaurants where flour mills used to predominate.

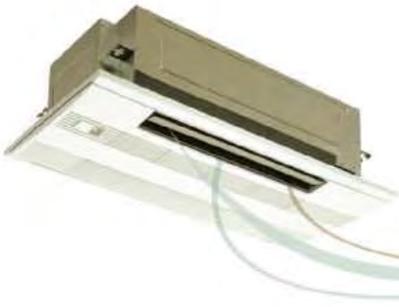
In New York City, growth spreads across the boroughs. On Manhattan's West Side, straddling the controversial and underused Hudson rail yards, the Metropolitan Transit Authority recently unveiled plans for an immense cluster of skyscrapers surrounding an urban green. Across the East River, Brooklyn has been the focus of intense development, with activity along its waterfront, where a new state park under way signals change. Around the bend of the river at Williamsburg, new condominiums sprout like isobars, while farther inland at Flatbush and Atlantic Avenues, the massive new Atlantic Yards development will include 12 high-rise residential buildings.

Smaller cities have big-city aspirations. Across the Sunbelt, small- to medium-size cities are adding critical facilities that affect material and cultural prosperity. Jackson, Mississippi, is completing a major new civic/convention center, the centerpiece of \$450 million in actual and planned construction. Multiply that one locale by the hundreds.

This laundry list omits any qualitative assessment. Thus far, we have not mentioned the absence of needed building types, such as affordable housing, or the lack of effective investment in the public realm. All remain real problems. We have only noted, in loose terms, the volume of design and construction.

In assessing the country's economic health, the facts assert that much private planning, design, and construction will continue, if skittish financing doesn't kill them. ARCHITECTURAL RECORD has no crystal ball, only a few estimates of construction cost, constantly subject to revision. Staring into the economic precipice, the next few months may prove harrowing, but focus on client need, keep your sights clear, then dive into the new year. We trust any drop will be shallow and safe.

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# Letters

## Ethereal architecture

Robert Ivy accurately points out in his January editorial ["Piano nobile," page 21] that 2008 Gold Medalist Renzo Piano is no "starchitect." The brilliance of Piano's architecture is that, rather than being the star brashly generating its own glaring egocentric light, his work is more lunar in nature, comfortable with the reflected light it produces in its role as neighbor in context, while calmly displaying its exquisite logic, structure, and detail. Piano's soft light illuminates a better path forward.

—John Mullen, FAIA  
Dallas

## Big and bad

Bravo to Robert Campbell for his right-on critique on New York City's Hearst Tower [January 2008, "Why Foster's Hearst Tower is no gherkin," page 47]. I have been baffled by the preponderance of positive write-ups on the building, which has struck me, in photos and in reality, as exactly what Campbell said: placeless and awkward. An apt metaphor is of a concertina stretched out of shape, the indents of its folds expressive both of painful attenuation and clumsy misshaping.

Ironically, the critique falls seamlessly into place after pieces on similarly ill-considered Very Big Buildings in Record News—Hudson Yards proposals (Holl's excepted), more Big and Peculiar work for Abu Dhabi (Gensler), and Herzon & de Meuron's grotesque tower that will cast a pall over Basel's urban fabric. Why are so many large projects so bad, and why don't we see more criticism of them? I challenge ARCHITECTURAL RECORD and Robert Campbell to take the lead in being the conscience that the profession seems to have lost, along with its judgment.

—Kenneth M. Moffett, AIA  
Knoxville, Tenn.

Critic Robert Campbell is right in lambasting Foster's Hearst Tower in New York City for its overbearing, truss/cage structure, ignoring scale, site orientation, and client program, reflecting as well the vainglory of world "prominent architects and pundits who believe we live in a single global culture." The same incitement fits so much other extravagant, spendthrift, tricky "look at me" work today: Gehry's "bump and grind," Morphosis's superficial structural gymnastics, Libeskind's zigzag, etc.

In the same issue, Toyo Ito's Tama Art University Library in Japan, Nicholas Grimshaw's steel museum in Mexico, Barton Myers and Architekton's Tempe Arts Center in Arizona, and Bernard Tschumi's Zenith Concert Hall in France all invite the same questions of overkill and indifference to their genius loci. It is all work that, to quote Campbell again, "could be built anywhere." Fortunately, the profile of Peter Zumthor and his architecture—which, in its sensitive, restrained timeless/timely elegance partially redeems the sins of today's excesses—offers hope, with nostalgia for design excellence of the recent past: the work of Saarinen, Kahn, Barnes, Jones, and many others less well known who demonstrated absence of ego and a deep respect for program, site, time, and place.

—A. Richard Williams, FAIA  
Tucson

## Out of context

I am very happy to see that an organization like the "Make It Right" foundation is stepping up to help try and rebuild New Orleans [January 2008, Record News, "Pitt unveils sustainable housing for New Orleans," page 27]. As an architect that went to the Tulane SOA in the early to mid 1990s, I was disheart-

ened by the difficulties the city went through during and after the hurricane. I knew that so much of the city I loved would never be the same again.

One significant problem with the prototypical designs for these homes is that they lack a relationship to their context. The city has very strong inherent architectural characteristics, and it appears that these new home designs willingly ignore this. It appears that most of these homes were designed in the vacuum of an empty drawing board or a blank computer screen. I am not implying that the new should mimic the old, but it would be advantageous to the city if the designs made more of an attempt to respect their location. These designs do not "belong" to New Orleans—they could be plopped down anywhere. As a somewhat funny irony, in the same issue, Robert Campbell, in his critique of the Hearst Tower, comments rather strongly on how buildings should fit into their immediate context.

—Frederick T. Wawra, AIA  
Liberty, N.J.

## Catching the spirit

It was great to see The Spirit of Place Program highlighted in your magazine [January 2008, Archrecord2, page 44]. It looks like a terrific program for the students lucky enough to get in. In the article, there is a misassumption, however. The author states that this program is different from other design-build programs because of a "focus on teamwork [and] consensus." There are many of us out here who run design-build studios as collaborations. In fact, one of the longest-lasting programs, run by Steve Badanes at the University of Washington, has always been collaborative as part of its pedagogy of design-build. The Yestermorrow Design/Build School in Warren,

Vermont, runs its design-build courses as collaborations, and the Design/Build Studio Program of the Architecture School of Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont, also produces projects that are the result of consensus. It would seem that it is mostly the high-profile programs that are run from the top down or run as competitions that give the impression that collaboration and consensus in the classroom are something unique.

—Danny Sagan  
Northfield, VT

## Gurus of green

In reading the recent Practice Matters column about the emergence of "sustainability gurus" for architecture firms [November 2007, "Firms embrace the emerging role of the sustainability guru," page 73], it struck me that another emergence may be considered more interesting and noteworthy than our practices creating positions focusing on sustainable interventions. The private development community has begun to recognize the importance of creating sustainable development as a worthy goal of their projects and has started to engage individuals within their organizations to drive, program, and monitor these efforts. In the end, without the commitment of our clients, our efforts and knowledge in this domain will be for naught. Therefore, when we encounter this within the development community and, in particular, in the retail development industry, it is of even greater significance, and we need to recognize and applaud the organization.

—Judson A. Kline, AIA  
Cleveland, Ohio

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## New Orleans riverfront enhancement plan receives green light

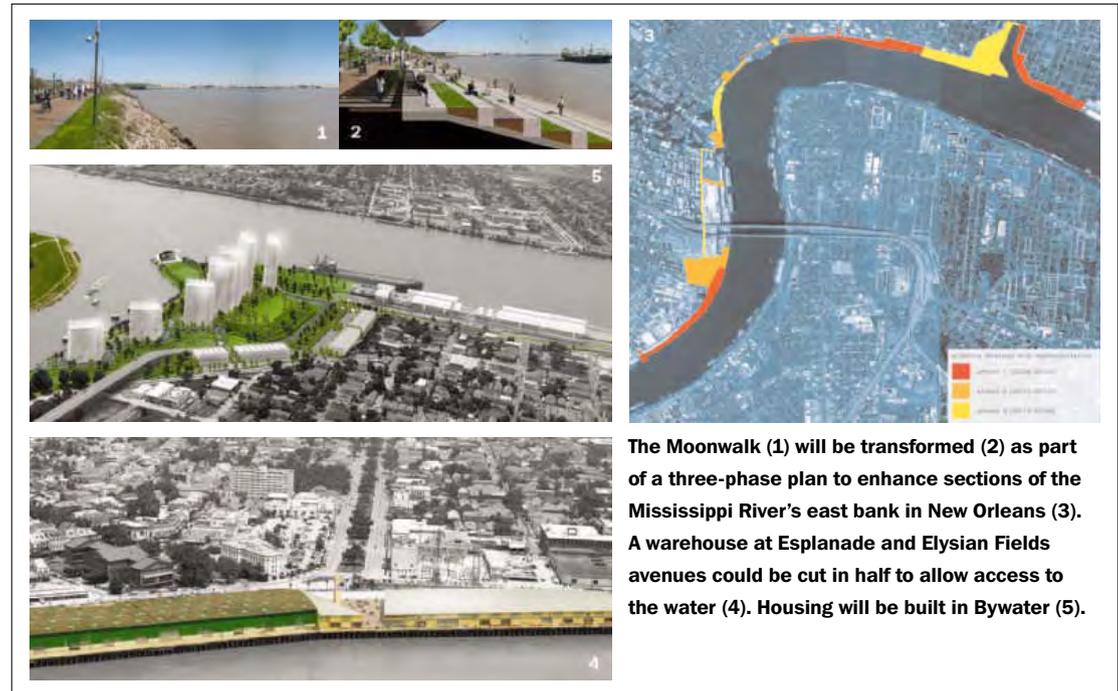
“Reinventing the Crescent,” a plan for redeveloping large sections of the riverfront in New Orleans, took a step closer to reality when it received a green light from the city on January 9. The New Orleans Building Corporation (NOBC), whose board includes Mayor Ray Nagin and members of the city council, endorsed conceptual plans and authorized work to begin on the project’s first phase, perhaps within months. New details about financing were also released.

The project’s broad goal is to reduce barriers that discourage people from enjoying the river and replace decaying sections with parks and public venues that will trigger private investment. Its centerpiece is a park that devotes nearly 85 percent of the development zone’s 174 acres to green space and plazas, as well as bike and walking paths. A team of architects led by Chan Krieger Sieniewicz, Hargreaves Associates, TEN Arquitectos, and Eskew+Dumez+Ripple is expected to unveil final designs this month.

“Improving public access to the river is the point,” says Allen Eskew, whose New Orleans-based firm is managing the project. “But the plan gives the city a riverfront design that is authentic for our time and does not just reflect the past.”

The redevelopment zone runs for 4.5 miles along the east bank of the Mississippi River from the Lower Garden district to the Bywater neighborhood. The designers extended their plan beyond its formal scope by making suggestions for improvements to an area south of the Industrial Canal known as Holy Cross, which was heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.

“They have crafted something remarkable that reaches for world-



The Moonwalk (1) will be transformed (2) as part of a three-phase plan to enhance sections of the Mississippi River’s east bank in New Orleans (3). A warehouse at Esplanade and Elysian Fields avenues could be cut in half to allow access to the water (4). Housing will be built in Bywater (5).

class excellence,” says Sean Cummings, director of the NOBC, the agency that develops city-owned properties, adding that he is particularly pleased the design relates both to New Orleans and its natural environment.

Landscape architect George Hargreaves, for example, proposes transforming a strip of land now dominated by marine businesses into 12 acres of recreational space, including a section of restored river wetlands. By contrast, a section of the proposed park that passes the central business district would be more urban and manicured, as in a terrace of broad steps leading down to the river at the foot of Canal Street. TEN Arquitectos plays on the serpentine path of the Mississippi with curved silhouettes for some of the proposed structures, including a bioenvironmental research center and a hotel in the Warehouse District. And for a warehouse that

must be maintained for port use, Alex Krieger, the design team’s urban planner, suggests cutting open a section of the building for public use while sheathing the remaining portion in glass to create visual connections with the river.

The first and largest of three construction phases will make \$163 million of improvements in two neighborhoods. One encompasses the area between Jackson Avenue and Henderson Street, the upriver boundary of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, where the design calls for a park, wetland gardens, and performance spaces. The second area is downriver from St. Philip and Pauline Streets, bordering the French Quarter, to Holy Cross. Work includes the creation of an open-air pavilion and a riverfront park.

The entire redevelopment is projected to cost \$289 million. The NOBC hopes to get \$62 million of

this amount from the city, which would include \$30 million in Community Development Block Grants and \$24 million from a deal to lease the World Trade Center, a city-owned office tower at the foot of Canal Street, expected to be signed this month with the developer Full Spectrum of New York. NOBC also hopes to receive \$45 million from the federal government and \$162 million from the state. It will raise \$20 million from private investors.

A report prepared by Louisiana State University estimates that an investment of \$289 million in public funds between now and 2016, the project’s completion date, could trigger \$3.6 billion in total investment by 2024. That money could result in the creation of 5,800 construction jobs each year in addition to 24,000 permanent jobs. It could also boost tourist spending by \$700 million per year. *Shawn Kennedy*

## Refurbished French Market opens in Big Easy

The French Market in New Orleans's French Quarter can still stake a claim to being one of the country's oldest marketplaces, but in recent years shops stocked with bottles of Louisiana hot sauce, boxes of beignet mix, and other food-oriented souvenirs outnumbered stalls where fresh food was sold. This month, the French Market Corporation, a nonprofit organization that operates the historic facility, unveils the results of a \$5 million revitalization project intended to realign the

farmers' Market section with its original purpose. The hope is that this transformation, designed by locally based Billes Architecture, will draw more visitors and residents to a more authentic venue where vendors will sell fresh produce, flowers, coffee, spices, baked goods, cheeses, as well as meats and Louisiana seafood.

Historians date the start of a formal market on the site to 1791, but the pitched-roof, metal sheds where the flea and farmers' markets operate were built as a Works

Progress Administration project in the 1930s. The 40,000-square-foot complex stretches two blocks along the Mississippi River between Barracks Street and Ursulines Avenue.

Improvements include the doubling of vendor spaces to at least 15 and the installation of upgrades that will allow some vendors to cook on-site. "The old space didn't work well for the vendors or the customers," says Gerald Billes, a principal of Billes, adding that the old building was a dimly lit space with poor drainage and circulation, and an uneven floor.

New underground utility lines and a new, level floor have been



installed. To make the space more open and airy, brighter light fixtures were introduced, and a glass-walled clerestory was added to the market's new roof. Other improvements include uniform signage, upgraded bathrooms, and a new café-style eating area. While the French Market Corporation's jurisdiction includes a 1970s-era retail complex along Decatur Street to the edge of Jackson Square—including the building where Café DuMonde operates—enhancements are limited, for now, to the farmers' market and a flea market, which reopened in September with new lighting, ceiling fans, and drop-down canvas awnings. *Shawn Kennedy*

**The series of buildings comprising the French Market (above) stretch east from Jackson Square along Decatur and North Peters streets (left).**



## At 151, AIA enjoys postanniversary bounce

The Empire State Building basked in the limelight after taking top honors in last year's "America's Favorite Architecture" poll, in which the American Institute of Architects (AIA) asked the public to pick the nation's most beloved 150 buildings in honor of its 150th anniversary. Now, architects are taking a turn. Buoyed by the immense popularity of sesquicentennial events—the AIA's Web site, which usually averages 7,000 hits a week, was slammed with a server-crashing 27,000 hits-per-hour after results of the top 150 poll were unveiled—they're capitalizing on the freshly elevated profile of their profession to shape policy across the country.

Last month, for instance, the AIA launched "Walk the Walk," an advertising campaign coupled with online education resources designed to promote sustainable design and help the nation move toward the AIA's goal, announced last year, of achieving a 50 percent reduction in carbon emissions from buildings by the year 2010.

Local AIA chapters are also capitalizing on the group's momentum. The Seattle component has been strongly advocating for the removal of the 2.3-mile Alaskan Way Viaduct, a 55-year-old double-decker section of Highway 99 that severs the city from its waterfront. It is debatable whether or not the AIA's influence prompted Washington governor Chris Gregoire to announce in January that the span will be razed by 2012, says Stephanie Pure, the component's spokesperson, but her 2,000-member group is now flexing its muscle for a seat on the new task force deliberating Highway 99's future. All in all, she adds, the sesquicentennial attention "really helped establish us as an organization with deep roots and credibility."

In Minnesota, the AIA's 150 poll prompted a show at the state capitol called "Livability 101," which presented photos of local buildings that embody AIA principles about deterring crime through design and making facades of new offices fit historic

streetscapes, says Beverly Hauschild-Baron, that component's executive vice president. The group also hosted two forums with government leaders that together drew 550 guests to tackle such issues as adding green space to Minneapolis's Washington Avenue and constructing a light-rail line to St. Paul's. Additional forums will follow in 2008. "These events have drawn the architects closer to the policy-makers," Hauschild-Baron says. "It's been extremely positive."

Many local efforts were under way before 2007, sparked by the AIA's Blueprint for America initiative in 2006. Still, states such as Mississippi used the top 150 poll to breathe new life into existing goals, aided by a contest of its own in which 24,000 residents voted on their favorite local buildings. (A dozen winners now grace a calendar.) This year, Mississippi architects will work with lawmakers to revise the state's building codes. "By leaps and bounds, we are engaging the public," says Joseph Blake, the component's executive director.

Nationally, public engagement

helped secure 10 design-related provisions in December's federal Energy Independence and Security Act Bill, says RK Stewart, FAIA, the AIA's 2007 president. The bill calls for cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from federal buildings and sets new efficiency standards for residential boilers, air conditioners, and appliances. Stewart also encouraged architects to pen more editorials to their local newspapers. "We have come of age in terms of how to best bring our issues forward and be the most effective advocates for the built environment," he says.

Increased dialogue could also help bolster the AIA's ranks, says 2008 president Marshall Purnell, FAIA. The AIA numbers 83,000 members, and it is looking to add some of the 29,000 licensed U.S. architects who do not yet belong, for a total membership of 100,000 by 2010. Purnell says that an even more important benefit of increased public dialogue would be to inspire children to seek careers in architecture, to think, "Maybe that's something that I can do." *C.J. Hughes*

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## AIA lauds Meier, Sklarek, and McKittrick



Thomas L. McKittrick and Norma Merrick Sklarek.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has named more winners of its awards for 2008. Richard Meier's Atheneum, in New Harmony, Indiana, will be honored with the Twenty-Five Year Award; Norma Merrick Sklarek, FAIA, will be recognized with the Whitney M. Young Jr. Award; and Thomas L. McKittrick, FAIA, will receive the Edward C. Kemper Award.

The Twenty-Five Year Award goes to a work first recognized by the AIA at its completion and whose design has held up well after its silver

anniversary. The Atheneum is a visitors center for the town of New Harmony, a utopian community founded in 1814. The three-story, white-walled structure features a ramp that leads visitors through exhibition spaces,

each one off-axis from the next, culminating in a rooftop platform that allows views of the town. "The Atheneum is one of Richard Meier's seminal works of architecture," nominator Peter Eisenman, FAIA, wrote. "It is a wonderfully pure example of the recurring themes among his substantial oeuvre."

The Whitney M. Young Jr. Award recognizes an architect or organization embodying the profession's responsibility to address social issues. Young, its namesake, was

president of the National Urban League in 1968, when he addressed the AIA convention about the need to increase the number of minorities and women within the profession.

The trailblazer career of Norma Merrick Sklarek, FAIA, includes several firsts for an African-American woman: first to earn a B.Arch. from Columbia University, in 1950; first to become a registered architect in the U.S., in 1954; and first to be named an AIA Fellow, in 1966. Sklarek spent 20 years with Gruen Associates, in Los Angeles, where her projects included the American Embassy in Tokyo. She cofounded the firm Siegel-Sklarek-Diamond, in 1980, and then established her own practice in 1985. Four years later, Sklarek joined the Jon Jerde Partnership, where her projects included the Mall of America, in Minneapolis. Marshall Purnell, FAIA, the AIA's 2008 president—and the first African-American to hold that position—said in a statement that Sklarek "made me possible. She is mentally the strongest person in this profession that I know."

Thomas L. McKittrick, FAIA, will

receive the Edward C. Kemper Award, which recognizes people who contribute to the profession through service to the AIA. McKittrick, a professor emeritus of Texas A&M University, is currently a visiting professor at the University of Houston. He is a past president of the AIA's Houston Chapter and the Texas Society of Architects (TSA), and has served as vice president and a board member of the AIA's national component. In 1984, McKittrick created the TSA's program "Let's Grow ... Better!" which encouraged each of Texas's 17 AIA chapters to work with a school of architecture to explore smart growth. "He advocated for and incorporated sustainability and active community-planning involvement long before they became de rigeur for the profession," TSA executive vice president David Lancaster, Hon. AIA, wrote in support of McKittrick's nomination.

McKittrick and Sklarek will be feted at the AIA's 2008 national convention in Boston this May. Meier will receive his award during the Accent on Architecture gala at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., on February 22. *James Murdock*

## Winners of AIA's 2008 Honor Awards named

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) announced the winners of its 2008 Honor Awards on January 7. They recognize excellence in architecture, interior architecture, and regional and urban design. Jurors selected 28 projects from more than 800 entries. The awards will be presented at the AIA's national convention in Boston this May. Look for complete coverage in a future issue of RECORD. *James Murdock*

### Architecture

**26th St. Low-Income Housing**, Santa Monica, California, Kanner Architects

**Delta Shelter**, Mazama, Washington, Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects

**Griffith Observatory**, Los Angeles, Pfeiffer Partners Architects

**Heifer International World Headquarters**, Little Rock, Polk Stanley

Rowland Curzon Porter Architects

**Loblolly House**, Taylors Island, Maryland, KieranTimberlake Associates

**Olympic Sculpture Park**, Seattle, Weiss/Manfredi Architecture

**Residence Halls Units 1 & 2 Infill Student Housing**, Berkeley, California, EHDD Architecture

**Shaw Center for the Arts**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Schwartz/Silver Architects

**The Liberty Memorial Restoration and Museum**, Kansas City, Missouri, ASAI Architecture

**Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art**, Kansas City, Missouri, Steven Holl Architects

**Thomas L. Wells Public School**, Toronto, Baird Sampson Neuert Architects

**Trutec Building**, Seoul, Barkow Leibinger Architects

**Unilever House (100 VE)**, London, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates

### Interior Architecture

**Anthony Nak Flagship Store**, Austin, Texas, M.J. Neal Architects

**Architects Office**, Los Angeles, Lehrer Architects LA

**Center for Theatre and Dance**, Williamstown, Massachusetts, William Rawn Associates Architects

**Central Park South Apartment**, New York City, Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects

**Hotel Boutique La Purificadora**, Puebla, Mexico, Legorreta + Legorreta

**Illinois State Capitol Chamber Restoration**, Springfield, Illinois, Vinci/Hamp Architects

**Laboratory**, Omaha, Randy Brown Architects

**Novelty Hill Januik Winery**, Woodinville, Washington, Mithun

**Private Residence**, Northfield, Illinois, Roszak/ADC

**Tehama Grasshopper**, San Francisco, Fougerson Architecture

### Regional and Urban Design

**Campus Hydroscapes**, Fayetteville, Arkansas, University of Arkansas Community Design Center

**Habitat Trails: A Low Impact Development**, Rogers, Arkansas, University of Arkansas Community Design Center

**Los Angeles River Rehabilitation Master Plan**, Los Angeles, CIVITAS

**Visioning Rail Transit in Northwest Arkansas: Lifestyles and Ecologies**, University of Arkansas Community Design Center

**Zuccotti Park**, New York City, Cooper Robertson & Partners



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## Robert Gutman, 81, the architect-sociologist

Until his death on November 23 at the age of 81, Robert Gutman, Hon. AIA, did more than any other individual to build a discourse between the disciplines of architecture and sociology. He avoided advocating the direct application of social fact to architectural form; rather, he initiated a conversation about the occupants of buildings and the forms, policies, plans, and theories that architects might shape.

Most architects became aware of Gutman in 1977 through his response in *Progressive Architecture* to Peter Eisenman's House VI. He opened with his own impression of the residence in Cornwall, Connecticut, describing it as "one of the superb visual experiences of modern design." Citing the work's relation to significant buildings such as Gerrit Rietveld's Schroeder House, he kept architectural readers in tow while leading them on to the battleground he was aiming for all along—the arena where form and use, aesthetics and technology, concept and program face each other head-on. Here, House VI didn't fare well. But Gutman's deep respect for architecture shone through and this



Robert Gutman

attitude attracted students, practitioners, and educators to work with him.

He earned his bachelor's from Columbia University, completing a Ph.D. in sociology there in 1955, then studied demography at the London School of Economics. In 1965, he became a special student of architecture at The Bartlett School of Architecture, in London, and at Princeton University. From the late 1960s until the end of his life, he divided his teaching between sociology at Rutgers University and architecture at Princeton.

Gutman will be remembered for elevating the discourse about architecture's people: those occupying buildings, society at large, and architects. His 1988 book *Architectural Practice: A Critical View* turned a mirror to the profession, allowing it to see itself plainly for the first time. Gutman's position as the sociological father of architecture was solidified. His essay collection *Architecture: From the Outside In* is forthcoming from Princeton Architectural Press. He is survived by his children, John and Liz, and three grandchildren. His wife of 47 years, Sonya Rudikoff, died in 1997. *Dana Cuff*

## Wayne Williams, So Cal Modernist, dies at 88

Wayne R. Williams, FAIA, an award-winning Southern California Modernist architect, died on November 27. He was 88 years old and had been in poor health for many months. Williams is best known for designing private residences, schools, community buildings, and recreational facilities with his business partner, Whitney R. Smith. The two began working together in 1946 and, three years later, formed a partnership that lasted nearly three decades.

A native of Los Angeles, Williams studied architecture at the University of Southern California before serving in World War II. He completed a bachelor's degree at USC, where he studied under Smith before the two went into business together. Williams and Smith blurred the line between indoors and outdoors by using post-and-beam construction with thin supporting members and large swaths of glass for airy, light-filled spaces. They

## Musical future for Rudolph's Riverview High?

Riverview High School, the Sarasota, Florida, building designed by Paul Rudolph that is threatened with demolition, may be resurrected by a new program. In December, the Sarasota School Board presented a letter to a team including Diane Lewis Architect, RMJM Hillier, Siebert Architects, and nonprofit adviser Beckelman + Capalino, allowing it to refine a scheme to adaptively reuse the 50-year-old building as a privately run music facility.



The school as it might be restored and reused.

The school board selected the Riverview Music Quadrangle" plan from several redevelopment proposals shortlisted by the Sarasota Architectural Foundation (SAF) in a competition juried by Toshiko Mori, Charles Gwathmey, FAIA, and Alex Krieger, FAIA, among others. The winning design, by Mack Scogin Merrill Elam with John McAslan + Partners, was disqualified by the school board for impeding its plan for a larger school.

Under the Music Quadrangle scheme, the Rudolph building would be stripped of approximately 40,000 square feet of additions and restored "to its original volumetric condition," says Diane Lewis. Rehabilitation also would re-establish its original sensitivity to climate: an insightful system of

sun-shading, clerestory windows, and rooftop monitors that creates a stacking effect. This sustainable legacy would be enhanced by installing reflective seashell paving in the parking lot and a system to capture storm-water runoff. Lewis estimates a fund-raising goal of \$40 million for redeveloping the building and establishing an endowment for its operation.

McAslan, whose contest submission envisioned keeping school administrative offices in the Rudolph building and connecting it to a new school, wonders if the school board has selected a plan that's bound to fail. "I hope to be proved wrong," he says, "but to raise millions of dollars for an arts project in any environment will take years."

The Music Quadrangle team will make another presentation to the school board in March, when it will unveil an advanced design as well as a financial strategy. The board could still declare the plan unsatisfactory and choose to demolish Riverview. *David Sokol*

often extended roof beams and flooring beyond entryways, fusing a building with its environment while allowing exposed structural components to act as design elements.

The pair's office at 1414 S. Fair Oaks Avenue, in South Pasadena, showcased their design ethos with clean lines, large glass windows, and exposed steel beams. The American Institute of Architects' Southern California Chapter described the building one of the most significant examples of Los Angeles architecture constructed between 1947 and 1967.

Williams and Smith prepared master plans for San Diego's Mission Bay Park and Kern County's California City, and designed residences for the Mutual Housing Association Community in Brentwood. Smith left the firm in 1973 and retired in 1998.

Williams continued practicing and in recent years designed large-scale commercial and residential projects for Giuseppe Cecchi's International Developers throughout the Mid-Atlantic. He is survived by his wife, Paula, as well as sons Garth, Rhys, and Keith. *Tony Illia*

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## Self-certification crackdown sparks turf war

A new state law aimed at curbing architects who knowingly self-certify incorrect plans has sparked a turf war between New York State and local officials in New York City over administering professional discipline.

The city's Department of Buildings (DOB) initiated self-certification in 1995 to ease a permit backlog. It allows architects and engineers to confirm that their plans are compliant with applicable laws, rather than submit plans to DOB inspectors. Self-certification accounted for nearly half the 6,000 new building permits issued in 2007. Controversy erupted last summer when audits revealed that almost half of self-certified plans violated building and zoning codes. In August, the state passed a law aimed at reining in that misconduct by allowing the DOB to refuse self-certified plans from architects who had previously skirted codes. But the State Education Department (SED), the body responsible for granting and rescinding professional licenses, is now crying foul.

"The Education Department opposes the (law) because it allows the DOB to establish what amounts to a discipline process for design professionals in New York City that is independent of, and potentially in conflict with, the process for professional discipline under Title 8 of the Education Law," says Jonathan Burman, a spokesperson for SED and

its subsidiary, the Board of Architects.

Despite DOB safeguards, which included random audits of self-certified plans and investigations of malpractice claims through its Buildings Special Investigation Unit, a stream of faulty plans flowed through the self-certification program. Audits in 2006 revealed that one architect, Robert Scarano, submitted reckless or misleading plans for more than 30 properties. This made headlines after laborer Anthony Duncan died in a building collapse, allegedly the result of unsafe working conditions, at one of Scarano's self-certified projects. Under the city's building code, applicants of record are held responsible in some cases for workplace safety.

The DOB struck a deal with Scarano that accepted his voluntary removal from the self-certification program in return for its own promise not to refer the case to SED. Patricia Lancaster, DOB commissioner, says that SED was aware of Scarano's much-publicized malfeasance and could have conducted its own investigation. But this explanation did not sit well with the public. The *New York Daily News* accused her of "hiding" Scarano's mistakes to protect a flawed self-certification practice; Duncan's family blasted her for failing to pursue Scarano for negligence. Lancaster responds that the move was an attempt to take immediate action and circumvent a

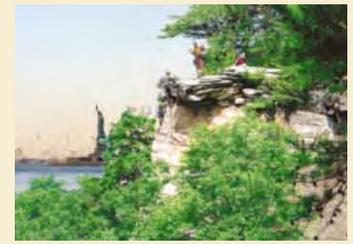
long procedure at the state level.

DOB has since ended its no-referral practice but continues to embrace its own discipline process for scofflaw architects independent of state activity. Last summer, it created the Professional Certification Audits and Inspections Team, which has conducted 700 inspections and issued 170 Stop-Work Orders since August, mostly for construction-site activity inconsistent with permits.

Critics are concerned that those powers conflict with state protocol. Russell Davidson, president of the American Institute of Architects New York State Chapter, wonders how the DOB will distinguish which architects are deliberately skirting the rules from those who have simply made mistakes. Worse, he adds, architects could be blamed for "certain portions of the building activity over which we have no control and no responsibility." Others, including Burman, worry that competing professional discipline systems at state and municipal levels could hold professionals to different standards of proof at discipline hearings and could result in multiple punishments for the same offense.

Proponents counter that measures exist in the new law to address such concerns. Before the DOB can remove an architect from its self-certification program, for instance, it must first make its case in a hearing before the city's Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings. "There are a whole set of due process rights afforded to architects," says state assemblyman James Brennan, who wrote the self-certification reform bill. *Dorian Davis*

## West 8 team wins Governors Island competition



A conceptual view of new parkland.

A team led by West 8 won the competition to design open space on Governors Island, a 172-acre landmass near the southern tip of Manhattan. The project encompasses a 2-mile promenade along the water's edge, a 40-acre park on the island's southern half, and improvements in the northern half, which is a Historic District. Also on the team are Rogers Marvel Architects, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Quennell Rothschild, and SMWM. They bested a short list that included Field Operations and WilkinsonEyre; Hargreaves Associates and Michael Maltzan Architecture; REX and Michel Desvigne Paysagistes; and WRT and Urban Strategies. West 8's proposal envisions circulation paths inspired by the markings of a butterfly wing, and artificial hills built with waste from demolished buildings. Since the competition was only to pick a design team, not a final scheme, the architects must now develop detailed plans. Ground breaking could occur by 2010. *Tim McKeough*

## Columbia's controversial expansion okayed

Columbia University's plan for rezoning portions of Manhattanville received a green light from the New York City Council in December, allowing the school to move forward with developing a controversial, 17-acre campus expansion designed by Renzo Piano and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM).

The Council's vote came one month after the city's Planning

Commission recommended that it approve a modified plan that grants most of the elements Columbia proposed—a sprawling, mixed-use campus with 4.8 million square feet of boxy, glass-walled buildings, and 2 million square feet of subterranean space located 10 blocks north of the existing campus—but also addresses concerns raised by local residents and businesses. It lowers

building heights at the north end of campus by 50 percent, to 120 feet, in order to better serve the neighborhood context. It also ensures that public parks and open spaces are completed in the first phase of construction, set to end in 2015.

Marilyn Taylor, a partner at SOM, says that the height restrictions could help resolve aesthetic tension between past and present construction: "These buildings can be more of a transition between our

[larger] proposals to the south and the community to the north."

But community members remain upset that the school has left open the possibility it might petition the state to start eminent domain proceedings against several old warehouses, including Hudson Moving and Storage, built in 1903 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They also fear that the new campus could displace as many as 5,000 residents. *Dorian Davis*



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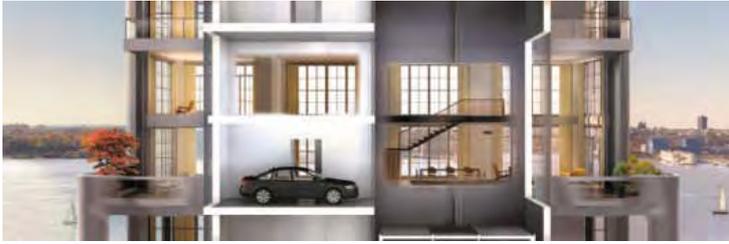


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## Condos continue to sprout by High Line



The apartments at 200 Eleventh Avenue feature elevator-accessible garages.

The High Line, the Manhattan elevated railway that's undergoing conversion from industrial artifact to public green space, is the work of a trifecta of design-world giants, including Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Field Operations, and L'Observatoire. The park also has cast stylish rip-

ples. Rezoned in 2005, the neighborhood has boomed with upscale condominiums [RECORD, June 2006, page 54], and developers continue to announce new buildings.

Jean Nouvel's second Manhattan condo project, dubbed 100 11th, responds abstractly to the

opportunities and exigencies of its site. The 72-unit, 23-story building, designed with Beyer Blinder Belle, presents two unique faces to the neighborhood. To approximate the shimmering effect of the Hudson River, which it overlooks, the building's south- and west-facing curtain wall is assembled of 1,700 panes of glass in a variety of sizes and inserted into steel frames at a series of angles. The other elevations, clad in black brick, reflect the area's industrial buildings, and the residences' all-white interiors are inspired by the art galleries that have been inserted into those original, gritty shells.

Nearby, for the 19-story tower 200 Eleventh Avenue, architect Annabelle Selldorf designed stainless-steel facades rising from a cast gunmetal-glazed-terra-cotta base. These elevations are punctuated

with large expanses of muntin-gridded glass to evoke industrial-era lofts. The 16 interiors include duplex configurations and, a first for the city, elevator-accessible garages integrated with each apartment.

A section of the 1.5-mile-long High Line park, between Gansevoort and West 20th Streets, will partially open this summer. As its new phases are launched in the coming years, the collection of new architecture surrounding it promises to grow. Last June, Steven Holl announced that he was designing the Highline Hybrid Tower, the architect's first large-scale project in New York. And in October, marketing began on Metal Shutters House, Shigeru Ban's first new-build condominium in the U.S. This 11-story structure features pivoting glass walls and motorized metal shutters that can encase large terraces. *David Sokol*

## Form follows feathers in bird-friendly design

An estimated 1 billion birds die annually in the United States as a result of striking buildings and other man-made structures. Lights, vegetation, and water play a role, but glass is the main culprit, according to bird-safe design guidelines prepared by groups including the New York City Audubon Society, the Chicago Birds & Buildings Forum, and the City of Toronto. Birds fly into conventionally formulated glass because they fail to perceive it as a solid barrier; they also mistake reflections as continuous space.

The design guidelines are largely an appeal to enlightened self-interest, saving birds while reaping the financial benefits of green building. The USGBC is beginning to highlight it, but advocates note that it's far from a mainstream design consideration. Guidelines emphasize creating "visual noise," that is, patterns that birds can register. With glass, this means enhancing ultraviolet-reflectivity, color, texture, or opacity. Shading, brises-soleil, colored and reflective solar blinds, and curtains also help.

Adding bird-safe design to LEED scorecards would give the practice a boost. "We want to enshrine bird-safe

design in LEED as a proven innovation point, and we need legislation and mandates," says Bruce Fowle, senior principal of FXFOWLE Architects. "The immediate goal is to have bird-kill reduction identified as an option in the LEED reference manual."

But green building is no guarantee of bird-safety. If not patterned, tinted, or used in small panes, low-E glass has a dangerously mirrorlike quality; birds are also lured by green roofs reflected on surrounding walls. With its highly reflective windows and nearby stand of trees, for instance, Emory University's LEED-certified Mathematics and Science Center, in Atlanta (2002), designed by Cooper Carry, decimated neotropical fall migrants and forced officials to drape netting over the building.

Bird safety is easier to sell when it overlaps with other green strategies, says Jeanne Gang, principal and founder of Studio Gang Architects. "Slanted glass reduces solar heat gain but also works to effectively reduce bird injuries," Gang says of her firm's 26-story Solstice on the Park condo tower, in Chicago. "Fritted glass reduces heat gain, and if it's 50



At Solstice on the Park, low-E glass is angled to reduce its reflective quality.

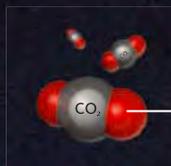
percent, you can still see through it."

Most birds can see ultraviolet light, which is invisible to humans, and in nature it often attracts birds, says Daniel Klem, an ornithologist and biology professor at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania. More tests are needed to see if birds avoid UV-reflective glass, he adds, "but it would be the most elegant solution if it works." Isolar Glass already markets patterned, UV-reflective glass and Guardian Global plans to release a bird-safe line by 2009.

Installing glass that birds can see would be simpler than current options. "There's no easy way to con-

vince clients that they need dots every four inches or stripes or louvers or angled glass," Fowle says. The New York Times Building, by FXFOWLE and Renzo Piano, uses thin horizontal ceramic tubes to form an external lattice that reduces heat gain and makes the building visible to birds.

While major cities located along migratory flyways get a lot of attention, they account for a comparatively small percentage of kills. The crucial next step, says New York City Audubon Society executive director Glenn Phillips, is "getting to the big designers of suburban and exurban buildings." *Ted Smalley Bowen*



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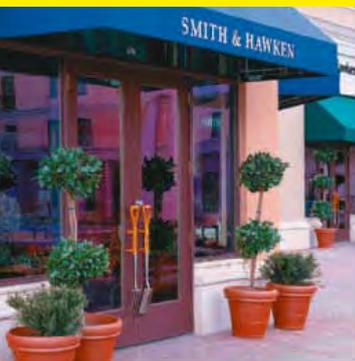


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COMMERCIAL

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A biologist, musician, and a playwright enter a classroom: This isn't the setup for a joke, but rather the pedagogy of Colorado College, a liberal arts school in Colorado Springs. Classes are taught by a team of professors from different departments and culminate in a project that weaves all



the subjects together. **Cornerstone Arts Center**, the first building to unify all arts programs under one roof, manifests this teaching philosophy in flexible architecture designed by **Antoine Predock, FAIA**. The mainly copper-clad, 73,300-square-foot structure appears as a geologically inspired pyramid shape that narrows toward the northern part of the site, where smaller rectilinear volumes step down toward the grade. Interior highlights include a

433-seat auditorium, sound stage, and screening room, although every room can sustain at least three functions. A central atrium includes amphitheater seating and is ringed by a catwalk that can be turned over to fine arts exhibitions; classrooms are equally suited to history seminars or dance troupes, thanks to easily reconfigurable partitions. The \$33 million center broke ground in 2006 and is due to open later this year. *David Sokol*



Battling Rust Belt decline with a startlingly modern design, New York City-based developer Northern Group and architect **Anthony Caradonna** have unveiled plans for **Cadillac Centre**, a \$150 million mixed-use complex in Detroit's historic central square, Campus Martius. The project features two 24-story sculpted, glass-and-steel apartment tow-

ers with 84 rental units, atop a base of retail and entertainment venues. The asymmetrically rounded towers taper from top to bottom, faced with transparent glass that has a shimmering quality derived from solar fibers embedded within the glazing. They rise from either end of a 12-story podium, which is partly faced with a greenish glass. Cadillac Centre will be among the city's most daring architectural works since the John Portman-designed Renaissance Center opened in 1977. "Detroit has these amazing tall buildings with these amazingly beautifully designed, ornamented, and three-dimensionally vibrant interior spaces," Caradonna says. "It's really about raising this piece that fits into this really important puzzle of downtown, linking the spaces around it." Construction could begin in 2009 and finish in 2011. *John Gallagher*

Becoming a U.S. citizen requires study, effort, patience—and a lot of paperwork. When the interviews and forms are completed, individuals raise their hands and swear allegiance to their new country. Chicago-based **4240 Architects** wanted to provide a proper setting for that transformative experience, so it designed a two-story, glass-enclosed Ceremony Room for the new **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** building in Irving, Texas. "Think of it as Lady Liberty's torch," says 4240 design director Robert Benson—an uplifting space that gleams "like a beacon." But the building reveals more detail about itself the more that visitors study it. Giant screen-printed words spelling "I will support and defend the Constitution" wrap around the Ceremony Room. They, in turn, are



formed of smaller words that reproduce the text of the Constitution: a metaphor for new citizens' deepened understanding of what it means to be an American. The \$22.9 million, 56,000-square-foot facility opens this summer. *Elizabeth Lunday*

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## News Briefs [architecturalrecord.com/news/](http://architecturalrecord.com/news/)



**Broad museum, angular skin.**

### Michigan State University picked Zaha Hadid

to design its new \$26 million Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, in East Lansing, on January 15. The short list included Morphosis, Kohn Pedersen Fox, Coop Himmelb(l)au, and Randall Stout Architects. Hadid's design calls for a sharply angular, low-slung, 41,000-square-foot building with a glass and aluminum skin. Exterior louvers will regulate daylight entering trapezoidal-shaped galleries, one of several green features aimed at getting a LEED rating for the project. "The horizontality of America, big skies, and light are amazing," Hadid said during a press conference. "I've always been struck by the light in North America and to bring in the light was very critical." Ground breaking is expected later this year, with the museum to open in 2010. *John Gallagher*

### "Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes" takes a lens

to contemporary U.S. suburbia at the Walker Art Center, in Minneapolis, February 16 to May 18. Curated by the Walker's Andrew Blauvelt and Tracy Myers, of the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, the show examines everything from ethnic diversity to the conversion of big-box stores for churches and other uses. It even takes a peak inside houses used as porno sets in Southern California. *James Murdock*



**Left behind ... in suburbia?**

**The Dallas Museum of Nature & Science selected Thom Mayne**, of Los Angeles-based Morphosis, as the architect for a new flagship building. He was one of four finalists, from a field of 100, along with Polshek Partners, Shigeru Ban, and Snøhetta. At a press conference on January 8, Mayne said that he has "absolutely no preconceptions" about the new building, currently planned for 150,000 square feet. Afterward, he added that he intends to "rethink the museum: What is its purpose? What is an exhibit? What qualities of that experience are still cogent today?" With a planned construction cost of \$155 million, work is expected to begin in 2009. The building will be located in Victory Park, a new mixed-use development on the northeast edge of downtown Dallas. *Elizabeth Lunday*

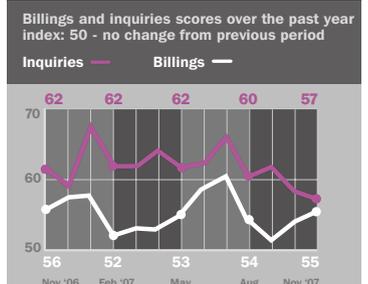


**A linear plan helps overcome the baggage of modern flying.**

**Airport architects must address a trio** of recent phenomena: a new generation of larger aircraft, the burgeoning of low-cost carriers, and heightened security. At the 800,000-square-foot North Terminal of the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, Gensler met these challenges. A small ticketing hall acknowledges that boarding passes are now printed at home or at kiosks; passengers get more room at security for removing shoes and opening bags; and gates are arranged in a straight line, allowing high-volume discount airlines to "pull in an airplane, off-board the passengers, reboard, and pull out to taxi in 20 minutes," says Gensler principal Ron Steinert. The \$315 million project opens this fall. *David Sokol*

### The Architectural Billings Index continued to rebound

in November, adding 2.1 points for a score of 55.3. It was the second straight gain after a sharp drop earlier that autumn. The American Institute of Architects, which compiles the index based on surveys sent to 300 mainly commercial architects, says this improvement indicates that anxiety from the credit crunch might abate. Although the index of new business inquiries slipped another 1.5 points to 56.6 in November, a nearly 10-point drop since July, any score above 50 indicates growth. *James Murdock*



### ENDNOTES

- Frank Gehry will design the annual summertime pavilion at London's Serpentine Gallery this year.
- Boston Society of Architects executive director Richard Fitzgerald will retire in November 2008.
- Greensburg, Kansas, leveled by a tornado in May 2007, has resolved to construct all city-owned buildings to LEED Platinum certification, a first for any city in the nation, according to the USBGC.

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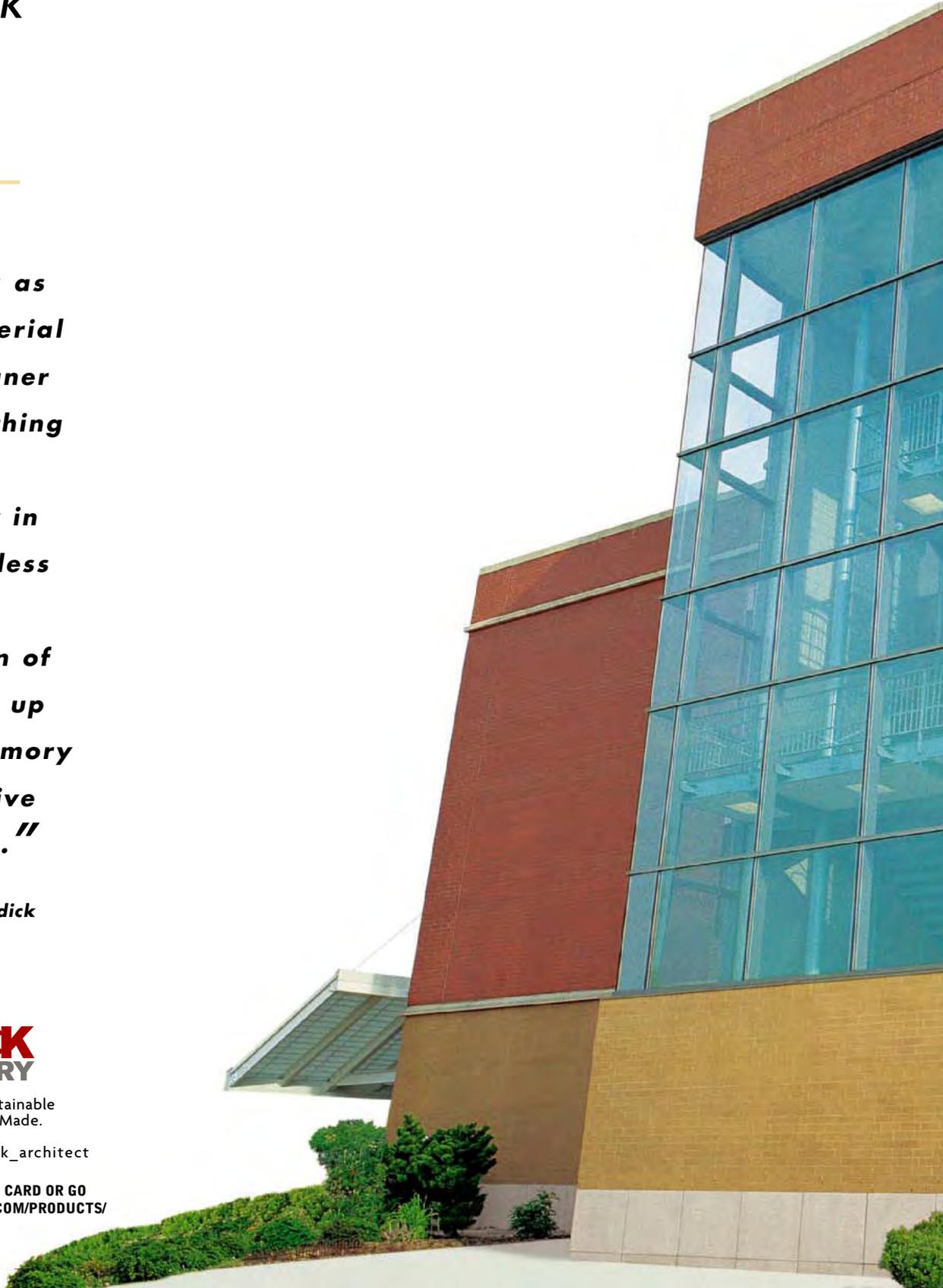
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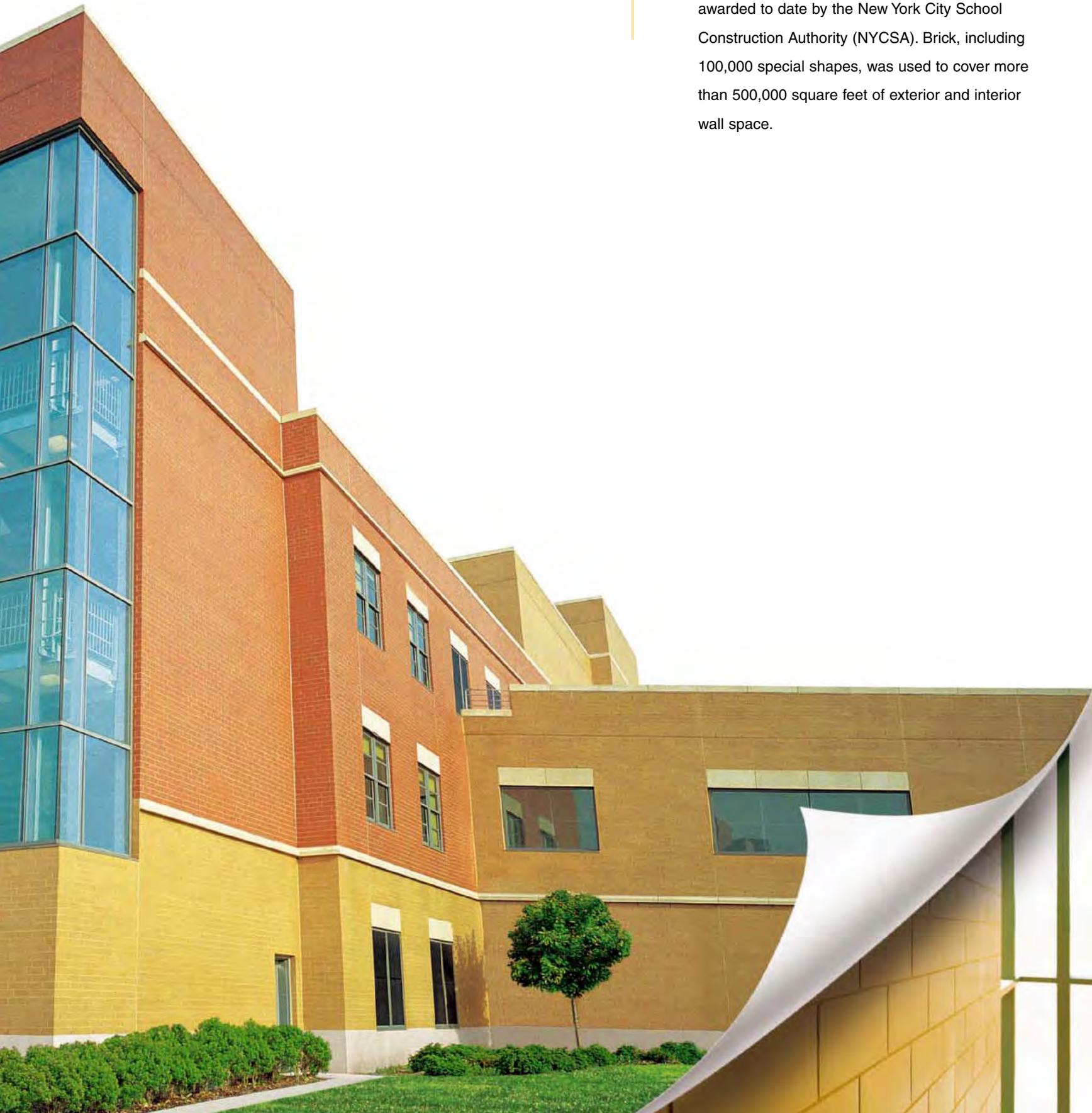
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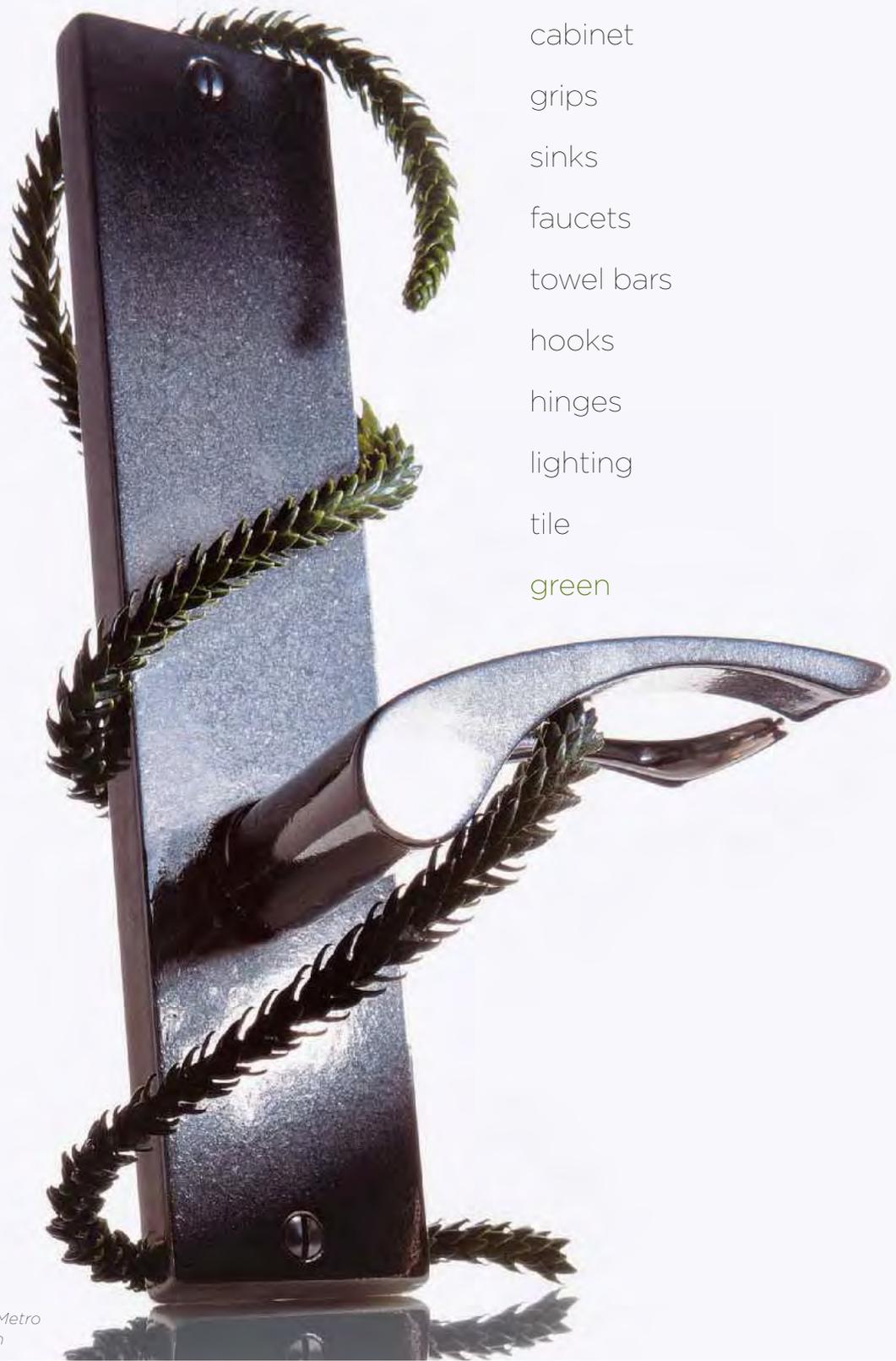
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DEPARTMENTS

Two maverick Los Angeles firms with an emphasis on construction grace our pages this month. Techentin Buckingham Architecture focuses on process and technique, while LeanArch builds for a future of electric cars and zero energy. In *Work*, Chicago firm Demonica Del Muro sets an example as a young practice teaming up with larger firms to gain opportunity and clout. **ONLINE:** How important is it for young firms to serve as general contractors? Reply at [construction.com/community/forums.aspx](http://construction.com/community/forums.aspx).

