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TO DRAW BY HAND OR BY MOUSE?

The dean of an East Coast architecture school was recently asked, “do you still teach your students hand drawing?” “No,” he responded, “and we don’t use slide rules or Rapidograph pens. Students today come to us as totally embedded in the digital world and that’s how they communicate and think.”

Yet here at *AN* we seem to receive a book or peer review journal nearly every week on the importance of freehand drawing in architectural practice. There is no question that buildings are no longer constructed following pages of hand drawings—that it is now entirely digital and the process is smoother and more precise for it. In addition, there is a digital divide still in the profession between those who trained and began practice doing hand drawings and those who learned entirely on a computer. Richard Meier famously goes nowhere near a computer. He gives his hand drawings to a computer savvy office worker to translate into useable digital files. The late Michael Graves, according to J. Michael Welton, who recently published *Drawing From Practice*, believed, “computers are now taking the architect away from what he and others call ‘humanism.’” More convincingly, Graves also claimed, “a drawing leaves the question open, and leads to the next drawing.” A computer, he argued, does the opposite. “It wants the finality of closing the question.”

The beautiful watercolor drawings by Steven Holl are a testament to the power a hand drawing can still have in the design process. The real question is whether it is still necessary or even helpful for architects to know how to do a quick and simple hand sketch or rendering? Is anything more lost by architectural design and representation being filtered through a mouse pad than when writers changed from typewriters to computers?

Drawings are in some way drawings whether they are done by hand or a computer. Peter Cook, for one, claims, “one or two of us don’t much care whether the drawing itself is covered in lead and sweat, caressed by layers of sediment or watercolor, is a partly photo-shopped manipulation, is caressed by the soothing characteristics of Maya, or dragged at extra speed through a printing machine.” It is that quick transformation of an idea represented on a page before it goes into CATIA or Rhino that is the most exciting part of the design process and how it is expressed, represented, and communicated.

Carlo Scarpa famously wrote, “I place things in front of me, on the paper, so I can see them. I want to see, therefore I draw. I can see an image only if I draw it.” There is still an open question whether computer drawings have this immediacy—let alone the poetry and design of the best hand rendering. In the late 1960 and 70s, as conceptual and video art swept through the art schools, artists did not drop drawing and painting. Much of today’s most compelling art is a synthesis of all these modes of presentation. Likewise, schools of architecture should not take a one-size-fits-all approach to representation and exclusively teach the digital.

It is likely we are in the middle of a change in design production similar to the moment Brunelleschi left the workshop and went into a quiet room to draw. But architecture schools should continue to promote the idea of collage in representation, so that all ideas are displayed equally, not flattened by design programs onto a monitor.

**WILLIAM MENKING**



Houston’s flourishing arts and culture firmament stands to gain another leg-up, with master plans for the first Houston Botanic Garden underway. The non-profit organization has designated landscape architecture practice West 8 to helm plans for a new garden on the site of the 120-acre Glenbrook Park Golf Course, located between downtown and Hobby Airport. Houston Botanic Garden will take control of the site, which is currently leased to it by the City of Houston, if it can raise \$20 million by the end of 2017.

West 8, which was commissioned on April 1 following a national search process, is in the midst of site analysis and input from local stakeholders regarding a vision for the cultural institution. “The arts community is very strong in Houston, so this botanic garden is kind of a high-level vision of what we hope to achieve,” said Jamie Maslyn Larson, principal-in-charge of West 8’s American projects.

Bisected by the Sims Bayou, the Glenbrook site hosts multiple wet and dry ecosystems and is integrated with a flood-proof channel. Meanwhile, the 18-hole golf course’s undulating topography offers both challenges and perks, said Larson. “Fortunately, there are a lot of great shade trees and the potential to shape and sculpt the land in a way that’s already providing views and vistas, and we would like to expand the vocabulary that’s already there,” she said.

Given Houston’s heat and humidity, providing adequate shade, air circulation, and flood prevention will be a necessity for the design. “Anything you design in Houston has to honor the hydraulic conditions. It would be our plan to capture rainwater and reuse it as much as possible,” said Jeff Ross, president and CEO of Houston Botanic Garden.

The Glenbrook site is surrounded by two residential areas, rendering it “less commercial” than the other considered site, the Gus Wortham Golf Course north of Idylwood. The Botanic Garden lost a bid in January to the Houston Golf Association for that plot of land.

Larson explained that the designers are fine with the site they ended up with, swampy terrain and all. “We’re thrilled that there’s water on the [Glenbrook] site. On two levels: There’s the meandering channel, which makes part of the garden like an island because you have to cross bridges to get there...it’s definitely something that we think has potential to make a more visceral experience in the garden,” she said, adding that the Sims Bayou will be a linchpin for education, conservation, and research within the garden. “Part of Houston Botanical Garden’s goal is to really get integrated with the science community and with children so the garden can really be the go-to-place for Houstonians to get real hands-on experience in the garden and learn concepts that are more tactile.” **KINDRA COOPER**

LETTER

**MEET THE STREET**

We saw your editorial on design organizations yesterday (“Design Organizations Need to Meet the Street,” *AN* 04\_03.18.2015) and were thrilled to see the positive things you had to say about the Center for Architecture. After repositioning the Center as a 501(c)3, we are more committed than ever to public outreach and really promoting the idea that design matters to a general audience. We’re very proud of our storefront and we’re happy to hear you are too.

CAMILA SCHAULSOHN  
AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER, CENTER  
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**CORRECTIONS**

In our Q&A with Marshall Strabala (*ANMW* 04\_04.15.2015), we misattributed the lead architects of the Shanghai Tower. Expected to open later this year, the Shanghai Tower was designed by a Gensler team led by Jun Xia, of which Strabala was a director of design. Before he left to start his own firm, 2DEFINE Architecture, Strabala worked with architects at Gensler on the Shanghai Tower, as well as Thornton Tomasetti, Cosentini, PHA, Tongji University, and Edgett Williams Consulting Group.

In our feature article on the development of a General Plan for Houston (“Houston, We Have A Plan,” *ANSW* 02\_03.11.2015) we

mistakenly listed the Kinder Foundation as a stakeholder in the General Plan. In fact, the Kinder Foundation is not involved in the General Plan in any way.

We regret the errors.

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## THE BELL RINGS IN SILENCE

There's one question on everybody's mind in New York this spring: What happened to **Rick Bell**? On March 27, without warning or explanation, the former executive director of AIANY and the Center for Architecture tendered his resignation, effective immediately, which AIANY's board of directors promptly accepted. The unforthcoming announcement stirred up a steamy fountain of rumor and conjecture—very little of it fit for printing—over what could have precipitated Bell's speedy departure, and AIANY's continued reticence on the matter (there seems to be a gag order in place among its staff) hasn't done anything to lessen the sheer salacious heights to which the gossip has climbed. Bell, for his part, doesn't seem to be very phased by the upheaval. Eavesdrop spotted him at the Storefront for Art and Architecture's annual benefit party—held this year in the un-finished lobby of the **Rafael Viñoly**-designed 432 Park Avenue—wearing a T-shirt that read "I Am Still Alive" and smiling like the cat that ate the canary. Also like a cat, Bell has landed on his feet. On May 8, New York City Department of Design and Construction Commissioner **Feniosky Peña-Mora** announced that the agency had hired him as its executive director of design and construction excellence. Meanwhile, in an interesting game of musical chairs, the AIANY appointed **David Burney**, who recently left his post as commissioner of the DDC, as its interim executive director.

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### UNVEILED

#### THE NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MUSEUM

The National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation has unveiled a design by Safdie Architects for the United States' first-ever museum dedicated to telling the story of the Medal of Honor and those who have earned it.

Located at Patriot's Point in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, on the east side of Charleston Harbor, the museum's site has as its most prominent built neighbors the cable-stayed Ravenel Bridge and the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Yorktown, which itself is now a museum. Safdie Architects took these two icons of the region as contextual inspiration for its design. The concrete and glass structure has a similar gray-blue color as the Yorktown. Perched over its wetland site on pylons, the building rises to 128 feet high, standing above the surrounding trees and matching the height of the aircraft carrier. Five galleries radiate out to form a central atrium, leveraging out in section and creating a sense of tension and strength, much like that expressed by the

bridge. Panels in the skylit ceiling of the atrium form a five-pointed star, the symbol of the Medal of Honor.

The museum's entry is housed in a green-roofed pavilion building that also accommodates a 240-seat auditorium, museum shop, curatorial and archival space, and administrative offices for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, and the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation. A 140-seat chapel

overlooks the sea at the tip of the site, connecting to the museum by a two-level pedestrian bridge.

Silver Spring, Maryland-based Gallagher & Associates is planning and designing the exhibition spaces. The museum is expected to cost \$98 million and to open in early 2018. **AARON SEWARD**

**Architect:** Safdie Architects  
**Client:** National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation  
**Location:** Mount Pleasant, South Carolina  
**Completion Date:** 2018



COURTESY THE NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MUSEUM FOUNDATION



DC PUBLIC LIBRARY

### UPDATED PLANS RELEASED FOR MIES' MLK LIBRARY IN D.C.

## THE MIESIAN TOUCH

In early 2014, the District of Columbia Public Library announced that the Washington, D.C.-based Martinez + Johnson and the Dutch firm Mecanoo won the competition to reimagine its central branch, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library—a Mies van der Rohe-designed building that opened in 1972. In the teams' submission, they pledged to "improve Mies in a contemporary Miesian way."

Now, after about a year of feedback, the library has released a new batch of images, after a \$208 million renovation. However, a representative for Martinez + Johnson told AN

that the plan is still evolving and these images are really more ideas than concrete plans. More finalized plans are expected when the two firms present to the Historic Preservation Review Board and the Fine Arts Commission in June.

The new images depict significant changes from the first go-round, such as an undulating, one-story glass pavilion that would be used for library programming, and topped by a green roof. Interior spaces have also been retrofitted to accommodate educational technologies and a wider array of programming, in addition to a performance space and a Maker Space inside the building.

This project has a long way to go before construction starts. *The Washington Business Journal* reported that most of the funds will not be released until 2018 or 2019. **HENRY MELCHER**

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### THE GREY

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One of Savannah's long-shuttered Art Moderne marvels, the former Greyhound Bus Depot on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, has been reborn as an elegant bar and

restaurant, aptly named The Grey. Managing partner John Morisana teamed up with chef Mashama Bailey, who spent much of her childhood in the Spanish Moss-laden city, to open the local eatery.

New York-based studio Parts and Labor Design (PLD) collaborated with local firm Felder & Associates to rehabilitate the 1938 bus terminal, originally designed by architect George Brown. "We wanted to pay homage to the design style, but do it in our own way," explained Jeremy Levitt, principal at PLD.

The designers revived the space through a combination of meticulous restoration and new modern furnishings and decorative

lighting. They captured the era's streamlined geometric forms and, instead of skirting around the terminal's complicated history, thoughtfully maintained remnants from the building's Jim Crow-era past. The waiting room once designated for African American passengers is now a vestibule and restrooms displaying the photography of Jerry Harris, whose work Levitt characterized as "racially charged but appropriate" of the African American experience in Savannah.

The old depot's labyrinth of rooms has been transformed into a gracefully meandering series of spaces to eat, drink, and socialize. A casual diner at the front—anchored by a bar

made of blue vinyl, white oak, and zinc—leads into an expansive dining area, which was formerly the main terminal. Decorative, water-jet-cut stainless steel panels are mounted to the original Masonite, a nod to the art deco roots of the building. Upstairs on the second level, the female bus drivers' shower room, featuring the original mint green tiles and clad in oak paneling and stainless steel, has been converted into a private dining room. Downstairs, the men's bunker is now the wine cellar, and the boiler room serves as another intimate private dining room. The yard where buses used to pull up is an outdoor area for live music and pig roasts. **NICOLE ANDERSON**

BELZBERG ARCHITECTS DELIVERS AN UNEXPECTED DESIGN FOR A BEVERLY HILLS OFFICE

## SURPRISES UNDER THE SKIN



Driving along Wilshire towards its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard, one is distracted from the usual backup of traffic by a most unusual building. At first glance it appears disturbingly

assertive: a shiny bauble shoehorned into the inept historicism and generic modernism at the edge of Beverly Hills' Golden Triangle. The glass facades feel puffed up, like a cluster of soap

bubbles and capped by a lacy, undulating canopy. However, it's unwise to rely on first impressions. Never judge a book by its cover, or dismiss a party guest who may be talking too loudly and wearing too bright a jacket, but turns out to be the most interesting person in the room. So it is with the Gores Group offices: a model of invention and sustainability.

Belzberg Architects remodeled 9800 Wilshire for the private equity firm, creating the most innovative skin, interior, and roof garden of any commercial building in Los Angeles. Its third floor is linked by a bridge spanning an alley to another suite of offices atop a new six-level parking structure on South Spaulding. "We covered the two facades in bubble wrap, to create performance patterning, activating the surfaces with the reflections of moving traffic," said Hagy Belzberg. "In addition, it's a thermal barrier that shuts out noise, filters light, and ensures privacy for the occupants." Buses and trucks pass within ten feet of the north face, and they are turned into a kinetic spectacle for pedestrians and silent phantoms for those within.

Smooth limestone clads the original shear walls at the base, and the stone was water-blasted to extend the curvilinear forms of the glass, so that the whole facade dissolves into motion. The former CAA Building (now occupied by Sony) is a sensuous sweep of travertine that Michael Ovitz commissioned from I.M. Pei, but it has worn rather badly, and now looks drab beside its new neighbor.

It took 18 months of R&D with Wiretech, an Ohio-based company that produces slumped glass, to test different thicknesses and come up with the right shape in repeatable panels. The Gores facade comprises three variations, randomly arranged. In the 3.5 inches of separation between the flat inner surface and the double outer skin is a layer of polycarbonate that serves, like fritting, as a privacy screen. It allows occupants to see out but not be seen. Hot air is evacuated from the inner space in summer and recycled to warm the interiors in winter.

The offices are entered from the alley to the rear. Belzberg and project architect Cory Taylor retained much of the existing steel-framed

structure, but punched out a central void for a lofty reception area and skylit stair hall, which pulls natural light into the center of the building and serves as a social condenser that fosters interaction between staff working on different floors. The staircase is treated as a sculpture that mimics the fluidity of the exterior. Water-bent strips of whitened ash form a continuous arched balustrade that turns and ascends through the four stories and frames a glimpse of a rooftop tree. The conference room opening out of the lobby, and the top-floor boardroom are walled in glass to convey a sense of transparency, as are most of the private offices. Across the bridge is a racetrack plan of glazed offices that open onto a richly planted courtyard that convey a sense of *rus in urbes*. Joan Behnke selected furnishings that give the interiors a residential feel, and made good use of the firm's contemporary art collection.

The roof garden is a first for Beverly Hills, and Belzberg had to fight for six months to secure a waiver on the absurd regulation that allows only



BENNY CHAN

service equipment. A new roof, reinforced to support a greater load and conceal ducts, was installed. Concrete pavers alternate with plantings and seating for alfresco lunches and receptions. Undulating canopies of fretted white-lacquered steel cast lacy shadows and echo the profile of the Hollywood Hills. It's an additional facade that peeks down to the street and can be enjoyed by the occupants of taller buildings. Landscaping enhances the workplace and contributes to the sustainability of the building. Hopefully the city will drop its irrational prohibition and encourage others to emulate Gores.

**MICHAEL WEBB**





COURTESY LUTRON

## JOEL SPIRA, 1927–2015

The name might not sound familiar, but his vision and products have affected us all. Mr. Spira was the founder of Lutron Electronics, a lighting control company based in Coopersburg, Pennsylvania, located outside of Allentown, Pennsylvania. Dimmers were originally introduced to create ambiance by lowering light levels and creating warm glows while saving energy. One of Lutron’s original marketing slogans encouraged customers to use dimmers to “dial romance.”

Today, the field of lighting controls has grown to include multiple energy-saving applications—reducing excessive or redundant light in spaces and creating multiple aesthetic moods in a simple space. The field now addresses both electric and natural light, with the addition of silent and automatic daylight shading devices to minimize glare and maximize additional energy savings. All of this growth is based upon the simple rotary, solid state (triac) dimmer that every house has over the dining room table. That same dimmer, which Mr. Joel Spira invented in 1961, now resides in the Smithsonian Institute.

I originally met Mr. Spira when I worked for Lutron Electronics after graduating from The Pennsylvania State University. As an architectural Engineering student I had several internships at various Philadelphia Architectural firms. Because I had one lighting class, I was the expert and began specifying lighting and controls. At a product fair, I saw a table full of working dimmers and began evaluating the products that I had previously specified. Six months later, I was working for Lutron, a company that typically hired mechanical and electrical engineering graduates. As a designer I was an experiment, but their leap of faith showed Lutron’s commitment to talent diversification and to supporting multiple university programs.

At first, Mr. Spira was intimidating to work for. Not because of his demeanor or actions, but because of his true brilliance, his tough questions, and his refusal to accept failure. It was this tenacity that continually pushed the company and inspired all of his employees. Anything could be done: For example, when frustrated with the multiple remote controls for his television and electronics, he envisioned and developed the first master remote control. This was back when most of us didn’t even have remotes for our televisions. His vision and ability to see product possibilities based

on ergonomic or human factors ensured a steady stream of products years before any of his competitors. We can all remember the Nova linear slide dimmer, or the game changing GRAFIK Eye preset controls, that made preset scenes simple, practical, and affordable.

Mr. Spira’s own life experiences shaped the company that he formed. He served in the Navy as a radar designer during World War II and then received a physics degree from Purdue University. The company has been committed to hiring engineers from the college since day one and Mr. Spira was also committed to supporting returning military troops. Lutron continues to recruit and hire Junior Military Officers, and did so long before it was fashionable.

He was a true visionary. While in the Orient, sourcing electronic components, he discovered Asian Pears. He became an expert on the pears, and eventually started his own orchards in Pennsylvania. Soon after, his orchards and new ways to market the pears created one of the largest Asian Pear orchards in the United States. Not bad for an engineer.

As the company expanded rapidly, Mr. Spira’s sense of family and commitment and loyalty to employees was shared throughout the company. It truly was a family affair. While Joel was envisioning products and refining old ones, his wife Ruth ran the communications department. One of his own daughters, Susan Hakkarainen, had to work her own way up through the company and is now a co-chairman. The Lutron family meant something unique to Mr. Spira, and there are numerous multi-generational families still working there.

We all must follow our passions, and Mr. Spira respected that, too. In the mid 1980s, I left Lutron to follow my passion: lighting design. Over the years our relationship actually grew, even though we were miles apart and had more limited interactions. Like always, when Joel talked with you, he always had time to really listen to what you were saying. Candid conversations about the lighting marketplace or the future of controls evolved into documentation and product changes happening overnight. Not only did he listen, he acted upon conversations. He always looked at what his customers’ needs and wants were and worked back to a solution or product. As a result, his impact in the architectural design community has been enormous. In fact, Lutron controls are in most landmark projects around the world.

That original dimmer provided drama and mood for residential projects, and that evolved into the world of hospitality projects. With the perfection of solid-state fluorescent dimming, the use of Lutron products in the commercial world allowed for full-range dimming previously limited to residential and hospitality projects. Today, Lutron’s product advancements continue with wireless controls for lighting as well as shading systems. These products add the benefit of energy efficiency and have helped billions of square feet of global real estate achieve sustainability goals and reduce their environmental footprints.

While known as the man behind the modern dimmer, Joel Spira has truly left his mark on the world and his spirit will glow into the future, a true inspiration to us all.

**CHIP ISRAEL IS THE CEO AND FOUNDER OF LIGHTING DESIGN ALLIANCE.**



Photograph: Tom Jernigan

## Sub Culture

Every day 300,000 subway riders stream through Manhattan’s **Fulton Center**, their underground trek now brightened by entertainment venues and daylight reflected from its skylit cable-net overhead. An integrated artwork by **James Carpenter Design Associates**, **Grimshaw Architects**, and **Arup**, this marvel of collaboration is a new bright spot beneath city streets. Read more about it in **Metals in Construction** online.

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It has been a long winter in New York. Spring is finally burning off the fog of malaise that has seemed to settle on many New Yorkers. Fatigued by crowded subways with increasingly frequent delays and endless talk about skyrocketing rents and rising costs of living, New York hasn't seemed like the vibrant, stimulating urban caldron that it used to be.

In cultural circles there has been endless hand-wringing about the state of the city's museums, most exemplified by the many critical freak-outs about the current Björk exhibition at MoMA, which most art writers have dismissed as both cynical and superficial—symptomatic of a slavish drive for spectacle events over serious artistic or scholarly engagement. Playful yet earnest, the Whitney Museum has often served as a foil to MoMA's high gloss enterprises. So the Whitney's confident return in a new Renzo Piano-designed home at the foot of the High Line feels like a refreshing and edifying corrective.

Whitney officials have touted the new building as a "playground for artists." A small historical show in the museum's free gallery off the lobby documents this artist-centric tradition, which dates to the museum's founding by the sculptor and heiress Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. The museum's smart, low-key curators want to keep that

tradition alive even as they join the big leagues, and they have had a direct hand in the shaping of the building to suit their needs. The museum has gained a tremendous amount of new gallery space (50 percent more than in their old Marcel Breuer-designed home) of differing scales and lighting conditions, all of which are designed to be easily reconfigured as needed. They also have, for the first time, a small auditorium and theater for film and performance events, which opens out to a large terrace. Even better, the art looks great on the walls. Now we get to see much more of the Whitney's important collection, and the museum can better examine and interrogate the history and future of American art.

Just as important, the museum and its architects (Renzo Piano Building Workshop partnered with Cooper Robertson & Partners) have created a viewer-centric space. It's a big building that never succumbs to gigantism. It offers many places for reflection, refreshment, and repose, like sofas facing out to the High Line or the Hudson. It also offers options to relax and avoid museum fatigue, like a pleasant café on the eighth floor, or a series of terraces overlooking the world famous elevated park. You can also take the exterior stairs from terrace to terrace for still more fresh air and remarkable city views.

Many have complained about the building's somewhat ungainly exterior, which has two very different



JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO

faces. The Hudson-facing side is canted and ship-like except for a protruding rectangular volume. The High Line facing side is even more of a jumble, with the stepped back terraces and spindly staircases and catwalks. Given the context of the formerly industrial Meatpacking District, Piano's building doesn't seem entirely out of place. He seems to have designed the building from the inside out, putting function first and capitalizing on the surprisingly spectacular site.

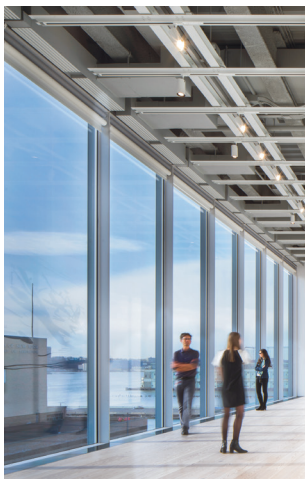
It is also built to withstand Sandy-scale or worse weather events, a necessity given its riverside location. No art is held below the third floor, save for a small (again, free to the public!) gallery on the ground floor, which could easily be evacuated.

Piano's building lacks the rich tectonics and the memorable heft of the vacated Breuer building uptown. While moving through Breuer's building was a profound architectural experience imbued

**The new Whitney in the Meat Packing District affords views of both the High Line and Hudson River from different perches and terraces.**

with a sense of craft and traces of the hand of the architect, Piano's Whitney is more like a machine for viewing. Piano and the Whitney curators understand that viewing art is not a static act, but rather a sequence of experiences of looking, focusing and unfocusing, thinking, moving, standing, sitting, etc. Its gently lit galleries, carefully framed views of city and river, and moments for reflection, combine to create perhaps the most satisfying museum environment among the city's large art museums. It's enriching rather than exhausting.

Piano may not have made a building to love, but he has made a building that will allow the Whitney to evolve and grow in its ambitions, and possibly to become an institution about which weary New Yorkers can rejoice. **ALAN G. BRAKE**



NIC LEHOUX



THE WHITNEY RETURNS DOWNTOWN, WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

## VESTIGES OF BOHEMIAN NEW YORK

The beloved Marcel Breuer headquarters for the Whitney Museum of American Art at Madison Avenue and 75<sup>th</sup> Street was in fact the institution’s third home since Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney founded it in 1931.

With the May 1 opening of a fourth, Renzo Piano–designed Whitney location at the southern Gansevoort Street source of the High Line (and with the Breuer building secure in the operating and contemporary curatorial hands of the Metropolitan Museum), the time is right to understand its architectural origins and creative pedigree.

Miss Vanderbilt grew up in what still holds the record as New York’s biggest residence: the 103-room 1893 Renaissance Revival house built for her father Cornelius II. It stood until 1925 on the Grand Army Plaza site that now features the Bergdorf Goodman flagship as opened in 1928, designed by the 20<sup>th</sup> century maverick Ely Jacques Kahn.

The Mansion was designed by the Beaux Arts trained architect George Browne Post, whose greatest surviving trace is the newly glistening, hipster-haven Williamsburg Savings Bank at the foot of its name-sharing Bridge. (If still standing, the old Vanderbilt mansion could by birthright be home to great-grandson Anderson Cooper...)

As a wealthy self-defined bohemian and skilled sculptor, daughter Gertrude set out in 1907 for Greenwich Village, where she created her first studio in a former stable at 19 MacDougal Alley, the mews-like cul-de-sac between West 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Square North. This first burst of gentrification was steadily followed by the acquisition of four 1830s Greek Revival brownstones, numbered 8 to 14 along West 8<sup>th</sup> Street proper, as well as the alleyway stables attached to each.

As her real estate footprint grew, so did her circle of fellow contemporary artists and the impulse to collect and display this collective accomplishment. The amalgamation of now interlaced buildings, which she started to call the Whitney Studio Club, set the stage. It was her home, her workplace, her personal *kunsthalle*, and a welcoming salon for artist friends often shunned elsewhere. Here was held, for example, the first exhibitions of John Sloane and Edward Hopper.

Perhaps of foremost initial design importance was her own personal sculpting studio built atop 19 MacDougal, conceived by her artistic fellow traveler, Robert Winthrop Chanler, as multi-media *gesamtkunstwerk* of painted bas-relief, decorated surfaces, and stained glass windows. (The Chanler Studio in particular has been on the World Monuments Fund’s renowned Watch List since 2012.)

When the by then Mrs. Vanderbilt Whitney’s offer to donate 700 contemporary artworks by Americans was refused by the Metropolitan Museum (Hopper? No thank you.), as well as soon after by the Euro-centric Museum of American Art, she created the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1931. Taking matters into her own hands, Gertrude launched it for the display and appreciation of contemporary art—the 20<sup>th</sup>-century up until then and proceeding onward. She did so with her long-time assistant, Juliana Force, recognized ever after as the Whitney Museum’s first director.

These two women—besides their art

collecting—were also an important, unsung catalyst for modern interior design and the evenly-illuminated white cube aesthetic that still sets the standard of museums worldwide, even as they keep growing in scale and room-denying flexibility. This architecture unfolded in a warren of early 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic residential interiors with attached stables, whose generous volumes emerged with the removal of stalls and haylofts. The result helped foretell the formal future of museums, even as its historic role goes largely unnoticed today.

Mrs. Whitney and Ms. Force did so in partnership with the design team consisting first and foremost of her son-in-law, architect Auguste Noël, and his umlaut-free firm of Noel & Miller Architects. Like Jacques Kahn, this team was Beaux Arts trained, yielding to the classically descended vocabulary of art deco and especially its later offshoot, *moderne*, which heralded capital-M Modernism. They worked with a society interior designer of like urbanity, Bruce Buttfield.

In 1954, the Museum decamped for its second home, which was a building on West 54<sup>th</sup> Street just west of Philip Johnson’s reconfigured MOMA sculpture garden, where the Taniguchi’s Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Educational and Research Center stands today. It too was designed for the Whitney/Force duo by Noel & Miller, but it turned out the shadow of its juggernaut neighbor was too strong both physically and metaphorically and off they went to commission the great Breuer reverse juggernaut masterpiece, which opened in 1967 as an instant landmark on the Upper East Side. Contextual it was not.

It was at this time that the old Whitney Studio and Museum crucible on West 8<sup>th</sup> Street became the New York Studio School (NYSS), opening in the academic year 1964/65. Now at the half-century mark, this Whitney legacy holds a place as a leading independent school of fine art pedagogy grounded in the traditional atelier of life study and a rigorous pedagogy to provide the springboard for a professional career. It resolutely does so in the heart of Greenwich Village, existing today as a precious trace of New York’s first Bohemia on what is now a street undergoing rapid commercial and residential gentrification. Stepping inside, the visitor today discovers a fascinating palimpsest of the old townhouses and former stable voids altered as galleries with then-radical recessed bands of ceiling lights and *moderne* details of travertine floors, aluminum railings, and jazzy doorjamb thresholds. This glimpse of design modernism and its tie to American art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as it prepared for global supremacy in the wake of World War II is a sort of secret cultural treasure, living and breathing still as a place for making art.

The Whitney’s return downtown brings it closer to home as still evident to the roving architectural eye. Take a look when next passing by. **PAUL GUNTHER**



COURTESY NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL



Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill  
Structural Engineer: WSP Cantor Seinuk  
Photograph: Tex Jernigan

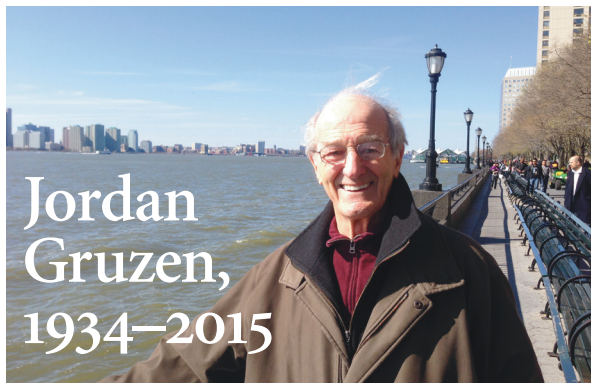
# World View

While the world watched, **One World Trade Center** grew in both height and symbolism, its 1,776-foot crystalline form bringing unmatched views back to Lower Manhattan. A redundant structural steel frame, the result of creative collaboration between **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** and **WSP Cantor Seinuk**, ensures that its safety is as substantial as its stature. Read more about it in **Metals in Construction** online.

 **Steel Institute of New York**

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COURTESY GRUZEN + PARTNERS

I met Jordan in the fall of 1952, quite by accident, having jumped from a diving board and landed on him in the Lawrence Anderson–designed pool at M.I.T. We were both about to begin the five-year program in the School of Architecture under Pietro Belluschi’s deanship.

Cambridge appeared to us to be the center of the world of architecture then, and we enjoyed the relief from the cold winters and intense charrettes by often heading to northern Vermont to go skiing on weekends. He was a natural athlete and excellent skier. It was a good counter measure to the close-in detailed design work at the School of Architecture where India-ink drawing was the norm of presentation, and we often worked through the night.

After a year, as Fulbrights he went to Italy and me to France; we travelled through Spain and Morocco, and I became familiar with Jordan’s unrelenting enthusiasm and positive personality. He wanted to see and do everything, even feasting with a Moroccan family where they gave us each a lamb’s eye as a delicacy that we weren’t expected to refuse.

Our friendship developed through an obvious mutual love of architecture and in spite of different personalities. He was the perennial optimist seeing his father’s firm, Kelly+Gruzen, quickly succeed, and I more the pessimist, having fled Germany with my family at the start of World War II, often worried about the future.

I joined the firm in the early 1960s when Jordan’s father, Barney, ran the office with an iron fist. Staff was often terrified of him, yet he was mindful of talent. (Lew Davis and Sam Brody first met there years earlier.) Barney was tough, often chewing on the yellow tracing paper as he reviewed designer’s sketches, but Jordan lobbied more for a collaborative atmosphere and in 1967 helped to turn it into a partnership, bringing in six new partners. While Barney unlocked the door, Jordan pushed it

wide open.

That same year, we were invited in competition with a select group of architects, including Breuer, Johnson, Barnes, and Conklin+Rossant, for a new stables building in Central Park at the 86th Street transverse. We won with an underground design. However, the mention of the word Polo, by an East Side newspaper, killed the project. That just emboldened Jordan, and the firm soon found itself amending the Civic Center Master Plan, with the design of the new Police Headquarters and later the Metropolitan Correction Center and Court House Annex, by depressing existing roadways, changing the on-off ramps of the Brooklyn Bridge, and eliminating a proposed pedestrian bridge for an at-grade extension of Chambers Street. This, along with adjacent affordable residential projects including the first all-concrete Chatham Towers, signaled a triumph of the new firm, now known as Gruzen+Partners.

Jordan helped create the office atmosphere that ambitious designers needed. Over more than 40 years there were close to two-dozen new partners that came through the office to make their contribution. He enjoyed the collaboration and the excitement of large new projects making a difference. In the ensuing years, much thanks to Jordan’s heady optimism, the firm grew and became immersed in several new building types, including correctional facilities, starting with Leesburg Prison, known as the “Glass House”; hospitality with the re-design of the old Commodore Hotel into the Grand Hyatt, including an unusual garden room well over 42<sup>nd</sup> Street; Higher Education through the development of the East Campus Master Plan and the School of Health Science and Health Services at M.I.T. with Mitchell & Giurgola; international work with the American Embassy in Moscow with SOM as well as new towns in Tehran and Isfahan; and residential design with significant projects throughout

New York State for the Urban Development Corporation, including the Schomburg Plaza Apartments at 110<sup>th</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue. For many years the firm continued developing follow up work in these areas.

Each decade our office moved, finally arriving at its largest quarters with two floors on West Street directly south of the World Trade Center and a few blocks walk from Jordan and Lee’s apartment on the South Cove in Battery Park City. In less than a year after the move, September 11<sup>th</sup> struck and everything, including the very survival of the office, was placed in jeopardy. For Jordan, it was a double whammy, having to flee first the office and then his home, which temporarily acted as a refuge for our staff until they all were evacuated across the river to safety. Throughout this ordeal, Jordan rose to the occasion, convincing the authorities to let us return to our gutted office to rummage through the ruins looking for material to salvage, particularly critical computer records. Having no home or office for the next seven weeks for Jordan was a challenge and an adventure.

In less than 2 months, after splitting the staff into groups working out of ten different offices, generously provided to us by other architects, we were back in business in a new and finer space at the edge of the Meat Packing District. Over the next few years, Jordan returned to the Middle East, particularly to Dubai, for which he had great enthusiasm. He always loved the idea of taking on new challenges, just as the accomplished skier and sailor that he was. His continued interest in New Jersey with projects in Newark and Hoboken, a Ferry Terminal in Weehawken, and El Museo Del Barrio on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, replaced his travels.

His final and most difficult challenge was faced with the same upbeat attitude with which he lived his life. Knowing that his days were numbered, he focused on his summer-house under construction in Amagansett. Just days before he died, he visited the house with his wife Lee and his family. He showed us around, pointed out unusual details, and expressed the delight of an architect surveying his project and envisioning the final product. The completed house he will never see, but the optimism with which he lived his life is there for all of us to take note and learn from. **PETER SAMTON**



COURTESY LEERS WEINZAPFEL ASSOCIATES

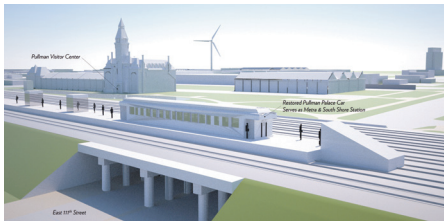
## UNVEILED

**INTEGRATED DESIGN BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST** The Boston-based Leers Weinzapfel Associates has unveiled designs for the Integrated Design Building at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The new structure will bring the university’s departments of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, Architecture, and Building Construction Technology together under one roof for the first time. To foster a sense of collaboration between the interdisciplinary students, the 80,000-square-foot structure is assembled like a coil with a significant center courtyard. This space has a two-story atrium that is topped by a “zipper truss” system and an outdoor courtyard above. Tom Chung,

a principal at the firm, said the space reflects an intersection of the building’s three departments because it cohesively incorporates architecture, landscape design, and advanced building technologies.

The exterior of the Integrated Design Building is clad in bronzed anodized aluminum and has a pattern of vertical windows. Together, these components are intended to give the structure a “forest-like grain,” said Andrea Leers, another partner at Leers Weinzapfel Associates. A landscape of native plantings and stones surrounds the building, forming a natural stormwater management system. The facility, which is aiming for LEED Gold certification, is also topped with a green roof. **HM**

**Architect:** Leers Weinzapfel Associates  
**Client:** University of Massachusetts  
**Location:** Amherst, MA  
**Completion Date:** Summer 2016



COURTESY AIA CHICAGO

## CHANGES ON TRACK FOR CHICAGO'S HISTORIC PULLMAN NEIGHBORHOOD

### Destination Unknown

Two months after President Obama declared the historic company town of Pullman, Illinois a national monument, a group of architects, planners, and preservationists are examining ways to balance economic development and historic preservation in the newly protected neighborhood on Chicago’s South Side.

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and AIA Chicago in April kicked off an initiative called “Positioning Pullman” with a three-day design charrette on how to grow and protect this neighborhood, which is struggling to maintain its prized stock of Queen Anne and Romanesque architecture in light of the economic challenges facing much of the South Side.

Luther Mason, pastor at the Solon Spencer Beman-designed Greenstone Church in Pullman (which hosted a charrette meeting), had an uncle that was a porter on Pullman sleeper cars. “The story’s gotta be told, the good, the bad, and the ugly,” he said.

The town of Pullman began in 1880 as an experiment in industrial capitalism, but it reached its historical apotheosis as an icon of unionizing and collective bargaining. Built by luxury railcar tycoon George Pullman as the ideal company town, it was designed by the then 26-year-old Beman to be clean, orderly, and above all, profitable. When Pullman reduced wages in 1893 but didn’t offer rent relief, a strike ensued, crippling

the entire industry. Pullman won that battle, but lost the war. In 1937, The Pullman Company (the largest employer of African-Americans in the nation) signed the first contract with an African-American labor union, the Pullman Porters. However, by 1957 most of Pullman’s industrial empire was in serious decline.

The neighborhood has been the subject of seven studies since the late 1980s, most of which has gone unimplemented. Attendees of April’s charrette say this time is different: NPCA Midwest Regional Director Lynn McClure said that the plans to emerge out of Positioning Pullman will be “living art” that will give state and local agencies a vision to promote. Also, 80 percent of the development in the neighborhood over the last five years has been from private businesses, McClure said, including the Pullman Park commercial strip and William McDonough + Partners’ factory for Method, a brand of environmentally-friendly cleaning products. Most importantly, McClure said, the national monument declaration could attract some 300,000 visitors and \$40 million in new economic activity each year.

Surrounded by vast warehouses and nearly 12 miles south of the Loop, Pullman feels cloistered from the energy and rhythms of the rest of the city. Queen Anne rowhouses made of red brick line the streets and are punctuated by the ornate but mostly shuttered Hotel Florence and Pullman Administration complex. The charrette’s historic preservation team created three scenarios to reactivate these buildings and the wider neighborhood, re-capturing Pullman’s small town vitality with the addition of new housing, restaurants, retail space, and cultural programs.

“Pullman, Roseland, and the entire Far South Side were once forgotten communities,” said 9<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Anthony Beale in an April press statement. “Businesses are opening, housing is being rehabbed—we’re rebuilding the thriving live-work community that Pullman once was.” **ZACH MORTICE**



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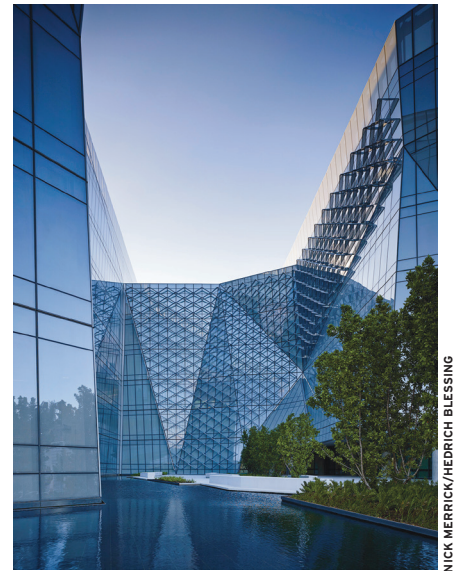
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 20, 2015



NICK MERRICK/HERDRICH BLESSING

The architects designed this GSA project to respond to its South Florida context. The wetland site was restored. The diamond shaped solar shades respond to low-angle sun.

In addition to developing buildings that embody “the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American national government,” and the “finest contemporary American architectural thought,” the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) Design Excellence Program asks the architects it commissions to be site conscious and to respond sensitively to local communities and contexts. In the case of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s new South Florida headquarters, which happens to be located in Miramar, a city northwest of Miami, that context, in the words of Krueck + Sexton principal Mark Sexton, “is Taco Bell, on a good day.” Not satisfied with the fast-food chain as a design progenitor, the Chicago-based architecture firm instead took its cues from the location’s geographical history and prevailing climate.

Miramar (Spanish for “sea-view”) is actually some 13 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean. Named for a neighborhood in Havana, Cuba, it sits on land that for countless millennia before the city’s establishment in 1955 was tropical wetlands—the Sawgrass marsh and slough region of The Everglades. The previous owners of the 20-acre plot dumped 18-inches of gravel on it, thinking it would improve the site as a real estate prospect. Krueck + Sexton thought differently. It proposed restoring the

wetlands and bringing them right up to the building. It was the only firm in the government’s short list to put forth the idea, and the GSA saw the value.

The office building itself had to accommodate 1,000 agents and workers. The architects wanted to connect them to the restored landscape through views as well as provide ample daylight on the interior while delivering a highly sustainable building. They laid out the structure’s 375,000 square feet on six floors in two parallel 60-foot wide bars connected by a perpendicular bar. The resulting H-shaped plan created a condition where, no matter where in the building you stand, you are never more than 30 feet from the natural light and views afforded by the glass curtain wall. The plan also created two semi-enclosed courtyards: one to the east that serves as the main entrance and combines a reflecting pool and a formally composed landscape, and one to the west for use by employees that is an extension of the restored wetlands.

Each floor varies slightly in plan, creating different experiences throughout the interior and changes on the elevation. The long outer north and south walls curve smoothly, as though responding to the sinuous waterways of The Everglades. Within the courtyards, the facades are fractured and faceted along hard lines,

giving the building the feel of a geode.

The choice of a unitized glass curtain wall for the enclosure came with its challenges. For one, South Florida gets a lot of sun, and thus a lot of heat loading, especially on the east and west faces. In addition, it is a hurricane-prone area, which, along with the FBI’s requirements for blast resistance and other security measures, meant that the building skin had to be very robust. Aesthetically, the architects wanted the building to be all white and read as a monolithic unit, without the floor plates telegraphing through the glass and creating bands on the facade.