### Design

#### Techentin Buckingham Architecture: Keeping it real-world



Techentin Buckingham will pass on paper architecture. The Los Angeles studio, founded by college friends Warren Techentin, AIA, and Henry Buckingham, AIA, has focused its six years so precisely on real-world building that the partners only recently decided to enter one competition annually—if only to keep staff spirits high and creative juices flowing.

By emphasizing construction, Techentin and Buckingham have engaged all kinds of clients and their associated sets of limitations. “We end up with a kind of straightforward Dutch model in which client interaction, big ambitions, and minimal means develop the program,” Techentin says. Some clever solutions surface along the way, too. For the clothing manufacturer Elwood, for example, the architects developed a cabinet design that could be lined with textiles of the company’s making. And when a Pasadena couple recently revealed that the husband’s father runs a shipping business in South Dakota, the team decided to fabricate their new home there and ship the parts to the site to reduce local construction costs.

Even projects seemingly unfettered by parameters can get creative. When Techentin remodeled his own home in nearby Los Feliz, he also served as general contractor, putting him in closer contact with different trades. After learning that one 81-year-old subcontractor specialized in Venetian terrazzo, Techentin made a point of experimenting with the material. Today, his kitchen countertop features the terrazzo polka-dotted with large circular stones.

By designing responses to the exigencies and surprise opportunities of each project, Techentin and Buckingham are moving only gradually toward a signature. The architects stand at a self-admitted crossroads, wondering whether Dutch-style pragmatism or a looser, folded language will become their M.O. Regardless, several unifying characteristics shine through the oeuvre, such as urban interaction. For the Casa Santa Ana parochial school in Los Angeles, the Archdiocese originally requested a simple set of additional



#### Nativity Primary School, Los Angeles, 2007

*An addition to a school provides a strong edge to the street and a more porous, open edge to the playground the nearby residential areas.*

#### Glassell Park Housing, Glassell Park, Calif., 2009

*A mixed-use, 114-unit complex incorporates a variety of unit designs and open, outdoor space.*



#### Pacific Palisades Residence, Pacific Palisades, Calif., 2006

*For this addition of a kitchen, living space, and office, the architects rotated the axis of the house 90 degrees to flood the spaces with light while maintaining privacy.*



IMAGES: COURTESY TECHENTIN BUCKINGHAM ARCHITECTURE



**Breville Airstream, Los Angeles, 2008** *An exercise in environmental and product design, the project functions as a working kitchen to showcase appliances.*

kindergarten classrooms. But instead of tacking volumes onto the existing complex, Techentin Buckingham nestled the expansion into it; this courtyard-in-courtyard scheme allows the youngest students to see their role models in everyday situations. In a similar vein, residential projects like the Los Feliz house and a beach house in Ventura feature openings aligned to the neighborhood to encourage engagement between occupants and community landmarks beyond. These careful considerations reflect the partners' longstanding interests. After graduating from Berkeley, the native Californians earned their M.Arch. degrees at Harvard and Columbia, respectively, with Techentin picking up an extra degree in urban planning. Both then worked in New York, at ARO, Resolution: 4 Architecture, and Selldorf Architects.

Although their firm's formal stamp is undetermined, the architects agree that their everyday urbanism seems destined to stick around. Indeed, they're working on three condominium projects, and each makes an attempt to contribute to their neighborhoods' critical mass of activity with courtyards, mixed uses, and variously sized units that promote a wider profile of ownership. "We've taken the longer route through building," Techentin says. Then again, that longer route has also yielded tangible places that are making greater Los Angeles a friendlier place to live. *David Sokol*

For more about Techentin Buckingham, visit [architecturalrecord.com/archrecord2/](http://architecturalrecord.com/archrecord2/).

## Design

### LeanArch: Adding whimsy to sophisticated design



He doesn't wear a cape, but architect James Meyer, AIA, principal of Los Angeles firm LeanArch, has a superhero thing going on nonetheless. Having started his solo practice in 2000 with small projects like bathroom remodels and room additions, Meyer says he began his fledgling firm with a passionate concept. "There was a lot of building going on in L.A., and I knew that if we kept to the idea that we were a firm that could be counted on to do reliable, fair, ethical service and good design, we would grow," he says. "I told my office, 'This is the hall of justice, and we're the superfriends battling bad design. Everyone has their own superpower to bring to the mix.'" Now with a team of 11 and a full roster of residential and commercial projects completed and on the boards, Meyer's nontraditional approach is just one facet of a serious business with sophisticated design leanings.

For Meyer, who grew up in Los Angeles's beach communities and has found his way back there after world travel and stints working for SOM in New York City, as well as Johnson Fain Partners and Lubowicki Lanier Architects in Los Angeles, a whimsical approach to serious architecture keeps the work interesting. Whimsy doesn't get in the way of the practical, however. Meyer sought from the onset to establish solid relationships with contractors to make sure projects were properly completed. He enjoys the hands-on approach so much he decided to establish a building division at LeanArch in 2006 and got his general contractor's license. He runs that division as a separate part of the business, at times even bidding on design work LeanArch already has in hand. "The construction side has helped us breathe a lot of vitality into the work," Meyer says. It's also helped him get back to the sustainable techniques he learned in college, at California Polytechnic San Luis Obispo. "While at SOM, I learned a lot about working at a huge firm on really big projects, where everything was so machined and refined," he says. "But with LeanArch, I wanted to get back to the sustainable techniques Cal Poly really pushed—rammed earth and hay-bale construction and such. Part of me shied away from that type of building at the time as too California.



**Park Oak Drive, Los Angeles, 2005**

*Developed in partnership with Robot & Sons, this 3,610-square-foot home mixes a varied spatial experience, including outdoor areas, with an organic palette.*

**Canyon Oak Drive, Los Angeles, unbuilt**

*A bridge that connects a 1940s residence with a proposed multilevel office/artist's studio, the project's form reflects the winding street.*



IMAGES: COURTESY TECHENTIN BUCKINGHAM ARCHITECTURE (TOP); LEANARCH (BOTTOM FOUR)

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**Kuhlhaus 01,**  
**Manhattan Beach, Calif., 2007**  
*In partnership with Kuhlhaus Development Company, this 1,800-square-foot home incorporates flexible spaces and solar panels.*



Experience with the opposite of all that has really made me see its value.” Meyer has a three-tiered approach to sustainability. First come the smart design techniques that don’t cost the client any money—orientation, wind and sun exposure, and such. Next, he tries to be responsible with the finishes and materials he uses. Then, he tries to incorporate alternative energy sources for his projects, including flash furnaces and solar panels. He also tries to make sure the projects he designs won’t become obsolete in years to come, going so far as to put in accessible hookups for electric vehicles in some of them. Do his clients have electric cars? “Not yet, but we figure they will one day,” he says. “We want to be sure the provisions are there.”

Meyer says his colleagues in New York used to make fun of his easygoing So Cal ways. He doesn’t mind. The architect, who is also a guitarist (his current band is called Bride Primer), says he started LeanArch in college as a fictitious firm that would have “approachable, rock ‘n’ roll architects.” His now very real firm has that, but it also has a principal who starts his day at 4:30 A.M. and often works past dark. “I’m fortunate,” says Meyer. “It’s never a chore.” *Ingrid Spencer*

For more LeanArch projects, go to [architecturalrecord.com/archrecord2/](http://architecturalrecord.com/archrecord2/).

## Work

### Teaming with larger firms serves opportunities



When Arthur Del Muro, AIA, and Dominick Demonica, AIA, colleagues of 16 years at a Chicago firm, decided to start their own practice, they thought it would take a while to garner projects and grow their firm. To their surprise, in less than a year they have added five more architects to their team to

handle the commissions that keep coming their way. What has fueled such an impressive growth are collaborations with older, more established practices.

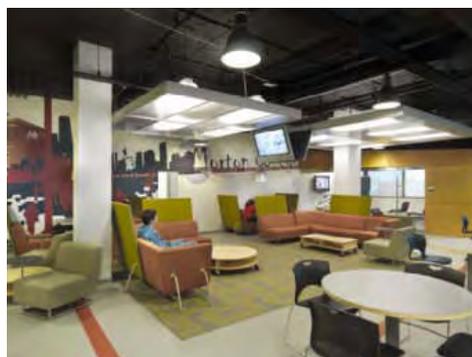
The young firm, Demonica Del Muro Associates (DDA), has been able to get a piece of various municipal projects by pitching their niche knowledge. During their last years at Chicago-based Legat Architects, Del Muro and Demonica helped build and lead the firm’s business in higher education, Del Muro says. Armed with that specialty, they scored one of their first significant municipal projects—a new structure on the Greencastle, Indiana, satellite campus of the statewide community college system—by teaming up with Indianapolis firm InterDesign. This more-established, locally rooted practice serves as the firm of record, while DDA acts as the design architect. “We bring a certain level of expertise,” says Del Muro. “The combination of our portfolios really makes a strong team.”

Andrew Costlow of InterDesign, who is working with DDA on the project, says despite the youth of the practice, it has a lot of experience—experience that contributes to the two firms’ synergy.

DDA’s success in winning projects by collaboration—all obtained by word-of-mouth rather than hard-sell marketing—shows that young architects who choose to strike out on their own can do so without having to completely fly solo. This type of project sharing can be at once promising and rewarding. “I think there is a lot of possibility out there,” says Doug Garofalo, AIA. Garofalo is a professor at the University of Illinois School of Architecture and principal of Garofalo Architects. “The upside is that you get to work on a project that—I hate to say this—you



*For the Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana’s New Center for Workforce and Economic Development (left), DDA—as design architect—partnered with Indianapolis firm InterDesign.*



*For Morton College’s Student Success Center in Cicero, Illinois, Del Muro and Demonica teamed with former employer Legat Architects of Chicago.*

are guaranteed not to get on your own. You gain some valuable experience. If it’s a true collaboration, you’ll learn quite a bit.”

Garofalo cautions that young firms should not be afraid to walk out if they feel that they’re being exploited. An escape clause is important for protection.

DDA’s Del Muro, meanwhile, can’t wait for his and Demonica’s noncompete contracts with their previous employer to expire this March so that they can actively solicit from former clients they had back at Legat. During the wait, they’ve joined forces with other firms, including Saavedra Gehlhausen Architects in Rockford, Illinois, and Tang & Associates in Chicago, as well as Legat. Despite the good luck working with others, Del Muro still hopes that before long his firm can be strong enough to go solo. “We want to get to the point that we don’t have to team up and still have enough horsepower to survive on our own,” he says. *Violet Law*

For additional information on Demonica Del Muro Associates, go to [architecturalrecord.com/archrecord2/](http://architecturalrecord.com/archrecord2/).

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# Making (too) big plans for Manhattan's West Side

## Critique

By Michael Sorkin

New York's powerful deputy mayor for economic development, Dan Doctoroff, recently resigned, something that had been rumored for a time. Doctoroff, who came to the city from a master-of-the-universe career as a private equity dealer, has left—with scarcely a murmur of disapproval—to become head of Bloomberg L.P., the Mayor's very own multibillion-dollar financial reporting company. While there is apparently nothing illegal about this, it does affirm once again the degree of control of the city by an interlocking directorate of government, finance, and real estate—development interests, and the tendency of players to move seamlessly from one sector to another. This cozy relationship finds its parallel at the national level in the kind of reciprocal arrangement that has Cheney going from government to Halliburton and back to government, with the resulting engorgement of Halliburton on no-bid contracts in Bush's war in Iraq.

While in office, Doctoroff accomplished a great deal, much of it constructive. He became the city's de-facto head of planning and was frequently compared to Robert Moses for the scope of his activities and energy. This favorable comparison resulted from a long-growing national feeling that government has been incompetent (what politician nowadays doesn't run against the government?), incapable of deliver-

*Contributing editor Michael Sorkin is the director of the urban design program at City College of New York.*



ing the goods, too mired in the ethos of welfare, too estranged from the can-do mentality of big business. The electorate has bought into this to a remarkable degree. Our bluest of blue-state towns has now been run for 15 years by Republican mayors—Giuliani and Bloomberg—who have pursued the sort of tough-on-crime, big-business-friendly policies of the national party. The results have been very successful by certain measures: Crime is down dramatically and real estate prices have never been higher, with the city still seemingly immune to the current national meltdown. And Bloomberg, in particular, has used the city's rising revenues for substantial improvements in many areas of public service.

Of course, there are down sides. Many people seem to have forgotten Giuliani's vicious authoritarianism. And the obscene income gap that has grown so dramatically in both the nation and the city means that New York in general—with Manhattan as an extreme case—is becoming increasingly inhospitable to any but the wealthiest, a culture too skewed to remorseless getting and spending. While by many measures the “quality

of life” in the city has improved—the subway is better, the streets are cleaner and safer, the fizz of construction is everywhere—the question must be asked: Better for whom? Certainly not for kids in public school, where improvements proceed at a glacial pace and a two-tier system has most parents who can afford it sending their children to private schools. Nor for those squeezed from their homes by the cruelties of the market.

Doctoroff made his first big appearance on the city scene as a promoter of New York's unsuccessful bid for the 2012 Olympic Games. The centerpiece of that effort was a proposal to build a giant stadium on the last truly vast tract of developable land on Manhattan, the commuter rail yards on the West Side. After the Olympics, the stadium was to have served as the home for the Jets football team. The massive structure would have joined the even more massive Javits Center nearby in hulking isolation and conspired to further isolate the area from the riverfront. In a district very poorly served by public transportation, the stadium would have created massive traffic problems and a vast

**Proposals for developing the Hudson Yards site on the west side of Manhattan include designs by Steven Holl (above right) and SOM and other firms (above left).**

social vacuum. Widely opposed, it proved a nonstarter with the public and both it and the bid for the games went down in flames.

After the Olympics debacle, the city has moved to a more comprehensive approach and produced a zoning and public infrastructure plan for the area to encourage a more “mixed” strategy. The plan includes the extension of a subway line and a clear, if not exactly inspired, formal armature for development. The linchpin for the plan is the rail yards—28 acres of opportunity for big bucks, with the sky as the limit. (In comparison, Ground Zero offers a mere 16 acres.) The owner of the yards, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, has put the site out for bids and five proposals were recently submitted by a roster of the usual development and architectural suspects. In making its selection, the MTA, in what might be interpreted as no more than the exercise of its fiduciary responsibility, is likely to

focus entirely on the bottom line, this being the Republican definition of civic virtue. As at Ground Zero, this choice is protected by the ability of the agency to make its decision with too much independence from public review and by a program—12 million square feet of buildings, a cultural bauble, and a park in the middle—that fixes the project's scale at a level of sublime unreason.

One of the keys to the magician's art is misdirection: We are fooled, tricked into looking at the wrong thing. Recent presentations of the five schemes have all focused on the architecture, which plays its usual supine role in distracting our gaze from necessity to invention. (The five teams are Steven Holl for Extell Development; SOM, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Thomas Phifer, SHoP, SANAA, Field Operations, and Handel Architects for Brookfield Properties; Murphy/Jahn, Cooper Robertson, and Peter Walker for Tishman Speyer and Morgan Stanley; Pelli Clarke Pelli, FXFOWLE, and WRT for the Durst Organization and Vornado Realty; and KPF, Arquitectonica, and Robert A.M. Stern for The Related Companies.) As many have remarked in the media, none of the schemes will have any necessary bearing on what is finally built, and all will be subjected to the usual closed-door deal-making between the MTA and the developers, as each seeks to max out its profits and minimize any investment that detracts from the mellifluous *ka-ching, ka-ching* playing in their collective cortex. They will, nonetheless, surely claim, as they stand behind their lovely renderings and models, that the best "design" has won.

### Green camouflage

In listening to one very well attended public presentation by the designers of the five schemes, I noticed another interesting form of misdirection. We are all greatly attuned to matters green nowadays,

and each of the teams pressed that component to the fore, often with the landscape architect most prominently featured in making the case. (By the way, the Bloomberg administration has, under Doctoroff's direction, produced what is, in many ways, a very impressive plan for the city's sustainable growth, which is clearly having at least a rhetorical impact.) The evening was filled with talk of microclimates and runoff capture, of lawns and bosks, as if the schemes were somehow primarily about parks and not about the areola of 90-story monstrosities that would surround (and in most instances, cast into darkness) the open space. The environmental ethos—the very least we should expect from all of our building—was meant to lull and to camouflage. Ironically, for all the dulcet claims of up-to-date urbanism, we were served a massive dose of towers in the park. Of course, every scheme was depicted on a glorious summer-of-love day, all blue skies and blooms.

Although many sought to establish pedigree via comparisons to Rockefeller Center, the more apposite analogue is the Albany Mall. (Ah, those Rockefellers: We have them to thank for the original World Trade Center, as well. Not the best batting average.) The genius of Rockefeller Center comes from its architecture, its compactness, and its brilliant elision with its surrounding context. The Albany Mall is dreadful for its architecture, its Brasilia-like spatial extravagance, and its context-of-no-context megalomania. Four of the five schemes simply accepted the client-proposed Albany Mall parti of a rectangular green space with its long axis running east–west, lined by huge buildings with the jumbos generally at the east end, on axis or framing it. By and large, despite the claims of the authors, I was not persuaded that these parks—flanked by giant towers along their southern

edges—were likely to be bathed in the photoshopped sunshine depicted in the renderings. Nor was I convinced that the orientation of the skyscraper-walled park toward the river would do much to prevent a massive generation of the Venturi effect on dark and windy winter days. And the literal link of the schemes to the riverfront showed truly massive failures of imagination: Virtually every project seized up on its cliff-faced podium beside the riverside highway, then extended a single tragic tendril across the road to the skinny shoreline park.

### Best of a bad lot

Two projects had merit (ironically, the two that handicappers already think are most likely out of the running). Although I was ambivalent about the architecture as well as by the solar implication of the decision to put high towers to the south and a low bar building to the north, Holl's scheme took strong cognizance of the mandate to overscale and did something about it. By putting his park on a suspension structure over the tracks instead of on a massive platform, and by building his towers on the flanking terra firma, his plan simply costs less and allows the developer to use the savings to reduce the overall scale of the thing. This is civic thinking. While I was uncertain of how Holl would solve the meeting of his suspension structure with the avenues (likely to produce a walled condition) and how much of the strength of the scheme would be lost if the individual buildings were franchised to other architects, this was still a very serious piece of design. But these cavils are probably moot. Without the indispensable anchor tenant brought by several other developers, this proposal is likely to sink.

The other seriously worked out project was that of Brookfield Properties, with an architectural team dominated by SOM but ornamented by a cadre of hipper practices. This was the one scheme that seemed to come to grips with the thornier issues of planning the site in its real particularity, and did

so with intelligence. The biggest difficulty presented in building over the yards lies not so much in the need to span them, but in the very substantial change in grade from east to west, raising a classic problem of too-simple placement of buildings at the artificial grade of a podium. The Brookfield design (presented that evening by its landscape architect, James Corner) has a succinct and elegant modulation from street to podium, creating on its southern edge strong spaces at both lower and upper levels, and smartly integrating the High Line (the disused railway viaduct that runs from the site through the neighborhood to the south and is now being converted to a park). This was also the only scheme to subdivide the central park, creating two distinct spaces of differing character—an approach that strikes me as far more rational, both environmentally and programmatically. Much too much architecture, though.

Whether any of this wisdom will wind up in the project selected remains to be seen. Although the whole operation has been the object of uniformly scathing criticism by architectural critics, most of that is itself hemmed by the developers' intended misdirection. Little is written about the larger planning, morphological, and artistic implications of building a clutch of Empire State Building–scaled towers at this edge of the island. Little is mentioned about the distributive ecologies of use, and despite the pieties about sustainability (the acceptable face of social responsibility), few voices can be heard questioning the real social content and effects of a project motivated primarily by the further enrichment of the city's most privileged classes. Rupert Murdoch or S.I. Newhouse or Goldman Sachs will wind up with shiny new headquarters. Others will be obliged to look elsewhere. What a waste of a precious public resource. ■

**ONLINE:** What should be built at the Hudson Yards? Respond at [architecturalrecord.com/community/critique](http://architecturalrecord.com/community/critique).



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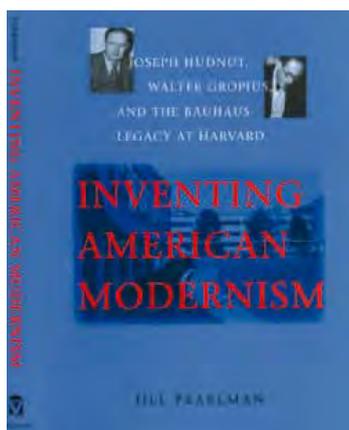
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# Reexamining Modernism and its roots

## Books



**Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius, and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard**, by Jill Pearlman. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2007, 276 pages, \$40.

When naming pioneers of Modern architecture in the United States, who immediately comes to mind? Surely not Joseph Hudnut.

And that's truly a shame, not just for Hudnut (1886–1968) but for all of us. As Jill Pearlman convincingly demonstrates, Hudnut played a significant role in introducing Modernism to America. More poignantly, he argued for a much more varied and humane Modernism than would dominate the frenetic building boom following World War II. One can only wonder how much better our built environment would be today if more people had heeded the modest Hudnut instead of his suave adversary, Walter Gropius.

Hudnut was raised in Big Rapids, Michigan, and trained at the University of Michigan and Columbia.

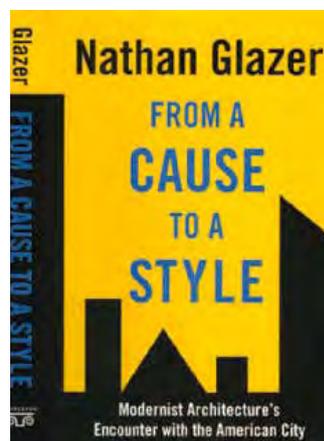
When he was tapped as dean of Columbia's School of Architecture in 1934, he began a shift of curriculum away from the then-dominant Beaux-Arts toward a more progressive program. But it wasn't until he became dean at Harvard in 1935 that Hudnut began to significantly alter the course of architecture and planning in America. It was he who in 1936 united the schools of architecture, landscape architecture, and city planning into one—which he named the Graduate School of Design (GSD)—to reflect the growing importance of collaboration. And it was he who brought Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius to Harvard in 1937 as architecture chair, followed by other avowed Modernists. Although supported by Harvard president James Bryant Conant throughout his 18-year tenure as dean, Hudnut was continually challenged, first by old-guard faculty members, then by Gropius, as their common enemy, Beaux-Arts traditionalists, began to retreat.

Pearlman recounts in detail the power struggles, personality clashes, and shifting alliances that occurred—both within and outside the GSD—as the drama of Modern architecture and planning unfolded in America. Such intricacies are fascinating for fans of the Modern movement, who know, of course, that “God is in the details.”

*Nancy B. Solomon*

**From a Cause to a Style**, by Nathan Glazer. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007, 300 pages, \$25.

Sociologist Nathan Glazer, the coauthor with Mark Lilla of *The Public Face of Architecture* (1987), here looks at Modern architecture with critical affection. One premise in this collection of a dozen essays written over the past 15 years is that the Modern movement has abandoned its noble roots in social theory for something more trivial. The social agenda in low-income housing has dropped out of architects' minds, Glazer writes, because it is generally understood that such once-celebrated designers as William Lescaze and Minoru Yamasaki were naive and the housing projects they designed were too large. In addition, government subsidies have shriv-



eled and now emphasize rehabilitation. Glazer contends that the architects that get most of the attention today design computer-enabled flash for elite clients, and that point is supportable. But hasn't the idealism that made early Modernists want to clean up city slums been supplanted by a quest to clean up the environment? The

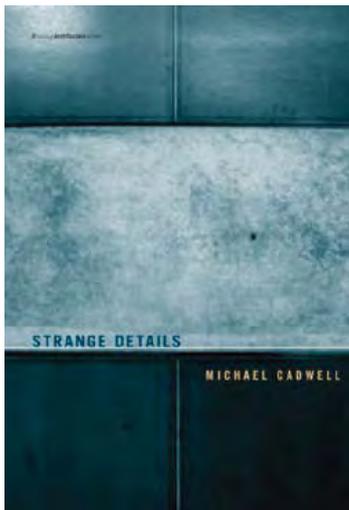
world has changed; haven't socially conscious architects just moved on?

Glazer's subtitle is “Modernist Architecture's Encounter with the American City,” and New York is his city. He interprets with compassion and understanding the subjects of postwar housing in East Harlem and the perils of making plans for such a complex, densely populated place. He also looks at Jerold S. Kayden's “monumental scholarly account” of privately owned public spaces.

There's a chapter, too, about designing monuments, particularly those on the National Mall. A decade ago, certain Modernist critics derided as fascist Friedrich St. Florian's Neoclassical World War II Memorial. Their concerns echoed the reaction of emerging Modernists in the late 1930s—including Albert Barr of the Museum of Modern Art and Frank Lloyd Wright—to John Russell Pope's proposal for the Jefferson Memorial. But what, Glazer asks, has Modernism brought to the vocabulary of memorials, and what would the Jefferson have been like if designed by a Modernist? Would we have preferred it to what was built? “One may doubt it,” he concludes. “There is the rub: Modernism and monuments do not marry well.” *Allen Freeman*

**Strange Details (Writing Architecture series)**, by Michael Cadwell; introduction by Nader Tehrani. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007, 239 pages, \$20 (paperback).

This book's four essays present studied explanations for the choices made by Kahn, Mies, Wright, and



Scarpa in four iconic 20th-century buildings: the Yale Center for British Art (New Haven, 1974), the Farnsworth House (Plano, Illinois, 1951), the Jacobs House (Madison, Wisconsin, 1936), and the Querini Stampalia Foundation (Venice, Italy, 1963). The title takes its cue from the author's thoughtful reading of the Seamus Heaney poem "Making Strange," which provides a framework for his meditation on architects who are remembered for, among other things, dealing in details.

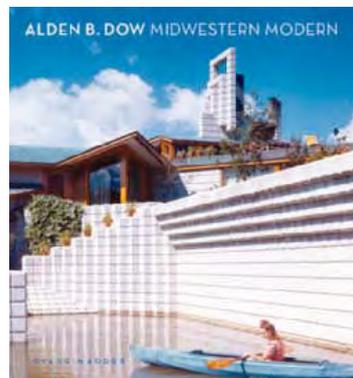
Cadwell's interest here is not to fetishize the aberrant components of a building, but to reveal the small triumphs and gaffes that can tell a larger story. Beyond the formal decisions about program, parti, and plan, there are the equally compelling decisions about surface, material, and the act of joining. The book's subjects emerge as builders and craftsmen, not inflated, mythic creatures. The author encourages us to think about these buildings not as objects, but as a series of assembled systems and parts. *Strange Details* is not a history; it offers no unifying argument about Midcentury Modernism, nor is it Babelic "talkitecture." It is a useful, deeply felt discussion about the art and practice of building: thorough without being boring, and lively without being sensational. One of the best features of the book are the

bibliographic notes that follow each chapter as miniature essays that reveal Cadwell's judicious use of sources. *William Richards*

**Alden B. Dow: Midwestern Modern**, by Diane Maddex. *Midland, Mich.: W.W. Norton, 2007; 240 pages, \$50.*

Born in his parents' house in 1904, architect Alden Dow was a lifelong resident of Midland, Michigan. A son of the founder of the Dow Chemical Company, he derived great comfort from working in and for his hometown, whose face he changed with more than 100 houses, schools, religious and civic structures, and commercial buildings.

To look at some of Dow's buildings is to see the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright, with whom he studied briefly at Taliesin. "Both were



inspired by nature," writes Maddex, "used geometric modules as the basis of their designs, dreamed that architecture might cure social ills, relished challenging sites, excelled at designing homes, and built flexibility in their buildings." Yet Dow's works stand securely on their own merits—innovations in style, function, and the use of materials.

Houses—and housing—were the focus of Dow's career. Convinced that architecture, allied with science, should address the need for low-cost shelter, he designed several sophisticated prototypes. But he also produced houses for many individual clients, the zenith of

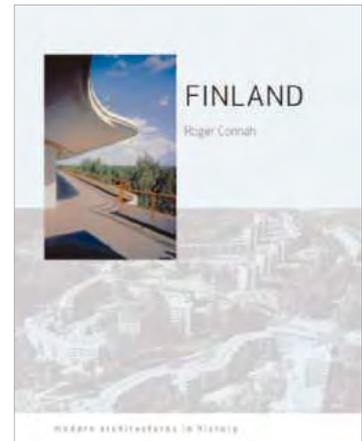
which was his own home and studio, in 1941, a complex of long wings and rakish shapes built of what he called Unit Blocks. These rectangular elements, inspired by Wright's textile blocks and made from Dow Chemical cinder ash, formed the basis of 13 Dow houses. With his home and studio, Maddex writes, "Alden Dow wrote a new chapter in the history of the American country house."

Much of midcentury American architecture now seems aesthetically weak, but we tend to forget that designers of Dow's caliber did practice during those years and that their work's exemplary qualities, indeed the structures themselves, have endured. Dow was celebrated during his life but has faded from view, so this book—the first new survey of his life and works since 1983, the year he died—should restore his status. Spaciously laid out and cheerfully colored, like so many of Dow's buildings, the volume joins an expanding clan of books on regional architects. *Arnold Berke*

**Finland: Modern Architectures in History**, by Roger Connah. *London: Reaktion Books, 2006, 284 pages, \$30.*

Despite its sparse population and minimal international political power, Finland is a major presence in international architectural circles, largely because of its best-known designer, Alvar Aalto. You might think that a history of Modern Finnish architecture would relate a pantheon of lesser lights to Aalto.

But in Finland, Roger Connah assumes the architectural historian's most arduous challenge: He examines a sweeping panorama of a nation's cultural and political currents and shows how these helped shape architectural creativity. The broadly erudite Connah details the complex and often-paradoxical struggles faced by generations of architects whose designs mirrored a shifting sense of Finnish identity. Instead of placing Aalto center stage, Connah moves more than a dozen Modern and Postmodern



figures, in addition to Aalto, through his gripping story. These "shadow figures," as Connah calls them, each deserve their own text, as Connah demonstrates, yet many remain obscure outside Finland. They include Juha Leiviska, who reconfigured a striking sense of Louis Kahn's monumentality with a flair for Nordic romanticism, and Viljo Revell, a dynamic futurist.

Nearly 200 small but sharply focused halftones invite further investigation of modern Finnish architecture, an invitation amplified by the author's lyrical prose. Connah's several stints teaching architecture in Finland marked the beginning of a love affair. He writes, "Few countries have seen the potential in an architecture set out and defined by the pioneers of the 20th century and yet been able to co-opt, adapt, and refine their own architecture and social objectives to respond to such a vision." *Norman Weinstein*

**Alvar Aalto Through the Eyes of Shigeru Ban**, edited by Juhani Pallasmaa and Tomoko Sato. *London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007, 271 pages, \$45.*

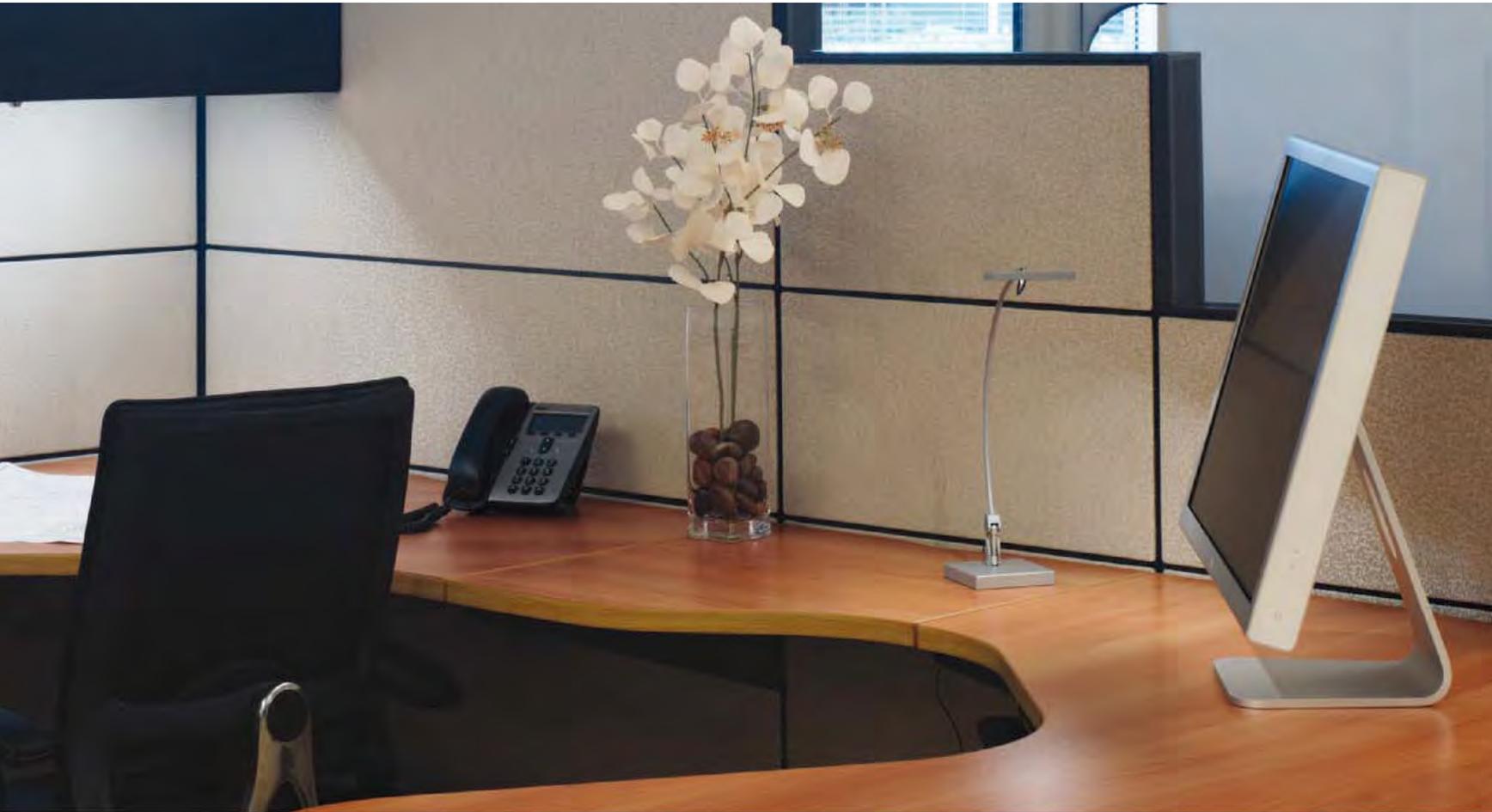
This exhibition catalog from a 2007 show at London's Barbican is a first-rate tribute to architectural genius. Conceived by curator Tomoko Sato, the exhibition, whose subject was Shigeru Ban as well as Alvar Aalto, covered a broad swath of intellectual and aesthetic territory, and juggled huge gaps across cultures and generations.

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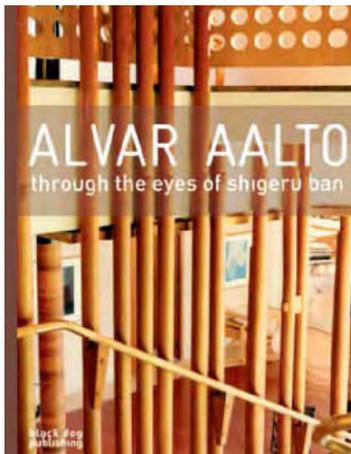


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Drawings and photographs of 15 projects selected by Ban reveal Aalto's architectural legacy. Also showcased are photographs of Ban's architectural projects, essays by Aalto, and an astute commentary by the contemporary Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa tying Aalto to Ban. As a bonus, a sensational portfolio by architectural photographer Judith Turner creates an abstract composition of Aalto's buildings.

What is it that holds together this presentation of two architects separated by time and geography? Aalto and Ban shared a passionate commitment to a humanistic and humane architecture sensitive to all life in nature. "Variety and growth reminiscent of natural organic life are the very essence of architecture," wrote Aalto long before "biomimicry" and "green" became common architectural terms. Ban recalls, "Aalto was the first architect I encountered whose work was inseparable from its surroundings aesthetically and functionally." Curator Sato astutely juxtaposes Ban and Aalto's words with photographs of their buildings to give the impression of two contemporaries enthusiastically discussing their common concerns about emergency housing and sustainable design. Both address these issues through spare nouveau-Modernist buildings illuminating the ethereal qualities of natural light. As Aalto proclaimed, "Architecture has an

ulterior motive ... the thought of creating a paradise." This book sheds light on how architects can design with paradise in mind. *N.W.*

**Shuhei Endo: Paramodern Architecture**, edited by Hiroyuki Suzuki. Milan: *Electaarchitecture*, 2006, 211 pages, \$30.

Has any architect of our time attempted to do so much with so little as Japan's Shuhei Endo? It is not, in any meaningful sense, a Minimalist impulse that drives the subject of *Paramodern Architecture*; as the title suggests, Endo is at pains to disentangle himself from any genealogy of Modern art and architecture. He is aided in this by his native country's cultural



atmosphere, from which he draws more deeply than perhaps any of his contemporaries, and by his own willful design preferences, which border on monomania.

Corrugated sheet metal is Endo's theme, and in this handsome book it receives more than 30 different treatments, in briefs ranging from a bicycle deposit to an art museum. Under headings like "Roofecture" and "Springecture," Endo forcibly reduces the exigencies that interior space usually place on exterior form to create a single shell spanning the whole surface of his structure. Endo calls it a calligraphic

approach, derived from the continuous brushstrokes of Japanese script. It's an apt comparison, at least in so far as the ideogram, like the building, plays the double role of use—object and objet d'art.

Certainly, Endo might be easily grouped with the "Big Shed" school of contemporary architecture: In proposals such as his "ecological house" for Tokyo, the metal skin is rooted fast to the ground and springs up and over, independent of the interior arrangement. But there are other comparisons, as well. It's difficult to look at this much rolled, bolted steel and not think of early Gehry, who represents a more improvised, if less coherent strategy. There is a half-admitted debt (first by editor Hiroyuki Suzuki, then conditionally by Endo) to the Metabolists. And especially in his farm emporium for Biwa-cho, completed in 2000, Endo would seem to recall less the Japanese tradition he cites in his introduction and more the architecture of the Quonset hut, a major feature of military installations during the period of the American occupation of Japan. This is just one of the latent intrigues to be found in the work of this seemingly simple, lyrical architect. *Ian Volner*

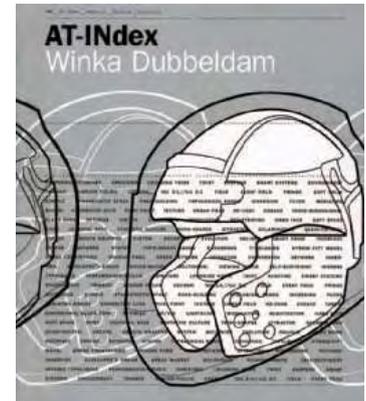
**AT-INDEX**, by Winka Dubbeldam. New York: *Princeton Architectural Press*, 2006, 224 pages, \$40.

Archi-Tectonics is a think tank for form, a computer course for philosophers, and an architectural practice responsible for some of the most nuanced and convincing "hyper-modern" buildings in America today. Now its principal, Winka Dubbeldam, has produced *AT-INDEX*, an Archi-Tectonics companion and a master class on design.

She knows whereof she speaks: Dubbeldam has been in the right places at the right times, having worked for Rem Koolhaas at OMA in Rotterdam in the mid-1980s, then in the U.S. for Peter Eisenman, Steven Roche, and Bernard Tschumi. Dubbeldam completed her postgraduate studies at

Columbia in the 1990s, one of a brace of young architects there who first wed continental theory to digital technology. The completed work featured in this book is the fruit of that union.

As Reed Kroloff puts it in his nimble and too brief introduction, Dubbeldam's "writing and lectures occasionally exhibit the linguistic thickening agents characteristic of



that school." Some of her passages describing her own work are positively coagulated. But that's the necessary result of a serious engagement in systems and complexity theories, and one borne out in projects that range from a light fixture to a proposed Museum of World Culture in Sweden. The recently completed GW 497 loft building in Manhattan has a crunched and crimped glass facade, a curtain wall that finally lives up to the sense of ductility-in-suspension that the name implies.

Essays and interviews by Javier Barreiro Cavestany, Detlef Mertins, and Michael Speaks fill out the book and lend added perspective. Still, as reflective as the work is, Dubbeldam makes few appeals to a populist or a romantic or even an environmental sensibility. But unlike many of her contemporaries, Dubbeldam's architecture escapes sensationalism. Hers is a wrought, thoughtful architecture, and her insistence on process leads to architectural objects that are the opposite of iconic: frozen animation, sliding surfaces, buildings that evade easy visual understanding and that are always more than meets the eye. *I.V.*

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# Creating a firm culture that supports innovative design

## Practice Matters

By Andrew Pressman, FAIA

Cultivating an environment in which there is a swift and easy exchange of ideas is an important part of the design process in many firms, both large and small. What may not be so obvious are strategies to foster optimal functioning and creative thinking in such an environment.

Early in their indoctrination and training, architecture students learn about studio culture. It has been a hot topic for the American Institute of Architecture Students, the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, and the National Architectural Accreditation Board. Architecture schools are required to demonstrate a healthy design studio culture in order to be accredited, and criteria include encouraging “respect, engagement, and innovation among faculty and student body,” which should serve as a model of professional conduct in the future.

There is increasing recognition that a firm’s cultural environment is a critical factor not only in producing the best possible design work but also in attracting and retaining both new staff and clients. Many architectural firms are now including sections on their Web sites dedicated to describing a distinctive office culture. Their intent is to demonstrate that the firm has a climate in which excellent design can be nurtured, so they can serve as a magnet for talented people, who are

*Contributing editor Andrew Pressman, FAIA, is a practicing architect and the author of numerous books on practice. He resides in Washington, D.C.*



**The culture of the design firm IDEO does not discourage bad ideas, because they can trigger solutions. One of its credos is, “Fail often to succeed sooner.”**

in great demand at the moment. By definition, the design process involves some degree of innovation relative to a unique set of project circumstances. Since design—and its management—is the core of what most architects do, it follows that creating the environment to facilitate an innovative subculture should likewise be a main concern.

A firm’s culture, as succinctly characterized by Jean Valence, Hon. AIA, principal and director of strategic development at Symmes Maini & McKee Associates, Cambridge, Massachusetts, “encompasses its history and accomplishments, its leaders’ ambitions and goals, its definition of and criteria for excellence, its attitude about clients and

staff, its traditions and lore, its mood and energy, and its balance between art and business.” In other words, a firm’s values describe its culture, and the subcultural components such as those promoting innovation, continuing education, communication, and so on, impart a distinct personality.

### Strategies that support a subculture of innovation

Here are a few strategies suggested by experts to encourage innovation that might surprise you: Hire naive misfits who argue with you; encourage failure; avoid letting client input limit your vision; and fully commit to risky ventures. This is an extreme approach to fostering innovation in an otherwise relatively static office environment that was proposed by Robert I. Sutton. Writing in the *Harvard Business Review* in 2001, Sutton argued that fresh perspectives derive from mavericks with wildly diverse backgrounds and no preconceptions who challenge the status quo, champion their own ideas, and illuminate the metaphorical darkness.

Sutton points out that ignoring client input may seem counterintuitive, but clients can’t always imagine what’s possible. Ted Hoff, an inventor of the microprocessor, echoed that sentiment the next year, also in *Harvard Business Review*: “Don’t do what the customer wants; do something better.” Likewise, failure is critical to the design process—assuming the group learns from the failure—because, typically, many bad ideas must be generated to produce a terrific one. Even the bad ideas can illuminate a problem and serve as a

creative trigger to its solution. IDEO, the renowned Palo Alto, California, innovation and design firm, has a saying: “Fail often to succeed sooner.”

A somewhat more tempered and time-proven model of Sutton’s dogma is embodied in the culture of the United States Navy. The role of the executive officer, or second-in-command, is historically charged with such principles as support and delegation of authority. But also implicit is the responsibility of providing alternative, even self-consciously innovative, solutions to problems that may arise in battle or in other emergency situations. Frankly opposite viewpoints from those of the commanding officer are often invited and seen as requisite components of tactical decision making. The resulting complementary tension that exists between the commanding and executive officers is considered a positive force that enriches the culture because it demands that alternative strategies must be considered. Perhaps a formalized notion of a second-in-command equivalent that would add some creative and energetic tension could be a beneficial addition to some architecture firms’ cultures, improving the underlying process and dynamic of their design teams.

The notion of a council of experts made up of senior members of a practice, as a resource that contributes to a learning environment through mentoring, supporting teams and individuals with new ideas, and sharing best practices, is a powerful cultural attribute. Moreover, tapping into a firm’s internal expertise can assist designers in understanding particular building types and technologies in an accelerated manner. James R. Brogan, AIA, senior associate principal with Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF), describes a Web-based example of such a resource—the firmwide KPF intranet—that includes a database of valuable past project information.

He says, “One can best take advantage of our internal knowledge and experience through the database and knowing who within the office worked on a particular project.”

To augment the database, KPF is planning on shortly launching an “Architectural Forum” on the intranet, which will be a “collaborative vehicle for posting questions, comments, techniques, materials issues, and so on, about specific projects to capture a running discourse on various design topics throughout the office. It will be searchable and will contain pertinent solutions and best practices through a firmwide dialogue.”

### Look outside for insight

Applying cross-disciplinary knowledge to help creatively solve architectural problems—and broaden perspectives—is a time-honored strategy. The Seattle firm Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects employs a visiting-lecturer series which, according to its Web site, is “inspired by the power of cross-fertilization—where individuals who excel in disciplines other than architecture come and share with us what they do.” They have had presentations by artists, craftspeople, environmentalists, and even an exotic dancer.

Reorganizing staff can fuel new approaches to engaging everyday problems. Roger Goldstein, FAIA, a principal at Goody Clancy in Boston, explains that intentionally mixing teams from one project to the next is an integral part of his firm’s culture. He says, “There’s a lot of value in applying the things we learn in one realm to another completely different context.” There is, however, a delicate balance in composing a team with experts in a particular building type (that appeals to prospective clients) and those with little experience who come to the table with no preconceptions, contribute fresh ideas, and challenge basic assumptions. “Team

composition that might lead to the most efficient design process does not necessarily lead to the best design,” explains Goldstein.

“One way for a majority of staff to have a degree of ownership in the design process,” claims Michael Ryan, principal of Environmental Dynamics Inc. (EDI), Albuquerque, “is to sponsor a group charrette for larger projects in which everyone gets to draw and design in the schematic phase.” Roger Goldstein similarly believes that charging a design team to “spend a few days developing a bunch of ideas that may or may not be workable” is not only intriguing for pushing the design envelope but contribute to a culture of innovation. Jim Voelzke, principal, MV+A Architects, Bethesda, Maryland, summarizes the collective feeling: “Most projects follow a classic pattern of high risk-taking in the beginning, gradually ebbing as the project develops and the time spent becomes more of a liability.”

### How IDEO does it

Does everything have to be a touchy-feely collaboration? Are competition and collaboration within the same firm culture mutually exclusive? Not according to IDEO founder David Kelly. He describes its brainstorming process as “enlightened trial and error” and “focused chaos.” They don’t get too attached to their first few design ideas because they know they will change and improve. They may select a couple of alternatives to pursue (out of a half-dozen developed by competing teams) after a charrette, or cherry-pick ideas from multiple sources to create yet another alternative—all to ensure the final design has benefited from a series of explorations and perspectives. In this case, an internal competitive environment can indeed push outcomes to new heights.

The physical environment of an office can reflect and influence its culture. Ryan asserts something as simple as a big open space—no special offices, no closed doors, and no cubicles—promotes an atmosphere of shared experience, mutual respect, and casual (and nonhierar-

chical) exchange. For example, an impromptu gathering around someone’s computer is common when they have discovered something of architectural interest or “to kick ideas around.” EDI, like IDEO, also places a premium on humor and playfulness—whether it’s a nickname for a principal or their computers spewing quotes from cartoons when new e-mail is detected—to relieve stress and encourage whacky thinking. IDEO even has a wing of an old DC-3 cantilevered over a meeting room.

As a vital part of its firm culture, which is also under the umbrella of professional development, Torti Gallas, a Silver Spring, Maryland, practice, developed firm committees, firmwide “discourses,” and a customized project-management course. Staff at all levels participate on the committees, which primarily address office operations such as marketing and public relations, and document standards. The work of some of the committees is disseminated through a monthly session called a “discourse.” The discourse is also a forum for change and evolution in the firm, and helps to build consensus and ownership in shaping new directions. Principal Thomas Gallas says that the firm’s design charter, for example, arose from a discussion about improving the quality of architecture and included a set of principles that was signed—and embraced—by everyone in the office. Finally, the Torti Gallas project-management course is directed to interns and involves one-on-one training (during personal time), complete with homework and tests, and is a means to “get a common mindset about the importance of project management,” according to Tom Gallas. The firm was recognized by the AIA in 2005 as the IDP Firm of the Year—large firm category for its learning culture and initiatives.