Since such an envelope system could not be ordered out of a catalog, Krueck + Sexton worked closely with its consultants and fabricators to develop one. The resulting curtain wall is a unitized system outfitted with an IGU with a 3/8-inch outer lite of low-iron glass, a one-inch space filled with argon gas, and an inner lite made up of two ¼-inch laminated pieces of glass. The No. 2 surface of the inner lite has a low-e coating and a white ceramic frit pattern in a gradient: 20 percent for vision, 60 to 80 percent for spandrel, and 80 percent on the east and west faces, cladding the egress stairs. The inner piece of laminated glass is pyrolytic, made to attenuate infrared and radio frequencies.

In this latitude, the sun shines more or

less from directly overhead. Through solar studies, the architects determined that the building would get the bulk of its solar loading and glare when the sun was low in the horizon. As a result, they arranged the solar shades, which are thick-gauge, 7 ½-foot-long sections of painted, perforated aluminum that are integrated into the unitized panel, in a diamond pattern. The unexpected application of this fairly standard sun mitigation equipment was entirely performance based, but it gives the building an interesting texture and anchors it solidly to its place. **AS**

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## L.A. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN PROMPTS ARCHITECTS TO HELP SOLVE HOUSING CRISIS

# HOUSE HUNTING

If there's a better city for residential design than Los Angeles, the world's architects have not found it. From the historical pastiches of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, to the modernist movement, to the pioneering designs of some of the world's most famous contemporary architects, LA's varied terrain, blank geographic slate, and utter unfamiliarity with tradition has resulted in some of the most notable single-family homes in the world. What the city now needs, though, is much more than sublime boxes and clever uses of industrial materials.

LA is built-out and a housing crisis is raging. Rents have crept up for years, due in part to chronic under-production of housing. Last summer, a UCLA report confirmed that LA is the least affordable city in the country, as a function of average salaries and average rents.

In April, LA Mayor Eric Garcetti addressed the housing crunch by presenting a wide-ranging agenda for economic and ecological sustainability called *pLAN*. One part calls for the creation of 100,000 units of housing by 2021. At least 17,000 of those units are to be located within 1,500 feet of a public transit stop. The city currently has 3.8 million residents and 1.4 million units.

*pLAN* seeks action through a variety of policies, collaborations, and funding sources; some of them already underway. Through the *re:code LA* effort to revamp the city's zoning code, Garcetti has called for the completion of the city's long-delayed community plans, updating land use to match current residential priorities. He has also pledged to streamline permitting for transit-oriented developments and secure funds to preserve and subsidize below market-rate housing.

Los Angeles' community of architects, developers, and planners have long been united in asking the city for more opportunities to build (often over the objections of homeowners groups and others who favor slow growth). Within this alliance, it is largely up to architects to figure out what the new, larger Los Angeles will look like and how it can grow.

The most straightforward approach—which the city has endorsed in places—is to erect large residential towers, presumably on high-capacity transportation corridors. That's happening in downtown, Mid-Wilshire, and elsewhere. But many of the city's architects favor more subtle approaches that acknowledge the city's diversity.

"Los Angeles is a city of many cities, and it's very difficult to have top-down strategies," said Lorcan O'Herlihy, founding principal of Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects. "(By) incrementally embedding socially-conscious interventions and gestures, including buildings, throughout the city, you can have great smart growth."

Attractive small apartment buildings not only offer more opportunities for creative design, but they also have a better chance of gaining neighborhood acceptance with a scale that is more in line with the character of LA.

Kevin Daly, principal at Kevin Daly Architects, cited the city's history of courtyard housing and small modernist buildings that can fit relatively seamlessly into existing neighborhoods.

"The more tailored the housing is to the unique conditions of that project, the greater chance you have of real success of building community and connecting to the larger context," said Michael Maltzan, principal at Michael Maltzan Architecture.

Some architects advocate an even smaller approach—one that might be invisible to homeowners, who are often on the front lines in the fight against density, traffic, and aesthetic offenses.

For every single-family home in Los Angeles, there's typically an underused garage or vacant patch of grass that could accommodate an accessory dwelling unit. By adding one or two residents per lot, these units would, supporters say, exert zero aesthetic or traffic impacts on the city's residential neighborhoods.

"For Los Angeles...our DNA is in the single-family house," said Dana Cuff, director of cityLAB and professor of architecture at UCLA. "I think as architects it's our burden and basic ethical responsibility to try to enhance and solve housing problems in the single-family zones."

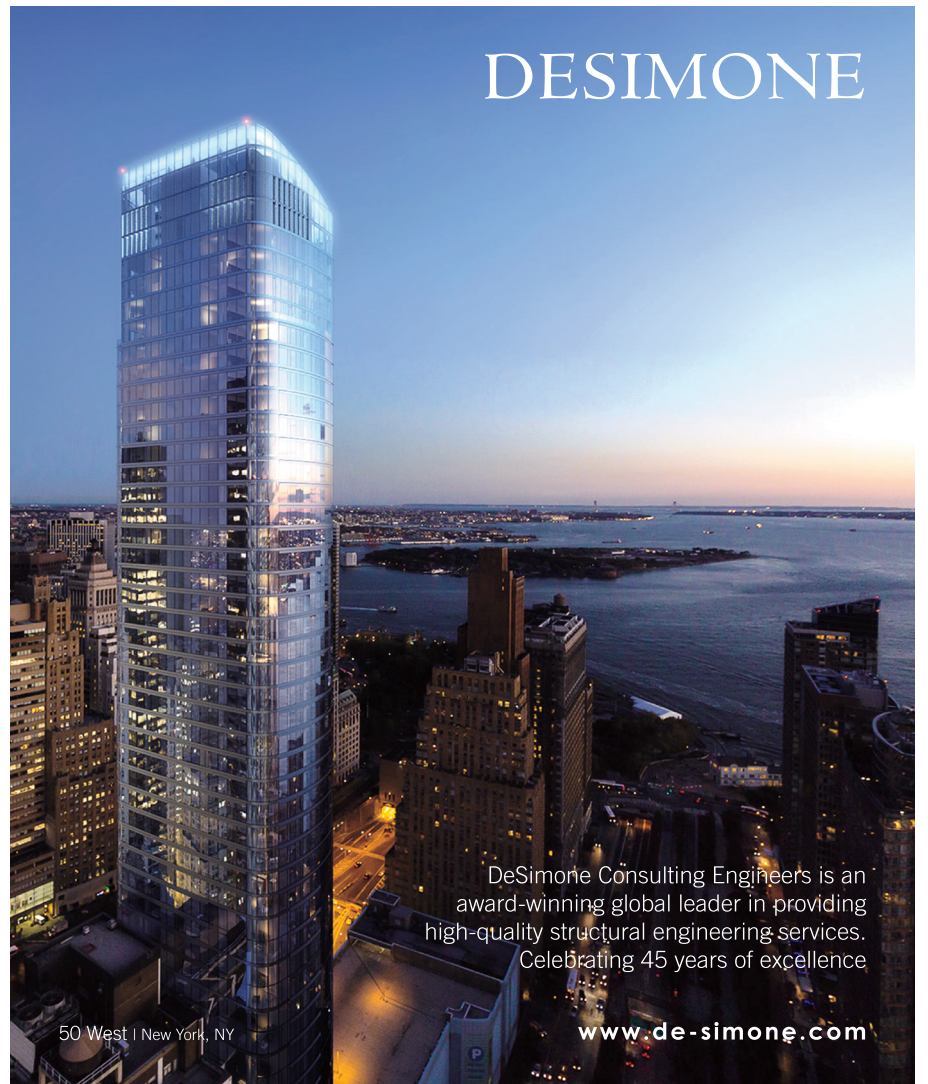
Cuff noted that if 20 percent of the city's 500,000 single-family lots included ADU's, that alone would reach the mayor's goal. As well, an embrace of alleyways could create brand new front doors.

These design solutions need to be legal before they are implemented. With the mayor issuing such a bold plan—and directing all city departments to do their part to realize its goals—architects are hoping the city will update its regulations accordingly on issues such as setback requirements, parking regulations, height restrictions, floor-to-area ratios, and density in transit-oriented neighborhoods.

"There's definitely going to be a lot of collaboration required both between departments and between different facets of the city government," said Ashley Atkinson, planning and housing specialist for Garcetti.

If the city succeeds in streamlining its administrative process and reconciling its planning and building codes, architects and developers may be significantly freer to go about their work. Will Wright, director of government and public affairs for AIA/LA, added that the city needs to provide for more by-right development and minimize the negotiation among developers, stakeholders, and city council members. **JOSH STEPHENS**

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Carlo Ratti Associati's pavilion for New Holland features a planted roof, harvested by a self-driving tractor.



Japanese designers team-Lab created an immersive pavilion, projecting textures of rice patties onto discs.

COURTESY CARLO RATTI ASSOCIATI

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Future Food District provides interactive technologies to show shoppers' role in food consumption.



DELFINO SISTO LEGNANI

EYE-CATCHING PAVILIONS EXPLORE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD PRODUCTION AND POPULATION GROWTH AT EXPO MILANO 2015

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Spring in Milan has been even more exciting than usual this year. Still shaking off a Prosecco-induced hangover from the annual Salone del Mobile design fair, the city is now celebrating the opening of the Expo Milano 2015, the world's largest exhibition, which is expected to attract over 20 million visitors and over 260 participating organizations, including 140 countries.

The theme of the event, which runs from May 1 through October 31, is "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life," a reflection on the future of how the world will feed its

growing population. Following in the footsteps of previous World's Fairs and Expos, such as London 1951, New York 1939, or Osaka 1970, the 2015 rendition will have architecture as one of its main components, including projects by high profile designers such as Norman Foster and Daniel Libeskind.

The original master plan was designed by a team consisting of Stefano Boeri, Herzog & de Meuron, Ricky Burdett, and William McDonough—all of whom stepped down from the project after their initial scheme was overturned. Herzog

recently told *uncube magazine* that he expects the show to turn into a "vanity fair" type of happening, where individual pavilions use novel gimmicks and extreme forms that will distract from the important content of the exhibitions. Their 2011 proposal gave each country an equal, linear exhibition space under a large tent, flattening the site in order to minimize nationalistic architectural ambition. Instead, the organizers have scrapped the team's master plan, opting instead for the old model of large national pavilions with areas for retail, restaurants,

bars, exhibitions, education spaces, and performance spaces.

While Herzog has a point that the planned structures are indeed fantastical, it is debatable whether interesting, informative exhibitions and wild pavilion designs are mutually exclusive. Furthermore, innovations in architecture, construction, and urban design are an integral part of how the world will address the food challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Some of the pavilions do, in fact, seem like iconic attention-grabbers reminiscent of the mid-2000s, such as Malaysia's giant seeds or the UK Pavilion—the first to be completed—with its beehive-like structure serving as a metaphor for how hives affect our ecosystem, a mostly ambivalent approach to sustainable food production.

The German Pavilion most directly confirms what Herzog has claimed, as visitors "can decide either they want to stand in line to visit the whole exhibition or rather go to the roof terrace, to have a picnic and to enjoy the great view over the whole Expo site." It is literally using the building to reframe architecture as a distraction from the exhibition.

However, there are a handful of designs that stand out as attempts to rethink the way we build and how it relates to modern agriculture and sustainable food production for the next century. Most of the pavilions use sustainable materials and construction methods that utilize national building techniques. Inside, exhibitions—often interactive—showcase the biodiversity, culture, and food traditions of each nation.

Arguably the most radical pavilion is the corporate entry from American farm equipment company

New Holland. Designed by Turin-based architects Carlo Ratti Associati, it features a sloped, planted roof that is harvested by a self-driving tractor, an experiment in combining architecture with robotic agricultural technologies that are set to change the way we respond to local terrain conditions.

New York-based Biber Architects designed the USA pavilion. Its east wall is a 7,200-square-foot vertical farm planted with 42 varieties of harvestable crops on rotating louvers. It also features a reclaimed boardwalk, which the team said represents the intersection of food, entertainment, and infrastructure in America. You can almost hear the Bruce Springsteen blaring: The building is clad in an enormous Pentagram-designed American flag with utensils instead of stars.

Several pavilions merge architecture with flora. Vietnam's rising star, Vo Trong Nghia, has designed a bamboo structure with trees planted in its roof. The sustainable material is abundant in Vietnam, as it grows quickly and, in this case, can also be reused once the expo is over.

Italian grocery giant Coop Italia has presented a space that projects the future of supermarkets. The Future Food District was designed by Ratti and the MIT SENSEable City Lab. Interactive technologies allow "shoppers" to interrogate their role in the consumption process by revealing the food objects' nutrition information, origins, and history, through information-enhanced tables and augmented labels.

Japan's pavilion is a relatively simple design architecturally, but it has one of the most robust exhibition designs by Japanese designers teamLab. Visitors move through an immersive, darkened space with a mirror-walled room, full of knee- and waist-high discs, illuminated with the textures of rice patties. Projected images on the discs respond to the movements of exhibition-goers.

While the architecture of the Milan exposition overall continues the recent trends of the "vanity fair," some fragments exist that might shed light on how architecture can interact with innovations in agriculture and food production in the coming decades. Ideally, this concept would be pushed much further, but for now these will have to serve as examples for future projects. **MATT SHAW**



Biber Architects design a pavilion featuring a wall with over 40 varieties of harvestable crops.



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Dwell On Design: 2037

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Let's start next door. Enter the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (I.M. Pei & Associates, 1979) on Columbia Point at the University of Massachusetts–Boston, and you find yourself on a balcony, looking into the space-frame tower that will later complete your experience. A placard explains the water view: “When Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis sought the perfect location for the JFK presidential library, she looked to the sea that President Kennedy loved so well.”

The truth is rather more complicated. Siting and designing the library was a dreary, 16-year slog of shrinking expectations and genuine heartbreak. Kennedy himself had chosen an urban site at Harvard, and Pei designed two different schemes accordingly, but logistics and community opposition stalled the project for a decade. In 1975, the Kennedys turned to maritime sites, and landed at Columbia Point—home to U. Mass. and a garbage dump. “It was a backwater, literally,” said Ted Musho, Pei’s associate partner on the project. “[U. Mass.] went there for the same reason we wound up there: Nobody else would take us. We’d been thrown out of the best site in the world, and here we are. So what do you do?”

To sell the family on the dump as the best remaining option, said Musho, “We rented a big flatbed truck and we loaded everybody on, and we drove out as far as we could onto the muck, and I remember Mrs. Kennedy saying, ‘Where are you proposing putting the library?’”

Finally the site was refined, but “I.M.

suffered. I mean, he *suffered*” from the endless compromise, said Musho. And now the budget was tight: “It should have been white marble, white granite—if we had the money! There is nothing about the building that was commensurate with the aura of the president’s name on it! It’s an inexpensive presidential library.” The resulting complex has always had a faintly depressing air, not because it is a memorial to a slain president but because, as such, it sat alone, and vaguely under-inspired, in a vaguely suboptimal place.

It is within this context that Rafael Viñoly has produced a resoundingly smart, sensitive design for the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate that quietly transforms the entire site. Both architecturally and programmatically, John seems happier with his brother beside him: His building is no longer so isolated, and the tragic matter of his death is relieved by Teddy’s clever, youth-oriented program centered on model Senate proceedings.

The institute is an object lesson in the power of limitations. Ted wanted a building that complemented John’s but did not compete with it. Viñoly’s symmetrical, low-rise plan leaves the spotlight on Pei’s geometries, but responds to them with aligned triangular “wings” and a subtler vertical mass—gray metal composite to Pei’s black glass. The axial entrance path alludes to neoclassical Washington, D.C., creating what partner David Rolland called “a procession, a formal entry into the building.” A thin strip of gravel at the building’s edge,

where concrete meets lawn, is brilliant but nearly invisible; it could be thickened.

Entering the lobby, you face a long, rich wall of Virginia mist granite, in the center of which a small well leads to a pair of tiny, traditional oak doors: the Senate chamber. First you’ll circumnavigate it, learning—through electronic projections on the outside walls, and your tablet computer—how hard it is to hammer out a bill that can be voted into law. Hidden classrooms on the perimeter allow school groups to test the process in depth.

The corridors are masterfully done. Painted in deep, warm grays and floored in polished concrete, they are softly lit to avoid the gloom of a cinema. Among the grays are dark oak benches and signs (both by exhibit designer ESI Design) that, while modern in form and typography, allude in tone and finish to the Senate’s historic furnishings. Above, a central light strip is flanked by gently pitched ceiling planes. Floor and ceiling joints are both recessed, with indirect lighting at the floor, to make the space “look more architectonic rather than more massive,” said Rolland. Hallways this simple could easily be soulless; these are thoughtful and comfortable. You then experience the Senate replica—with its yellow gallery walls, navy and red textiles, Levanto marble, cherry desks, and oval tray ceiling—as a sunburst. Guests are encouraged to stage a floor debate on an issue of the day, and actors start the process.

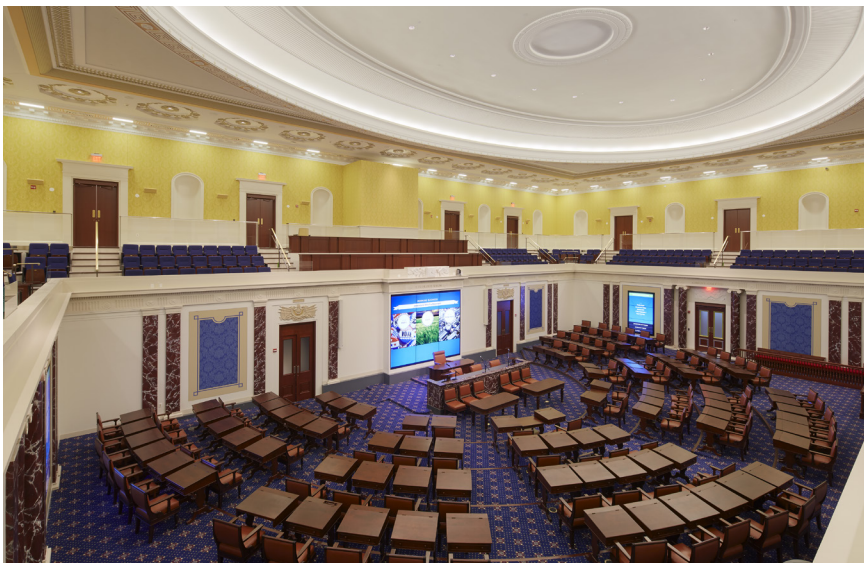
Viñoly’s restraint is important not in the tired sense of adherence to high-modern lines, but in its palpable respect for the

**Left: The building’s plan complements the neighboring JFK Library with a pair of triangular “wings” and its vertical mass. Above: The entrance procession. Below left: A replica of the US Senate. Below right: the building’s rich material palette captures the regality of the Senate.**

older design he was effectively adjoining. His team worked with the materials, formal language, and color palette they were given—in an age when most additions to historic structures use none of the three, and often lean on glass as a way to evade them all. This is the polar opposite of a trend-driven building, and the effect is as fresh as the breeze off Dorchester Bay.

Some of the errors were, so to speak, forced. The lobby is empty. Viñoly’s original design had a giant ribbed skylight throwing bands of sun on the floor, but the budget cut it to one strip. Without such a flourish, the space needs some iconography or a pair of ESI’s oak benches. The landscape, by Sasaki Associates, is inadequate, especially where windows look to the bay past JFK’s loading dock; a tight property line tied the designers’ hands. Traffic circulation is a work in progress. And the Miesian gleam of the glass entry confounds some, leading to embarrassing makeshift signs: “Please find door here —>.”

Would Viñoly ever have sketched this prone form in isolation? Of course not. But he gave his site and his clients, who in this case go well beyond the Kennedys, exactly what they needed: a taste of redemption. **CHRISTINE CIPRIANI**





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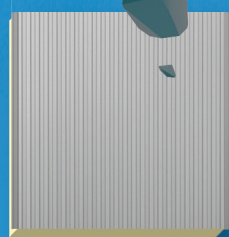
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 20, 2015

PULITZER ARTS FOUNDATION IN ST. LOUIS BRINGS BACK TADAO ANDO TO EXPAND HIS 2001 GALLERY

# Ando Add-on



The addition increases the Pulitzer's Tadao Ando-designed space by half.

ALISE O'BRIEN PHOTOGRAPHY

On May 1, St. Louis' Pulitzer Arts Foundation wrapped up a major renovation project by Tadao Ando that expanded the gallery space of its celebrated building by 3,500 square feet. Ando also designed the original building completed in 2001.

In its 14 years of existence, the Foundation has become known for its unique curatorial taste, often challenging preconceptions about art galleries. With an intention to curate an ever-changing collection, the museum does not display any permanent exhibitions except for two site-specific pieces by Richard Serra and Ellsworth Kelly.

As a result, the environment has become an integral part of the experience. Without overpowering the art itself, the building's cast concrete holds an abundance of natural light. "The space becomes a unique vessel that allows the audience to focus on the artworks themselves," said Emily Pulitzer, founder and chair of the Foundation.

Kristina Van Dyke, outgoing director of the Foundation, said the renovation is part of the Pulitzer's continued effort to push for interdisciplinary initiatives. "One of the hallmarks of this building is its generosity. It's a space that doesn't privilege a particular point of view," Van Dyke said. "That's also part of what makes it so receptive to different kinds of art."

To accommodate for the growth of the institution, the Foundation launched its renovation last September, consulting with Ando and his team, as well as local

architectural firm Christner, who acted as the architects of record for both the original building and the renovation. The update expands the Pulitzer's gallery space by half, and is the first major alteration to the building since its 2001 opening. With new public spaces and lower level galleries, the entire building now loops around the signature water court at the heart of the site, allowing for more flexibility in programming and spatial allocations.

The lower level galleries are darker than their natural light-soaked counterparts above. In a statement Ando said that his intention was to "design the new space on lower floors as a calm and serene space, compared to the dynamic and lively space on the upper floors." Hardwood flooring, instead of concrete, accentuates the sense of transition from above to below.

As part of the Pulitzer's goal to "push the boundaries of the traditional arts encounter," the first shows opening after the renovation will respond specifically to the museum's new rebuilt environment. Among them is the exhibition *Richard Tuttle Wire Pieces*, which will probe spatial relationships with minimal wire sculptures. There will also be a five-month series named *Press Play*, which aims to inspire visitors to explore the architecture and other concurrent exhibitions through sound—works will range from cushion designs to symphony concerts, activating "every nook, corner, and expanse of the space." **GEORGE HUAIYU ZHANG**



TADAO ANDO AND GABELLINI SHEPPARD TEAM UP ON THE PRITZKER-WINNER'S FIRST NEW YORK CITY BUILDING

## CONCRETE, LIGHT, AND WATER

Pritzker Prize-winning Japanese architect Tadao Ando has a wide portfolio of subtle, elegant designs for museums and small residential projects around the globe. However, he has never built anything in New York. Until now. His 7-unit apartment complex at 152 Elizabeth Street in downtown Manhattan's NoLita neighborhood looks to be a stunning but understated first foray into the city's red-hot housing market.

Located on Kenmare Street just down from Steven Holl and Vito Acconci's Storefront for Art and Architecture, and around the corner from SANAA's New Museum, the building is located in a vibrant urban intersection with access to many parts of the city. Ando worked on the design in collaboration with New York firm Gabellini Sheppard, which is designing the interiors and serving as architect of record.

Both firms share an affinity for understated design and their collaboration has been close, resulting in a minimalistic building that showcases Ando's mastery of concrete, which he has been perfecting since the 1970s. According to Ando, "A living space should be a sanctuary," and for the NoLita



COURTESY NOË &amp; ASSOCIATES AND THE BOUNDARY

The NoLita apartment building displays Ando's trademark use and mastery of concrete.

project, the team has chosen a natural material palette that creates spaces that compress and expand while giving "life to light and water," according to Michael Gabellini, principal of Gabellini Sheppard.

Concrete solids give way to voids of glass and light. "Concrete is a very democratic material, very accessible," Gabellini explained. "It doesn't create a gap between the rich and poor like some other materials." A slotted entry from the side of the building on Elizabeth Street gives way to an entry vestibule where a slit of light shines through fritted glass across a water wall, combining water, light, and sound into sensorial experience. A 55-foot-by-99-foot vertical hanging garden faces Chinatown and can be seen from Elizabeth Street as well as the adjacent rooftop, creating a green courtyard for the neighbors.

The units' interiors are luxurious with details and materials that look exquisite without being ostentatious, which is appropriate for the relatively quiet neighborhood with small-scale buildings. The second and third floors are split into two units, while the fourth and fifth are single units. A penthouse occupies the top three floors and includes its own reflecting pool and water walls. Gabellini Sheppard will be providing bespoke interior design services. The developers, Sumaida + Khurana, also have plans to build a 400-foot-tall tower in Midtown designed by Álvaro Siza. **MS**



COURTESY NOË &amp; ASSOCIATES AND THE BOUNDARY





MINNEAPOLIS SCULPTURE GARDEN TO CLOSE DURING MAJOR OVERHAUL

# CHERRY ON TOP

The eclectic sculpture garden adjacent to the Walker Art Center is in part designed for stormwater retention.

Minneapolis’ celebrated sculpture garden at the Walker Art Center will close its gates in October, reopening May 2017 after a major redesign of its landscape and conservatory. Snow Kreilich Architects and landscape architects Oslund & Associates, both of Minneapolis, will lead the \$10 million design in collaboration with Minneapolis’ Park & Recreation Board. According to architect and Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Project Manager Dana Murdoch, the work is long overdue.

“The garden is deteriorating. The plant mat is becoming overgrown. Some of the granite infrastructure is falling aside and cracking,” said Murdoch. “We have some fairly serious drainage issues because it’s a formerly swampy area, and it has had impacts on the

navigability of the walks.”

As part of an ancient drainage bed for the Mississippi River, the site has a high water table. Murdoch said the garden—built in 1988 by Edward Larrabee Barnes and landscape architects Quinnet Rothschild & Partners, and expanded four years later by Michael Van Valkenburgh and Associates—has needed an overhaul for at least a decade. It took until May 2014, however, for the Park Board to win \$8.5 million in general obligation bond funding from the state of Minnesota. The project got another \$1.5 million through the regional Mississippi Watershed Management Organization for its focus on stormwater retention.

“It’s a very unstable condition,” said lead landscape architect Tom Oslund. Trees have started to sink into the site’s soggy soil, even



warping pathways. “It’s kind of a mess. But we decided to actually embrace that.”

On the north end of the site, where the drainage problems are most severe, the design team plans to reorganize the space around three circular, outdoor “rooms.” Riprap slopes raise the rooms above a large cistern and retention pond that, according to Oslund, is shaped “kind of like an Aalto vase.” The depression will contain the entire garden’s stormwater and will be bridged by elevated granite pathways.

To the southern end of the site, four square rooms will feature an “enhanced turf” to aid stormwater drainage while supporting the artwork and granite pathways. Oslund’s design replaces an existing arborvitae perimeter with a lower, deciduous hedge. Along with

perennial plantings and ornamental grasses, the new greenery is meant to help invoke a sense of discovery.

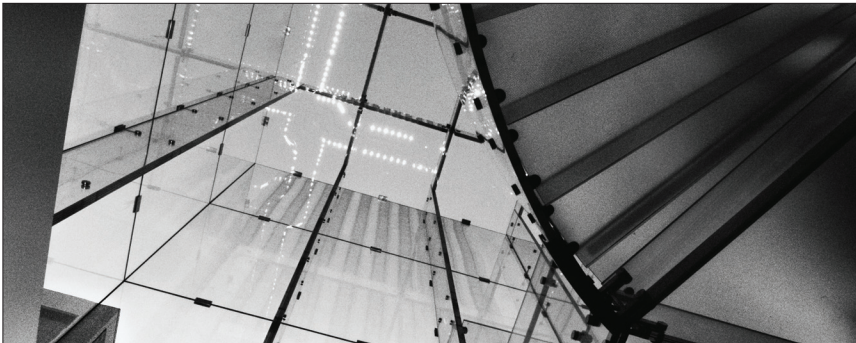
“There is this series of reveals,” said Oslund, “so it’s not just a one-liner.”

Depending on the room, these reveals could be for work by Fritz Haeg, Mark di Suvero, Ellsworth Kelly, or one of dozens of artists who have contributed more than 40 sculptures to the 11-acre site over the years. The redesign maintains the central location of perhaps the garden’s most well known piece, “Spoonbridge and Cherry” by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. Spoonbridge will stay in place during construction, as will work by Sol LeWitt, Frank Gehry, and Richard Serra. A handful of sculptures are going on long-term loan elsewhere in the area, including to Gold Medal Park and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. The rest will stay in protected storage in an adjacent parking lot, according to the Park Board’s Dana Murdoch.

Snow Kreilich is in the early phases of “revitalizing” the garden’s Cowles Conservatory to make it more accessible and energy efficient, according to a firm spokeswoman. Murdoch said the work could include opening up the conservatory to the elements, adding seasonal food vendors and imparting “a more picnicy feel to it.”

More than 350,000 annual visitors will have to wait two years to return to the garden, a popular wedding destination and event space, but Murdoch said the closure was unavoidable due to the nature of the work—specifically the new stormwater system and the upgraded irrigation.

“You just have to dig everything up for that,” she said. **CB**



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EPPSTEIN UHEN  
ARCHITECTS

Once a proud outpost in a farm tools empire, a midcentury factory in West Allis, Wisconsin, is now part of a second Milwaukee-born company's story.

Last year, Johnson Controls Inc. (JCI) took over the 130,700-square-foot building, which was a factory for the Allis-Chalmers tractor company. Though the sturdy, timber-frame building began its life as a munitions manufacturing

plant during World War II, Allis-Chalmers churned out tractor parts and other farm implements for decades beneath its burly wood trusses. (The site handled uranium, and may have been built for work on the Manhattan Project.)

JCI hired Milwaukee's Eppstein Uhen Architects to retrofit the space, which became a department store during the 1990s after Allis-Chalmers dissolved. Suburban West Allis was a company town, whose name was changed from North Greenfield when Edward P. Allis' business set up shop there in 1901. More than a century later it is a working-class, mostly white suburb. The JCI move brought 800 jobs to West Allis in a hurry—they urgently needed the space for a special projects team. The firm had to design, document, and build out the new office in a single phase in less than seven months.

The architects were given two guiding ideas: breakdown hierarchical barriers between managers and lower-level employees, and marry the building's contemporary needs with its historical character. Eppstein's first move was to remove much of the floor separating the office's upper and lower levels, leaving a double-height atrium and central gathering space visible from most of the office.

Capable of accommodating the entire staff for meetings and events, the central



Reclaimed wood decks out this WWII-era industrial space, now home to a technology giant that wants to eliminate hierarchical barriers between its office workers.

C&N PHOTOGRAPHY



"Unity Space" also features a two-story, video display wall, framed with salvaged steel beams and clad with reclaimed barn wood. When not in use the video display's black, back-painted glass panels are a sleek monolith playing off the organic textures of the repurposed wood.

A "monumental stair" lined by transparent glass rails connects the floors with an exposed steel structure and steps made of reclaimed wood. "The space was designed with details and variety of materials that complement and celebrate the building's architecture from different eras," said Justo Banaag, project manager for Eppstein Uhen. The original building construction included timber columns and roof trusses, as well as tongue and groove wood decking, and exposed brick masonry.

There are no private offices, but plenty of conference rooms. For when the open atmosphere proves distracting, there are dozens of so-called "Focus Rooms" available to any staff member. "Everybody should be out working with everybody else to support a collaborative work environment," said Chad Omon, architectural project manager for Johnson Controls.

For all its rustic overtones, the office still boasts ample electrical outlets and boosted cell and wifi service throughout the building. Splashes of yellow and colored felt hangings play off the neutral

palette of the wood and steel. And for employees who want to take the charm of the countryside one step further, the office is adjacent to a bike trail, so the architects added a locker room and shower area.

"When we received the space it was completely raw. There was not a wall in the place, but it was a gorgeous heavy timber building. It had a lot of character," said Omon. "We made it a little more contemporary." **CB**

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The Tree House is composed of stacked boxes, which step out to create cantilevering canopies.

## 5468796 ARCHITECTURE STACKS PIXELS IN TORONTO'S EAST END A GAME OF TETRIS

Melding development interests with inspired design is no easy affair for an aspiring young firm, but Winnipeg's 5468796 Architecture is, quite literally, pushing the box with a new residential project in Toronto. The firm, named after its incorporation number—5468796—has sought to inject a fresh take on architecture into its sleepy Canadian hometown since its founding

in 2007. As the firm grows up, it is ready to expand its territory with its first project outside Manitoba.

The so-called Tree House occupies a daunting formerly industrial site squeezed between densely packed houses. "The site is extremely angled," said Pablo Batista, an architectural designer with 5468796. "The streets in the [Birch Cliff] neighborhood

and the houses follow that geometry." But the firm used the angled parallelogram shape to help inform the three-building complex's final shape.

5468796 stacked a series of boxes to create the Tree House's massing, giving it a pixelated look. Two buildings contain lofts and a third is comprised of a series of L-shaped townhouses.

"In the Tree House, we had a strong existing north-to-south geometry on the site that informed the offset massing," said Batista. "The boxes

allowed us to be able to push and pull the building, to be able to grow the building as it gets higher, giving us more square footage." Nudging individual pixels in and out enabled 5468796 to make the most of the site's area while providing upper units with terraces and rooftop gardens. "We're always trying to get as much as we can out of the site. Every square foot counts," added Batista. Each box is filled with floor-to-ceiling glass and framed with charcoal metal siding to give it a slightly raw aesthetic. 5468796 partnered with Toronto's DK Studio to create light and airy interiors contrasting white walls with exposed plywood details. "We're trying to go for a very simple, very refined approach to the interiors," said Batista.

Each building is oriented around one of two linear courtyards that connect to the surrounding neighborhood and yield outdoor space for the units. "As the buildings stagger out creating cantilevering canopies, we've created these courtyards in between," said Batista. "It's more than just an alley between the buildings, it's trying to create an open space



COURTESY 5468796 ARCHITECTURE

that's generally not present in a condo project." Metal mesh armatures will be covered with vines to create a vegetated privacy wall. Landscape architecture firm Land Art Design is collaborating on the outdoor spaces.

The firm expects Tree House to break ground later

this year. "This project is a big step for the office," said Batista. "It's one of the first major projects outside of the province where we are located. It's been a great experience to work in Toronto." The Tree House is expected to be complete in 2017.

**BRANDEN KLAYKO**



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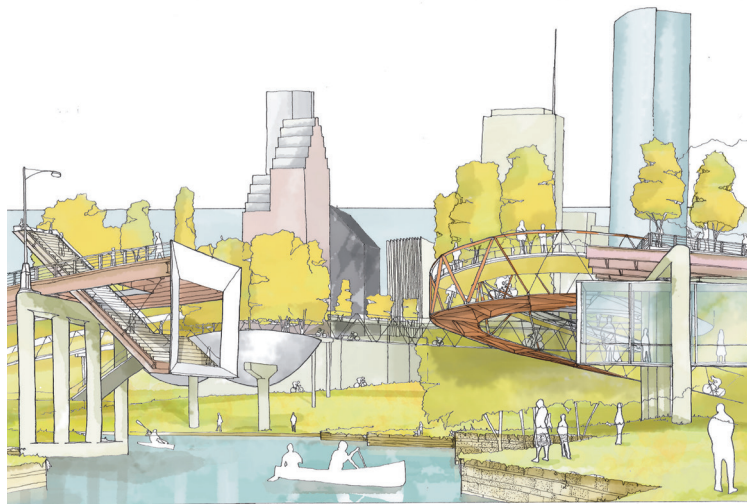
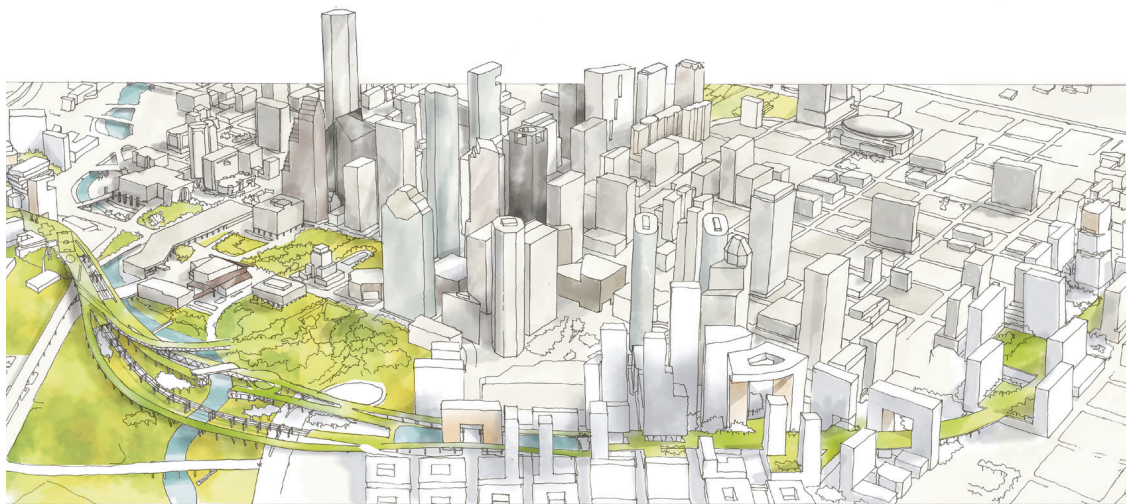
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COURTESY PAGE A

TXDOT IS CONSIDERING REMOVING PART OF AN ELEVATED FREEWAY NEXT TO DOWNTOWN HOUSTON, ARCHITECTS ARE PROPOSING TO SAVE IT AND TURN IT INTO A PUBLIC AMENITY

# PIERCING THE SKY

The public debut of the Texas Department of Transportation's \$6 billion plan to re-route I-45 around downtown Houston has citizens, planners, and city leaders atwitter about whether to demolish or repurpose a section of freeway known as the Pierce Elevated.

Houston needs an urban icon, said Marcus Martinez, a designer at the Houston office of national architecture firm Page. Martinez believes the Pierce can be saved and reprogrammed into an elevated park development connecting Buffalo Bayou, downtown, and adjacent neighborhoods. He has been working pro bono on a proposal called the Pierce Skypark with Tami Merrick and John Cryer, also of Page.

"We are due for something big that puts us on the map and attracts people from all industries," said Martinez. "Our chief goal is to keep it and turn it into something public and transformational for the city. It could be a variety of programming

and flavors as well." And it would be a nod to the city's heritage instead of razing the structure completely.

The Pierce Skypark is an optimistic vision to turn a two-mile stretch of elevated freeway (roughly 3 times the size of New York's High Line) into an amenity for citizens and visitors. Programming above and below the existing structure could range from parks and trails to public space, retail, housing, and office space.

"All kinds of big ideas are being batted around," said Cryer, CEO of Page. Cryer has been a key player in major revitalization projects in downtown Houston, including Discovery Green and Buffalo Bayou parks, the Rice Hotel, Commerce Towers, Club Quarters Hotel, and Keystone Lofts. He is also president-elect of Preservation Houston. "The main issue is people think of it as another park. The power of it is that it becomes a development with occupied space below, like a shaded promenade, and above with air

rights. It can be an incredible design element and identity marker. Think big. When you look at the history of Houston, there can be a return to the legacy of Houston doing bold and big moves again."

A master development strategy needs to be created, Cryer said.

"Not every elevated stretch of infrastructure is a High Line," said Charles Renfro, a Houston native and a partner at Diller, Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R), which designed the High Line. "There is no success guarantee. The Pierce makes a surreal landscape that lets people get higher than normal and it is a launching pad to think differently about making landscape in Houston. There could be an opportunity to keep, or selectively keep it, and that is where design comes in. Whosoever designs something on top and under the Pierce Elevated, there has to be a spectacular ambition to not mimic anything in the world."

A myriad of public and private conversations have ensued about

the potential of transforming the 37.7 acres of the Pierce that currently afford a view of a giant neon cross. Comments have come from journalist Lisa Gray of the Houston Chronicle, urban and environmental historian Dr. Kyle Shelton of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University, Bob Eury of the Houston Downtown Management District, and John S. Jacob of the Eastwood Civic Association.

At three public meetings attended by more than 500 people across the city, TxDOT has released intricate maps, animated renderings, and data tables showing various routes, as well as the environmental and statistical impacts of its rerouting plan. It involves the widening, depression, and elevation of three segments of I-45 from Beltway 8 continuing to downtown connectors and around the George R. Brown Convention Center. Parts of the proposal in segment 3 cut through the Mexican Consulate and the South Central Police Station in Third Ward, and will raze a public housing project called Clayton Homes along with the Pierce Elevated.

The state agency is in the process of gathering public feedback, but consensus has not been reached in the community. The environmental

As TxDOT proposes a plan to re-route I-45 around downtown Houston, architects at Page have proposed transforming a section known as the Pierce Elevated into park land and open space, as well as retail, housing, and offices.

studies are due in 2017, and then a public hearing will ensue. Along with processing community input, the lengthy procedure of eminent domain would need to run its course and funding would have to be secured. Danny Perez, TxDOT spokesman, estimated "it could be five to 10 years before we see any movement on these projects."

TxDOT is accepting public comments until May 31 via regular mail and email. The group from Page had pitched the idea of the Skypark to Councilman David Robinson privately prior to the recent public meetings and media attention. "We need to recognize this is going to be a very long process and there are several authorities that have jurisdiction over this," said Robinson. "It's not a fully integrated solution but it's very provocative and stimulates the discussion in an appropriate way and hopefully we can make a Houston-specific solution."

FLORENCE TANG

LA ABOUT TO COMPLETE OVERCROSSING TO BRIDGE FREEWAY DIVIDE DOWNTOWN

# MIND THE GAP



LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

For seven years, several of Los Angeles's scattered departments have been working on a way to bridge the intimidating chasm between the city's Downtown Civic Center

and the El Pueblo de Los Angeles historic district created by the massive 101 Freeway. Their solution, the "101 Freeway Overcrossing," which will finally open later this month,

The curved overcrossing on Los Angeles Street will link the city's Olvera Street and Civic Center.

provides a gestural "pedestrian enhancement" buttressed by large steel rings and a mesh-like kinetic awning spanning the sidewalk of Los Angeles Street.

The \$2 million project—a joint effort by LA's Bureau of Engineering, Department of Cultural Affairs, Board of Public Works, and California's Department of Transportation—was conceived by artists Jenna Didier, Oliver Hess, Ned Kahn, and Marcos Lutyens. Its technical layout was managed by Nous Engineering, WKE, BuroHappold, and the LA Public Works Engineering Bureau with construction by Acon Construction.

The showcase is a 22-foot-tall by 17-foot-wide by 123-foot-long arc-canopy along the (widened) westerly sidewalk of Los Angeles Street. A more rectilinear structure is going up on Main Street. The artists drew inspiration from the freeway below, "warping" that infrastructural language. "How do you use

the vernacular of Caltrans to grow a more natural or organic feeling structure?" asked Didier. The project also serves as a gateway for those entering the city from the freeway below.

The upper section of the Los Angeles Street edifice consists of a series of etched metallic panels fastened to stainless steel netting. LED lights are slotted into aluminum nodes attached to the structures. The Main Street bridge is topped with Galvanized steel beams that will sway slightly as pedestrians walk underneath.

While it was originally green lighted in 2008, the project has been held up by design revisions, "project uniqueness," and "unforeseen issues during construction," according to Jimmy Tokeshi, a spokesperson for LA's Department of Public Works.

But finally a blank scar in the urban fabric is starting to garner some attention, and pedestrians may be drawn to a new monument, or at the very least to some shade. Perhaps a freeway cap, or more interventions like this, will follow? **SL**



D.C.'s M Street Tunnel will be enlivened by a light installation inspired by falling rain.



COURTESY THURLOW SMALL ARCHITECTURE/NIO

AN INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION EMULATING FALLING RAIN WILL ACTIVATE A DARKENED D.C. UNDERPASS

## Light Within the Tunnel

As Amtrak trains—possibly carrying Vice President Biden—rumble across overpasses in Washington, D.C., the dark passageways below yearn for a breath of new life. They are about to get just that, as Pawtucket-based Thurlow Small Architecture (TSA) has devised an interactive light installation that will turn dark roofs into planes of light in the M Street tunnel, one of

four underpasses that will get such treatment in the NoMa district.

The design was developed in collaboration with Joan Almekinders and Rotterdam-based NIO architecten, and it is moving forward after winning a competition sponsored by the NoMa Business Improvement District (BID) to bring better connectivity to the area. “On the NoMa BID side, there are a

number of large, 10-story buildings,” explained architect Andrew Thurlow of TSA, “Once you pass through the tunnel the scale and building footprints decrease and a row-house typology emerges—the aesthetics are quite different, too. They asked us to bridge this gap by both highlighting and improving upon the existing infrastructure.”

Responding to the prompt of “light and safety,” the interactive light installation is based on the effects of rain falling, with 4,000 polycarbonate rods fixed to the top of the tunnel. Programmable LEDs blink and cascade in wave-like

patterns when cars pass through. The main challenge was to make sure the light didn’t distract drivers, which was the main concern for the District Department of Transportation (DOT). The pattern will resemble a boat-like wake behind the passing vehicle, ensuring that pedestrians experience the light, but not drivers. When traffic is heavy, the pattern becomes a dim, even glow, maintaining a calm light throughout the tunnel. The relationships between pedestrians, bikes, and cars are exploited as the lights change as people pass through.

Amtrak owns the existing rail structure, and the granite walls are protected, so much of the existing structure was off limits. Working inside of these constrictions, the designers added new steel columns against the walls, and the rods were hung from a substructure that spanned the pedestrian space. The rods are cut in an implied vaulted pattern that responds to the existing structural grid, but also to the bike lanes and pedestrian paths below.

Each element is designed to give maximum effect for passersby. “We are hoping to get a soundtrack which will add another sensorial dimension, explained Thurlow, contextualizing his project, “We are going for an affectatious architecture that involves multiple senses, both visual and acoustic.”

TSA worked closely with NIO, who have considerable experience with this type of project, having recently completed similar projects in Amsterdam and Amersfoort, Netherlands. The installation will be pre-fabricated and assembled in as little as two weeks onsite. Lighting designer Maramoja in Germany is now building prototypes of the rods. The project is expected to open in the fall following permitting this summer. This is the first of four for the \$2 million NoMa BID program, which will later improve the tunnels over L Street, K Street, and Florida Avenue NE. **MS**



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ROGERS PARTNERS AND KEN SMITH RECONCEIVE ST. PETERSBURG'S PIER

# Experience on the Water

The design transforms the linear experience of the pier with a variety of spaces and uses.



COURTESY ROGERS PARTNERS/KEN SMITH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Crowned by an inverted pyramid structure, the Pier of St. Petersburg, Florida leads visitors on a long and narrow journey to the end and back. However, as it stands now, it stops

short of providing much value outside of that. A new project headed by New York City-based architecture practice Rogers Partners will revitalize The Pier by turning it into a

multi-dimensional gathering place of both leisure and economic development.

Robert Rogers of Rogers Partners highlighted complexity and flexible functionality as the defining features of the Pier Park (as it will be redubbed). "Really great urban parks have the ability to change their program weekly, monthly, even by generation," said Rogers. "We want to build a high quality public space that strives toward an iconic experience instead of presenting visitors with just an iconic symbol."

The new park offers a range of amenities in order to provide this experience. The plan demolishes the inverted pyramid, but retains the structure's elevator and stairway core in deference to the public's "sentimental affection" for the icon. Four floors are being added that will contain air-conditioned lobbies, a bar and grill, bathrooms, and sweeping views of the bay.

Two classrooms on the ground floor—one indoors, and one "wet" room that utilizes the bay's waters—offer educational opportunities to young and old alike. A tilted lawn provides seating for up to 4,000 people, and can be used for lounging or for concerts and other outdoor events. The overall structure allows visitors to wander in a dozen different paths, with each one rewarding a different experience. "Open areas, skinny areas, broad areas," enumerated Rogers. "Over the water and underneath it. The pier is no longer one

long linear experience."

Landscape architect Ken Smith expanded upon how the landscape will deepen the pier's original intention of combining leisure with tourism for economic development. "The pier builds into a long tradition of turning waterfronts into public spaces," he said. Its many iterations over the decades have always included recreational elements: In the 1950s it housed a dance hall; in the 70s it gained the inverted pyramid. However, this is the first version to incorporate the bay's native ecology into the experience.

Seagrass grows in the breakwaters. A maze of boardwalks lead visitors through a curated coastal thicket that incorporates local vegetation and connects back to St. Petersburg's downtown streets. A grove of ornamental flowering trees energizes the landscape while pulling visitors toward the pier's end. "The landscape emphasizes sustainability and access to the water," said Smith. He described a point at the end of the pier where a small beach is in the tidal zone so that visitors can sit in the water while also being on the pier. "It's about getting back to the water," noted Smith. All the elements are sensitive to the bay's need for natural sunlight to keep the vegetation alive, leading to "leaner, skinnier landscape schemes." Lean as the landscape may be, all the elements converge in order to bring Pier Park into its most fully rounded version yet. **ELISIA GUERENA**

PERKINS EASTMAN DESIGNS A CITY ON THE FORMER SITE OF AN ATLANTA CAR FACTORY

# Assembling a City

The City of Doraville, population 8,300, is a 15-mile drive from downtown Atlanta. The suburban enclave is also the last stop on Atlanta's METRO Gold line rail transit system. Around the station, Stan Eckstut, principal at Perkins Eastman, has designed a "city-within-a-city" on the 165-acre site of a former General Motors assembly plant, adding a heavy dose of transit-oriented walkability that developers at The Integral Group hope can entice city-centric millennials to the city's fringe.

"It is a city, there's no question," Eckstut said of the development, dubbed "Assembly, Doraville, USA."

His master plan design—a mix of about 50-percent public space and 50-percent developable land sandwiched between railroad tracks and an interstate highway—embraces density around the Doraville transit stop, connecting to the city's historic downtown with an armature of parks that will guide development over the next decade.

Eckstut said streets and public spaces organize development parcels, which are envisioned as fluid land-use designations rather than prescribed uses—much like in a real city. In turn, market forces guide what ends up getting built. Eckstut cautioned against the pitfalls

of large-scale "Renaissance plans," that guided 20<sup>th</sup> century urban renewal, and today have influenced heavy-handed development in China. "The issue is creating something that can be implemented over time with many ideas and many innovations," said Eckstut. "You need to focus on how it will get implemented and how you can create a fabric where things can evolve and change—much like the grid of Manhattan."

Assembly sits on one side of a 30-foot-tall freight and transit rail line, one of the busiest in the Southeast, and Doraville on the other. Eckstut said connecting the two was important to create a real urban place. He plans to build a 60-foot-wide tunnel beneath 13 active tracks, an expensive feat, to create connections that can also foster density.

"The plans that preceded us all had bridges that went over the tracks," said Eckstut. The massive approach ramps required for such a structure precluded creating a compact town center. "I realized I could bring a street right under the tracks and meet up with grade. That became the whole scheme." Eckstut said the street—an extension of Doraville's civic heart, Park Avenue—will form the framework for the rest of the development. "This is the glue that connects the historical town center with the new 165-acre site," he said.

Just inside, an approximately 1.7-acre "Transit Square" serves as the forecourt to the larger parks system. From here, everything in Assembly is an easy walk. "I drew a circle with a radius of about 1,200 feet—a five minute walk," said Eckstut. "When you

reach a five-minute walk, the world changes—people don't walk after that." You can get just about anywhere in Assembly in five minutes, and your walk will always be close by a park."

Eckstut said that Assembly's park system is a sustainable machine for the entire neighborhood. "Most large-scale projects today have one major sustainability challenge: keeping stormwater on site," he said. "The best way of doing that is creating a park system. Wherever you have streets, you're going to have rain gardens." Rather than build wide sidewalks, Eckstut hopes these gardens will create a more intimate and vibrant streetscape.

Around the parks, the city has approved up to 10 million square feet of development governed by form-based codes that call for maintaining a street wall without setbacks

for the first 60 feet of height. Eckstut said the tallest buildings around the Transit Square will top out at up to 15 stories, as dictated by the airspace requirements of an adjacent airport.

The first section of the plan to be built is called "The Yards" on the southwest corner of the site, where a spur of the rail line once entered the factory. Eckstut convinced developers to save leftover remnants from the old GM plant to be repurposed as a film studio. Perkins Eastman is also designing a new minimalist loft building adjacent to the studio. Cottage-like outbuildings will surround the studio and additional offices will fill train cars. Developers plan on breaking ground on The Yards within the next year.

With the master plan complete and approved, each of six distinct neighborhood districts will go through a separate site planning process that goes into more detail about buildings and public space design. The district surrounding Transit Square and including the new underpass, will go into planning in the next 18 months. Eckstut said this phase "is very complicated because we have to engage the transit station and the street that goes under. It involves at least a dozen entities." **BK**



COURTESY PERKINS EASTMAN



AFFORDABLE HOUSING BATTLES RISING RENTS ALONG CHICAGO'S NEWEST PARK

PARKS FOR ALL?

Chicago's new linear park and bike corridor, The 606, opens in June. It is hotly anticipated for its potential to transform several West Side neighborhoods, but community groups have questioned who benefits from that transformation.

Some affordable housing advocates see New York City's High Line as a herald of gentrification so severe that few tools outside of affordable housing can combat it. According to the New York City Department of City Planning, their celebrated rails-to-trails project didn't spawn any dedicated affordable housing developments—just units added during the park's planning and construction to market-rate developments already in the works. Also known as The Bloomingdale Trail and Park, The 606 is a more formally restrained, contextual, and neighborhood-integrated project than the High Line. Chicago's park barely rises to meet the tops of the modest houses and two- and three-story residential buildings surrounding it. It also does without the New York project's expressive steel structure.

Real estate prices are rising several times the city-wide average

in the majority-Latino neighborhood of Logan Square that is adjacent to The 606. In a bid to maintain the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of the Humboldt Park and Logan Square neighborhoods, Chicago designers Landon Bone Baker Architects (LBBA) will bring 43 units of affordable housing to an area along The 606. Dubbed "Tierra Linda", the development will place three- and six-story buildings on 12 separate sites near the trail. The two- and three-bedroom units will be priced for residents making at or below 60 percent of the area's median income. Construction is set to begin early next year.

By investing in more affordable housing, Tierra Linda's non-profit developers, the Latin United Community Housing Association (LUCHA), hope that (compared to the High Line) the demographic and economic changes in the neighborhood will be as subtle as the aesthetic ones brought on by the new park.

"We're serving some of the last opportunities in this area to provide affordable housing," said Charlene Andreas, LUCHA's Director of Building Development.

Tierra Linda is one of a half dozen affordable housing projects near The 606 that will comprise more than 300 residences, according to the city's Department of Planning and Development.

Rising property values have strained low-income residents in the area. In Humboldt Park, 65 percent of residents were spending over 30 percent of their income on rent in 2010, according to the Chicago Rehab Network, an affordable housing advocacy group. Large-scale, market-rate housing developments, like the 100-unit Centrum 606, are springing up near The 606 as well, cutting into space for affordable housing.

"We recognize the interplay of green space and housing issues," read a statement from Beth White, Chicago Region Director for The 606's lead private partner, the Trust for Public Land. "So—while it is beyond our mission to set public policy around housing access—we have worked to bring together community members and policymakers to have productive discussions about these and other issues impacting the communities we serve."

LBBA, LUCHA, and the wider network of area non-profit affordable housing advocates said The 606 will have an overall positive impact on its low-income neighbors. They said the diversity-retaining elements



of affordable housing are as much a selling point as new park space, or the accompanying commercial development.

"What makes me optimistic is the amount of support that came with all of the community meetings," said Catherine Baker of LBBA. "There were a lot of new people to Humboldt Park, and they specifically moved [there] because of the diversity; they liked the mix of incomes, and they want to keep it that way. They're fighting for that, and they're the newcomers."

Despite that, a handful of affordable housing developments won't preserve Logan Square and Humboldt Park's current diversity forever. As they move from renters to homeowners, newcomers may

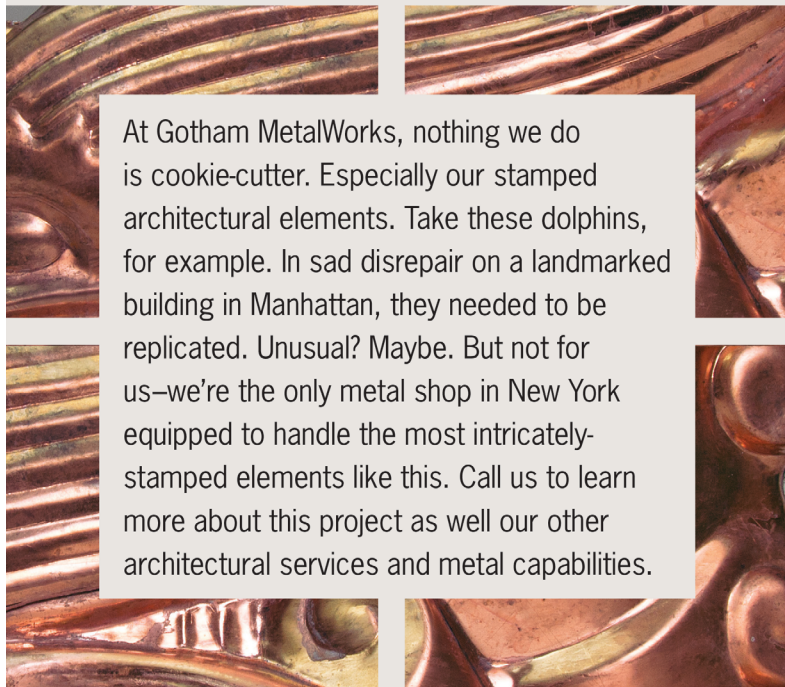
**Above: LBBA's Tierra Linda is a modern take on vernacular aesthetics—and, crucially, it's affordable.**

prioritize new kinds of housing. But The 606 itself might be the neighborhood's best hope for keeping gentrifiers cognizant of why they chose a place that cuts across class and racial boundaries—it's possible that a stroll along the park will inspire a more accommodating place, not a more exclusive one.

"The city is so segregated, and here's an opportunity where we have both ethnic and economic diversity," said Lucy Gomez-Feliciano of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association, an affordable housing community agency. "What we have now is good, but it's very fragile."

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6



**1 Kinesit  
Arper**

This self-balancing task chair features a discreet built-in mechanism under the seat that provides synchronized movement and seat height command. An adjustable lumbar support is concealed within the thin frame of the backrest, maintaining a sharp, clean aesthetic. Designed by Lievore Altherr Molina.

[arper.com](http://arper.com)

**2 Allstar  
Vitra**

A looping polyamide armrest distinguishes the design of Allstar, and represents the main structural element on which the mechanical unit of the chair is hinged. Fully adjustable, the chair is available in a variety of colors. Designed by Konstantin Grcic.

[vitra.com](http://vitra.com)

**3 Beyond Solid  
Allsteel**

Beyond Solid is the latest addition to the collection of movable walls that deliver superior acoustic performance. As an alternative to drywall and other traditional construction, it allows for increased spatial flexibility in the modern workplace.

[allsteel.com](http://allsteel.com)

**4 Bloom  
Kimball**

Casual and sophisticated, Bloom fits comfortably in a variety of settings. United by the same base design, the lounge chair offers a tailored seat with optional contrasting fabric, while the occasional tables come in a range of shapes, heights, and materials.

[kimball.com](http://kimball.com)

**5 Exclave  
Herman Miller**

Exclave's rail-based wall system helps foster ideation with white boards, tack boards, and a media support for dual monitors and video conferencing. Unique table shapes, with varying heights and sizes, allow team members to gather in focused groups. Completing the suite are mobile easels and storage elements.

[hermanmiller.com](http://hermanmiller.com)

**6 Goldman Lamp  
Flos**

Featuring a USB port at the rear of the base, this contemporary interpretation of the traditional banker's lamp is both useful and eye-catching. Designed by Ron Gilad.

[usa.flos.com](http://usa.flos.com)





**7 Kinetic Desk M1  
Stir**

This height-adjustable desk is driven by software that senses an occupant's presence, learns their preferences, enables them to set goals, and actively reminds them to change positions. It utilizes a cloud-based architecture allows user data to "travel" with workers as they move between desks.

[Stirworks.com](http://Stirworks.com)

**8 sixfivezero Seating  
Coalesse**

These wood chairs are stackable up to six high for efficient storage. A wide range of shell, base, and upholstery choices allow for a myriad of finish combinations. Coordinating tables are available. Designed by Lievore Altherr Molina.

[coalesse.com](http://coalesse.com)

**9 Bahn  
Watson**

Bahn is a furniture system designed for dynamic office environments that promote heads-down focus and team interaction. Manufactured in Washington state.

[watsonfurniture.com](http://watsonfurniture.com)

**10 Concierge  
Bernhardt Design**

Sleek and versatile, the Concierge is a workstation that can be customized to fit specific needs. The design lends itself to incorporate televisions, whiteboards, and charging stations for both laptops and mobile devices. Offered in five materials, two heights, and six base options.

[bernhardtdesign.com](http://bernhardtdesign.com)

**11 Sway Lounge Chair  
KI**

The innovative design of this chair utilizes a unique orbital motion, allowing users to move freely from front to back, side to side, and everywhere in between. Made from rotationally molded polypropylene in four standard colors. Coordinating occasional table and upholstered ottoman are available.

[ki.com](http://ki.com)

**12 StandTable  
Proof**

The StandTable features three surfaces of different heights to stimulate users to work in different positions and to fully occupy the circular space around the station. USB ports are embedded into the tabletops and storage space is incorporated into the base of the unit. Designed by Ben van Berkel, UN Studio.

[proof.com](http://proof.com)

**13 BuzziFalls  
BuzziSpace**

Patterns are CNC-cut into two layers of a proprietary acoustic felt. The product can serve as a decorative room divider or be hung in front of a wall, acting as dimensional wallpaper with acoustical properties. Designed to be hung from a ceiling fixture, it is available in seven motifs and two sizes. Designed by Sas Adriaenssens.

[buzzispace.com](http://buzzispace.com)

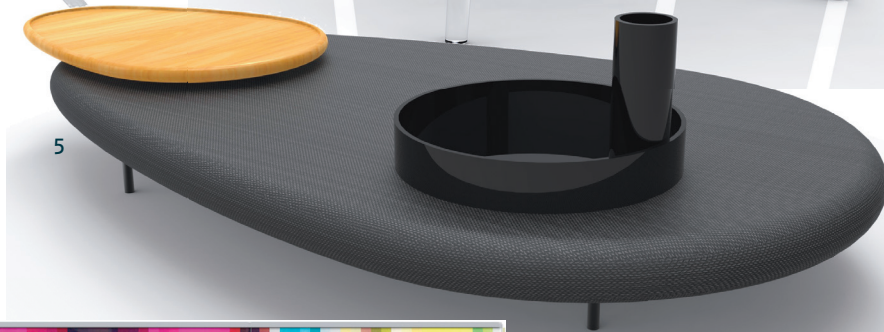




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# Welcoming Environments

Hospitality design is all about visual impact and physical comfort. From pedigreed modernist classics to eye-popping contemporary works, these pieces will make any lobby or lounge area a memorable space. By Leslie Clagett

## 1 Jewels Garden Carpet Moooi

Fabricated using the ChromoJet high-definition printer, which creates remarkably realistic images, this flamboyant collage of flowers, gemstones, and Madras motifs is definitely lobby-worthy. Designed by Sacha Walckhoff of Christian Lacroix Maison.

[moooi.com](http://moooi.com)

## 2 Diatom Moroso

Suitable for indoor and outdoor use, this stacking chair is fabricated of pressed aluminum. Available with a clear protective finish in metallic gold, metallic copper, white, grey, fluorescent green, or black powder-coat. Designed by Ross Lovegrove.

[moroso.it](http://moroso.it)

## 3 Santorini Marset

This fixture offers an unusual degree of customization; users can choose how many shades to place on the diffuser, along with their order, position, and direction, depending on the desired light effect. The luminaire can be converted into a wall or floor fixture. Shades are available in white, grey, and mustard. Designed by Sputnik Estudio.

[marset.com/usa](http://marset.com/usa)

## 4 Cloud-io Kartell

Small puffs of crystal-clear plastic conjoin in this airy, light-catching design. Lightweight and durable, the piece is designed by Eugeni Quitllet.

[kartell.com](http://kartell.com)

## 5 Lily Casamania

Inspired by the architecture of the Nymphaeaceae plant, this table is a system of low-slung pads and surfaces, which operate at different heights to accommodate different functions. Higher pads are used as seating and tables, while the lower ones offer display and utility. Designed by Marc Thorpe.

[casamania.it](http://casamania.it)

## 6 Dreams Cabinet BD Barcelona Design

The pixelated graphics that wrap this cabinet assume a more pronounced presence thanks to the ultra high-gloss finish of the piece. Available in multi-color, white-, or black-scale versions. Designed by Cristian Zuzunaga.

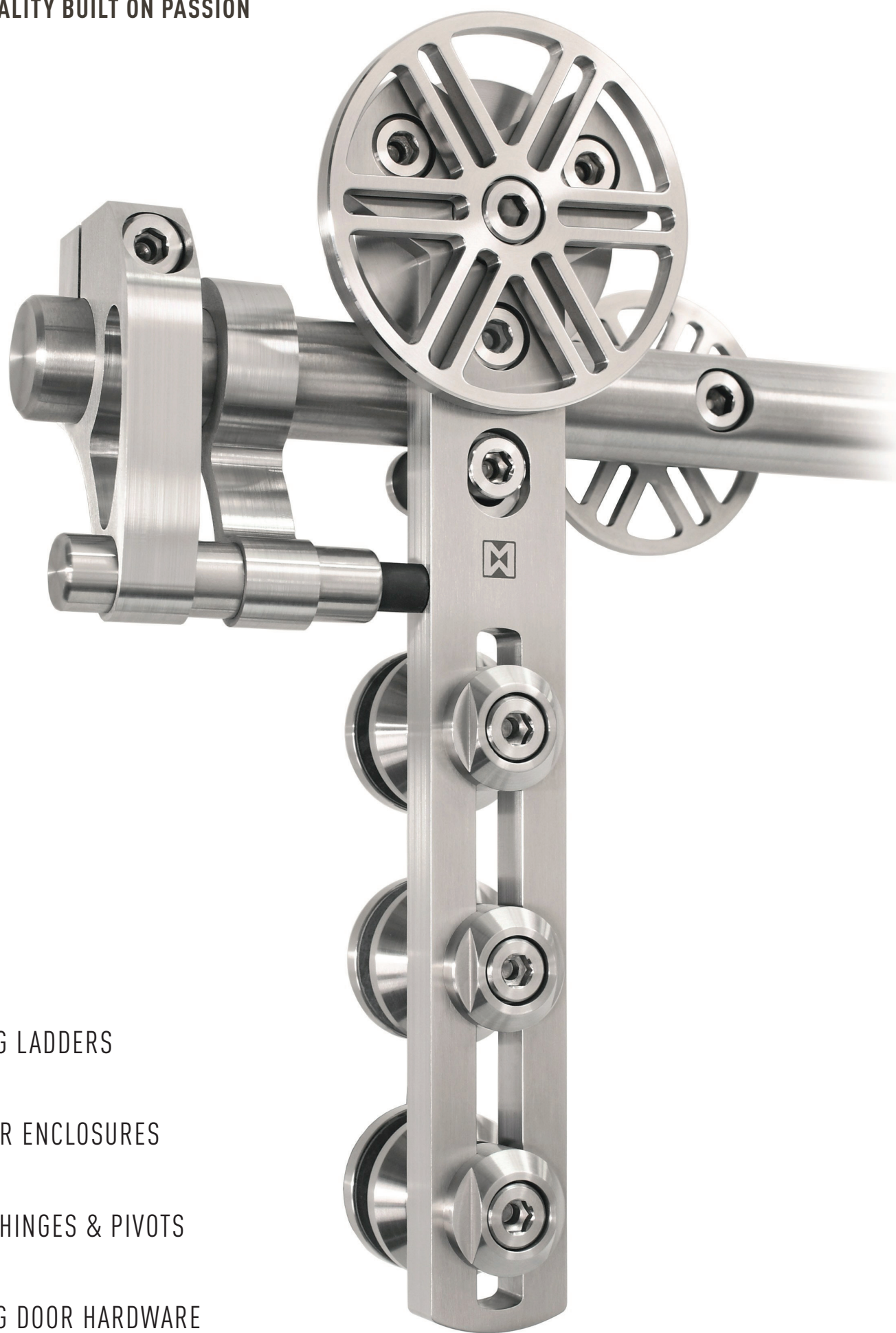
[bdbarcelona.com](http://bdbarcelona.com)

## 7 Nail Table #30 Sandback Studio

A slab of walnut "inlaid" with aluminum nails rests atop a waxed steel base. Measuring 36 inches square, the table stands 16 inches tall. Available in several finishes and base materials. Designed by Peter Sandback.

[petersandback.com](http://petersandback.com)





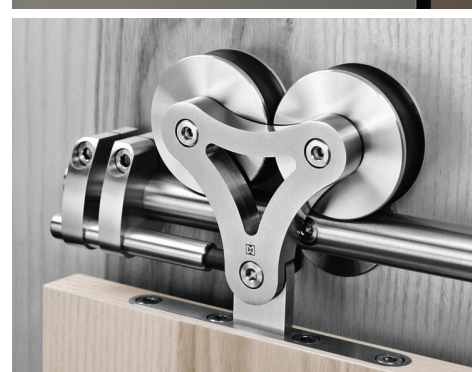
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THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE IN THE KATHMANDU VALLEY HAS SPOTLIGHTED NEPAL'S NEED FOR BETTER BUILDING REGULATIONS

# DISASTER, TRAGEDY

In the days after the earthquake in Nepal, as aftershocks splintered through the country and the death toll continued to climb, the impact of the disaster came into focus for those far from the epicenter. Across the impoverished nation, historic temples had toppled, and buildings had collapsed entirely, spreading cragged blankets of concrete, beams, and bricks. The death and destruction in Nepal is devastating, but not surprising. The country sits on a fault line and experienced a deadly earthquake in 1934. Making matters worse, rapid urbanization—and the shoddily built homes that have come with it—left countless people particularly vulnerable when the earth shook so vigorously that the entire city of Kathmandu shifted by 10 feet.

The fallout from the April earthquake is exactly the type of tragedy that the World Bank warned about in a 2013 report. “Unplanned

urban development in the Kathmandu Valley has led to rapid and uncontrolled sprawl; irregular, substandard, and inaccessible housing development; loss of open space, and decreased livability,” stated the organization. “It has also increased vulnerability to disasters, making Kathmandu one of the most earthquake-vulnerable cities in the world.”

The catastrophic event not only destroyed homes and ended lives, it brought down many of Nepal’s centuries-old monuments and temples. These structures exemplified the country’s religious and cultural history and helped fuel Nepal’s tourist economy. Kathmandu Valley is on UNESCO’s World Heritage list with seven groups of historic monuments. But after the 7.8-magnitude earthquake, many of Kathmandu’s renowned sites have been destroyed, or at least damaged.

The historic Durbar Square, for example, was covered in debris from the fallen buildings that had surrounded it. The collapse of these cultural landmarks also had deadly results: According to early estimates, 180 people died when the iconic, nine-story Dharahara Tower fell.

Following the disaster, Irina Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO said in a statement that Kathmandu Valley had experienced “extensive and irreversible damage.” She added that the organization would assess the damage and work with Nepalese authorities to protect and conserve these sites “with a view to recovery.”

But despite the earthquake’s magnitude, and the country’s inadequate infrastructure and seismic planning, many historic structures survived the disaster largely unscathed. For many sites, this was due to the work of the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT), a local non-profit that has been rehabbing and seismically retrofitting the area’s architectural gems since 1991. Almost immediately after the earthquake, KVPT surveyed the roughly 45 structures it has worked on, and found—much to its surprise—that only three had major structural damage. Rohit Ranjitkar, the trust’s Nepal director, has already said that each of these buildings could be rebuilt.

The difference between the condition of the structures rehabbed by the KVPT and many UNESCO sites is dramatic. When asked about the disparity, Lisa Ackerman,

the executive vice president of the World Monuments Fund, which has partnered with KVPT, said it comes down to issues of organizational structure, control over specific sites, and money—and in an impoverished country like Nepal, money is hard to come by. “KVPT is a local organization that had purview over a relatively small area of the country,” Ackerman wrote in an email. “UNESCO is an intergovernmental agency that does not own or operate buildings or sites in any particular country. Member nations of UNESCO and signatories to the World Heritage Convention must decide how much to invest in their local heritage activities. UNESCO provides a framework for international standards.” Both Ackerman and representatives from KVPT praised UNESCO’s work in the region. (UNESCO did not respond to requests to comment for this story.)

With the country still reeling from the disaster, focus remains on reducing human suffering. Nepal is expected to rebuild as it has done many times before; and as it does so, the country will need to decide what the process should look like. The work of organizations like the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust could provide the necessary roadmap for how to stabilize and preserve the country’s cultural, religious, and architectural heritage.

“Nepal is a place where people are really identified as part of this cultural landscape with these extraordinary historic buildings,” said Ackerman. “It would be unthinkable not to care about the cultural heritage, not just because of the tourism economy that has developed in Kathmandu but it really is a living, spiritual center.” **HENRY MELCHER**



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ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

# Naturally Indoors

**Humankind has come a long way from its primitive origins in terms of constructing shelters to isolate itself from the insalubrious harassments of the outdoors only to find that hermetic environments come with their own costs and consequences. In this issue, AN looks at four commercial and four hospitality interiors that, from a comfortable remove, reconnect inhabitants with nature. Plus, we talk to COOKFOX Senior Associate Pam Campbell about the biophilic design principals that guide much of her firm's work.**





Rogers Partners located group work areas and communal spaces against the window banks, allowing the entire space to enjoy daylight and views.

Natural materials, such as charred cypress and cork, lend a sensual note to the otherwise minimal palette.



ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

## Commercial

# Droga5

New York City  
Rogers Partners

Founded in 2006, New York City-based advertising firm Droga5 grew quickly and in ad-hoc fashion within three connected buildings in NoHo. “There was no organizational structure to their old space,” explained Robert Rogers, principal of architecture practice Rogers Partners, which designed Droga5’s new offices. “The departmentalization was determined by who got there first. The office culture thrived on that spontaneous environment.”

Droga5’s new location is in 120 Wall Street, a 34-story wedding cake style office building on the East River designed by Buchman & Kahn and completed in 1930. The firm occupies the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> floors, each of which are about 23,000 square feet in area, as well as the much smaller 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> penthouse floors. In conceiving of

how to transport the spontaneous environment of the aggressive startup to the more sedate surrounds of an old-guard Wall Street office building, Rogers Partners developed a constellation model, intentionally dispersing the firm’s departments throughout the floors and then connecting them in ways that promote random encounters.

The southeast corner of the 10<sup>th</sup> floor is occupied by a large kitchen—food is also a big part of Droga5’s culture—and lounge area with couches and coffee tables that serves as a breakout work space. An enclosed glass boardroom—where employee teams pitch their ideas to firm founder David Droga—floats above a grand stair that descends into the communal area from the 11<sup>th</sup> floor. When a large presentation screen is rolled down above the boardroom, the stairs become seating for company video screenings and presentations.

A charred cypress wood ceiling demarcates the grand stair and traces the circulation pathway through the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> floors. “We wanted something with real materiality, not just a color,” said Rogers. “We wanted there to be more dimensions to the sensory experience. The wood has a slight aromatic quality.” Employees are encouraged to

take the stairs rather than the elevators, and the architects positioned little nooks and crannies along the circulation pathway for private meetings.

Group work areas line the window banks, while the private glass offices are on the core, allowing the entire office to enjoy natural light. The ceiling was cleaned up, the soffit moved back and packed with the mechanical services, and a linear LED pendant up/down fixture hung low above the desks. Cork and glass enclosed “war rooms” punctuate the space, outfitted with white and black boards, video screens, and curtains for privacy. Where there are offices along the windows on the north and south facades, the architects partitioned them with a translucent polycarbonate system from Duo-Gard that transmits ample daylight.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> floor is a “retreat,” where teams can get away to buckle down and focus on a campaign. The 34<sup>th</sup> floor is the closing room, where clients are brought for the Big Pitch. To make this space more impressive, and highlight the views, the architects raised the floors so that you can look down on the East River from a seated position, and canted the walls inward, adding to the vertiginous experience.

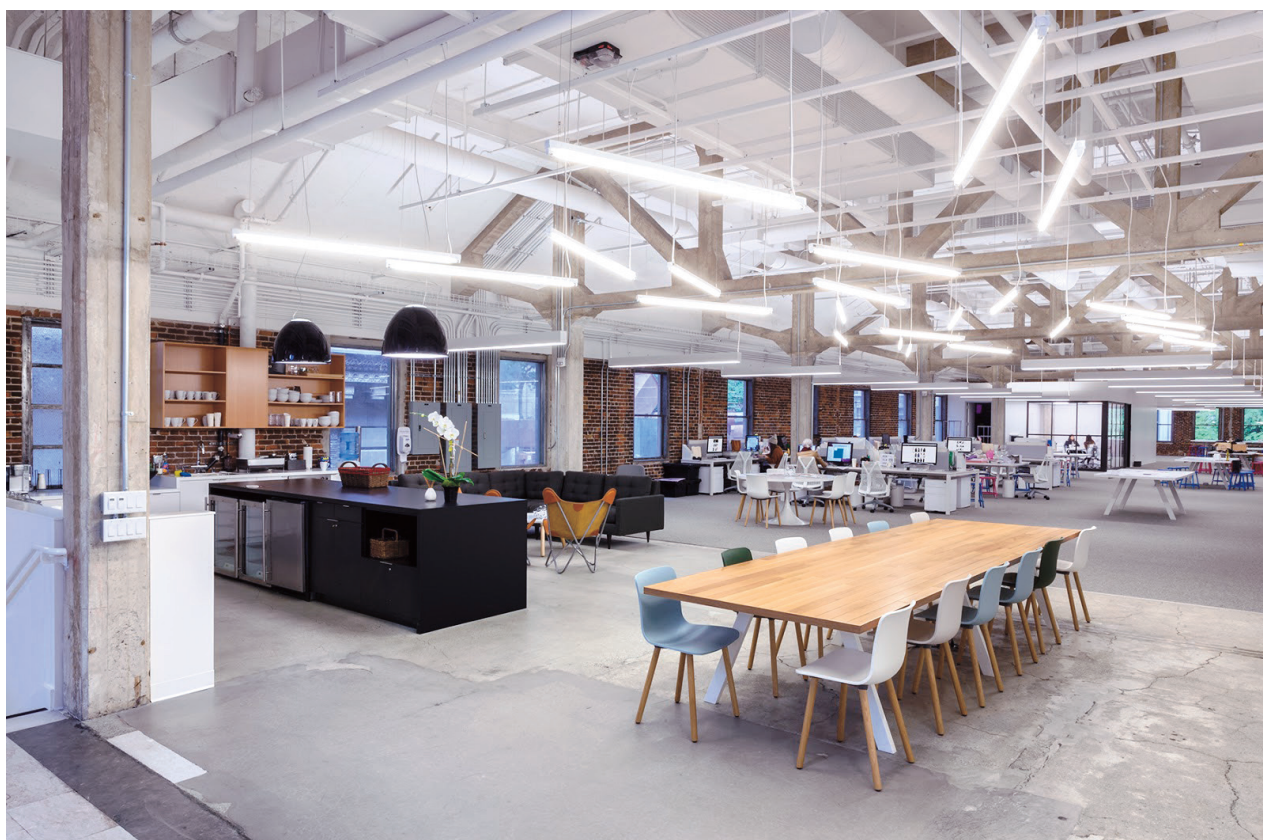
AARON SEWARD





In a process described as “more archaeology than architecture,” the architects stripped the interior to its raw, structural materiality, exposing a central skylight that floods the two-level workspace with daylight.

An open kitchen in an area known as “the hub” is one of many spaces that fosters collaboration.



Commercial

## Nasty Gal

Los Angeles, California  
Loescher Meachem Architects and  
Barbara Bestor Architects

Nasty Gal, an edgy online fashion retailer based in downtown Los Angeles, is one of the fastest growing e-commerce sites

in the country. When it recently moved to LA from San Francisco, its founders weren't looking for a space that would be—like much of the fashion world—fleeting trendy. They wanted an office full of inherent character that could smoothly house its varied departments and programs under one roof.

It found what it was looking for in the Pacific Mutual Building, a 1908 gem that is the oldest structure on Pershing Square. However, this selection was not without major challenges. Not only had

the building, now known as PacMutual, undergone several renovations over the years that had left its original form unrecognizable, it had also received two major additions, leaving it a warren of hallways, bridges, and ramps longing for uniformity.

Loescher Meachem Architects (LMA) and Barbara Bestor Architecture stepped in, determined to make sense of these agglomerations. What they created is an open, multi-story, 30,000-square-foot space fitted with conference rooms,





meeting spaces, breakout zones, and creative studios that capture the brand's identity, but more importantly call out its location's unique history.

The team, working with Steiner Construction, basically removed all the renovations made over the last century, exposing original clerestories, skylights, fittings, doors, and windows. They also pulled out mechanical equipment, and removed drop ceilings, plaster walls, and double-loaded corridors. Brick walls were blasted just lightly enough to maintain their original surfaces.

"We took it back as far as we needed to expose some of the originality of the building," said LMA principal John Meachem. "It was more archaeology than

architecture," added creative director Jenny Myers.

To cope with the maze of rooms, the firm pulled out even more walls and shifted spaces to make the "flow of the traffic cohesive," said Meachem. They still took advantage of some of the spatial divisions, separating close to ten departments into what Meachem calls "neighborhoods."

Where possible—particularly in the oldest volume contained in the original PacMutual building—they opened things up, unifying work zones around the mezzanine and atrium (which employees refer to as "the cathedral") and creating a central spine around which everything revolves. Original concrete trusses are exposed and painted white to garner attention.

Up and down suspended lighting illuminates work spaces and ceiling details. Elsewhere pendant lights create more intimate environments. One such space, known as "the hub," contains kitchen and hangout facilities and blackboards on which leaders can post messages.

Collaboration is promoted throughout, although smaller meeting spaces provide privacy when necessary. Private offices are kept to a minimum and maintain transparency via full-height glass. The use of vintage furniture gives the offices additional warmth, while Vitra benching workstations provide a consistent, clean, and modular collaborative workspace.

The mostly white material

palette, and the expression of existing stone, wood, and metal, makes for a simple, understated interior.

"We didn't want the new architecture to get in the way of what was there," said Meachem. "We tried to touch the original walls as little as possible."

There are a few exceptions—injecting the brand's contemporary aesthetic into the equation—like the newly timber-clad reception area.

The offices are meant to grow and stay relevant for years. They now accommodate 150 people, and could grow about 50 percent more. It is a surprisingly long-term plan for a company that changes its lines every season.

**SAM LUBELL**

A mix of vintage and contemporary furniture creates eclectic atmospheres in the office's different "neighborhoods." The wood-surfaced reception area, with its wall of plants, is one of the few places in the office where the company's brand is put front and center.



COURTESY NASTY GAL





COURTESY GENSLER

Commercial

## Gensler

Denver, Colorado  
Gensler

Global design firm Gensler has recently moved its Denver office to a new space at 1225 17<sup>th</sup> Street, in the Lower Downtown neighborhood. The firm designed the interior renovation of this space to take advantage of sustainable design principles while offering employees and collaborators a diversity of work environments.

The office provides 23,000 square feet of workspace over two floors and features a variety of work environments to address the manifold working and social needs of 90 employees. The first thing one notices when examining the new space is the ground-floor lobby and collaboration space located directly off Lawrence Street. This expansive lobby allows Gensler to host events, helping to engage the community in the design process. A stadium style staircase connects the lobby to the second floor office area, which has been massed so as to place the length of the program along the facade of the building, allowing natural light to fill the space. This second floor office spills out onto a roof deck featuring plantings, seating, and break areas, creating not only a place for repose, but an engaging outdoor work environment to take advantage of the copious Denver sunshine.

A focus on workplace ergonomics is borne out in a variety of standing, sitting,

and lounging workspaces designed for different types of work. The size of individual workspaces has been reduced at the same time so that communal spaces have been increased in order to accommodate the changing nature of collaboration. This sensitivity to different work types and styles frames ergonomics as its own kind of sustainable and natural design. It is this human-centered focus that drives much of Gensler's workspace design. Design Director Michelle Liebling spoke to *AN* about the project, "The strategies that we worked with in this project are developed by our [Workplace Strategy and Design] consulting group, which includes management consultants, cultural anthropologists, psychologists, and other professionals." The tools this in-house consultancy developed were put to use by the Denver office in both design and analysis in order to tailor the programming and implementation of the space planning to the needs of the office. Increasingly, it is these sorts of collaborations with behavioral and environmental professionals that are driving the profession forward in ways that simple geometry and program planning can never do.

LED lighting with motion and daylighting sensors, low-VOC materials, energy and water saving equipment, and interior landscaping round out the sustainable credentials of the space. Locally sourced beetle-kill pine provides a rich texture in a sustainable package throughout this project. The Gensler project team has shown that sustainable and natural design consists of much more than efficient fixtures and certified materials. **NICK CECCHI**



COURTESY REVERSIBLE DESTINY FOUNDATION

Commercial

## Biotopological Scale-juggling Escalator

New York City  
Reversible Destiny Foundation

The artists Madeline Gins and Shusaku Arakawa spent 40 years evolving an art practice that moved from conceptual and object-based work to projects that aim to "reinvent our species through works of procedural architecture." Their architecture exists under a heading they called Reversible Destiny—which is also the name of the "practice" they founded in 2010, the Reversible Destiny Foundation. Like other artists who claim expertise in the field of architecture without ever having studied it formally, they came to designing from a wholly unique background. They claimed for their work new insights that have "never been addressed by architecture before," and, not unlike many architects, were interested in the theoretical implications of their works. In order to achieve what they hoped would be a "dynamic architecture," they worked with social scientists in experimental biology, phenomenology, and medicine, among other fields to create "lifespan extending projects."