If you’re successful, you’re in jeopardy of becoming complacent. So get out of your corner office, fail often, argue respectfully with coworkers, adopt a learning culture, don’t accept anything at face value, and start to innovate. ■

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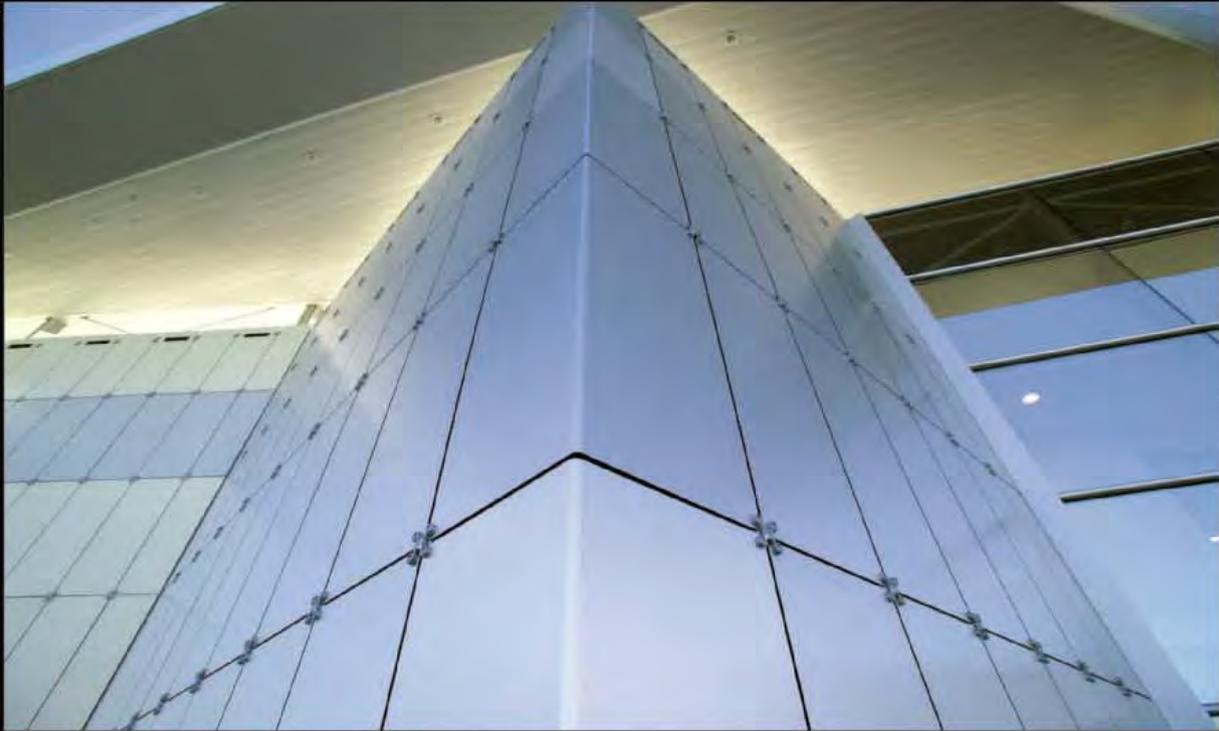
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# Trade Show Review London • 100% Design

With its mix of multinational companies and independent craftsman sitting cheek by jowl, London's 100% Design offers the opportunity to see both Europe's Next Big Thing and the latest idiosyncratic products. Following are a few of our favorites from last year's show. *Julie Taraska*

**1 Fire starter** Planika adds a spark to indoor entertaining with the DK 7000, a remote-controlled fireplace incorporated into a coffee table. The flames are contained within a shatterproof glass cylinder balanced on a steel hearth; the latter is coated with a temperature-resistant powder varnish that prevents the transfer of heat throughout the rest of the oak-veneer-and-aluminum-lacquered unit. A liquid ethanol derivative called Fanola fuels the fire. When burnt, the substance produces only steam and carbon dioxide—removing the need to install exterior ventilation or a chimney. Planika Décor, Lyndhurst, N.J. [www.planikafires.com](http://www.planikafires.com)



1



2

**CIRCLE 201**

**2 Through the keyhole** Livalike's ornate Doretta strike plates add bygone glamour to ordinary doors. The two-piece plastic set boasts an abrasion-resistant glossy coating and comes in cream, green, or anthracite (black). Livalike, Essen, Germany. [www.livalike.com](http://www.livalike.com)



3



4

**3 Flowering floors** One of Britain's most inventive wallpaper designers, Jocelyn Warner, moves into the floor coverings arena with Bloom, a hand-knotted, 100 percent wool, 6'-square rug featuring a single peony rendered in eight shades of pink and red. Jocelyn Warner, London. [www.jocelynwarner.com](http://www.jocelynwarner.com)

**CIRCLE 203**

**4 From the forest** The Arborism table's twiglike steel legs are based on the branch structure of trees. Measuring 2.3' high x 1.6' wide, the piece is available in stainless, black, or white and retails for about \$1,380. Nosinger. Tokyo. [www.nosinger.com](http://www.nosinger.com)

**5 Soul 2 Soul** Designed by the British duo Tom Lloyd and Luke Pearson of PearsonLloyd, the cantilevered Soul chair is available in a polypropylene shell with different-colored backrests and an optional upholstered pad for its translucent polycarbonate seat. See Web site below for U.S. reps. Allermuir, Lancashire, England. [www.allermuir.com](http://www.allermuir.com)

5



## Trade Show Review London • 100% Design



**6 Wooden wonders** For more than 20 years, Matthew Hilton has created furniture for Triade, Habitat, CASE, and Design Within Reach. His eponymous line of Arts and Crafts-inspired chairs, tables, and home accessories, including the dining chair and coffee table shown, are handmade from slabs of teak, mahogany, and paramara. Matthew Hilton, London. [www.matthewhilton.com](http://www.matthewhilton.com) **CIRCLE 206**

**7 Boiling point** The next generation in pot fillers, Quooker's boiling water tap provides 212 degree liquid right out of the spout. A compact, undersink stainless-steel tank with vacuum insulation stores the water, keeping it hot but the unit itself cool. The tap is available with a childproof safety mechanism and in four models, including the Classic SS (shown). Quooker, Manchester, England. [www.quooker.com](http://www.quooker.com) **CIRCLE 207**



**8 Circling the drain** Alape's WT.RL800 washstand's flat surfaces and concealed inflow and outflow mechanisms belie the unit's purpose. Part of the Components System, the lightweight unit has a hollow steel body and a hard-wearing, scratch-resistant glaze surface. Dornbracht, Duluth, Ga. [www.dornbracht.com](http://www.dornbracht.com) **CIRCLE 208**

**9 The art of sound** Designed by artist Gill Hewitt in collaboration with Ecophon, these recyclable bespoke textile acoustic panels are as easy on the eye as they are on the ear. Each comprises a glass-based unit with a sound-absorbing substrate nestled between multiple layers of felted cotton, polyester, or linen. Class 1 rated for flame spread, the panels can reduce flutter echo in offices, restaurants, and homes. Gill Hewitt, Bath, England. [www.gillhewitt.com](http://www.gillhewitt.com) **CIRCLE 209**

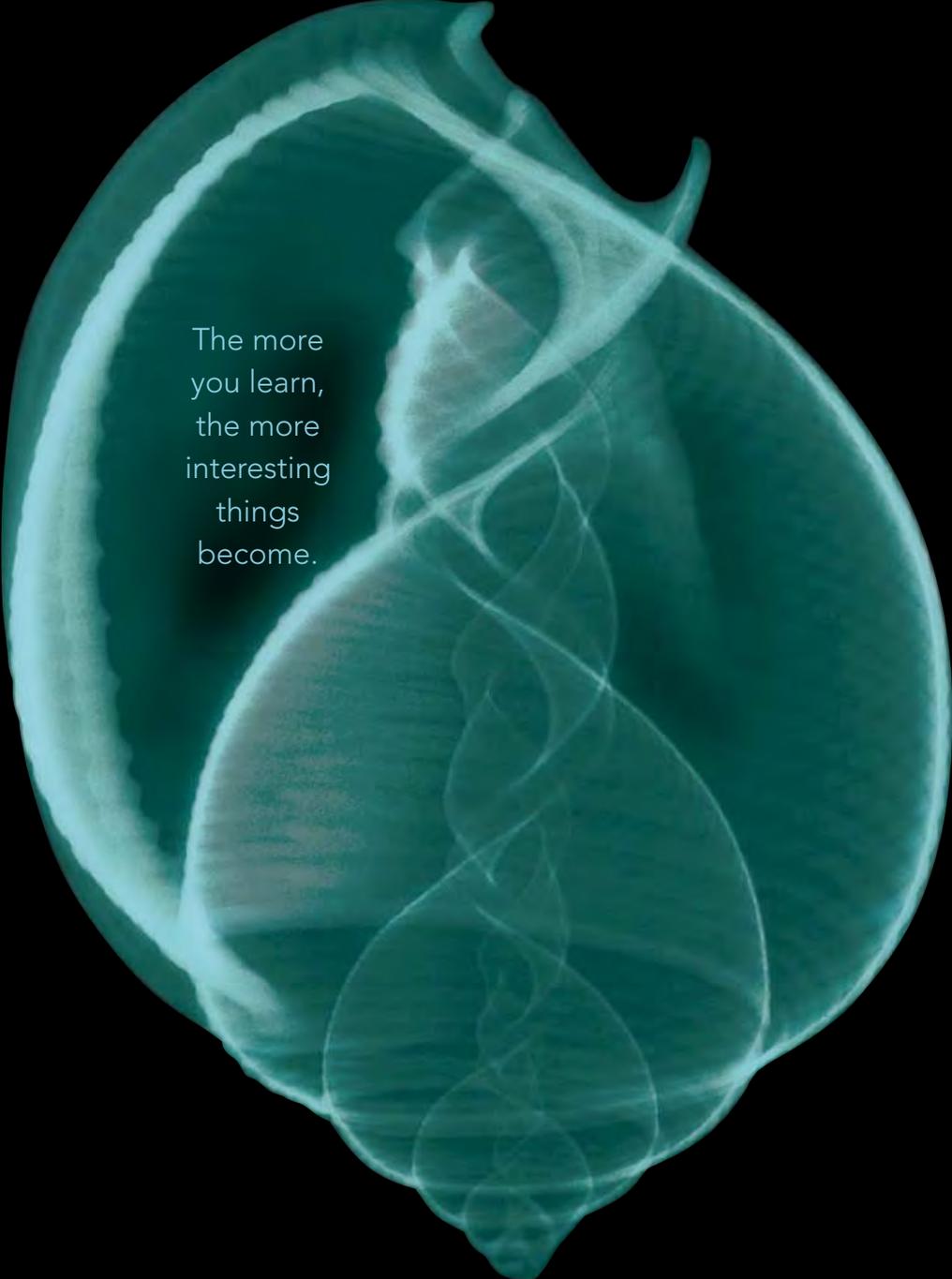


**10 For the birds** Produced by Freedom of Creation, a Dutch firm known for its cutting-edge work in rapid manufacturing techniques, the Trabecula bench is made of lightweight but very sturdy plastic. The interior of bird bones, with their low-density but structural strength, inspired the unit's seat, fashioned from overlapping layers of an open honeycomb pattern. Progressive Design Group, Forest Hills, N.Y. [www.freedomofcreation.com](http://www.freedomofcreation.com) **CIRCLE 210**

10



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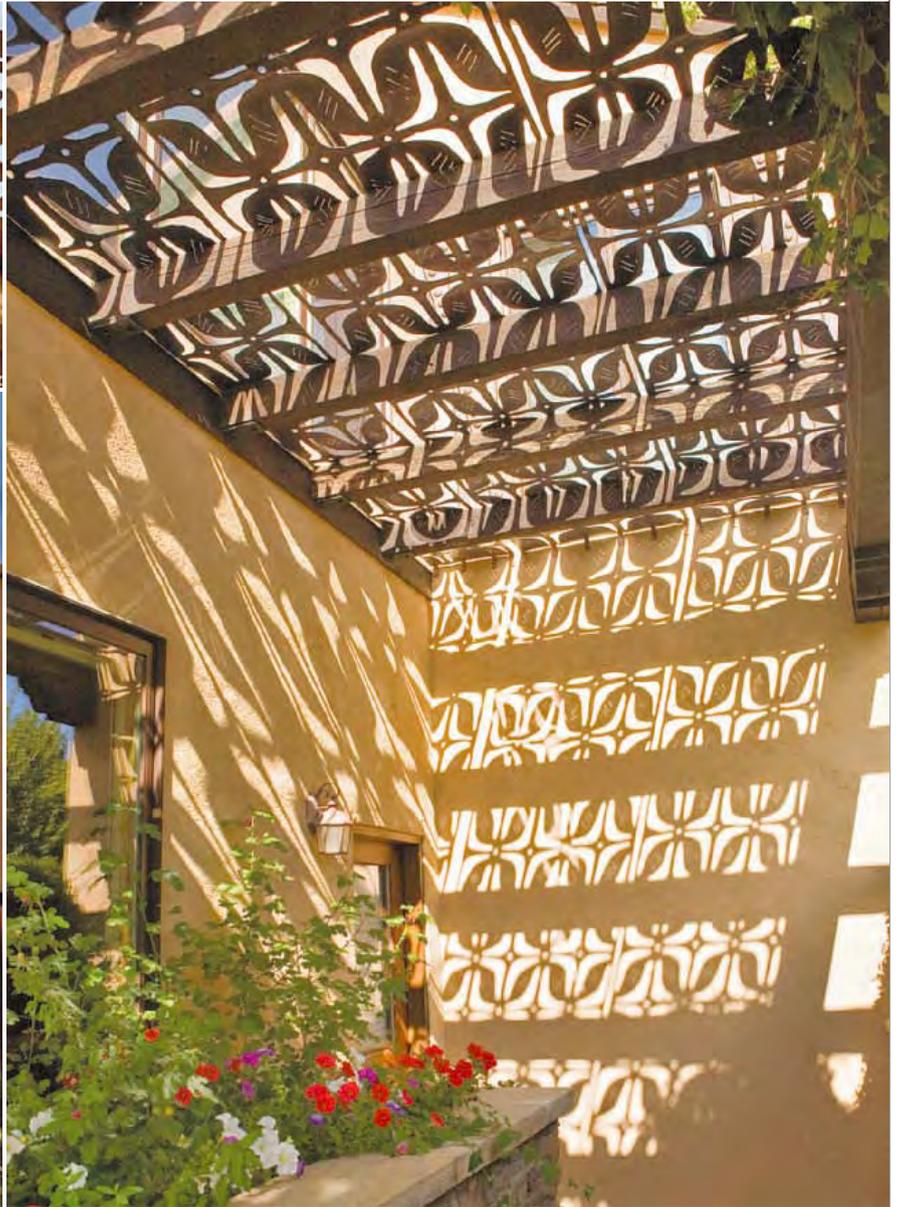


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# Product View



The Flanigan pattern (above). The Kenyan pattern casting downlit (right) and uplit shadows (below).



By Rita Catinella Orrell

According to Uriah Bueller, owner/artist of the Boulder, Colorado-based metal-artwork studio UB Arts, the national launch of his company's Parasoleil copper shade and privacy panels at last October's ASLA conference in San Francisco not only received an overwhelming response from attendees but sparked ideas for new applications, such as replacement for glass in cabinet doors. Bueller, who has designed furniture, fountains, and custom architectural metalwork pieces for residential and commercial projects, started Parasoleil in 2006 after creating a copper sunshade canopy for a residence in Boulder. With a varied background in psychology, art, and world cultures/religions, Bueller finds inspiration for his designs from student trips he arranges (as a side business) to countries like Kenya, Thailand, and Fiji. Completely mined, milled, and manufactured in the U.S. to limit transportation energy waste, the shades and privacy panels, made from 90–95 percent recycled copper and 100 percent recyclable, do not require maintenance. Available in five standard patterns, the panels weigh 15–18 pounds each after they are cut. A waterjet cutting process allows all of the excess copper to be reused. The 36" x 96" finished panels currently list at \$369 wholesale. Parasoleil, Boulder, Colo. [www.parasoleil.com](http://www.parasoleil.com) **CIRCLE 200**

## Copper panels filter light while treading lightly

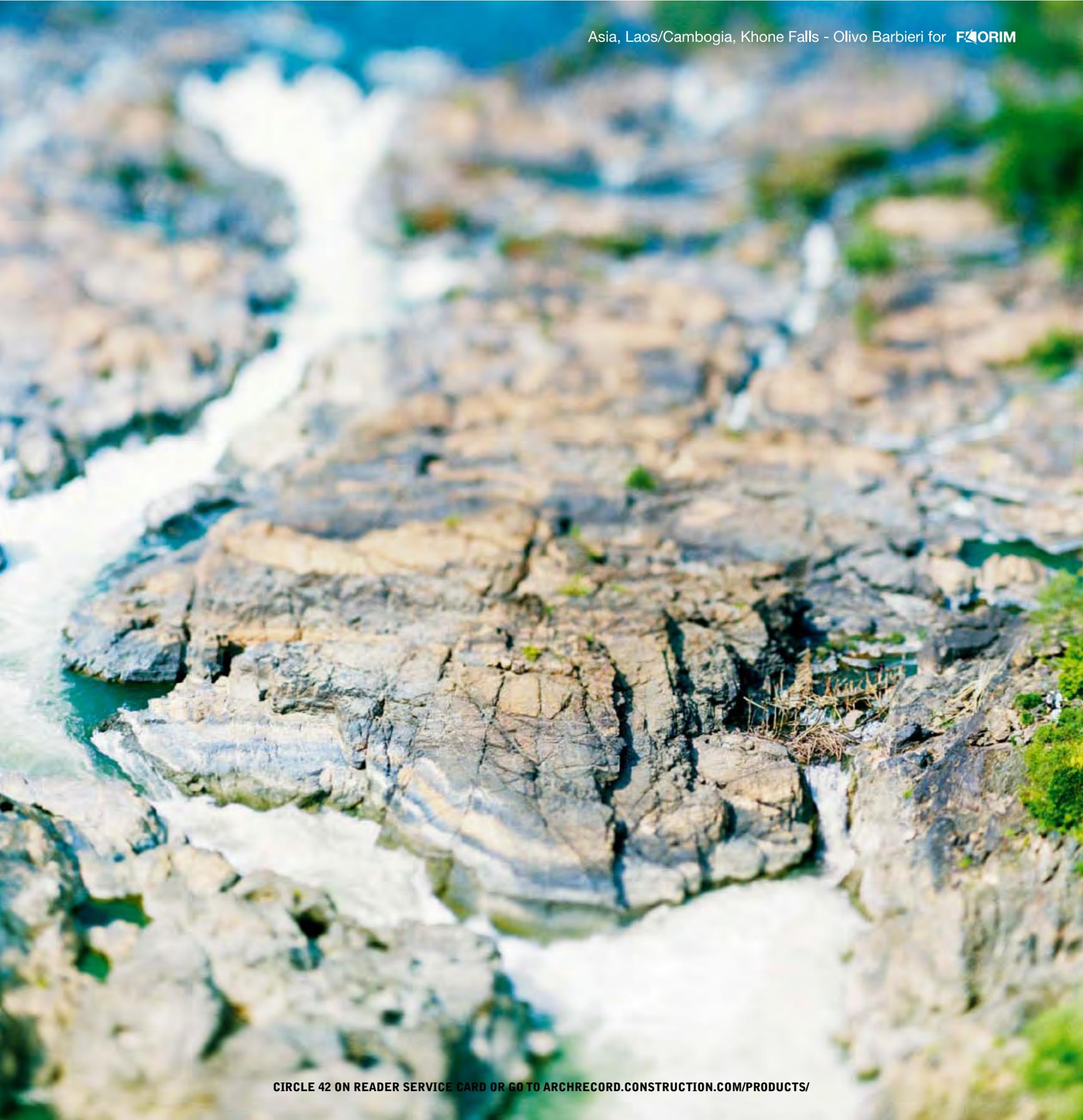
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# Two Cities, One Theme: Expiration and Regeneration

## Exhibitions

By Violet Law

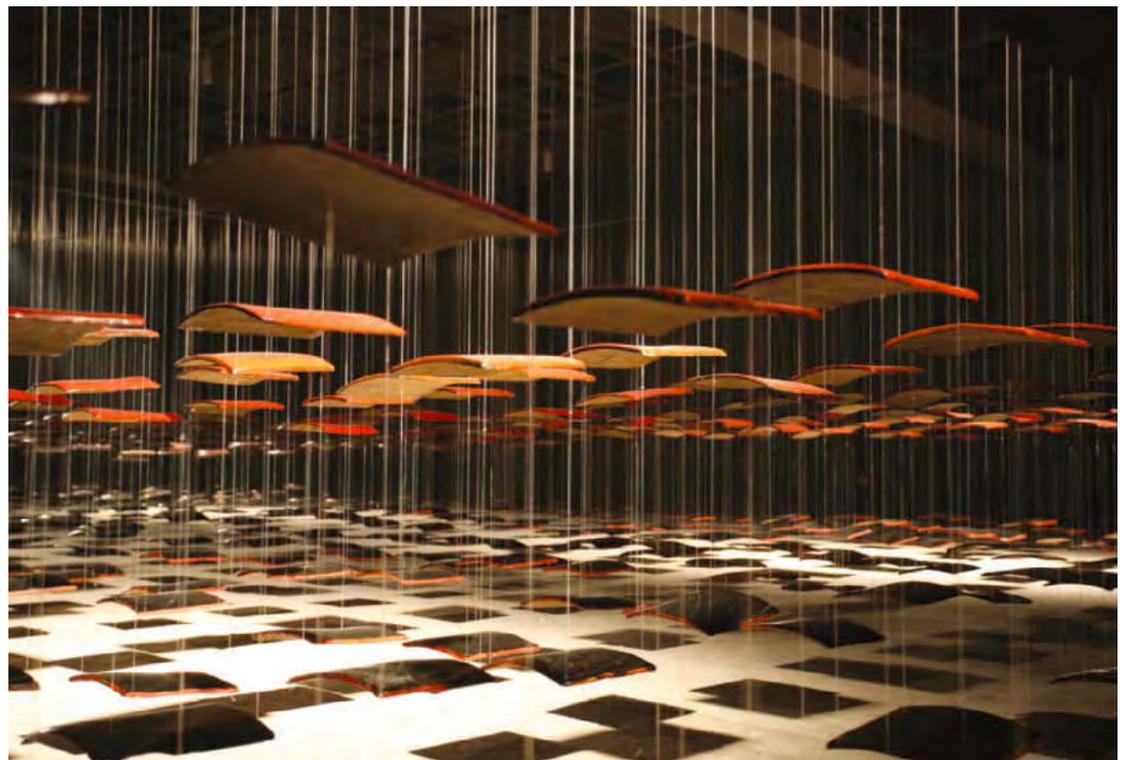
### 2007 Shenzhen-Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism.

Curated by Qingyun Ma  
(Shenzhen, through March 9)  
and Weijen Wang (Hong Kong,  
through March 15).



Can we envision a city with buildings that don't last forever? Should buildings have expiration dates? Can we trust our judgment about the future? These are the issues being debated at the 2007 Shenzhen-Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism. The biennale features more than 130 exhibits. At least 200 architects, urban planners, and artists have converged to brainstorm about some of the most pressing issues facing the future of the city. The theme, "The City of Expiration and Regeneration," is a fitting one to take place in the fastest-urbanizing country in the world.

Shenzhen, a special economic zone in the forefront of China's modernization, is experiencing urban growing pains. In just 30 years, this hamlet has mushroomed into a city of 10 million. For architects and planners who practice here and elsewhere in China, the 2007 biennale presents a golden opportunity to explore issues that every city faces, regardless of its pace of devel-



More than 130 exhibits executed in a multitude of materials from tile (above) to bamboo (left).

opment. At the exhibition opening in Shenzhen, a series of "guerrilla forums" were held to discuss a range of topics, from green architecture practice to urban-space use.

"We considered certain regional concerns and different approaches to the future of the city, ranging from participative art events to government-sponsored campaigns," says chief cocurator Qingyun Ma, a Shanghai architect and dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Southern California. "And there was an effort to promote young and unknown architects and thinkers in China."

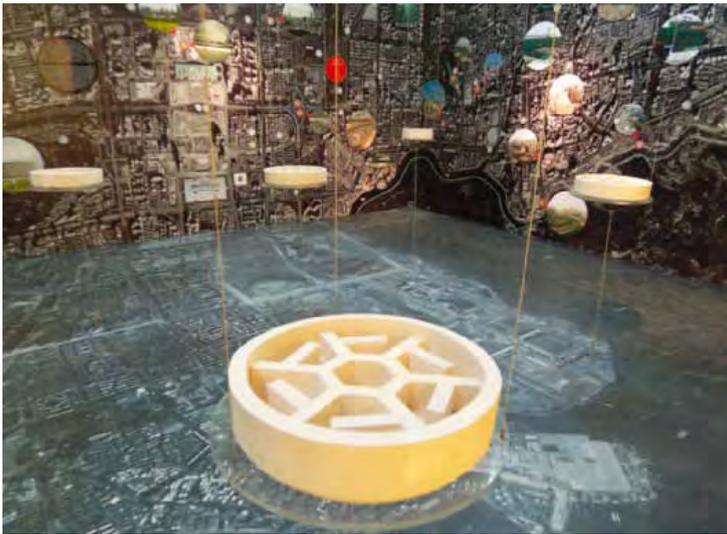
Certainly, some of the Shenzhen exhibits are thought-provoking, but many do not seem to live up to what they promised. A few even appear amateurish. To be sure, the biennale broke the text-and-model mold that so often dominates architecture exhibitions. By employing a variety of media, from ambient sounds and music to special lighting and video projections, the exhibition is at once dazzling—and dizzying. At one of the Shenzhen venues, visitors are greeted with a cacophony of sounds booming from several of the exhibits.

The installations with the most substance are among the simplest.

Not coincidentally, they are representations of built projects, not academic exercises that will expire when the show closes.

For example, the Shenzhen-based firm Urbanus presented a working-class housing complex in nearby Nanhai. The circular, slab-housing design represents a regeneration of the traditional housing type, *tulou* ("mud mansion" in Chinese), which is unique to a tribe in southern China. In this modern rendition by Urbanus, the traditional form is being adapted to an urban infill site and will incorporate residential, commercial, and social uses under the same roof. In the exhibit,

## Exhibitions



Urbanus is adapting the traditional Chinese “mud mansion” for urban use.

viewers are encouraged to suggest sites in Shenzhen where a modern *tulou* might fit, as the firm is actively scouting for sites in the city.

Two winning entries from Austrian firm rpaX and Dutch firm

MVRDV for a competition to develop a new town in Shenzhen also offer architects’ insights about balancing privacy and density in shaping the next generation of urbanism. The presentations are mounted on win-

dows and are illuminated by sunlight pouring in from outside. Even without benefit of electric light, the potential excitement of this newly planned Radiant City nonetheless comes through.

However, in Hong Kong, the story of urbanization is vastly different, although the two Chinese cities are only separated by a river. A century and a half in the making, this former British colony is just now looking back in time, peeling away the layers of fabric in search of heritage sites. As a matter of fact, the choice of Hong Kong as one of the two venues is tied to the theme of understanding the urban fabric.

Some of the best exhibits in this venue focus on much older cities, such as Beijing and Tokyo. In *REaD Beijing*, two Tsinghua University architecture professors tell the story of the urban transformation of Beijing in clear and clever graphics. They label the city wall and gates as the effaced edifices that have since lost out to the new industrial icon—the smokestack.

They trace the history of the “building banquet” of the 1980s that has produced current landmarks, such as the National Library and the Great Wall Hotel, to the next wave of landmarks, the Rem Koolhaas–designed CCTV headquarters and the National Stadium (“Bird’s Nest”) by Herzog & de Meuron for the 2008 Summer Olympics.

The Hong Kong venue, a recently mothballed historic police station and prison complex, is among the best-preserved sites in the city. While the constricted office and cells may not lend themselves to fantastic exhibition spaces, crisscrossing the labyrinthine complex to view different exhibits is an experience. The complex is shoehorned on steep hills among high-rises in the city’s throbbing center. On the way out of the venue to the main street, well-worn concrete steps lead one through a smorgasbord of vendors and traditional markets. That gives one a much better understanding of the city’s fabric than any exhibition can. ■

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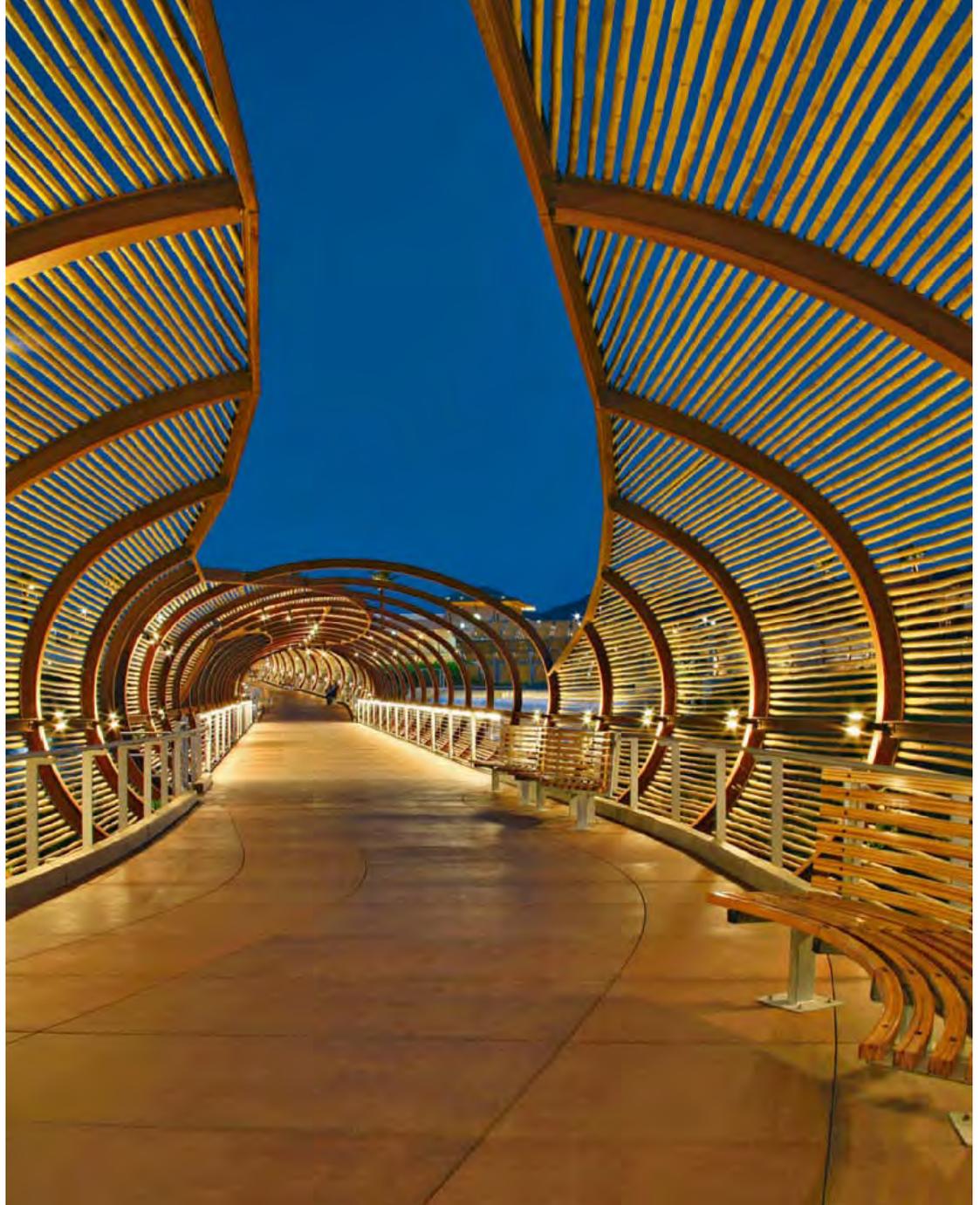
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# Snapshot

The illuminated steel-ribbed bridge, clad in bamboo slats (right), undulates over former mining pits that have been transformed into two lakes (below).



## Walking on Water in Suburbia

By Rebecca Ward

The Dos Lagos development in Corona, California, sits on the site of a deserted silica mine. As a central component of the project, Monrovia, California-based architect and urban designer Norberto Nardi has created a unique outdoor gathering space by transforming two gaping craters from the mining efforts into lakes. Conjoined by a 9-foot waterfall, the lakes feature a sinuous bamboo-ribbed bridge that winds across their surface, “walking” people across the water, rather than around it.

The bridge is the lifeline for the suburb, which is slated for completion in late 2008 and will eventually include a live-work center, a senior citizen complex, office space, a hotel, a conference center, a community-college satellite campus, and a parking garage, all tucked away at the base of Temescal Canyon. A network of walking paths leads to the bridge, which curves its way to an outdoor amphitheater for community events. As much as 17 feet wide in places, it provides a Ponte Vecchio feel: People can relax on one of the many benches that line the structure, and soon will be able to meander among movable kiosks that will





**The bridge, 17 feet wide in places, serves as the heart of the community. Movable kiosks will eventually transform the bridge into a modern Ponte Vecchio.**



transform the space into an outdoor marketplace where artisans from the live-work center and other merchants can sell their wares.

To temper the effects of the hot Southern California sun and provide a welcoming environment, Nardi designed this weathered-steel-based bridge to include sustainable bamboo slats that curve into an overarching system oriented to the sun's movements and provide shade accordingly. Rose vines have been planted along the bridge's concrete deck to create what Nardi calls a "community garden armature."

In the beginning, critics regarded Nardi's overall design, with its modern, sustainable sensibility and nontraditional use of materials, with trepidation. But the winding bridge, which was completed in 2006 and is the heart of the development, softened their response to features such as the developer's

headquarters with its outdoor lobby, the office building's vertical garden facade, and the live-work center topped with green roof systems. "When I presented my plans to the city council, one of the councilmen said, 'You think you're working in Westwood,' indicating my architecture was too progressive for the area," says Nardi.

"I've been saying for years that suburbia has to find its own niche and cannot continue cookie-cutter style," he continues. "People didn't think I could do this project because it was not typical for a suburb. But I have hope for suburban development. When I was on the site one evening, I looked to the bridge, which was totally illuminated. The creation of a design that enhances a sense of community was very rewarding." ■

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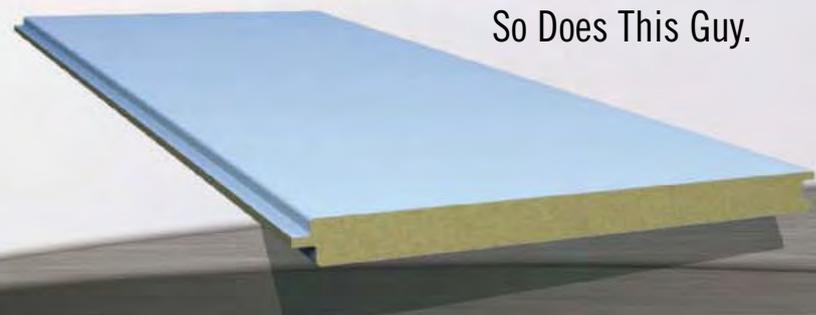
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# American Architecture

# Today

Six critics  
examine  
the state of  
American

architecture  
from their  
hometowns.

By Clifford A. Pearson

**T**aking the measure of American architecture depends on where you look. What's generating buzz in Chicago might not resonate in L.A. And the issues driving design in Miami might not mean much in New York. Although big-name, international architects are working all over the United States—Renzo Piano, for example, has current or recently completed projects in New York, Chicago, L.A., San Francisco, and Atlanta—smaller, domestic firms are playing important roles, too. This mix of big and small, global and regional is shaping the American architectural landscape. The projects shown here offer a cross section of what is going on right now—from a skyscraper in Manhattan to a quonset hut in Kansas, from a youth center in a tough part of Chicago to a private college in Maine, from the ultra-modern to works that engage history. To make sense of all this, we talked with six architecture critics from around the nation and asked them to give us some of their thoughts.

“L.A. IS THE MOST INTERESTING CITY IN THE country right now, because of what’s happening with its urbanism, more than its architecture,” states Christopher Hawthorne, who has been the architecture critic of the *Los Angeles Times* for three years. The city that became synonymous with sprawl has “hit the limits of its growth and is turning back on itself,” he explains. “But it’s not just getting denser; it’s having to redefine itself as a city.”



1. *Grand Avenue*
2. *The Getty Villa*
3. *Plaza near the Nokia Theater*

This redefinition is affecting everything from mass transit and highways to planning, housing, and architecture, says Hawthorne. “Part of the answer may lie in recapturing the city’s past,” when it had a successful network of streetcars, he suggests. Transit-oriented development is moving

forward with projects such as a 1,200-unit housing complex by Arquitectonica wrapping around a plaza above the Wilshire/Vermont Metro station. “It isn’t great architecture,” says Hawthorne, “but it exemplifies a new kind of development for LA.” A mural by the artist April Greiman covers a large part of the Wilshire Boulevard facade, prompting Hawthorne to call the building “the love child of

“WE NOW LIVE IN A CULTURE OF INFINITE CHOICES,” says *Chicago Tribune’s* architecture critic, Blair Kamin. “You go to Home Depot and there are 60 different kinds of floors you can put in your basement, whereas in 1950 you would have had two. A lot of our architecture is like that.” Kamin is explaining how the boxy skylight vaults of Steven Holl’s sensuous Bloch Building at the historicist Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri [RECORD, July 2007, page 92], consist of myriad customized pieces made possible through digitally enabled design and construction. “Holl’s notion of the complementary contrast is a welcome



shift from the polarizing contrast, like Chicago’s Soldier Field [RECORD, May 2004, page 114],” he says. “This is a project that adds on a new layer, while respecting the past.”

As much as Kamin may consider the Bloch to

have been among the more significant buildings to open in 2007, he passionately believes that urban issues, low- and middle-income housing, and sustainability need the most attention from critics. He references Chicago projects like John Ronan’s Gary Comer Youth Center (see page 126), Krueck + Sexton’s Spertus Institute, and even Santiago Calatrava’s unbuilt, 2,000-foot Chicago Spire as important new works that address sustainability by reinforcing the urban realm.

“This spire is a good example of how the culture is changing,” he says. “The Sears Tower and the Hancock building were self-consciously dark and foreboding, almost muscular, icons of an industrial America. But now China is the world’s manufacturing center. Downtown Chicago is a place not of work, but of play and ideas.” For Kamin, Ronan’s Youth Center is not about a “wow” factor, but rather spatial flexibility and community understanding. “It’s an antidote to the spectacle and its facile solutions,” he says. “It’s not just some-

one selling himself and helping a developer sell a brand.” Like many critics, Kamin bemoans the success of image-driven, so-called “starchitecture” that many blame on the contemporary media culture. “If [Frank Lloyd] Wright’s *Wasmuth Portfolio* were published today, you’d have kids on the Internet in Dubai reading it,” says Kamin. He completely rejects simplistic divisions between what qualifies as global or local architecture.

Chicago, like most American cities, has experienced a glut of new condominium projects. “Most buildings going up are just junk,” Kamin says. “You can talk about a resurgence if you just focus on the Perry Street apartments by Richard Meier [in New York], but if you step back, the field is weak.” He wonders if the typical condo—a tower on top of a parking-garage podium—isn’t a creative trap. “These are the buildings that are killing cities and giving us this problem of density without urbanity,” he says.



## Blair Kamin is the architecture critic of the *Chicago Tribune*

# Christopher Hawthorne is the architecture critic of the *Los Angeles Times*

the billboard and the plaza.”

In a city notorious for a lack of shared urban spaces, a number of recent projects have included plazas. Renzo Piano’s addition to the Los Angeles County Museum has one, and Rios Clementi Hale designed one adjacent to the Nokia Theater. In the past, the public sector would build these kinds of spaces, but today developers or arts organizations are doing them. Such a trend is part of what Hawthorne calls the growth of “the unprivate city. It’s the opposite of private, but it’s not really public,” he explains.

“L.A. has a long tradition of stand-alone icons, such as the Schindler House, the Getty, Dodger Stadium,” says Hawthorne. “Interestingly, some of the most talked-about recent projects have involved expanding or reimagining buildings that had stood by themselves,” he says, citing Machado and Silvetti’s reworking of the Getty Villa and the expansion of Griffith

Observatory by Pfeiffer Partners and Levin & Associates. Asked about Grand Avenue, the large, mixed-use development downtown being designed by Frank Gehry, Hawthorne says, “Gehry’s in the interesting position of extending his beachhead at the Disney Concert Hall and creating an urban context for it.”

Hawthorne worries about the impact of traffic congestion on the city. “People are starting to lead more local, circumscribed lives, because it takes too long to drive to the other side of town. Much of the appeal of L.A. has been having access to the whole area—Malibu, Santa Monica, downtown, Pasadena,” he says. Traffic jams, more planning, and more regulation “may well change the local myth of architectural freedom.” For the past 30 years, architects like Gehry and Thom Mayne have drawn inspiration from industrial construction and the commercial strip, redefining what is ugly and what is beautiful. “We’ve been evaluating architects in Los Angeles on the basis of expressiveness and virtuosity. I

don’t know if that’s appropriate anymore.” With the new generation of L.A. architects working on tighter sites where free-standing expressions are less possible, “we may need a new way of thinking about these designers and whether they’re succeeding. Their work may be less loud, less in-your-face.”

Hawthorne also sees L.A. changing directions more literally. Instead of looking east and hiring Richard Meier to design the Getty, for example, he thinks the city is turning south and to Asia. With Qingyun Ma from China assuming the deanship at USC, Hitoshi Abe from Japan taking over at UCLA, and growing contacts with Latin America, the city’s architectural culture will change, too.  
*Clifford A. Pearson*



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1



2

1. Bloch Building
2. Des Moines library
3. Spertus Institute

Kamin surveys the landscape of contemporary American architecture and sees a lot of Modernist projects he considers “one-offs,” buildings that visually register within a city but don’t always contribute to street life. Exceptions include David Chipperfield’s Des Moines Public Library, which Kamin sees as part of an overall strategy of enlivening that city’s downtown. “The city is a project that takes generations to realize,” he says. “To think

that architects alone have the silver bullet that will change a downtown’s fate is ridiculous.” But Kamin says more architects need to stop getting caught up in style wars and the obsession with sustainable “gadgets”—to borrow the Chicago architect and urbanist Douglas Farr’s terminology—that have the tendency to marginalize the profession. “Sustainability and architecture are ultimately about how we are going to live,” he says. “You can’t ignore the small picture, so, yes, buildings should be green, but the real architects are the planners, politicians, and people who write codes.”

*Russell Fortmeyer*



3

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# Paul Goldberger is the architecture critic of *The New Yorker*



"I DON'T SEE THE REGIONAL differences in design that were apparent in the past," states Paul Goldberger when asked what American architecture looks like from his perspective at *The New Yorker*.

"Trends today are national or even global. Sustainability is certainly one. We should be doing more on this, but we're doing more than we did in the past."

He also talks about "the democratization of architecture," a process that in recent years has brought Modernism to the masses, or at least, to a larger audience. "What you can get at Ikea and Crate & Barrell is a lot better than what most people used to buy for their homes. At the same time, major architects are finally getting to design large commercial developments in New York," he says, mentioning Norman Foster's Hearst Tower, Frank Gehry's Atlantic Yards complex, and Renzo Piano's New York Times Building. "The results are mixed. When things move into the main-

stream, they inevitably get compromised. I think, though, where the center of the dial has moved is more important than where the cutting edge is." He is also encouraged by a growing audience for architecture within the general public, noting the popularity, for example, of the Web site *Curbed* (curbed.com). "It's gossipy and sometimes it's silly, but it shows a growing level of engagement with the built environment."

Modernist architects have even penetrated that bastion of middle-brow design: the New York City apartment house. "Glass has become the new white brick," says Goldberger. Transparent residential towers by Richard Meier, Jean Nouvel, Herzog & de Meuron, and others are rising in Manhattan and Brooklyn. He notes, though, that there is still room for buildings such as Robert A.M. Stern's 15 Central Park West, which captures the spirit of the great apartment houses built in New York between the two World Wars.

While New York is finally getting major buildings by star architects, Goldberger notes, "I'm fascinated by the

extent to which provincial places in the country are willing to take more risks than cities like New York and L.A. I'm thinking of Zaha in Cincinnati, Steven Holl in Kansas City, and SANAA in Toledo. I'm also intrigued by the time lag between the provinces and when they finally get to do so in New York. For example, Gehry built in Toledo long before he did anything in New York. How many years was it between Meier's project in New Harmony, Indiana, and his apartment towers on the Hudson?"

Reviewing New York's recent crop of high-profile buildings, Goldberger cites SANAA's New Museum as a "significant" addition to the city's architecture. "It manages to straddle an industrial aesthetic and an intellectual approach to design. And it brings a distinctive young firm to New York." He also approves of Foster's Hearst Tower. "I like the way it challenges our intuitive perception. It seems at first like the wrong way to add onto the Joseph Urban base. But it makes us realize that the Urban building



1



2



3



4

1. Chesapeake Boathouse
2. World Birding Center
3. W Dallas Victory
4. Dallas opera house

"DALLAS IS A VERY IMAGE-CONSCIOUS PLACE, and it has always been looking to headlines," says David Dillon, who writes on architecture for *The Dallas Morning News*. Lately, the headlines have been filled with the starry names of the architects for the Dallas Arts District—an opera house by Norman Foster, a theater by Rem Koolhaas, and a science museum by Thom Mayne will soon join the existing sculpture museum by Renzo Piano

and symphony hall by I.M. Pei. "It's important to set the bar high, to have the chance to see good work built in your home city," Dillon says.

Other design news from Dallas this year was the opening of the 33-story W Dallas Victory Hotel & Residences, designed by HKS, in the 93-acre Victory Park development downtown [RECORD, October 2007, page 146]. "The Victory tower is the best thing that has ever come out of that firm," he says. "It's a response to the growing sophistication of the market for urban architecture."

The selection of Robert A.M. Stern to design the George W. Bush Presidential Library at Southern Methodist University does not surprise Dillon. "It was a foregone conclusion that there was not

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isn't really about Classicism; it's about an almost bombastic expressionism. Foster's design captures that spirit." As for Renzo Piano's New York Times tower, Goldberger says, "It's not the transcendent building some people had hoped for, but it's still one of the best buildings of the past few years."

Reviewing what is happening at Ground Zero, Goldberger calls it "a sad story. In many ways, it merely reflects where we are today. It's a commercial development, not a civic place. And it isn't effective urban design." Warming to the topic, he talks about

"the relative withdrawal, even abandonment, of large-scale planning by the public sector. It's giving way to private developers, letting them take charge of what gets built where. At the end of the day, it's not real planning." A reason for this withdrawal is the government's inability to build urban infrastructure on the scale that is needed. "What we're seeing is the development of

parallel infrastructures—one built by the private sector and one by the public. I can imagine a time in the future when some people might have little interaction with the public infrastructure." *C.A.P.*

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2

1. Hudson Yards site
2. Hearst Tower
3. Atlantic Yards design
4. New Museum

4

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going to be any adventurous architecture—Gehry or Libeskind, no way," he says. "It's a conservative institution with a very conservative architectural culture. The list of firms considered was farcical—there was not a great deal of interest or expectation among Texas architects that they would want that job or even get that job."

Dillon sees the continuance of a regional tradition in Texas, particularly in the work of Lake/Flato Architects in San Antonio and Max Levy Architects in Dallas. Lake/Flato is known for its embrace of sustainable design, reusing scrap materials in projects like the World Birding Center, from 2006. Max Levy is known for designing elegant, contemporary houses that rely on traditional formal responses to Texas weather. "Like [the late] O'Neil Ford in the 1950s and 1960s, people have a similar philosophy of wanting to design buildings that are appropriate and acknowledge the climatic

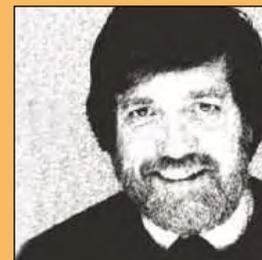
conditions and materials of the place," he says. "Lake and Flato, both of whom used to work for Ford, have carried on that sophisticated vernacular tradition and have jumped in scale, from houses to office buildings."

"There is a maverick tradition in Oklahoma that goes back quite a ways," Dillon notes, talking about Rand Elliott's Chesapeake Boathouse in Oklahoma City [RECORD, May 2007, page 180]. He sees that project as a continuation of the tradition set forth by earlier architects like Bruce Goff. "There is a frontier attitude of, 'We're doing what we want to do whether or not anyone else cares,' and there is no looking over your shoulder for what's going on in New York." Dillon says Elliott and architects like Antoine Predock in Albuquerque have cultivated clients and developed extraordinary work outside of architecture's mainstream. "Elliott is a student of Oklahoma's landscape, its sky, and Indian culture," he says.

Echoing most critics, Dillon says

affordable housing remains a challenge for architecture. "If you ever wanted a real laboratory for developing affordable housing and prototypes, New Orleans is it," he says. "But what I've seen mostly is just a lot of New Urbanism stuff that doesn't seem to get to the real problems of accessibility and affordability." Dillon, in his teaching role at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, studies affordable housing in the U.S. "It's not a style exercise; it's a community-building, economic exercise," he says, explaining why high-design architects don't pursue the arduous process of piecing together funding for such projects.

"Dallas is 40,000 units short in terms of affordable housing, and the houses built by Habitat for Humanity and community development corporations don't even begin to touch this need." *R.F.*



**David Dillon** is the architecture critic of *The Dallas Morning News*

“BUILDINGS HERE IN ATLANTA REMAIN DISAPPOINTING, with a few exceptions,” states Catherine Fox, the art and architecture critic for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Renzo Piano’s addition to the High Museum is one of those



1

exceptions. “The expansion, which is actually three buildings and a restaurant arrayed around a plaza, opened in 2005. As you’d expect, it’s a handsome project, designed to complement rather than outdo the Meier building, and it offers wonderful spaces for viewing art. The “piazza” at the center of the complex “is the connective tissue,” says Fox, “but I don’t think it has quite succeeded as the gathering space he envisioned. It’s rather bare, and people tend to stick to the edges, where there is seating beneath the trees.”



2

- 1. 1180 Peachtree
- 2. High Museum
- 3. BeltLine



3

READERS OF ROBERT CAMPBELL’S COLUMNS IN OUR PAGES PERHAPS don’t know that *The Boston Globe’s* long-time architecture critic helped the General Services Administration select Thom Mayne and Morphosis to design the San Francisco Federal Building, completed in 2007. “I’ve never seen a building of his that didn’t have major flaws, but I felt he needed a client who could hold his feet to the fire,” Campbell says. He compares the U.S. to the Netherlands, where young architects have greater chances at larger commissions. “Mayne is still somewhat of an enfant terrible and is now only getting the work he has always wanted,” he says. “The Netherlands



loves when young architects come up with new ideas.”

Campbell found one such new idea in Office dA’s Macallen building, a condominium development that opened in 2007 in South Boston. He particularly likes the way that

architects turned a conventional developer-driven project into a sleek, sloping building—taking advantage of two different zoning requirements for height on the site—in keeping with the firm’s edgy reputation. Campbell says the lack of consensus about what makes good design makes it hard for an architect to justify one design approach over another. “It makes it easier for developers to build cheaply without feeling guilty,” he says, “but also developers from out of town just don’t feel the social pressure to build well.”

Perhaps the most written-about building in Boston last year was Diller Scofidio + Renfro’s Institute of Contemporary Art, perched on the Fan Pier waterfront. “It’s not an unconventional building, but for Boston, it was very daring,” says Campbell. “It’s all about media and views to the water and is really very successful.” Further afield, he admires Steven Holl’s Bloch Building at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri—a building that is

piling up critical appreciation—even though Campbell wonders how it will age. “The way those icebergs step down the hill is really magical,” he says. “And the channel glass being turned up and used as skylights—I’m not sure that’s ever been done before.”

Campbell views the hot topic of sustainability as perhaps finally putting an end to the debates about arcane design theory, and becoming a new version of what had been considered Regionalism. “Sustainable design is a great opportunity for architects to sell themselves as environmental experts,” he says. While sprawl is not as much a concern in Boston—a well-developed historic city—as it is in faster-growing cities, Campbell says the biggest environmental concern for the city remains the prospect of rising water levels, which he



1

**Robert Campbell, FAIA,** is the architecture critic of *The Boston Globe*

# Catherine Fox is the art and architecture critic of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

Disappointing projects include the World of Coca-Cola museum, designed by the Jerde Partnership. “It’s a terrible building,” declares Fox. “It sits right on Centennial Olympic Park, but turns its back to the park. Instead, it faces the aquarium, which faces the other direction.”

Fox is also disappointed that plans for the Santiago Calatrava–designed symphony seem to be “dead in the water,”

with fund-raising halted and the client looking for a new site. Meanwhile, developer John Wieland’s plan to build a condo project designed by David Chipperfield across the street from the High Museum also seem to be on hold.

As downtown and midtown are attracting more

residential development, close-in neighborhoods like Buckhead are becoming more urban, too. Novare Group, a local developer, recently acquired a 9-acre parcel in Buckhead and plans a mixed-use project with retail, offices, and luxury condos. “The architecture isn’t great, but the project shows the ambitions of the developer,” states Fox.

The biggest story in Atlanta, says Fox, may be the construction of the BeltLine, a 22-mile transit line that will incorporate bike paths, parks, and plazas. The project will use a largely abandoned 19th-century rail line wrapping around the city’s urban core to connect 45 neighborhoods. Private developers have already started building adjacent to the BeltLine, attesting to its “potential as an engine for economic” growth, says Fox. “Rooted in the city’s railroad history, the BeltLine could become the city’s civic symbol, linking the past and present even as it shapes the future,” states Fox.

While Fox is excited about the

potential of the BeltLine to transform the city and offer Atlantans a viable alternative to the automobile, she expresses concern that as yet “there is no coherent design vision” for the project. “The question now is: Will the BeltLine be more than just a transportation project?”

Looking south to Miami, where she recently visited, Fox reports that the most anticipated project is Herzog & de Meuron’s Miami Art Museum, which is scheduled to open in late 2010. In Miami Beach, she “wasn’t thoroughly impressed” by Aqua, the New Urbanist community master-planned by Duany Plater-Zyberk. “It’s certainly better than most condo developments, but the architecture isn’t really memorable, and it’s an enclave, so you need to drive to get anywhere else.” *C.A.P.*



1. ICA
2. Macallen building
3. Genzyme



sees few architects addressing. “I can’t believe people are still developing big buildings on the harbor near sea level,” he muses. He also laments the view that high-rise buildings are the only answer to increasing urban density in the name of sustainability. “The density of Paris is just as high, if not higher, than cities that have tall buildings,” Campbell says. “In Midtown Manhattan, where every block is a single building with

a single door, it becomes oppressive.”

And although the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has mostly completed its ambitious expansion plans, with Frank Gehry’s Stata Center (2004) and Steven Holl’s Simmons Hall (2003), Harvard University has embarked on a building spree with a sustainable bent. Campbell thinks Bruner/Cott’s conversion of the historic Blackstone Station, an old

power plant along the Charles River, into offices for Harvard is a successful first step. However, he is anxious to see how Stefan Behnisch’s plans for the new Harvard Allston Science Complex develop, particularly since he considers Behnisch’s Genzyme Center (2003) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to be a remarkable example of sustainable design. “It’s about making a much better place to work, not just saving energy, and those two things can reinforce one another,” he says. *R.F.*

**ONLINE:** To express your views on this critic’s comments, go to [architecturalrecord.com/features/](http://architecturalrecord.com/features/).

**Renzo Piano Building Workshop** and  
**FXFOWLE** present a quietly luminous  
addition to the Manhattan skyline with  
**THE NEW YORK TIMES BUILDING**

PROJECTS



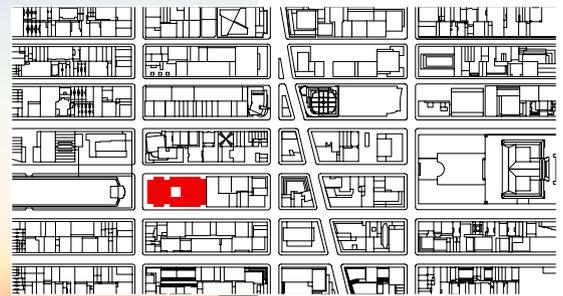


# The New York Times

The steel-and-glass 52-story tower (opposite) near Times Square is veiled with screens of ceramic rods. Ample glazing (this page) encourages visual access to the interior.



The slim tower (left), about 194 by 157 feet in size, is attached to a low-rise block, 196 by 240 feet, which wraps around a courtyard. The tower refreshingly lacks the splenetic signage of its Times Square district (site plan, below). Renzo Piano argues that light, transparency, and people moving through the space provides that vibrancy. In the lobby (opposite), an art installation, *Movable Type*, by artists Ben Rubin and Mark Hansen, sets off the Marmorino plaster walls.