Their 2007 Bioscleave House (also called Lifespan Extending Villa) in East Hampton, New York, was an addition to an existing home that had sloping floors and walls that

purposefully connected in unexpected ways in order to "map perception and diagrammatically display the set of tendencies and coordinating skills fundamental to human capability." With architects increasingly interested in formal manipulation to find design solutions to issues like sustainability and social engagement, Reversible Destiny's Lifespan projects were unique in wanting to expand human perception of daily life.

The work of Arakawa and Gins exists primarily in galleries and on private walls, but now there is a public space in New York City where one can engage with their architecture.

Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons commissioned Madeline Gins (Arakawa passed away in 2010 and Gins in 2014) to design a transition space in the Dover Street Market at 30<sup>th</sup> and Lexington Avenue. The installation, called Biotopological Scale-Juggling Escalator, is a multi-colored, biomorphically textured tunnel holding scale models of bedrooms and a bathroom. Its purpose is to encourage disengaged shoppers who are ambling from one floor to another to become more aware of their body and spirit in space, time, and culture.

The artists want users to rethink architecture and what it can do. With Biotopological Scale-Juggling Escalator they hope to trigger cognitive awareness that will help people age with grace and dignity. How can one argue with architecture of such ambition and hope? In fact this tunnel promises what the expensive clothes in the market promise, but deliver only as long as they are new.

**WILLIAM MENKING**

**Top and middle:** Gensler deployed the findings of its Workplace Strategy and Design Consulting Group in designing its new Denver office. A grand stair connects the lobby to the second floor work area, which is massed along the window wall and spills out onto a landscaped terrace.

**Above:** Resembling nothing so much as the inner workings of the digestive tract, the biomorphically inspired Biotopological Scale Juggling Escalator seeks to remind high-end shoppers of their bodies and help them age gracefully.



**In recent years, sustainability has become one of the most prominent motivators of architectural design. Rarely is a project unveiled without a corresponding press release touting a green roof, photovoltaic array, or an expected LEED ranking. While such headline-grabbing green building features are important, New York City-based architecture practice COOKFOX believes that sustainability should go beyond reducing the energy footprint. The firm has been incorporating principles of biophilic design into its projects in order to produce buildings that treat human beings as an integral part of a natural ecosystem.**

**ANs Henry Melcher recently spoke with COOKFOX Senior Associate Pam Campbell about what biophilic design is and how her firm is incorporating it into its architecture.**

**Henry Melcher: So what is Biophilic Design?**

**Pam Campbell:** The term was initially coined by a social psychologist back in the 1960s called Erich Fromm, but it is generally attributed to E.O. Wilson, who wrote the *Biophilia Hypothesis* in the 80s, which was a body of research that has developed ever since and really explains that we as human beings have this connection to nature, and that because we developed in a natural setting we have these psychological and physical reactions to natural landscapes and materials.

There has been a lot of research showing how different natural phenomenon within the interior environment contribute to the performance of children in schools and people in the workplace—how healthy they are, how attentive they are, how much they can focus on a certain task.

The thinking is that because of the nature of human beings, we feel at home in natural landscapes so we really need to reestablish that connection—and that is where architecture comes into it. We have this ability as designers to create spaces that can work to reengage people with the natural landscape and the health benefits that go along with that.

Whether it's views out to a natural landscape or bringing plantings into an interior, we call that "nature *in the* space." And then there is something called "nature *of the* space" and that might not have anything to do with looking at vegetation, but creating spaces that mimic natural settings in which humans thrived and felt most comfortable in the way we developed over time.

There is also something called "prospect and refuge theory." If you think about humans in the natural landscape way back when, when they could see into the distance to a predator or some danger coming, they would be in a place of prospect, but also in a place where they have some refuge. When you have this combination of prospect and refuge, it has this visceral reaction of how we feel within that space.

And there is "risk and peril." Our bodies react pretty well to short-term stresses—they keep us more alert, raise our heart rate and hormone levels—and as long as that is not a permanent state, that has some physical benefits to us. So places where you can see over a balustrade, or be in a place where some sort of risk is involved, it can be a good thing as long as there is a safe place within the space.

The other category is "natural analogues"—when you actually have a tree or something in your space. There are other patterns and materials that we can bring into the design that



Live Work Home, Syracuse, New York, COOKFOX; Right: Pam Campbell.



COURTESY COOKFOX; RICHARD BARNES/OTTO

## Q&A > PAM CAMPBELL

# BEYOND THE GREEN ROOF: DISCUSSING BIOPHILIC DESIGN

can start to have the same beneficial responses: the grain of a natural wood as opposed to a piece of plastic.

**What are the challenges of using biophilic design in New York City where so many buildings are sealed and climate-controlled?**

It is definitely a challenge. When we get the rare opportunity to design a building in an actual landscape, it can do so much for you in terms of general sustainability. But when you are in the city, you have to do so much more because we are in an environment that is 90 percent buildings, as opposed to 90 percent natural.

There is always that delicate balance between daylight and energy savings. Obviously the glazing technologies are getting better and better; we can now afford to have windows that have a significant amount of glazing without killing the energy budget in terms of cooling and heating costs.

Window sizing is really kind of an art form. Some spaces are great to have floor-to-ceiling glazing, but there are a lot of environments where that is not appropriate—it is too much peril, it doesn't make people feel relaxed and enclosed. So getting the right balance of opaque, solid exterior walls to glazing is probably one of the major things we can do to create a comfortable environment on the interior.

Biophilic design really comes into play when we are talking about the shape of the space, the materials we use, and the views outside. In terms of trying to create natural environments in the city, it is a challenge and what we've tried to do with our projects is to create many terrace spaces and outdoor spaces so people can still view, at least in the foreground, some natural landscapes.

And then obviously creating spaces that aren't so hermetically sealed where people can view the sky, the changing weather, and different

light patterns coming into the space. Not just having good daylighting, but having that pattern change how it impacts the space during the day—it can keep people more alert.

At Live Work Home up in Syracuse we had a particular challenge because Syracuse gets half the amount of natural daylight as the rest of the country. It is a particularly gray place. So we created this screen around the house that was perforated and had a pattern that we digitized from a photograph of daylight coming through a tree canopy. With that randomized pattern we were trying to mimic how you might feel if you were walking through a forest.

That screen allows daylight to filter into the building in different ways. On the north side, we painted the interior face of the screen with a reflective white coating so the sun from the south would reflect off that in a pattern and bounce back onto the porch area as well.

**Is biophilic design a selling point? Do developers and prospective buyers want these strategies incorporated into buildings?**

I think from the developers' standpoint, for residential, certainly; everyone is interested in outdoor terraces and we are trying to explain why it is a good thing beyond just a marketing tool. Even if people don't understand the science behind [biophilic design], they get the fact that, yes, looking out of your living room onto an area of plantings and trees that is changing with the seasons is better than looking across the street at another building. People naturally understand that even if they can't put it into words.

In terms of biophilic design, people do feel healthier when they are looking at a natural landscape, so I think that is pretty well understood and has been for a long time.

Architects always talk about blending the indoor and the outside. How many times have you heard that? It is something that we have

all understood, and I think we are in a better position now because there's actually some real hard data behind it. That body of knowledge lets us control it more instead of just randomly putting some planting outside on a terrace. We can really enhance the design of that by understanding that it should be changing, it should be moving, there should be taller parts and smaller parts, there should be areas where you feel protected and areas where you see over.

**There are a lot of biophilic and sustainable design practices incorporated into One Bryant Park, which is LEED Platinum, but then a [New York City benchmarking] report comes out and says the building is using twice the amount of energy as the Empire State Building. So what are the tangible benefits of using these types of designs?**

For Bryant Park there is a difference between energy that is generated on-site versus energy that is generated remotely. The thing is it is a bank of trading floors at the end of the day, so it has one of the most intense energy usages of any building type that can exist in the city; but a lot of that energy is produced on-site.

About 75 percent of the power that is produced by power plants actually gets lost through the transmission of that power to a building. When you're producing that on-site, that loss doesn't exist anymore. So in terms of the overall energy use and pollution, those things have to be factored in and rarely are. It's normally just some numbers that are coming up in a meter and it is not taking into consideration the building type and also where that power is coming from.

Where we really caught the interest of the bank and the developer—this was a joint venture between Bank of America and The Durst Organization—was when we started talking about employee retention.

When you employ somebody there is a certain amount of startup time where they are being pretty inefficient, and when you lose somebody and somebody new starts, there is obviously a huge financial cost there. So creating spaces that people want to be in, where they do have access to daylight and they do feel better, it helps with employee retention and also reduces sick days.

In terms of the air that is getting delivered to the space, it is at a higher filtration. The outdoor air in the city obviously isn't that great, so if we can filter that air to high levels we can reduce the amount of respiratory problems and other reasons why people may end up taking sick days.

Employee retention and creating healthy workspaces is a huge tool that we have in our toolbox.

**Where do you think these technologies and tools will take things in the future?**

I think biophilic design is something that people are going to start employing more. We are never going to tear down a city and build a forest again so we have to start employing more educated techniques of bringing back the actual environment in such way that we can cohabit with it. That is something that has to get pushed forward.

There are more and more children being brought up in the city and they have less and less ability to really understand what nature is; they tend to come across it in a very condensed, small environment.

How do we expect future generations to care about the environment if they don't even understand what it is?





KEN HAYDEN/COURTESY SELLDORF

The Selldorf-designed Mesa at Amangiri exploits the dramatic landscape of Southern Utah, offering sweeping views of the rugged terrain from the interior, while also carving out intimate and shaded areas for quiet and relaxation.

#### Hospitality

## The Mesa at Amangiri

Canyon Point, Southern Utah  
Selldorf Architects



Set within the craggy, serene desert landscape of Utah's canyon country, the Mesa at Amangiri, a villa from Aman Resorts, rises quietly from the earth, a subtle counterpart to the sandstone formations that speckle the surroundings. Designed by New York-based Selldorf Architects, this is the first of 36 private villas planned for the remote Canyon Point location, which will share services and amenities with its neighboring Amangiri Resort. Intended to maximize views but





The interior palette is warm and neutral, much like the desert landscape, with teak and Douglas fir accents, sandstone floors, copper doors, and stucco walls.



also maintain a restrained footprint, the villas are positioned so “you are really part of the landscape,” explained Sara Lopercolo, partner at Selldorf Architects, and sited to avoid direct views of other villas, creating a sense of privacy. “[While] also being very careful about how the villas are inserted so not to disturb the topography. The desert flora is very fragile. We had to proceed very gingerly,” she added. The inside, designed to complement not compete with the stunning vistas,

is configured to provide ample opportunity to enjoy the landscape from different perspectives while also offering tucked-away areas for repose. Residents enter through a shaded courtyard, leading to an entry hall, or through the kitchen on the left side of the villa. There is, as Lopercolo characterized it, “a public bar of living” comprising a living and dining room with sliding glass doors that look out onto the swimming pool and the desert and peaks beyond. Two stucco walls act as an

“organizing device between the public and private,” partitioning the communal spaces from the pavilion housing the bedrooms on the right side of the villa. Upstairs, two additional bedrooms and bathrooms accommodate more guests. Outside, a terrace wraps around the main volume, giving way to more nooks and crannies. “When you are designing in such an enormous vista, you also want spaces that retreat from the view. The courtyard is meant as a place to sit and get away

from the view sometimes,” said Lopercolo. Warm, yet neutral materials—consisting of stucco, sandstone floors, teak and wire brush douglas fir accents, and copper doors—gently play off the dynamic tones of the landscape. The firm used a palette of dark metals and pale colors to “evoke a vacation but also to feel like it is a home all year-round.” In the bedroom, a custom-designed concrete and teak bed serves as the central organizing feature in the space. A comfortable

bathroom includes plenty of storage, and an elegant marble vanity. On the opposite side of the villa, a Bulthaup kitchen in soft earth tone and grays provides another inviting place to congregate. The specific orientation of the villa was not only a means of enhancing views, but also a strategy for mitigating heat gain and providing shade. The implementation of brise-soleils and geothermal heating and cooling were tools to make the building

more energy efficient. Selldorf has already completed schematic designs for three other villas. While each will contain similar design components, such as the palette, the organization of the houses will differ according to the topography of the specific site. “The floor plans flow very well,” said Lopercolo. “These houses have to be for entertaining many people as well as be intimate enough for a family—it is about striking a nice balance.”

**NICOLE ANDERSON**



Hospitality

# Coopers Hall

Portland, Oregon  
Lorraine Guthrie Architect



DINA AVILA

Lorraine Guthrie transformed this Quonset hut—a one-time service center at a car dealership—into a light and airy winery tap room. The lofty space, sliding glass walls, ample daylight, and string lights at night, combine to bring the feeling of the outdoors inside.

Coopers Hall in Portland, Oregon, is a winery-cum-taproom that finesses the rawness of an industrial space with the delicacy of its natural environment. Principal architect Lorraine Guthrie described how Coopers Hall began when A&R Development purchased a Quonset hut—a light steel-frame structure that had originally served as a service center for a car dealership. The structure is unique in the Portland area, so when A&R partnered with AlexEli Vineyard, ChefsTable, and Restaurant St. Jack to build Coopers

Hall, Guthrie’s team “let the building lead the way” toward a space that reflected the desired experience: organic yet urban, light-hearted yet refined. Guthrie stripped the hut down while retaining key elements: a mezzanine that became a dining area, and a northern wall full of windows that allowed patrons to enjoy the sunlight while hinting at an outdoor experience. Indeed, a handful of picnic tables coyly suggest that patrons might actually be sitting outside, and a west-facing wall that slides open during

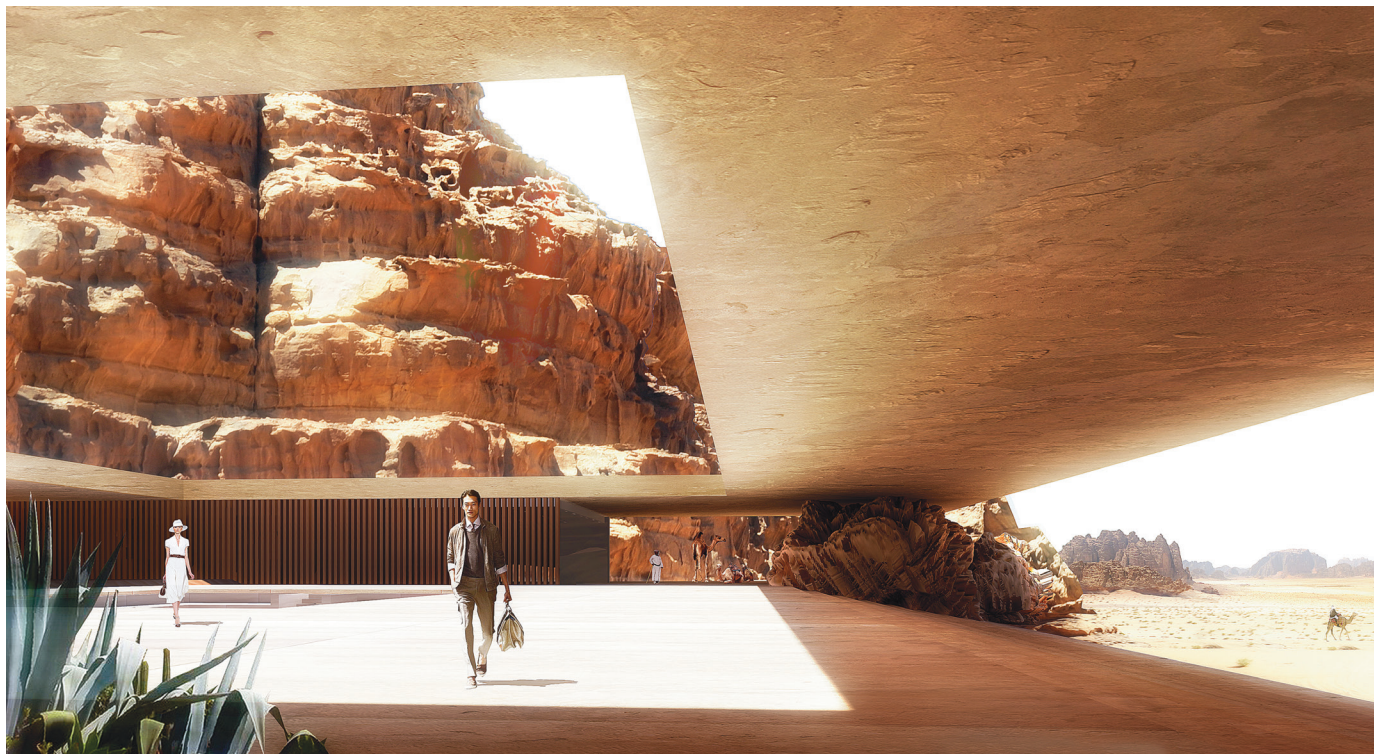
business hours furthers patron’s access to the outdoors. Between the sunlight received through the open wall and the windows, lighting is optional well into the evening hours. Once the sun does set, delicate white string lights that hang over the dining tables lighten the structure’s industrial edge while continuing the feeling of an outdoor space. A large concrete and steel staircase leads to the ground floor, where fermenting barrels rest upon the burnished concrete floors. Accent lighting around the

barrels brightens up the space while also giving a nod toward one of its more unique features: wines on tap. While most wineries use bottles, Coopers Hall elects to store its wine in mini kegs shelved behind a gleaming tile wall that spans the bar’s back. Not only do the kegs allow the wine to last longer and eliminate the need for 30,000 glass bottles each year, but they also offer a refreshing take on the winery experience. These seemingly small details not only economize the operation, they uncork pretense, allowing

participants to enjoy the experience of fine wine and dining without the fussy accoutrements. Still, “sumptuous but simple” details such as walnut table tops, stools remade from oak staves, and a Scandinavian-inspired, dark-stained wood bar show how luxurious simple can actually be. Guthrie sourced locally for most the design elements, although she was clear to state that reclaimed wood played no part of the project: “that’s been done to the point of cliché,” she said. “We actually

painted the bottom half the bar white in response to that.” White walls top to bottom complement the bar space, while also showcasing the hall’s airiness. A variety of plants in Rainier Beer buckets hang from the ceiling, bringing a touch of nature indoors, though as Guthrie noted, a winery, by definition, pays tribute to the outdoors. “The whole process is organic,” she said. “You’re drinking wine in the same place it’s fermenting.” What could be more natural than that?  
**ELISIA GUERENA**





Hospitality

## Wadi Rum Desert Resort

Wadi Rum, Jordan  
Oppenheim Architecture & Design

Steal yourself for a weekend, sans smart-phone, to a majestic landscape where luxury consists of silence and candlelight. Thus is the concept behind architect Chad Oppenheim's Wadi Rum Desert Resort, a facility recessed entirely into sandstone monoliths in the Jordanian desert. The founder of Florida-based Oppenheim Architecture + Design hesitates to bill it as a building, dubbing it instead a "subtractive space" that defers entirely to the natural topography while creating livable environs for human beings through minimalistic sculpting of rock.

Using long-armed excavation machinery resembling a jackhammer, the 72 guest lodges were carved like geometric pockets out of the rock, some built into existing caves that were "amplified" for space. "[The guest rooms] are sculpted into these existing crevices and geometries of the rock. We formed it so that it's as discreet as possible, hiding them in the shadows based on studies of the sun," explained Oppenheim.

The Spartan fixtures and fittings of each guestroom, such as platforms for the beds and the hand-sculpted bathtubs, rise out of the rock à la *The Flintstones*. Meanwhile, the rooms feature tent-like canvas entrances to fend off blustery desert winds. Each room is separated by up to 50 feet for privacy. Made of rammed earth and cement mixed with local red sands, the structural walls and supports are nearly indistinguishable from the rock.

The facility relies on natural ventilation of the stonework configurations rather than synthetic climate control, and even fires are eschewed in favor of fur blankets to keep warm at night. "The resort is open mostly in the temperate times. The environment is quite pleasant eight out of 12 months, so it wouldn't be open in the heat of summer or the depth of winter," said Oppenheim. "It's more about the luxury of isolation, of a sky without sound, without light." While the resort has zero electrical lighting, it is outfitted with requisite 5-star luxury facilities, such as restaurants and a spa that "harnesses water through very primitive channels." But do not expect electrical outlets in the guestrooms. "The only thing we have is hot water that gets brought in through solar power," explained Oppenheim, adding that after dark, check-ins would be greeted by candlelight.

However, the cliff-face architecture is confronting a crag of its own. Initially slated for completion in 2014, construction was halted by tribal tensions after the Arab Spring. "Essentially the land was obtained from the tribal groups and the government of Jordan and then tribal groups wanted to re-trade the deal years later," said Oppenheim. When queried about a new completion date, Oppenheim responded: "That's a good question." **KINDRA COOPER**

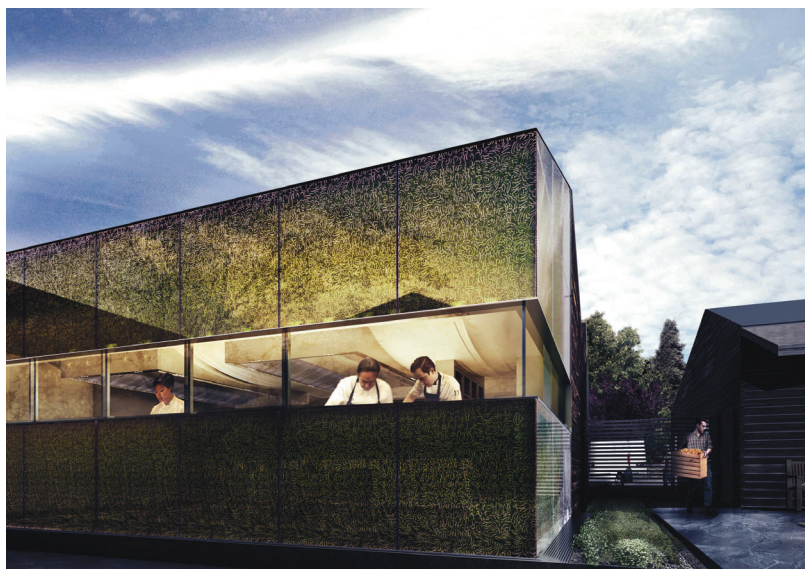


Though it may never be completed due to tribal tensions, the Wadi Rum Desert Resort takes luxury to new levels of primitivism. The cave dwellings are unencumbered by electrical fixtures of any kind, focusing guests on the silence and isolation of the desert.



COURTESY OPPENHEIM ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN





COURTESY SNØHETTA

Designed to evoke the motions of food preparation and service—the movement of a chef's hands, the spreading of a tablecloth—the expanded kitchen of The French Laundry connects cooks and diners with a newly landscaped garden. The kitchen cladding is printed glass. Its sculptural ceiling conceals a sensor-controlled ventilation system.

### Hospitality

## The French Laundry

Yountville, California  
Snøhetta, Envelope A+D,  
Harrison & Koellner

The French Laundry—the Napa Valley restaurant in Yountville, California, known for nine-course dinners that change daily—is getting a makeover. Chef Thomas Keller has teamed up with design partnership Snøhetta (lead design architect and landscape architect), Envelope A+D (executive architect), and Harrison & Koellner (kitchen designer) to bring a new interpretation to the globally famous restaurant. Having just celebrated a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year, the restaurant is undergoing a renovation to expand its courtyard and will feature

a new kitchen and kitchen annex. The original two-story restaurant with several dining areas will remain untouched.

The French Laundry, which is on the National Historic Register, was originally a saloon built by a Scottish stonemason at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and later housed a French steam laundry in the 1920s. In the 1970s the mayor of Yountville converted the building into a restaurant and sold it to Chef Keller in 1994.

The new design seeks to create a more immersive experience for guests while adding much-needed expanded spaces for the culinary, service teams, and the extensive wine collection.

The landscape design reworks how guests enter the restaurant and enlarges the garden. The new courtyard and approach features elements like integrated grass pavers, a stone basalt wall, wood lattice fencing, and steel-bordered beds. Ornamental plantings like blooming almond trees help bring contrast to the neutral color scheme. And cutouts in the stone wall serve as windows, giving visitors and passerby a peak into the

garden and restaurant beyond.

A new kitchen annex on the property will house a wine cellar with room for over 14,000 bottles of wine, and other spaces like dry goods storage and areas for kitchen prep. The new kitchen is 25 percent larger than the existing one, and closely integrated into its site. Chef Keller imagined it being like the Louvre Pyramid by I. M. Pei that boldly links the new with the old. “A printed glass wall forms the primary facade of the kitchen facing the garden where guests arrive,” said Craig Dykers, principal and founding partner of Snøhetta. “The pattern on the glass is an interpretation of the movement of the chef's hands while at work. It is presented in shades of green so that the image becomes an extension of the surrounding garden.”

The kitchen itself is outfitted with a high-performance, sensor-controlled ventilation system integrated within a custom ceiling fabricated by Kreysler & Associates. “Inside the kitchen is a softly undulating ceiling that mimics the feeling of a tablecloth being lifted over

a table,” explained Dykers. The form helps to reduce ambient noise, while skylights in the ceiling as well as along the periphery of the kitchen bring in lots of natural light. The white-on-white kitchen also features materials like antimicrobial Dekton Quartz counters and ranges by Hestan Commercial.

After the kitchen demolition closed the restaurant to the public for the first four months of 2015 (with staff temporarily relocated to Ad Lib, a pop-up restaurant in the Napa Valley Silverado Resort and Spa), The French Laundry reopened for business in early April, albeit with the culinary team working out of a temporary kitchen installed in four shipping containers designed by Envelope A+D. The full renovation is expected to be complete by this fall.

“Chef Keller has always wanted this to be among the most advanced kitchens in the world,” said Dykers. “This meant working with atmosphere, technology, and ergonomics. A good kitchen balances intimacy with high-energy.”

ARIEL ROSENSTOCK



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MAY

WEDNESDAY 20  
LECTURES  
**Think Bigger, Dig Deeper:  
Scaling Up Energy  
Conservation Measures**  
6:00 p.m.  
Center for Architecture  
536 LaGuardia Pl.  
cfa.aiany.org

**Current Work:  
David Chipperfield**  
7:30 p.m.  
The Cooper Union  
The Great Hall  
7 East Seventh St.  
archleague.org

EVENTS  
**Tour: An Industrial  
Building Becomes  
a Very Modern Residence**  
5:00 p.m. h  
542 West Grant Pl., Chicago  
aiachicago.org

**Latin America in  
Construction: Cities**  
11:30 a.m.  
Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53rd St.  
moma.org

THURSDAY 21  
LECTURES  
**Women in Industrial Design:  
A Changing Field?**  
7:00 p.m.  
Museum of Art & Design  
2 Columbus Cir.  
madmuseum.org

**The Art of Social Change  
Series: Art as Activism**  
8:30 a.m.  
Washington University  
St. Louis  
Sam Fox School of  
Design & Visual Arts  
1 Brookings Dr. St. Louis, MO  
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

EVENT  
**Parsons Festival:  
Designing Multiplicity**  
10:00 a.m.  
Parsons The New School  
for Design  
66 Fifth Ave.  
newschool.edu

EXHIBITION CLOSING  
**Life in the Sky:  
The Elevated City**  
Walker Art Center  
1750 Hennepin Ave.  
Minneapolis, MN  
walkerart.org

SATURDAY 23  
EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
**Nomad Studio: Green Varnish**  
Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis  
3750 Washington Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO  
camstl.org

**Northern Lights:  
Scandinavian Design**  
Philadelphia Museum of Art  
2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy.  
Philadelphia, PA  
philamuseum.org

**Clifford Ross: Landscape  
Seen & Imagined**  
Massachusetts Museum of  
Contemporary Art  
1040 Mass MoCa Way  
North Adams, MA  
massmoca.org

MONDAY 25  
EXHIBITION CLOSING  
**Tools: Extending Our Reach**  
Cooper Hewitt Museum  
2 East 91st St.  
cooperhewitt.org

TUESDAY 26  
EVENTS  
**2015 IDEAS City: NY**  
9:00 a.m.  
New Museum  
235 Bowery  
newmuseum.org

**Preserving the Fabric  
of our Neighborhoods**  
6:30 p.m.  
Museum of the City  
of New York  
1220 Fifth Ave.  
mcny.org

EXHIBITION OPENING  
**Paper, Rock, Pixels**  
UC Berkeley: College of  
Environmental Design  
Environmental Design Library  
210 Wurster Hall  
Berkeley, CA  
ced.berkeley.edu

LECTURE  
**Transforming Suburban  
Downtowns Through  
Innovative Street Design**  
6:00 p.m.  
Lafayette Community Hall  
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Lafayette, CA  
aiaeb.org

SATURDAY 30  
EVENT  
**Frank Lloyd Wright Home Tour**  
1:00 p.m.  
Fawcett Home  
21200 Center Ave.  
Los Banos, CA  
aiasf.org

SUNDAY 31  
EXHIBITION CLOSING  
**Big Pictures**  
Cincinnati Art Museum  
953 Eden Park Dr.  
Cincinnati, OH  
cincinnatiartmuseum.org

JUNE

TUESDAY 2  
EVENT  
**AIASF and DBIA Present:  
Design Build in the Eye  
of the Beholder**  
6:00 p.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St.  
San Francisco  
aiasf.org

WEDNESDAY 3  
LECTURES  
**Green Building Products and  
Technologies Seminar**  
8:30 a.m.  
AMA's Executive New York  
Conference Center  
1601 Broadway  
cfa.aiany.org

**Building Enclosure Council:  
Case Study on the Botanic  
Gardens Science Pyramid**  
1:00 p.m.  
AIA Colorado Conference Room  
303 East 17th Ave.  
Denver, CO  
aiacolorado.org

**A Conversation with  
Fallingwater Director  
Linda Waggoner**  
7:00 p.m.  
Crystal Bridges Museum of  
American Art  
600 Museum Way  
Bentonville, AR  
crystalbridges.org

THURSDAY 4  
EVENT  
**Friedrich St. Florian:  
Designing the WWII Memorial  
in Washington, DC**  
6:00 p.m.  
Cherry Hills Country Club  
4125 South University Blvd.  
Englewood, CO  
aiacolorado.org

**Experience Design:  
The Integration of People,  
Process and Place**  
12:00 p.m.  
Center for Architecture  
1218 Arch St., Philadelphia  
aiaphiladelphia.org

**Context Volume 2:  
What's the Big Idea?**  
6:00 p.m.  
SILO in Makers Quarter  
753 15th St., San Diego, CA  
sdaf.wildapricot.org

SATURDAY 6  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
**Noah Purifoy: Junk Dada**  
Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art  
5905 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles  
lacma.org

SUNDAY 7  
EVENT  
**Iconic L.A. Tours: Lautner  
Sheats-Goldstein Residence**  
10:00 a.m.  
Lautner Sheats-Goldstein  
Residence  
10104 Angelo View Dr.  
Los Angeles  
aialosangeles.org

TUESDAY 9  
LECTURE  
**Digital Media and Memorials:  
Joseph DeLappe and  
Marita Sturken**  
7:00 p.m.  
Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art  
5905 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles  
lacma.org

THURSDAY 11  
EVENT  
**First Human-Centric  
Lighting Conference**  
8:00 a.m.  
Seattle Mariners Safeco Field  
1250 First Ave. S, Seattle, WA  
aiasf.org

FRIDAY 12  
EXHIBITION CLOSING  
**The Past Retooled,  
The Present Rebooted**  
District Gallery  
740 East Third St.  
Los Angeles  
aialosangeles.org

EVENTS  
**30th Annual Transport  
Chicago Conference**  
8:00 a.m.  
University at Illinois Chicago  
Student Center East  
750 South Halsted St., Chicago  
transportchicago.org

**AIA San Antonio Summer  
Conference & Expo**  
11:00 a.m.  
Center for Architecture  
1334 South Flores St.  
San Antonio, TX  
aiasa.org

**Columbus Arts Festival**  
11:00 a.m.  
Scioto Mile  
Columbus, OH  
columbusartsfestival.org

SUNDAY 14  
EXHIBITION CLOSING  
**Piranesi: Imaginative Spaces**  
The Nelson-Atkins  
Museum of Art  
4525 Oak St., Kansas City, MO  
nelson-atkins.org

THURSDAY 18  
LECTURES  
**Seeing with Nature's Mind:  
Permaculture Patterns and  
Principles**  
12:00 p.m.  
Seasons Rotisserie & Grill  
2031 Mountain Rd. NW  
Albuquerque, NM  
aianewmexico.org

**Works and Humanitarian  
Activities by Shigeru Ban**  
7:30 p.m.  
Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art  
5905 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles  
lacma.org

SCREENING  
**Making Space: 5 Women  
Changing the Face  
of Architecture**  
7:00 p.m.  
Laguna Art Museum  
307 Cliff Dr.  
Laguna Beach, CA  
lagunaartmuseum.org

FRIDAY 19  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
**Heather Roberge:  
En Pointe**  
Sci-Arc  
960 East Third St.  
Los Angeles  
sci-arc.edu

FRIDAY 26  
EVENT  
**David Thaddeus ARE  
Seminar: Structures**  
8:00 a.m.  
AIA New Orleans Center for  
Design  
1000 St Charles Ave.  
New Orleans, LA  
aianeworleans.org

JULY

FRIDAY 17  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
**10 Years 10 Stories**  
AIA New Orleans  
Center for Design  
1000 St Charles Ave.  
New Orleans, LA  
aianeworleans.org

SATURDAY 27  
LECTURE  
**Art + Studio: Hydrospatial  
Hanging Sculptures**  
1:00 p.m.  
Museum of Fine Art, Houston  
Beck Building  
5601 Main St.  
Houston, TX  
mfah.org



AMIE SIEGEL/COURTESY STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE

**THE ARCHITECTS**  
Storefront for Art & Architecture  
97 Kenmare Street  
New York, NY  
Through May 30

Protocols have changed in the globalized arena of architectural production. *The Architects*, a film by Amie Siegel, explores the inner workings of global architectural offices in New York City today, conveying the pulse of the high-pressure profession through a cross-section look into the offices of architecture firms from Fifth Avenue to downtown to Brooklyn. As a single unfolding visual, the film depicts silent conversations between the architecture, location, object, and character, raising questions of scale, agency, and power. As a whole, the footage aims to explore the collective body of architects globally today. The film was originally commissioned by Storefront as part of OfficeUS, the United States Pavilion at the 2014 Venice Biennale of Architecture.



GRANT MUDFORD/COURTESY JOSEPH BELLOW'S GALLERY

**DRAWN TO LIGHT**  
Joseph Bellows Gallery  
7661 Girard Avenue  
La Jolla, CA  
Through July 3

This group exhibition explores photographers' unique ability to use light to shape the descriptive and emotional content of their photographs. *Drawn to Light* features seascape and urban photography by Anthony Friedkin, Steve Kahn's *Corridor* series, and architectural images by Grant Mudford. Breaking waves kissed by glinting sunlight and more characterize Friedkin's tonally rich, black-and-white images of the Pacific Ocean. Kahn's photographs, meanwhile, explore the hallways that connect private rooms in old apartment buildings in Los Angeles, where dim lighting at the ends of the corridors draws viewers right into the photograph. These snapshots were taken from the last segment of the artist's *The Hollywood Series*. Mudford's images, meanwhile, capture institutions such as the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in an unexpected light.

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Eladio Dieste. Church in Atlantida, Uruguay, 1958.



LEONARDO FINOTTI/COURTESY MOMA

# THE POETICS OF AN ARCHITECTURE OF DEVELOPMENTALISM

**Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955–1980**  
Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53rd Street, New York, New York  
Through July 2015

*“Modernity [can] be measured neither exclusively nor principally by the number of industries or machines... what counts is the development of the intellectual and political critique.”*  
Octavio Paz, 1983

*“The exhibition is intended to challenge the notion of Latin America as a testing ground for ideas and methods devised in Europe and the United States. It brings to light the radical originality of architecture and urban planning in the vast region during a complex quarter century.”*  
Barry Bergdoll, Patricio del Real, Carlos Comas, and Pancho Liernur

This opening statement by the curators is a radical statement of advocacy for a new history of modernity. After the quarter-century defined here as “The Age of Developmentalism” we are rapidly changing our views about the automobile and the city and are speculating on the future of the sprawling network of urbanization both in North and South America. The exhibition is laid out in the form of a modern space without a single axial view that can instantly give us the entire picture. Instead, we encounter the instruments of architecture: drawings, models, photographs, and film. All are seen through the lens of development by way of more than 500 works gathered from Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico.

To paraphrase the four curators, a complex historical process was taking place within the varied geographies, nation states, and political ideologies of this vast region. The opening and

closing rooms of the exhibition elegantly frame this historical process. In the opening room, we see President Kennedy in Caracas inaugurating with active diplomacy the U.S.’s “Good Neighbor Policy.” The Cold War achieved the re-establishment of democratic rule in Venezuela and at the same time the establishment of dictatorial rule in Cuba. Also greeting us on these introductory screens we see works of the first generation of architects that pre-date the timeframe of the show. Among the highlights are the exquisite construction documents of Amancio Williams House over a Stream; the sketches and perspective views of Juan O’ Gorman’s School of *Industrias Técnicas* of 1932, published in *Architectural Record*’s special 1937 issue on Mexico; and Luis Barragan’s colorful sketch of an Islamic influenced fountain.

The exhibition goes beyond the normal clichés of “paymasters in Washington and Moscow” and argues for the role of architecture in modernizing all the nations of the Americas. In all fairness, I must disclose that I was a member of the large advisory committee for the exhibition. Our first visit to Caracas included a zealous guard threatening to arrest us on spying charges while we were looking at the beautiful wood models of Tomas Sanabria’s Banco Central de Venezuela (1962–75). This extraordinary building was probably omitted from the show because of the difficulty in dealing with Venezuela and Cuba at the moment.

And so, after a long hiatus, MoMA has produced a show of fundamental interest both to artists and architects who believe in the discipline of architecture as an intellectual and artistic pursuit fundamentally engaged with the

notion of improving society at large. To tell this complex story, approximately 500 original works are on display, some of which are being exhibited for the first time anywhere. I was delighted with the vicarious pleasure of seeing original documents, such as Lucio Costa’s faded, type-written sheets of 8½-by-11 paper, illustrated by incisive miniature hand drawings. This was the competition entry that won and thus created—in a few years—the most famous new capital city of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Very few cities of the age were planned and built from scratch, and diplomats and pundits alike immediately declared the capital city of Brasilia a failure. Peter Mattheissen wrote in *The Cloud Forest: A Chronicle of the South American Wilderness* (1961) that when he arrived at the construction site of the unfinished Brasilia in 1960, notwithstanding his naturalist bias against all cities, “Brasilia is less inspired than pretentious, a brave new city cunningly disguised as a World’s Fair.”

The focus on the urban legacy of Latin America is brought to life in the synchronized film clips of six rapidly growing cities: Havana, Caracas, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paolo, Buenos Aires, and Mexico City. Among my favorite destinations in the exhibition is the wonderful *mise en scene* of the architect in his house: Henry Klumb standing before his home in Puerto Rico, and Jimmy Alcock posing in front of his pyramidal concrete and steel “tree-house” overlooking Caracas. The CVG building by Jesús Tenreiro Degwitz is a beautiful and innovative use of steel and brick that reminds us of how this particular building aspired to be the foundation for a new society in the last of the large-scale urban experiments of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century: Ciudad Guayana on the Orinoco River in Venezuela.

The exhibition is not organized chronologically, by nation, or by building type and does not deify any stylistic classification of the “experimental architecture” of Latin America. Instead we find new paradigms of public space, new institutions, and a new cityscape mostly built by public works of governments who believed in architecture as a means to solve urgent problems of infrastructure or housing, and who recognized the propagandistic value of a radical architecture in establishing the identity of a new national ideal. Anchored to a place and time of origin, the original documents provide another layer of aesthetic pleasure that tells us a history including multiple sub-plots framed by the central idea of “Desarrollismo.”

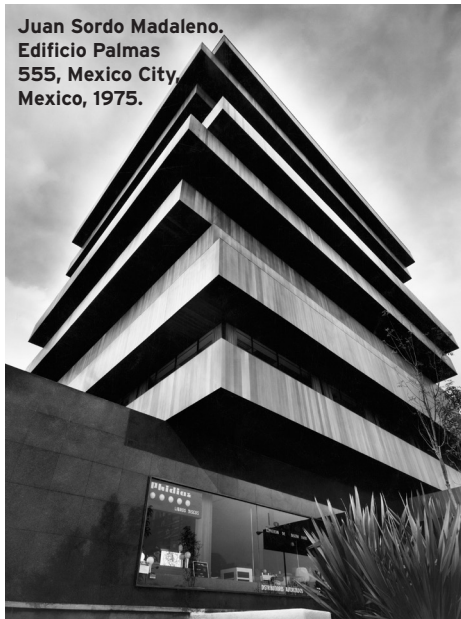
To experience an exhibition framed in this way, we are stimulated to make multiple and sometimes contradictory readings. To experience a mix of projects from different countries that are exhibited adjacent to each other offers a cross-reading that allows us to see each project differently. If Modernity was a European invention that some historians claim began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, then this period of post-war ideas about development in Latin America provides for a critical reading of the construction of modernity as a whole—as an emancipatory project that was doomed to fail. In the last room, entitled “Utopias,” we see drawings that begin a systematic critique of “modern” architecture from the point of view of the inhabitant rather than the state sponsored architect. In 1980 we came to the end of the optimism inherent in the idea of progress—a moment when a systematic critique arose about the validity of governance reliant on a state-sponsored ideology of “developmentalism.”

That post-war period, which was characterized by a belief in progress, is today confronted with a very different world-view. The chimera of “sustainable development,” supposedly in harmonious interaction with nature, is a deceptive one when viewed from the point of view of “under-developed” nations. Could this ideology be replaced with a new strategy to shrink humanity’s footprint by using nature and urban centers more efficiently?

The magnitude of the problems ahead is only hinted at in the Utopias room. For those of us who believe in the redemptive value of the architecture of the city, this extraordinary anthology of architecture should be seen as a springboard toward the renewed relevance of a socially committed architecture.

**CARLOS BRILLEMBOURG IS AN ARCHITECT IN NEW YORK CITY.**

Juan Sordo Madaleno. Edificio Palmas 555, Mexico City, Mexico, 1975.



GUILLERMO ZAMORA/COURTESY MOMA





COURTESY IPA

## A Big Interesting Mess

### An Inventory of What's Possible

A symposium at Pratt looked at the past of New York City affordable housing in hopes of discerning the future.

On April 9 and 10, the Institute for Public Architecture and Pratt Institute School of Architecture held “An Inventory of What’s Possible,” a symposium organized to discern what can be done to implement Mayor Bill de Blasio’s ambitious plan to build 200,000 affordable housing units in the next ten years. The event consisted of visits to a variety of different public and supportive housing projects from various eras throughout the city, in addition to talks by professors, students, city officials, community activists, and the president of a residents’ association. They discussed new ideas, historic projects, problems, possible solutions, and opportunities that the current affordable housing crisis presents.