**By Suzanne Stephens**

**I**n the past few years, New York City has been valiantly trying to turn around its deserved reputation for treating innovative architecture like an exotic disease that should be stamped out by courageous developers, bankers, and government officials. One solution has been to import high-design architects whose experience elsewhere can help them withstand such assaults. But the expectations of what the famously fabulous architects can do on New York's tough turf easily become inflated, as shown in the case of The New York Times Building, designed by Renzo Piano Building Workshop of Genoa and Paris with New York architects FXFOWLE. Despite its creation of a superior workplace environment (with Gensler in charge of interiors), the new skyscraper hasn't knocked a lot of the architectural community off its feet, whether standing near or far away. To be sure, the 52-story tower, veiled with screens of 3-inch-diameter off-white ceramic tubes over the glass-and-steel rectilinear structure, is elegantly proportioned. But it seems strangely bland in New York's architecturally variegated context. At a distance, except under certain angles of sunlight, those ceramic rods don't look like white, shimmering veils as much as delicate gray washboards.

As has been observed by *Times* architecture critic Nicolai Ouroussoff, the building is a sophisticated sequel to New York's mid-20th-century monuments—Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building (1958) and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Lever House (1952). While it certainly updates its predecessors in terms of technique and sus-

tainability, the design doesn't proclaim itself as an ambitious prototype of skyscrapers for the 21st century.

Ambition best describes Norman Foster's Hearst Tower [RECORD, August 2006, page 74], which, aggressive and klutzy as it is, aspires to rethink the structure of the skyscraper (and even got a LEED Gold certification, to boot). Although Piano's muter, more refined New York Times tower is so much easier on the eye than the technopornish Hearst, it lacks even the oomph of New York's own historic skyscrapers. (Let us not forget, however, that the much-revered Chrysler Building, Empire State, and even Rockefeller Center were disdained by the architecture critics, such as Lewis Mumford and Douglas Haskell, for being unimaginative and/or crude, when they were designed in the early 1930s.)

For his part, Piano wanted a crafted, poetic, and ephemeral tower. "I'm opposed to the idea that a building should be tortured," he says. Since he had never done a tower in New York, he wanted FXFOWLE to join him:

**Project:** *The New York Times Building, New York City*

**Architect:** *Renzo Piano Building Workshop with FXFOWLE—Renzo Piano, design principal; Bruce Fowle, FAIA, project principal; B. Plattner (RPBW), senior partner in charge;*

*Daniel Kaplan, AIA (FXFOWLE), project principal in charge*

**Interior design:** *Gensler—Robin Klehr Avia, project principal; Rocco Giannetti, AIA, project manager*

**Engineers:** *Flack + Kurtz (m/e/p); Thornton-Tomasetti Group (structural)*



The firm had designed other Times Square towers, including the Condé Nast and Reuters buildings. Founding principal Bruce Fowle hesitated to fall into the architect-next-door role, overshadowed by the new guy in town. Nevertheless, the two firms agreed to team up as a single entity for this project (but not legally a joint venture), with project fees divided in half and “shared” credit to emphasize the collaboration. (This sounds good, but let’s face it: Piano, chosen in an invited competition, is bestowed the fame—and the blame.) Fowle allows that Piano set the “vision” while FXFOWLE “worked out the parti and made sure the project didn’t go off track in function and cost.” The building isn’t cheap: The costs exceed \$1 billion total. Since the 1.5-million-square-foot project is co-owned in a condominium arrangement with developers Forest City Ratner Companies (FCRC), the *Times* portion (floors 2 to 27) is expected to cost about \$604 to 624 million, and FCRC’s spec space (floors 29 to 52) about \$400 to 429 million. They both own floors 28, 51, and the lobby.

Piano was selected over Pelli Clarke Pelli, Foster + Partners, and reported front-runners Frank O. Gehry with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM). (Gehry and SOM pulled out at the last minute, supposedly because Gehry feared his adventurous scheme of sinuous ribbonlike vertical shapes would be compromised along the way.) The Times Company’s marriage to Forest City Ratner as developer and co-owner in the condominium arrangement had cynics rolling their eyes. How could anyone work with a developer famous for the mediocrity of MetroPark in

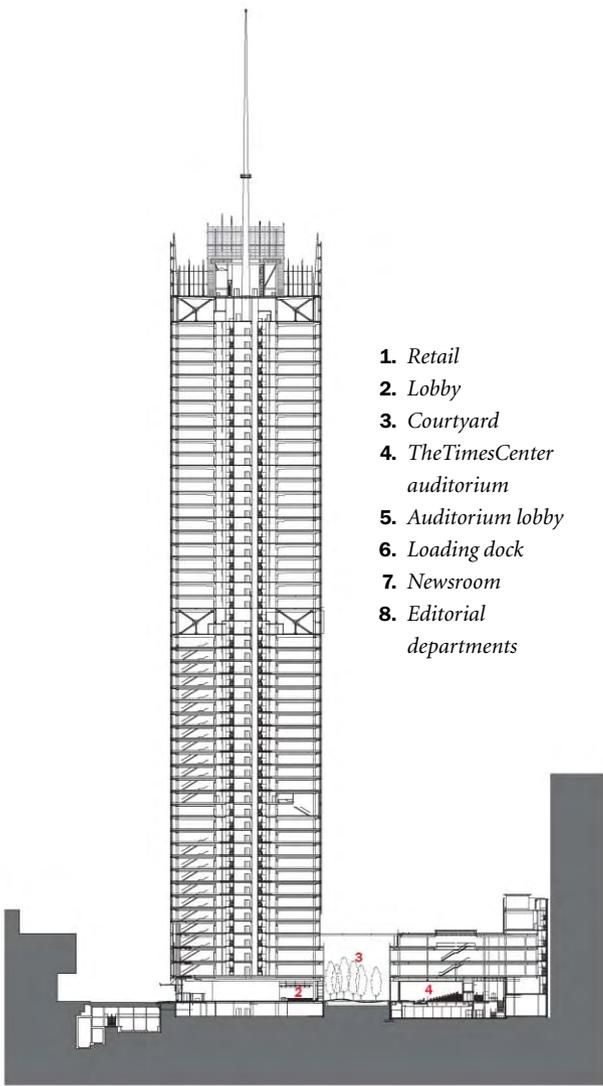
Brooklyn? Somehow, guided by David Thurm, real estate vice president of the Times Company for most of the construction, the two owners and two architectural firms learned to deal with each other. (Still, the Times’s floors come with innovative energy-saving features that don’t appear in the spec spaces owned by FCRC, hence they decided not to pursue a LEED rating.) After this architectural baptism, Forest City Ratner, like born-again evangelists, hopes to convince New York to embrace its plus-size Atlantic Yards development in Brooklyn by dangling the Times’s almost-architect, Frank Gehry, before Brooklyn opponents.

The new Times site extends between 40th and 41st Streets along Eighth Avenue right across the street from the scuzzy, *Bladerunner*-ish Port Authority Bus Terminal. Since the 79,000-square-foot parcel of land fell into the 13-acre urban-renewal zone of the 42nd Street Development Project, run by the Empire State Development Corporation, developable air rights were predetermined. But the lessees of the site did enjoy tax breaks and condemnation powers that came with this parcel—although it still couldn’t avoid delays by lawsuits from previous property owners.

While the location is not too far from the former Times building on 43rd Street, the difference, architecturally, is worlds apart. The 43rd Street building is a gloomy pile that housed newspaper operations since 1913, when the Times Company grew out of its famous slender tower on 42nd Street, designed by Cyrus Eidlitz in 1904. The new Times tower, a slim, a rectilinear steel frame pulled to the edge of Eighth Avenue, is

A courtyard (opposite) lies at the heart of the building, offering day-light and a sense of orientation to the first four floors, which have large floor plates. The courtyard, featuring white birches and landscaping by H.M. White Site Architects, can be seen from TheTimesCenter auditorium (below). In the lobby (right), clear glass, white oak floors, and exposed steel columns (painted with intumescent paint) create an airy setting.

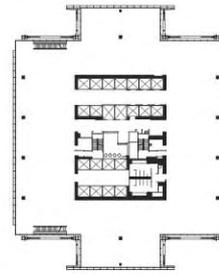




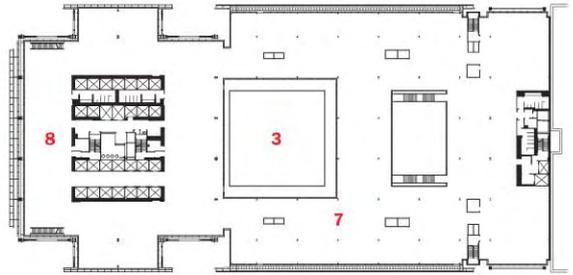
SECTION A-A

1. Retail
2. Lobby
3. Courtyard
4. TheTimesCenter auditorium
5. Auditorium lobby
6. Loading dock
7. Newsroom
8. Editorial departments

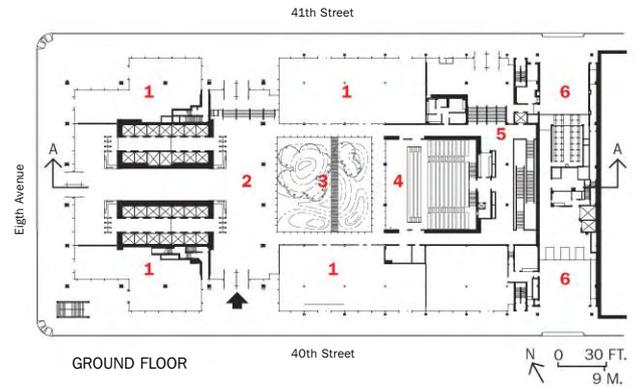
The tower (section, left) is a condominium owned by the New York Times Company and Forest City Ratner Companies (FCRC). Floors 2 to 27 belong to the Times, while FCRC leases space above to other tenants. (Floors 28 and 51 are jointly owned.) The Times's floors feature interconnecting stairways and raised floors for ventilation.



TYPICAL TOWER FLOOR 18-22



FOURTH FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



In the low-rise portion (opposite, top), the three-level newsroom is linked by red stairs and topped by a skylight. Each floor has two interconnected perimeter stairs (left), as a shortcut to the elevator. Gensler kept to a 5-by-5-foot ceiling grid and lighting module that aligns with the curtain-wall mullions. Most workstations are cherry veneer. Lobbies, such as that on 22nd floor (far left), feature colorful Modern furniture.



PHOTOGRAPHY: © NIC LEHOUX (THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE TWO)

attached to a low-rise, four-story structure that wraps around a courtyard and is itself topped by a skylight. Piano wanted the tower to dematerialize as it looms to its 52-story height: Since the screens of rods don't wrap around the shaft's corners, the corners are notched to expose (with the help of intumescent paint) the frame of beams, columns, and tie rods (see details, pages 114–15). The facade continues above the top floor enclosing mechanical spaces in a rigid but feathery sort of way. There, Piano is designing a private roof garden, where he hopes trees will have a “visible presence.”

Dematerialization and transparency are the operative descriptive terms inside and out. As you enter from Eighth Avenue, your eye takes you past the marigold Marmorino plaster walls of the elevator banks to the courtyard, where birches are picturesquely clumped, on past the glass wall on the east. Here the red seats of TheTimesCenter auditorium terminate the vista. Above, the low-rise structure, the home of the famous newsroom operations, functions efficiently as a fish bowl allowing reporters, the copy desk, and editors to see and work together. Open red stairs in the corners of the tower and in the newsroom allow *Times* staffers to run up and down a floor or two without having to use the elevator. Here, too, you find tables and chairs for informal conversations, and around the core, glass-walled private rooms for work or meetings—necessary features often at a premium in typical open offices. Let us not forget the double-height cafeteria, where views, light, and culinary fare compete honorably with the trend for media companies (e.g., Hearst, Condé Nast, Bloomberg, and Fairchild)

to provide staffers with designer dining spots.

While the dependence on an open office maintains the quality of light and view, a hierarchy does exist in desk arrangement, size, and placement of offices, of course. The section editors usually sit in cubicles nearest the perimeter windows; reporters sit in cubicles between them and red-walled elevator cores; top editors occupy glass-walled offices around the core; while Bill Keller, executive editor of the *Times*, has a glass-walled office that also abuts a glazed perimeter wall. (Shunning an all-clear-glass office, he has installed a screen of translucent glass there, as well.)

The copydesk personnel got the short shrift in the scheme of things. Since they have to be in only certain hours to get the prose fit for print, their cubicles, while near reporters, editors, and production people, are much smaller, and without cherrywood partitions. The plastic laminate desks look weirdly Lilliputian.

The slenderness of the ceramic rods and their spacing brings glimpses of the city right into the office space while cutting heat load 30 percent and energy costs 13 percent. To further reduce heat gain and glare, the architects worked with manufacturers to put in place automatically adjustable shades, sensitized to respond to the shifting patterns of sunlight. In fact, the architects, electrical engineers, and lighting designers visited the Building Technologies Department at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory at the University of California, Berkeley to look into its research on “dynamic lighting.” Subsequently, the *Times* built a mock-

# Curtain-wall ingenuity eliminates the fear factor

Fear factor. That was the obstacle the New York Times and its New York-based architect, FXFOWLE, faced when it was time to bid the curtain wall for the media giant's new headquarters in Midtown Manhattan. Design architect Renzo Piano conceived of a brise-soleil made of horizontal rods to project 18 inches from the curtain wall. Simple in concept, confounding in execution, when one imagines finding a strategy that would work for a 52-story tower. "While this approach has been achieved on a smaller scale in Europe, it had never been attempted at such a large scale in the U.S.," confirms Daniel Kaplan, AIA, senior principal at FXFOWLE.

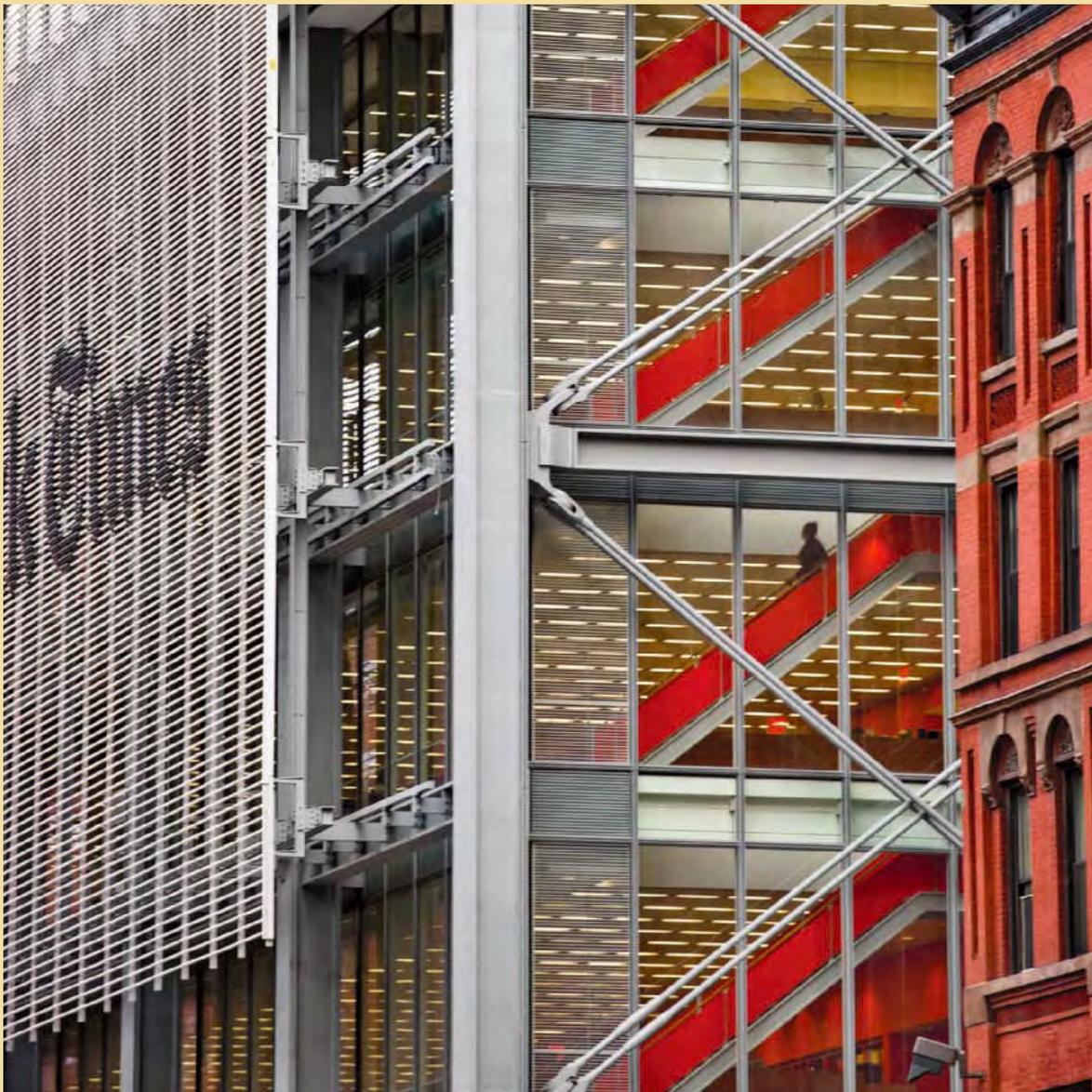
Contractors rely on precedent and predictability when preparing bids. Since the

project's curtain wall was innovative, it lacked both of these safety values. The architect and the client were correct to assume that curtain-wall contractors would approach the bidding with trepidation, which is to say that when fear is a factor, bids tend to soar; it is an understandable fact of risk management. As far as the client was concerned, however, keeping costs under control was paramount. Considering that a building's envelope accounts for about 20 percent of the total construction cost, any precautionary padding of the estimates would result in unacceptable increases in overall construction costs.

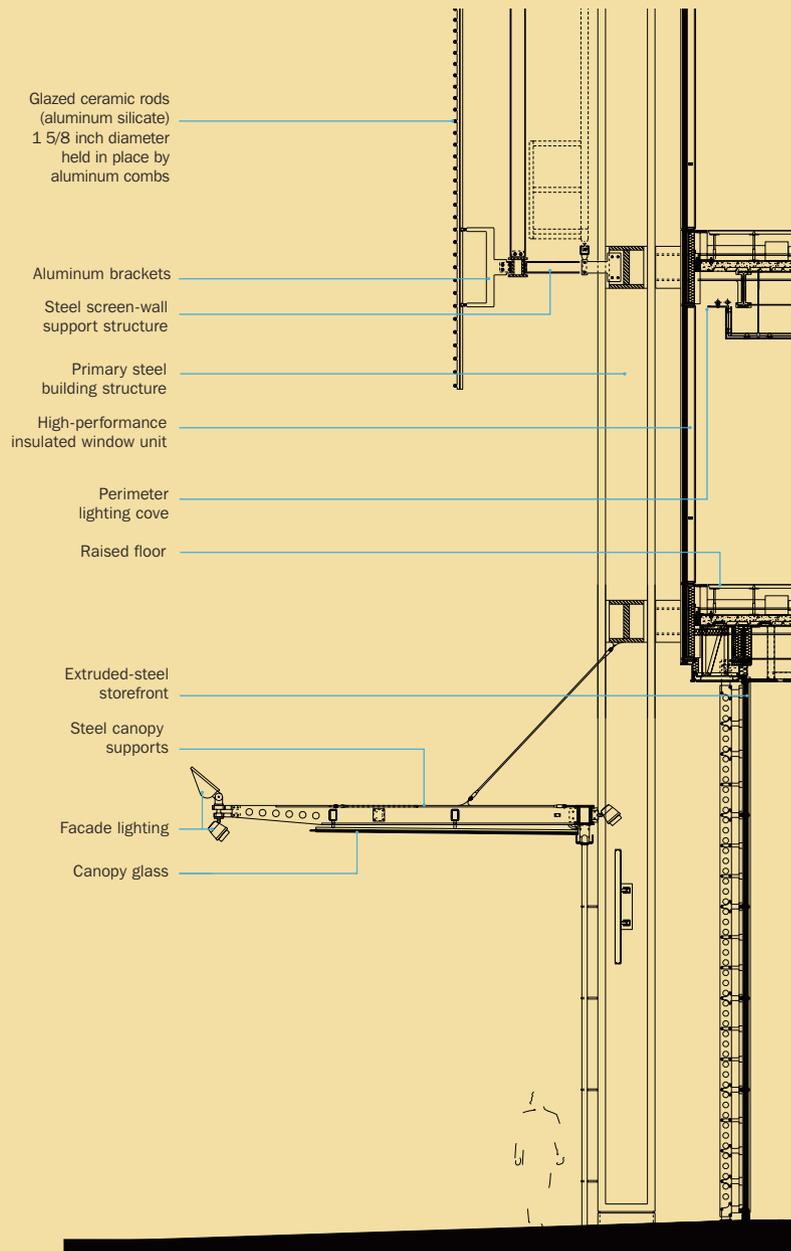
The Times and its development partner, Forest City Ratner, decided on a preemptive strategy. They selected four qualified

curtain-wall manufacturers, who were likely to bid on the project, and paid them to solve the problem and build a mock-up of a typical wall section, according to their solutions. "We gave them drawings of the basic design and the parameters—a 5-x-13½-foot [the height of one story] module with ceramic [aluminum silicate] rods [1½ inch diameter] placed at variable intervals," explains Kaplan. "We gave each company performance criteria and asked them to engineer a solution in which many units could be fabricated in a timely manner for a certain price."

This approach turned out to be inspired. Competition stimulates ingenuity, and all four companies succeeded. With the challenges under control and rationalized,



**The curtain wall is based on a 5-by-13½-foot module, allowing the entire envelope to benefit from unitized construction. A module consists of the insulated window unit fixed to the ceramic-rod sunscreen.**



CURTAIN WALL SECTION

PHOTOGRAPHY: © NIC LEHOUX

the fear factor dissipated. When asked to bid the curtain wall based on their own investigations, every company delivered numbers that were below previous estimates and within the budget. In the end the client awarded the job to Portland, Oregon-based Benson Global, who also happens to be manufacturing the curtain wall for the Freedom Tower at Ground Zero.

The resulting curtain wall consists of several elements. There are the ceramic (aluminum silicate) rods. The rods as conceived, of course, were not standard building materials. Much effort and travel went into identifying a supplier. Eventually, the honor went to the maker of ceramic sewer pipes in Leipzig, Germany. The other major elements

include a supporting structure for the screen and an insulated window unit. The architects and the contractors realized early on that assembling 170,000 rods on-site would be prohibitively time-consuming, expensive, and would make it impossible to guarantee rigorous quality control.

By using a method of unitized construction and building the curtain wall in its environmentally controlled Portland, Oregon, plant, Benson was able to combine the rod system and window assembly into a single unit, a strategy that was essential to feasibility and consistency. Workers fabricated and assembled the different elements in accordance with the 5-by-13½-foot design module. Each unit uses aluminum “combs”

to secure the rods. The combs are, in turn, supported by aluminum arms, which are connected to a steel screen-wall support structure. The insulated window unit is also based on the design module. Assembled separately, it consists of low-iron, double-glazed, spectrally selective vision glass with a high-performance low-e coating. In those areas where there are no rods, a subtle ceramic frit pattern was applied.

In an era in which value engineering often means eliminating the design while retaining the shell, the Times showed perseverance and ingenuity. By spending a few hundred thousand dollars up front to resolve the design issues, the client saved millions in the end. *Sara Hart*



The double-height cafeteria on the 14th and 15th floors offers expansive views of the city (left and above left)—for now. It faces west, where a tower is to rise above the Port Authority Bus Terminal. The cafeteria's interior (right), designed by Piano, features Arne Jacobsen furniture. Perimeter stairs (left) lead to a mezzanine (opposite) for more private dining.



up of a southwest corner office, to see how all the various products and technology to control light would work. Underfloor air—the largest installation in Manhattan—resulted from more research and another mock-up. By placing air vents under raised floors, the building brings in air cooled to 68 degrees in adjustable low-pressure vents near workstations. As it heats and rises, air goes out via return vents in the ceiling. Carbon-dioxide sensors can spur an increase in fresh air when necessary.

All in all, it is hard to fault the building as a workplace: It does have so much light, so much space, even “pink noise” to muffle voices. We journalists working for media corporations in more down-market quarters can only sigh. Or we can tsk-tsk about two incidents of wind apparently cracking and breaking those evanescent glass windows on four different floors in December and January. And we can wonder about ice falling off the horizontal ceramic rods on the tower’s north face in December.

We prefer to take the optimistic view that these kinks will be ironed out in time. For one thing, the wind off the Hudson may be diminished when the 1.3-million-square-foot tower goes up atop the bus terminal, following Port Authority’s recent sale of its air rights. Certainly, west light and view will be cut down for *Times* staffers within the building. But that is a situation endemic to New York: Development encourages development. Already, a 38-story tower is going up to the north designed by (guess who?) FXFOWLE, which also will cut off some of the Times

building’s light and views of frenetic 42nd Street.

The irony is that the delicate 52-story tower will be less visible in the cityscape as time goes by. Right now, we still notice, however, that the fine proportions of the ceramic-rod screens make them read as corrugated gray panels from afar, except under certain sun conditions. Bigger and bolder rods would have appeared more legible, but would have impeded views out for those inside. Definitely, the rods should have been whiter, a perception that Piano, in retrospect, admits. So far, pollution hasn’t turned them even grayer; according to Fowle, the rods’ hard brittle surfaces are self-cleaning. But the windows lack this advantage, and the glazed walls placed 18 inches behind the rods take considerable effort to wash. While the Times Company has come up with a shimmering, new, see-through tower for its “Gray Lady,” in most situations, it is only a lighter shade of gray. ■

#### Sources

**Curtain wall:** *Benson; Seele (storefront)*

**Wood flooring:** *Haywood Berk*

**Glass:** *Viracon; Saint Gobain (storefront)*

**Skylights:** *Colt*

**Entrance doors:** *Dawson Doors*

**Acoustical ceilings:** *Armstrong*

**Decorative plaster:** *Island Diversified*

**Raised flooring:** *Haworth*

**Plastic laminate:** *Laminart; Formica; Avonite*

**ONLINE:** To rate this project, go to [architecturalrecord.com/projects/](http://architecturalrecord.com/projects/).



**ASAI Architecture's** new **NATIONAL  
WORLD WAR I MUSEUM** and finely  
reconstructed **LIBERTY MEMORIAL** solemnly  
tell the story of the “War to End All Wars”



H. Van Buren Magonigle's  
1920s-era Liberty Memorial,  
complete with pseudo-  
Egyptian sphinxes and  
pavilions, was reconstructed  
and the new National World  
War I Museum built below it.





**ASAI Architecture reversed the allée's original upward slope toward the memorial's deck to allow the new museum to be carved from the space beneath it. Visitors pass a reflecting pool and enter bronze doors cut into the new, battered Indiana limestone wall.**



**By Charles Linn, FAIA**

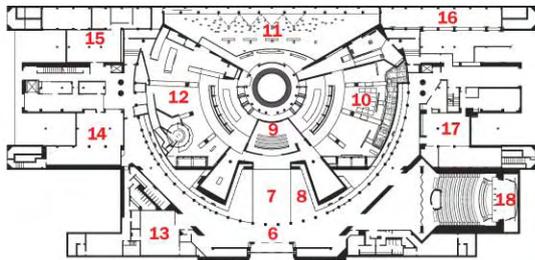
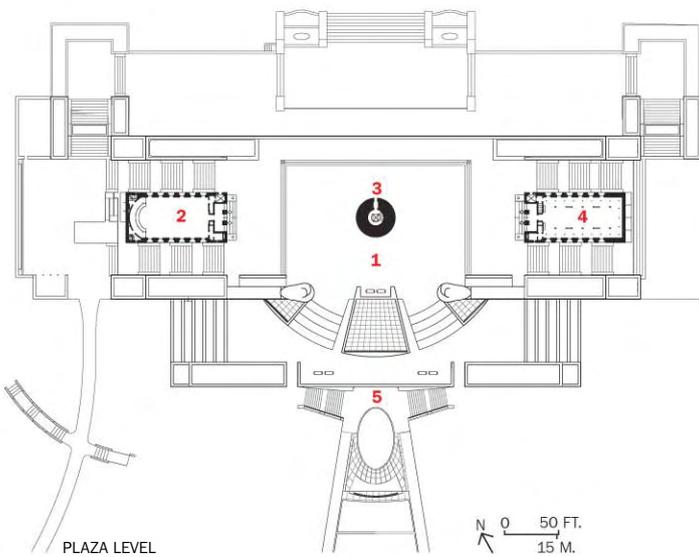
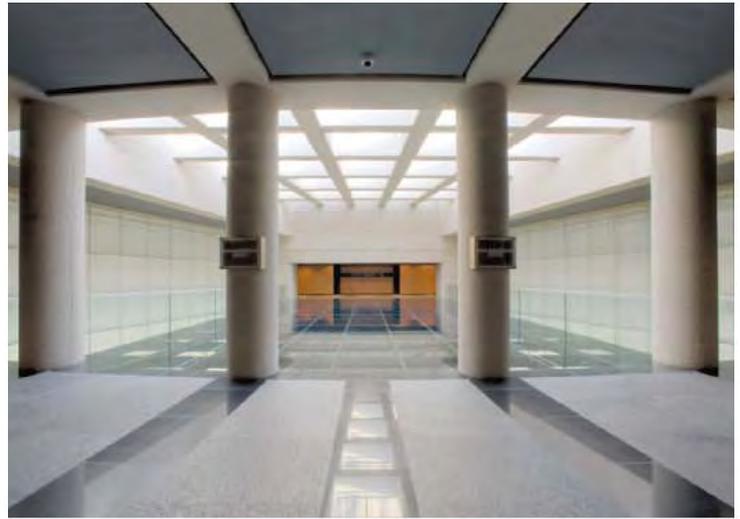
**K**ansas City, Missouri, would seem to have been one of the least-likely spots for the construction of what is undoubtedly the nation's grandest memorial to Americans who served in World War I. The mass militarization of Europe, the intrigue of secret treaties, and the struggles of monarchies to maintain power in the face of rising nationalism could not have been farther from the attention of the people living at the crossroads of the nation. Yet during the war, something ignited their passions. Perhaps it was the deaths of nearly 500 Kansas Citians during the conflict, or the 7,300 casualties taken by the 28,000-man-strong 35th Division, made up of Kansas and Missouri National Guardsmen, during the first five days of the battle of Meuse-Argonne, France, less than two months before troops laid down their arms. Immediately after the armistice was signed, a group of locals formed the Liberty Memorial Association, and organized a design competition, while it began amassing what would become the finest collection of World War I artifacts in the U.S. In 1919, a 10-day subscription drive raised \$2.5 million, roughly \$40 million today. In preparation for the contest, the group consulted the American Institute of Architects. H. Van Buren Magonigle, FAIA, the insti-

**Flames and steam come from the top of the tower, which symbolizes a gun barrel. The site plan is oriented 11-degrees off true north, to honor the time and date the armistice was signed.**

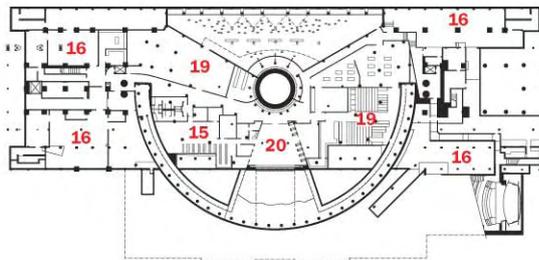


tute's competition adviser, not only gave advice on it, but ultimately won it.

The association purchased a prime piece of ground that overlooks downtown Kansas City, and Magonigle's spare, Egyptian-influenced monument makes the most of it. A ½-mile-long allée is terminated by a podium that supports a fluted, 271-foot-tall, steam-and-flame-spewing gun barrel. It is flanked by a pair of pavilions and two sphinxes whose faces are shrouded by wings. *Future*, the west-facing statue, looks toward the years ahead, which cannot be seen; *Memory*, the east-facing sphinx, is covered to protect it from seeing the horrors of war. The site is oriented 11-degrees off true north, a reference to the signing of the armistice at 11 A.M. on November 11, 1918. Magonigle may have promised more than he could deliver, because he was fired before the project was completed. The scaled-back complex has his allée,



GROUND LEVEL



LOWER LEVEL

1. Observation deck
2. Exhibit Hall
3. Memorial Tower
4. Memory Hall
5. Museum entrance
6. Lobby
7. Bridge
8. Poppy field
9. Kemper Theater
10. European themes
11. Horizon Theater
12. American themes
13. Gift shop
14. Café
15. Administration
16. Support services
17. Education center
18. Auditorium
19. Collections
20. Research

tower, and pavilions, but a museum and theater were never realized.

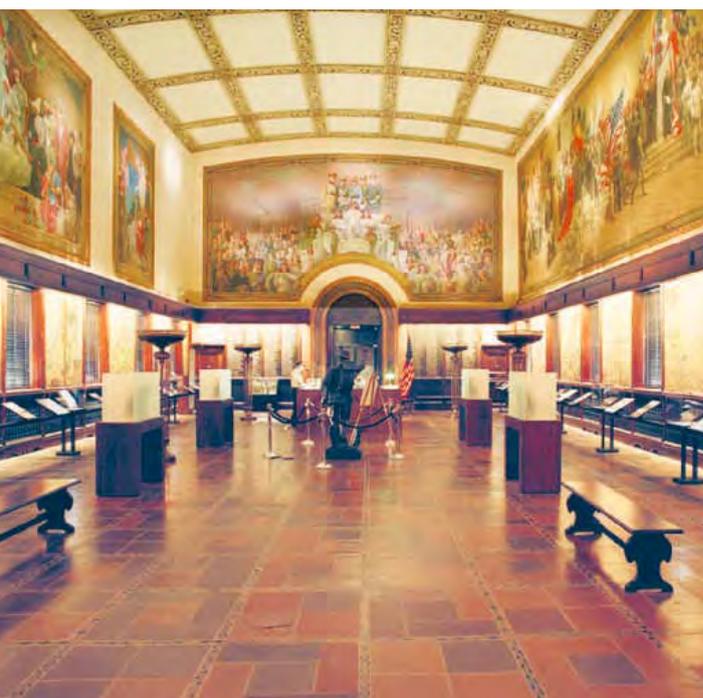
The problem with memorials that are long on symbolism and short on storytelling is that the power and meaning of the events that inspired their construction fades as the generation of people who built them pass on, and over the years they frequently suffer from neglect. Such was the case here, and by the mid-1990s the condition of the memorial had deteriorated so severely that it was considered a danger to the public and fenced off. Then, the citizens of Kansas City did an extraordinary thing: They voted a tax on themselves to fund its complete reconstruction, and started a separate fundraising effort to build a National World War I Museum to display the collection.

ASAI Architecture, led by Stephen Abend, FAIA, won a competition to reconstruct the memorial, starting with its deteriorated concrete frame, and to build the new National World War I Museum beneath it. He reversed the slope of the mall in front, bringing it three stories down, to expose the foundation wall that had covered the memorial's basement. A 40,000-square-foot addition to accommodate a new entry, lobby, gathering spaces, and auditorium was built in front of this. The new museum was carved out of the undercroft beneath the memorial, and a research library and storage for the collection placed in a new basement below it. The original pavilions, now called Memory Hall and Exhibit Hall, and the murals inside them, were lovingly restored. They can now be reached from the museum level via new elevators.

The entry to the museum building could not be more austere. Its Indiana limestone surface and massive bronze doors have no identifying words or marks cut into them. Inside, the lobby is daylit, but clad in dark-gray granite with a semispecular finish that renders the movement of visitors into ghostlike reflections. To enter the exhibitions, visitors cross a glass bridge spanning a field of 9,000 silk poppies, one for each of the 9,000 combatants killed in the war. The short journey is literally from the present to the past: The memorial's tower is clearly visible through a large skylight above, and the doors to the exhibitions are on the vertical plane

Museumgoers cross a glass bridge spanning a field of 9,000 silk poppies, one for each of the 9,000 combatants who died in the war (below and opposite, right). The tower is visible through the skylight. At the Portrait Wall, visitors can use interactive displays to read the stories of people who served in the war (opposite, left).





**Ralph Appelbaum Associates' excellent exhibitions are organized chronologically so visitors can comprehend the way this complex story unfolded. Artifacts are not treated as objets d'art; rather, everything is put into context. Two pavilions on the top of the Liberty Memorial's deck, Memory Hall (left) and Exhibits Hall (right), have been lovingly restored. Of particular importance are period murals, which are explained by interactive graphics displays.**



In the Horizon Theater, visitors see a film explaining America's entry into the war. It plays over a 200-foot-long, life-size trench.

that divides the new addition from the memorial's original foundation wall. Inside the museum, the story of the war is told chronologically, as visitors pass from space to space. The architectural detailing is clean, and with no formalistic references to motifs associated with the war or Magonigle's monument above. Ceilings are black, light levels are low, rooms are quiet, and the mood is introspective. A short film in the Kemper Theater gives visitors an overview of the social and political forces that put the nations of Europe on a collision course during the early part of the 20th century. Museumgoers then proceed into rooms whose exhibitions tell the story of the war between 1914 and 1917, with little mention of America.

After having explored the war through the eyes of the Europeans, visitors enter the darkened Horizon Theater, where a 15-minute film explores the forces that finally drove the U.S. into the conflict. It plays on a panoramic screen over a life-size, 200-foot-wide replica of a destroyed trench, full of the muck and debris of war, rendered in a way that makes it a powerful addition to the experience, without a trace of the kitschiness that frequently undermines this sort of tableau. After exiting the theater, exhibitions resume the drama, this time emphasizing the American experience and the end of the conflict.

The curators of the collection and Ralph Appelbaum Associates, the exhibition designers, did an outstanding job of selecting thousands of artifacts and displaying them in a contextual manner that reaches for

meaning, as opposed to isolating them like objets d'art. Stephen Abend's design for the museum is to be admired for resisting the temptation to be an add-on to Magonigle's monument. It does not demand of the visitor, "Look at me," at the expense of the tale being told. This is as it should be: Nothing should interfere with the moral of the story, that this war was a tragic waste of life and resources on an almost incomprehensible scale. ■

**Project:** *Liberty Memorial and National World War I Museum*

**Owner:** *Kansas City, Missouri, Parks and Recreation Department and the Liberty Memorial Association*

**Architecture, interiors, landscape:** *ASAI Architecture—Stephen Abend, FAIA, Crichton Singleton, FAIA*

**Consultants:** *Bob D. Campbell & Co. (structural); W.L. Cassell Associates (m/e/p); SK Design Group (civil); Ralph Appelbaum Associates (exhibits); John G. Waite & Associates (preserva-*

*tion); Architectural and Historical Research (history); Yarnell Associates (lighting); Acoustical Design Group*

**Contractors:** *J.E. Dunn Construction; Turner Construction*

**Sources**

**Indiana limestone:** *Evans Limestone*

**Waterproofing:** *American Hydrotech*

**Elevators:** *Otis Elevators*

**Skylights:** *Super Sky Products*

**Steel windows:** *Hope's Windows*

**Roofing:** *Carlisle Roofing*

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# John Ronan's bright and bold **GARY COMER YOUTH CENTER** supports an ambitious agenda on Chicago's South Side

By Joann Gonchar, AIA

PROJECTS

**T**hough little more than 10 miles to the south, Grand Crossing is worlds away from Downtown Chicago. Instead of the sleek office towers and luxury apartment buildings sprouting like weeds in and around the Loop, this South Side neighborhood is a jumble of empty lots, industrial buildings, and humble wood-frame and brick single-family homes. In the midst of these dreary surroundings is an almost improbable symbol of optimism—the colorfully clad, \$30 million Gary Comer Youth Center, with its scrolling LED sign atop an 80-foot-tall tower that punctuates the otherwise low-rise landscape.

The building, financed by Lands End founder Gary Comer, was completed in July 2006, just months before he died of cancer at age 78. The mail-order retailer had grown up in Grand Crossing and had attended Paul Revere Elementary school, just one block from the site of the future youth center. His reengagement with his old neighborhood reportedly began in the late 1990s, with the donation of computers to Revere. Soon, Comer's involvement with the community deepened, and in early 2004, on the basis of a recommendation from a professor at the Illinois Institute of

Technology, he sought out Chicago architect John Ronan.

Comer's desire was to build a home for the 300-member South Shore Drill Team—a 28-year-old parade performance group, whose mission is to combat teen drug use and violence by instilling kids with self-discipline and confidence. But Comer's ambitions for the building grew, with the program expanding almost weekly, according to Ronan. The philanthropist's vision for the center eventually evolved into a three-story, 75,000-square-foot facility that would support recreational and educational

**Project:** *The Gary Comer Youth Center, Chicago*

**Owner:** *The Comer Science & Education Foundation*

**Architect:** *John Ronan Architects—John Ronan, AIA, lead designer; Evan Menk, Brian Maladay, project architects; Yasushi Koakutsu, Oscar Kang,*

*Brad Kelley, Micah Land, Nageshwar Rao, project team*

**Engineers:** *Arup (structural); CCJM (m/e/p); Terra Engineering (civil)*

**Consultants:** *Charter Sills (lighting); Kirkegaard Associates (acoustics); Peter Lindsay Schaudt (landscape)*

**General contractor:** *W.E. O'Neil*



The colorful exterior of the Gary Comer Youth Center enlivens an otherwise dreary landscape. Its collection of boxlike volumes, including the glazed exhibition hall that projects to shelter the entrance below, gives just a hint of the spatial complexity found within.





**The client had at first wanted a brick building. However, the architect thought the material would be the wrong scale, especially for a building with few windows. Instead, he enveloped the structure in a bold pattern of rain-screen panels.**

programs for all Grand Crossing youth.

The program's expansion might have complicated site selection, but Comer had already acquired much of the available land in the neighborhood. The project "had an unreal quality," comments Ronan. "We could pick the site and make up the program."

If the project had the make-believe character of an architecture school studio assignment, Ronan nevertheless grappled with daunting real-world constraints. For example, community members worried that expanses of street-facing glass would leave occupants vulnerable to drive-by shootings. To respond to this concern without creating a fortress, the architect enveloped almost all of the braced-steel frame structure in colorful fiber-cement rain-screen panels. Their seemingly random arrangement camouflages slotlike bullet-resistant windows. More generous areas of this glazing give expression to programmatically significant elements, like a dance studio and an exhibition hall.

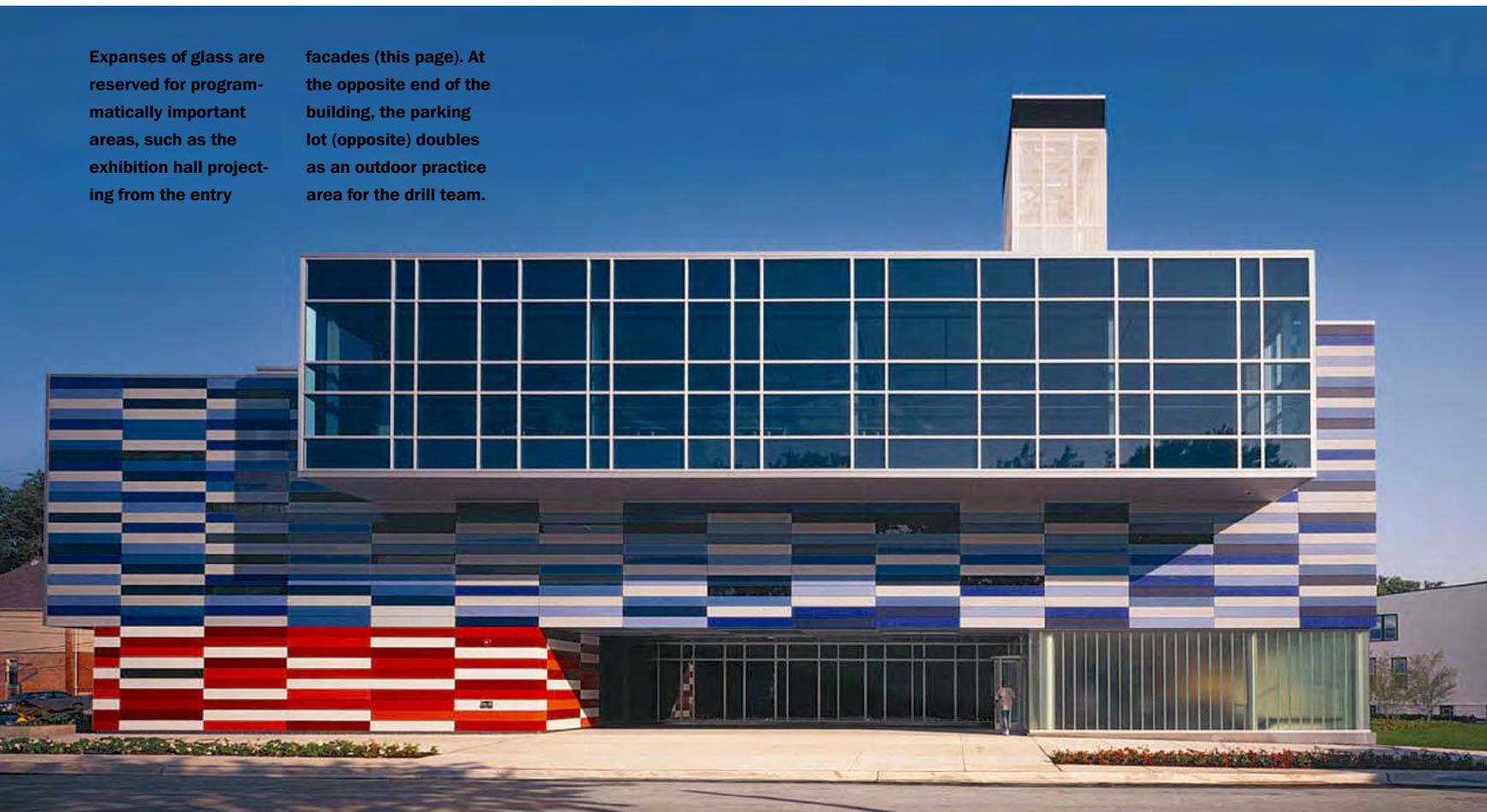
These spaces, as well as others that support programs such as computer instruction, tutoring, and music classes, are housed within bar-like modules that wrap around the building's physical and emotional center—a double-story, daylight-filled gymnasium that serves as a daily practice space for the drill team. To convert the gym into a theater for an audience of 640 people, a telescoping seating system is deployed, and motorized doors open to reveal a well-equipped stage.

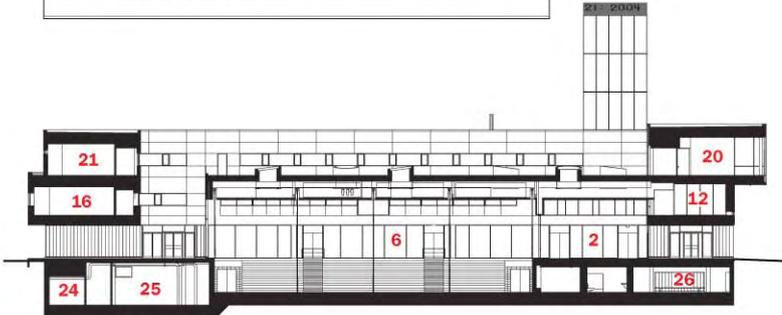
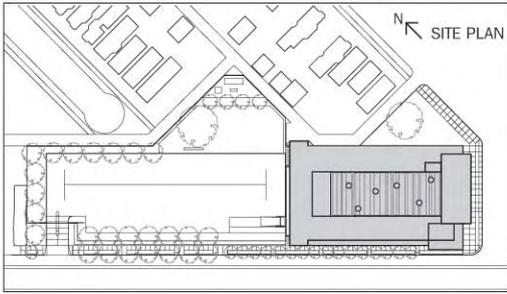
An endowment established by Comer covers the building's operations and maintenance, while educational and community organizations, such as the job-training group After School Matters and the video instruction program Free Spirit Media, oversee the center's offerings. Forging such partnerships was a process that continued throughout design and construc-

PHOTOGRAPHY: © STEVE HALL/HEDRICH BLESSING

Expanses of glass are reserved for program-matically important areas, such as the exhibition hall projecting from the entry

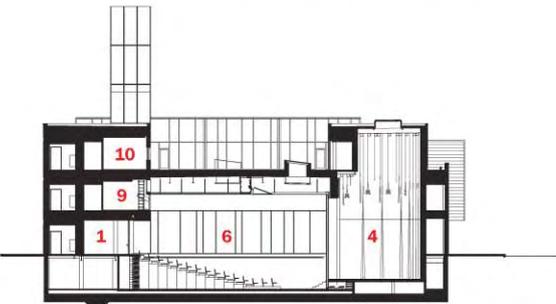
facades (this page). At the opposite end of the building, the parking lot (opposite) doubles as an outdoor practice area for the drill team.





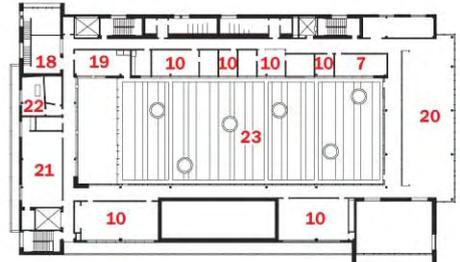
SECTION A-A

0 20 FT.  
6 M.

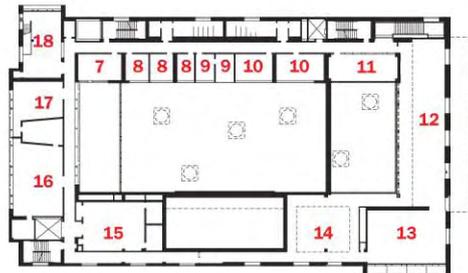


SECTION B-B

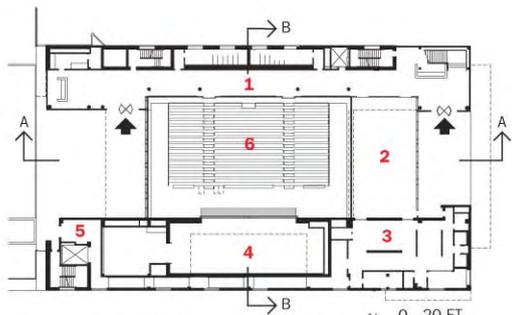
1. Lobby
2. Cafeteria
3. Kitchen
4. Stage
5. Loading
6. Gymnasium/theater
7. Conference
8. Tutoring
9. Theater lighting controls
10. Office
11. Study
12. Recreation
13. Dance
14. Exercise
15. Costume shop
16. Band
17. Music
18. Arts and crafts
19. Gardening
20. Lecture/exhibition
21. Computer lab
22. Recording studio
23. Roof garden
24. Server room
25. Mechanical
26. Locker room



THIRD FLOOR



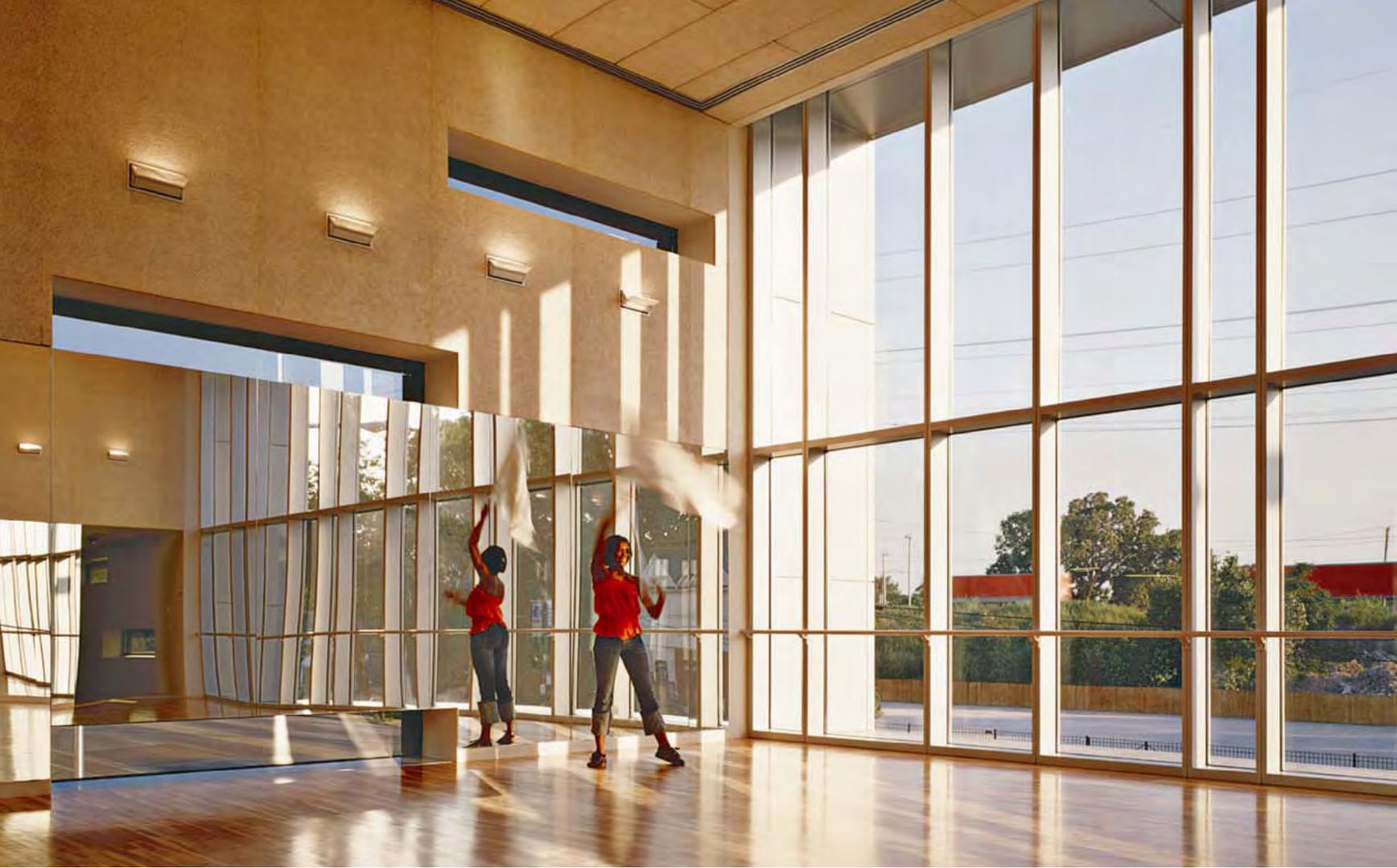
SECOND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

0 20 FT.  
6 M.





The dance studio (above) has ceilings tall enough to allow the drill team to practice twirling and throwing props such as flags.

Many of the third-floor spaces, including a circulation corridor (below left), provide visual access to the roof garden, where

children cultivate vegetables and herbs. From the cafeteria (below), visitors can survey activity in the gym and beyond.



tion, says Greg Mooney, executive director of both the youth center and the Comer Science & Education Foundation. But, by the time the building opened, all the spaces were occupied. "It all fell into place," adds the architect.

With overlapping volumes, well-considered adjacencies, and strategic use of interior glazing, Ronan has achieved a spatial complexity that the center's exterior massing belies. From the cafeteria, for example, a visitor can survey the activity in the gymnasium, look through the entry court, and see beyond to the parking lot that doubles as an outdoor practice area for the drill team. This visual access encourages a sense of community among the various users and facilitates staff oversight.

Ronan chose finishes that create a calm but playful backdrop for the center's sometimes frenetic activity. Inside, the bold cladding scheme gives way to more subdued hues: epoxy-coated concrete floors in muted oranges, blues, and greens pull out the aggregate colors in ground-face-block walls. "We were aiming for a fun environment where kids would want to be," says Ronan. "One where they feel respected and important."

Much of Comer's philanthropy was directed toward the study of climate change, and the building reflects his concern about the environment.

**The spaces are designed to be adaptable and flexible. The third-floor exhibition area comes with deployable display panels that double as room dividers, while black-out shades and projection screens convert it into a small lecture hall.**

The most obvious manifestation of this preoccupation is the green roof above the gym and cafeteria. It counteracts the urban-heat-island effect and reduces storm-water runoff, but unlike most planted roofs built for those purposes, the center's intensive system has soil deep enough to allow children to cultivate vegetables and herbs. For some, it is their first experience with gardening. "To these kids, outside is a dangerous place to be," points out Ronan.

Other features contribute to the green agenda as well, including the rain-screen facade, which has inherent thermal benefits. Strategies

such as skylights and the generous interior glazing help the building seem remarkably daylight-filled despite the community's stricture against windows, while occupancy sensors control electric lights. In addition, a sophisticated management system permits the stepping down of heating and cooling when individual spaces are not in use.

Perhaps more important than any of these features is the building's programmatic adaptability. Just as the gymnasium converts to a theater, the third-floor exhibition space allows for multiple uses. Here, a deployable panel system for displaying artwork can also subdivide the room into classrooms. Black-out shades permit its conversion to a lecture room.

Other spaces are designed so that they can be easily modified over time as the needs of the community change, or to allow multiple uses over the course of the day. For example, during normal school hours, when the building is relatively empty, adult exercise classes and a nurse-training program occupy some of the rooms. Starting next fall, the building will be even more intensely inhabited during school hours when the center launches a charter high school in partnership with another Chicago-based nonprofit.

The launch of the charter school is one example of how programs offered at the center are already growing and transforming in ways unanticipated during the design process. And that is perfectly in keeping with Comer's philosophy, says Mooney. "Gary believed that if you created something visionary, it would sustain itself." ■

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#### Sources

**Exterior cladding:** *Eternit; Alucobond; Centria*

**Roofing:** *American Hydrotech (roof garden); Carlisle (other locations)*

**Windows and skylights:** *Wausau*

**Glazing:** *Viracon*

**Auditorium seating:** *Irwin*

**Interior downlights:** *Lightolier*

**Elevators:** *Mitsubishi*

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# Machado and Silveti Associates chooses a dialectical, but not dissonant approach to adding onto the historic **BOWDOIN COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART** in Brunswick, Maine



By Suzanne Stephens

PROJECTS

**T**he wisest architects are often ones who do not hang on too long to their first scheme. When they find obstacles in their path, they view annoying impediments merely as spurs for further creative action. Machado and Silveti's expansion of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art (formerly known as the Walker Art Building) offers an excellent case in point.

The graceful Renaissance Revival museum at Bowdoin College has long occupied a prime position on the leafy quad of a campus for 1750 students in Brunswick, Maine. Designed by Charles McKim, of McKim, Mead & White, in 1894, the elegantly symmetrical composition recalls Brunelleschi's Pazzi Chapel (1430–61) in Florence while paying a bit of homage to Annibale Lippi's Villa Medici (circa 1540) and Vignola's Villa Giulia (1553) in Rome, as well. Indeed, the small brick-and-limestone palazzo prefigured the grander, marble Morgan Library McKim designed in 1906 in New York City. McKim's architecture, so contained, so perfect, declares quite forthrightly the near impossibility of

adding onto it. Yet the museum's holdings of some 15,000 objects, including ancient art of the Mediterranean world, European old master drawings, and American paintings, necessitated expansion. In addition, the school needed teaching spaces and had to update its methods of climate control and security, as well as meet new standards for accessibility and construction safety.

To perform these tasks, Bowdoin turned to Machado and Silveti Associates, a Boston-based firm. By all accounts, the choice made sense: The firm was in the midst of restoring and expanding the Getty Villa in Malibu [RECORD, May 2006, page 106], where it integrated both Modernist and traditional elements without sacrificing the identity of each. (It should be noted, however, that the budget was vastly different—\$275 million for the Getty Villa compared to Bowdoin's \$20.8 million.) Other architects considered for the Bowdoin project alternated between Modernists and traditionally minded—Polshek Partnership, Bruner/Cott & Associates, Robert A.M. Stern Architects, Hammond Beeby Rupert

The museum, formerly known as the Walker Art Building, was designed in 1894 by Charles McKim of McKim, Mead & White. The entrance on the campus quad has been relocated to the glass cube on the south side of the building.





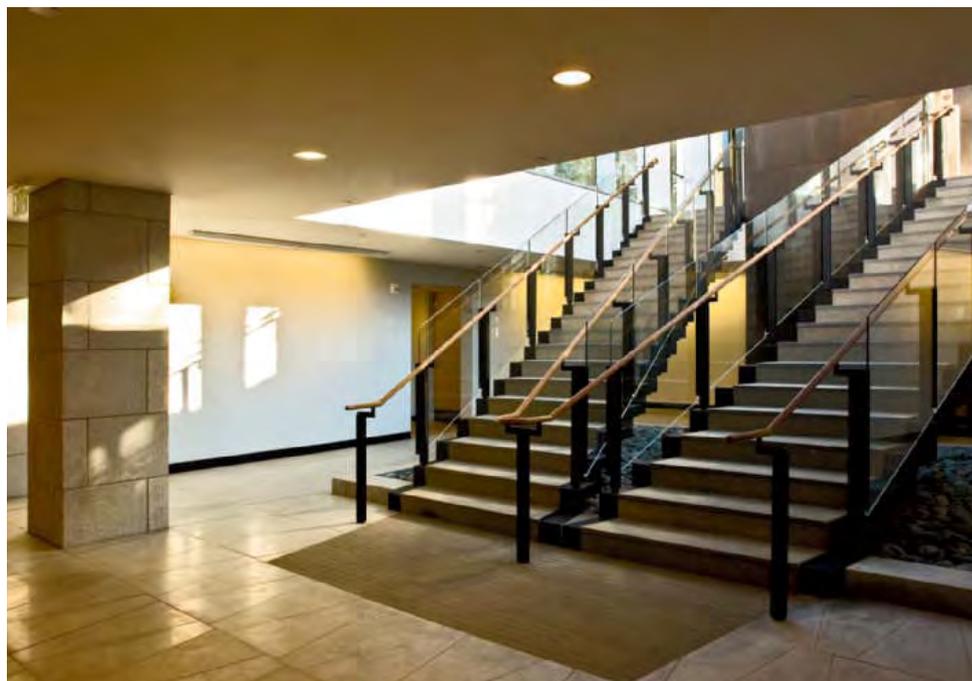
The glazed entrance pavilion at the south end of the museum (above) is sheathed in bronze and glass with blackened-steel interi-

ors. From the detached pavilion, museumgoers descend a V-shaped steel stair (below right) or take the elevator to the lower level.

Ainge, and Schwartz/Silver Architects (which had helped in the initial feasibility studies). Even Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects had previously consulted with the museum. During the discussions with the various teams, Katy Kline, the director of the museum, remarks, “Jorge Silveti did such an extraordinary job analyzing the problems” that Bowdoin decided to go with his firm, jettisoning a second round of presentations.

But obstacles lay ahead. Originally Machado and Silveti proposed a scheme that called for accessibility ramps feeding from the lawn into the museum through the lower level. While the architects had kept McKim’s front entrance, their scheme called for removing the grand staircase leading up to it. Among those who objected was the Maine Historic Preservation Commission’s director Earle Shettleworth. As he flatly declares, “This is Maine’s finest example of Renaissance Revival architecture, hands down, The grand staircase is a major character-defining feature.” Many in the college agreed, especially since commencement ceremonies take place on those steps. Although the trustees had approved the first scheme, Silveti faced a battle.

Silveti now agrees that going back to the drawing board proved to be better all around. The second time, Machado and Silveti placed the entrance in a 600-square-foot glazed, bronze, and blackened-steel pavilion at the south end of the McKim structure. From the lawn and the street it



**Project:** Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine  
**Architect:** Machado and Silveti Associates—Jorge Silveti, principal in charge; Rodolfo Machado, consulting

principal; Conrad Ello, AIA, project director and architect of record; Edwin Goodell, AIA, project architect.

**Engineers:** Richmond So (structural); Altieri Sebor Wieber (m/e/p)

appears to be a transparent glass cube. Yet its steel roof is cantilevered from a south wall composed of folded vertical steel plates arranged in a V that join at the roof. Inside the pavilion, two flights of steel stairs converge in a V-formation to take museumgoers on a route that begins with the lower-level galleries. In order to gain height for these subterranean spaces, the architects dropped the basement floor 4 feet, which called for extensive foundation work. In addition, they filled out the 15,171-square-foot structure’s rear side, which faces Maine Street, with a 3,213-square-foot wing. With all the recovered and added spaces, the museum now approaches 23,4200 square feet, net.

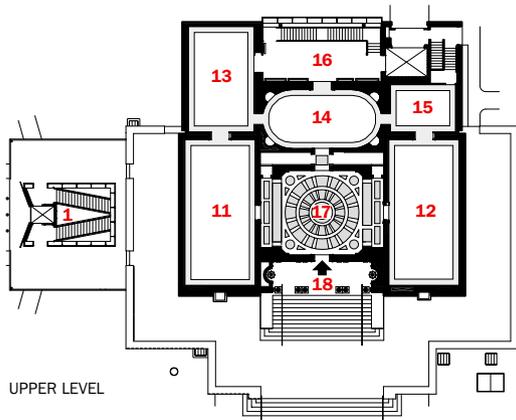
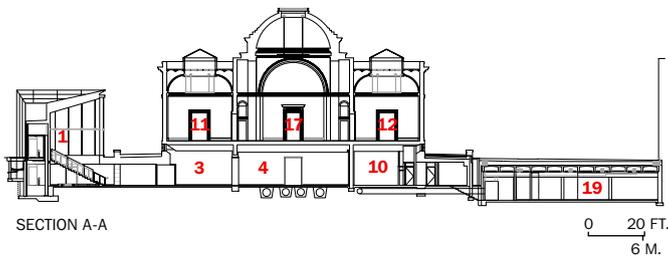
A structural-glass curtain wall sheathes this west facade—a modern intervention that allows the 9th-century-B.C. Assyrian reliefs of

1. Bowdoin College Museum of Art
2. Visual Art Center
3. Park Row
4. Maine Street

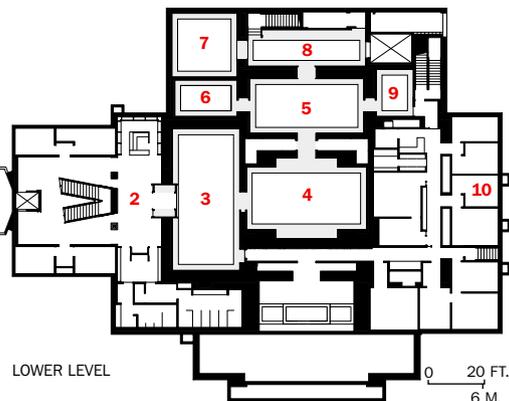


Along Park Row and Maine Street (site plan above), the former back side of the museum has been turned into a Modernist glazed gallery (above, right) showing off the 9th-century-B.C. Assyrian reliefs. Jorge Silvetti worked closely with the museum to devise a rich color scheme for the walls of the galleries that would evoke the period in which the art and the architecture were first put on view, as the restored Bowdoin Gallery (right) on the upper level illustrates. Oak floors and millwork along with the 19th-century salon-style hanging further establish the ambience.





1. Entrance pavilion
2. Lobby
3. Osher Gallery
4. Halford Gallery
5. Center Gallery
6. Becker Gallery
7. Zuckert Seminar Room
8. Focus gallery
9. Media gallery
10. Administration offices
11. Boyd Gallery
12. Bowdoin Gallery
13. Shaw Ruddock Gallery
14. Walker Gallery
15. Northend Gallery
16. Assyrian Gallery
17. Rotunda
18. Original entrance
19. Art storage



On the main level, the architects added a skylighted space, the Shaw Ruddock Gallery, at the southwest corner (above left). Lower-level galleries (above right) are depressed 4 feet to get 12-foot-4-inch to 13-foot ceiling heights.

King Assurnasirpal II, mounted against a cobalt blue wall, to be visible from Maine Street and a parallel road, Park Row. Fortunately, the reliefs, long enshrined in sepulchral darkness in the rotunda near the shop, can withstand the direct sunlight. The architects also renovated the remaining galleries, painting them rich hues, not unlike the approach they took with the gallery walls of the Getty Villa. In addition to doubling Bowdoin's galleries to 14 and amplifying teaching spaces, Machado and Silveti restored the remarkable rotunda, highlighted by 19th-century murals by Kenyon Cox, Elihu Vedder, John La Farge, and Abbott Thayer.

Nevertheless, there is no room for a café or reception hall for exhibition openings. In addition, some may regret that the grand entrance to the museum onto the lawn is no longer used, and the circulation sequence, which calls for descending to the lower level before coming back up to the grander galleries, hardly begins the way McKim conceived it. Altering the intended circulation path, for various reasons, seems to be a trend among museums today. While one can point out that Bowdoin's compromise is not as drastic as the one taken by Renzo Piano with McKim's Morgan Library [RECORD, October 2006, page 92], where the circulation route through the new lobby heightens the sense of a back-door arrival at the McKim palazzo, it still seems rather disorienting. At least at Bowdoin, the visitor terminates his or her route in the marvelous rotunda; and there, he or she can look out to the lawn through a new bronze-and-glass front door the architects designed. With this final touch, the dialectic Machado and Silveti established between the new and old arrives at a final synthesis. ■

**Sources**

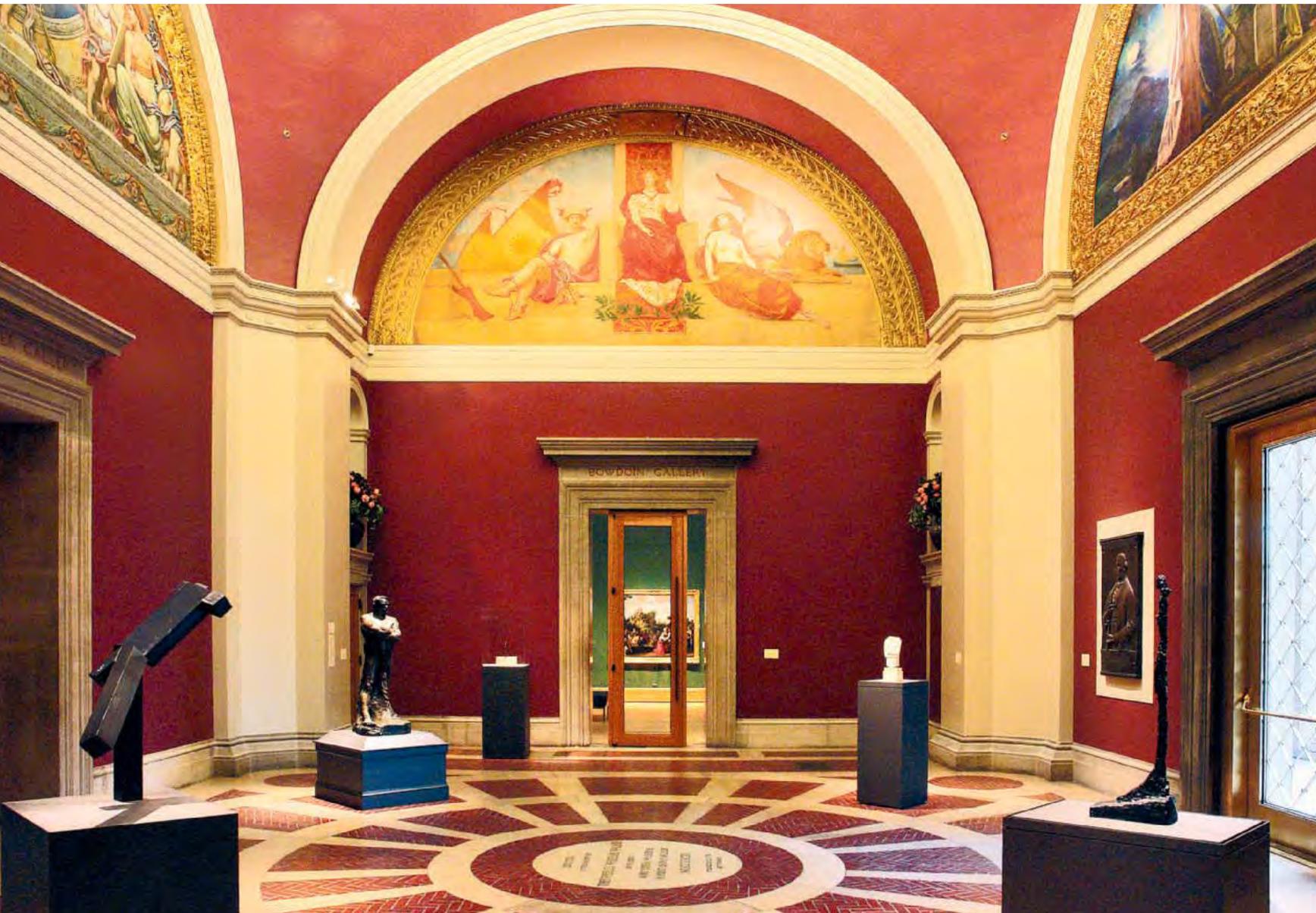
**Architectural bronze, stainless steel:** A. Zahner  
**Structural-glass curtain wall:** Innovative Structural Glass  
**Steel and bronze fabrications:**

*Accidental Anomalies*

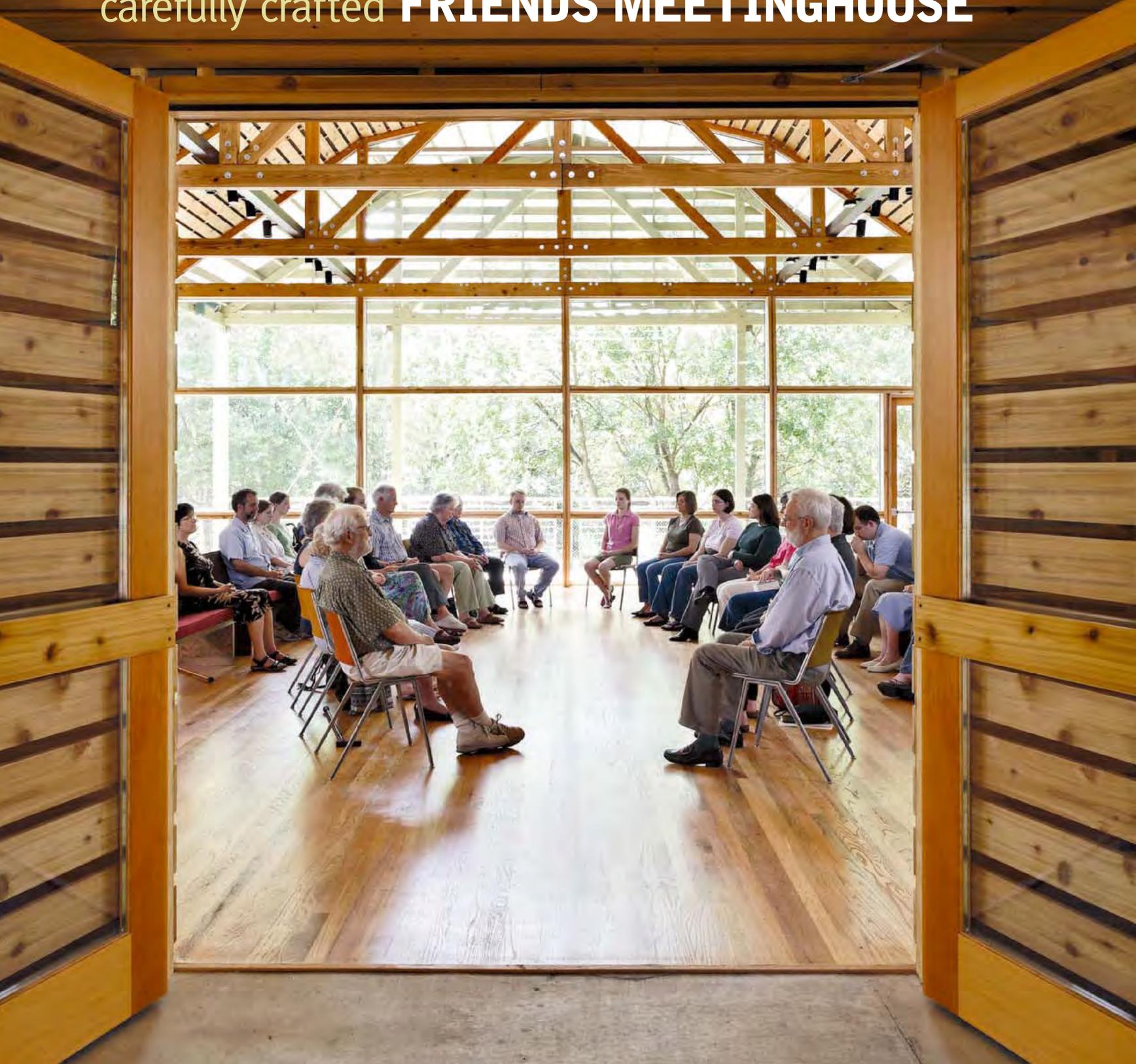
**Stone:** J.C. Stone; Granite Importers  
**Brick:** Morin Brick  
**Millwork:** Selmore Industries  
**Aluminum windows:** Kawnee  
**Bronze entry door:** Dawson Doors

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The deep tawny gold hue of the walls of the upper level's Walker Gallery (right) highlights the collection of antiquities. The upper level rotunda (below) is now the terminus of the museum visitor's circulation path, which began on the lower level. Its brick-red walls dramatize the lunette murals by late-19th-century artists Elihu Vedder, Kenyon Cox, and John La Farge (left to right). Machado and Silveti redesigned the front door, originally thought to be wood, now bronze and glass, with a view to the lawn.



Pared-down materials and simple forms express traditional Quaker values in **Lake/Flato's** carefully crafted **FRIENDS MEETINGHOUSE**





By Jane F. Kolleeny

**S**ilence and humility figure prominently in the Quaker way of life. That's why Ted Flato, FAIA, and Bob Harris, AIA, of Lake/Flato Architects, used both principles to guide the design for the 4,800-square-foot Friends Meetinghouse in San Antonio, Texas. The architects responded to the challenge of achieving silence on a site bordered by busy roads and an apartment complex by tucking the L-shaped building into the gently sloped site with the main gathering hall located at the back, where native plants grow in a drainage area. This offered a secluded garden setting suitable for contemplation.

Arriving parishioners approach the small complex on a path that meanders through xeriscaped shrubs and mature mesquite and acacia trees, which block a nearby beauty salon from view. As one treads the circuitous path, the gradual arrival sequence allows the mind to settle, shedding the busyness of daily life until one passes through a heavy wood-slotted gate set in a thick limestone perimeter wall. Harris describes the material of the wall as "old yella," a term he uses for the off-white, locally quarried stone used in many buildings in town. The stone lends an air of permanence to the premises, while also calling to mind the nearby Alamo, which is surrounded by a similar enclosure. Once inside, parishioners encounter a covered portico stretching along a wing housing a series of small rooms, including a nursery and a library. With a garden courtyard on the right, circulation continues to the main meeting space on the other side of the building's "L" plan. Each parishioner's journey of quietude ends in the main hall, where Friends gather to practice attentive silence.

Lake/Flato realized humility in its design by embracing a domestic scale, simple symmetry of forms, and unadorned, inexpensive materials, taking cues from traditional American Quaker meeting houses shaped by similar design conditions. The architects clad the exterior of the 1,024-square-foot main gathering hall in horizontal panels spaced

**Inside, benches for circular seating express the egalitarian, non-hierarchical nature of the community (opposite). The L-shaped building opens to an interior garden courtyard (above). One enters the premises through a wood-slotted gate in a limestone perimeter wall (right).**



about 1 inch apart and made of an extremely durable, low-maintenance cementitious material derived from recycled paper—a modern, sustainable interpretation of vernacular meeting-house design. A gambrel roof, with exposed interior wood roof trusses, creates a barnlike effect inside. Interior walls and ceiling are finished in cedar slats spaced the same as the exterior panels, but with acoustical sound barriers made of Homasote, a 100 percent recycled material, behind them.

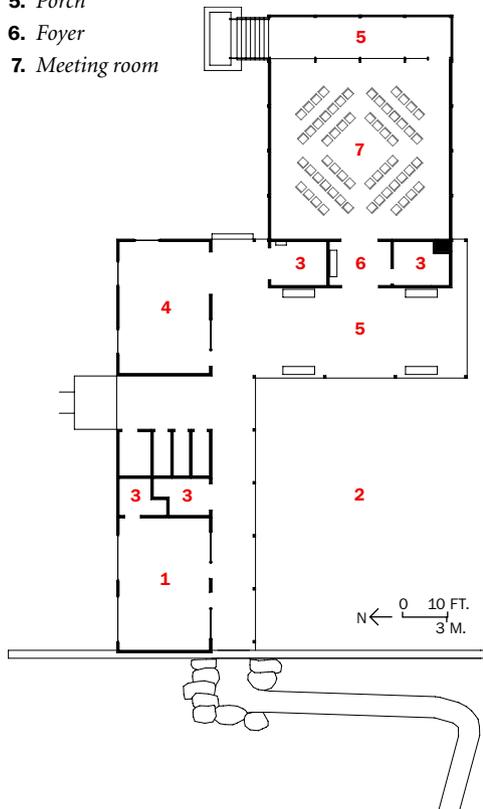
Harris comments, "In the meeting space itself, one can silently sense a warbler bounce between branches, the movement of translucent leaves, and shifting of light around you." The architects achieved this sense of openness and lightness with some subtle architectural cues. Clerestory windows top the gabled entry wall on the west. Beneath the deep-hanging roof eaves, the south and north walls feature high windows, allowing daylight and breezes to ventilate the space, but offering no views. The windows pay tribute to the Friends' belief that worshippers ought not to be



The fully glazed east back wall of the meeting house opens to a porch and frames the exterior foliage, contributing to the serenity of the space.



1. Nursery
2. Courtyard
3. Storage
4. Library
5. Porch
6. Foyer
7. Meeting room



distracted by the activities of the world outside.

Since Friends' worship involves silent listening without ritual, there are no altar, pulpit, or liturgical features. Harris conceived a design for the benches to be constructed of the wood left over from the interior walls and ceiling. He gave the wood to the community, who then built the benches based on his design. True to their humble aspirations, seating never exceeds 100 people. According to Ken Southwood, the meeting clerk at Friends Meetinghouse in San Antonio, if numbers exceed this, it's time for the group to open another hall.

Harris doesn't hide his passion for the opportunity to respond to his clients' values in his well-articulated, low-key, sustainable design. "We wanted to give this amazing group of Friends a beautiful space that worked to embrace the natural qualities of the trees, sky, and light together with values of humility and 'plainness.'" Pared down to its basics with eloquence and care, the meetinghouse is elegant architecture at its most unpretentious. ■

**A gambrel roof tops the main meeting hall, reminiscent of historic Quaker meeting-house designs (opposite). A typical meeting-house plan includes an unornamented rectangular space (above).**

**Project:** Friends Meetinghouse, San Antonio

**Architect:** Lake/Flato Architects—Ted Flato, FAIA; Robert Harris, AIA; German Spiller, Isabel Mijangos, team

**Engineers:** Steve G. Persyn, (structural); Pape Dawson (civil)

**Landscape:** Bender Wells Clark

**Sources**

**Curtain wall:** Vistawall

**Acoustical backing:** Homasote

**Wood siding:** Hardy Plank

**Metal roofing:** MBCI

**Windows:** Marvin

**Glazing:** AFGD

**Doors:** Roddis

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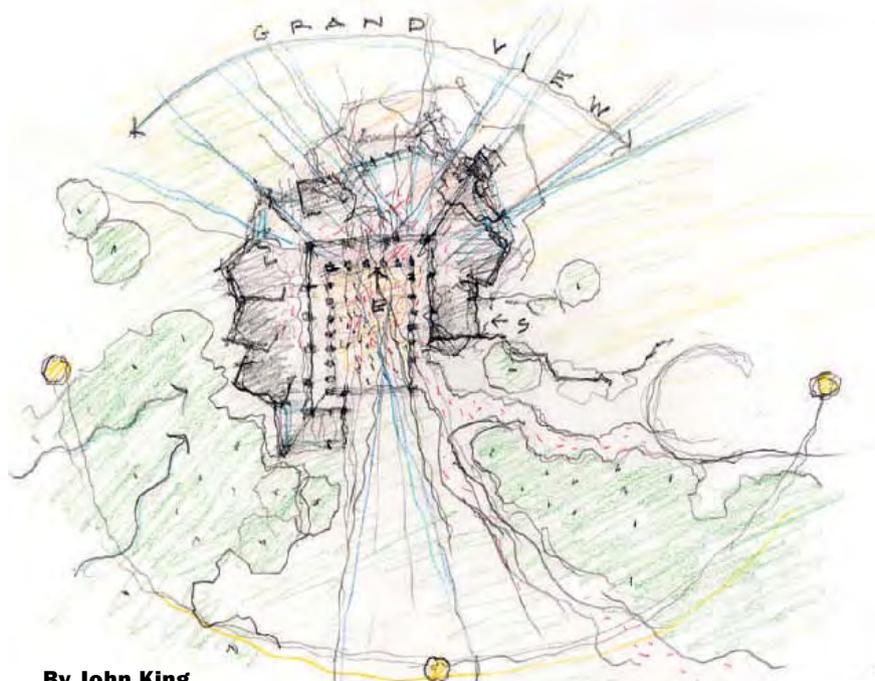


**Bohlin Cywinski Jackson** seizes on  
Grand Teton's natural drama  
with the elegant **CRAIG THOMAS  
VISITOR CENTER**

The exhibition area of the visitor center has a seemingly erratic heavy-timber structure that frames a series of distant views of the Grand Teton range.



PHOTOGRAPHY: © NIC LEHOUX



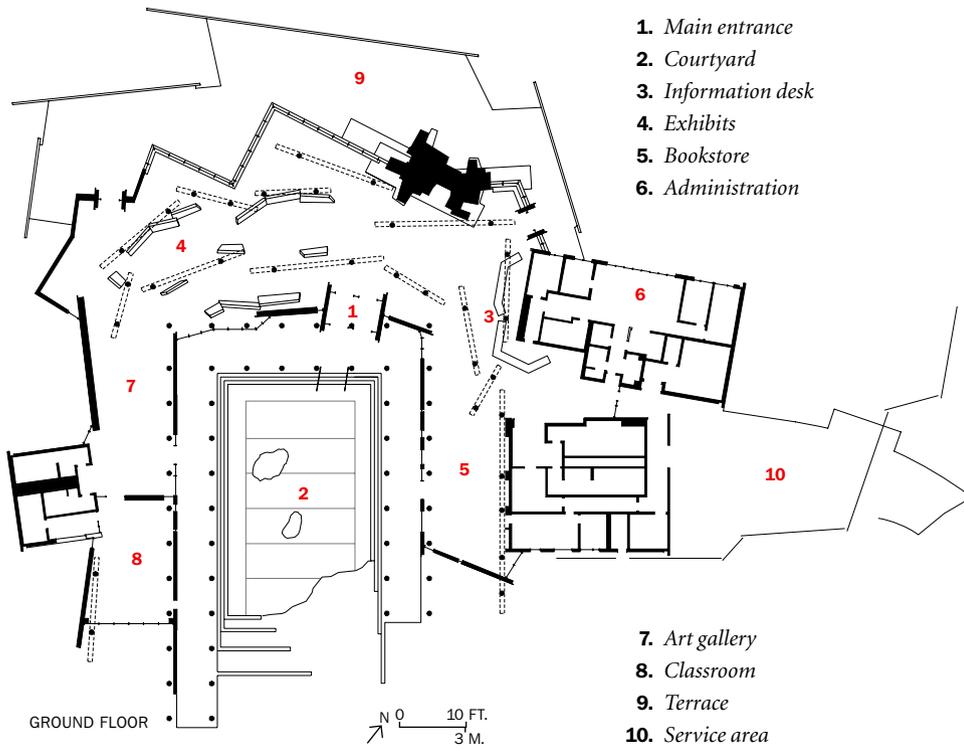
**By John King**

**T**here's nothing formulaic about the National Park Service's new Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center for the Grand Teton National Park in Moose, Wyoming. The jagged roofline evokes the storied mountain range to the west, on view beyond a glass wall that spikes as high as 30 feet above the floor. The sawtooth floor plan accentuates the view while keeping out afternoon sun. Stocky columns of Douglas fir march through the exhibition hall; not only do they brace the roof beams, they also hint that perhaps you're emerging from a forest and into the meadow that lies beyond the windows.

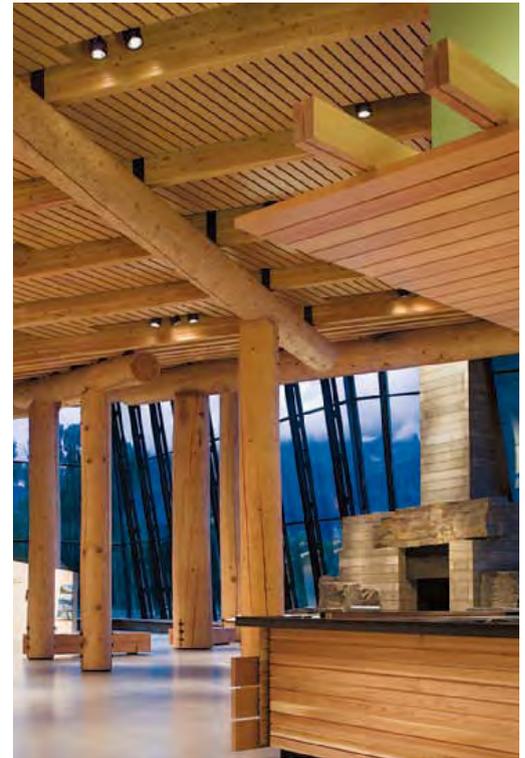
All of these architectural moves are rooted in the Wyoming terrain, yet the 23,000-square-foot visitor center also reflects an emerging 21st-century sensibility that blends values—contemporary design with a palpable sense of place, both shaped by environmental concerns—once considered distinct in architecture. This approach is evident in much of the work of the center's architects, the Seattle office of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, but there's none of the Minimalist sheen that marks the firm's high-profile Apple stores. Instead, the tactile materials and expressive forms in the Grand Tetons center, which opened in August 2007, draw on mountain houses that principal Peter Bohlin, FAIA, has crafted over the years.

In 2001, the firm won the competition to design a badly needed

*John King is the urban design writer for the San Francisco Chronicle. He is a two-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in criticism.*



- 1. Main entrance
- 2. Courtyard
- 3. Information desk
- 4. Exhibits
- 5. Bookstore
- 6. Administration
- 7. Art gallery
- 8. Classroom
- 9. Terrace
- 10. Service area



The copper roof and Western red cedar structure was designed to weather naturally. All logs and glu-lam members are FSC-certified, from the courtyard to the information desk (top right).



Vice President Dick Cheney, a nearby resident, dedicated the center in August 2007 in memory of Wyoming's late Senator Craig Thomas.

starting point for the two million annual visitors who explore the Grand Tetons by foot, raft, or car. The first scheme called for a partially buried building to the east, across the Snake River, but concerns about disturbing undeveloped land led the architects to focus instead on the present site west of the river, which was already occupied by nondescript commercial buildings slated to be removed.

The change in location transformed the design approach; the center announces itself to drivers on busy Teton Park Road with an eye-catching silhouette where the metal roof slides past the glass wall toward the mountains. What's not obvious from the road is the center's U-shaped layout: The central exhibition hall focuses on the mountains, while the wings point back toward the Snake River. One wing contains a gallery and small classroom, the other a bookstore and offices.

The parking lot is tucked to the north of the exhibition hall, and the obvious thing would be to place the entrance here. Instead, Bohlin and his team choreographed the procession to slow visitors down and take them into the landscape. The path meanders east past the cedar-clad offices through a new landscape of native plants. Two sharp right turns lead into a central courtyard where the rustic feel of a colonnaded walkway contrasts with the smooth metal roof sloping in on three sides. After these intentional contrasts, the interior of the exhibition hall is a show of a different sort—an updated take on National Park lodges of yore. The floor is rough concrete aggregate, the ceiling an emphatic fan of angled rafters, and an enormous stone fireplace makes a chunky form against smooth con-

crete blocks. Display cases, as part of exhibitions designed by Ralph Applebaum Associates, rear up like shards of rock in a trout stream amid the Douglas fir timber columns.

It's an assertive space, but one that engages the visitor without trying to upstage the drama outside. Similarly, many sustainable elements are integral to the design. For instance, the steep roofline steers snow back into the courtyard, which has pervious paving to allow for snowmelt to recharge the groundwater in the newly planted landscape areas. Even if the snow piles high during the winter, visitors will be able to enter the center through a tunnel formed by the constructed colonnade and the natural snow pack.

The visitor center represents what Bohlin calls "humane Modernism," which he sees as a sensibility more than a style—contemporary and disciplined, but friendly to the touch. If the center is an unexpected shot of architectural sophistication in a popular national park, it also feels like it belongs. In this setting, that's high praise. ■

---

**Project:** *Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center, Moose, Wyoming*

**Architect:** *Bohlin Cywinski Jackson—Peter Bohlin, FAIA, principal; Raymond Calabro, AIA, project manager; David Miller, Jessica O'Brien, team*

**Sources**

**Curtain wall:** *Hankins & Johann*

**Glazing:** *Oldcastle*

**Carpet:** *FLOR by Interface*

**Seating:** *Knoll*

**Water-free urinals:** *Sloan*

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**ONLINE:** To rate this project, go to [architecturalrecord.com/projects/](http://architecturalrecord.com/projects/).

**El dorado Architects** rethink the Quonset hut to enliven simple, new offices for the **HODGDON POWDER COMPANY** in rural Kansas



A garden of native plants (planned for the left foreground), will provide an area for casual entertaining and other functions.

By Russell Fortmeyer

**I**t wasn't image consciousness or architectural publicity that convinced the board of the Hodgdon Powder Company to hire an architect to design its new production facility's administration building near Herington, Kansas. It was the employees. Tom Shepherd, the C.E.O. of the Overland Park, Kansas-based gunpowder company, says he took one look at the original proposed Butler building for the facility's staff and he knew it would not be a pleasant place to work. "I took a little risk," Shepherd says, noting that much of his staff initially resisted the idea of open offices. "And I learned a great deal."

For starters, Shepherd says, the building, which opened on September 2007, designed by Kansas City, Missouri-based El dorado Architects, looks nothing like what he imagined when he described his company's needs to the architects. The team at El dorado split the simple, 8,500-square-foot program—reception, meeting space, offices, dining, and locker rooms—into three separate buildings oriented around outdoor circulation spaces and a garden of native plants. Josh Shelton, a principal at El dorado, proposed using the Quonset hut system—a pre-engineered structure—to the company after he saw similar examples for nearby airplane hangars and rural agricultural buildings. "The Quonset hut is already such a beautiful section of corrugated ribs, so we did not want to mess with this elegant system," Shelton says. "We created a com-

pound of sorts that brought indoor and outdoor spaces together, peeling away a series of spanning ribs to create an overhead canopy." It's merely coincidental, Shelton says, that the project could be read by some as looking like a double-barreled shotgun in plan.

But the simplicity of this design conceals just how much the contemporary appearance of the buildings disturbs local conventions. For there are really only two competing strains of small industrial architecture in Kansas: house or barn. In many cities and towns, you will see purpose-built, brick-clad houses of dubious scale that operate as administration buildings for family-owned companies. If not a house, then you will see a pre-engineered, metal box of a building, like a barn with small windows, filling the same role. This anonymous architecture blankets America. Herington, which is 1½ hours north of Wichita, bordering the state's rolling Flint Hills region, is certainly no exception.

A Kansas farmer would most likely refer to a larger Quonset hut used for agriculture as a "round-top." You see these types of buildings sprinkled through the countryside, in various sizes, because of their material efficiency—the walls and roof are condensed into a single, self-supporting structure. But a Quonset hut certainly introduces a particular set of design problems. El dorado collaborated with the hut's fabricator, Steelmaster USA, to work out the size, span, and details of the galvanized-steel hut. Shelton

PHOTOGRAPHY: © MIKE SINCLAIR



says they first had to develop a scale figure to determine that the slope of the hut would begin at about shoulder height for an average person. This put the peak of the ceiling at 17 feet, with a 3-foot concrete-stem-wall base. Sean Slattery, AIA, project architect for El dorado, says the firm spent much time on the details of connections—the casings around the windows, in particular—since the firm is well-known for working with pre-engineered building systems. The ends of each hut are clad in cedar slats with conventional aluminum storefront doors and windows. The buildings' interiors were kept minimal—a white corrugated-metal ceiling conceals spray-on foam insulation, floors are sealed concrete, and custom furniture, designed and built by El dorado, is finished in light Baltic Birch plywood. Shepherd, the C.E.O., says the majority of his employees are happy in their new offices. “My guess is there are people who just don’t like design,” Shepherd says. “I may not choose it for my house, but I can appreciate it.” ■

**Project:** *An Office for Hodgdon Powder Company*

**Architect:** *El dorado Architects—Josh Shelton, principal; Sean Slattery, AIA, project architect; Brady Neely*

**Sources**

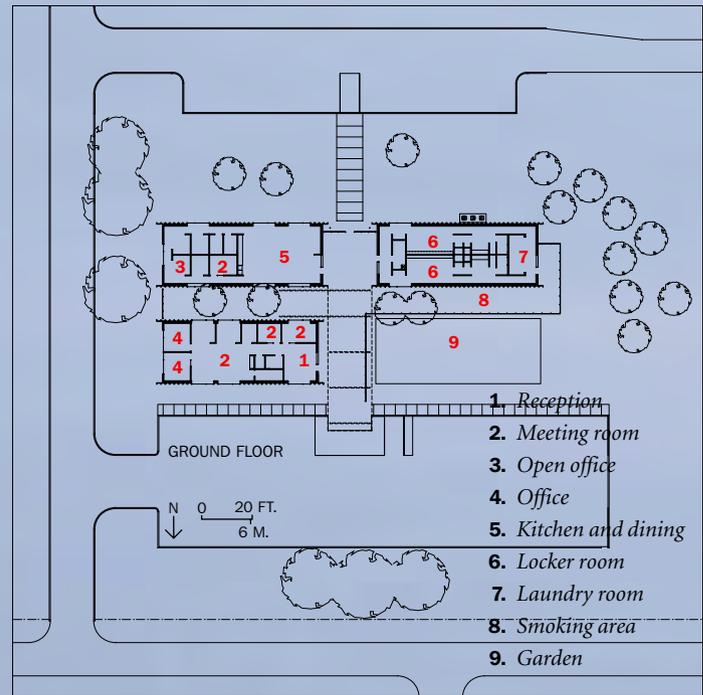
**Storefront system:** *Manko*

**HVAC:** *Trane*

**Paint:** *Sherwin Williams*

**Ceiling:** *Una-Clad*

**ONLINE:** To rate this project, go to [architecturalrecord.com/projects/](http://architecturalrecord.com/projects/).



Exterior corridors and a cedar-slat fence bolster the compoundlike feel of the offices. Horizontal windows increase cross ventilation.



The cedar slats (above left) take advantage of native materials, since cedar grows like a weed on the Kansas prairie. The simplicity of the dining hall (above) depends on minimal finishes and fluorescent strip lighting installed on the top of exposed ductwork.



**"THE LAPPED TCS PANELS ADDED NICE TEXTURE AND PROVIDED A VERY FORWARD-THINKING LOOK."**

— Doug Pasma, Design Principle, Goss Pasma Blomquist Architects

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Blomquist Architects  
Wall Panel Installer: A-1  
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Roofing Contractor: James  
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"We were somewhat given a palette of material," said Doug Pasma, design principal with Goss Pasma Blomquist Architects. "The existing pre-engineered building had lots of metal with a brick package at ground level. While we wanted to stay within the family of material for the expansion, we clearly sought to integrate an inviting, contemporary design. The lapped TCS panels added nice texture and provided a very forward-thinking look."

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## LIBRARIES

# Circulation Boost

By providing attractive, wifi-ready spaces where people want to gather and linger, public libraries are holding their own in the age of the Internet.

By James Murdock

### HERCULES PUBLIC LIBRARY

Hercules, California

*HGA and Will Bruder establish a new civic presence amid suburban banality, anchoring their building with a Zen-like central garden but adding a touch of whimsy for children.*



### MULBERRY STREET BRANCH

New York City

*Using a grand stair to draw daylight into subterranean levels, Rogers Marvel Architects plays off the historic fabric of an old candy factory and adds a new window onto Manhattan's underbelly.*



### CESAR CHAVEZ LIBRARY

Phoenix, Arizona

*Line and Space let topography and the desert climate guide the footprint and forms of a Modernist library building intended to serve a young, fast-growing community.*



Public libraries, like many institutions in society, at first seemed threatened by the Internet. Although it has taken them some time, librarians have realized that the best way to survive is by focusing on their strengths. Anyone can use Google to locate something online—but librarians know where to find the highest quality information. Libraries are also emphasizing their role as community centers by providing innovative artistic events and after-school programs, as well as creating architecturally pleasing, wifi-ready places where people want to bring their laptop computers and work in the company of others. Not coincidentally, the desire to be around people partly explains the success of the Apple store and Starbucks in a world where online shopping and drive-through windows provide cheaper alternatives. Contrary to what Jean-Paul Sartre wrote, hell is not other people.

The projects in this Building Types Study illustrate how public libraries are adapting. Each one is an all-new branch that provides its community with a civic center that had previously been lacking: two in the rapidly growing West, another in a once-pioneering neighborhood within an established East Coast city. With the Hercules Public Library, located in a suburb 25 miles north of San Francisco, HGA Architects and Engineers, in collaboration with Will Bruder + Partners, organized program elements around a central “Sky Garden”—a quiet, glass-enclosed outdoor space that orients visitors within the building. Similarly, Rogers Marvel Architects conceived of The New York Public Library’s Mulberry Street Branch as a “respite” from the relentlessly commercial focus of boutique-lined streets in SoHo. This Manhattan neighborhood, with its cast-iron 19th-century lofts, is the original model for gentrification, but it had yet to receive its own library branch. And at the Cesar Chavez Library on the outskirts of Phoenix, among the nation’s fastest-growing cities, Line and Space created the “living room” for a community rising on former farmland.

Line and Space’s tranquil building hugs the contour of an adjacent lake, with generous fenestration along this elevation, while presenting as few glazed surfaces as possible on its opposite, sun-scorched west facade. Likewise, the Mulberry Street Branch is of a piece with its surroundings: Cast-iron columns from the original 1886-vintage structure punctuate the library, while its walls are unfinished masonry. And HGA and Will Bruder, working on a site that bridges drab tract houses and big-box retail, employed a classic civic vocabulary that elevates the tone of the neighborhood without condescending to it. By displaying a sensitivity for context, these public libraries claim their rightful place in the community—proving that this institution, at least, has nothing to fear in our brave new online world. ■

# One: HERCULES PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Hercules, California

HGA and Will Bruder strengthen the public heart of a suburban community with a library whose facade boldly meets a busy street.

By Lisa Findley

**Architect:** HGA Architects and Engineers in association with Will Bruder+Partners—Fredric Sherman, AIA, principal in charge; Jane Dederling, interior designer and library planner (HGA); Will Bruder, lead project designer (Will Bruder)

**Client:** City of Hercules

**Consultants:** Umerani Associates (structural); Glumac (m/e); CMG (landscape); Linda Demmers (program); Turner Construction (general contractor)

**Size:** 20,162 square feet

**Cost:** \$10.4 million

**Completion date:** January 2007

### Sources

**Masonry:** H.C. Muddox

**Metal-and-glass curtain wall:** Vistawall; Singapore Safety Glass; Paragon Glass Industries

**Aluminum windows:** Vistawall

**Glazing:** Singapore Safety Glass

**Doors:** Marshfield

**Acoustical ceilings:** Armstrong

**Woodwork:** ISEC

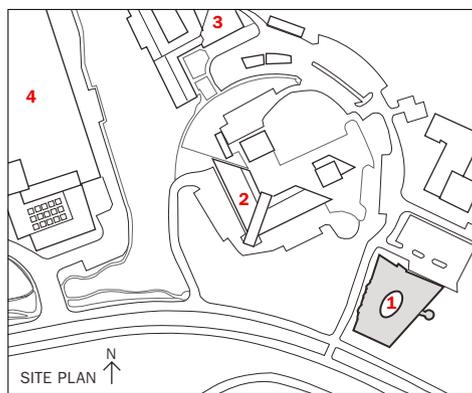
**Paints and stains:** Dunn Edwards

**Carpet:** Shaw

**Lighting:** Elliptipar; Metalux; Cooper Lighting; Artemide; Lithonia

**ONLINE:** Rate this project and access additional sources at [architecturalrecord.com/bts/](http://architecturalrecord.com/bts/).

1. Public library
2. Civic Center
3. Elderly housing
4. Shopping center



Unlike its namesake, there is little heroic about Hercules, California: Big-box retail and strip shopping centers line its main roads, and houses sprawl in shades of beige. This suburb in the San Francisco Bay area is, in typical fashion, a privatized world where cars rule; what should be its most public building, the Civic Center, hides like a landscaped office campus on a hill off a main road. The community also lacked a public library until the San Francisco office of Hammel Green and Abrahamson (HGA), in collaboration with Phoenix-based Will Bruder+Partners, was approached to create one.

### Program

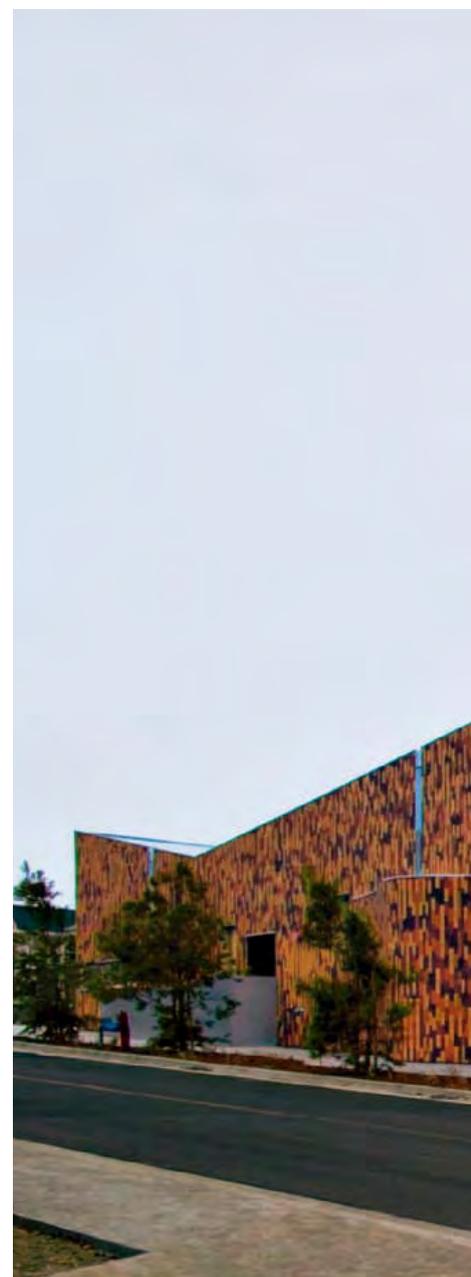
Tapping into monies allocated by a state library bond measure, the city of Hercules and Contra Costa County commissioned the architects

*Lisa Findley chairs the architecture program at California College of the Arts.*

to design a 21,000-square-foot, \$10.4 million building that would double as a library and a community center. Open shelving for periodicals, stacks for books and DVDs, open access computers, and reading areas for adults, teens, and children were to be supplemented by a homework center, multipurpose meeting rooms available to public groups, a small kitchen for a coffee shop, and a generous lobby. Additionally, the city requested that the building be highly visible.

### Solution

HGA and Bruder used the slope of the site and a range of design strategies to give the relatively small building a civic presence and identity while at the same time making it humanly scaled. To bulk up the structure, the architects aggregated the modest program into a single volume and expanded the footprint by inserting a generous, oval-shaped light court into its middle. In section,



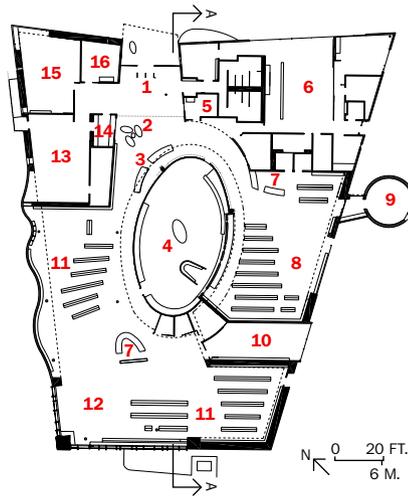
PHOTOGRAPHY: © BILL TIMMERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

A glass-enclosed fireplace in the library's southwest corner faces the road (below), while the main entry (right) opens onto parking at the building's north elevation. The children's Story Cone projects from the east elevation.





- |                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Entry           | 9. Story Cone          |
| 2. Card catalog    | 10. Teen room          |
| 3. Checkout        | 11. Stacks             |
| 4. Sky Garden      | 12. Adult reading room |
| 5. Bookstore       | 13. Community room     |
| 6. Staff offices   | 14. Café               |
| 7. Information     | 15. Homework center    |
| 8. Children's room | 16. Conference room    |



an asymmetrical butterfly roof shelters a lower wing that modestly faces a parking lot and entry at the rear, and a taller wing that soars to a height of 44 feet above the street corner, perhaps the only building in Hercules to hold the street edge in this way. At this corner, a randomly patterned earth-tone palette of vertical brick tiles clad the exterior of the building's steel structure, helping the library stand out against its drab neighbors.

A more intimate world begins inside the main entry, where closely, a school-district homework center as well as community meeting rooms are clustered. The lobby, straight ahead, is populated with a coffee shop and café tables, reference computers, and automated check-out counters, and connects directly with the courtyard. Dubbed the "Sky Garden" by the architects, this elliptical outdoor space is visible from all parts of the building and orients patrons by dividing the library into three worlds: a children's section, to the east; a teen section, to the southeast; and the adult reading room, to the southwest.