On April 9, participants toured housing ranging in time from Strivers Row by James Brown Lord, Bruce Price, and Stanford White (1893) to Via Verde by Dattner Architects and Grimshaw (2012) and in space from Roland Wank’s Grand Street housing in Lower Manhattan to Clarence Stein and Henry Wright’s Sunnyside Gardens in Queens and Twin Parks in the north Bronx. Richard Meier; Prentice, Chan & Olhausen; and Giovanni Pasanella all have buildings at Twin Parks. The tour drove home the point that New York City’s legacy is remarkable for its range, quality, and continuing success. It also showed that there are lessons to be learned—both positive and negative—from what has been built in the past.

After welcomes by Pratt Dean Thomas Hanrahan, and professor and *AN* editor-in-chief William Menking, panel discussions furthered historical perspectives, provided views of neighborhood activists, and presented new ideas about ways to attack the affordable housing crisis.

Jonathan Kirschenfeld, the founder of the Institute for Public Architecture, who had designed some of the

housing visited the day before, noted, “We have 50 years of research on the public realm at Pratt in the institute founded by Ron Shiffman (Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development, or PICCED) and now directed by Adam Freeman. Housing—and the way we think about the public realm and the interior realm—defines our humanity as a city. New York is the quintessential innovator in thinking about housing in a dense place, willing to take chances and create new types of housing.”

Karen Kubey, who directs the Institute for Public Architecture, mentioned in an Institute Fellows residency program for stabilizing neighborhoods that took place last summer, noted that Michael Kimmelman had covered it enthusiastically in “Trading Parking Lots for Affordable Housing,” in *The New York Times* on September 14.

Later in the day, when Institute Fellows presented the findings from their work, Miriam Peterson, Nathan Rich, and Sagi Golan described the “9 x 18” plan that Kimmelman had praised. They proposed a new parking policy, especially in areas near public transportation, an attempt to create streets that promote an active lifestyle.

“There is much more parking on NYCHA sites than on other urban blocks. The idea is to replace parking lots with parking structures that house community facilities,” said Golan. “A lot of the residents were willing to trade parking space for other amenities.” Another Institute Fellow, Kaja Kuhl, a Columbia GSAPP professor who goes to five neighborhoods every year with the 5 Borough Studio, talked about the importance of starting a conversation with each community. She uses “Postcards from Home” to learn how the residents view “home” and found that they see it

**Columbia University professor Richard Plunz discusses New York City affordable housing as part of “An Inventory of What’s Possible.”**

as “neighborhood and community,” “privacy,” and even “food.” She said, “We heard that housing should be affordable,” and she showed some of the student projects that were inspired by these conversations. At the Forest Houses in the Bronx, students looked at the schools that surround the NYCHA development as a place to share school facilities like a library, a gymnasium, and computer labs with each other and with NYCHA residents by putting them on the housing authority campus.

Frederick Biehle, a Pratt professor and principal of VIA Architecture, had also considered restoring streets and reshaping the urban fabric in his studio that focused on the Ingersoll and Whitman Houses in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. He suggested “delineating public, semipublic, and private spaces” to counter the “sameness and banality” of the existing buildings. The studio proposed a new two-story base connecting two existing towers with semi-private space for residents and an interior courtyard with new institutional programs—a skating rink, a school, stores. “Each individual building gets to determine its own block. The metastasized scheme doubles the number of units, but the buildings’ lower floors become more porous. Townhouses face the street.” He described a number of possibilities and noted, “It’s amazing that so many successful, doable projects were proposed.”

In a morning session on “Stabilizing Neighborhoods,” the moderator was Daniel Hernandez, the Deputy Commissioner for Neighborhood Strategies at the Department of Housing Preservation and Development and a Pratt professor. He noted the importance of early engagement in identifying issues and then implementing them, since “it’s a moment when there is a lot of cultural change going on in the agencies.”

NYIT Professor Nicholas Bloom described the promise of subsidized coops and said, “The word ownership comes up often in the mayor’s document.” He talked about the success of earlier subsidized coops, such as Village View in Manhattan and the Luna Park Co-op in Coney Island, which encouraged residents to take care of their neighborhoods. He proposed that NYCHA create a subsidiary to build some of these on their land on a nonprofit model, similar to what is done in Singapore. They might be built with FEMA funds in some areas, would “put more eyes on the street,” and might be step-up housing for some NYCHA families. “There has to be a less strident conversation about underused land in NYCHA communities,” he said.

Gabrielle Bendiner-Viani, a principal of Buscada who teaches at the New School for Public Engagement, discussed the Seward Park Urban

Renewal Area (SPURA). She described it as “a big mess but one that is interesting.” In 1967, families were driven out but told that they could return when new housing was built. However, not enough was built for many families to return. She emphasized the importance of perpetuity in communities.

Benjamin Dulchin, who is a community organizer, not an architect, represents an umbrella organization for 101 community development groups. He is trying to help neighborhoods set agendas and develop policies by studying what has worked and what conditions made success possible. He said that while it is important to build permanently affordable housing, it is also necessary to focus on crime, economic development, and institutions to sustain a community.

Paula Segal, the executive director of 596 Acres, an organization that advocates for community gardens spoke, unsurprisingly, in favor of their preservation and of ownership of land by communities. She is particularly opposed to giving gardens to for-profit developers.

In a discussion period after their talks, Ron Shiffman said, “Displacement and speculation on land has become palpable in every neighborhood of New York. A lot of good planning came from neighborhood-based organizations. Let’s start integrating some of the wealthiest communities.”

Pratt faculty member Meredith TenHoor chaired a panel on Enabling Quality Design. She noted that in the 1970s, when cities were seen as failing, it was often the design of housing that was blamed.

Suzanne Schindler, who teaches at Columbia, discussed another historic example—Twin Parks in the Bronx (1967–75), which participants had visited the day before. She described the interesting variety of buildings, built by a group of 15 churches and synagogues with help from the state and federal governments and designed by well-known architects. The 2,300 apartments ranging from studios to five bedrooms “were created to stabilize the neighborhood but gang warfare happened right there.” She asked, “What can we learn?” and answered, “It all depends, not just on design but on how a project is managed,” showing a single loaded corridor completely blocked, plazas fenced in, she added, “You need to think about design along with management, security, and other factors.”

Pratt professor David Burney commissioned innovative community centers from celebrated, mostly young architects when he was in charge of architecture at NYCHA in the 1990s and then headed the city’s Department of Design and Construction during the Bloomberg Administration. “When I got to NYCHA, I found that there was still some money left for buildings but it was hard to spend. You couldn’t build unless you could provide free land

and use the low income tax credit. The Reagan Administration insisted on private developers, and the early attempts had been disastrous,” he said. They found a community garden on West 84<sup>th</sup> Street and hired Castro-Blanco Piscioneri Architects to build 35 permanently affordable units. With Becker + Becker, they built two- and three-bedroom apartments in a contextual walkup building on 8<sup>th</sup> Street; at 189 Stanton Street they built supportive housing for families with AIDS designed by James McCullar. “There are ways of doing things that are different. All these projects are completely integrated into their neighborhoods,” he pointed out.

TenHoor then asked the speakers, “How do we get quality? Who defines those standards?” Menking said, “At Sunnyside, the architects were deeply committed to quality and social scientists were part of it.” He also noted the role that philanthropy had played in the past, citing Phipps Houses, The Robin Hood Foundation, and Common Ground. Burney suggested, “Reverse the notion that design costs money, that design is only for the wealthy.” He also said, “As every architect knows, when you get to the end of the project, it’s the landscaping that gets cut.” He noted the importance of “health and the built environment. We are not number one in many things, but we are number one in obesity.” TenHoor mentioned the role of the private sector, noting that Mayor Lindsay advocated it and that it attracted architects of the caliber who designed Twin Parks. Schindler mentioned “long term issues and short term issues. If someone is going to maintain it, they may build it differently.”

Toward the end of the day, the president of the residents association at the five-story walkup First Houses (1936), Brendaliz Santiago, presented the tenants’ point of view. “NYCHA doesn’t communicate with tenants,” she said, “but we want community residents involved in planning.” Since New Years Eve 2014, though, she has been working closely with NYCHA. “With unity there is power.”

Karina Totah, Senior Advisor to the Chair of the New York City Housing Authority, explained, “The mayor gave the chair two directions: Reset your relationship with key stakeholders and create a plan for how you are going to make NYCHA survive.” She said, “Safe, clean, and connected is the goal,” and that engaging residents like Santiago to get resident input is a priority as well as dealing with short term financial problems, rehabilitating, and harnessing the real estate NYCHA already owns, and operating 138,000 units. “We are the largest landlord in New York City,” she added.

The two-day event brought together architects, professors, students, community organizers, residents, and managers of housing projects. The conversation necessary to jumpstart Mayor de Blasio’s ambitious housing plan has begun.

**JAYNE MERKEL IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO *AN*.**





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**Philip Johnson's Wiley House (1952) as photographed for *Midcentury Houses Today*, a survey of how modernist houses in New Canaan, CT have aged and are being preserved.**

of architects, and reporting on their conditions today.

Although fans of Palms Springs may take issue, you could argue that New Canaan was the epicenter of mid-century modernist American residential design. From the late 1940s through the 70s, the "Harvard 5" group of architects [and others similarly disposed] designed more than 100 outstanding examples of modernist houses in the town, enriching its already rarefied character as an exclusive exurb of New York.

The residences examined in *Midcentury Houses Today* suitably represent the range of contemporary states in which we find them. The authors describe the second house that Eliot Noyes [one of the aforementioned "5"] built for his family in 1954 as a "time capsule." It is still owned by his family members and thus intriguingly fly-in-amber preserved. Similarly, John Johansen's 1956 Villa Ponte, despite having changed owners, is thrillingly unaltered, with its original gold leaf vaulted ceilings, ebonized cabinetry, and terrazzo floors intact. At the other end of the scale is the house Marcel Breuer

designed for his family in 1951. Today, although it maintains some of its original footprint, the rest of it—plus a 2-story addition—is completely new construction. Others have been remodeled, expanded, and upgraded in ways that offer subtle indicators of how our conception of "modern design" has evolved.

Of the New Canaan architects, Philip Johnson, Marcel Breuer, and Eliot Noyes all achieved some renown in their lifetimes; less so for the others who worked there, and the book provides them with well-deserved exposure. It's satisfying to see the work of Hugh Smallen and Alan Goldberg, both of whose approaches show a refinement of earlier modernist principles with more expansive proportions and richer materials to reflect shifting residential lifestyles.

Like most large format books of its type, *Midcentury Houses Today* is primarily about its images, and Michael Biondo's photographs do not disappoint, strikingly displaying New Canaan's singularity as a setting for these buildings and their exquisite relationship with the southern New England landscape of woods, ravines, creeks, and outcroppings.

The book does have its shortcomings. There's a paucity of period photographs. Each house is illustrated with a black and white

exterior shot, contemporary with the house's completion; many of them are no more than thumbnail size and none feature views of the interiors, depriving readers the opportunity of comparing the then with the now. In one case, the text refers to a set of 1954 Ezra Stoller photographs of one of the houses. Why didn't the book reproduce them? Are image rights that expensive?

And with regards to the contemporary illustrations, the reader accustomed to the "credits" appended at the back of most shelter magazines will be frustrated to discover no identification of those responsible for the interior design and decoration of the houses, to say nothing of an itemized list of sources and materials. And while there is reference to the forces threatening the remaining modernist houses in New Canaan, and, by extension, the rest of the country, the discussion is relatively limited.

Of course, *Midcentury Houses Today* isn't a home decorating magazine or a professional design journal; it's not really even a book about architecture and design. It's about documentation, not polemics, and preservation, not aesthetics. And as a preservation document, it's an excellent addition to the canon.

**PHILIP BERGER IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

## AS IS

*Midcentury Houses Today*  
by Lorenzo Ottaviani, Jeffrey Matz,  
Cristina A. Ross, Photographer  
Michael Biondo  
The Monacelli Press, \$65

for a host of reasons, but primarily for their choice locations. An alarming number of the gemlike, relatively modest houses built half a century ago on the most picturesque sites have been scrapped and replaced; in response, the architecturally astute have scrambled to reassess the idea—or at least the timeframe—of the history to be preserved.

*Midcentury Houses Today* offers a window into this shift in preservation priorities by spotlighting 16 houses in New Canaan, Connecticut, designed during in the 1950s and 60s by a select group



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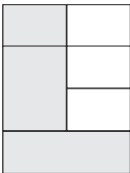


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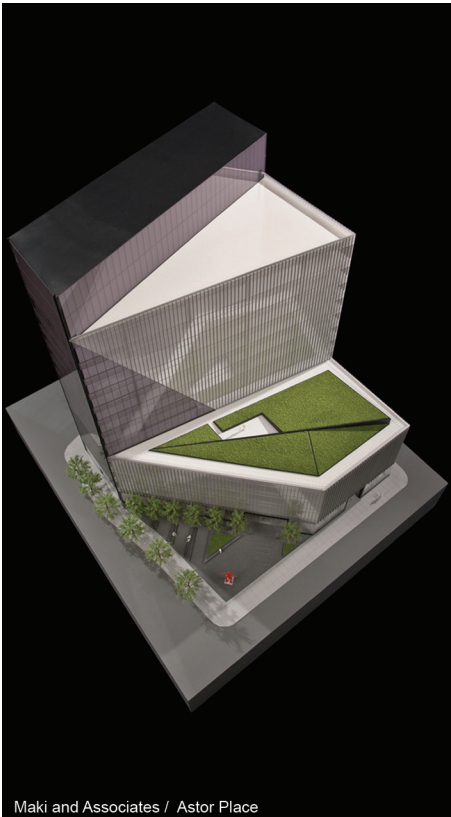
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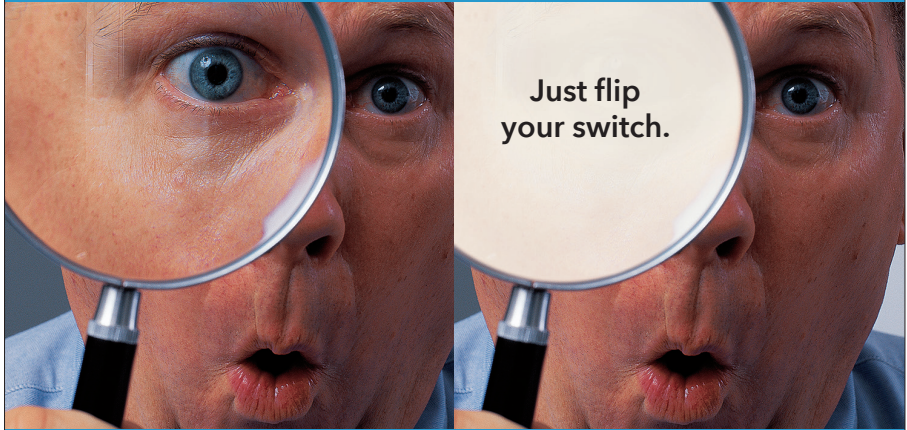
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Tadao Ando.

Early this month, the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St. Louis opened its newly renovated and expanded gallery (p. 22). As part of our coverage of the event, *AN* contributor George Huaiyu Zhang got in touch with Japanese architect and Pritzker Prize-winner Tadao Ando, who designed the original 2001 building and completed the expansion, to ask him about the process of revisiting his old project, what it was like to work with Mrs. Pulitzer and artists such as Ellsworth Kelly and Richard Serra, and how he finds working in the United States.

**George Huaiyu Zhang:** For you, what is the most important consideration behind this renovation? The construction for the new renovation was probably a lot smoother in terms of technological difficulties, but were there other challenges posed by the existing site and conditions?

**Tadao Ando:** I think that renovation is an architectural construct that regards existing structure as a site. Despite the restriction of the existing belowground structure, we aimed to create an entirely new space that exists only here by reconsidering the sequence of each space; the lighting systems and equipment; and each detail, proportion, and material of the finishing.

You often emphasize the importance of juxtaposition to create specificity of a place. As an example, you mentioned in one of your statements that to “intensify the emotion of entering a tall room, you need to experience it in relation to another lower space.” The existing Pulitzer galleries are known to have an emphasis on

natural light and spatial dynamics, and yet with the new addition being underground, there is no natural light introduced. How do you then reconcile and mediate between the old and the new in terms of the experience of light? How do you envision it becoming a coherent juxtaposition?

The extension plan proposed to add one small and one large gallery belowground and connect them to the existing gallery space in order to establish a new circulation. The loop-shaped route around the water court, which occupies the heart of the aboveground part of the museum, will be concluded through the new galleries. At the same time, each gallery space was designed to be able to hold exhibitions individually. In contrast with the existing aboveground galleries, where the natural light plays freely and spatial impressions fluctuate according to the time of day, the new belowground galleries do not allow the natural light. Giving greater importance to the contrast, we intended to design the new space on lower floors as a calm and serene space, compared with the dynamic and lively space on the upper floors. In between the two galleries, a foyer was located as a node to the upper floors. Visitors will walk through the entire building and feel three-dimensional spatial depth more clearly.

Mrs. Pulitzer, in one of her speeches about the Foundation, observed that unlike many buildings which have no “there” there (or “thereness”), each space within the Foundation has a distinct character yet directly relates to the overall design. The specificity of this architectural piece has inspired a variety of artistic explorations that aim to directly and specifically engage

with the space. More recently, and with the upcoming reopening, there are explorations such as the Richard Tuttle show that Mrs. Pulitzer is curating, exploring spatial relationships with minimal materials. There is also the program series called *Press Play*, exploring and engaging the specific building through the experience of sound. In a sense the building itself has become part of the art. How do you personally envision arts and acts that engage with this space? Or rather, what kind of artistic interventions would you be interested in seeing in the space?

I think that architecture which has “thereness” can be made in the design process, which in this case progressed as the client, architect, and artists exchanged opinions and proposals about the Pulitzer building from their respective standpoints. I am really interested in this process of dialogue. In the first stage of the project, the quality of the architecture steadily increased through uncompromising dialogues among the artists Ellsworth Kelly, Richard Serra, and us, and with Mrs. Pulitzer, our client. This collaborative work with them was extremely significant, making us think about the most basic elements of art museums.

In evoking a vigorous dialogue between the art museum and the artworks, the artists and the audience, we hope that the new gallery spaces will remain a constant stimulus.

You were quoted in an article that you and Mrs. Pulitzer discussed the possibility of outdoor signage and cushions for the stairs during concerts, and that the issue of a sign for the building exterior is particularly interesting since it relates to

The Pulitzer Foundation, in St. Louis, Missouri, recently hired Tadao Ando to expand his 2001 design.



ALISE O'BRIEN PHOTOGRAPHY; LEFT: KEITAKU HAYASHI

how the building fits into the surrounding context. I know that you visited the Pulitzer after it was first opened. How do you feel about the way that the museum unfolded in its surrounding urban fabric? Last year, in 2014, there was also the PXSTL Pavilion being built right across the street. How would you see it in relation to the museum structure?

I think that a building can't exist by itself in architectural meaning, and the influence that the building gives to surroundings must be considered when it is designed. We wanted to create not only a building, but also a new cultural center in St. Louis, in which the museum was one of the nuclei. In this meaning, it is a great success that a cultural area has been formed with the completion of the surrounding cultural facilities, which includes CAM and PXSTL next to the Pulitzer.

If designing buildings is only for novelty and creating bold forms, the completion of buildings will be the goal for architects. However, I assume the completion is another beginning of architecture. It is a great pleasure for me that I could see the process through which the building has been used by the Pulitzer and its visitors to enrich people's cultural lives.

**The Pulitzer was your first public building in the United States. Now that you're looking back after 15 years, and after having designed other spaces in America, such as the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and a currently in-design residential project in New York, how does designing in this country differ from designing in other places in the world?**

In the United States, a mature industrial society, exposed concrete finish is very difficult in financial and technical respects because it must be made by hand, one by one. However, we brought together an excellent team, which overcame this difficulty.

I always think that it requires a great team to create great architecture. In the design process,

I spend a great deal of energy to bring together a team, which includes the client, constructors, consultants, and executive architects, and engineers. We go to visit buildings together in each country, and sometimes we exchange our opinions about them at the construction site in progress. We try to have the opportunity to communicate to each other in our team as much as possible in order to achieve the shared goal of great architecture.

**What's next for you?**

In 1969, I made a start to my architectural activities by relying on passion alone. I was self-educated and had no connections or backing, so I naturally had no work. Running about determinedly, I tried my hand at very small residences and retail projects. Forty-six years have gone by since then. Today, public projects account for most of my work, and the places where I am building have been globalized over the years. Back in the day, I never even imagined my (in some ways) fortunate present circumstances, but this does not mean that my struggles have ended.

I am well aware that I would be able to work more efficiently if I built off of my accumulated experience and aimed toward refining and developing my work from the past. It is a self-evident truth that one can build more solid work if one just thinks about making cut-and-dried architecture within the bounds of the given frameworks. Even knowing this, however, I always find myself trying to come up with new things to attempt with each project in order to break away from the expected.

I have continued to believe in the limitless potential of architecture, which always allows one to turn each and every project into a new endeavor with the power of one's own imagination. In a sense, the moments in which I am striving intently in pursuit of architecture's possibilities are what drive me to live.

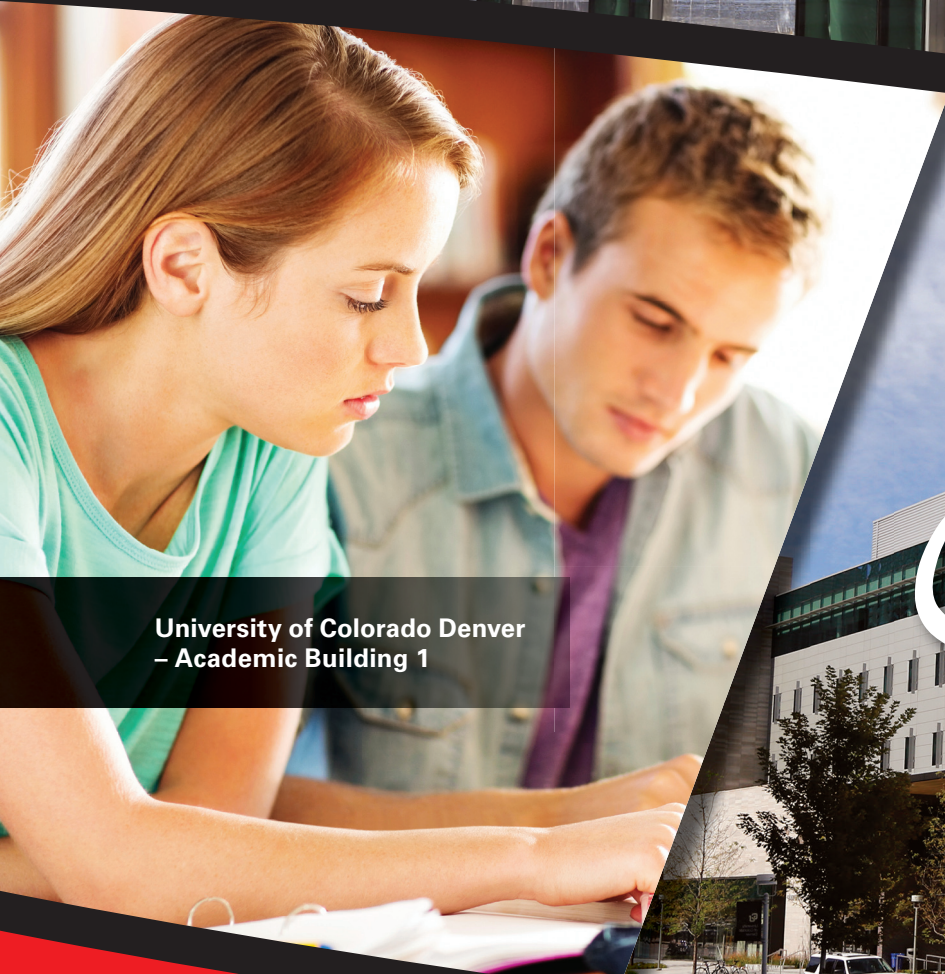
For me, “next” is still “another challenge in architecture.”



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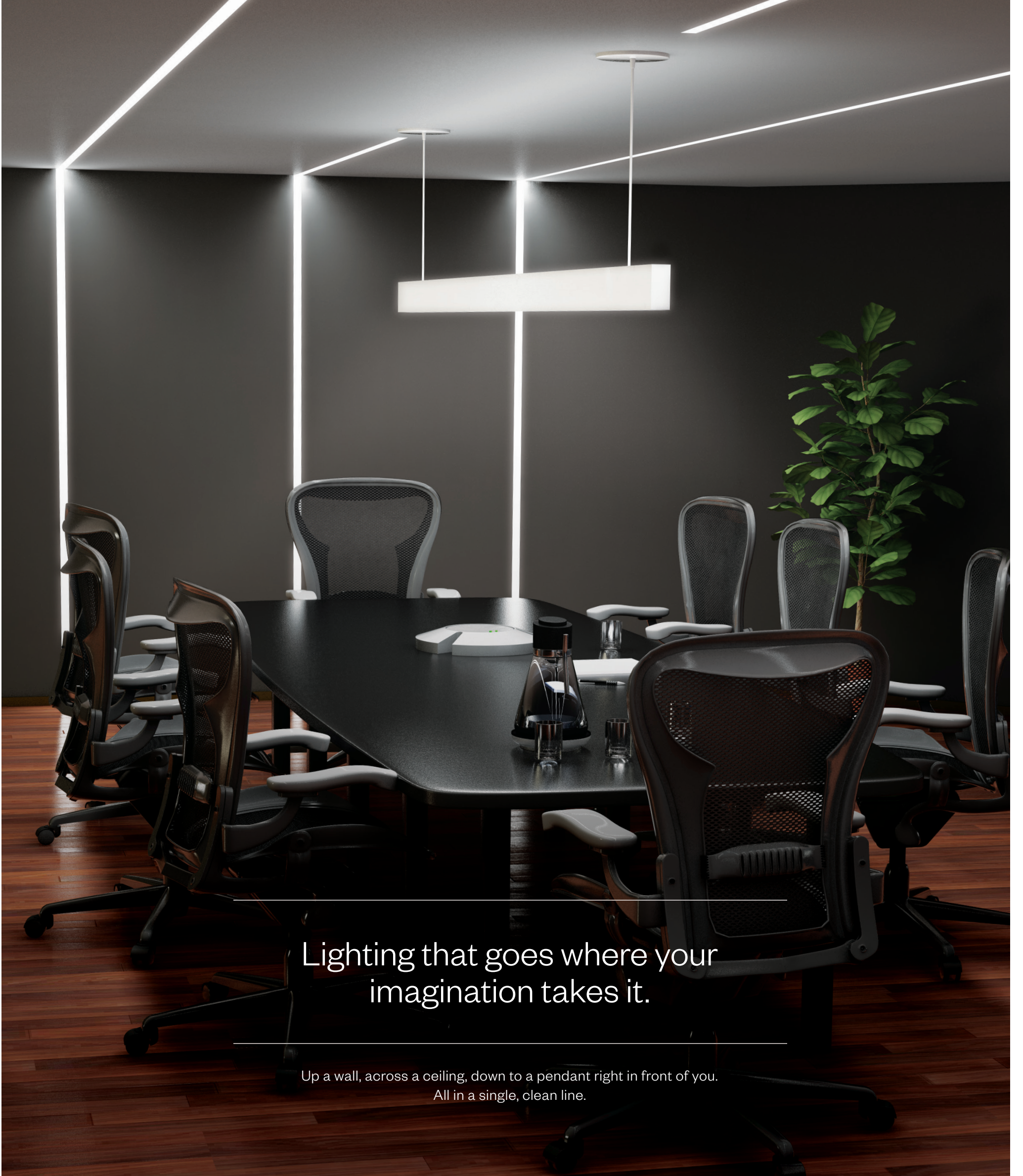
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TO DRAW BY HAND OR BY MOUSE?

The dean of an East Coast architecture school was recently asked, “do you still teach your students hand drawing?” “No,” he responded, “and we don’t use slide rules or Rapidograph pens. Students today come to us as totally embedded in the digital world and that’s how they communicate and think.”

Yet here at *AN* we seem to receive a book or peer review journal nearly every week on the importance of freehand drawing in architectural practice. There is no question that buildings are no longer constructed following pages of hand drawings—that it is now entirely digital and the process is smoother and more precise for it. In addition, there is a digital divide still in the profession between those who trained and began practice doing hand drawings and those who learned entirely on a computer. Richard Meier famously goes nowhere near a computer. He gives his hand drawings to a computer savvy office worker to translate into useable digital files. The late Michael Graves, according to J. Michael Welton, who recently published *Drawing From Practice*, believed, “computers are now taking the architect away from what he and others call ‘humanism.’” More convincingly, Graves also claimed, “a drawing leaves the question open, and leads to the next drawing.” A computer, he argued, does the opposite. “It wants the finality of closing the question.”

The beautiful watercolor drawings by Steven Holl are a testament to the power a hand drawing can still have in the design process. The real question is whether it is still necessary or even helpful for architects to know how to do a quick and simple hand sketch or rendering? Is anything more lost by architectural design and representation being filtered through a mouse pad than when writers changed from typewriters to computers?

Drawings are in some way drawings whether they are done by hand or a computer. Peter Cook, for one, claims, “one or two of us don’t much care whether the drawing itself is covered in lead and sweat, caressed by layers of sediment or watercolor, is a partly photo-shopped manipulation, is caressed by the soothing characteristics of Maya, or dragged at extra speed through a printing machine.” It is that quick transformation of an idea represented on a page before it goes into CATIA or Rhino that is the most exciting part of the design process and how it is expressed, represented, and communicated.

Carlo Scarpa famously wrote, “I place things in front of me, on the paper, so I can see them. I want to see, therefore I draw. I can see an image only if I draw it.” There is still an open question whether computer drawings have this immediacy—let alone the poetry and design of the best hand rendering. In the late 1960 and 70s, as conceptual and video art swept through the art schools, artists did not drop drawing and painting. Much of today’s most compelling art is a synthesis of all these modes of presentation. Likewise, schools of architecture should not take a one-size-fits-all approach to representation and exclusively teach the digital.

It is likely we are in the middle of a change in design production similar to the moment Brunelleschi left the workshop and went into a quiet room to draw. But architecture schools should continue to promote the idea of collage in representation, so that all ideas are displayed equally, not flattened by design programs onto a monitor.

WILLIAM MENKING

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS WEST 8  
SELECTED TO MASTER PLAN  
HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN

Hot Botany

COURTESY HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN

Houston’s flourishing arts and culture firmament stands to gain another leg-up, with master plans for the first Houston Botanic Garden underway. The non-profit organization has designated landscape architecture practice West 8 to helm plans for a new garden on the site of the 120-acre Glenbrook Park Golf Course, located between downtown and Hobby Airport. Houston Botanic Garden will take control of the site, which is currently leased to it by the City of Houston, if it can raise \$20 million by the end of 2017.

West 8, which was commissioned on April 1 following a national search process, is in the midst of site analysis and input from local stakeholders regarding a vision for the cultural institution. “The arts community is very strong in Houston, so this botanic garden is kind of a high-level vision of what we hope to achieve,” said Jamie Maslyn Larson, principal-in-charge of West 8’s American projects.

Bisected by the Sims Bayou, the Glenbrook site hosts multiple wet and dry ecosystems and is integrated with a flood-proof channel. Meanwhile, the 18-hole golf course’s undulating topography offers both challenges and perks, said Larson. “Fortunately, there are a lot of great shade trees and the potential to shape and sculpt the land in a way that’s already providing views and vistas, and we would like to expand the vocabulary that’s already there,” she said.

Given Houston’s heat and humidity, providing adequate shade, air circulation, and flood prevention will be a necessity for the design. “Anything you design in Houston has to honor the hydraulic conditions. It would be our plan to capture rainwater and reuse it as much as possible,” said Jeff Ross, president and CEO of Houston Botanic Garden.

The Glenbrook site is surrounded by two residential areas, rendering it “less commercial” than the other considered site, the Gus Wortham Golf Course north of Idylwood. The Botanic Garden lost a bid in January to the Houston Golf Association for that plot of land.

Larson explained that the designers are fine with the site they ended up with, swampy terrain and all. “We’re thrilled that there’s water on the [Glenbrook] site. On two levels: There’s the meandering channel, which makes part of the garden like an island because you have to cross bridges to get there...it’s definitely something that we think has potential to make a more visceral experience in the garden,” she said, adding that the Sims Bayou will be a linchpin for education, conservation, and research within the garden. “Part of Houston Botanical Garden’s goal is to really get integrated with the science community and with children so the garden can really be the go-to-place for Houstonians to get real hands-on experience in the garden and learn concepts that are more tactile.” **KINDRA COOPER**

LETTER

MEET THE STREET

We saw your editorial on design organizations yesterday (“Design Organizations Need to Meet the Street,” *AN* 04\_03.18.2015) and were thrilled to see the positive things you had to say about the Center for Architecture. After repositioning the Center as a 501(c)3, we are more committed than ever to public outreach and really promoting the idea that design matters to a general audience. We’re very proud of our storefront and we’re happy to hear you are too.

CAMILA SCHAULSOHN  
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CORRECTIONS

In our Q&A with Marshall Strabala (*AN* 04\_04.15.2015), we misattributed the lead architects of the Shanghai Tower. Expected to open later this year, the Shanghai Tower was designed by a Gensler team led by Jun Xia, of which Strabala was a director of design. Before he left to start his own firm, 2DEFINE Architecture, Strabala worked with architects at Gensler on the Shanghai Tower, as well as Thornton Tomasetti, Cosentini, PHA, Tongji University, and Edgett Williams Consulting Group.

In our feature article on the development of a General Plan for Houston (“Houston, We Have A Plan,” *ANSW* 02\_03.11.2015) we

mistakenly listed the Kinder Foundation as a stakeholder in the General Plan. In fact, the Kinder Foundation is not involved in the General Plan in any way.

We regret the errors.

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## THE BELL RINGS IN SILENCE

There's one question on everybody's mind in New York this spring: What happened to **Rick Bell**? On March 27, without warning or explanation, the former executive director of AIA NY and the Center for Architecture tendered his resignation, effective immediately, which AIA NY's board of directors promptly accepted. The unforthcoming announcement stirred up a steamy fountain of rumor and conjecture—very little of it fit for printing—over what could have precipitated Bell's speedy departure, and AIA NY's continued reticence on the matter (there seems to be a gag order in place among its staff) hasn't done anything to lessen the sheer salacious heights to which the gossip has climbed. Bell, for his part, doesn't seem to be very phased by the upheaval. Eavesdrop spotted him at the Storefront for Art and Architecture's annual benefit party—held this year in the un-finished lobby of the **Rafael Viñoly**-designed 432 Park Avenue—wearing a T-shirt that read "I Am Still Alive" and smiling like the cat that ate the canary. Also like a cat, Bell has landed on his feet. On May 8, New York City Department of Design and Construction Commissioner **Feniosky Peña-Mora** announced that the agency had hired him as its executive director of design and construction excellence. Meanwhile, in an interesting game of musical chairs, the AIA NY appointed **David Burney**, who recently left his post as commissioner of the DDC, as its interim executive director.

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### UNVEILED

#### THE NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MUSEUM

The National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation has unveiled a design by Safdie Architects for the United States' first-ever museum dedicated to telling the story of the Medal of Honor and those who have earned it.

Located at Patriot's Point in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, on the east side of Charleston Harbor, the museum's site has as its most prominent built neighbors the cable-stayed Ravenel Bridge and the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Yorktown, which itself is now a museum. Safdie Architects took these two icons of the region as contextual inspiration for its design. The concrete and glass structure has a similar gray-blue color as the Yorktown. Perched over its wetland site on pylons, the building rises to 128 feet high, standing above the surrounding trees and matching the height of the aircraft carrier. Five galleries radiate out to form a central atrium, leveraging out in section and creating a sense of tension and strength, much like that expressed by the

bridge. Panels in the skylit ceiling of the atrium form a five-pointed star, the symbol of the Medal of Honor.

The museum's entry is housed in a green-roofed pavilion building that also accommodates a 240-seat auditorium, museum shop, curatorial and archival space, and administrative offices for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, and the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation. A 140-seat chapel

overlooks the sea at the tip of the site, connecting to the museum by a two-level pedestrian bridge.

Silver Spring, Maryland-based Gallagher & Associates is planning and designing the exhibition spaces. The museum is expected to cost \$98 million and to open in early 2018. **AARON SEWARD**

**Architect:** Safdie Architects  
**Client:** National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation  
**Location:** Mount Pleasant, South Carolina  
**Completion Date:** 2018



COURTESY THE NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MUSEUM FOUNDATION



DC PUBLIC LIBRARY

### UPDATED PLANS RELEASED FOR MIES' MLK LIBRARY IN D.C.

#### THE MIESIAN TOUCH

In early 2014, the District of Columbia Public Library announced that the Washington, D.C.-based Martinez + Johnson and the Dutch firm Mecanoo won the competition to reimagine its central branch, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library—a Mies van der Rohe-designed building that opened in 1972. In the teams' submission, they pledged to "improve Mies in a contemporary Miesian way."

Now, after about a year of feedback, the library has released a new batch of images, after a \$208 million renovation. However, a representative for Martinez + Johnson told *AN*

that the plan is still evolving and these images are really more ideas than concrete plans. More finalized plans are expected when the two firms present to the Historic Preservation Review Board and the Fine Arts Commission in June.

The new images depict significant changes from the first go-round, such as an undulating, one-story glass pavilion that would be used for library programming, and topped by a green roof. Interior spaces have also been retrofitted to accommodate educational technologies and a wider array of programming, in addition to a performance space and a Maker Space inside the building.

This project has a long way to go before construction starts. *The Washington Business Journal* reported that most of the funds will not be released until 2018 or 2019. **HENRY MELCHER**

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### THE GREY

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One of Savannah's long-shuttered Art Moderne marvels, the former Greyhound Bus Depot on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, has been reborn as an elegant bar and

restaurant, aptly named The Grey. Managing partner John Morisana teamed up with chef Mashama Bailey, who spent much of her childhood in the Spanish Moss-laden city, to open the local eatery.

New York-based studio Parts and Labor Design (PLD) collaborated with local firm Felder & Associates to rehabilitate the 1938 bus terminal, originally designed by architect George Brown. "We wanted to pay homage to the design style, but do it in our own way," explained Jeremy Levitt, principal at PLD.

The designers revived the space through a combination of meticulous restoration and new modern furnishings and decorative

lighting. They captured the era's streamlined geometric forms and, instead of skirting around the terminal's complicated history, thoughtfully maintained remnants from the building's Jim Crow-era past. The waiting room once designated for African American passengers is now a vestibule and restrooms displaying the photography of Jerry Harris, whose work Levitt characterized as "racially charged but appropriate" of the African American experience in Savannah.

The old depot's labyrinth of rooms has been transformed into a gracefully meandering series of spaces to eat, drink, and socialize. A casual diner at the front—anchored by a bar

made of blue vinyl, white oak, and zinc—leads into an expansive dining area, which was formerly the main terminal. Decorative, water-jet-cut stainless steel panels are mounted to the original Masonite, a nod to the art deco roots of the building. Upstairs on the second level, the female bus drivers' shower room, featuring the original mint green tiles and clad in oak paneling and stainless steel, has been converted into a private dining room. Downstairs, the men's bunker is now the wine cellar, and the boiler room serves as another intimate private dining room. The yard where buses used to pull up is an outdoor area for live music and pig roasts. **NICOLE ANDERSON**



Driving along Wilshire towards its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard, one is distracted from the usual backup of traffic by a most unusual building. At first glance it appears disturbingly

assertive: a shiny bauble shoehorned into the inept historicism and generic modernism at the edge of Beverly Hills' Golden Triangle. The glass facades feel puffed up, like a cluster of soap

bubbles and capped by a lacy, undulating canopy. However, it's unwise to rely on first impressions. Never judge a book by its cover, or dismiss a party guest who may be talking too loudly and wearing too bright a jacket, but turns out to be the most interesting person in the room. So it is with the Gores Group offices: a model of invention and sustainability.

Belzberg Architects remodeled 9800 Wilshire for the private equity firm, creating the most innovative skin, interior, and roof garden of any commercial building in Los Angeles. Its third floor is linked by a bridge spanning an alley to another suite of offices atop a new six-level parking structure on South Spaulding. "We covered the two facades in bubble wrap, to create performance patterning, activating the surfaces with the reflections of moving traffic," said Hagy Belzberg. "In addition, it's a thermal barrier that shuts out noise, filters light, and ensures privacy for the occupants." Buses and trucks pass within ten feet of the north face, and they are turned into a kinetic spectacle for pedestrians and silent phantoms for those within.

Smooth limestone clads the original shear walls at the base, and the stone was water-blasted to extend the curvilinear forms of the glass, so that the whole facade dissolves into motion. The former CAA Building (now occupied by Sony) is a sensuous sweep of travertine that Michael Ovitiz commissioned from I.M. Pei, but it has worn rather badly, and now looks drab beside its new neighbor.

It took 18 months of R&D with Wiretech, an Ohio-based company that produces slumped glass, to test different thicknesses and come up with the right shape in repeatable panels. The Gores facade comprises three variations, randomly arranged. In the 3.5 inches of separation between the flat inner surface and the double outer skin is a layer of polycarbonate that serves, like fritting, as a privacy screen. It allows occupants to see out but not be seen. Hot air is evacuated from the inner space in summer and recycled to warm the interiors in winter.

The offices are entered from the alley to the rear. Belzberg and project architect Cory Taylor retained much of the existing steel-framed

structure, but punched out a central void for a lofty reception area and skylit stair hall, which pulls natural light into the center of the building and serves as a social condenser that fosters interaction between staff working on different floors. The staircase is treated as a sculpture that mimics the fluidity of the exterior. Water-bent strips of whitened ash form a continuous arched balustrade that turns and ascends through the four stories and frames a glimpse of a rooftop tree. The conference room opening out of the lobby, and the top-floor boardroom are walled in glass to convey a sense of transparency, as are most of the private offices. Across the bridge is a racetrack plan of glazed offices that open onto a richly planted courtyard that convey a sense of *rus in urbes*. Joan Behnke selected furnishings that give the interiors a residential feel, and made good use of the firm's contemporary art collection.

The roof garden is a first for Beverly Hills, and Belzberg had to fight for six months to secure a waiver on the absurd regulation that allows only



BENNY CHAN

service equipment. A new roof, reinforced to support a greater load and conceal ducts, was installed. Concrete pavers alternate with plantings and seating for alfresco lunches and receptions. Undulating canopies of fretted white-lacquered steel cast lacy shadows and echo the profile of the Hollywood Hills. It's an additional facade that peeks down to the street and can be enjoyed by the occupants of taller buildings. Landscaping enhances the workplace and contributes to the sustainability of the building. Hopefully the city will drop its irrational prohibition and encourage others to emulate Gores. **MICHAEL WEBB**





COURTESY LUTRON

## JOEL SPIRA, 1927–2015

The name might not sound familiar, but his vision and products have affected us all. Mr. Spira was the founder of Lutron Electronics, a lighting control company based in Coopersburg, Pennsylvania, located outside of Allentown, Pennsylvania. Dimmers were originally introduced to create ambiance by lowering light levels and creating warm glows while saving energy. One of Lutron's original marketing slogans encouraged customers to use dimmers to "dial romance."