For children, there's a free-standing Story Cone, a 28-foot-tall circular room painted cobalt blue, its 20-foot-diameter floor scattered with pillows. Teens get a space lit by funky light fixtures and filled with computers and video-game consoles. And the southwest corner of the adult reading room features 35-foot-tall, floor-to-ceiling windows that diffuse daylight with a veil-like double layer of ceramic frit begin-



Visible throughout the building, a central "Sky Garden" (opposite) helps orient patrons in the main reading room and stacks (this page).

The adult reading room and stacks (this page) receive light from large, south-facing windows as well as smaller, randomly placed openings on the east elevation. A plywood-paneled Story Cone for children is attached to the north elevation; stucco covers its exterior (opposite).





ning 8 feet above the floor. Here, upholstered couches and chairs cluster around a sleek, glass-box fireplace that extends through the facade as a beacon to the street.

### Commentary

HGA and Bruder reacted to the bland placelessness of Hercules with a masterful design that, seemingly without effort, provides both an architectural and programmatic antidote to insular life. It is surprising how effective the simple urban move of holding a sidewalk edge can be in suburbia. Inside, the building has an easy openness, allowing people to feel ownership of the space. After only a year of operation, the library has the highest usage of any of the Contra Costa County libraries, and plans are afoot to double its book holdings to 22,000 volumes.

But the architects' effort to overcome the predictability of Hercules is occasionally misplaced. For instance, although the glass-and-steel fireplace at first seems intriguing, it is seldom used and its hard, cool materials repel rather than attract people. The Sky Garden, which might have provided a generous outdoor reading room and gathering space in the mild climate of Hercules, lacks comfortable seating. For the most part, though, the library acts upon the imagination like a good book: The inspiring spatial experiences created by the sweeping geometry of the Sky Garden, the luminous corner reading area, and the skyward lift of the Story Cone transform how one sees the world. ■



# Two: MULBERRY STREET BRANCH

## New York City

Rogers Marvel Architects inserts a grand stair into an old loft floor, allowing light to penetrate into two subterranean levels.

By James Murdock

**Architect:** Rogers Marvel Architects—Rob Rogers, Jonathan Marvel, principals; Matthew Peckham, project manager; Marta Sanders, Thaddeus Briner, project architects; Mike Pilarski, senior architectural designer  
**Client:** The New York Public Library  
**Consultants:** Robert Silman Associates (structural); Langan Engineering and Environmental Services (geotechnical); FMC Associates (m/e/p); Bill Armstrong (lighting); Robert A. Hansen Associates (acoustical); Omni Contracting Company (general contractor)

**Size:** 15,000 square feet  
**Cost:** \$4.5 million (construction only)  
**Completion date:** May 2007

**Sources**  
**Acoustical ceiling:** Tectum  
**Suspension grid:** Armstrong  
**Paints and stains:** Benjamin Moore; Oikos Pallas  
**Carpet:** Interface  
**Information desks:** Broadart  
**Lighting:** Linear Lighting; Edison Price Lighting; Columbia Lighting

**ONLINE:** Rate this project and access additional sources at [architecturalrecord.com/bts/](http://architecturalrecord.com/bts/).



During the 1970s, artists transformed light industrial buildings in New York City's SoHo district into studios and residences. Young professionals and families followed. It's an archetypal story that's since been repeated in cities nationwide. Eventually, SoHo residents wanted the same amenities found in other neighborhoods, including their own library. The New York Public Library (NYPL) secured a space and, in a nod to nearby Little Italy, which would share the facility, named it the Mulberry Street Branch.

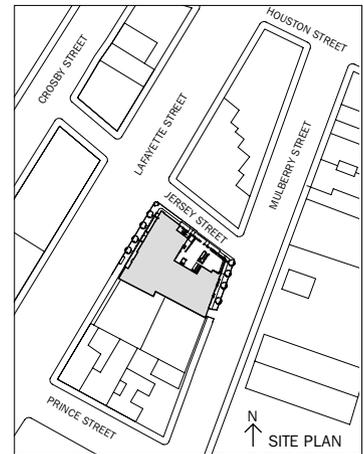
### Program

The scarcity of land in Manhattan often leaves just two directions for growth: up or down. NYPL was obliged to follow the latter course at the former Hawley & Hoops candy factory,

constructed in 1886, with a cast-iron column structure and brick walls. It leased a portion of the ground floor and two subterranean levels, then asked Rogers & Marvel Architects to design reading rooms and stacks for children, teens, and adults, as well as a community room and a large area for public computers.

### Solution

Marta Sanders, project architect, says the design team wanted to reserve as much of the library's "precious" ground floor as possible for public use. Rather than locate the main entry on Mulberry Street, which would have meant sacrificing window frontage along this east elevation for the circulation desk and staff work areas, they moved it to



Windows on the ground floor face east toward Mulberry Street (left).

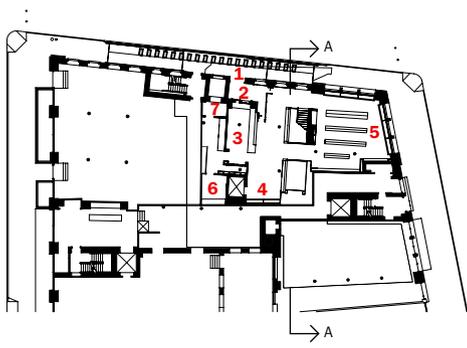
the north elevation on Jersey Street. This allowed a window-lined reading room, ringed with cushioned benches and containing low shelves for adult paperback fiction and DVDs.

The architects removed two wood joists in the center of the ground floor—reusing one to serve as a counter for the card catalog station—and inserted a stair that connects all three levels of the library. Overhead, a band of sheet aluminum painted green serves as a navigation aid and also conceals HVAC conduits, keeping the other ceilings clutter-free.

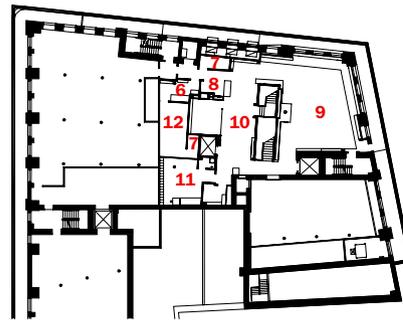
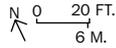
Elevator pits, a disused boiler room, and mechanical lines divided the subgrade levels into a warren of smaller spaces. The designers moved some of these elements but primarily used the unusually shaped volumes

A central stair connects the ground floor to children's areas, located one floor down, with adult and teen reading rooms in a subbasement. Its steel beams support concrete treads, aluminum side panels, and mahogany railings.

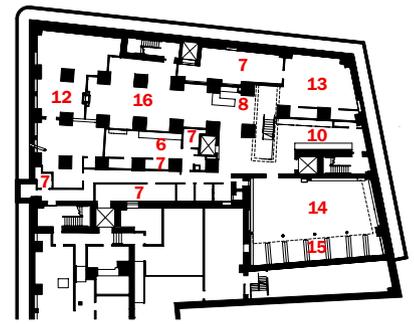




GROUND LEVEL



LOWER LEVEL



LOWER LEVEL TWO

- |                         |                     |                        |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Ramped sidewalk      | 7. Mechanical       | 13. Community room     |
| 2. Entry                | 8. Information desk | 14. Adult reading room |
| 3. Circulation desk     | 9. Children's room  | 15. Stacks             |
| 4. Card catalog station | 10. Computers       | 16. Teen room          |
| 5. Reading room         | 11. Staff lounge    |                        |
| 6. Office               | 12. Storage         |                        |



**Windows cut into the children's-room walls on the second level down reveal an underground passage (left).**

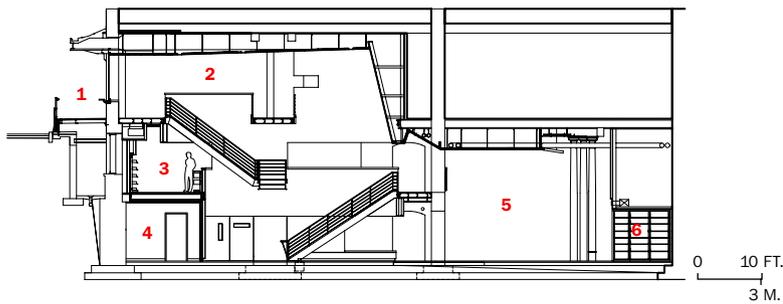
**The teen room occupies an isolated volume on the lowest level (below).**

to their advantage. On lower-level one, which features the shortest ceiling heights, they located children's and toddler's reading rooms. At the building's northeast corner, they cut "window" openings and installed lighting to reveal views of a passage that runs underneath the sidewalk. On lower-level two, the architects located the teen reading room in a narrow volume that stretches westward, away from the central stair and the bulk of the library. North of the stair, they located the community room and the public computers. The main adult reading room and stacks occupy the cavernous boiler room, which features a 23-foot ceiling.

Working on a tight budget, Rogers & Marvel retained as many of the space's original details as possible. On the ground floor, they exposed cast-iron columns and wood ceiling joists, while on lower levels they preserved existing masonry walls. For the stair, they chose perforated-aluminum panels and mahogany railings. The floors are a mixture of wood and polished concrete.

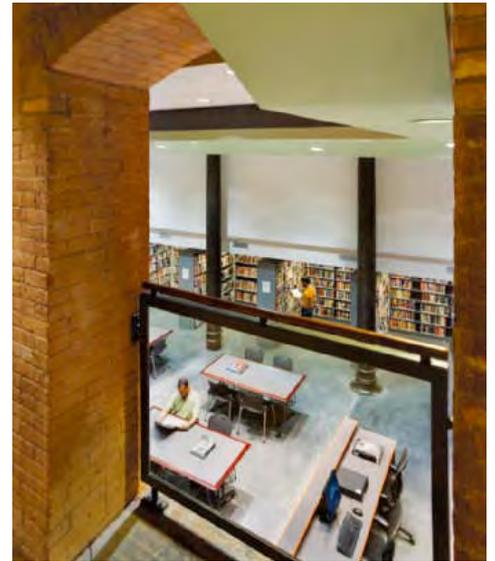
### Commentary

Residents of SoHo and Little Italy took to their new library immediately, aided by "Meet the Neighbors"



SECTION A-A

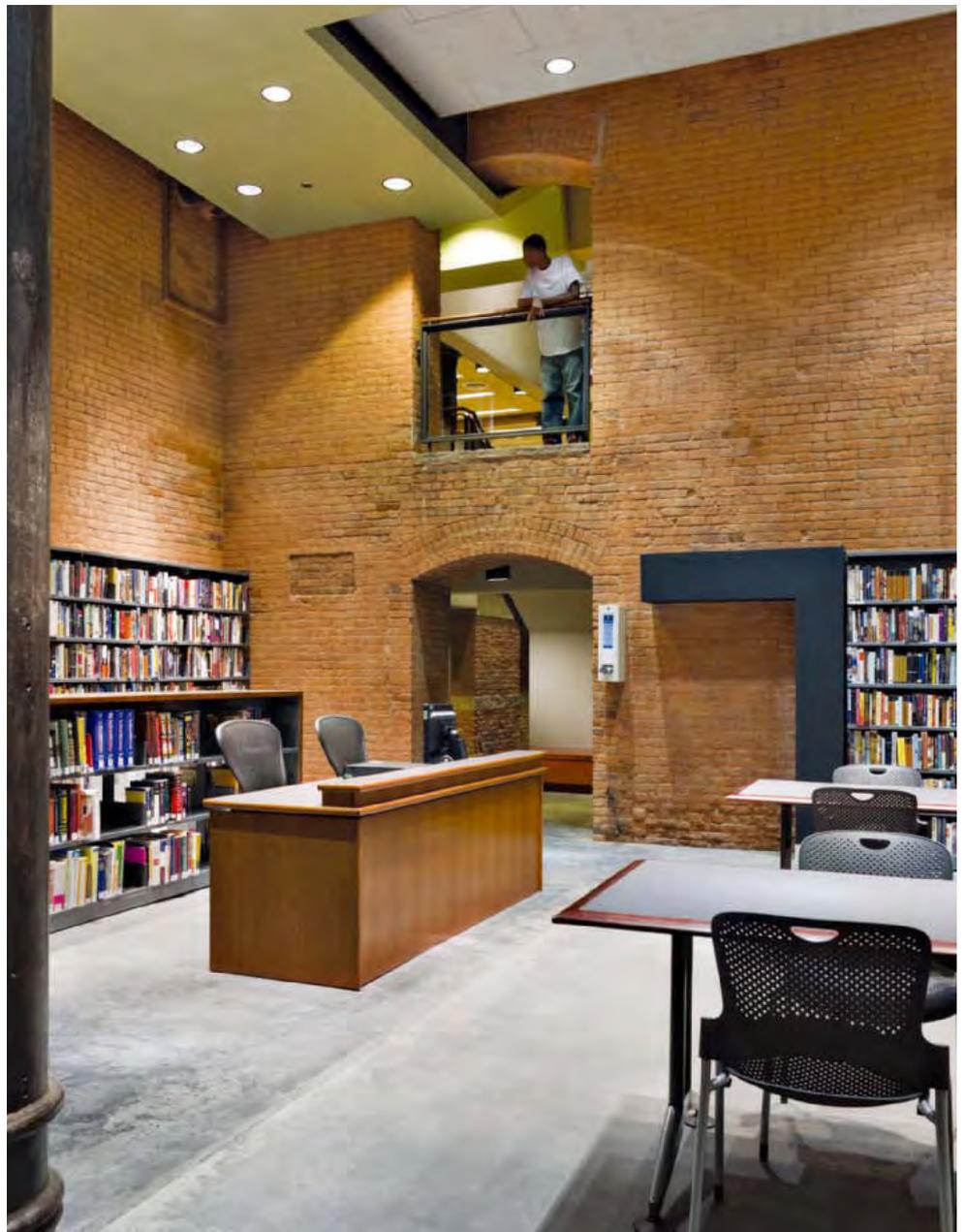
1. Ramped sidewalk
2. Reading room
3. Children's room
4. Mechanical
5. Adult reading room
6. Stacks



**A green band of aluminum leads patrons to the lowest level and the main adult reading room (top right). The architects left the space's masonry walls uncovered (right).**

events, which showcase local authors and musicians, and the opportunity for neighborhood artists to display paintings and photographs on walls in the main reading room. The community has also responded to the architecture. "New Yorkers just can't get enough exposed brick," senior librarian Andrea Nicolay says with a laugh. But the building's historical character is a mixed blessing. New finishes, especially in the ceilings, look cheap by comparison.

Although initially it seemed counterintuitive, the architects were smart to move the library's main entry onto the less-trafficked Jersey Street, thereby keeping the ground floor windows unobstructed. Muted daylight trickles into both subterranean levels via the central stair and, through an arched wall opening, into the main reading room. If nothing else, it's an important psychological feat. "We wanted a visual sense of escape," Sanders explains. But there's no denying that the bulk of the library is located underground, and the architects were equally smart to make the most of this. The "windows" in the children's reading room allow a rare glimpse into Manhattan's underbelly—enough to spark the imagination in people of all ages. ■



# Three: **CESAR CHAVEZ LIBRARY**

## Phoenix, Arizona

Line and Space creates a simple yet striking building that gracefully responds to its context.

By Jenna M. McKnight

**Architect:** *Line and Space*—*Les Wallach, FAIA, lead design architect; Johnny Birkinbine, AIA, project architect; Henry Tom, AIA, project manager; Mike Anglin, Jennifer DaRos, Ray Jin, Manny Kropf, design team*

**Client:** *City of Phoenix*

**Consultants:** *Richärd+Bauer (interiors); McGann & Associates (landscape); KPFF Consulting Engineers (civil engineering); Caruso Turley Scott (structural engineering); Energy Systems Design (m/e and lighting); Linticum (general contractor)*

**Size:** *25,000 square feet*

**Cost:** *\$5 million (construction)*

**Completion date:** *January 2007*

### Sources

**Steel:** *Ikon Steel (structural system and custom window boxes)*

**Masonry:** *Quality Block*

**Concrete:** *Rinker*

**Aluminum:** *Arcadia (curtain walls and storefronts)*

**Glazing:** *Oldcastle (glass); Solatube (skylights)*

**Ceilings:** *Ecophon; Armstrong*

**Lighting:** *Peerless; Lithonia; Bruck; Hydrel; Bega*

**Custom woodwork:** *Gemini Company*

**ONLINE:** Rate this project and access additional sources at [architecturalrecord.com/bts/](http://architecturalrecord.com/bts/).



With its vast desert valleys and raw, jagged mountains set against a turquoise sky, central Arizona is the ideal canvas for environmentally reverent architecture. The region has long attracted accomplished architects—Frank Lloyd Wright, Paolo Soleri, Will Bruder, Rick Joy, among others—whose buildings respond to the landscape and climate. The public has come to appreciate, if not expect, building design that takes its cue from the environment.

It's in this context that Line and Space, a 13-member firm in Tucson, was charged with creating a 25,000-square-foot library in Laveen, a farming village turned bedroom community in southwest Phoenix. As a tribute to the area's agricultural history, the new library carries the name of the late farm worker and labor activist, Cesar Chavez.

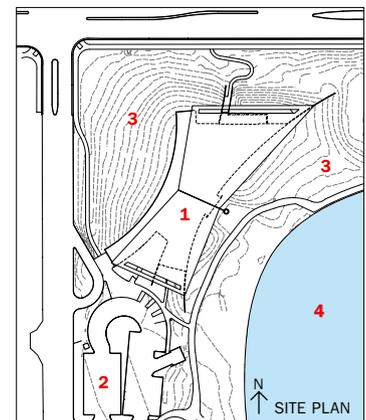
### Program

Laveen, like most suburbs, lacks a nucleus. The design team wanted to create a “living room” for a rapidly growing population of 45,000 residents. The library needed to appeal to people of all ages, particularly children and teens, given the site's proximity to a high school. “Encouraging family interaction was one of our goals,” explains Les Wallach, the founder and principal of Line and Space. The facility was to house 140,000 media materials and include a computer lab and multi-purpose room.

### Solution

Located in the corner of a park, the library occupies a small site bound by a man-made lake to the east and a heavily traveled street to the north. In designing the library, the

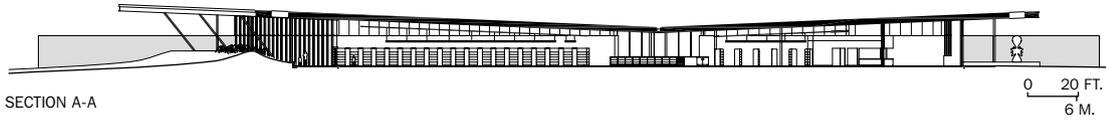
**A view of the south and west elevations shows how the library is integrated with the landscape.**



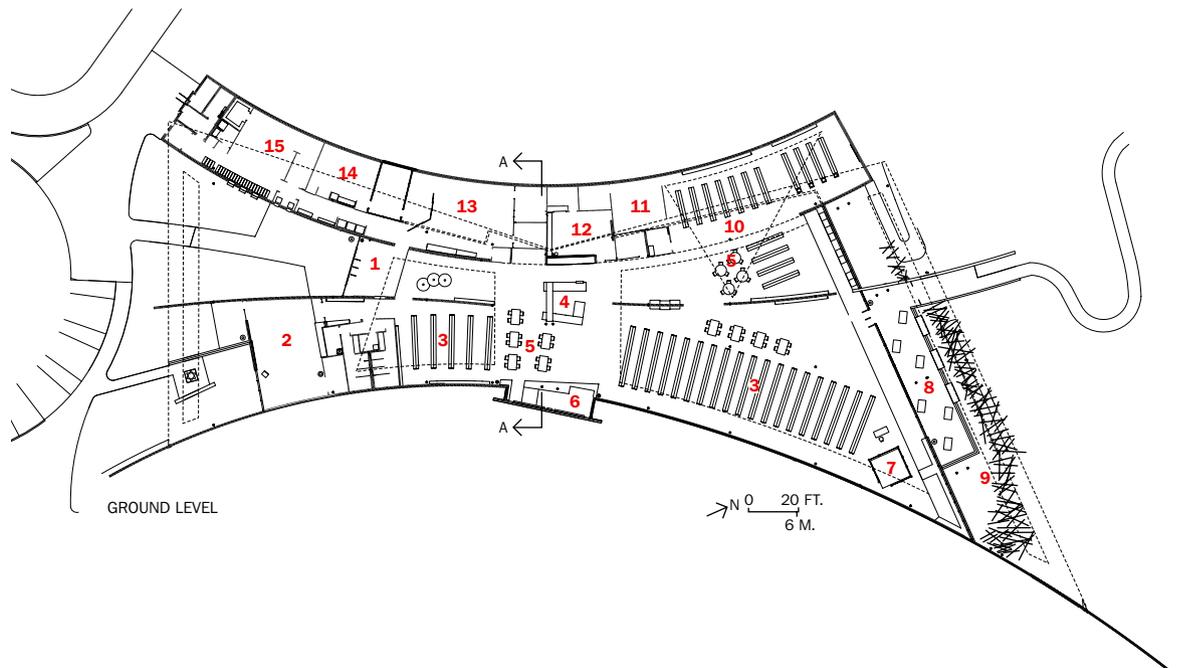
1. Library
2. Parking lot
3. Earth berms
4. Lake



**On the building's northern side (top), steel "kickers" support the overhanging roof punctured by elongated open slots. On the east (left), a wall of windows faces a basin 10 feet in diameter that collects water from a scupper protruding from the steel-edged roof.**



- 1. Entry
- 2. Multipurpose room
- 3. Shelving
- 4. Service desk
- 5. Computer stations
- 6. Reading alcove
- 7. Teen center
- 8. Patio
- 9. Art installation
- 10. Children's area
- 11. Storytelling room
- 12. Computer lab
- 13. Offices
- 14. Employee lounge
- 15. Sorting room



**Concrete-block walls extend beyond the building on the south (opposite). Looking north, the main entryway (right) leads toward a bright and airy central volume. A glass wall on the east (below) affords a view of the lake and mountains.**

architects were guided by the topography of the site: They nestled an unassuming, single-story structure into existing berms and topped it with a butterfly roof with deep overhangs. The shape of the roof evokes a bird landing in a field, while the building's hourglass footprint responds to the curve of the lake.

The structure features distinctly different elevations depending on the orientation to the desert sun. Visitors park their cars and approach the building from the south, where a gray concrete-block facade and recessed, shaded entryway provide a modest arrival. The building opens up on the north: A 150-foot-long, 18-foot-high glass wall faces the busy road and overlooks a patio.

The west elevation, highly exposed to the sun, is particularly understated: A grassy mound slopes toward a windowless, concrete-block facade. The curved east elevation features a glass clerestory over a concrete-block wall that extends beyond the building to a total of 300 feet. Near the center of the library, the roof creases and the masonry turns into a glass wall approximately 44 feet long and 10 feet high. The crease is punctuated by a scupper for rainwater projecting toward a basin. (The roof channels 140,000 gallons of rainwater a year into the lake, which then is used to irrigate surrounding land.) The facility's other green features include appropriate solar orientation, earth berms serving as thermal mass, and patio cooling devices that use recycled exhaust air. The city hopes to achieve a LEED Silver rating for the project.

All elevations serve to dramatize the butterfly roof that seems to float above the concrete walls. A steel-deck roof with bar joists is carried on steel lally columns inside the library. The deep overhangs on the





A children's area (left) contains an interactive sculpture and vibrantly colored furnishings. Dubbed R3 for "read, relax, rejuvenate," the teen section (below) features MP3 listening stations, funky chairs, and a semi-enclosed lounge.

exterior are supported by a concrete wall on the south and a row of slanted steel columns on the north.

Inside, the main entry leads into an 18,000-square-foot central volume that contains computer stations, shelving, and an east-facing alcove that looks out toward the lake and mountains beyond. It also features two areas for young people: a teen center with a semi-enclosed lounge, and a children's area with a story-telling room. A computer lab, study room, and multipurpose room are all connected to the main volume.

The interior design, created in collaboration with Richärd+Bauer, is clean and modern. Light wood and gray carpeting are paired with exuberant furnishings, such as curvy lounge chairs and side chairs made with seat-belt webbing.

### Commentary

While clearly an economical project, the building exemplifies sensible, elegant design that respects its context. The architects gracefully integrated the structure into the landscape and took special measures, such as the windowless western facade, to protect it from the extreme desert heat. The interior design is simple yet stylish, with a contemporary aesthetic likely to appeal to young patrons.

Programmatically, the library also succeeds. "The design is really conducive to the flow of a library," observes Karl Kendall, the library's manager. Cesar Chavez averages 25,000 visitors per month, making it one of the most-visited libraries in Phoenix, and its multipurpose room is typically booked two months in advance. Line and Space has created a community centerpiece that is a worthy contribution to the region's rich architectural heritage. ■



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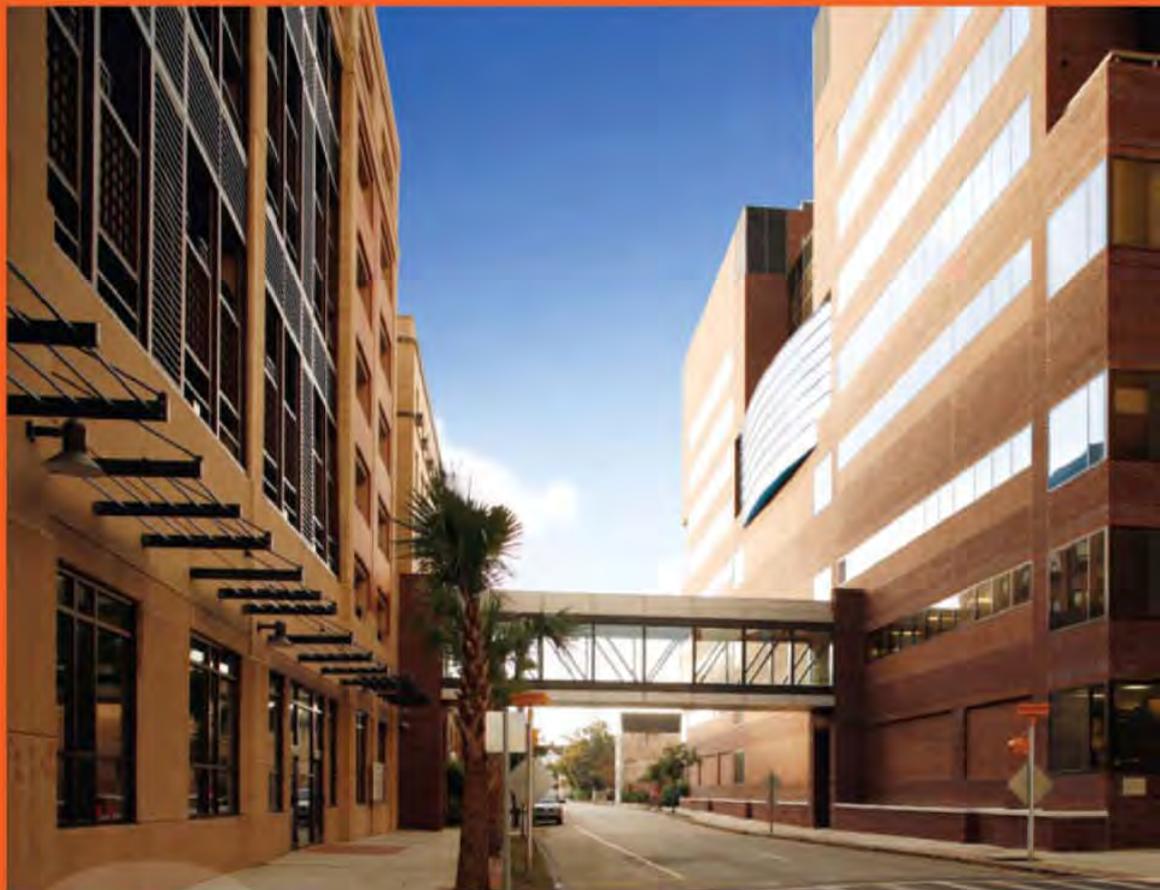
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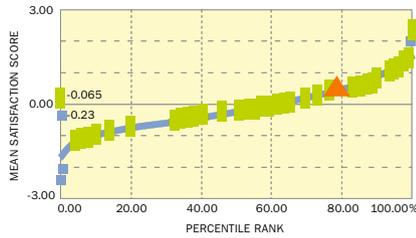
At the Global Ecology Center, radiant slabs and air-to-air heat exchangers reduce the energy needed to condition ventilation in the largely daylit labs.



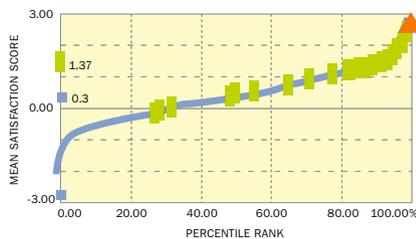
# Looking Back and Moving Forward

**POSTOCCUPANCY EVALUATIONS OFFER A SYSTEMATIC PROCESS FOR ASSESSING COMPLETED PROJECTS, POINTING THE WAY TO BETTER-PERFORMING BUILDINGS**

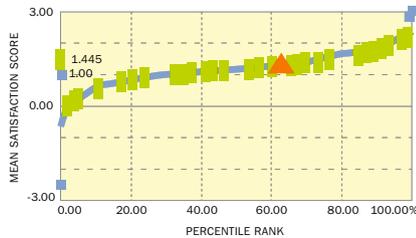
Acoustic Quality



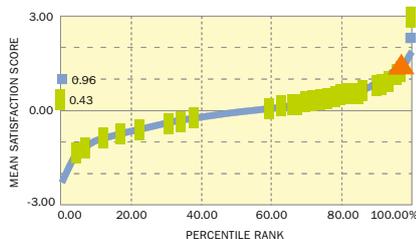
Air Quality



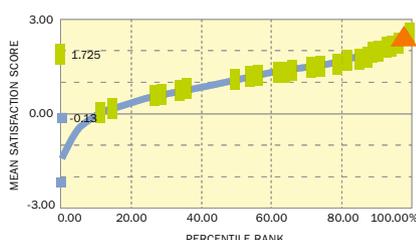
Lighting



Thermal Comfort



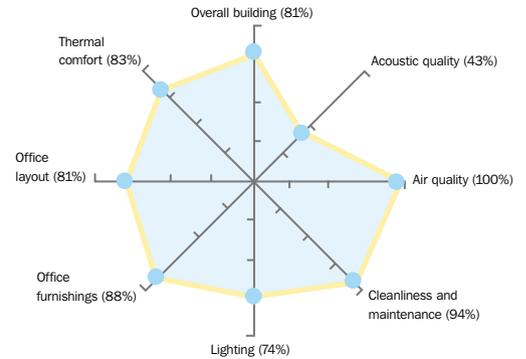
General Satisfaction



■ LEED-certified buildings  
■ Noncertified buildings  
▲ Global Ecology Center

The mean satisfaction score for the 39 LEED buildings in the CBE database (left) was consistently better than that for the 284 noncertified buildings, except in the area of thermal comfort. The spider graph (right) shows the percentage of satisfied Global Ecology Center occupants.

Satisfaction in Core Survey Categories



By Joann Gonchar, AIA

Despite a growing preoccupation among the general public with all things green and an industrywide awareness about the built environment's role in the depletion of natural resources, there is little available information about how buildings designed with sustainability in mind actually perform. Once the construction trailer is taken away, and the owner settles in, architects seldom systematically review a completed project to understand if it met its design objectives, if the occupants are comfortable and productive, or if it conserves energy and water.

One rarely used but potentially powerful tool for gathering such information is a postoccupancy evaluation, or POE. Though there is no standard definition of the process, a POE can consist of an analysis of resource consumption, an assessment of physical conditions such as lighting levels or acoustics, and an occupant survey or interview. A variety of other names are often used to refer to such a study, including environ-

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

Use the following learning objectives to focus your study while reading this month's ARCHITECTURAL RECORD/AIA Continuing Education article. To earn one AIA learning unit, including one hour of health, safety, and welfare credit, turn to page 168 and follow the instructions.

### Learning Objectives

After reading this article, you should be able to:

1. Describe the various studies that can be included in a post-occupancy evaluation.
2. Explain the benefits of conducting a postoccupancy evaluation.
3. Discuss how the results of a postoccupancy evaluation can be used.

PHOTOGRAPHY: © PETER AARON/ESTO; GRAPHS: COURTESY CENTER FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

A downdraft cooling tower keeps the lobby (below) of the Global Ecology Center comfortable. Night sky radiation (right) cools water that chills the building's slabs. An open office plan (bottom) facilitates daylighting and natural ventilation. But some occupants complained about acoustics.



mental-design evaluation, building-in-use assessment, and facility-performance evaluation, but POE is the most common term.

No matter what term is used, advocates of the practice say that widespread adoption of such studies, and sharing of the resulting information, would help advance sustainable design because the evaluation can help identify strategies that work best, those that need refinement, and those that should not be repeated on future projects. Although designers might worry about the liability associated with an unsuccessful aspect of a project exposed during a POE, sources are reassuring: "Architects get nervous being held accountable," says Craig Zimring, an environmental psychologist and a professor in the College of Architecture, at the Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta. "However, I don't know of a single instance where a POE resulted in a lawsuit, but I know of many instances where a POE helped avoid one," he says.

## THOUGH SUBJECTIVE, OCCUPANT FEEDBACK IS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING HOW WELL A BUILDING PERFORMS.

In fact, the involvement with a project after its completion that is necessarily required for a POE can help enhance the rapport between architects and owners, sources point out. "The process strengthened our relationship with our clients," says Sandy Mendler, AIA, senior design principal in HOK's San Francisco office. The firm recently conducted POEs on several of its green buildings.

One of the most important steps in the POE process is obtaining occupant feedback. Though their opinions about physical characteristics such as indoor air quality, privacy, and lighting are by nature subjective, they are nevertheless essential to understanding how well a building performs. "If we were only concerned about energy use, we could easily achieve 2030," says Max Richter, an intern architect in the Vancouver office of Stantec, referring to the 2030 Challenge, the goal for carbon-neutral buildings set out by Santa Fe, New Mexico architect Ed Mazria and adopted by several key industry organizations. However, occupants would likely be uncomfortable if lighting levels were lowered and thermostats adjusted, points out Richter, who is involved in a POE of one of the Stantec's projects.

A systematic and reliable way to gather information about occupant comfort is through a Web-based survey such as the one administered by the Center for the Built Environment (CBE) at the University of California, Berkeley. CBE's Occupant Indoor Environmental Quality Survey costs about \$1,000 per building to implement. After initial setup by the owner or design team, it typically takes participants about 10 minutes to complete, and includes questions about key aspects of the indoor environment, such as office layout, thermal comfort, air quality, acoustics, and lighting.

The center conducted its first survey in 2000, and to date has collected responses from 45,000 individual occupants in more than 300 buildings. The database includes 4,500 responses from occupants of 39 LEED-certified buildings, providing an opportunity to better understand the successes and shortcomings of green design strategies. Users can benchmark their buildings against others in the database on factors such as type, size, or geographic location. "We can slice the data in any number of ways,"

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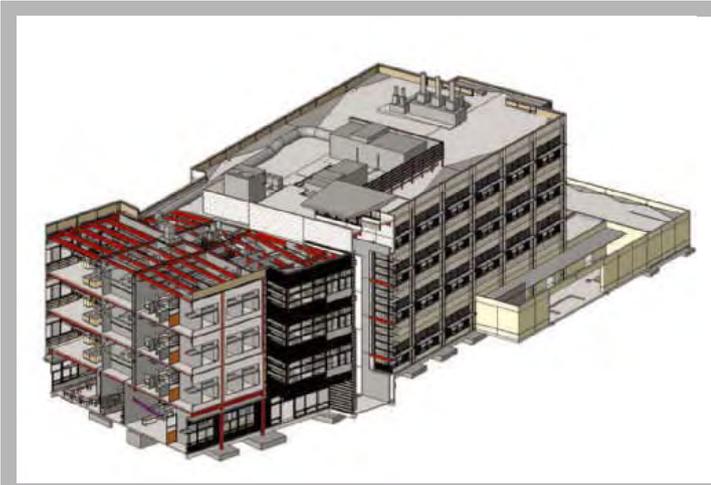
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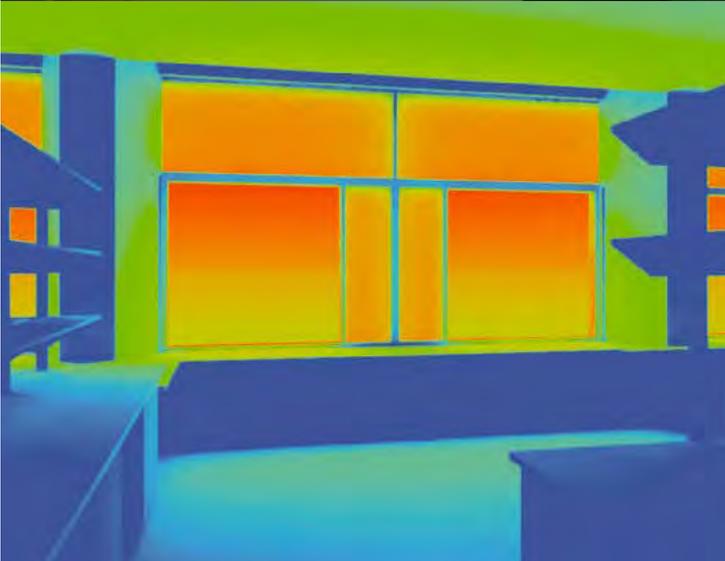
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As a result of its POE findings, HOK is performing more comprehensive analysis of its buildings during the design phase. Some of the studies for a planned veterinary lab at the University of California, Davis (above) include an examination of the effect of window openings and glazing types on lab space daylighting (below and bottom).



says John Goins, a CBE research specialist. “For example, we could compare LEED Gold buildings with operable windows in California,” he says.

One building that performed particularly well in the CBE survey is the Global Ecology Center of the Carnegie Institution for Science, which opened on the campus of Stanford University in California four years ago. The largely daylit, 11,000-square-foot, two-story lab-and-office building, designed by EHDD Architecture, San Francisco, is cooled almost entirely by natural systems. It relies on a downdraft cooling tower to provide evaporative cooling to the lobby, and a radiant slab system coupled with operable windows to keep workspaces comfortable. The water that chills the slabs is cooled by an unusual night-sky radiation system.

The center ranked above the 90th percentile of all buildings in the CBE database in almost all of the survey’s categories. The two exceptions were acoustics and lighting, though the building still scored above the mean in both categories. Scott Shell, AIA, EHDD principal, says that users have ample light to perform their tasks at their workspaces. However, the space as a whole seems dark because occupants turn off wall washers in order to reduce the building’s carbon emissions, he says. “We try to light the wall and ceiling surfaces, not just the work surface. This often provides a more interesting sculptural [effect], as well.”

He associates the dissatisfaction with the building’s acoustics with the second floor’s open office layout central to both the daylighting and natural ventilation strategies. And he points to the nature of the occupants’ work, which requires that they have the ability to concentrate alone, and that they gather in teams, often generating noise. “Those activities fundamentally conflict,” points out Shell. In response, the firm has been working closely with its consultants, paying close attention to the use of thermal mass and how much of it is exposed, and looking for ways to combine acoustical isolation of spaces with natural ventilation strategies.

The CBE survey was also part of HOK’s recent evaluation of 10 buildings that it felt were among its most successful green projects. In addition to the occupant survey, the assessment process included a third-party energy evaluation based on utility bills and maintenance records, and an end-user interview conducted by HOK staff and intended to collect more detailed information about specific sustainable solutions. The process cost about \$5,000 per building, an expense the firm paid for itself in order to better understand if design goals had been realized. “Clients would inevitably ask how these buildings were performing,” says Mendler.

The sample of HOK’s projects represented a variety of building types, including offices, laboratories, and academic buildings that had been occupied between one and five years. The examination of these projects revealed that owners and users were generally very satisfied with the HOK projects. However, a few areas of improvement were identified. For example, though occupants were pleased with the access to daylight that most of the projects provided, some reported problems with spill light and glare. And as with the EHDD project, the occupants of open office environments in HOK’s buildings also reported dissatisfaction with acoustics and the level of privacy.

On some projects, the study also showed a disconnect between energy savings predicted through energy modeling and those actually realized. Notably, those HOK projects that scored highest in the CBE survey’s thermal-comfort category were also the most efficient. “Thermal comfort wasn’t sacrificed in order to achieve energy-use savings,” says

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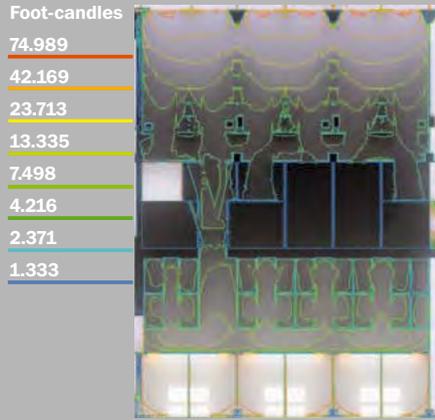
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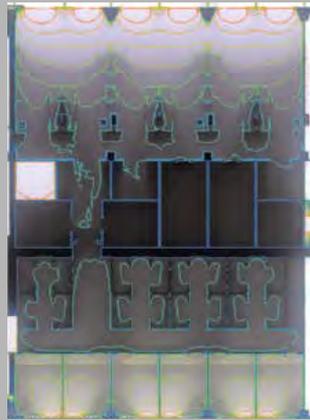
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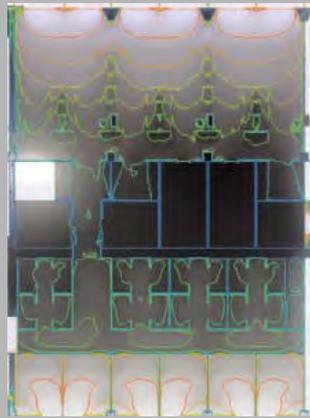
As part of its effort to improve the daylighting in its buildings, HOK is more thoroughly examining the relationship between facade options and environmental conditions. Some of those investigations—a selection of illuminance studies for a lab building planned for the University of California, Davis—are shown here.



December illuminance clear sky



December illuminance overcast



June illuminance clear sky



June illuminance overcast

Mendler. The buildings that were found to be less efficient also tended to be those with the benefit of minimal or no commissioning, had no sustainable-design consultant as an integral part of the project team, or were subject to late design changes, she adds.

As a result of this examination, the firm is instituting a more integrated design process, placing more emphasis on commissioning with its clients, and investing more resources in analysis tools for daylighting and acoustics. One project that should benefit from these efforts is a 122,000-square-foot laboratory that the firm is designing for the school of veterinary medicine at the University of California, Davis, slated for occupancy in 2012. To refine the daylighting and sun-control strategy for the open lab and office suites, the HOK design team studied a physical model of the building using the Pacific Gas & Electric heliodon at the utility's Energy Center in San Francisco. It also used building information mod-

## HOK'S STUDIES REVEALED THAT THERMAL COMFORT NEED NOT BE SACRIFICED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

eling (BIM) and simulation tools to compare glazing and facade options under a wide variety of environmental conditions in order to better understand foot-candle levels and avoid glare. "These types of analyses were not regularly part of our design process," says Mendler. "We would make design decisions based on average conditions and then have our engineers calculate the impact on energy use," says Mendler.

Although interest in POEs is growing as both owners and designers become increasingly interested in verifying performance claims, there is still no industrywide accepted method for conducting such an evaluation. But a handful of North American efforts do exist. For example, the White Salmon, Washington-based nonprofit organization the New Buildings Institute (NBI) has developed what it calls a "market friendly" POE protocol intended to provide a basic set of performance indicators. The protocol includes an energy-bill assessment, a facility-manager interview, and an occupant survey that requires minimal up-front documentation by the owner. "Our intent is for the process to take as little time as possible," says Cathy Turner, NBI senior analyst. The organization recently completed a pilot test of the protocol with a large Seattle-area school district and is searching for partners to help finalize the program for more widespread use.

A more comprehensive protocol has been developed by engineering and architecture firm Stantec, in conjunction with the Canadian not-for-profit EcoSmart Foundation. Tested on six Vancouver buildings, the resulting Building Performance Evaluation (BPE) tool (available free of charge at [www.ecosmart.ca](http://www.ecosmart.ca)) outlines a process that integrates the CBE survey, a building-operator interview, energy and water consumption analysis, and physical measurements of environmental conditions, including indoor air quality, lighting levels, and acoustics.

After finalizing the protocol last year, the BPE team now hopes to develop a cumulative index that would allow this comparison of buildings, says Rosamund Hyde, a Stantec senior research engineer and manager of the EcoSmart BPE project. The advantage of such a standardized evaluation process is that it would allow the benchmarking of one building against others using the same protocol, she points out.

# decoustics

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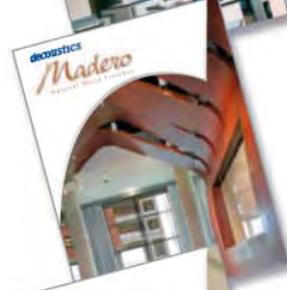
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Aquaquest designers are wrapping up a comprehensive POE of the building.

Stantec will soon wrap up the evaluation of one of its own projects, a 40,000-square-foot learning center at the Vancouver Aquarium designed in collaboration with local architect Clive Grout and completed in late 2006. The building, known as Aquaquest, includes laboratory space for school children, a gallery, a theater, and administrative offices. The project deploys a number of sustainable strategies, such as thermal mass for heating and cooling, collection of rainwater to flush toilets, and a 500-square-foot vertical garden covering one of its exterior walls. It is targeting a Gold rating under the Canadian LEED system.

The full BPE of Aquaquest, including the Web-based survey, the energy- and water-use analysis, and the physical diagnostics, will cost Stantec about C\$25,000, according to Richter, who in addition to helping implement the project's evaluation, was also a member of the design team. But Stantec anticipates that the value of the information will be enormous. "This evaluation [process] provides feedback that most building owners and design teams can only guess at," says Richter. "Not doing postoccupancy building evaluation is like flying blind." ■

For this story and more continuing education, as well as links to sources, white papers, and products, go to [architecturalrecord.com/tech/](http://architecturalrecord.com/tech/).



## AIA/ARCHITECTURAL RECORD CONTINUING EDUCATION

### INSTRUCTIONS

- ◆ Read the article "Looking Back and Moving Forward" using the learning objectives provided.
- ◆ Complete the questions below, then fill in your answers on the next page.
- ◆ Fill out and submit the AIA/CES education reporting form on the next page or download the form at [archrecord.construction.com](http://archrecord.construction.com) to receive one AIA learning unit.

### QUESTIONS

1. A postoccupancy evaluation can consist of which?
  - a. an analysis of resource consumption
  - b. an interview or survey with occupants
  - c. an assessment of physical conditions
  - d. all of the above
2. A postoccupancy evaluation is also sometimes called which?
  - a. environmental design evaluation
  - b. building-in-use assessment
  - c. facility performance evaluation
  - d. all of the above
3. Postoccupancy evaluations can advance sustainable design by which?
  - a. establishing green standards
  - b. identifying strategies that work best
  - c. limiting the liability of architects
  - d. concealing the unsuccessful aspects of a project
4. The CBE survey provides which?
  - a. physical measurements of environmental conditions
  - b. energy and water consumption numbers
  - c. feedback from occupants
  - d. feedback from facility operators
5. A systematic and reliable way to gather information about occupant comfort is which?
  - a. suggestion-box submissions
  - b. interviews with building facility managers
  - c. a survey of the building occupants
  - d. interviews with the building owner
6. The postoccupancy evaluations conducted by HOK revealed a correlation between which?
  - a. high thermal comfort and low energy use
  - b. low thermal comfort and low energy use
  - c. high thermal comfort and high energy use
  - d. none of the above
7. HOK found that those projects that used more energy also had which?
  - a. late design changes
  - b. minimal commissioning
  - c. no sustainable design consultant integral to team
  - d. all of the above
8. In the postoccupancy evaluations of buildings by EHDD and HOK, dissatisfaction with acoustics was often associated with which?
  - a. high energy use
  - b. natural ventilation
  - c. open office layout
  - d. daylighting
9. As a result of its postoccupancy evaluations, HOK is putting more emphasis on all except which?
  - a. integrated design
  - b. analysis tools for daylighting and acoustics
  - c. value engineering
  - d. commissioning
10. The postoccupancy evaluation protocol in development by NBI is intended to provide which?
  - a. a basic set of building-performance indicators
  - b. a comprehensive set of building-performance indicators
  - c. an assessment tool for a Seattle-area school district
  - d. sustainable design standards

**Program title: "Looking Back and Moving Forward," Architectural Record (02/08, page 160).**

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# Tech News

Seismic issues take center stage in California, as Pasadena finishes a base-isolated renovation of its historic 1927 City Hall, while the state granted health-care architects and designers another extension on seismically upgrading damage-prone hospitals before this year's deadline passed

## A base-isolated makeover for Pasadena's historic City Hall

Structural base isolation—effectively “floating” a building on rubber pads to safely ride out an earthquake—is nothing new in California. But the isolators installed for the structural and architectural renovation of Pasadena's 1927 City Hall, designed by Bakewell and Brown, represent an innovative approach for addressing historic structures. Instead of placing an isolator under each structural concrete column, as is typically done, the engineers at San Francisco-based Forell/Elsesser Engineers designed a system of transfer beams that reduce the overall number of isolators.

“For an existing building, you usually only isolate one column at a time to maintain the global stability of the building,” says Steve Marusich, a structural engineer and the project manager for Forell/Elsesser. “On this project, we built a new foundation in between the original and the structure above, and then set the new foundation on top of isolators.” There were several challenges with City Hall that led Forell/Elsesser and the project's architects, San Francisco-based Architectural Resources Group (ARG), to consider unconventional structural solutions in order to bring it up to code. The original building, designed in a California Mediterranean style, was slated for the \$117.5 million seismic upgrade and renovation project after suffering minor damage from the 1994 Northridge earthquake and after investigators found the structure to present potential life-safety issues, such as collapse. Although Forell/Elsesser began seismic investigation of the building in 1994, they were joined by ARG and construction manager DMJM+H+N for the current com-



The seismic update and architectural renovation of Pasadena's City Hall included the base isolation of the dome (above), as well as the structural buttressing of the courtyard staircases (right).

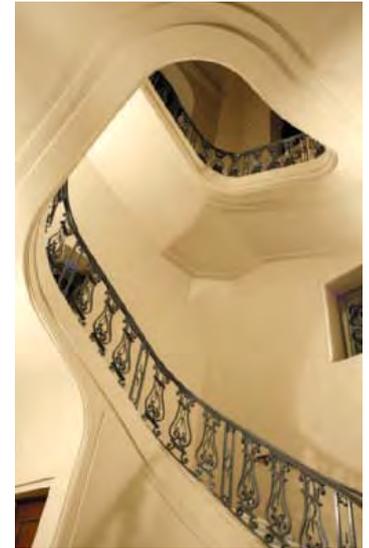


pleted project in 1999. Construction began in March 2005 and finished in April 2007, a surprising two months ahead of schedule.

First among the challenges the design team encountered was that the concrete building, located in the middle of downtown, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This meant that the structural changes allowing the building to move the necessary 2½ feet in any lateral direction couldn't alter the appearance of the architecture. Jim Guthrie, a structural engineer and a principal at Forell/Elsesser, says the team considered conventional bracing and shear walls, instead of base isolators. However, he says adding shear walls would have been too visually intrusive to City Hall's historic character. Aside from being registered as a historic building,

City Hall is an architectural icon of Pasadena, if not Greater Los Angeles.

Additionally, the three-story, 190,000-square-foot building is U-shaped in plan, with two long wings and a large domed structure at the bottom of the U. During an earthquake, the two wings had the tendency to move separately, increasing strain on the remaining structure. The architects addressed this by removing a structurally isolated, single-story arcade that had visually connected the two wings, inserting a concrete “tube” that connected the foundations of the wings below grade, and then rebuilding the arcade. Bruce Judd, FAIA, a principal for ARG, says the new structure now acts as a unit, similar to a conventional courtyard building. The engineers also but-



tressed the piers of the dome to lessen shaking, while also connecting four stair towers, at each corner of the courtyard, which were originally structurally isolated.

The last significant challenge affected the isolators themselves, since the on-center spacing of the structural columns is tight. This made excavation for isolator pads in the basement quite difficult, since contractors from Clark Construction Group would need to remove the existing basement slab and excavate around the existing footings. The new isolators solved this: Each isolator was installed on new footings located in between the existing structural grid. Once an isolator was installed, a transfer beam would be introduced to connect two adjacent existing columns that could then rest on the new isolator. When completed, the footings for the existing columns could be removed, thereby freeing up space for excavation and shoring. After the isolators were installed (a conventional design of one isolator per column was used under the dome), a new slab was



**The base isolator level (left and below left) supports a new base-isolator slab. With a transfer beam, each isolator can support two structural columns.**

neer and a principal at Forell/Elsesser, says that although base isolation is usually always the more expensive option, once the design team investigated the costs of shutting the building down and relocating staff following a major earthquake, the numbers easily indicated isolators would be cheaper. Reducing the number of isolators—the engi-

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neers estimated they saved 20 percent of the total isolator cost with their solution—also helps the structure, since isolators perform better under heavier loads. The new structure was designed for a 500-year earthquake, or what would amount to around an 8.0 on the Richter scale earthquake from the nearby San Andreas Fault (there are no faults directly beneath the building).

Conceptually, the new base isolation scheme appears easy enough, but details make all the difference. Since the building's structural columns now rest on transfer beams, the engineers needed to design post-tensioning rods that could effectively clamp the columns to the beams. "This creates enough friction so the column doesn't punch through," says Marusich. The isolators themselves are like two dishes—a concave, cast-steel, Teflon-coated "bowl" that sits on

the concrete footing and a convex, stainless-steel bearing that can roll around. These isolators, manufactured by the California company Earthquake Protection Systems, are known as the "friction-pendulum" type, since as the building moves, the bearing rides up the sides of the bowl and creates enough friction to slow down the movement of the building. A counterforce then returns the bearing to rest in the middle of the isolator. The most common are rubber-pad isolators.

Even with the innovative structure, ARG's Judd says there were few surprises on the project. ARG's work mostly focuses on historic preservation, so he says he's particularly accustomed to surprises. He notes that when the City Hall staff returned, someone asked him if all he did was paint it. "That was good to hear," he says, since it indicated the firm's work had gone unnoticed. *Russell Fortmeyer*

## California hospitals get a seismic reprieve

The California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) moved in December 2007 to allow the reclassification of potentially hundreds of seismically questionable hospitals in the state to avoid possible closure due to code noncompliance. The decision will likely ripple through the large market for health-care design and construction that developed following Southern California's Northridge earthquake in 1994, which left many hospitals still standing, but structurally unsound.

"This is giving hospitals more time to do what's right," says Chris Poland, a structural engineer and the president and C.E.O. of San Francisco-based Degenkolb Engineers. After the 1994 earthquake, Poland served on an advisory board that assisted the CBSC in developing design regulations to upgrade old hospital facilities to meet contemporary seismic standards by this year; the

CBSC's decision extended that to 2013 for a handful of structurally inadequate hospitals, and to 2020 for nearly 1,000 other health-care structures qualifying for the reclassification. Poland says the CBSC's decision was based on the availability of a new methodology and software program—called HAZUS, for Hazardous U.S.—used for gauging the seismic performance of hospitals, in addition to the fact that some financially strapped hospitals were unable to meet the requirements.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) created HAZUS as a means to quickly and comprehensively determine a building's ability to withstand natural disasters, including earthquakes. In the past, a hospital's design and structure would be evaluated based on what code it was intended to meet, as well as what type of structural system was used. A building designed prior to 1973, when California adopted stringent hospital seismic standards, often would not

have qualified as seismically safe and, after 1994, would have been identified as needing to be upgraded or replaced. Under the state's Senate Bill 1953 legislation dating from 1994, owners of the most high-risk buildings had until 2008 to be upgraded and until 2030 to be replaced with structures designed to contemporary standards. This situation generated a significant amount of health-care design work in California in the last decade, choking regulatory review processes and increasing material and labor costs, while also keeping many architecture and design firms busy.

With HAZUS, inspectors can now use building age, structural system type, building height, and documentation of structural deficiencies to then assess the overall risk of significant collapse. Poland says that although the majority of hospitals don't pose the threat of collapse, the point of legislation requiring full upgrade or replacement by 2030 was to ensure that hospitals would not be forced to close for repairs following an earth-

quake. "HAZUS gives us a way to come in and pluck out the very worst buildings to work on," Poland says.

Zigmund Rubel, AIA, a principal with San Francisco-based Anshen + Allen Architects, says although the decision won't directly affect his firm's current projects, he expects a significant number of upgrade projects to be deferred several years, which could force down labor and material costs for his clients. "The real test is what the state is going to do to nonconformers in 2020," Rubel says. "Are they going to close down a trauma center?" Rubel says he thinks the 2020 goal is probably unrealistic, as well, but notes that all it will take is another major earthquake to change public opinion and get the state to react. Carlos Amato, AIA, an associate principal at Los Angeles-based RBB Architects, says because the threat of earthquakes is constant, he always views these rules as temporary. "Every project is challenged financially, so this is releasing some of that pressure," Amato says. "But the work still needs to be done." *R.F.*

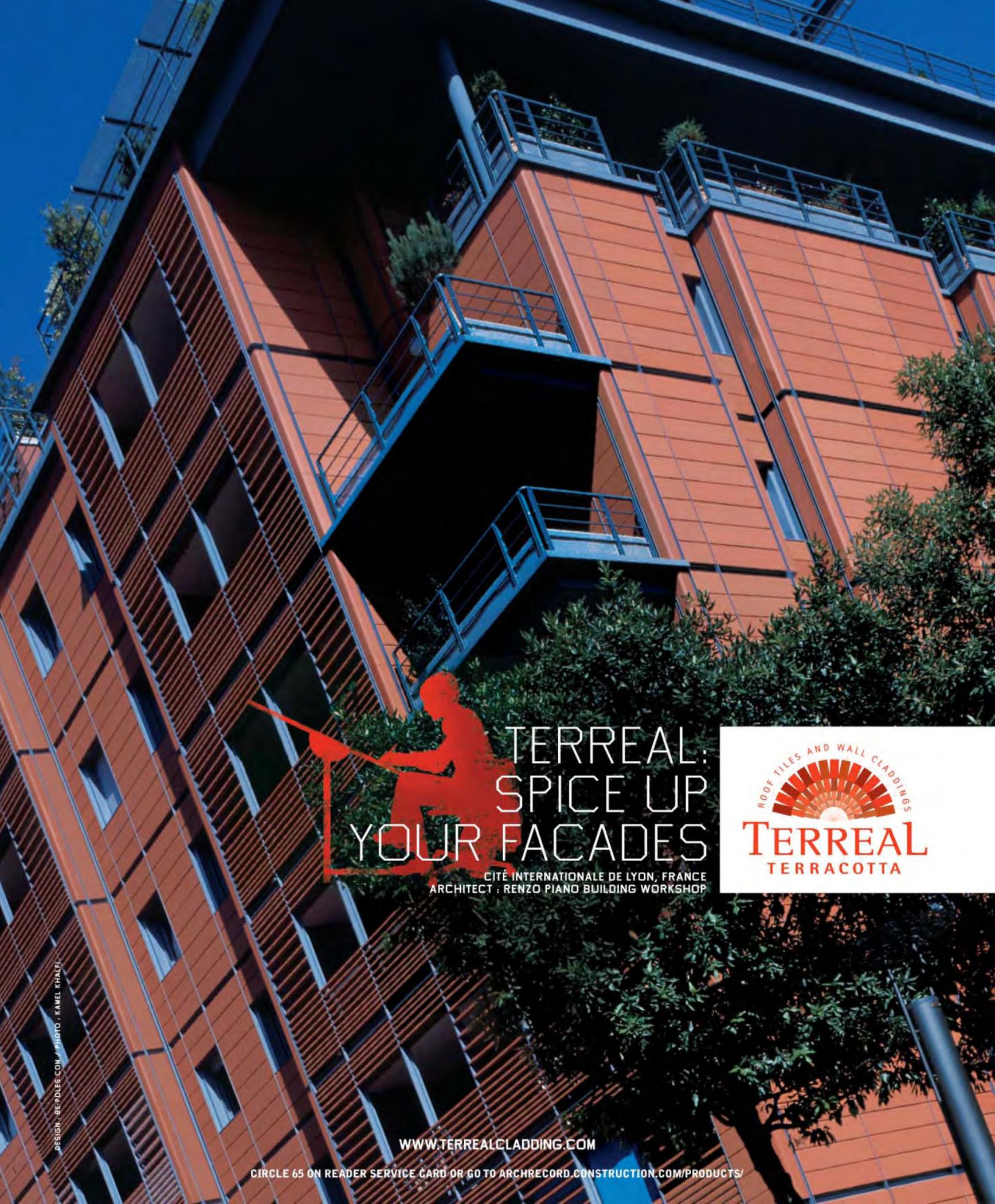
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# Lighting

## Museums in the Spotlight

**T**he challenge for lighting museums is to be invisible, to reveal or underline the architecture,” states Hervé Descottes of L’Observatoire International. The New York–based lighting-design firm counts nine museums and exhibitions among its extensive list of prestigious commissions, and invisibility defines the firm’s work with exterior surfaces as well as interior spaces.

L’Observatoire’s design of the chandeliers for the great hall of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in the Louvre in Paris signals a potential sea change in lighting designers’ relationship with architecturally powerful buildings. For the past decade, the firm has collaborated with Dubuisson Architectes on the renovation of the museum’s wing of the Louvre, and instead of deferring to the building’s historic architecture, the chandeliers complement it by asserting their own identity. Like futuristic clouds rendered in inflatable PVC tubing and overlapping frosted-fiberglass sheets, the 17-foot-wide chandeliers hover beneath a series of seven oculi in the ceiling, discovered when the designers removed a floor inserted in the 1980s.

“We created an ephemeral element that contrasts with the heaviness of the architecture,” Descottes says of the translucent chandeliers. These luminaires are memorable creatures. Their inflatable tubing contains LEDs that spread a soft glow over the modern filigree of fiberglass, and color shifts from pale pink to white to amber over the course of the day, marking the passage of time for museum visitors. L’Observatoire provided operators with a menu of color options that can be switched according to the use of the great hall during evening hours, as for special events. When there are no such events, the nearby museum restaurant prefers bathing the 4,500-square-foot hall in a dramatic cyan that deepens the creases and carvings of the architecture. The chandeliers’ hazy surfaces are also well suited for video projections.

The projects in this month’s lighting quarterly follow Descotte’s own trajectory of museum design. For example, Mark Cavagnero Associates and the staff of the de Young Museum in San



The great hall of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, transformed by light.

Francisco use lighting as a foil that makes the photographs of Hiroshi Sugimoto leap off the paper. Similarly, Lighting Planners Associates’ work at the National Museum of Singapore complements the museum’s original 1897 building, blanketing it in bright light while punctuating W Architects’ new addition to the museum in dramatic outlines. For the installation of the museum’s permanent collection, on the other hand, the Montreal firm Lightemotion combines hidden effects with luminaires that are as much props as sources of illumination. And the first American survey of Olafur Eliasson’s work, at San Francisco’s Museum of Modern Art, shows how the renowned artist deploys light as a centerpiece.

Descottes calls the Musée des Arts Décoratifs’s great hall an anomaly. “Usually we don’t bring so much strength to the object,” he says. But the projects on these pages suggest that, perhaps, strong exceptions will become the rule. *David Sokol*

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A new glass roof reveals the original museum dome, uplit in fluorescent and neon.



## W Architects and Lighting Planners Associates look skyward at the National Museum of Singapore

By Naomi R. Pollock, AIA

Singapore may be a tiny city-state, but its rich culture incorporates multiple ethnic groups, and its complex history stretches over several centuries. The National Museum of Singapore proudly showcases this heritage inside a Neoclassical building and a year-old, glass-and-steel addition.

Designed by Colonel Sir H.E. McCallum, the museum first opened in 1887 when Singapore belonged to the British Straits Settlements. In 2000, the government decided to double the museum's capacity and update its contents without demolishing previous expansions. While government designers handled restoration, the local firm W Architects spearheaded the new construction. Concentrating on the building exterior, Lighting Planners Associates (LPA) of Tokyo and Singapore used the tricks of their trade to help join the two.

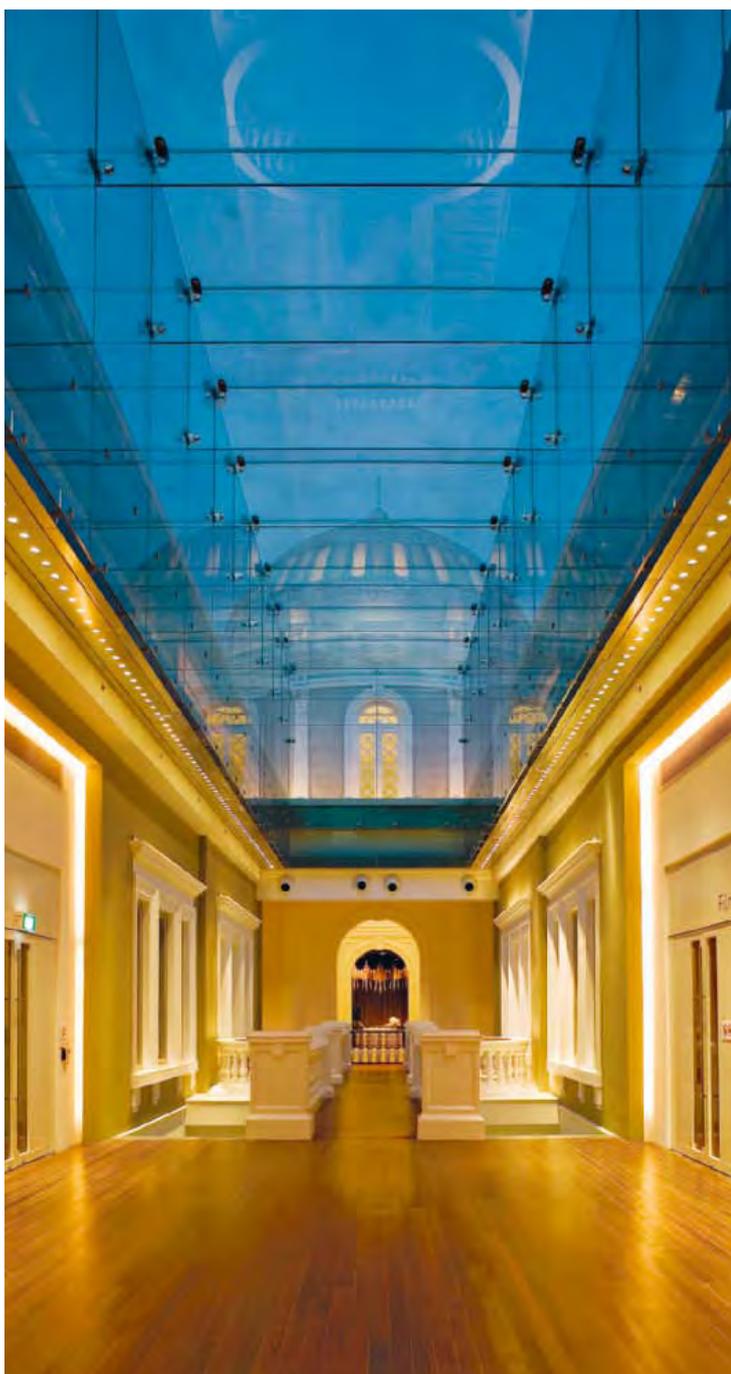
Spanning two of the city's major green spaces, the museum today comprises 198,000 square feet distributed among three parallel, lin-



ear blocks. The original building faces Bras Basah City Park. It is followed by an early-20th-century addition and then the most recent construction, which overlooks Fort Canning Park. The existing components contain restaurants, shops, and offices on the ground floor and thematic galleries upstairs. The new part holds the children's discovery gallery above ground, the history gallery in its first basement, and temporary galleries and a 250-seat auditorium in its second basement. In a gesture that is both architectural and urbanistic, a perpendicular corridor links the layers and, conceptually, connects the parks.

Although this corridor predated the new construction, it was W Architects' bold idea to replace its solid roof with glass, providing museumgoers with unobstructed views of the magnificent, zinc-tiled rotunda that crowns the original building. Where the historic structure ends, the corridor becomes a bridge that culminates at the W Architects-designed addition's top level. "We did not want old and new to simply stand next to each other," explains principal Mok Wei Wei. "We wanted physical engagement."

Naomi R. Pollock, AIA, is RECORDS's special international correspondent based in Tokyo and the author of *Modern Japanese House*.



A corridor (left) connects the 121-year-old museum building, a 20th-century addition, and W Architects' expansion. This newest wing features a drum volume (above left) flanking an internal glazed corridor (above).

Because the height of the new construction could not exceed the dome's spring line, the architects concentrated the program underground, turning its above-ground space into a glorified circulation concourse flanked by the perforated-metal children's wing as well as a glass drum descending to the history gallery. Cut into the concourse floor, a metaphorical canyon connects to the lowest level: Reminiscent of the earth's layers, walls of concrete-and-granite-chip panels define this deep and narrow incision.

Reinforcing the museum's stratified plan, LPA's lighting scheme changes progressively from the old building to the new and from day to night, reaching its peak in the early evening hours when the museum is still open but the sun has set. Highlighting the original building's ornate facade, flat, compact-fluorescent floodlights create gradated illumination along its base and xenon strip fixtures draw attention to its windows, columns, cornices and pediments. Ringed with fluorescent uplights and two rows of neon, the dome simply glows.

By contrast, natural light fills W Architects' addition, although in the evening, metal-halide lamps bathe the entire surface of the old building's rear elevation (now the addition's inner wall) from above. Playfully uniting new and old, tiny blue LED fixtures line the top of the wall and adorn the drum. Visible through the transparent enclosure, the warmly illuminated wall remains on display long after the museum closes, while the addition practically fades into shadow.

Together, LPA's lighting and W Architects' architecture imbue the antique building with new life. Turning it into an artifact as well as a work of architecture proudly elevates the institution and honors the cultural history it embodies. ■

**Project:** *The National Museum of Singapore*

**Client:** *National Heritage Board*

**Architect:** *W Architects—Mok Wei Wei, Nui Ratiwat, Goh Wei Kiat, Joan Loo, and Tng Choon How, project designers*

**Lighting designer:** *Lighting Planners*

*Associates—Kaoru Mende, Mari Kubota, Emiko Nagata, and Yah Li Toh, project designers*

**Structural consultant:** *CPG Consultants*

**Sources**

**Exterior floodlights:** *Erco*

**Interior metal-halide lamps:** *Erco*

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## Lightemotion uses illumination as scenography for the National Museum of Singapore's collection

By David Sokol

A major renovation and expansion of the National Museum of Singapore by Singapore-based W Architects presented a tabula rasa for light designers at Lightemotion and exhibition designers from GSM Group. François Roupinian, who founded Montreal-based Lightemotion in 2002, likens the museum's 126,000-square-foot addition to a "complete black box." Founded as a natural history museum in 1887, the institution used its recent construction project also to expand its curatorial focus, which now encompasses cultural identity and nation building. This broader scope meant that the museum's collection would be spread thin across the new galleries, creating the need for the exhibition and lighting designers to engender a sense of intimacy in the cavernous interiors.

In a gallery located inside the original Neoclassical building, for example, curators lined the room's perimeter with handmade Singaporean fabrics, but little else. To concentrate visitors' attention on these panels, Lightemotion grazed each textile with an AR111 tightened to a 4-degree beam spread. "Grazing really makes a strong statement," Roupinian says, "so just by illuminating those layers, by highlighting their texture and making them shimmer, we could make the space pop."

In addition to providing the illusion of a smaller scale, the designers at Lightemotion helped reinforce the museum's narrative. "We

tried to make lighting a third character," states Roupinian. "The lighting became the scenography." In a gallery devoted to Singapore's theatrical traditions, the firm suspended bare light bulbs from the ceiling, letting the electrical cords swag this way and that. A century ago, Singaporean opera singers worked as itinerant performers, explains Roupinian. So "we tried to create a bit of the feeling of the nomadic dressing room, where performers would hang all those light bulbs to do their makeup," he says.

While the original galleries now focus on themes such as fashion and theater, the extension designed by W Architects houses the museum's permanent collection. Rather than divide galleries thematically, GSM designed two paths that follow the chronology of Singapore's political and social histories. One of the rare intersections between the two paths serves as the entryway to galleries devoted to the Japanese occupation. Here, too, suspended lighting does the work of props. "We wanted people to experience—in a metaphorical way—the anguish and fear [that residents felt during the occupation]," Roupinian says. So GSM designed an angled concrete wall that outlines the route, and Lightemotion illuminated it with attenuated Edison bulbs whose filaments are dimmed to 5 percent. "They shake a bit just so you can feel the fragility," Roupinian says of the

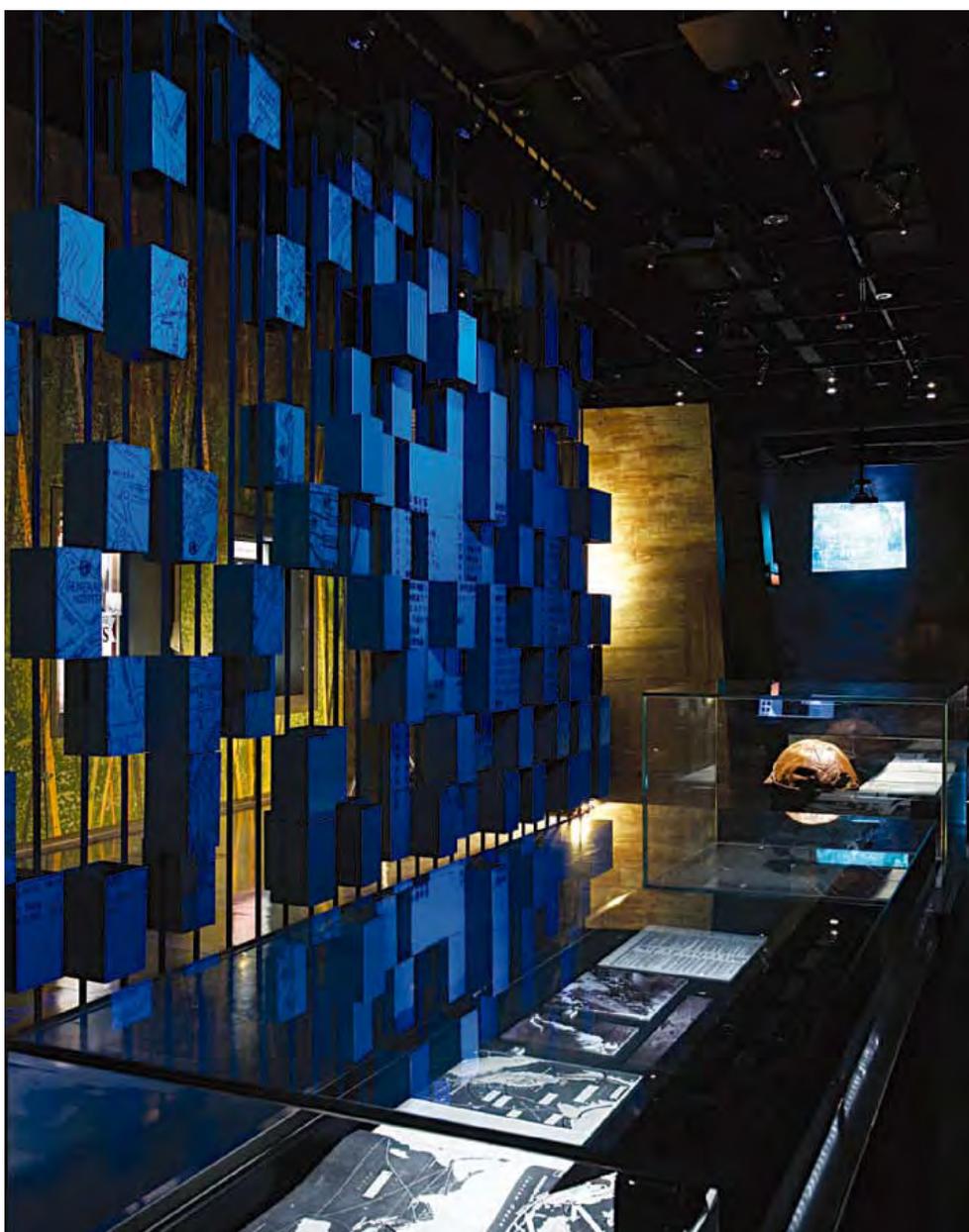
**Projections are used throughout the museum, integrated with the architecture via a media server (above) or displayed in a theater-like space (opposite).**

David Sokol is a New York-based freelance writer and editor.





A gallery devoted to the Japanese occupation includes two metal partitions that appear to be abstract cubes but are in fact pixelated maps of Singapore. Colored light highlights these and a wall of bicycles (left).



quivering filaments. Prior to this junction, along the social-history path, museumgoers can explore a re-created opium den where paper lanterns hang from the ceiling; a metal-halide/fiber-optic system integrated in the raised floor uplights a metal-mesh ceiling, where shadows evoke smoke. As the permanent collection approaches the most recent decades, a gallery devoted to contemporary manufacturing features a ceiling of myriad luminaires fabricated in Singapore.

The designers also used projected images to help fill the National Museum's abundant space. In one example, at the start of the permanent collection, they created a collage of still images that dance across lycra panels stretched inside a drumlike volume. At the end of the journey, films of contemporary Singaporean life play on canted walls, and embedded fiber optics in vitrines give the impression that the exhibition cases have somehow captured the spillover light.

A cinematic approach characterizes GSM and Lightemotion's work at the National Museum of Singapore. In the pools of light that underscore certain artifacts, for example, the designers created counterparts to the range of luminous and emotional intensity found in film. "Singaporeans are used to a wash of fluorescent light," Roupinian says. That the National Museum of Singapore does the opposite offers testimony to a trusting client, and adds a new layer of meaning to the island nation's relatively brief history. ■

**Project:** National Museum of Singapore collection

**Exhibition designer:** GSM Design—Yves Mayrand, Fiona NG, Cheryl Catteral, François Bellehumeur, Laura Miotto, Maryline Thibault

**Lighting designer:** Lightemotion—François Roupinian, Sophie Charvein, Caroline Ferland

#### Sources

**General museum lighting:** Lighting Services

**Theatrical projectors:** ETC; Selecon

**Fiber-optic systems:** Luxam; Advanced Lighting Systems

**Architectural fixtures:** iGuzzini

**Lamps and light sources:** Osram Sylvania



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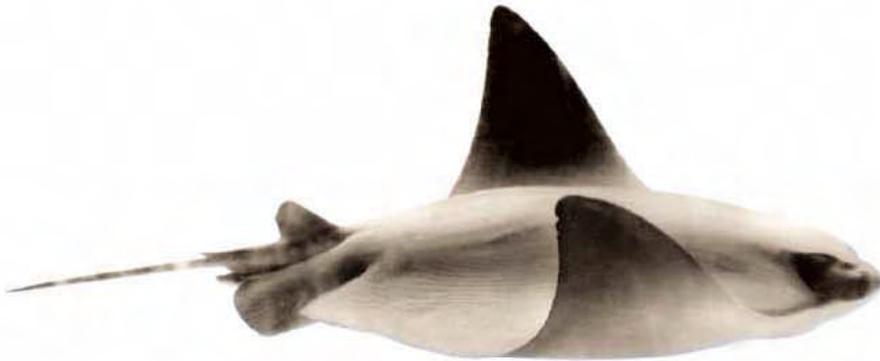
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Frame projectors directed halogen lamp-light to creep along the edges of Hiroshi Sugimoto's sublime seascape photos.

## Mark Cavagnero Associates and the de Young Museum shed light on the photos of **Hiroshi Sugimoto**

By **Alison Bing**

**W**hen New York–based photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto first arrived in his adopted city in the mid-1970s, he spent long nights in empty cinemas, capturing the entire running time of films in single long-exposure shots. Sugimoto's silver screens radiate ethereal white light in a deceptively simple effect achieved through exacting effort—and the same can be said of the 2007 Sugimoto retrospective designed by San Francisco's de Young Museum in consultation with architecture firm Mark Cavagnero Associates.

The lighting design needed to complement Sugimoto's own virtuoso effects, from his blurred vision of the Twin Towers to a photograph of a Henry VIII waxwork spotlight to resemble Hans Holbein's 16th-century

portrait of the king. The de Young's Herzog & de Meuron structure also presented constraints: The wooden floors couldn't be marred, anchors couldn't be attached to the walls, and a flat back wall couldn't be modified. To satisfy the San Francisco Building Department, all built structures had to be able to withstand seismic events.

In-house designers Bill White and Bill Huggins replicated the lighting techniques Sugimoto had mastered over his 40-year career. For example, in his image of King Henry VIII, Sugimoto had recreated the illusion of Holbein's eerie candle-lighting, and any reflection off the glass or misdirected modern spotlighting could spoil the effect; a lone PAR36 12-volt tungsten incandescent light was used to avoid double shadow and echo the nocturnal lighting scheme. To set a more somber tone in the room containing Sugimoto's hazy images of war monuments and the Twin Towers, Huggins used window screening to diffuse additional PAR36s. And for Sugimoto's signature cinemas, installers positioned the

*Alison Bing writes and comments on art, architecture, and culture for the San Francisco Chronicle, the BBC, Flash Art, NPR, and the Lonely Planet guidebooks, among others.*

Seascapes lined one side of the Cavagnero-designed wall (right), while 1000 Buddhas occupied a niche in its opposite side (below).

highest value of spotlighting on the glowing white movie screens at the center of the picture plane, subtly enhancing the dark edges of Sugimoto's long-exposure images.

The retrospective had been previously installed at the Hirshhorn Museum, in Washington, D.C., whose rounded gallery walls suggested a curvature of the earth that made a fitting backdrop for silvery, pristine seascapes so untouched by human encroachment that Sugimoto refers to them as "prehistoric." To adapt the seascapes to the de Young's flat surfaces, White called in architect Mark Cavagnero, FAIA, who worked with the de Young and builders to devise a wide, modular curved wall 3 feet deep. Cavagnero says of the creation, "The whole thing could sit on a Neoprene pad so it didn't damage the wood floor, and its own weight and girth would secure it for a seismic event." Another concern was circulation through the gallery at this pivotal point. "Then it was a question about how to get the curvature strong enough so that it reads, but not so strong that it pinches circulation," Cavagnero says.

This alone would have been a clever workaround, but there was an additional puzzle piece to consider. Behind the wide curved wall, it would be difficult to illuminate the wall-length black-and-white phalanx of beatific statues, *1000 Buddhas*, against the flat gallery wall opposite it. As the architect explains, "This curved wall was 12 feet high, and the lights would be at such a steep angle that there would be glaring and crowning over the face of the photographs." So instead, Cavagnero suggested cutting a channel through the back of the curved wall. This niche would be fitted with fiber-optic lighting to provide a uniform glow across the piece—essential to capture the repetitive, meditative nature of Sugimoto's image of the sacred sculptures. The structure was coated in a dark gray paint that evened out the light further.

Builders constructed sturdy wall modules that were seamlessly joined on-site, and in the three-day lighting installation, fitted fiber optics under the lip of the long niche. When the switch was flipped at the opening, Sugimoto's *Buddhas* emitted an otherworldly aura. On the front of the wall hung Sugimoto's seascapes, lit with Altman Micro Ellipse frame projectors with MR16 halogens hung from a ceiling track so that these images also seemed to glow from within. Incredulous visitors inspected the sides of the seascapes, convinced that these photographs must be light boxes. Sugimoto's photographic illusions remained mysteriously intact, betraying no suggestion of the elaborate schemes that brought them so vividly to life—a tribute to the artist and exhibition designers alike. ■

**Project:** Hiroshi Sugimoto at the de Young Museum, San Francisco

**Client:** Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, de Young Museum

**Architect:** Mark Cavagnero Associates—Mark Cavagnero, FAIA, Koji Tsutsui, and Ian Young, project designers

**Lighting:** Sugimoto artist team with de Young lighting department

**Engineer:** Jon Brody Structural Engineers

**Sources**

**Fiber-optic light bars:** Glasslux  
**MR16 quartz projectors:** Altman

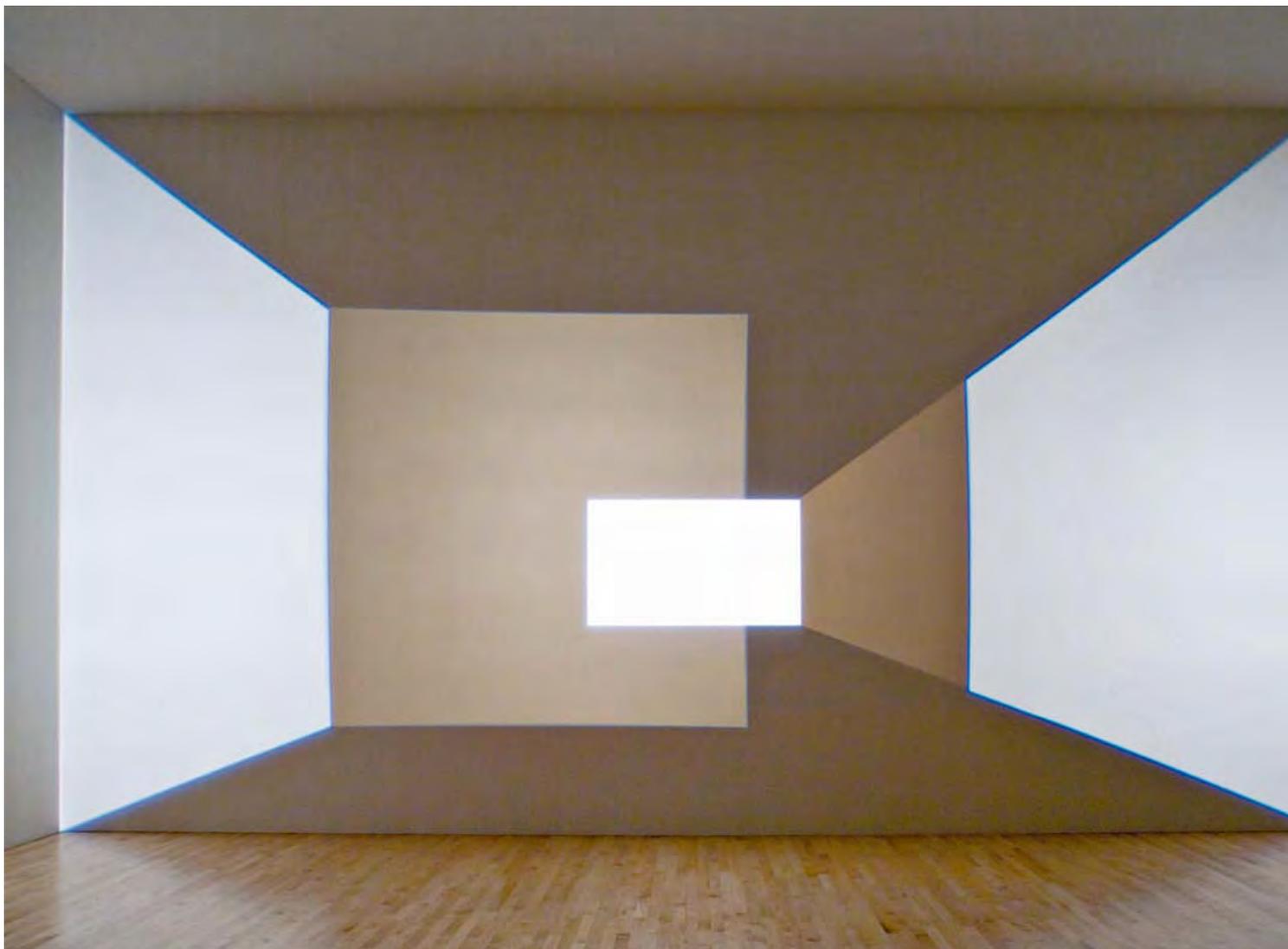




**Room for One Color's** yellow glare (above) causes viewers to see adjacent spaces, like the entry to *Space Reversal* (right, which actually reflects blue light from the sky), as the complementary color of purple.



PHOTOGRAPHY: © 2007 OLAFUR ELIASSON, COURTESY SFMOMA/JAN REEVES

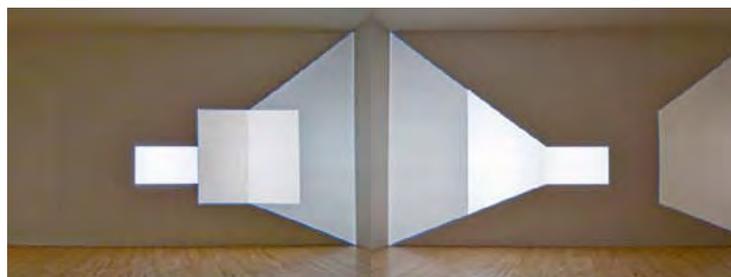


## Olafur Eliasson divulges the secrets of his immersive light environments in *Take Your Time*

By Nate Lippens

**F**or more than a decade, Olafur Eliasson has been making art on a grand scale by recreating the sensory effects of the natural landscape, often inspired by his Icelandic homeland. In the winter of 2003–4, two million visitors to the Tate Modern in London frolicked in, sunbathed under, and marveled at *The Weather Project*, a giant fake sun made of 200 low-pressure sodium lamps, mirrors, and mist that he installed in the museum's Turbine Hall. By deploying the most basic lighting technologies to evoke a sublime environment, Eliasson's creation earned as much critical acclaim as it did popularity.

Since September, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art has hosted the first American survey devoted to Eliasson. The exhibition, *Take Your Time*—which will be on view in San Francisco until February 24 and travels to the Museum of Modern Art and P.S. 1 in New York in April, followed by the Dallas Museum of Art—features mostly room-size installations of his work from 1993 to the present, including a kaleido-

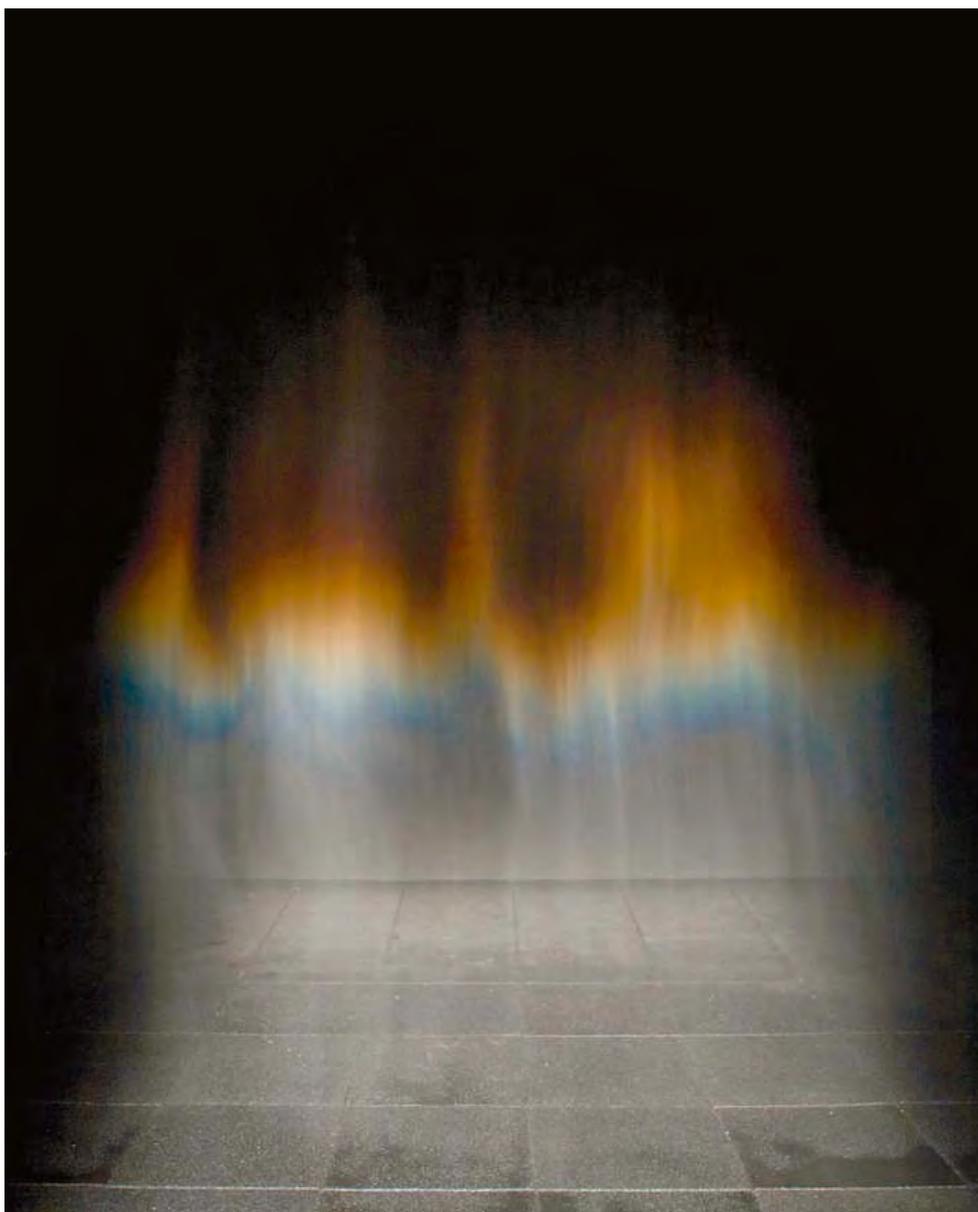


**The seemingly animated projections of *Reimagine* not only question one's ability to perceive movement, but also reference the art-historical motif of forced perspective.**

*Nate Lippens is an art critic for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and was recipient of the 2006 Hopgood Prize for Fiction.*



**360° Room for All Colors** (left) floods a semicircular room in different colors, while a pinpoint illuminates the entire color spectrum in *Beauty* (below).



scopic tunnel commissioned for the building's fifth-floor indoor bridge. The pieces can seem like sleights of hand, but they capture the viewer's attention through their simple and evident construction—as if a magician has allowed you to peek into his wardrobe.

*Room for One Color* has the directness of a simple trick: Plain-as-day sodium lamps mounted on the ceiling of a skinny rectangular room greet you with a disorienting blast of light. The glare from the light is so intense that everyone becomes yellow-and-black polarized versions of themselves, the walls seem to dematerialize, and the overpowering illusion alters the space itself. When you close your eyes, you see purple, yellow's complementary color. It's the flipside of *The Weather Project*, in which you basked in the light; here, you walk quickly out of the oppressive glare. *Room for One Color* is both a ruse for a show called *Take Your Time* and an introduction of sorts, signaling that nothing will be what it first appears.

A piece called *Beauty* is particularly successful at exploding first impressions. In an empty room with black walls, floors, and ceiling, a single Fresnel lamp points at a gentle mist falling from overhead sprinklers. The light produces iridescent, rainbowlike effects as tiny droplets of water diffract it. Because the beam of light has a tight focus, the water appears to change form as it descends, seeming almost solid and sculptural.

*Yellow Versus Purple* also transforms a seemingly simple optical effect into an environment. A spinning polarized disc hangs in the middle of a small room, rotating as a projector illuminates it. As some of the purple light passes through the disc, other parts of the spectrum are reflected. Yellow light changes shape as the



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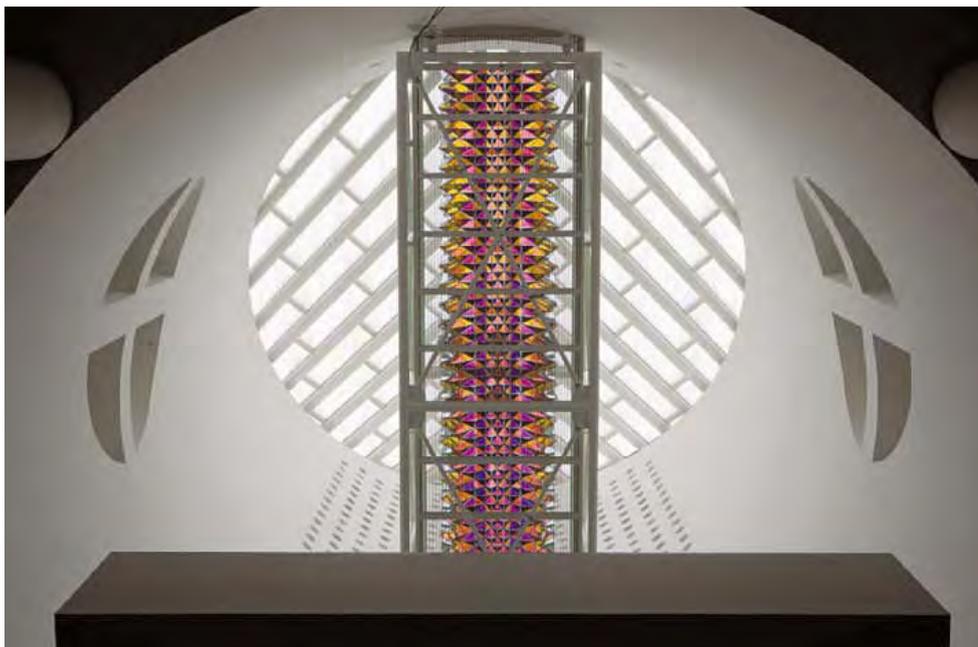
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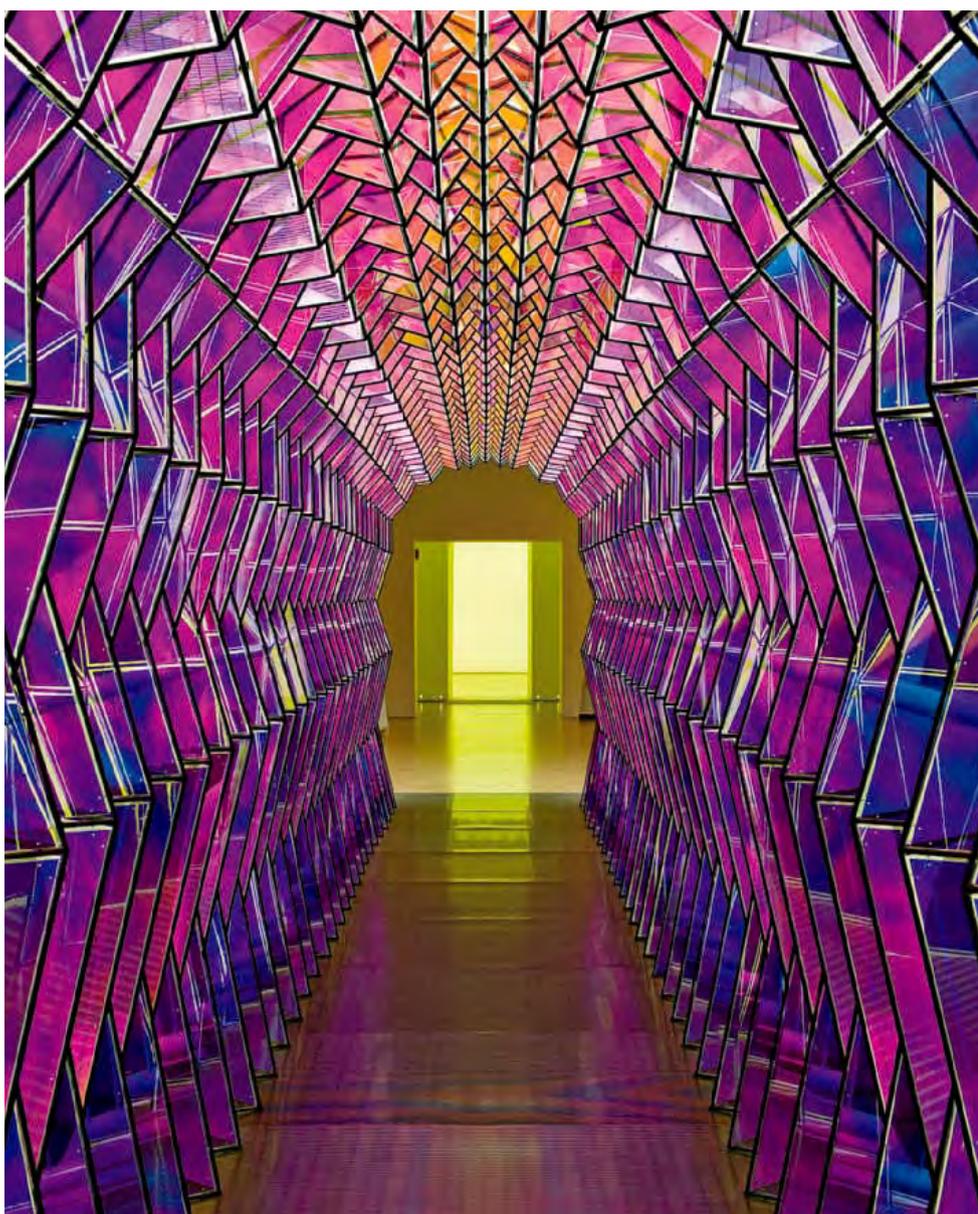
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With its acrylic prisms backed in stainless steel, *One-Way Color Tunnel* reveals its chromatic surface only to visitors walking in one direction through it.



disc rotates—flattening from a circle to a line, then plumping up again—while the purple light moves around the room.

Just as *Yellow Versus Purple* implicates you in its effect—its reflections pass over the body—Eliasson makes you an integral part of his artwork's reception. In *360° Room for All Colors*, for example, halogen lamps project colors onto the screen of a semicircular room. Slowly moving through the chromatic spectrum, the colors gradually pulse across the screen and saturate the room. With the departure of one color, its complement appears momentarily as an afterimage. The optical illusion is not the work of Eliasson, but of your own eyes' rods and cones.

Similarly, *Reimagine* separates sight from perception by suggesting movement. A series of seven incandescent spotlights turn on and off, projecting trapezoidal shapes on a wall. While the effect could be achieved by computer animation, Eliasson uses baffled fixtures with distinct shapes to create the illusion of perspective.

The exhibition's first as well as final piece requires the most active viewer participation. Walk in one direction through *One-Way Color Tunnel* and you see only an opaque, metallic structure. But go in the other direction, and it is a translucent, prismatic series of jutting acrylic triangles. Daylight streaming through the prisms changes just as dramatically throughout the multisensorial experience. Like most of Eliasson's work, a very simple setup creates a complex effect, upending perceptions by changing what the viewer sees. And while his construction methods are transparent, he shows the viewer everything but the basic biological mechanisms that transform these devices into transfixing art. ■

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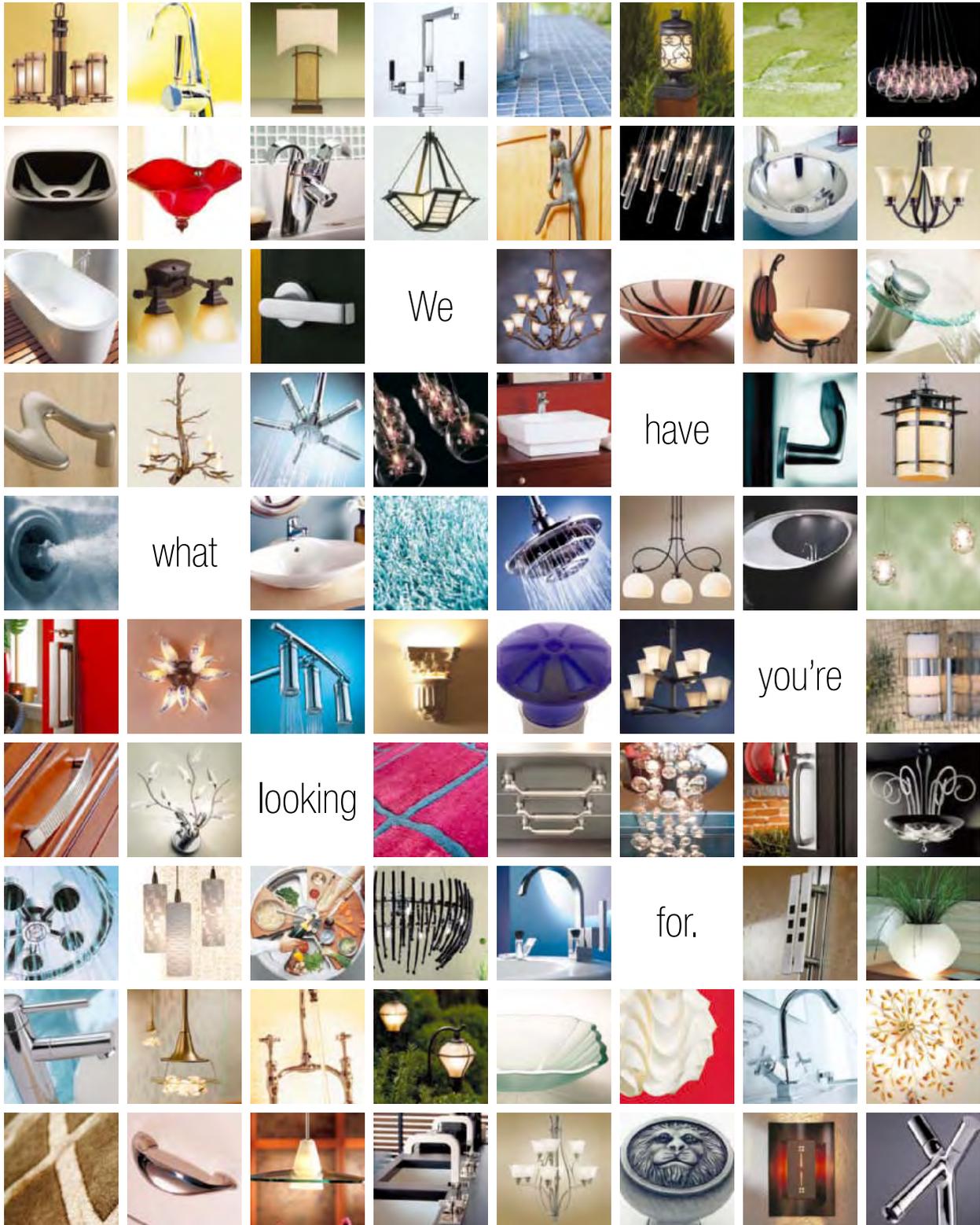
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## Lighting Products



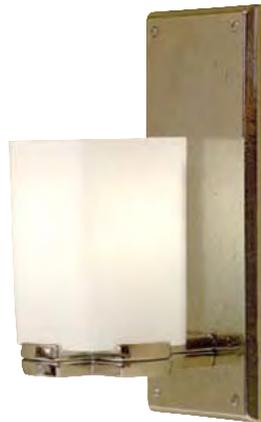
### ▲ A light in the ceiling

Zumtobel Lighting has partnered with Armstrong to create a line of recessed lighting fixtures compatible with Armstrong TechZone ceilings. Zumtobel's compatible fixtures are installed in 6"-wide technical zones between ceiling panels. Three TechZone-compatible fixtures are on the market: the Recessed Lensed unit for diffused lighting, the Recessed Bivergence with glare control (above), and the Recessed Louver with Light Chamber, suitable for smaller spaces. Zumtobel Lighting, Highland, N.Y. [www.zumtobel.us](http://www.zumtobel.us) **CIRCLE 211**

### ► Bronze goes light

The first lighting collection from bronze hardware manufacturer Rocky Mountain Hardware features handcrafted bronze and handblown, hand-cast glass lighting units. Four fixtures, sconces, pendants, vanities, and chandeliers are available in 21 designs. Nine patina finishes ranging from white-bronze-brushed to silicon-bronze-rust are available. Produced out of recycled metals and materials, the lights can contribute to LEED credit. Rocky Mountain Hardware, Hailey, Idaho. [www.rockymountainhardware.com](http://www.rockymountainhardware.com)

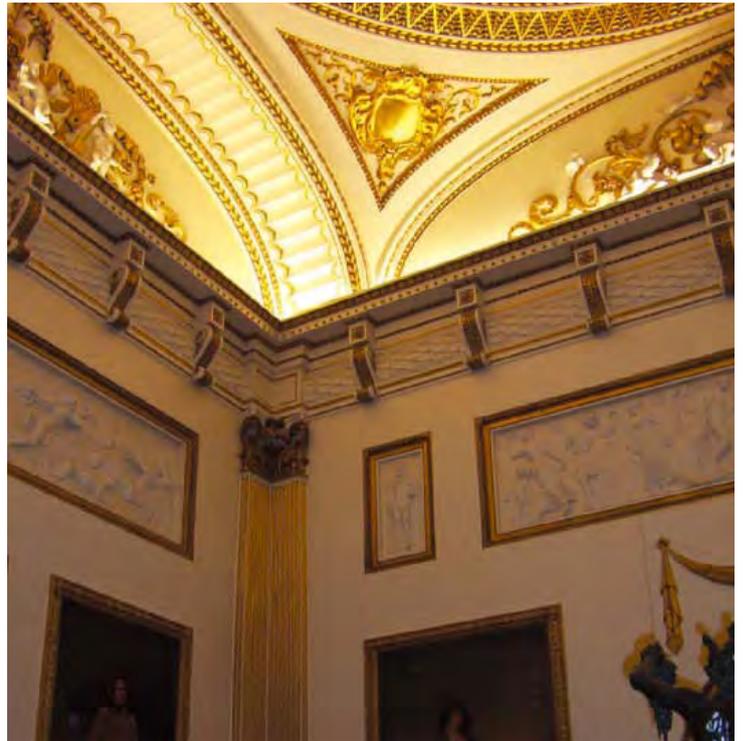
**CIRCLE 212**



### ◀ Relamp safely

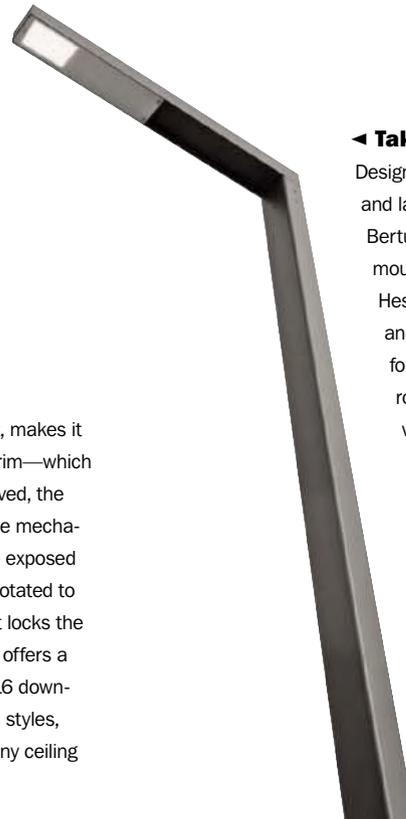
ID, a new downlight from Focal Point, makes it easy and safe to relamp. Once the trim—which is connected to the fixture—is removed, the lamp tray can be tilted forward as the mechanism is lowered from the ceiling. The exposed bulb is easy to replace, and can be rotated to its original position with a screw that locks the fixture into a memorized position. ID offers a complete family of halogen and MR16 downlights, in both flush and overlap trim styles, and ensures a full 45 degree tilt in any ceiling thickness. Focal Point, Chicago.