Today, the field of lighting controls has grown to include multiple energy-saving applications—reducing excessive or redundant light in spaces and creating multiple aesthetic moods in a simple space. The field now addresses both electric and natural light, with the addition of silent and automatic daylight shading devices to minimize glare and maximize additional energy savings. All of this growth is based upon the simple rotary, solid state (triac) dimmer that every house has over the dining room table. That same dimmer, which Mr. Joel Spira invented in 1961, now resides in the Smithsonian Institute.

I originally met Mr. Spira when I worked for Lutron Electronics after graduating from The Pennsylvania State University. As an architectural Engineering student I had several internships at various Philadelphia Architectural firms. Because I had one lighting class, I was the expert and began specifying lighting and controls. At a product fair, I saw a table full of working dimmers and began evaluating the products that I had previously specified. Six months later, I was working for Lutron, a company that typically hired mechanical and electrical engineering graduates. As a designer I was an experiment, but their leap of faith showed Lutron's commitment to talent diversification and to supporting multiple university programs.

At first, Mr. Spira was intimidating to work for. Not because of his demeanor or actions, but because of his true brilliance, his tough questions, and his refusal to accept failure. It was this tenacity that continually pushed the company and inspired all of his employees. Anything could be done: For example, when frustrated with the multiple remote controls for his television and electronics, he envisioned and developed the first master remote control. This was back when most of us didn't even have remotes for our televisions. His vision and ability to see product possibilities based

on ergonomic or human factors ensured a steady stream of products years before any of his competitors. We can all remember the Nova linear slide dimmer, or the game changing GRAFIK Eye preset controls, that made preset scenes simple, practical, and affordable.

Mr. Spira's own life experiences shaped the company that he formed. He served in the Navy as a radar designer during World War II and then received a physics degree from Purdue University. The company has been committed to hiring engineers from the college since day one and Mr. Spira was also committed to supporting returning military troops. Lutron continues to recruit and hire Junior Military Officers, and did so long before it was fashionable.

He was a true visionary. While in the Orient, sourcing electronic components, he discovered Asian Pears. He became an expert on the pears, and eventually started his own orchards in Pennsylvania. Soon after, his orchards and new ways to market the pears created one of the largest Asian Pear orchards in the United States. Not bad for an engineer.

As the company expanded rapidly, Mr. Spira's sense of family and commitment and loyalty to employees was shared throughout the company. It truly was a family affair. While Joel was envisioning products and refining old ones, his wife Ruth ran the communications department. One of his own daughters, Susan Hakkarainen, had to work her own way up through the company and is now a co-chairman. The Lutron family meant something unique to Mr. Spira, and there are numerous multi-generational families still working there.

We all must follow our passions, and Mr. Spira respected that, too. In the mid 1980s, I left Lutron to follow my passion: lighting design. Over the years our relationship actually grew, even though we were miles apart and had more limited interactions. Like always, when Joel talked with you, he always had time to really listen to what you were saying. Candid conversations about the lighting marketplace or the future of controls evolved into documentation and product changes happening overnight. Not only did he listen, he acted upon conversations. He always looked at what his customers' needs and wants were and worked back to a solution or product. As a result, his impact in the architectural design community has been enormous. In fact, Lutron controls are in most landmark projects around the world.

That original dimmer provided drama and mood for residential projects, and that evolved into the world of hospitality projects. With the perfection of solid-state fluorescent dimming, the use of Lutron products in the commercial world allowed for full-range dimming previously limited to residential and hospitality projects. Today, Lutron's product advancements continue with wireless controls for lighting as well as shading systems. These products add the benefit of energy efficiency and have helped billions of square feet of global real estate achieve sustainability goals and reduce their environmental footprints.

While known as the man behind the modern dimmer, Joel Spira has truly left his mark on the world and his spirit will glow into the future, a true inspiration to us all.

**CHIP ISRAEL IS THE CEO AND FOUNDER OF LIGHTING DESIGN ALLIANCE.**



Photograph: Tom Jernigan

## Sub Culture

Every day 300,000 subway riders stream through Manhattan's **Fulton Center**, their underground trek now brightened by entertainment venues and daylight reflected from its skylit cable-net overhead. An integrated artwork by **James Carpenter Design Associates**, **Grimshaw Architects**, and **Arup**, this marvel of collaboration is a new bright spot beneath city streets. Read more about it in **Metals in Construction** online.

 **Ornamental Metal Institute of New York**

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It has been a long winter in New York. Spring is finally burning off the fog of malaise that has seemed to settle on many New Yorkers. Fatigued by crowded subways with increasingly frequent delays and endless talk about skyrocketing rents and rising costs of living, New York hasn't seemed like the vibrant, stimulating urban caldron that it used to be.

In cultural circles there has been endless hand-wringing about the state of the city's museums, most exemplified by the many critical freak-outs about the current Björk exhibition at MoMA, which most art writers have dismissed as both cynical and superficial—symptomatic of a slavish drive for spectacle events over serious artistic or scholarly engagement. Playful yet earnest, the Whitney Museum has often served as a foil to MoMA's high gloss enterprises. So the Whitney's confident return in a new Renzo Piano-designed home at the foot of the High Line feels like a refreshing and edifying corrective.

Whitney officials have touted the new building as a "playground for artists." A small historical show in the museum's free gallery off the lobby documents this artist-centric tradition, which dates to the museum's founding by the sculptor and heiress Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. The museum's smart, low-key curators want to keep that

tradition alive even as they join the big leagues, and they have had a direct hand in the shaping of the building to suit their needs. The museum has gained a tremendous amount of new gallery space (50 percent more than in their old Marcel Breuer-designed home) of differing scales and lighting conditions, all of which are designed to be easily reconfigured as needed. They also have, for the first time, a small auditorium and theater for film and performance events, which opens out to a large terrace. Even better, the art looks great on the walls. Now we get to see much more of the Whitney's important collection, and the museum can better examine and interrogate the history and future of American art.

Just as important, the museum and its architects (Renzo Piano Building Workshop partnered with Cooper Robertson & Partners) have created a viewer-centric space. It's a big building that never succumbs to gigantism. It offers many places for reflection, refreshment, and repose, like sofas facing out to the High Line or the Hudson. It also offers options to relax and avoid museum fatigue, like a pleasant café on the eighth floor, or a series of terraces overlooking the world famous elevated park. You can also take the exterior stairs from terrace to terrace for still more fresh air and remarkable city views.

Many have complained about the building's somewhat ungainly exterior, which has two very different



JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO

faces. The Hudson-facing side is canted and ship-like except for a protruding rectangular volume. The High Line facing side is even more of a jumble, with the stepped back terraces and spindly staircases and catwalks. Given the context of the formerly industrial Meatpacking District, Piano's building doesn't seem entirely out of place. He seems to have designed the building from the inside out, putting function first and capitalizing on the surprisingly spectacular site.

It is also built to withstand Sandy-scale or worse weather events, a necessity given its riverside location. No art is held below the third floor, save for a small (again, free to the public!) gallery on the ground floor, which could easily be evacuated.

Piano's building lacks the rich tectonics and the memorable heft of the vacated Breuer building uptown. While moving through Breuer's building was a profound architectural experience imbued

**The new Whitney in the Meat Packing District affords views of both the High Line and Hudson River from different perches and terraces.**

with a sense of craft and traces of the hand of the architect, Piano's Whitney is more like a machine for viewing. Piano and the Whitney curators understand that viewing art is not a static act, but rather a sequence of experiences of looking, focusing and unfocusing, thinking, moving, standing, sitting, etc. Its gently lit galleries, carefully framed views of city and river, and moments for reflection, combine to create perhaps the most satisfying museum environment among the city's large art museums. It's enriching rather than exhausting.

Piano may not have made a building to love, but he has made a building that will allow the Whitney to evolve and grow in its ambitions, and possibly to become an institution about which weary New Yorkers can rejoice. **ALAN G. BRAKE**



NIC LEHOUX



## THE WHITNEY RETURNS DOWNTOWN, WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

### VESTIGES OF BOHEMIAN NEW YORK

The beloved Marcel Breuer headquarters for the Whitney Museum of American Art at Madison Avenue and 75<sup>th</sup> Street was in fact the institution's third home since Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney founded it in 1931.

With the May 1 opening of a fourth, Renzo Piano-designed Whitney location at the southern Gansevoort Street source of the High Line (and with the Breuer building secure in the operating and contemporary curatorial hands of the Metropolitan Museum), the time is right to understand its architectural origins and creative pedigree.

Miss Vanderbilt grew up in what still holds the record as New York's biggest residence: the 103-room 1893 Renaissance Revival house built for her father Cornelius II. It stood until 1925 on the Grand Army Plaza site that now features the Bergdorf Goodman flagship as opened in 1928, designed by the 20<sup>th</sup> century maverick Ely Jacques Kahn.

The Mansion was designed by the Beaux Arts trained architect George Browne Post, whose greatest surviving trace is the newly glistening, hipster-haven Williamsburg Savings Bank at the foot of its name-sharing Bridge. (If still standing, the old Vanderbilt mansion could by birthright be home to great-grandson Anderson Cooper...)

As a wealthy self-defined bohemian and skilled sculptor, daughter Gertrude set out in 1907 for Greenwich Village, where she created her first studio in a former stable at 19 MacDougal Alley, the mews-like cul-de-sac between West 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Square North. This first burst of gentrification was steadily followed by the acquisition of four 1830s Greek Revival brownstones, numbered 8 to 14 along West 8<sup>th</sup> Street proper, as well as the alleyway stables attached to each.

As her real estate footprint grew, so did her circle of fellow contemporary artists and the impulse to collect and display this collective accomplishment. The amalgamation of now interlaced buildings, which she started to call the Whitney Studio Club, set the stage. It was her home, her workplace, her personal *kunsthalle*, and a welcoming salon for artist friends often shunned elsewhere. Here was held, for example, the first exhibitions of John Sloane and Edward Hopper.

Perhaps of foremost initial design importance was her own personal sculpting studio built atop 19 MacDougal, conceived by her artistic fellow traveler, Robert Winthrop Chanler, as multi-media *gesamtkunstwerk* of painted bas-relief, decorated surfaces, and stained glass windows. (The Chanler Studio in particular has been on the World Monuments Fund's renowned Watch List since 2012.)

When the by then Mrs. Vanderbilt Whitney's offer to donate 700 contemporary artworks by Americans was refused by the Metropolitan Museum (Hopper? No thank you.), as well as soon after by the Euro-centric Museum of American Art, she created the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1931. Taking matters into her own hands, Gertrude launched it for the display and appreciation of contemporary art—the 20<sup>th</sup>-century up until then and proceeding onward. She did so with her long-time assistant, Juliana Force, recognized ever after as the Whitney Museum's first director.

These two women—besides their art

collecting—were also an important, unsung catalyst for modern interior design and the evenly-illuminated white cube aesthetic that still sets the standard of museums worldwide, even as they keep growing in scale and room-denying flexibility. This architecture unfolded in a warren of early 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic residential interiors with attached stables, whose generous volumes emerged with the removal of stalls and haylofts. The result helped foretell the formal future of museums, even as its historic role goes largely unnoticed today.

Mrs. Whitney and Ms. Force did so in partnership with the design team consisting first and foremost of her son-in-law, architect Auguste Noël, and his umlaut-free firm of Noel & Miller Architects. Like Jacques Kahn, this team was Beaux Arts trained, yielding to the classically descended vocabulary of art deco and especially its later offshoot, *moderne*, which heralded capital-M Modernism. They worked with a society interior designer of like urbanity, Bruce Butterfield.

In 1954, the Museum decamped for its second home, which was a building on West 54<sup>th</sup> Street just west of Philip Johnson's reconfigured MOMA sculpture garden, where the Taniguchi's Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Educational and Research Center stands today. It too was designed for the Whitney/Force duo by Noel & Miller, but it turned out the shadow of its juggernaut neighbor was too strong both physically and metaphorically and off they went to commission the great Breuer reverse juggernaut masterpiece, which opened in 1967 as an instant landmark on the Upper East Side. Contextual it was not.

It was at this time that the old Whitney Studio and Museum crucible on West 8<sup>th</sup> Street became the New York Studio School (NYSS), opening in the academic year 1964/65. Now at the half-century mark, this Whitney legacy holds a place as a leading independent school of fine art pedagogy grounded in the traditional atelier of life study and a rigorous pedagogy to provide the springboard for a professional career. It resolutely does so in the heart of Greenwich Village, existing today as a precious trace of New York's first Bohemia on what is now a street undergoing rapid commercial and residential gentrification. Stepping inside, the visitor today discovers a fascinating palimpsest of the old townhouses and former stable voids altered as galleries with then-radical recessed bands of ceiling lights and *moderne* details of travertine floors, aluminum railings, and jazzy doorjamb thresholds. This glimpse of design modernism and its tie to American art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as it prepared for global supremacy in the wake of World War II is a sort of secret cultural treasure, living and breathing still as a place for making art.

The Whitney's return downtown brings it closer to home as still evident to the roving architectural eye. Take a look when next passing by. **PAUL GUNTHER**



COURTESY NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL



Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill  
Structural Engineer: WSP Cantor Seinuk  
Photograph: Tex Jernigan

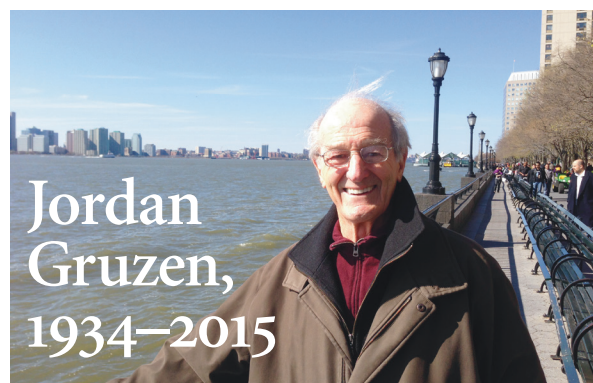
## World View

While the world watched, **One World Trade Center** grew in both height and symbolism, its 1,776-foot crystalline form bringing unmatched views back to Lower Manhattan. A redundant structural steel frame, the result of creative collaboration between **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** and **WSP Cantor Seinuk**, ensures that its safety is as substantial as its stature. Read more about it in **Metals in Construction** online.

 **Steel Institute of New York**

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Jordan  
Gruzen,  
1934–2015

COURTESY GRUZEN + PARTNERS

I met Jordan in the fall of 1952, quite by accident, having jumped from a diving board and landed on him in the Lawrence Anderson–designed pool at M.I.T. We were both about to begin the five-year program in the School of Architecture under Pietro Belluschi's deanship.

Cambridge appeared to us to be the center of the world of architecture then, and we enjoyed the relief from the cold winters and intense charrettes by often heading to northern Vermont to go skiing on weekends. He was a natural athlete and excellent skier. It was a good counter measure to the close-in detailed design work at the School of Architecture where India-ink drawing was the norm of presentation, and we often worked through the night.

After a year, as Fulbrights he went to Italy and me to France; we travelled through Spain and Morocco, and I became familiar with Jordan's unrelenting enthusiasm and positive personality. He wanted to see and do everything, even feasting with a Moroccan family where they gave us each a lamb's eye as a delicacy that we weren't expected to refuse.

Our friendship developed through an obvious mutual love of architecture and in spite of different personalities. He was the perennial optimist seeing his father's firm, Kelly+Gruzen, quickly succeed, and I more the pessimist, having fled Germany with my family at the start of World War II, often worried about the future.

I joined the firm in the early 1960s when Jordan's father, Barney, ran the office with an iron fist. Staff was often terrified of him, yet he was mindful of talent. (Lew Davis and Sam Brody first met there years earlier.) Barney was tough, often chewing on the yellow tracing paper as he reviewed designer's sketches, but Jordan lobbied more for a collaborative atmosphere and in 1967 helped to turn it into a partnership, bringing in six new partners. While Barney unlocked the door, Jordan pushed it

wide open.

That same year, we were invited in competition with a select group of architects, including Breuer, Johnson, Barnes, and Conklin+Rossant, for a new stables building in Central Park at the 86th Street transverse. We won with an underground design. However, the mention of the word Polo, by an East Side newspaper, killed the project. That just emboldened Jordan, and the firm soon found itself amending the Civic Center Master Plan, with the design of the new Police Headquarters and later the Metropolitan Correction Center and Court House Annex, by depressing existing roadways, changing the on-off ramps of the Brooklyn Bridge, and eliminating a proposed pedestrian bridge for an at-grade extension of Chambers Street. This, along with adjacent affordable residential projects including the first all-concrete Chatham Towers, signaled a triumph of the new firm, now known as Gruzen+Partners.

Jordan helped create the office atmosphere that ambitious designers needed. Over more than 40 years there were close to two-dozen new partners that came through the office to make their contribution. He enjoyed the collaboration and the excitement of large new projects making a difference. In the ensuing years, much thanks to Jordan's heady optimism, the firm grew and became immersed in several new building types, including correctional facilities, starting with Leesburg Prison, known as the "Glass House"; hospitality with the re-design of the old Commodore Hotel into the Grand Hyatt, including an unusual garden room well over 42<sup>nd</sup> Street; Higher Education through the development of the East Campus Master Plan and the School of Health Science and Health Services at M.I.T. with Mitchell & Giurgola; international work with the American Embassy in Moscow with SOM as well as new towns in Tehran and Isfahan; and residential design with significant projects throughout

New York State for the Urban Development Corporation, including the Schomburg Plaza Apartments at 110<sup>th</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue. For many years the firm continued developing follow up work in these areas.

Each decade our office moved, finally arriving at its largest quarters with two floors on West Street directly south of the World Trade Center and a few blocks walk from Jordan and Lee's apartment on the South Cove in Battery Park City. In less than a year after the move, September 11<sup>th</sup> struck and everything, including the very survival of the office, was placed in jeopardy. For Jordan, it was a double whammy, having to flee first the office and then his home, which temporarily acted as a refuge for our staff until they all were evacuated across the river to safety. Throughout this ordeal, Jordan rose to the occasion, convincing the authorities to let us return to our gutted office to rummage through the ruins looking for material to salvage, particularly critical computer records. Having no home or office for the next seven weeks for Jordan was a challenge and an adventure.

In less than 2 months, after splitting the staff into groups working out of ten different offices, generously provided to us by other architects, we were back in business in a new and finer space at the edge of the Meat Packing District. Over the next few years, Jordan returned to the Middle East, particularly to Dubai, for which he had great enthusiasm. He always loved the idea of taking on new challenges, just as the accomplished skier and sailor that he was. His continued interest in New Jersey with projects in Newark and Hoboken, a Ferry Terminal in Weehawken, and El Museo Del Barrio on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, replaced his travels.

His final and most difficult challenge was faced with the same upbeat attitude with which he lived his life. Knowing that his days were numbered, he focused on his summer-house under construction in Amagansett. Just days before he died, he visited the house with his wife Lee and his family. He showed us around, pointed out unusual details, and expressed the delight of an architect surveying his project and envisioning the final product. The completed house he will never see, but the optimism with which he lived his life is there for all of us to take note and learn from. **PETER SAMTON**



COURTESY LEERS WEINZAPFEL ASSOCIATES

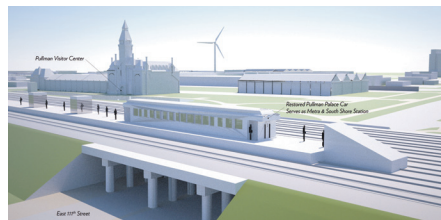
## UNVEILED

**INTEGRATED DESIGN BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST**  
The Boston-based Leers Weinzapfel Associates has unveiled designs for the Integrated Design Building at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The new structure will bring the university's departments of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, Architecture, and Building Construction Technology together under one roof for the first time. To foster a sense of collaboration between the interdisciplinary students, the 80,000-square-foot structure is assembled like a coil with a significant center courtyard. This space has a two-story atrium that is topped by a "zipper truss" system and an outdoor courtyard above. Tom Chung,

a principal at the firm, said the space reflects an intersection of the building's three departments because it cohesively incorporates architecture, landscape design, and advanced building technologies.

The exterior of the Integrated Design Building is clad in bronzed anodized aluminum and has a pattern of vertical windows. Together, these components are intended to give the structure a "forest-like grain," said Andrea Leers, another partner at Leers Weinzapfel Associates. A landscape of native plantings and stones surrounds the building, forming a natural stormwater management system. The facility, which is aiming for LEED Gold certification, is also topped with a green roof. **HM**

**Architect:** Leers Weinzapfel Associates  
**Client:** University of Massachusetts  
**Location:** Amherst, MA  
**Completion Date:** Summer 2016



COURTESY AIA CHICAGO

## CHANGES ON TRACK FOR CHICAGO'S HISTORIC PULLMAN NEIGHBORHOOD

### Destination Unknown

Two months after President Obama declared the historic company town of Pullman, Illinois a national monument, a group of architects, planners, and preservationists are examining ways to balance economic development and historic preservation in the newly protected neighborhood on Chicago's South Side.

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and AIA Chicago in April kicked off an initiative called "Positioning Pullman" with a three-day design charrette on how to grow and protect this neighborhood, which is struggling to maintain its prized stock of Queen Anne and Romanesque architecture in light of the economic challenges facing much of the South Side.

Luther Mason, pastor at the Solon Spencer Beman-designed Greenstone Church in Pullman (which hosted a charrette meeting), had an uncle that was a porter on Pullman sleeper cars. "The story's gotta be told, the good, the bad, and the ugly," he said.

The town of Pullman began in 1880 as an experiment in industrial capitalism, but it reached its historical apotheosis as an icon of unionizing and collective bargaining. Built by luxury railcar tycoon George Pullman as the ideal company town, it was designed by the then 26-year-old Beman to be clean, orderly, and above all, profitable. When Pullman reduced wages in 1893 but didn't offer rent relief, a strike ensued, crippling

the entire industry. Pullman won that battle, but lost the war. In 1937, The Pullman Company (the largest employer of African-Americans in the nation) signed the first contract with an African-American labor union, the Pullman Porters. However, by 1957 most of Pullman's industrial empire was in serious decline.

The neighborhood has been the subject of seven studies since the late 1980s, most of which has gone unimplemented. Attendees of April's charrette say this time is different: NPCA Midwest Regional Director Lynn McClure said that the plans to emerge out of Positioning Pullman will be "living art" that will give state and local agencies a vision to promote. Also, 80 percent of the development in the neighborhood over the last five years has been from private businesses, McClure said, including the Pullman Park commercial strip and William McDonough + Partners' factory for Method, a brand of environmentally-friendly cleaning products. Most importantly, McClure said, the national monument declaration could attract some 300,000 visitors and \$40 million in new economic activity each year.

Surrounded by vast warehouses and nearly 12 miles south of the Loop, Pullman feels cloistered from the energy and rhythms of the rest of the city. Queen Anne rowhouses made of red brick line the streets and are punctuated by the ornate but mostly shuttered Hotel Florence and Pullman Administration complex. The charrette's historic preservation team created three scenarios to reactivate these buildings and the wider neighborhood, re-capturing Pullman's small town vitality with the addition of new housing, restaurants, retail space, and cultural programs.

"Pullman, Roseland, and the entire Far South Side were once forgotten communities," said 9<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Anthony Beale in an April press statement. "Businesses are opening, housing is being rehabbed—we're rebuilding the thriving live-work community that Pullman once was." **ZACH MORTICE**



# Clearly Evolving

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NICK MERRICK/HEDRICH BLESSING

The architects designed this GSA project to respond to its South Florida context. The wetland site was restored. The diamond shaped solar shades respond to low-angle sun.

In addition to developing buildings that embody “the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American national government,” and the “finest contemporary American architectural thought,” the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) Design Excellence Program asks the architects it commissions to be site conscious and to respond sensitively to local communities and contexts. In the case of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s new South Florida headquarters, which happens to be located in Miramar, a city northwest of Miami, that context, in the words of Krueck + Sexton principal Mark Sexton, “is Taco Bell, on a good day.” Not satisfied with the fast-food chain as a design progenitor, the Chicago-based architecture firm instead took its cues from the location’s geographical history and prevailing climate.

Miramar (Spanish for “sea-view”) is actually some 13 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean. Named for a neighborhood in Havana, Cuba, it sits on land that for countless millennia before the city’s establishment in 1955 was tropical wetlands—the Sawgrass marsh and slough region of The Everglades. The previous owners of the 20-acre plot dumped 18-inches of gravel on it, thinking it would improve the site as a real estate prospect. Krueck + Sexton thought differently. It proposed restoring the

wetlands and bringing them right up to the building. It was the only firm in the government’s short list to put forth the idea, and the GSA saw the value.

The office building itself had to accommodate 1,000 agents and workers. The architects wanted to connect them to the restored landscape through views as well as provide ample daylight on the interior while delivering a highly sustainable building. They laid out the structure’s 375,000 square feet on six floors in two parallel 60-foot wide bars connected by a perpendicular bar. The resulting H-shaped plan created a condition where, no matter where in the building you stand, you are never more than 30 feet from the natural light and views afforded by the glass curtain wall. The plan also created two semi-enclosed courtyards: one to the east that serves as the main entrance and combines a reflecting pool and a formally composed landscape, and one to the west for use by employees that is an extension of the restored wetlands.

Each floor varies slightly in plan, creating different experiences throughout the interior and changes on the elevation. The long outer north and south walls curve smoothly, as though responding to the sinuous waterways of The Everglades. Within the courtyards, the facades are fractured and faceted along hard lines,

giving the building the feel of a geode.

The choice of a unitized glass curtain wall for the enclosure came with its challenges. For one, South Florida gets a lot of sun, and thus a lot of heat loading, especially on the east and west faces. In addition, it is a hurricane-prone area, which, along with the FBI’s requirements for blast resistance and other security measures, meant that the building skin had to be very robust. Aesthetically, the architects wanted the building to be all white and read as a monolithic unit, without the floor plates telegraphing through the glass and creating bands on the facade.

Since such an envelope system could not be ordered out of a catalog, Krueck + Sexton worked closely with its consultants and fabricators to develop one. The resulting curtain wall is a unitized system outfitted with an IGU with a 3/8-inch outer lite of low-iron glass, a one-inch space filled with argon gas, and an inner lite made up of two ¼-inch laminated pieces of glass. The No. 2 surface of the inner lite has a low-e coating and a white ceramic frit pattern in a gradient: 20 percent for vision, 60 to 80 percent for spandrel, and 80 percent on the east and west faces, cladding the egress stairs. The inner piece of laminated glass is pyrolytic, made to attenuate infrared and radio frequencies.

In this latitude, the sun shines more or

less from directly overhead. Through solar studies, the architects determined that the building would get the bulk of its solar loading and glare when the sun was low in the horizon. As a result, they arranged the solar shades, which are thick-gauge, 7 ½-foot-long sections of painted, perforated aluminum that are integrated into the unitized panel, in a diamond pattern. The unexpected application of this fairly standard sun mitigation equipment was entirely performance based, but it gives the building an interesting texture and anchors it solidly to its place. **AS**

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## L.A. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN PROMPTS ARCHITECTS TO HELP SOLVE HOUSING CRISIS

## HOUSE HUNTING

If there's a better city for residential design than Los Angeles, the world's architects have not found it. From the historical pastiches of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, to the modernist movement, to the pioneering designs of some of the world's most famous contemporary architects, LA's varied terrain, blank geographic slate, and utter unfamiliarity with tradition has resulted in some of the most notable single-family homes in the world. What the city now needs, though, is much more than sublime boxes and clever uses of industrial materials.

LA is built-out and a housing crisis is raging. Rents have crept up for years, due in part to chronic under-production of housing. Last summer, a UCLA report confirmed that LA is the least affordable city in the country, as a function of average salaries and average rents.

In April, LA Mayor Eric Garcetti addressed the housing crunch by presenting a wide-ranging agenda for economic and ecological sustainability called *pLAN*. One part calls for the creation of 100,000 units of housing by 2021. At least 17,000 of those units are to be located within 1,500 feet of a public transit stop. The city currently has 3.8 million residents and 1.4 million units.

*pLAN* seeks action through a variety of policies, collaborations, and funding sources; some of them already underway. Through the *re:code LA* effort to revamp the city's zoning code, Garcetti has called for the completion of the city's long-delayed community plans, updating land use to match current residential priorities. He has also pledged to streamline permitting for transit-oriented developments and secure funds to preserve and subsidize below market-rate housing.

Los Angeles' community of architects, developers, and planners have long been united in asking the city for more opportunities to build (often over the objections of homeowners groups and others who favor slow growth). Within this alliance, it is largely up to architects to figure out what the new, larger Los Angeles will look like and how it can grow.

The most straightforward approach—which the city has endorsed in places—is to erect large residential towers, presumably on high-capacity transportation corridors. That's happening in downtown, Mid-Wilshire, and elsewhere. But many of the city's architects favor more subtle approaches that acknowledge the city's diversity.

"Los Angeles is a city of many cities, and it's very difficult to have top-down strategies," said Lorcan O'Herlihy, founding principal of Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects. "(By) incrementally embedding socially-conscious interventions and gestures, including buildings, throughout the city, you can have great smart growth."

Attractive small apartment buildings not only offer more opportunities for creative design, but they also have a better chance of gaining neighborhood acceptance with a scale that is more in line with the character of LA.

Kevin Daly, principal at Kevin Daly Architects, cited the city's history of courtyard housing and small modernist buildings that can fit relatively seamlessly into existing neighborhoods.

"The more tailored the housing is to the unique conditions of that project, the greater chance you have of real success of building community and connecting to the larger context," said Michael Maltzan, principal at Michael Maltzan Architecture.

Some architects advocate an even smaller approach—one that might be invisible to homeowners, who are often on the front lines in the fight against density, traffic, and aesthetic offenses.

For every single-family home in Los Angeles, there's typically an underused garage or vacant patch of grass that could accommodate an accessory dwelling unit. By adding one or two residents per lot, these units would, supporters say, exert zero aesthetic or traffic impacts on the city's residential neighborhoods.

"For Los Angeles...our DNA is in the single-family house," said Dana Cuff, director of cityLAB and professor of architecture at UCLA. "I think as architects it's our burden and basic ethical responsibility to try to enhance and solve housing problems in the single-family zones."

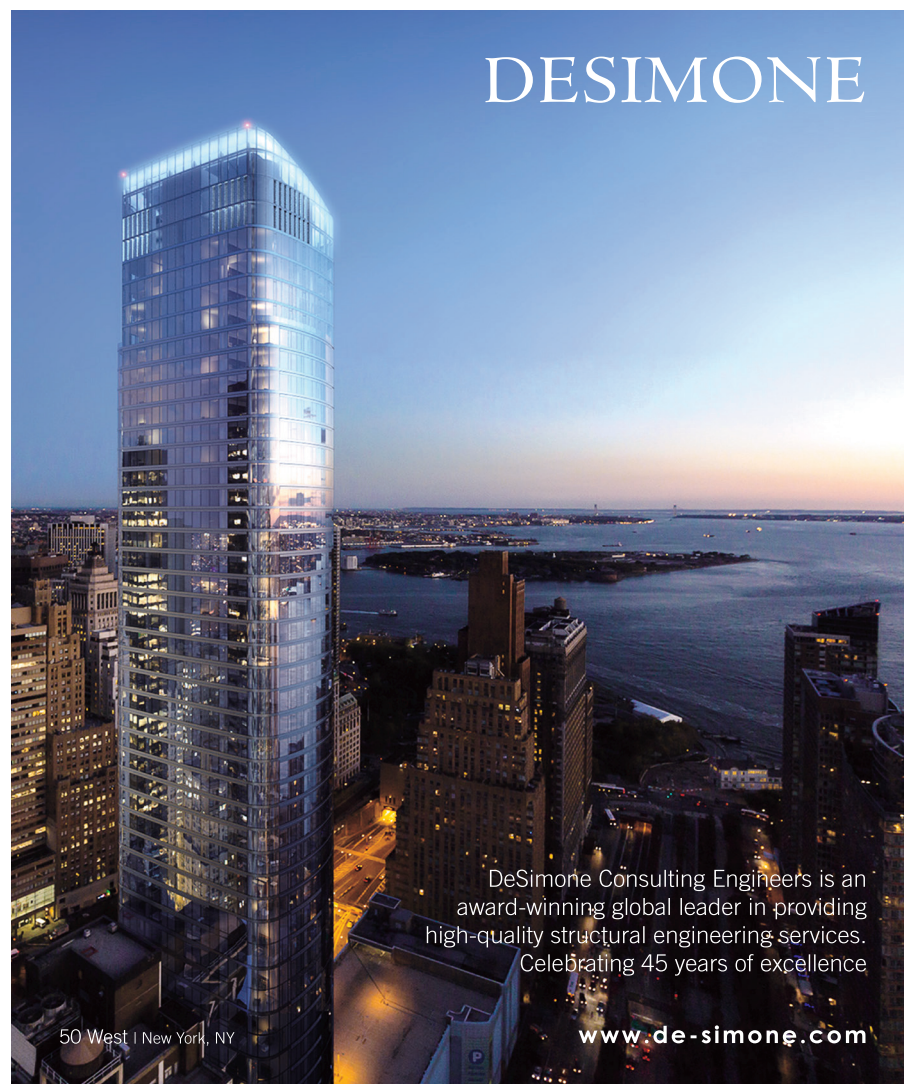
Cuff noted that if 20 percent of the city's 500,000 single-family lots included ADU's, that alone would reach the mayor's goal. As well, an embrace of alleyways could create brand new front doors.

These design solutions need to be legal before they are implemented. With the mayor issuing such a bold plan—and directing all city departments to do their part to realize its goals—architects are hoping the city will update its regulations accordingly on issues such as setback requirements, parking regulations, height restrictions, floor-to-area ratios, and density in transit-oriented neighborhoods.

"There's definitely going to be a lot of collaboration required both between departments and between different facets of the city government," said Ashley Atkinson, planning and housing specialist for Garcetti.

If the city succeeds in streamlining its administrative process and reconciling its planning and building codes, architects and developers may be significantly freer to go about their work. Will Wright, director of government and public affairs for AIA/LA, added that the city needs to provide for more by-right development and minimize the negotiation among developers, stakeholders, and city council members. **JOSH STEPHENS**

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 20, 2015

Carlo Ratti Associati's pavilion for New Holland features a planted roof, harvested by a self-driving tractor.



Japanese designers team-Lab created an immersive pavilion, projecting textures of rice patties onto discs.



Future Food District provides interactive technologies to show shoppers' role in food consumption.



EYE-CATCHING PAVILIONS EXPLORE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD PRODUCTION AND POPULATION GROWTH AT EXPO MILANO 2015

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Spring in Milan has been even more exciting than usual this year. Still shaking off a Prosecco-induced hangover from the annual Salone del Mobile design fair, the city is now celebrating the opening of the Expo Milano 2015, the world's largest exhibition, which is expected to attract over 20 million visitors and over 260 participating organizations, including 140 countries.

The theme of the event, which runs from May 1 through October 31, is "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life," a reflection on the future of how the world will feed its

growing population. Following in the footsteps of previous World's Fairs and Expos, such as London 1951, New York 1939, or Osaka 1970, the 2015 rendition will have architecture as one of its main components, including projects by high profile designers such as Norman Foster and Daniel Libeskind.

The original master plan was designed by a team consisting of Stefano Boeri, Herzog & de Meuron, Ricky Burdett, and William McDonough—all of whom stepped down from the project after their initial scheme was overturned. Herzog

recently told *uncube magazine* that he expects the show to turn into a "vanity fair" type of happening, where individual pavilions use novel gimmicks and extreme forms that will distract from the important content of the exhibitions. Their 2011 proposal gave each country an equal, linear exhibition space under a large tent, flattening the site in order to minimize nationalistic architectural ambition. Instead, the organizers have scrapped the team's master plan, opting instead for the old model of large national pavilions with areas for retail, restaurants,

bars, exhibitions, education spaces, and performance spaces.

While Herzog has a point that the planned structures are indeed fantastical, it is debatable whether interesting, informative exhibitions and wild pavilion designs are mutually exclusive. Furthermore, innovations in architecture, construction, and urban design are an integral part of how the world will address the food challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Some of the pavilions do, in fact, seem like iconic attention-grabbers reminiscent of the mid-2000s, such as Malaysia's giant seeds or the UK Pavilion—the first to be completed—with its beehive-like structure serving as a metaphor for how hives affect our ecosystem, a mostly ambivalent approach to sustainable food production.

The German Pavilion most directly confirms what Herzog has claimed, as visitors "can decide either they want to stand in line to visit the whole exhibition or rather go to the roof terrace, to have a picnic and to enjoy the great view over the whole Expo site." It is literally using the building to reframe architecture as a distraction from the exhibition.

However, there are a handful of designs that stand out as attempts to rethink the way we build and how it relates to modern agriculture and sustainable food production for the next century. Most of the pavilions use sustainable materials and construction methods that utilize national building techniques. Inside, exhibitions—often interactive—showcase the biodiversity, culture, and food traditions of each nation.

Arguably the most radical pavilion is the corporate entry from American farm equipment company

New Holland. Designed by Turin-based architects Carlo Ratti Associati, it features a sloped, planted roof that is harvested by a self-driving tractor, an experiment in combining architecture with robotic agricultural technologies that are set to change the way we respond to local terrain conditions.

New York-based Biber Architects designed the USA pavilion. Its east wall is a 7,200-square-foot vertical farm planted with 42 varieties of harvestable crops on rotating louvers. It also features a reclaimed boardwalk, which the team said represents the intersection of food, entertainment, and infrastructure in America. You can almost hear the Bruce Springsteen blaring: The building is clad in an enormous Pentagram-designed American flag with utensils instead of stars.

Several pavilions merge architecture with flora. Vietnam's rising star, Vo Trong Nghia, has designed a bamboo structure with trees planted in its roof. The sustainable material is abundant in Vietnam, as it grows quickly and, in this case, can also be reused once the expo is over.

Italian grocery giant Coop Italia has presented a space that projects the future of supermarkets. The Future Food District was designed by Ratti and the MIT SENSEable City Lab. Interactive technologies allow "shoppers" to interrogate their role in the consumption process by revealing the food objects' nutrition information, origins, and history, through information-enhanced tables and augmented labels.

Japan's pavilion is a relatively simple design architecturally, but it has one of the most robust exhibition designs by Japanese designers teamLab. Visitors move through an immersive, darkened space with a mirror-walled room, full of knee- and waist-high discs, illuminated with the textures of rice patties. Projected images on the discs respond to the movements of exhibition-goers.

While the architecture of the Milan exposition overall continues the recent trends of the "vanity fair," some fragments exist that might shed light on how architecture can interact with innovations in agriculture and food production in the coming decades. Ideally, this concept would be pushed much further, but for now these will have to serve as examples for future projects. **MATT SHAW**



Biber Architects design a pavilion featuring a wall with over 40 varieties of harvestable crops.



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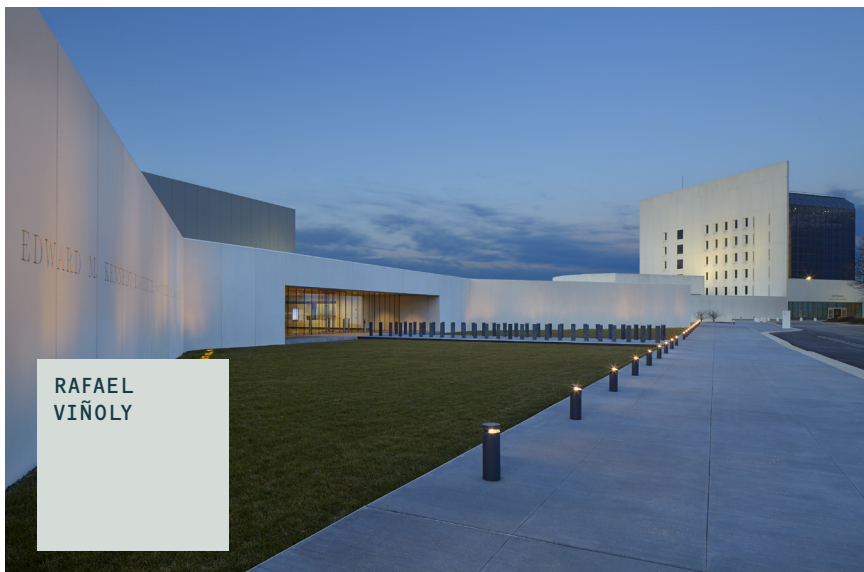
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RAFAEL VIÑOLY

Let's start next door. Enter the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (I.M. Pei & Associates, 1979) on Columbia Point at the University of Massachusetts–Boston, and you find yourself on a balcony, looking into the space-frame tower that will later complete your experience. A placard explains the water view: "When Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis sought the perfect location for the JFK presidential library, she looked to the sea that President Kennedy loved so well."

The truth is rather more complicated. Siting and designing the library was a dreary, 16-year slog of shrinking expectations and genuine heartbreak. Kennedy himself had chosen an urban site at Harvard, and Pei designed two different schemes accordingly, but logistics and community opposition stalled the project for a decade. In 1975, the Kennedys turned to maritime sites, and landed at Columbia Point—home to U. Mass. and a garbage dump. "It was a backwater, literally," said Ted Musho, Pei's associate partner on the project. "[U. Mass.] went there for the same reason we wound up there: Nobody else would take us. We'd been thrown out of the best site in the world, and here we are. So what do you do?"

To sell the family on the dump as the best remaining option, said Musho, "We rented a big flatbed truck and we loaded everybody on, and we drove out as far as we could onto the muck, and I remember Mrs. Kennedy saying, 'Where are you proposing putting the library?'"

Finally the site was refined, but "I.M.

suffered. I mean, he *suffered*" from the endless compromise, said Musho. And now the budget was tight: "It should have been white marble, white granite—if we had the money! There is nothing about the building that was commensurate with the aura of the president's name on it! It's an inexpensive presidential library." The resulting complex has always had a faintly depressing air, not because it is a memorial to a slain president but because, as such, it sat alone, and vaguely under-inspired, in a vaguely suboptimal place.

It is within this context that Rafael Viñoly has produced a resoundingly smart, sensitive design for the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate that quietly transforms the entire site. Both architecturally and programmatically, John seems happier with his brother beside him: His building is no longer so isolated, and the tragic matter of his death is relieved by Teddy's clever, youth-oriented program centered on model Senate proceedings.

The institute is an object lesson in the power of limitations. Ted wanted a building that complemented John's but did not compete with it. Viñoly's symmetrical, low-rise plan leaves the spotlight on Pei's geometries, but responds to them with aligned triangular "wings" and a subtler vertical mass—gray metal composite to Pei's black glass. The axial entrance path alludes to neoclassical Washington, D.C., creating what partner David Rolland called "a procession, a formal entry into the building." A thin strip of gravel at the building's edge,

where concrete meets lawn, is brilliant but nearly invisible; it could be thickened.

Entering the lobby, you face a long, rich wall of Virginia mist granite, in the center of which a small well leads to a pair of tiny, traditional oak doors: the Senate chamber. First you'll circumnavigate it, learning—through electronic projections on the outside walls, and your tablet computer—how hard it is to hammer out a bill that can be voted into law. Hidden classrooms on the perimeter allow school groups to test the process in depth.

The corridors are masterfully done. Painted in deep, warm grays and floored in polished concrete, they are softly lit to avoid the gloom of a cinema. Among the grays are dark oak benches and signs (both by exhibit designer ESI Design) that, while modern in form and typography, allude in tone and finish to the Senate's historic furnishings. Above, a central light strip is flanked by gently pitched ceiling planes. Floor and ceiling joints are both recessed, with indirect lighting at the floor, to make the space "look more architectonic rather than more massive," said Rolland. Hallways this simple could easily be soulless; these are thoughtful and comfortable. You then experience the Senate replica—with its yellow gallery walls, navy and red textiles, Levanto marble, cherry desks, and oval tray ceiling—as a sunburst. Guests are encouraged to stage a floor debate on an issue of the day, and actors start the process.

Viñoly's restraint is important not in the tired sense of adherence to high-modern lines, but in its palpable respect for the

**Left: The building's plan complements the neighboring JFK Library with a pair of triangular "wings" and its vertical mass. Above: The entrance procession. Below left: A replica of the US Senate. Below right: the building's rich material palette captures the regality of the Senate.**

older design he was effectively adjoining. His team worked with the materials, formal language, and color palette they were given—in an age when most additions to historic structures use none of the three, and often lean on glass as a way to evade them all. This is the polar opposite of a trend-driven building, and the effect is as fresh as the breeze off Dorchester Bay.

Some of the errors were, so to speak, forced. The lobby is empty. Viñoly's original design had a giant ribbed skylight throwing bands of sun on the floor, but the budget cut it to one strip. Without such a flourish, the space needs some iconography or a pair of ESI's oak benches. The landscape, by Sasaki Associates, is inadequate, especially where windows look to the bay past JFK's loading dock; a tight property line tied the designers' hands. Traffic circulation is a work in progress. And the Miesian gleam of the glass entry confounds some, leading to embarrassing makeshift signs: "Please find door here —>."

Would Viñoly ever have sketched this prone form in isolation? Of course not. But he gave his site and his clients, who in this case go well beyond the Kennedys, exactly what they needed: a taste of redemption. **CHRISTINE CIPRIANI**



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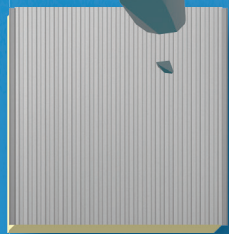
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 20, 2015

PULITZER ARTS FOUNDATION IN ST. LOUIS BRINGS BACK TADAO ANDO TO EXPAND HIS 2001 GALLERY

# Ando Add-on



The addition increases the Pulitzer's Tadao Ando-designed space by half.

ALISE O'BRIEN PHOTOGRAPHY

On May 1, St. Louis' Pulitzer Arts Foundation wrapped up a major renovation project by Tadao Ando that expanded the gallery space of its celebrated building by 3,500 square feet. Ando also designed the original building completed in 2001.

In its 14 years of existence, the Foundation has become known for its unique curatorial taste, often challenging preconceptions about art galleries. With an intention to curate an ever-changing collection, the museum does not display any permanent exhibitions except for two site-specific pieces by Richard Serra and Ellsworth Kelly.

As a result, the environment has become an integral part of the experience. Without overpowering the art itself, the building's cast concrete holds an abundance of natural light. "The space becomes a unique vessel that allows the audience to focus on the artworks themselves," said Emily Pulitzer, founder and chair of the Foundation.

Kristina Van Dyke, outgoing director of the Foundation, said the renovation is part of the Pulitzer's continued effort to push for interdisciplinary initiatives. "One of the hallmarks of this building is its generosity. It's a space that doesn't privilege a particular point of view," Van Dyke said. "That's also part of what makes it so receptive to different kinds of art."

To accommodate for the growth of the institution, the Foundation launched its renovation last September, consulting with Ando and his team, as well as local

architectural firm Christner, who acted as the architects of record for both the original building and the renovation. The update expands the Pulitzer's gallery space by half, and is the first major alteration to the building since its 2001 opening. With new public spaces and lower level galleries, the entire building now loops around the signature water court at the heart of the site, allowing for more flexibility in programming and spatial allocations.

The lower level galleries are darker than their natural light-soaked counterparts above. In a statement Ando said that his intention was to "design the new space on lower floors as a calm and serene space, compared to the dynamic and lively space on the upper floors." Hardwood flooring, instead of concrete, accentuates the sense of transition from above to below.

As part of the Pulitzer's goal to "push the boundaries of the traditional arts encounter," the first shows opening after the renovation will respond specifically to the museum's new rebuilt environment. Among them is the exhibition *Richard Tuttle Wire Pieces*, which will probe spatial relationships with minimal wire sculptures. There will also be a five-month series named *Press Play*, which aims to inspire visitors to explore the architecture and other concurrent exhibitions through sound—works will range from cushion designs to symphony concerts, activating "every nook, corner, and expanse of the space." **GEORGE HUAIYU ZHANG**



TADAO ANDO AND GABELLINI SHEPPARD TEAM UP ON THE PRITZKER-WINNER'S FIRST NEW YORK CITY BUILDING

## CONCRETE, LIGHT, AND WATER

Pritzker Prize-winning Japanese architect Tadao Ando has a wide portfolio of subtle, elegant designs for museums and small residential projects around the globe. However, he has never built anything in New York. Until now. His 7-unit apartment complex at 152 Elizabeth Street in downtown Manhattan's NoLita neighborhood looks to be a stunning but understated first foray into the city's red-hot housing market.

Located on Kenmare Street just down from Steven Holl and Vito Acconci's Storefront for Art and Architecture, and around the corner from SANAA's New Museum, the building is located in a vibrant urban intersection with access to many parts of the city. Ando worked on the design in collaboration with New York firm Gabellini Sheppard, which is designing the interiors and serving as architect of record.

Both firms share an affinity for understated design and their collaboration has been close, resulting in a minimalistic building that showcases Ando's mastery of concrete, which he has been perfecting since the 1970s. According to Ando, "A living space should be a sanctuary," and for the NoLita



COURTESY NOË &amp; ASSOCIATES AND THE BOUNDARY

The NoLita apartment building displays Ando's trademark use and mastery of concrete.

project, the team has chosen a natural material palette that creates spaces that compress and expand while giving "life to light and water," according to Michael Gabellini, principal of Gabellini Sheppard.

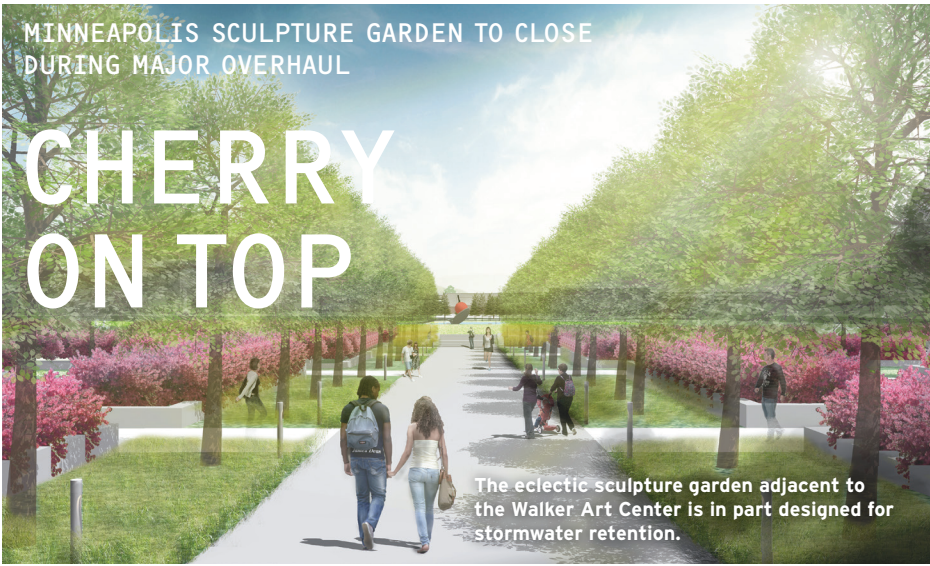
Concrete solids give way to voids of glass and light. "Concrete is a very democratic material, very accessible," Gabellini explained. "It doesn't create a gap between the rich and poor like some other materials." A slotted entry from the side of the building on Elizabeth Street gives way to an entry vestibule where a slit of light shines through fritted glass across a water wall, combining water, light, and sound into sensorial experience. A 55-foot-by-99-foot vertical hanging garden faces Chinatown and can be seen from Elizabeth Street as well as the adjacent rooftop, creating a green courtyard for the neighbors.

The units' interiors are luxurious with details and materials that look exquisite without being ostentatious, which is appropriate for the relatively quiet neighborhood with small-scale buildings. The second and third floors are split into two units, while the fourth and fifth are single units. A penthouse occupies the top three floors and includes its own reflecting pool and water walls. Gabellini Sheppard will be providing bespoke interior design services. The developers, Sumaida + Khurana, also have plans to build a 400-foot-tall tower in Midtown designed by Álvaro Siza. **MS**



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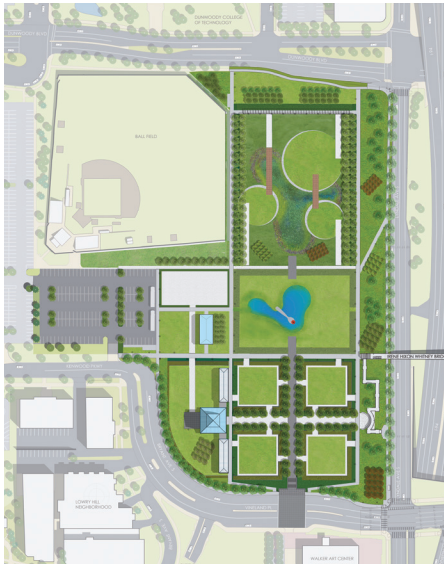
Minneapolis' celebrated sculpture garden at the Walker Art Center will close its gates in October, reopening May 2017 after a major redesign of its landscape and conservatory. Snow Kreilich Architects and landscape architects Oslund & Associates, both of Minneapolis, will lead the \$10 million design in collaboration with Minneapolis' Park & Recreation Board. According to architect and Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Project Manager Dana Murdoch, the work is long overdue.

"The garden is deteriorating. The plant mat is becoming overgrown. Some of the granite infrastructure is falling aside and cracking," said Murdoch. "We have some fairly serious drainage issues because it's a formerly swampy area, and it has had impacts on the

navigability of the walks."

As part of an ancient drainage bed for the Mississippi River, the site has a high water table. Murdoch said the garden—built in 1988 by Edward Larrabee Barnes and landscape architects Quinnet Rothschild & Partners, and expanded four years later by Michael Van Valkenburgh and Associates—has needed an overhaul for at least a decade. It took until May 2014, however, for the Park Board to win \$8.5 million in general obligation bond funding from the state of Minnesota. The project got another \$1.5 million through the regional Mississippi Watershed Management Organization for its focus on stormwater retention.

"It's a very unstable condition," said lead landscape architect Tom Oslund. Trees have started to sink into the site's soggy soil, even



warping pathways. "It's kind of a mess. But we decided to actually embrace that."

On the north end of the site, where the drainage problems are most severe, the design team plans to reorganize the space around three circular, outdoor "rooms." Riprap slopes raise the rooms above a large cistern and retention pond that, according to Oslund, is shaped "kind of like an Aalto vase." The depression will contain the entire garden's stormwater and will be bridged by elevated granite pathways.

To the southern end of the site, four square rooms will feature an "enhanced turf" to aid stormwater drainage while supporting the artwork and granite pathways. Oslund's design replaces an existing arborvitae perimeter with a lower, deciduous hedge. Along with

perennial plantings and ornamental grasses, the new greenery is meant to help invoke a sense of discovery.

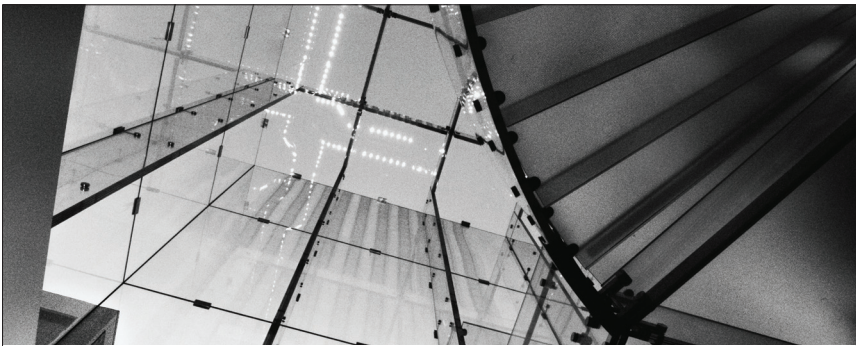
"There is this series of reveals," said Oslund, "so it's not just a one-liner."

Depending on the room, these reveals could be for work by Fritz Haeg, Mark di Suvero, Ellsworth Kelly, or one of dozens of artists who have contributed more than 40 sculptures to the 11-acre site over the years. The redesign maintains the central location of perhaps the garden's most well known piece, "Spoonbridge and Cherry" by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. Spoonbridge will stay in place during construction, as will work by Sol LeWitt, Frank Gehry, and Richard Serra. A handful of sculptures are going on long-term loan elsewhere in the area, including to Gold Medal Park and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. The rest will stay in protected storage in an adjacent parking lot, according to the Park Board's Dana Murdoch.

Snow Kreilich is in the early phases of "revitalizing" the garden's Cowles Conservatory to make it more accessible and energy efficient, according to a firm spokeswoman. Murdoch said the work could include opening up the conservatory to the elements, adding seasonal food vendors and imparting "a more picnicy feel to it."

More than 350,000 annual visitors will have to wait two years to return to the garden, a popular wedding destination and event space, but Murdoch said the closure was unavoidable due to the nature of the work—specifically the new stormwater system and the upgraded irrigation.

"You just have to dig everything up for that," she said. **CB**



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EPPSTEIN UHEN  
ARCHITECTS

Once a proud outpost in a farm tools empire, a midcentury factory in West Allis, Wisconsin, is now part of a second Milwaukee-born company's story.

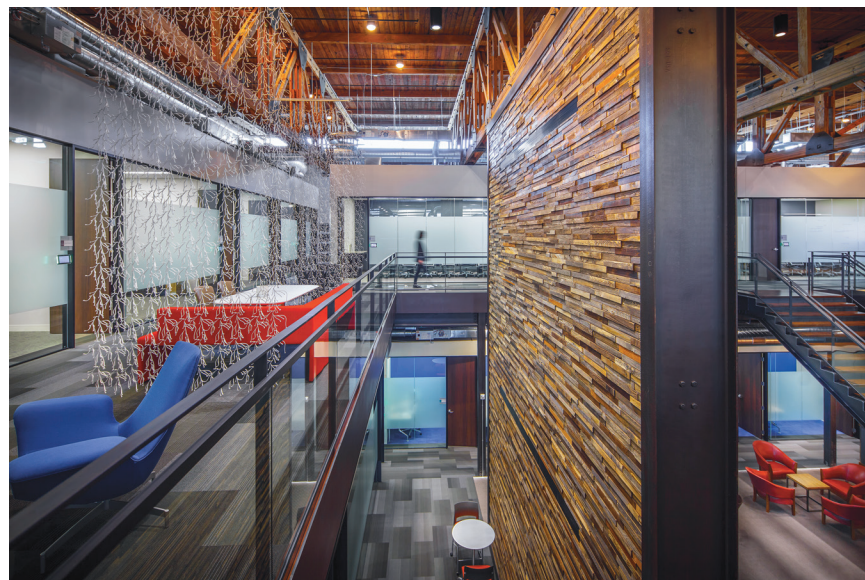
Last year, Johnson Controls Inc. (JCI) took over the 130,700-square-foot building, which was a factory for the Allis-Chalmers tractor company. Though the sturdy, timber-frame building began its life as a munitions manufacturing

plant during World War II, Allis-Chalmers churned out tractor parts and other farm implements for decades beneath its burly wood trusses. (The site handled uranium, and may have been built for work on the Manhattan Project.)

JCI hired Milwaukee's Eppstein Uhen Architects to retrofit the space, which became a department store during the 1990s after Allis-Chalmers dissolved. Suburban West Allis was a company town, whose name was changed from North Greenfield when Edward P. Allis' business set up shop there in 1901. More than a century later it is a working-class, mostly white suburb. The JCI move brought 800 jobs to West Allis in a hurry—they urgently needed the space for a special projects team. The firm had to design, document, and build out the new office in a single phase in less than seven months.

The architects were given two guiding ideas: breakdown hierarchical barriers between managers and lower-level employees, and marry the building's contemporary needs with its historical character. Eppstein's first move was to remove much of the floor separating the office's upper and lower levels, leaving a double-height atrium and central gathering space visible from most of the office.

Capable of accommodating the entire staff for meetings and events, the central



Reclaimed wood decks out this WWII-era industrial space, now home to a technology giant that wants to eliminate hierarchical barriers between its office workers.

"Unity Space" also features a two-story, video display wall, framed with salvaged steel beams and clad with reclaimed barn wood. When not in use the video display's black, back-painted glass panels are a sleek monolith playing off the organic textures of the repurposed wood.

A "monumental stair" lined by transparent glass rails connects the floors with an exposed steel structure and steps made of reclaimed wood. "The space was designed with details and variety of materials that complement and celebrate the building's architecture from different eras," said Justo Banaag, project manager for Eppstein Uhen. The original building construction included timber columns and roof trusses, as well as tongue and groove wood decking, and exposed brick masonry.

There are no private offices, but plenty of conference rooms. For when the open atmosphere proves distracting, there are dozens of so-called "Focus Rooms" available to any staff member. "Everybody should be out working with everybody else to support a collaborative work environment," said Chad Omon, architectural project manager for Johnson Controls.

For all its rustic overtones, the office still boasts ample electrical outlets and boosted cell and wifi service throughout the building. Splashes of yellow and colored felt hangings play off the neutral

palette of the wood and steel. And for employees who want to take the charm of the countryside one step further, the office is adjacent to a bike trail, so the architects added a locker room and shower area.

"When we received the space it was completely raw. There was not a wall in the place, but it was a gorgeous heavy timber building. It had a lot of character," said Omon. "We made it a little more contemporary." **CB**

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The Tree House is composed of stacked boxes, which step out to create cantilevering canopies.

## 5468796 ARCHITECTURE STACKS PIXELS IN TORONTO'S EAST END A GAME OF TETRIS

Melding development interests with inspired design is no easy affair for an aspiring young firm, but Winnipeg's 5468796 Architecture is, quite literally, pushing the box with a new residential project in Toronto. The firm, named after its incorporation number—5468796—has sought to inject a fresh take on architecture into its sleepy Canadian hometown since its founding

in 2007. As the firm grows up, it is ready to expand its territory with its first project outside Manitoba.

The so-called Tree House occupies a daunting formerly industrial site squeezed between densely packed houses. "The site is extremely angled," said Pablo Batista, an architectural designer with 5468796. "The streets in the [Birch Cliff] neighborhood

and the houses follow that geometry." But the firm used the angled parallelogram shape to help inform the three-building complex's final shape.

5468796 stacked a series of boxes to create the Tree House's massing, giving it a pixelated look. Two buildings contain lofts and a third is comprised of a series of L-shaped townhouses.

"In the Tree House, we had a strong existing north-to-south geometry on the site that informed the offset massing," said Batista. "The boxes

allowed us to be able to push and pull the building, to be able to grow the building as it gets higher, giving us more square footage." Nudging individual pixels in and out enabled 5468796 to make the most of the site's area while providing upper units with terraces and rooftop gardens. "We're always trying to get as much as we can out of the site. Every square foot counts," added Batista. Each box is filled with floor-to-ceiling glass and framed with charcoal metal siding to give it a slightly raw aesthetic. 5468796 partnered with Toronto's DK Studio to create light and airy interiors contrasting white walls with exposed plywood details. "We're trying to go for a very simple, very refined approach to the interiors," said Batista.

Each building is oriented around one of two linear courtyards that connect to the surrounding neighborhood and yield outdoor space for the units. "As the buildings stagger out creating cantilevering canopies, we've created these courtyards in between," said Batista. "It's more than just an alley between the buildings, it's trying to create an open space



COURTESY 5468796 ARCHITECTURE

that's generally not present in a condo project." Metal mesh armatures will be covered with vines to create a vegetated privacy wall. Landscape architecture firm Land Art Design is collaborating on the outdoor spaces.

The firm expects Tree House to break ground later

this year. "This project is a big step for the office," said Batista. "It's one of the first major projects outside of the province where we are located. It's been a great experience to work in Toronto." The Tree House is expected to be complete in 2017.

**BRANDEN KLAYKO**



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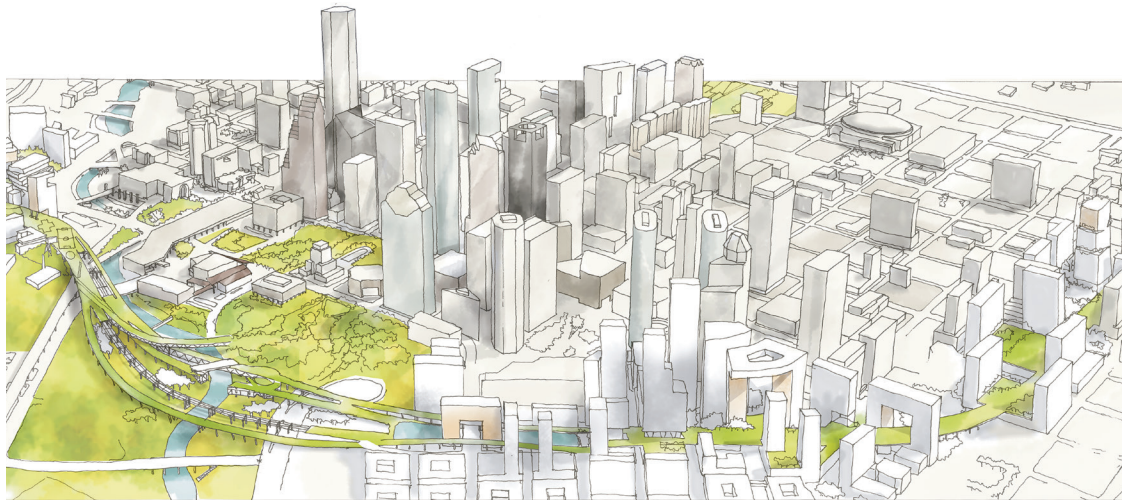
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TXDOT IS CONSIDERING REMOVING PART OF AN ELEVATED FREEWAY NEXT TO DOWNTOWN HOUSTON, ARCHITECTS ARE PROPOSING TO SAVE IT AND TURN IT INTO A PUBLIC AMENITY

## PIERCING THE SKY

The public debut of the Texas Department of Transportation's \$6 billion plan to re-route I-45 around downtown Houston has citizens, planners, and city leaders atwitter about whether to demolish or repurpose a section of freeway known as the Pierce Elevated.

Houston needs an urban icon, said Marcus Martinez, a designer at the Houston office of national architecture firm Page. Martinez believes the Pierce can be saved and reprogrammed into an elevated park development connecting Buffalo Bayou, downtown, and adjacent neighborhoods. He has been working pro bono on a proposal called the Pierce Skypark with Tami Merrick and John Cryer, also of Page.

"We are due for something big that puts us on the map and attracts people from all industries," said Martinez. "Our chief goal is to keep it and turn it into something public and transformational for the city. It could be a variety of programming

and flavors as well." And it would be a nod to the city's heritage instead of razing the structure completely.

The Pierce Skypark is an optimistic vision to turn a two-mile stretch of elevated freeway (roughly 3 times the size of New York's High Line) into an amenity for citizens and visitors. Programming above and below the existing structure could range from parks and trails to public space, retail, housing, and office space.

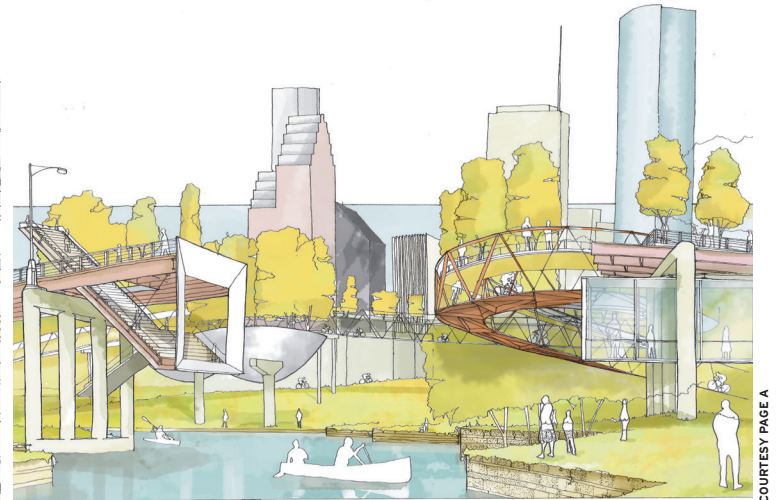
"All kinds of big ideas are being batted around," said Cryer, CEO of Page. Cryer has been a key player in major revitalization projects in downtown Houston, including Discovery Green and Buffalo Bayou parks, the Rice Hotel, Commerce Towers, Club Quarters Hotel, and Keystone Lofts. He is also president-elect of Preservation Houston. "The main issue is people think of it as another park. The power of it is that it becomes a development with occupied space below, like a shaded promenade, and above with air

rights. It can be an incredible design element and identity marker. Think big. When you look at the history of Houston, there can be a return to the legacy of Houston doing bold and big moves again."

A master development strategy needs to be created, Cryer said.

"Not every elevated stretch of infrastructure is a High Line," said Charles Renfro, a Houston native and a partner at Diller, Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R), which designed the High Line. "There is no success guarantee. The Pierce makes a surreal landscape that lets people get higher than normal and it is a launching pad to think differently about making landscape in Houston. There could be an opportunity to keep, or selectively keep it, and that is where design comes in. Whosoever designs something on top and under the Pierce Elevated, there has to be a spectacular ambition to not mimic anything in the world."

A myriad of public and private conversations have ensued about



COURTESY PAGE A

the potential of transforming the 37.7 acres of the Pierce that currently afford a view of a giant neon cross. Comments have come from journalist Lisa Gray of the Houston Chronicle, urban and environmental historian Dr. Kyle Shelton of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University, Bob Eury of the Houston Downtown Management District, and John S. Jacob of the Eastwood Civic Association.

At three public meetings attended by more than 500 people across the city, TxDOT has released intricate maps, animated renderings, and data tables showing various routes, as well as the environmental and statistical impacts of its rerouting plan. It involves the widening, depression, and elevation of three segments of I-45 from Beltway 8 continuing to downtown connectors and around the George R. Brown Convention Center. Parts of the proposal in segment 3 cut through the Mexican Consulate and the South Central Police Station in Third Ward, and will raze a public housing project called Clayton Homes along with the Pierce Elevated.

The state agency is in the process of gathering public feedback, but consensus has not been reached in the community. The environmental

As TXDOT proposes a plan to re-route I-45 around downtown Houston, architects at Page have proposed transforming a section known as the Pierce Elevated into park land and open space, as well as retail, housing, and offices.

studies are due in 2017, and then a public hearing will ensue. Along with processing community input, the lengthy procedure of eminent domain would need to run its course and funding would have to be secured. Danny Perez, TxDOT spokesman, estimated "it could be five to 10 years before we see any movement on these projects."

TxDOT is accepting public comments until May 31 via regular mail and email. The group from Page had pitched the idea of the Skypark to Councilman David Robinson privately prior to the recent public meetings and media attention. "We need to recognize this is going to be a very long process and there are several authorities that have jurisdiction over this," said Robinson. "It's not a fully integrated solution but it's very provocative and stimulates the discussion in an appropriate way and hopefully we can make a Houston-specific solution."

FLORENCE TANG

LA ABOUT TO COMPLETE OVERCROSSING TO BRIDGE FREEWAY DIVIDE DOWNTOWN

## MIND THE GAP



LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

For seven years, several of Los Angeles's scattered departments have been working on a way to bridge the intimidating chasm between the city's Downtown Civic Center

and the El Pueblo de Los Angeles historic district created by the massive 101 Freeway. Their solution, the "101 Freeway Overcrossing," which will finally open later this month,

The curved overcrossing on Los Angeles Street will link the city's Olvera Street and Civic Center.

provides a gestural "pedestrian enhancement" buttressed by large steel rings and a mesh-like kinetic awning spanning the sidewalk of Los Angeles Street.

The \$2 million project—a joint effort by LA's Bureau of Engineering, Department of Cultural Affairs, Board of Public Works, and California's Department of Transportation—was conceived by artists Jenna Didier, Oliver Hess, Ned Kahn, and Marcos Lutyens. Its technical layout was managed by Nous Engineering, WKE, BuroHappold, and the LA Public Works Engineering Bureau with construction by Acon Construction.

The showcase is a 22-foot-tall by 17-foot-wide by 123-foot-long arc-canopy along the (widened) westerly sidewalk of Los Angeles Street. A more rectilinear structure is going up on Main Street. The artists drew inspiration from the freeway below, "warping" that infrastructural language. "How do you use

the vernacular of Caltrans to grow a more natural or organic feeling structure?" asked Didier. The project also serves as a gateway for those entering the city from the freeway below.

The upper section of the Los Angeles Street edifice consists of a series of etched metallic panels fastened to stainless steel netting. LED lights are slotted into aluminum nodes attached to the structures. The Main Street bridge is topped with Galvanized steel beams that will sway slightly as pedestrians walk underneath.

While it was originally green lighted in 2008, the project has been held up by design revisions, "project uniqueness," and "unforeseen issues during construction," according to Jimmy Tokeshi, a spokesperson for LA's Department of Public Works.

But finally a blank scar in the urban fabric is starting to garner some attention, and pedestrians may be drawn to a new monument, or at the very least to some shade. Perhaps a freeway cap, or more interventions like this, will follow? **SL**





D.C.'s M Street Tunnel will be enlivened by a light installation inspired by falling rain.



COURTESY THURLOW SMALL ARCHITECTURE/NIO

AN INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION EMULATING FALLING RAIN WILL ACTIVATE A DARKENED D.C. UNDERPASS

# Light Within the Tunnel

As Amtrak trains—possibly carrying Vice President Biden—rumble across overpasses in Washington, D.C., the dark passageways below yearn for a breath of new life. They are about to get just that, as Pawtucket-based Thurlow Small Architecture (TSA) has devised an interactive light installation that will turn dark roofs into planes of light in the M Street tunnel, one of

four underpasses that will get such treatment in the NoMa district. The design was developed in collaboration with Joan Almekinders and Rotterdam-based NIO architecten, and it is moving forward after winning a competition sponsored by the NoMa Business Improvement District (BID) to bring better connectivity to the area. “On the NoMa BID side, there are a

number of large, 10-story buildings,” explained architect Andrew Thurlow of TSA, “Once you pass through the tunnel the scale and building footprints decrease and a row-house typology emerges—the aesthetics are quite different, too. They asked us to bridge this gap by both highlighting and improving upon the existing infrastructure.” Responding to the prompt of “light and safety,” the interactive light installation is based on the effects of rain falling, with 4,000 polycarbonate rods fixed to the top of the tunnel. Programmable LEDs blink and cascade in wave-like

patterns when cars pass through. The main challenge was to make sure the light didn’t distract drivers, which was the main concern for the District Department of Transportation (DOT). The pattern will resemble a boat-like wake behind the passing vehicle, ensuring that pedestrians experience the light, but not drivers. When traffic is heavy, the pattern becomes a dim, even glow, maintaining a calm light throughout the tunnel. The relationships between pedestrians, bikes, and cars are exploited as the lights change as people pass through.

Amtrak owns the existing rail structure, and the granite walls are protected, so much of the existing structure was off limits. Working inside of these constrictions, the designers added new steel columns against the walls, and the rods were hung from a substructure that spanned the pedestrian space. The rods are cut in an implied vaulted pattern that responds to the existing structural grid, but also to the bike lanes and pedestrian paths below. Each element is designed to give maximum effect for passersby. “We are hoping to get a soundtrack which will add another sensorial dimension, explained Thurlow, contextualizing his project, “We are going for an affectatious architecture that involves multiple senses, both visual and acoustic.” TSA worked closely with NIO, who have considerable experience with this type of project, having recently completed similar projects in Amsterdam and Amersfoort, Netherlands. The installation will be pre-fabricated and assembled in as little as two weeks onsite. Lighting designer Maramoja in Germany is now building prototypes of the rods. The project is expected to open in the fall following permitting this summer. This is the first of four for the \$2 million NoMa BID program, which will later improve the tunnels over L Street, K Street, and Florida Avenue NE. **MS**



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ROGERS PARTNERS AND KEN SMITH RECONCEIVE ST. PETERSBURG'S PIER

# Experience on the Water

The design transforms the linear experience of the pier with a variety of spaces and uses.



Crowned by an inverted pyramid structure, the Pier of St. Petersburg, Florida leads visitors on a long and narrow journey to the end and back. However, as it stands now, it stops

short of providing much value outside of that. A new project headed by New York City-based architecture practice Rogers Partners will revitalize The Pier by turning it into a

multi-dimensional gathering place of both leisure and economic development. Robert Rogers of Rogers Partners highlighted complexity and flexible functionality as the defining features of the Pier Park (as it will be redubbed). "Really great urban parks have the ability to change their program weekly, monthly, even by generation," said Rogers. "We want to build a high quality public space that strives toward an iconic experience instead of presenting visitors with just an iconic symbol."

The new park offers a range of amenities in order to provide this experience. The plan demolishes the inverted pyramid, but retains the structure's elevator and stairway core in deference to the public's "sentimental affection" for the icon. Four floors are being added that will contain air-conditioned lobbies, a bar and grill, bathrooms, and sweeping views of the bay.

Two classrooms on the ground floor—one indoors, and one "wet" room that utilizes the bay's waters—offer educational opportunities to young and old alike. A tilted lawn provides seating for up to 4,000 people, and can be used for lounging or for concerts and other outdoor events. The overall structure allows visitors to wander in a dozen different paths, with each one rewarding a different experience. "Open areas, skinny areas, broad areas," enumerated Rogers. "Over the water and underneath it. The pier is no longer one

long linear experience."

Landscape architect Ken Smith expanded upon how the landscape will deepen the pier's original intention of combining leisure with tourism for economic development. "The pier builds into a long tradition of turning waterfronts into public spaces," he said. Its many iterations over the decades have always included recreational elements: In the 1950s it housed a dance hall; in the 70s it gained the inverted pyramid. However, this is the first version to incorporate the bay's native ecology into the experience.

Seagrass grows in the breakwaters. A maze of boardwalks lead visitors through a curated coastal thicket that incorporates local vegetation and connects back to St. Petersburg's downtown streets. A grove of ornamental flowering trees energizes the landscape while pulling visitors toward the pier's end. "The landscape emphasizes sustainability and access to the water," said Smith. He described a point at the end of the pier where a small beach is in the tidal zone so that visitors can sit in the water while also being on the pier. "It's about getting back to the water," noted Smith. All the elements are sensitive to the bay's need for natural sunlight to keep the vegetation alive, leading to "leaner, skinnier landscape schemes." Lean as the landscape may be, all the elements converge in order to bring Pier Park into its most fully rounded version yet. **ELISIA GUERENA**

## PERKINS EASTMAN DESIGNS A CITY ON THE FORMER SITE OF AN ATLANTA CAR FACTORY

# Assembling a City

The City of Doraville, population 8,300, is a 15-mile drive from downtown Atlanta. The suburban enclave is also the last stop on Atlanta's METRO Gold line rail transit system. Around the station, Stan Eckstut, principal at Perkins Eastman, has designed a "city-within-a-city" on the 165-acre site of a former General Motors assembly plant, adding a heavy dose of transit-oriented walkability that developers at The Integral Group hope can entice city-centric millennials to the city's fringe.

"It is a city, there's no question," Eckstut said of the development, dubbed "Assembly, Doraville, USA."

His master plan design—a mix of about 50-percent public space and 50-percent developable land sandwiched between railroad tracks and an interstate highway—embraces density around the Doraville transit stop, connecting to the city's historic downtown with an armature of parks that will guide development over the next decade.

Eckstut said streets and public spaces organize development parcels, which are envisioned as fluid land-use designations rather than prescribed uses—much like in a real city. In turn, market forces guide what ends up getting built. Eckstut cautioned against the pitfalls

of large-scale "Renaissance plans," that guided 20<sup>th</sup> century urban renewal, and today have influenced heavy-handed development in China. "The issue is creating something that can be implemented over time with many ideas and many innovations," said Eckstut. "You need to focus on how it will get implemented and how you can create a fabric where things can evolve and change—much like the grid of Manhattan."

Assembly sits on one side of a 30-foot-tall freight and transit rail line, one of the busiest in the Southeast, and Doraville on the other. Eckstut said connecting the two was important to create a real urban place. He plans to build a 60-foot-wide tunnel beneath 13 active tracks, an expensive feat, to create connections that can also foster density.

"The plans that preceded us all had bridges that went over the tracks," said Eckstut. The massive approach ramps required for such a structure precluded creating a compact town center. "I realized I could bring a street right under the tracks and meet up with grade. That became the whole scheme," Eckstut said the street—an extension of Doraville's civic heart, Park Avenue—will form the framework for the rest of the development. "This is the glue that connects the historical town center with the new 165-acre site," he said.

Just inside, an approximately 1.7-acre "Transit Square" serves as the forecourt to the larger parks system. From here, everything in Assembly is an easy walk. "I drew a circle with a radius of about 1,200 feet—a five minute walk," said Eckstut. "When you

reach a five-minute walk, the world changes—people don't walk after that." You can get just about anywhere in Assembly in five minutes, and your walk will always be close by a park."

Eckstut said that Assembly's park system is a sustainable machine for the entire neighborhood. "Most large-scale projects today have one major sustainability challenge: keeping stormwater on site," he said. "The best way of doing that is creating a park system. Wherever you have streets, you're going to have rain gardens." Rather than build wide sidewalks, Eckstut hopes these gardens will create a more intimate and vibrant streetscape.

Around the parks, the city has approved up to 10 million square feet of development governed by form-based codes that call for maintaining a street wall without setbacks

for the first 60 feet of height. Eckstut said the tallest buildings around the Transit Square will top out at up to 15 stories, as dictated by the airspace requirements of an adjacent airport.

The first section of the plan to be built is called "The Yards" on the southwest corner of the site, where a spur of the rail line once entered the factory. Eckstut convinced developers to save leftover remnants from the old GM plant to be repurposed as a film studio. Perkins Eastman is also designing a new minimalist loft building with an industrial aesthetic adjacent to the studio. Cottage-like outbuildings will surround the studio and additional offices will fill train cars. Developers plan on breaking ground on The Yards within the next year.

With the master plan complete and approved, each of six distinct neighborhood districts will go through a separate site planning process that goes into more detail about buildings and public space design. The district surrounding Transit Square and including the new underpass, will go into planning in the next 18 months. Eckstut said this phase "is very complicated because we have to engage the transit station and the street that goes under. It involves at least a dozen entities." **BK**



Everywhere within the Assembly development is a five minute walk away.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING BATTLES RISING RENTS ALONG CHICAGO'S NEWEST PARK

# PARKS FOR ALL?

Chicago's new linear park and bike corridor, The 606, opens in June. It is hotly anticipated for its potential to transform several West Side neighborhoods, but community groups have questioned who benefits from that transformation.

Some affordable housing advocates see New York City's High Line as a herald of gentrification so severe that few tools outside of affordable housing can combat it. According to the New York City Department of City Planning, their celebrated rails-to-trails project didn't spawn any dedicated affordable housing developments—just units added during the park's planning and construction to market-rate developments already in the works. Also known as The Bloomingdale Trail and Park, The 606 is a more formally restrained, contextual, and neighborhood-integrated project than the High Line. Chicago's park barely rises to meet the tops of the modest houses and two- and three-story residential buildings surrounding it. It also does without the New York project's expressive steel structure.

Real estate prices are rising several times the city-wide average

in the majority-Latino neighborhood of Logan Square that is adjacent to The 606. In a bid to maintain the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of the Humboldt Park and Logan Square neighborhoods, Chicago designers Landon Bone Baker Architects (LBBA) will bring 43 units of affordable housing to an area along The 606. Dubbed "Tierra Linda", the development will place three- and six-story buildings on 12 separate sites near the trail. The two- and three-bedroom units will be priced for residents making at or below 60 percent of the area's median income. Construction is set to begin early next year.

By investing in more affordable housing, Tierra Linda's non-profit developers, the Latin United Community Housing Association (LUCHA), hope that (compared to the High Line) the demographic and economic changes in the neighborhood will be as subtle as the aesthetic ones brought on by the new park.

"We're serving some of the last opportunities in this area to provide affordable housing," said Charlene Andreas, LUCHA's Director of Building Development.

Tierra Linda is one of a half dozen affordable housing projects near The 606 that will comprise more than 300 residences, according to the city's Department of Planning and Development.

Rising property values have strained low-income residents in the area. In Humboldt Park, 65 percent of residents were spending over 30 percent of their income on rent in 2010, according to the Chicago Rehab Network, an affordable housing advocacy group. Large-scale, market-rate housing developments, like the 100-unit Centrum 606, are springing up near The 606 as well, cutting into space for affordable housing.

"We recognize the interplay of green space and housing issues," read a statement from Beth White, Chicago Region Director for The 606's lead private partner, the Trust for Public Land. "So—while it is beyond our mission to set public policy around housing access—we have worked to bring together community members and policymakers to have productive discussions about these and other issues impacting the communities we serve."

LBBA, LUCHA, and the wider network of area non-profit affordable housing advocates said The 606 will have an overall positive impact on its low-income neighbors. They said the diversity-retaining elements



LANDON BONE BAKER ARCHITECTS

of affordable housing are as much a selling point as new park space, or the accompanying commercial development.

"What makes me optimistic is the amount of support that came with all of the community meetings," said Catherine Baker of LBBA. "There were a lot of new people to Humboldt Park, and they specifically moved [there] because of the diversity; they liked the mix of incomes, and they want to keep it that way. They're fighting for that, and they're the newcomers."

Despite that, a handful of affordable housing developments won't preserve Logan Square and Humboldt Park's current diversity forever. As they move from renters to homeowners, newcomers may

**Above: LBBA's Tierra Linda is a modern take on vernacular aesthetics—and, crucially, it's affordable.**

prioritize new kinds of housing. But The 606 itself might be the neighborhood's best hope for keeping gentrifiers cognizant of why they chose a place that cuts across class and racial boundaries—it's possible that a stroll along the park will inspire a more accommodating place, not a more exclusive one.

"The city is so segregated, and here's an opportunity where we have both ethnic and economic diversity," said Lucy Gomez-Feliciano of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association, an affordable housing community agency. "What we have now is good, but it's very fragile."