[www.focalpointlights.com](http://www.focalpointlights.com) **CIRCLE 214**



### ▲ Royal flush

The Royal Household of Buckingham Palace requested the recently merged Bespoke Lighting and LEDtronics to create LED bulbs for its chandeliers. The bulbs replaced the tungsten lighting of the Center Room chandelier and the Grand Staircase (above). It is estimated that the transfer to LED lighting, which is expected to require little maintenance for the next 13 years, will save 80 percent in energy consumption. LEDtronics, Los Angeles. [www.ledtronics.com](http://www.ledtronics.com) **CIRCLE 213**



### ◀ Take it to the streets

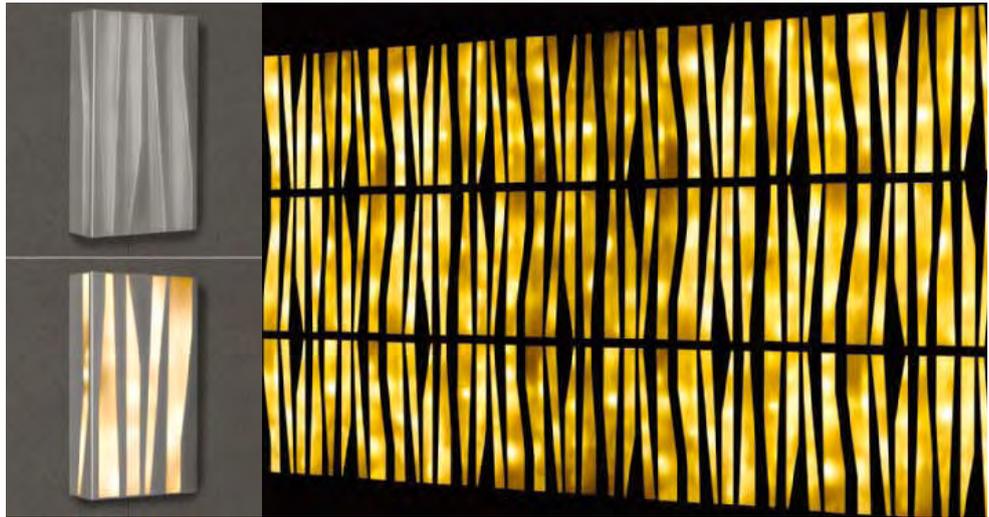
Designed by Berlin-based architecture and landscape architecture firm Toepfer Bertuleit Architects, the Linea pole-mounted outdoor light from HessAmerica is available in three sizes and mounting heights and is suitable for parking lots, parks, and corporate roads. The pole is composed of galvanized steel and is available in three colors: matte metallic silver gray, graphite gray, or black. The tempered-glass lens is clear, but is also available in matte by request. HessAmerica, Gaffney, S.C. [www.hessamerica.com](http://www.hessamerica.com)

**CIRCLE 215**

## Lighting Products

### ► Undulating luminaire

Silvus, the modular LED sconce system created by Roger Duffy, Peter Magill, and their design team at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, mimics the illusion of water reflecting foliage. A fixture that can be employed as a single unit or group unit, Silvus is suitable for interior and exterior lighting. Each steel module is 24" high, 13" wide, and 6¼" deep. The modules can be arranged in a variety of patterns or installed independently. The LED string behind the translucent lens of the module produces static, pulsing, or flowing light and is available in white, blue, green, red, or a combination of these colors. Ivalo, Coopersburg, Pa. [www.ivaloighting.com](http://www.ivaloighting.com) **CIRCLE 216**



### ▲► Linear for small spaces

Chopstick is a new family of suspended and wall-mount luminaires from Ledalite designed to illuminate small-scale spaces with a widespread semi-indirect distribution. Featuring a 4 ½" x 2" profile, the fixture can be suspended overhead and is available with 1, 2, or 3 lamp T5 and T5HO packages. For corridor and perimeter spaces, Chopstick can be mounted on the wall in single T5 and T5HO lamping. The matte finish is available in 19 colors ranging from White to Iron Orange. Ledalite, Vancouver, B.C. [www.ledalite.com](http://www.ledalite.com) **CIRCLE 217**



### ▼ Brass-framed sconce

The Twilight and Circolo Sconce collections, designed by Doyle Crosby and manufactured by Boyd Lighting, highlight a brass frame configured into geometric shapes: Circolo of a spherical nature, and Twilight of rectilinear creation (below). The sconces measure 16 ½" in height and 8 ½" in width, and include a white acrylic diffuser inside the brass frame. Suitable for both indoor and outdoor use for residential and commercial installations, the sconces come in four finishes. Boyd Lighting Company, San Francisco. [www.boydlighting.com](http://www.boydlighting.com)

**CIRCLE 218**



### ▲ LED fixtures for the outdoors

Kim Lighting's new LED Collection illuminates the landscape with high-brightness white diodes. The collection features the die-cast aluminum Step Light LED for recessed wall installations, the die-cast brass Minivault LED for in-grade applications, the Lightvault LED (above) for in-grade fixtures, the die-cast aluminum or brass Bell LED for pathway illumination, and the die-cast aluminum Micro-Flood LED for wall-washing light applications. Kim Lighting, City of Industry, Calif. [www.kimlighting.com](http://www.kimlighting.com) **CIRCLE 219**



### ▲ Halogen bulbs

Philips Lighting has introduced Halogená Energy Advantage lamps, halogen bulbs that provide 30 to 38 percent in energy savings as compared to incandescent lighting. The bulbs are ideal for use in table and floor lamps, recessed cans, track lighting, and general lighting fixtures. Available in various shapes and wattages, Halogená is also offered in a BR30 model flood lamp. Philips Lighting Company, Somerset, N.J. [www.philips.com](http://www.philips.com) **CIRCLE 220**

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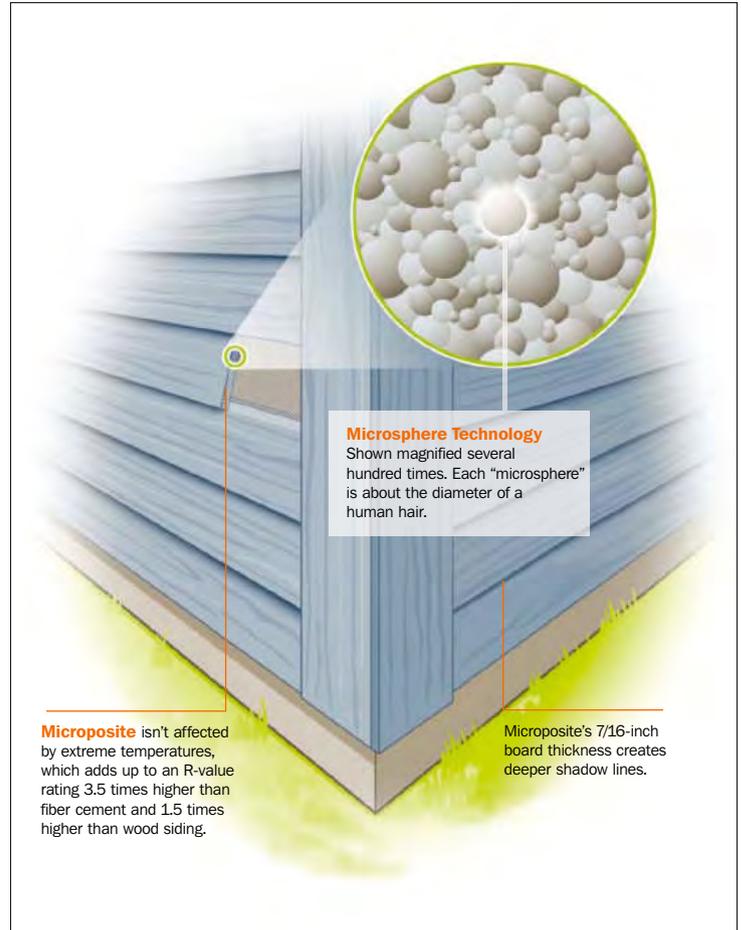
# Product Focus

## Walls & Wall Surfacing

Our roundup this month includes a wide range of interior and exterior wall and wall-surfacing options, from a **new breed of siding** (featured below) to handcrafted wallpaper to interior wall products that may help those who are building green projects to **breathe a little easier**. *Rita Catinella Orrell*



**Microposite siding comes in four widths, provides more prominent shadow lines, and features no-repeat grain patterns to replicate the look of real wood.**



## U.S. manufacturer launches first new siding category in 20 years

Michigan-based Microposite claims to have introduced the first new siding category to the building-product marketplace since fiber cement siding was launched 20 years ago. Nine years in development, Microposite's premium 7/16" boards are constructed of a combination of lightweight microspheres made of perlite (a mineral widely used in drywall paste, paint, roofing insulation, and other products) and a proprietary polyurethane resin binder. Perlite is mined from countries around the world, including the U.S., Greece, and China.

Microposite siding's micros-

phere technology gives the product the strength to resist temperature shifts, buckling, and warping, according to the manufacturer. Microposite offers an R-value rating 3.5 times greater than fiber cement, yet is 50 percent lighter. In addition, the siding does not require any special installation tools and creates no harmful dust when cut.

Microposite's closed-cell technology delivers 100 percent water resistance, eliminating concerns about decay or rotting. The boards are available in four widths, provide more prominent shadow lines,

and feature no-repeat grain patterns to replicate the look of real wood. Microposite states that the siding has undergone independent testing for areas such as wind load, moisture, and fire; the manufacturer is currently working through the process for International Code Council (ICC) testing.

"We've already received overwhelmingly positive response and interest in this new category of siding, reinforcing our belief that when applied intelligently, technology can be a beautiful thing," states Microposite president and C.E.O. Marc Carlson. The siding

has already been specified into a multithousand housing-development project in the United States.

Microposite's siding products will be competitively priced and distributed exclusively by building-product supplier BlueLinX Holdings. The product will be available beginning in the first quarter of 2008 in select markets, starting in the Northeast region. Microposite, Auburn Hills, Mich. [www.microposite.com](http://www.microposite.com) **CIRCLE 221**

For more information, circle item numbers on Reader Service Card or go to [architecturalrecord.com/products/](http://architecturalrecord.com/products/).

## Products Walls & Wall Surfacing

### ► Handcrafted wallpapers

Masterworks, the fourth collection from designer Lori Weitzner's eponymous wall-coverings company, Weitzner Limited, utilizes custom gilding, printing, and papermaking methods. All patterns pass Class A fire ratings; have a stain-resistant, water-based finish; and are suitable for residential, retail, and hospitality applications where a high-end look is desired. The collection is distributed nationally by Bergamo and worldwide through Sahco Hesslein. Bergamo Fabrics, Mount Vernon, N.Y. [www.bergamofabrics.com](http://www.bergamofabrics.com) **CIRCLE 222**



### ► Certified wood panels

The S.J. Morse Company, a full-service manufacturer of premier quality architectural wood-veneer-faced panels, has introduced fire-rated, 100 percent FSC-certified veneer-faced panels that meet additional USGBC LEED program criteria, including no added formaldehyde and postindustrial recycled content. The panels were contributed to the University of Maryland's LEAFHouse (right), which placed second in the 2007 Solar Decathlon. S.J. Morse Company, Capon Bridge, W.V. [www.sjmorse.com](http://www.sjmorse.com) **CIRCLE 223**



### ◀ Hand-printed stone

StoneImpressions has created a unique process for permanently hand-printing designs and images on stone, according to the manufacturer. Using Botticino marble, tumbled Durango, and Light or Noce Travertine, the stone tiles are handmade by skilled artisans using an artist-developed, patented process. The murals, listellos, and wall accents are ideal for kitchen backsplashes, baths, offices, or entryways. The company can custom create designs to your specs or recreate a period design. Stone Impressions, San Diego. [www.stoneimpressions.com](http://www.stoneimpressions.com) **CIRCLE 224**



### ◀ Stud options

TimberStrand LSL 3X studs that are 2.5" thick for light commercial buildings are available in a variety of dimensions, including 3" x 8", 3" x 10", 3" x 12", and 3" x 14". The single-piece, long-length studs are produced to standard dimension lumber sizes, helping architects and engineers avoid the potential for design errors and hassle of mixing standard-size and non-standard-size studs in a single wall. iLevel manufactures the studs in lengths up to 48', and they meet code requirements for lateral loads from earthquakes and high winds. iLevel by Weyerhaeuser, Federal Way, Wash. [www.ilevel.com](http://www.ilevel.com) **CIRCLE 225**

### ► A tree grows in L.A.

Sorelle Fine Arts is run by Laura Capitanio and Cristina Capitanio, Italian born, L.A.-based sisters who are specialists in creating one-of-kind frescoes, wall paintings, trompe l'oeils, faux finishes, and gold/silver leaf decorations. For the Burbank Buena Vista Branch Library project, the Capitanios crafted a digital mural, a rotunda mural, and the decoration of the entrance to the children's library. The highly tactile rotunda mural (right), located where children sit and read, depicts a forest and incorporates 3D tree trunks, branches, and needles made of resin. The entrance to the children's library is an acrylic mural depicting a prairie and includes an arch form fabricated of resin made to look like real stone. Sorelle Fine Arts, Culver City, Calif. [www.sorellefinearts.com](http://www.sorellefinearts.com) **CIRCLE 226**



### ▲ Greener particleboard

TemStock-Free is a new composite panel product from Temple-Inland made from 100 percent recycled/recovered fiber content with no added urea formaldehyde. TemStock-Free is available in thicknesses from 1/4" to 1 1/2" in 4'-wide sheets from 8'-24' in length. The particleboard offers a smooth surface for laminating and is suited for wall panels, flooring, furniture, cabinets, and architectural accents in projects such as hospitals, schools, and civic facilities. Temple-Inland, Diboll, Tex. [www.templeinland.com](http://www.templeinland.com) **CIRCLE 227**

For more information, circle item numbers on Reader Service Card or go to [architecturalrecord.com/products/](http://architecturalrecord.com/products/).



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## Product Briefs

### ▼ Frame for the fireplace

Designed by L.A.-based architect Alla Kazovsky, the Naum fireplace screen features a stainless-steel frame and steel-mesh spark shield. In contrast to traditional metal and glass folding screens or steel-mesh curtains that become sooty with use, the Naum screen remains translucent without sacrificing safety. The screen weighs 25½ pounds and measures 36" wide, 24" high, and 3½" deep. Five horizontal ¾", brushed, stainless-steel bars span the face of the screen. Made in the U.S., the screen retails for \$830 and is available through Kazovsky's firm's Web site, below, or at the L.A. store Details. Designed Real Estate, Los Angeles. [www.designedrealestate.com](http://www.designedrealestate.com) **CIRCLE 228**



### ◀ Magnetic appeal

Jeld-Wen has introduced the industry's first residential vinyl window lock using magnet technology. Called Mag-Lock, the one-touch automatic lock comes standard on Jeld-Wen Premium Vinyl slider and single-hung windows. The lock has passed the industry's rigorous forced-entry test as well as tests for water and air infiltration. The magnets will continue to maintain their force even after the lock has been engaged and disengaged for 36,000 cycles. In addition, the magnets can withstand extreme temperatures, can't be disengaged using other magnets, and do not interfere with pace-makers or computer equipment. Jeld-Wen, Klamath Falls, Ore. [www.jeld-wen.com](http://www.jeld-wen.com) **CIRCLE 229**

### ► Stars of the show

The warmth of Sign (top right), a walnut chair for residential use contrasts sharply with Riva (bottom right), a stackable, steel contract chair. Both were Top Ten winners at Promosedia, the international chair exhibition held in Udine, Italy, last fall. Milan-based architect and designer Daniele Lo Scalzo Moscheri designed the ergonomically sensitive Sign for Pedrali Lab. Its padded seat may be covered in fabric, or in either real or imitation leather. Available for indoor or outdoor use, Riva was designed for L'Abbate by the Vienna-based design firm For Use. It is available plated with either chrome or ruthenium, or coated with epoxy-powder paint. The seat is made of solid steel bars. Promosedia, Udine, Italy. [www.promosedia.it](http://www.promosedia.it) **CIRCLE 230**



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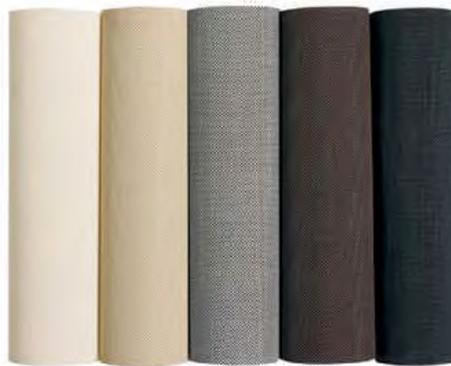
► **Italian-American collaboration**

Building on his three-year relationship with the iconic furniture maker Baleri Italia, American designer Jeff Miller has created two new pieces for the company, the Littlebig Chair and the Obo storage system. Originally exhibited as a prototype in 2006, the Littlebig chair features a cantilevered seat supported by the front edge of an aluminum tube frame. Obo (right) is a multifunctional molded plastic storage box made of high-gloss plastic. An innovative connector makes arrangement and assembly quick and easy; a wall- or ceiling-fastening kit helps stabilize more than three connected vertical units. Available in the U.S. through Atlanta retailer Domus International. Domus International, Atlanta. [www.domusinternational.com](http://www.domusinternational.com) **CIRCLE 231**



◀ **Get in control**

Hunter Douglas Architectural Products has added several new solar control products to their line, including sun louvers and exterior screens made from aluminum with a minimum of 70 percent recycled content (left). When used as architectural elements, the screens help reduce overall HVAC load and sun glare, and they block unwanted views. GlacierScreen solar-shading fabrics (below) avoid the use of VOC-emitting substances while maintaining the performance and durability of standard PVC-coated fabrics. Hunter Douglas Contract, Norcross, Ga. [www.hunterdouglascontract.com](http://www.hunterdouglascontract.com) **CIRCLE 232**



► **Better-looking presentation**

Arc lecterns were designed by Antoni Flores for Spanish manufacturer Vilgrasa S.A. and distributed in the U.S. by Magnuson Group. The lecterns are suited for upscale private or public meeting rooms, training or conference rooms, or educational venues. Available in two models, the lecterns' top surfaces angle from the horizontal up to 15 degrees. A discreet, silent, incremental crank handle allows height adjustments on one model up to 12". A narrow, low-scale, angled, nonglare halogen task light is optional for either model. Magnuson Group, Woodridge, Ill. [www.magnusongroup.com](http://www.magnusongroup.com) **CIRCLE 233**



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## Product Briefs

### ► Blast-resistant framing system

The Reliance blast-resistant framing system meets the increased security requirements of government and public buildings with a traditional pressure-glazed curtain-wall system. The thermally broken system was tested at a static load of 1 psi with 1" insulating glass made with 3/4" laminated inboard lites (3/8" annealed, .30 PVB, 3/8" annealed) per the Unified Facilities Criteria UFC 4-010-01. Overall dimensions for Reliance Blast are 2 1/2" x 7 3/4". The system is available in anodized or painted finishes. Vistawall, Terrell, Tex. [www.vistawall.com](http://www.vistawall.com) **CIRCLE 234**



### ◀ Roofing felt alternative

SynShield is a slip-resistant synthetic roof underlayment from Benjamin Obdyke that is lighter and stronger than standard roofing felt, while providing superior protection against water intrusion, according to the manufacturer. SynShield can be left uncovered for up to six months versus standard roof felt, which must be covered. In addition to passing Miami-Dade County requirements, the product passes ICC Certification requirements for UV, accelerated aging, pliability at 15 degrees Fahrenheit, water-ponding, and water vapor transition. Benjamin Obdyke, Horsham, Pa. [www.benjaminobdyke.com](http://www.benjaminobdyke.com) **CIRCLE 235**

### ► Ember-safe attic and roof vents

California's new fire building codes require that all exterior vents be designed to resist fire ember intrusion. Brandguard Vents has developed a series of vent products that prevent embers from entering the house. The vent's baffle material acts as a heat sink, virtually eliminating the threat of fire embers entering through a structure's vent openings. The baffle design changes the flow of air several times, creating an effective heat trap, preventing damage from radiant and direct heat sources. Made to code with 26-gauge galvanized steel, the Dormer, Round, Access, Soffit, and Gable End vents are applicable for most roof types. Brandguard Vents, San Clemente, Calif. [www.brandguardvents.com](http://www.brandguardvents.com) **CIRCLE 236**



### ◀ Less dust, cleaner workplace

Mapei has engineered a new technology that significantly reduces dust generation from Mapei products used on tile and stone installation job sites. Performance testing has recorded a 90 percent reduction in the amount of dust released during production, pouring, mixing, and use of products containing the Dust-Free Technology. The technology will be applied to a wide range of cement-based products, the first of which is Ultraflex 2 professional-grade, polymer-modified mortar, the most widely used Mapei tile installation product in the Americas. Mapei, Deerfield Beach, Fla. [www.mapei.us/DustFree.htm](http://www.mapei.us/DustFree.htm) **CIRCLE 237**

For more information, circle item numbers on Reader Service Card or go to [architecturalrecord.com/products/](http://architecturalrecord.com/products/).

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## Product Resources On the Web



### www.kettal.com

Barcelona-based Kettal, a manufacturer specializing in stylish aluminum and wooden outdoor furniture, has launched a new site that displays products from the company's various product lines, ranging from the sleek, modular Manhattan line to the more traditional, cozier Loom line. The site's "Kettalize it!" tool allows visitors to customize a product from any line by mixing and matching various colors for the upholstery, glass panels, or frames.



### www.graceconstruction.com

Grace Construction is promoting its sustainable services with a new section on its Web site, "Building Green With Grace." A little tricky to find, this special section can be accessed from a link on the main page under the "Grace Highlights" section. This section offers detailed information on Grace's green products, organized into six LEED categories, including information on LEED-NC Version 2.2 prerequisites and the credits Grace products can help achieve.

### www.greenalloys.com

Concast Metal Products Company, a manufacturer of environmentally friendly, lead-free alloys, has launched a new Web site to serve as a guide for designers, engineers, and manufacturers. Greenalloys.com offers a thorough description, complete with spec-sheets detailing chemical compositions, of each sustainable product offered by Concast.

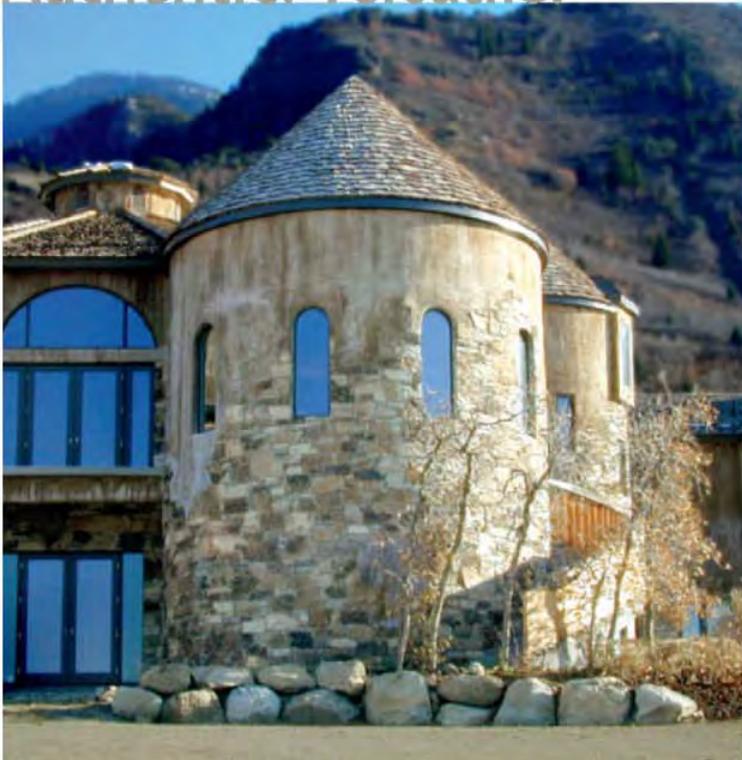


### www.2modern.com

Products from this online retailer of lifestyle goods from emerging, contemporary designers include furniture for the home and office, lighting, and personal accessories. With a commitment to sustainable design practices, the site also offers insight into developing and emerging trends in the industry. A design blog presents the latest and hippest products hitting the market, and visitors to the site can subscribe to the 2modern newsletter.



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**www.savethetile.com**

SaveTheTile, the stylish, interactive Web site from Delta, a manufacturer of faucets and related products, hopes to alleviate the hassles of shower specification and installation. The site features the MultiChoice Universal shower system, which boasts the only valve in the industry that will support single-function and dual-function pressure balance and thermostatic showers without altering behind-the-wall plumbing.



**www.carpet-concept.de**

Carpet Concept specializes in office carpet design and has launched an easy-to-navigate site to display its products. Various case studies show the carpets in context and offer recommendations for fitting, cleaning, and care. A pop-up function allows visitors to easily print out details about samples of particular interest. Visitors can also find information about the product designers and see other products designed by them.

**www.itsknotwood.blogspot.com**

For more than two years, this blog has devoted itself entirely to finding and calling attention to faux-wood products. Updated regularly with surprising and strange products, this site makes one wonder how the market for imitation wood could be as booming as the site seems to suggest. Some recent stand-out products include wood-grain bedding and log-shaped candles.



**http://healthcare.spacesaver.com**

Based in Wisconsin, Spacesaver is a manufacturer of high-density mobile storage and filing systems, servicing industries from government to library to law enforcement. Spacesaver's recently launched Web site showcases its products for the healthcare sector. Featured products include FrameWRX, a modular system that provides flexible storage of pharmaceuticals and hospital supplies.



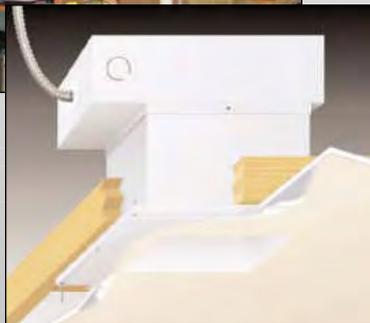
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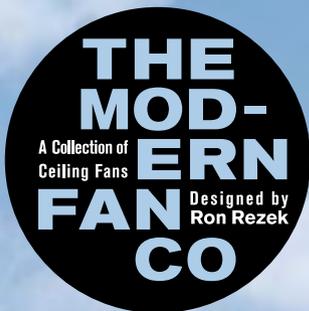
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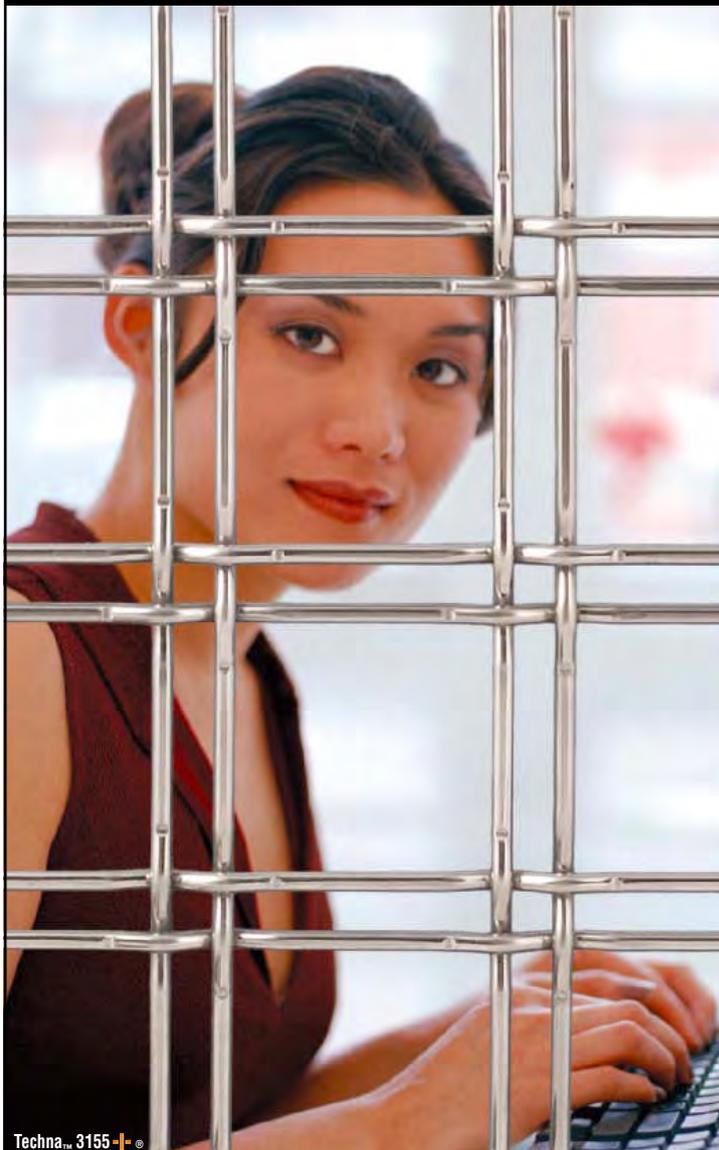
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# Dates & Events

## New and Upcoming Exhibitions

### **Do We Dare Squander Chicago's Great Architectural Heritage?**

#### **Chicago**

*February 7, 2008–May 9, 2008*

This exhibition examines the role of historic preservation in Chicago and the motivation of its proponents. At the Chicago Architecture Foundation. For more information, call 312/922-3432 or visit [www.architecture.org](http://www.architecture.org).

### **Ports of Entry: Richard Morris Hunt's Architectural Drawings from the École des Beaux-Arts and the Gates of Central Park**

#### **New York City**

*February 7–April 20, 2008*

Richard Morris Hunt's architectural genius radiates from the chambers of The Breakers in Newport, Rhode Island, the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, the great entrance wing to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty, among other notable structures. Often called the "dean of American architecture," Hunt was the first American to study architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. This exhibition consists of 25 architectural drawings that Hunt created between 1847 and 1863. At the National Academy of Design. For more information, call 212/369-4880 or visit [www.nationalacademy.org](http://www.nationalacademy.org).

### **Building China: Five Projects, Five Stories**

#### **New York City**

*February 26, 2008–May 31, 2008*

Created by curator Wei Wei Shannon of People's Architecture and cocurator Shi Jian, this exhibition examines the exploratory work of five emerging architects in China. Revealing the process behind the country's building practices, the exhibition includes information about the architects' relationships with their clients and the bidding process in their homeland. At the Center for Architecture's Judith and Walter Hunt Gallery, and the Mezzanine Gallery. For additional information about the show, call 212/683-0023 or visit [www.aiany.org](http://www.aiany.org).

## Ongoing Exhibitions

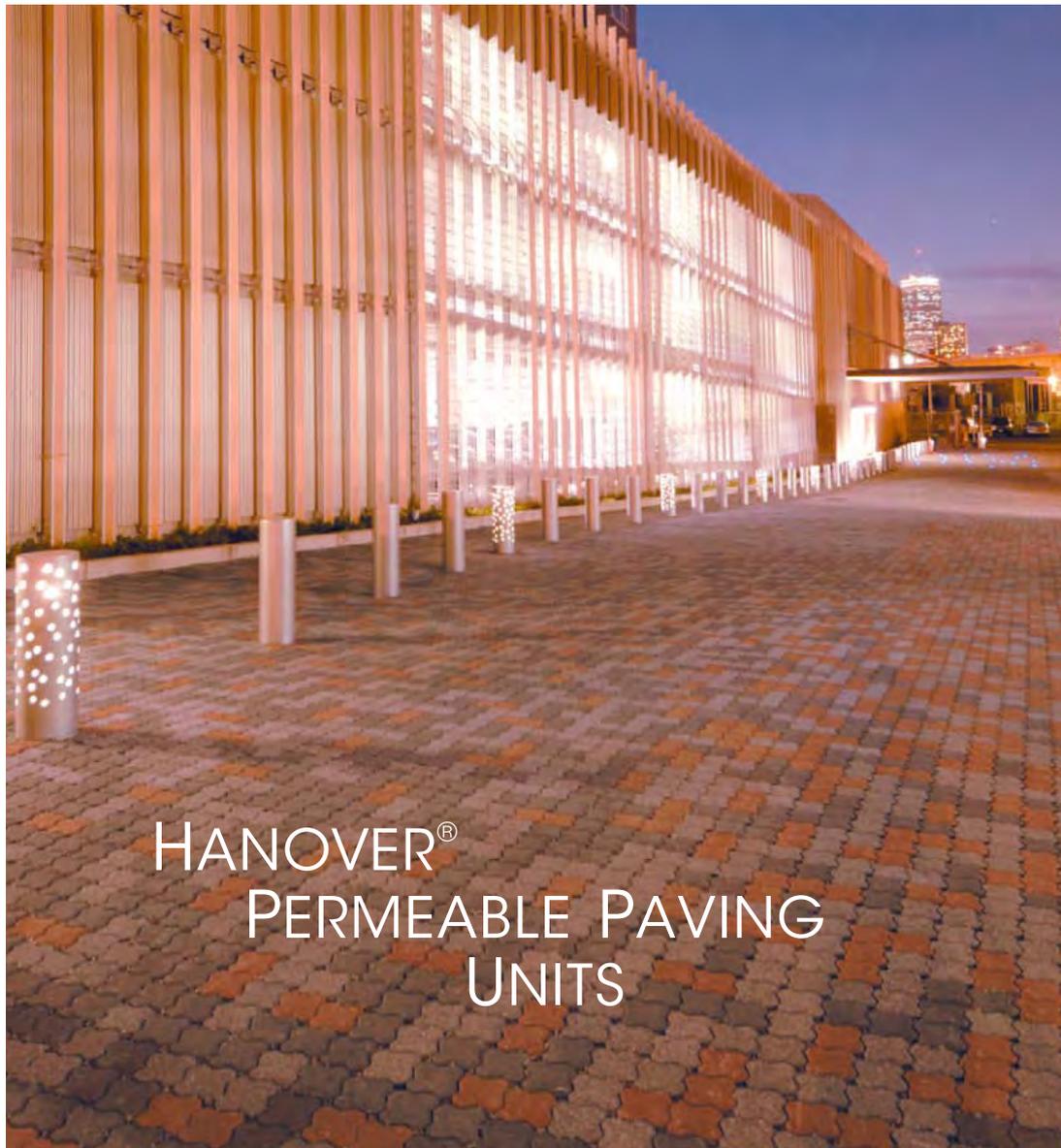
### **Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future**

#### **Bloomfield Hills, Michigan**

*Through March 30, 2008*

Traveling from Europe, this exhibition is the first retrospective of the life and works of one of the more celebrated designers of the Modern era. Saarinen is best known for his postwar

masterpieces, including the 630-foot-tall stainless-steel St. Louis Gateway Arch, the TWA terminal at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, numerous university campus plans and buildings, and the General Motors Technology Center near Detroit. At the Cranbrook Art Museum. For information, call 248/645-3323 or visit [www.cranbrookart.edu/museum](http://www.cranbrookart.edu/museum) or [www.eerosaarinen.net](http://www.eerosaarinen.net).



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## Dates & Events

### **Design Life Now: National Design Triennial Houston**

*Through April 20, 2008*

This exhibition presents the experimental projects, emerging ideas, major buildings, new products, and media that were at the center of contemporary culture from 2003 to 2006. Inaugurated in 2000, the triennial seeks out and presents the most innovative American designs from the prior three years in a variety of fields, including product design, architecture, furniture, film, graphics, new

technologies, animation, science, medicine, and fashion. At Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum. Call 713/284-8250 or visit [www.camh.org](http://www.camh.org).

### **Lectures, Conferences, and Symposia**

#### **Tadao Ando: Creating Dreams New York City**

*February 5, 2008*

In this program, Ando, recipient of the Pritzker

Architecture Prize and the AIA Gold Medal, speaks about the breadth and beauty of his past, present, and future works. Introduction by RECORD's editor in chief, Robert Ivy. At the Japan Society. Visit [www.japan100.org](http://www.japan100.org).

#### **The New Materialism and the Mind: Manuel DeLanda**

**Los Angeles**

*February 6, 2008*

This lecture will examine two directions taken by theorists of artificial intelligence, symbolic and connectionist, and argue that connectionist neural nets are a better approach to modeling embodied skills, the type of intelligence needed to interact with the material world. Manuel DeLanda is the author of four books on philosophy. At W.M. Keck Lecture Hall SCI-Arc. Lectures can also be streamed live on SCI-Arc's Web site at [www.sciarc.edu/live](http://www.sciarc.edu/live).

#### **Smog Veil Records Chicago**

*February 12, 2008*

Part of the Sustainable Architecture Lunchtime Lecture Series at the Chicago Architecture Foundation. Call 312/922-3432 or visit [www.architecture.org](http://www.architecture.org).

#### **A Crash Course in History: Edward Eigen Los Angeles**

*February 13, 2008*

Eigen's lecture examines narrative history and how accidents play their part in shaping cause and effect. Using a particular case of "death by architecture," the lecture is a primer in how to investigate accidents in the making. Eigen is an architectural historian and scholar whose work focuses on intersections of the human and the natural sciences with architecture in the 19th century. At W.M. Keck Lecture Hall SCI-Arc. Lectures can be streamed live on SCI-Arc's Web site at [www.sciarc.edu/live](http://www.sciarc.edu/live).

#### **Steven Holl New York City**

*February 21, 2008*

New York architect Steven Holl's diverse commissions are unified by his philosophy that "architecture does not so much intrude on the landscape as it serves to explain it." He will talk about how his designs offer a nuanced experience of unfolding space, which demonstrates architecture's "potential to shape experience, interrelating body, brain, and world." At the Great Hall, Cooper Union. Call 212/753-1722 or visit [www.archleague.org](http://www.archleague.org).



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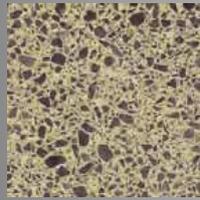
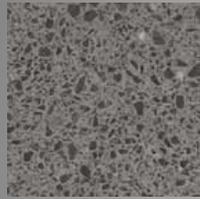
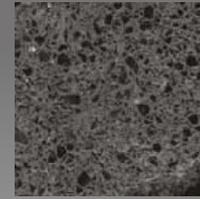
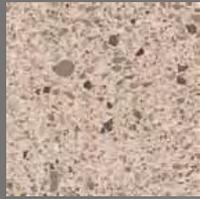


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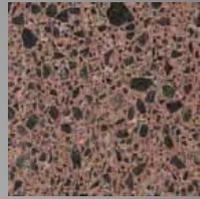
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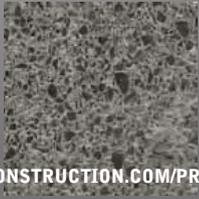
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Director Carol Willis on  
Harvey Wiley Corbett,  
"New Stones for Old"

skyscraper.org/programs

## Dates & Events

### Competitions

#### **AIA New York Chapter Design Awards**

*Entry Form and Fee Deadline: February 8, 2008*

*Submission Deadline: February 22, 2008*

The annual Design Awards Program recognizes excellence for architectural design by New York City architects and for architectural work in New York City. The purpose of the awards program is to increase awareness of outstanding architectural design and to honor the architects, clients, and consultants who work together to improve the built environment. For more information, visit [www.aiainy.org/designawards](http://www.aiainy.org/designawards).

#### **The 2008 Cavin Family Traveling Fellowship**

*Deadline: February 15, 2008*

A design competition will determine the scholar who will receive the foreign travel study fellowship. Candidates must be U.S. citizens under 35 years of age on March 1, 2008. Candidates must have a professional architecture degree from Cal Poly Pomona or the University of Oregon. Visit [www.cavinfellowship.org](http://www.cavinfellowship.org) for additional information.

#### **Millennium School Design Competition**

*Registration Deadline: February 29, 2008*

Millennium School is a design competition for school buildings in developing countries located in the tropics. The Millennium School Design Competition is part of the Be Better Build Better Campaign and aims to solicit the best architecture-for-humanity designs from all over the world. For further information, visit [www.millennium-school.org](http://www.millennium-school.org).

#### **Jeld-Wen Student Design Competition**

*Deadline: February 29, 2008*

Door manufacturer Jeld-Wen challenges students to design an entry door. Winners will be selected in spring 2008 by a panel of independent industry professionals and Jeld-Wen experts. The winning students' door designs will be announced at the Pacific Coast Builders Conference in San Francisco, June 25–27, 2008. Visit [www.jeld-wen.com](http://www.jeld-wen.com).

#### **Holcim Awards: For Sustainable Construction**

*Deadline: February 29, 2008*

Past winners have included architects, urban planners, civil engineers, professors, industrial

engineers, students, and a marine biologist. The Holcim Awards promote innovation in sustainable construction around the world. For more information, visit [www.holcimawards.org](http://www.holcimawards.org).

#### **Flip a Strip: A National Architectural Design Competition**

*Submission deadline: March 31, 2008*

*Exhibition: October 2008*

This innovative project will foster creative new visions for the renovation of the small-scale strip shopping plazas that line the streets of virtually every suburban zone in the country. Ringed by parking and adjacent to thriving neighborhoods, these strip malls have great potential for adaptive reuse and architectural upgrades. They are an undervalued and neglected building stock. This competition will look at options for making strip malls economically viable, aesthetically interesting, and communally meaningful. For more information, visit [www.flipastrip.org](http://www.flipastrip.org).

#### **White House Redux**

*Deadline: April 2008*

The original White House design, by James Hoban, was the result of a competition held in 1792. Over the centuries, presidents have added rooms, facilities, and new wings, turning the White House into the labyrinthine complex it is today. What would a White House designed in 2008, year of election of the 44th President of the United States, look like? White House Redux is a global call for ideas. For more information, visit [www.storefrontnews.org](http://www.storefrontnews.org).

#### **International Design Competition for the Magok Waterfront, Seoul, Korea**

*Project Design Submission Period: June 5, 2008*

The goal of the competition is to transform the area of Magok into a tourist, commerce, and environmentally friendly waterfront area, in line with Seoul's Han River Renaissance Project, through the participation and input of various professionals and experts from Korea and abroad. For additional information, visit [www.magokwaterfront.org](http://www.magokwaterfront.org).

*E-mail event and competition information two months in advance to [elizabeth\\_broome@mcgraw-hill.com](mailto:elizabeth_broome@mcgraw-hill.com).*

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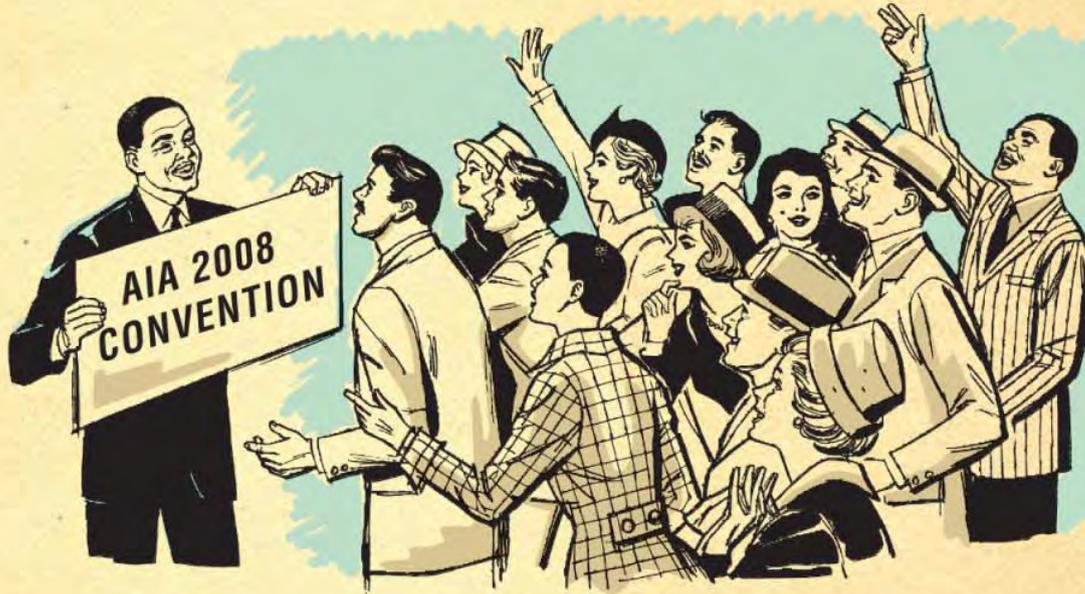
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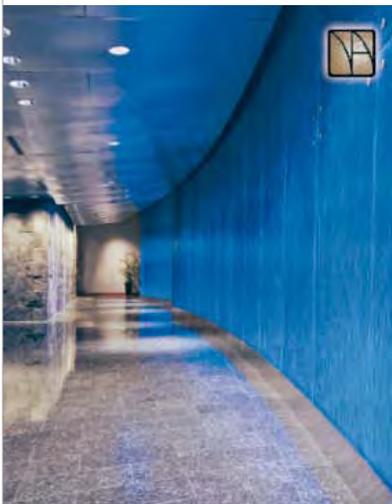


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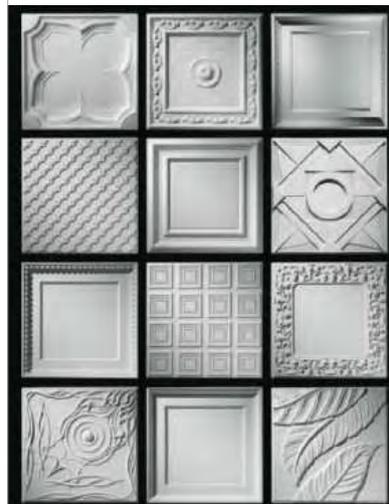


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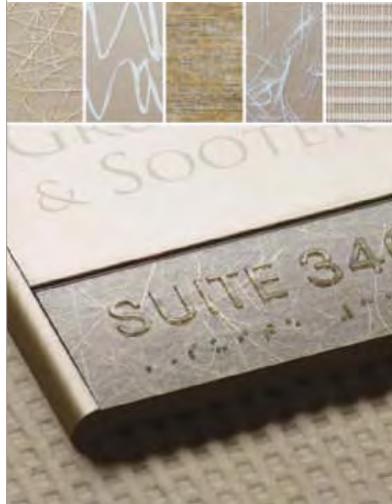


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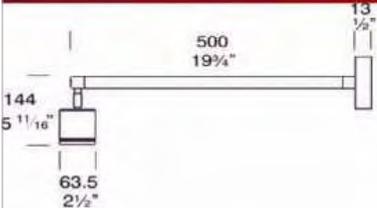
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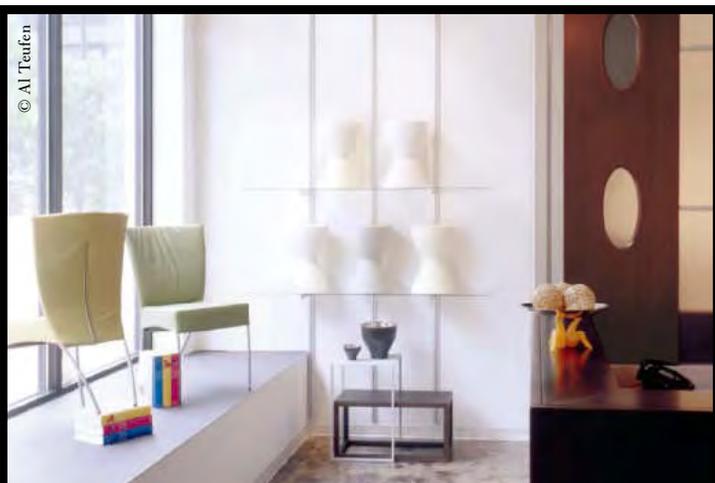
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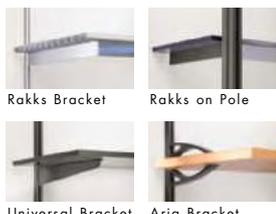
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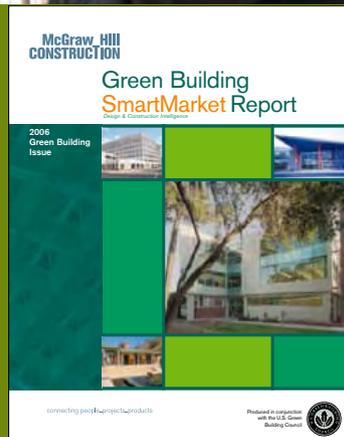
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# Kitchen & Bath Portfolio

The editors of Architectural Record are calling for entries for the 2008 Kitchen & Bath Portfolio. Entry is open to any registered architect who has recently completed an innovative kitchen and/or bath project. Of interest are projects that feature unexpected materials, address unique client needs, or are designed in a manner that allows these utilitarian spaces to be both functional and beautiful.

There is no fee. Submissions should include images (color prints, large-format transparencies, or high-res digital images on CD along with a labeled color printout), a brief project description, floor plan, and a complete credit and product source list. No slides or e-mailed submissions please. Materials must be postmarked by Friday, April 4th. Selected entries will be featured in RECORD's July 2008 issue.



**Mail submissions to**  
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 Kitchen & Bath Portfolio  
 ARCHITECTURAL RECORD  
 Two Penn Plaza  
 9th Floor  
 New York NY 10121  
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# The Architect's Hand



## Ohio sprawling across the page



**Suburb 3 (top), ink on watercolor paper, 2005. Suburb 8 (above), ink on watercolor paper, 2005.**

Cul-de-sacs in Brent Buck's fantastical suburban community, based on Perrysburg, Ohio, probably outnumber the 80 or so residents of his boyhood town, Curtice, Ohio. After noticing on a trip home how close suburban development had crept to his small community, 28-year-old Buck produced a series of ink drawings to criticize the oddity and tedium of suburban places. "The irony is that buyers want these idyllic connections to nature, but they end up stamping nature out with aesthetically indifferent McMansions," Buck comments.

An architectural designer at Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects in New York, Buck describes his drawing process as introverted, acting like a "conversation with yourself in which you try to figure things out." He usually works with a fine-point permanent marker, speeding through drawings such as the one above in an hour, glossing over mistakes and "getting lost" in the process. Explaining his preference for ink, Buck emphasizes the benefits of not erasing or dwelling on mistakes:

"The ability not to erase lets me see more intently, because it requires a certain amount of foresight before drawing. Even if you make errors, they become part of the drawing and ultimately add to the life of it."

Buck began each suburb drawing from observation, sitting before a particularly odd house or scanning aerial maps. Then he improvised across the page to express an extreme of the basic conditions he saw. As a result of Buck's rapid but meditative process, the line sprawls across the page like suburbs across the land, while maintaining a great vitality. Studying these intense but whimsical lines, which stray from boundaries and accuracy here and there, we experience moments of surprise and intrigue. If only we could say the same about the suburbs. *Henry Ng*



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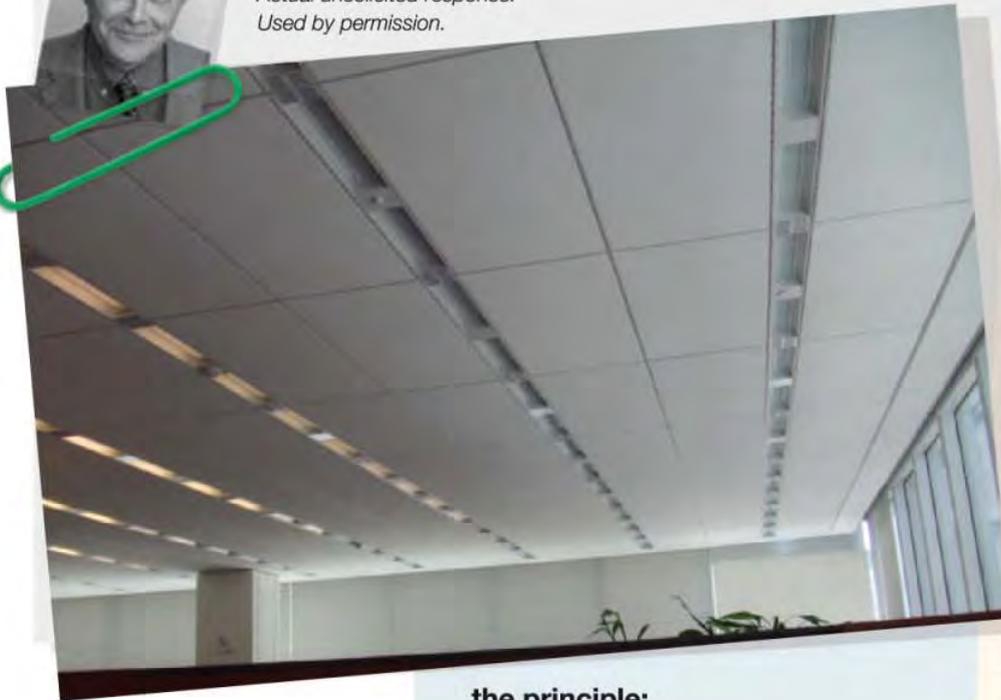
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