**ZACH MORTICE**

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EPPSTEIN UHEN  
ARCHITECTS

Once a proud outpost in a farm tools empire, a midcentury factory in West Allis, Wisconsin, is now part of a second Milwaukee-born company's story.

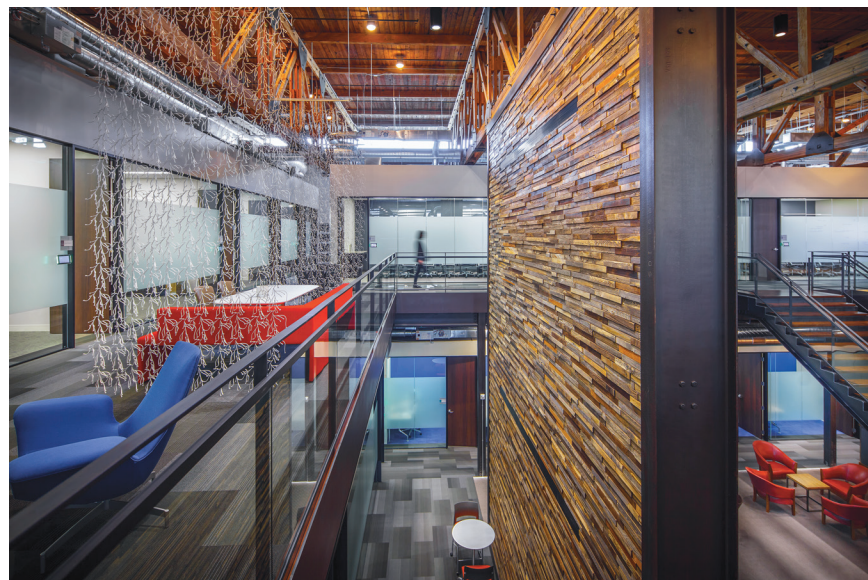
Last year, Johnson Controls Inc. (JCI) took over the 130,700-square-foot building, which was a factory for the Allis-Chalmers tractor company. Though the sturdy, timber-frame building began its life as a munitions manufacturing

plant during World War II, Allis-Chalmers churned out tractor parts and other farm implements for decades beneath its burly wood trusses. (The site handled uranium, and may have been built for work on the Manhattan Project.)

JCI hired Milwaukee's Eppstein Uhen Architects to retrofit the space, which became a department store during the 1990s after Allis-Chalmers dissolved. Suburban West Allis was a company town, whose name was changed from North Greenfield when Edward P. Allis' business set up shop there in 1901. More than a century later it is a working-class, mostly white suburb. The JCI move brought 800 jobs to West Allis in a hurry—they urgently needed the space for a special projects team. The firm had to design, document, and build out the new office in a single phase in less than seven months.

The architects were given two guiding ideas: breakdown hierarchical barriers between managers and lower-level employees, and marry the building's contemporary needs with its historical character. Eppstein's first move was to remove much of the floor separating the office's upper and lower levels, leaving a double-height atrium and central gathering space visible from most of the office.

Capable of accommodating the entire staff for meetings and events, the central



Reclaimed wood decks out this WWII-era industrial space, now home to a technology giant that wants to eliminate hierarchical barriers between its office workers.

"Unity Space" also features a two-story, video display wall, framed with salvaged steel beams and clad with reclaimed barn wood. When not in use the video display's black, back-painted glass panels are a sleek monolith playing off the organic textures of the repurposed wood.

A "monumental stair" lined by transparent glass rails connects the floors with an exposed steel structure and steps made of reclaimed wood. "The space was designed with details and variety of materials that complement and celebrate the building's architecture from different eras," said Justo Banaag, project manager for Eppstein Uhen. The original building construction included timber columns and roof trusses, as well as tongue and groove wood decking, and exposed brick masonry.

There are no private offices, but plenty of conference rooms. For when the open atmosphere proves distracting, there are dozens of so-called "Focus Rooms" available to any staff member. "Everybody should be out working with everybody else to support a collaborative work environment," said Chad Omon, architectural project manager for Johnson Controls.

For all its rustic overtones, the office still boasts ample electrical outlets and boosted cell and wifi service throughout the building. Splashes of yellow and colored felt hangings play off the neutral

palette of the wood and steel. And for employees who want to take the charm of the countryside one step further, the office is adjacent to a bike trail, so the architects added a locker room and shower area.

"When we received the space it was completely raw. There was not a wall in the place, but it was a gorgeous heavy timber building. It had a lot of character," said Omon. "We made it a little more contemporary." **CB**

#### RESOURCES:

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Milliken  
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**Doors**  
Wilsonart Laminate  
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**Metal Work**  
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aceiron.us

**Millwork**  
Precision Woodwork  
precisionwoodwork.biz

**Reclaimed Barnwood**  
Everitt & Schilling  
everittandschilling.com

**Furniture**  
Steelcase  
steelcase.com  
Coalesse  
coalesse.com







2



3



4



6



**1 Kinesit  
Arper**

This self-balancing task chair features a discreet built-in mechanism under the seat that provides synchronized movement and seat height command. An adjustable lumbar support is concealed within the thin frame of the backrest, maintaining a sharp, clean aesthetic. Designed by Lievore Altherr Molina.

arper.com

**2 Allstar  
Vitra**

A looping polyamide armrest distinguishes the design of Allstar, and represents the main structural element on which the mechanical unit of the chair is hinged. Fully adjustable, the chair is available in a variety of colors. Designed by Konstantin Grcic.

vitra.com

**3 Beyond Solid  
Allsteel**

Beyond Solid is the latest addition to the collection of movable walls that deliver superior acoustic performance. As an alternative to drywall and other traditional construction, it allows for increased spatial flexibility in the modern workplace.

allsteel.com

**4 Bloom  
Kimball**

Casual and sophisticated, Bloom fits comfortably in a variety of settings. United by the same base design, the lounge chair offers a tailored seat with optional contrasting fabric, while the occasional tables come in a range of shapes, heights, and materials.

kimball.com

**5 Exclave  
Herman Miller**

Exclave's rail-based wall system helps foster ideation with white boards, tack boards, and a media support for dual monitors and video conferencing. Unique table shapes, with varying heights and sizes, allow team members to gather in focused groups. Completing the suite are mobile easels and storage elements.

hermanmiller.com

**6 Goldman Lamp  
Flos**

Featuring a USB port at the rear of the base, this contemporary interpretation of the traditional banker's lamp is both useful and eye-catching. Designed by Ron Gilad.

usa.flos.com





# Working It

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Stirworks.com

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berhardtdesign.com

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buzzispace.com

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS





ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

# Naturally Indoors

**Humankind has come a long way from its primitive origins in terms of constructing shelters to isolate itself from the insalubrious harassments of the outdoors only to find that hermetic environments come with their own costs and consequences. In this issue, AN looks at four commercial and four hospitality interiors that, from a comfortable remove, reconnect inhabitants with nature. Plus, we talk to COOKFOX Senior Associate Pam Campbell about the biophilic design principals that guide much of her firm's work.**





Rogers Partners located group work areas and communal spaces against the window banks, allowing the entire space to enjoy daylight and views.

Natural materials, such as charred cypress and cork, lend a sensual note to the otherwise minimal palette.



ALBERT VECERKA/FESTO

## Commercial

# Droga5

New York City  
Rogers Partners

Founded in 2006, New York City-based advertising firm Droga5 grew quickly and in ad-hoc fashion within three connected buildings in NoHo. “There was no organizational structure to their old space,” explained Robert Rogers, principal of architecture practice Rogers Partners, which designed Droga5’s new offices. “The departmentalization was determined by who got there first. The office culture thrived on that spontaneous environment.”

Droga5’s new location is in 120 Wall Street, a 34-story wedding cake style office building on the East River designed by Buchman & Kahn and completed in 1930. The firm occupies the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> floors, each of which are about 23,000 square feet in area, as well as the much smaller 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> penthouse floors. In conceiving of

how to transport the spontaneous environment of the aggressive startup to the more sedate surrounds of an old-guard Wall Street office building, Rogers Partners developed a constellation model, intentionally dispersing the firm’s departments throughout the floors and then connecting them in ways that promote random encounters.

The southeast corner of the 10<sup>th</sup> floor is occupied by a large kitchen—food is also a big part of Droga5’s culture—and lounge area with couches and coffee tables that serves as a breakout work space. An enclosed glass boardroom—where employee teams pitch their ideas to firm founder David Droga—floats above a grand stair that descends into the communal area from the 11<sup>th</sup> floor. When a large presentation screen is rolled down above the boardroom, the stairs become seating for company video screenings and presentations.

A charred cypress wood ceiling demarcates the grand stair and traces the circulation pathway through the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> floors. “We wanted something with real materiality, not just a color,” said Rogers. “We wanted there to be more dimensions to the sensory experience. The wood has a slight aromatic quality.” Employees are encouraged to

take the stairs rather than the elevators, and the architects positioned little nooks and crannies along the circulation pathway for private meetings.

Group work areas line the window banks, while the private glass offices are on the core, allowing the entire office to enjoy natural light. The ceiling was cleaned up, the soffit moved back and packed with the mechanical services, and a linear LED pendant up/down fixture hung low above the desks. Cork and glass enclosed “war rooms” punctuate the space, outfitted with white and black boards, video screens, and curtains for privacy. Where there are offices along the windows on the north and south facades, the architects partitioned them with a translucent polycarbonate system from Duo-Gard that transmits ample daylight.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> floor is a “retreat,” where teams can get away to buckle down and focus on a campaign. The 34<sup>th</sup> floor is the closing room, where clients are brought for the Big Pitch. To make this space more impressive, and highlight the views, the architects raised the floors so that you can look down on the East River from a seated position, and canted the walls inward, adding to the vertiginous experience.

AARON SEWARD





In a process described as “more archaeology than architecture,” the architects stripped the interior to its raw, structural materiality, exposing a central skylight that floods the two-level workspace with daylight.

An open kitchen in an area known as “the hub” is one of many spaces that fosters collaboration.



Commercial

## Nasty Gal

Los Angeles, California  
Loescher Meachem Architects and  
Barbara Bestor Architects

Nasty Gal, an edgy online fashion retailer based in downtown Los Angeles, is one of the fastest growing e-commerce sites

in the country. When it recently moved to LA from San Francisco, its founders weren’t looking for a space that would be—like much of the fashion world—fleeting trendy. They wanted an office full of inherent character that could smoothly house its varied departments and programs under one roof.

It found what it was looking for in the Pacific Mutual Building, a 1908 gem that is the oldest structure on Pershing Square. However, this selection was not without major challenges. Not only had

the building, now known as PacMutual, undergone several renovations over the years that had left its original form unrecognizable, it had also received two major additions, leaving it a warren of hallways, bridges, and ramps longing for uniformity.

Loescher Meachem Architects (LMA) and Barbara Bestor Architecture stepped in, determined to make sense of these agglomerations. What they created is an open, multi-story, 30,000-square-foot space fitted with conference rooms,





meeting spaces, breakout zones, and creative studios that capture the brand's identity, but more importantly call out its location's unique history.

The team, working with Steiner Construction, basically removed all the renovations made over the last century, exposing original clerestories, skylights, fittings, doors, and windows. They also pulled out mechanical equipment, and removed drop ceilings, plaster walls, and double-loaded corridors. Brick walls were blasted just lightly enough to maintain their original surfaces.

"We took it back as far as we needed to expose some of the originality of the building," said LMA principal John Meachem. "It was more archaeology than

architecture," added creative director Jenny Myers.

To cope with the maze of rooms, the firm pulled out even more walls and shifted spaces to make the "flow of the traffic cohesive," said Meachem. They still took advantage of some of the spatial divisions, separating close to ten departments into what Meachem calls "neighborhoods."

Where possible—particularly in the oldest volume contained in the original PacMutual building—they opened things up, unifying work zones around the mezzanine and atrium (which employees refer to as "the cathedral") and creating a central spine around which everything revolves. Original concrete trusses are exposed and painted white to garner attention.

Up and down suspended lighting illuminates work spaces and ceiling details. Elsewhere pendant lights create more intimate environments. One such space, known as "the hub," contains kitchen and hangout facilities and blackboards on which leaders can post messages.

Collaboration is promoted throughout, although smaller meeting spaces provide privacy when necessary. Private offices are kept to a minimum and maintain transparency via full-height glass. The use of vintage furniture gives the offices additional warmth, while Vitra benching workstations provide a consistent, clean, and modular collaborative workspace.

The mostly white material

palette, and the expression of existing stone, wood, and metal, makes for a simple, understated interior.

"We didn't want the new architecture to get in the way of what was there," said Meachem. "We tried to touch the original walls as little as possible."

There are a few exceptions—injecting the brand's contemporary aesthetic into the equation—like the newly timber-clad reception area.

The offices are meant to grow and stay relevant for years. They now accommodate 150 people, and could grow about 50 percent more. It is a surprisingly long-term plan for a company that changes its lines every season.

**SAM LUBELL**

A mix of vintage and contemporary furniture creates eclectic atmospheres in the office's different "neighborhoods." The wood-surfaced reception area, with its wall of plants, is one of the few places in the office where the company's brand is put front and center.



COURTESY NASTY GAL





COURTESY GENSLER

Commercial

## Gensler

Denver, Colorado  
Gensler

Global design firm Gensler has recently moved its Denver office to a new space at 1225 17<sup>th</sup> Street, in the Lower Downtown neighborhood. The firm designed the interior renovation of this space to take advantage of sustainable design principles while offering employees and collaborators a diversity of work environments.

The office provides 23,000 square feet of workspace over two floors and features a variety of work environments to address the manifold working and social needs of 90 employees. The first thing one notices when examining the new space is the ground-floor lobby and collaboration space located directly off Lawrence Street. This expansive lobby allows Gensler to host events, helping to engage the community in the design process. A stadium style staircase connects the lobby to the second floor office area, which has been massed so as to place the length of the program along the facade of the building, allowing natural light to fill the space. This second floor office spills out onto a roof deck featuring plantings, seating, and break areas, creating not only a place for repose, but an engaging outdoor work environment to take advantage of the copious Denver sunshine.

A focus on workplace ergonomics is borne out in a variety of standing, sitting,

and lounging workspaces designed for different types of work. The size of individual workspaces has been reduced at the same time so that communal spaces have been increased in order to accommodate the changing nature of collaboration. This sensitivity to different work types and styles frames ergonomics as its own kind of sustainable and natural design. It is this human-centered focus that drives much of Gensler's workspace design. Design Director Michelle Liebling spoke to AN about the project, "The strategies that we worked with in this project are developed by our [Workplace Strategy and Design] consulting group, which includes management consultants, cultural anthropologists, psychologists, and other professionals." The tools this in-house consultancy developed were put to use by the Denver office in both design and analysis in order to tailor the programming and implementation of the space planning to the needs of the office. Increasingly, it is these sorts of collaborations with behavioral and environmental professionals that are driving the profession forward in ways that simple geometry and program planning can never do.

LED lighting with motion and daylighting sensors, low-VOC materials, energy and water saving equipment, and interior landscaping round out the sustainable credentials of the space. Locally sourced beetle-kill pine provides a rich texture in a sustainable package throughout this project. The Gensler project team has shown that sustainable and natural design consists of much more than efficient fixtures and certified materials. **NICK CECCHI**



COURTESY REVERSIBLE DESTINY FOUNDATION

Commercial

## Biotopological Scale-juggling Escalator

New York City  
Reversible Destiny Foundation

The artists Madeline Gins and Shusaku Arakawa spent 40 years evolving an art practice that moved from conceptual and object-based work to projects that aim to "reinvent our species through works of procedural architecture." Their architecture exists under a heading they called Reversible Destiny—which is also the name of the "practice" they founded in 2010, the Reversible Destiny Foundation. Like other artists who claim expertise in the field of architecture without ever having studied it formally, they came to designing from a wholly unique background. They claimed for their work new insights that have "never been addressed by architecture before," and, not unlike many architects, were interested in the theoretical implications of their works. In order to achieve what they hoped would be a "dynamic architecture," they worked with social scientists in experimental biology, phenomenology, and medicine, among other fields to create "lifespan extending projects."

Their 2007 Bioscleave House (also called Lifespan Extending Villa) in East Hampton, New York, was an addition to an existing home that had sloping floors and walls that

purposefully connected in unexpected ways in order to "map perception and diagrammatically display the set of tendencies and coordinating skills fundamental to human capability." With architects increasingly interested in formal manipulation to find design solutions to issues like sustainability and social engagement, Reversible Destiny's Lifespan projects were unique in wanting to expand human perception of daily life.

The work of Arakawa and Gins exists primarily in galleries and on private walls, but now there is a public space in New York City where one can engage with their architecture.

Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons commissioned Madeline Gins (Arakawa passed away in 2010 and Gins in 2014) to design a transition space in the Dover Street Market at 30<sup>th</sup> and Lexington Avenue. The installation, called Biotopological Scale-Juggling Escalator, is a multi-colored, biomorphically textured tunnel holding scale models of bedrooms and a bathroom. Its purpose is to encourage disengaged shoppers who are ambling from one floor to another to become more aware of their body and spirit in space, time, and culture.

The artists want users to rethink architecture and what it can do. With Biotopological Scale-Juggling Escalator they hope to trigger cognitive awareness that will help people age with grace and dignity. How can one argue with architecture of such ambition and hope? In fact this tunnel promises what the expensive clothes in the market promise, but deliver only as long as they are new.

**WILLIAM MENKING**

**Top and middle:** Gensler deployed the findings of its Workplace Strategy and Design Consulting Group in designing its new Denver office. A grand stair connects the lobby to the second floor work area, which is massed along the window wall and spills out onto a landscaped terrace.

**Above:** Resembling nothing so much as the inner workings of the digestive tract, the biomorphically inspired Biotopological Scale Juggling Escalator seeks to remind high-end shoppers of their bodies and help them age gracefully.





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buzzispace.com

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS





# Welcoming Environments

Hospitality design is all about visual impact and physical comfort. From pedigreed modernist classics to eye-popping contemporary works, these pieces will make any lobby or lounge area a memorable space. By Leslie Clagett

**1 Jewels Garden Carpet**  
**Moooi**

Fabricated using the ChromoJet high-definition printer, which creates remarkably realistic images, this flamboyant collage of flowers, gemstones, and Madras motifs is definitely lobby-worthy. Designed by Sacha Walckhoff of Christian Lacroix Maison.

[moooi.com](http://moooi.com)

**2 Diatom**  
**Moroso**

Suitable for indoor and outdoor use, this stacking chair is fabricated of pressed aluminum. Available with a clear protective finish in metallic gold, metallic copper, white, grey, fluorescent green, or black powder-coat. Designed by Ross Lovegrove.

[moroso.it](http://moroso.it)

**3 Santorini**  
**Marset**

This fixture offers an unusual degree of customization; users can choose how many shades to place on the diffuser, along with their order, position, and direction, depending on the desired light effect. The luminaire can be converted into a wall or floor fixture. Shades are available in white, grey, and mustard. Designed by Sputnik Estudio.

[marset.com/usa](http://marset.com/usa)

**4 Cloud-io**  
**Kartell**

Small puffs of crystal-clear plastic conjoin in this airy, light-catching design. Lightweight and durable, the piece is designed by Eugeni Quitllet.

[kartell.com](http://kartell.com)

**5 Lily**  
**Casamania**

Inspired by the architecture of the Nymphaeaceae plant, this table is a system of low-slung pads and surfaces, which operate at different heights to accommodate different functions. Higher pads are used as seating and tables, while the lower ones offer display and utility. Designed by Marc Thorpe.

[casamania.it](http://casamania.it)

**6 Dreams Cabinet**  
**BD Barcelona Design**

The pixelated graphics that wrap this cabinet assume a more pronounced presence thanks to the ultra high-gloss finish of the piece. Available in multi-color, white-, or black-scale versions. Designed by Cristian Zuzunaga.

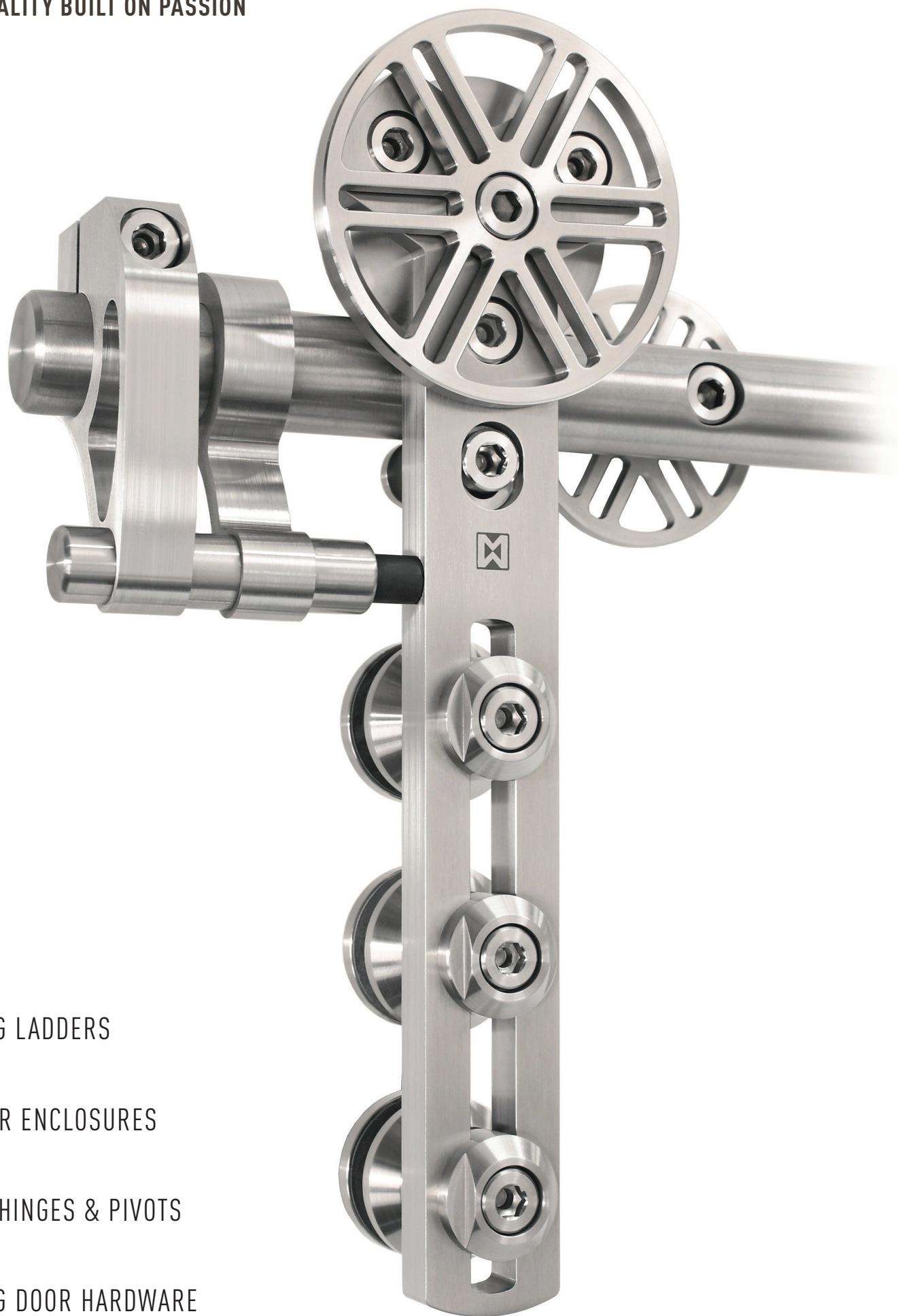
[bdbarcelona.com](http://bdbarcelona.com)

**7 Nail Table #30**  
**Sandback Studio**

A slab of walnut "inlaid" with aluminum nails rests atop a waxed steel base. Measuring 36 inches square, the table stands 16 inches tall. Available in several finishes and base materials. Designed by Peter Sandback.

[petersandback.com](http://petersandback.com)





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The 7.8-magnitude earthquake that shook Nepal left many historic sites in ruins and led to the loss of lives.

The historic Durbar Square, for example, was covered in debris from the fallen buildings that had surrounded it. The collapse of these cultural landmarks also had deadly results: According to early estimates, 180 people died when the iconic, nine-story Dharahara Tower fell.

Following the disaster, Irina Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO said in a statement that Kathmandu Valley had experienced "extensive and irreversible damage." She added that the organization would assess the damage and work with Nepalese authorities to protect and conserve these sites "with a view to recovery."

But despite the earthquake's magnitude, and the country's inadequate infrastructure and seismic planning, many historic structures survived the disaster largely unscathed. For many sites, this was due to the work of the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT), a local non-profit that has been rehabbing and seismically retrofitting the area's architectural gems since 1991. Almost immediately after the earthquake, KVPT surveyed the roughly 45 structures it has worked on, and found—much to its surprise—that only three had major structural damage. Rohit Ranjitkar, the trust's Nepal director, has already said that each of these buildings could be rebuilt.

The difference between the condition of the structures rehabbed by the KVPT and many UNESCO sites is dramatic. When asked about the disparity, Lisa Ackerman,

the executive vice president of the World Monuments Fund, which has partnered with KVPT, said it comes down to issues of organizational structure, control over specific sites, and money—and in an impoverished country like Nepal, money is hard to come by. "KVPT is a local organization that had purview over a relatively small area of the country," Ackerman wrote in an email. "UNESCO is an intergovernmental agency that does not own or operate buildings or sites in any particular country. Member nations of UNESCO and signatories to the World Heritage Convention must decide how much to invest in their local heritage activities. UNESCO provides a framework for international standards." Both Ackerman and representatives from KVPT praised UNESCO's work in the region. (UNESCO did not respond to requests to comment for this story.)

With the country still reeling from the disaster, focus remains on reducing human suffering. Nepal is expected to rebuild as it has done many times before; and as it does so, the country will need to decide what the process should look like. The work of organizations like the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust could provide the necessary roadmap for how to stabilize and preserve the country's cultural, religious, and architectural heritage.

"Nepal is a place where people are really identified as part of this cultural landscape with these extraordinary historic buildings," said Ackerman. "It would be unthinkable not to care about the cultural heritage, not just because of the tourism economy that has developed in Kathmandu but it really is a living, spiritual center." **HENRY MELCHER**

## THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE IN THE KATHMANDU VALLEY HAS SPOTLIGHTED NEPAL'S NEED FOR BETTER BUILDING REGULATIONS

# DISASTER, TRAGEDY

In the days after the earthquake in Nepal, as aftershocks splintered through the country and the death toll continued to climb, the impact of the disaster came into focus for those far from the epicenter. Across the impoverished nation, historic temples had toppled, and buildings had collapsed entirely, spreading cragged blankets of concrete, beams, and bricks. The death and destruction in Nepal is devastating, but not surprising. The country sits on a fault line and experienced a deadly earthquake in 1934. Making matters worse, rapid urbanization—and the shoddily built homes that have come with it—left countless people particularly vulnerable when the earth shook so vigorously that the entire city of Kathmandu shifted by 10 feet.

The fallout from the April earthquake is exactly the type of tragedy that the World Bank warned about in a 2013 report. "Unplanned

urban development in the Kathmandu Valley has led to rapid and uncontrolled sprawl; irregular, substandard, and inaccessible housing development; loss of open space, and decreased livability," stated the organization. "It has also increased vulnerability to disasters, making Kathmandu one of the most earthquake-vulnerable cities in the world."

The catastrophic event not only destroyed homes and ended lives, it brought down many of Nepal's centuries-old monuments and temples. These structures exemplified the country's religious and cultural history and helped fuel Nepal's tourist economy. Kathmandu Valley is on UNESCO's World Heritage list with seven groups of historic monuments. But after the 7.8-magnitude earthquake, many of Kathmandu's renowned sites have been destroyed, or at least damaged.



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ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

# Naturally Indoors

**Humankind has come a long way from its primitive origins in terms of constructing shelters to isolate itself from the insalubrious harassments of the outdoors only to find that hermetic environments come with their own costs and consequences. In this issue, AN looks at four commercial and four hospitality interiors that, from a comfortable remove, reconnect inhabitants with nature. Plus, we talk to COOKFOX Senior Associate Pam Campbell about the biophilic design principals that guide much of her firm's work.**





Rogers Partners located group work areas and communal spaces against the window banks, allowing the entire space to enjoy daylight and views.

Natural materials, such as charred cypress and cork, lend a sensual note to the otherwise minimal palette.



ALBERT VECERKA/FESTO

## Commercial

# Droga5

New York City  
Rogers Partners

Founded in 2006, New York City-based advertising firm Droga5 grew quickly and in ad-hoc fashion within three connected buildings in NoHo. “There was no organizational structure to their old space,” explained Robert Rogers, principal of architecture practice Rogers Partners, which designed Droga5’s new offices. “The departmentalization was determined by who got there first. The office culture thrived on that spontaneous environment.”

Droga5’s new location is in 120 Wall Street, a 34-story wedding cake style office building on the East River designed by Buchman & Kahn and completed in 1930. The firm occupies the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> floors, each of which are about 23,000 square feet in area, as well as the much smaller 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> penthouse floors. In conceiving of

how to transport the spontaneous environment of the aggressive startup to the more sedate surrounds of an old-guard Wall Street office building, Rogers Partners developed a constellation model, intentionally dispersing the firm’s departments throughout the floors and then connecting them in ways that promote random encounters.

The southeast corner of the 10<sup>th</sup> floor is occupied by a large kitchen—food is also a big part of Droga5’s culture—and lounge area with couches and coffee tables that serves as a breakout work space. An enclosed glass boardroom—where employee teams pitch their ideas to firm founder David Droga—floats above a grand stair that descends into the communal area from the 11<sup>th</sup> floor. When a large presentation screen is rolled down above the boardroom, the stairs become seating for company video screenings and presentations.

A charred cypress wood ceiling demarcates the grand stair and traces the circulation pathway through the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> floors. “We wanted something with real materiality, not just a color,” said Rogers. “We wanted there to be more dimensions to the sensory experience. The wood has a slight aromatic quality.” Employees are encouraged to

take the stairs rather than the elevators, and the architects positioned little nooks and crannies along the circulation pathway for private meetings.

Group work areas line the window banks, while the private glass offices are on the core, allowing the entire office to enjoy natural light. The ceiling was cleaned up, the soffit moved back and packed with the mechanical services, and a linear LED pendant up/down fixture hung low above the desks. Cork and glass enclosed “war rooms” punctuate the space, outfitted with white and black boards, video screens, and curtains for privacy. Where there are offices along the windows on the north and south facades, the architects partitioned them with a translucent polycarbonate system from Duo-Gard that transmits ample daylight.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> floor is a “retreat,” where teams can get away to buckle down and focus on a campaign. The 34<sup>th</sup> floor is the closing room, where clients are brought for the Big Pitch. To make this space more impressive, and highlight the views, the architects raised the floors so that you can look down on the East River from a seated position, and canted the walls inward, adding to the vertiginous experience.

AARON SEWARD





In a process described as “more archaeology than architecture,” the architects stripped the interior to its raw, structural materiality, exposing a central skylight that floods the two-level workspace with daylight.

An open kitchen in an area known as “the hub” is one of many spaces that fosters collaboration.



Commercial

## Nasty Gal

Los Angeles, California  
Loescher Meachem Architects and  
Barbara Bestor Architects

Nasty Gal, an edgy online fashion retailer based in downtown Los Angeles, is one of the fastest growing e-commerce sites

in the country. When it recently moved to LA from San Francisco, its founders weren’t looking for a space that would be—like much of the fashion world—fleeting trendy. They wanted an office full of inherent character that could smoothly house its varied departments and programs under one roof.

It found what it was looking for in the Pacific Mutual Building, a 1908 gem that is the oldest structure on Pershing Square. However, this selection was not without major challenges. Not only had

the building, now known as PacMutual, undergone several renovations over the years that had left its original form unrecognizable, it had also received two major additions, leaving it a warren of hallways, bridges, and ramps longing for uniformity.

Loescher Meachem Architects (LMA) and Barbara Bestor Architecture stepped in, determined to make sense of these agglomerations. What they created is an open, multi-story, 30,000-square-foot space fitted with conference rooms,





meeting spaces, breakout zones, and creative studios that capture the brand's identity, but more importantly call out its location's unique history.

The team, working with Steiner Construction, basically removed all the renovations made over the last century, exposing original clerestories, skylights, fittings, doors, and windows. They also pulled out mechanical equipment, and removed drop ceilings, plaster walls, and double-loaded corridors. Brick walls were blasted just lightly enough to maintain their original surfaces.

"We took it back as far as we needed to expose some of the originality of the building," said LMA principal John Meachem. "It was more archaeology than

architecture," added creative director Jenny Myers.

To cope with the maze of rooms, the firm pulled out even more walls and shifted spaces to make the "flow of the traffic cohesive," said Meachem. They still took advantage of some of the spatial divisions, separating close to ten departments into what Meachem calls "neighborhoods."

Where possible—particularly in the oldest volume contained in the original PacMutual building—they opened things up, unifying work zones around the mezzanine and atrium (which employees refer to as "the cathedral") and creating a central spine around which everything revolves. Original concrete trusses are exposed and painted white to garner attention.

Up and down suspended lighting illuminates work spaces and ceiling details. Elsewhere pendant lights create more intimate environments. One such space, known as "the hub," contains kitchen and hangout facilities and blackboards on which leaders can post messages.

Collaboration is promoted throughout, although smaller meeting spaces provide privacy when necessary. Private offices are kept to a minimum and maintain transparency via full-height glass. The use of vintage furniture gives the offices additional warmth, while Vitra benching workstations provide a consistent, clean, and modular collaborative workspace.

The mostly white material

palette, and the expression of existing stone, wood, and metal, makes for a simple, understated interior.

"We didn't want the new architecture to get in the way of what was there," said Meachem. "We tried to touch the original walls as little as possible."

There are a few exceptions—injecting the brand's contemporary aesthetic into the equation—like the newly timber-clad reception area.

The offices are meant to grow and stay relevant for years. They now accommodate 150 people, and could grow about 50 percent more. It is a surprisingly long-term plan for a company that changes its lines every season.

**SAM LUBELL**

A mix of vintage and contemporary furniture creates eclectic atmospheres in the office's different "neighborhoods." The wood-surfaced reception area, with its wall of plants, is one of the few places in the office where the company's brand is put front and center.



COURTESY NASTY GAL





COURTESY GENSLER

Commercial

## Gensler

Denver, Colorado  
Gensler

Global design firm Gensler has recently moved its Denver office to a new space at 1225 17<sup>th</sup> Street, in the Lower Downtown neighborhood. The firm designed the interior renovation of this space to take advantage of sustainable design principles while offering employees and collaborators a diversity of work environments.

The office provides 23,000 square feet of workspace over two floors and features a variety of work environments to address the manifold working and social needs of 90 employees. The first thing one notices when examining the new space is the ground-floor lobby and collaboration space located directly off Lawrence Street. This expansive lobby allows Gensler to host events, helping to engage the community in the design process. A stadium style staircase connects the lobby to the second floor office area, which has been massed so as to place the length of the program along the facade of the building, allowing natural light to fill the space. This second floor office spills out onto a roof deck featuring plantings, seating, and break areas, creating not only a place for repose, but an engaging outdoor work environment to take advantage of the copious Denver sunshine.

A focus on workplace ergonomics is borne out in a variety of standing, sitting,

and lounging workspaces designed for different types of work. The size of individual workspaces has been reduced at the same time so that communal spaces have been increased in order to accommodate the changing nature of collaboration. This sensitivity to different work types and styles frames ergonomics as its own kind of sustainable and natural design. It is this human-centered focus that drives much of Gensler's workspace design. Design Director Michelle Liebling spoke to AN about the project, "The strategies that we worked with in this project are developed by our [Workplace Strategy and Design] consulting group, which includes management consultants, cultural anthropologists, psychologists, and other professionals." The tools this in-house consultancy developed were put to use by the Denver office in both design and analysis in order to tailor the programming and implementation of the space planning to the needs of the office. Increasingly, it is these sorts of collaborations with behavioral and environmental professionals that are driving the profession forward in ways that simple geometry and program planning can never do.

LED lighting with motion and daylighting sensors, low-VOC materials, energy and water saving equipment, and interior landscaping round out the sustainable credentials of the space. Locally sourced beetle-kill pine provides a rich texture in a sustainable package throughout this project. The Gensler project team has shown that sustainable and natural design consists of much more than efficient fixtures and certified materials. **NICK CECCHI**



COURTESY REVERSIBLE DESTINY FOUNDATION

Commercial

## Biotopological Scale-juggling Escalator

New York City  
Reversible Destiny Foundation

The artists Madeline Gins and Shusaku Arakawa spent 40 years evolving an art practice that moved from conceptual and object-based work to projects that aim to "reinvent our species through works of procedural architecture." Their architecture exists under a heading they called Reversible Destiny—which is also the name of the "practice" they founded in 2010, the Reversible Destiny Foundation. Like other artists who claim expertise in the field of architecture without ever having studied it formally, they came to designing from a wholly unique background. They claimed for their work new insights that have "never been addressed by architecture before," and, not unlike many architects, were interested in the theoretical implications of their works. In order to achieve what they hoped would be a "dynamic architecture," they worked with social scientists in experimental biology, phenomenology, and medicine, among other fields to create "lifespan extending projects."

Their 2007 Bioscleave House (also called Lifespan Extending Villa) in East Hampton, New York, was an addition to an existing home that had sloping floors and walls that

purposefully connected in unexpected ways in order to "map perception and diagrammatically display the set of tendencies and coordinating skills fundamental to human capability." With architects increasingly interested in formal manipulation to find design solutions to issues like sustainability and social engagement, Reversible Destiny's Lifespan projects were unique in wanting to expand human perception of daily life.

The work of Arakawa and Gins exists primarily in galleries and on private walls, but now there is a public space in New York City where one can engage with their architecture.

Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons commissioned Madeline Gins (Arakawa passed away in 2010 and Gins in 2014) to design a transition space in the Dover Street Market at 30<sup>th</sup> and Lexington Avenue. The installation, called Biotopological Scale-Juggling Escalator, is a multi-colored, biomorphically textured tunnel holding scale models of bedrooms and a bathroom. Its purpose is to encourage disengaged shoppers who are ambling from one floor to another to become more aware of their body and spirit in space, time, and culture.

The artists want users to rethink architecture and what it can do. With Biotopological Scale-Juggling Escalator they hope to trigger cognitive awareness that will help people age with grace and dignity. How can one argue with architecture of such ambition and hope? In fact this tunnel promises what the expensive clothes in the market promise, but deliver only as long as they are new.

**WILLIAM MENKING**

**Top and middle:** Gensler deployed the findings of its Workplace Strategy and Design Consulting Group in designing its new Denver office. A grand stair connects the lobby to the second floor work area, which is massed along the window wall and spills out onto a landscaped terrace.

**Above:** Resembling nothing so much as the inner workings of the digestive tract, the biomorphically inspired Biotopological Scale Juggling Escalator seeks to remind high-end shoppers of their bodies and help them age gracefully.



In recent years, sustainability has become one of the most prominent motivators of architectural design. Rarely is a project unveiled without a corresponding press release touting a green roof, photovoltaic array, or an expected LEED ranking. While such headline-grabbing green building features are important, New York City-based architecture practice COOKFOX believes that sustainability should go beyond reducing the energy footprint. The firm has been incorporating principles of biophilic design into its projects in order to produce buildings that treat human beings as an integral part of a natural ecosystem.

AN's Henry Melcher recently spoke with COOKFOX Senior Associate Pam Campbell about what biophilic design is and how her firm is incorporating it into its architecture.

**Henry Melcher: So what is Biophilic Design?**

**Pam Campbell:** The term was initially coined by a social psychologist back in the 1960s called Erich Fromm, but it is generally attributed to E.O. Wilson, who wrote the *Biophilia Hypothesis* in the 80s, which was a body of research that has developed ever since and really explains that we as human beings have this connection to nature, and that because we developed in a natural setting we have these psychological and physical reactions to natural landscapes and materials.

There has been a lot of research showing how different natural phenomenon within the interior environment contribute to the performance of children in schools and people in the workplace—how healthy they are, how attentive they are, how much they can focus on a certain task.

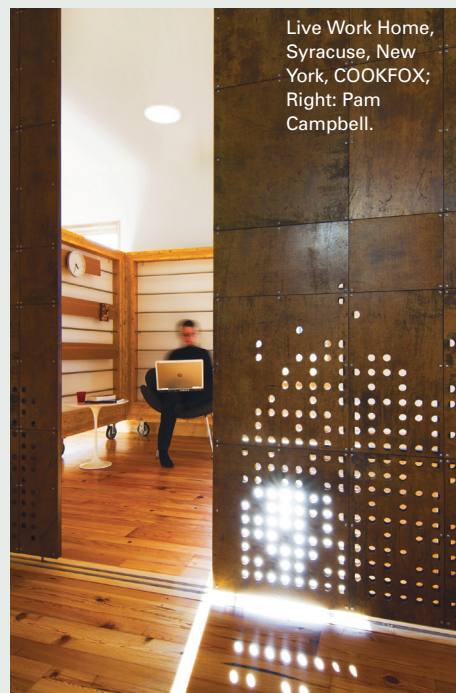
The thinking is that because of the nature of human beings, we feel at home in natural landscapes so we really need to reestablish that connection—and that is where architecture comes into it. We have this ability as designers to create spaces that can work to reengage people with the natural landscape and the health benefits that go along with that.

Whether it's views out to a natural landscape or bringing plantings into an interior, we call that "nature *in the space*." And then there is something called "nature *of the space*" and that might not have anything to do with looking at vegetation, but creating spaces that mimic natural settings in which humans thrived and felt most comfortable in the way we developed over time.

There is also something called "prospect and refuge theory." If you think about humans in the natural landscape way back when, when they could see into the distance to a predator or some danger coming, they would be in a place of prospect, but also in a place where they have some refuge. When you have this combination of prospect and refuge, it has this visceral reaction of how we feel within that space.

And there is "risk and peril." Our bodies react pretty well to short-term stresses—they keep us more alert, raise our heart rate and hormone levels—and as long as that is not a permanent state, that has some physical benefits to us. So places where you can see over a balustrade, or be in a place where some sort of risk is involved, it can be a good thing as long as there is a safe place within the space.

The other category is "natural analogues"—when you actually have a tree or something in your space. There are other patterns and materials that we can bring into the design that



Live Work Home, Syracuse, New York, COOKFOX; Right: Pam Campbell.



COURTESY COOKFOX; RICHARD BARNES/OTTO

## Q&A > PAM CAMPBELL

# BEYOND THE GREEN ROOF: DISCUSSING BIOPHILIC DESIGN

can start to have the same beneficial responses: the grain of a natural wood as opposed to a piece of plastic.

**What are the challenges of using biophilic design in New York City where so many buildings are sealed and climate-controlled?**

It is definitely a challenge. When we get the rare opportunity to design a building in an actual landscape, it can do so much for you in terms of general sustainability. But when you are in the city, you have to do so much more because we are in an environment that is 90 percent buildings, as opposed to 90 percent natural.

There is always that delicate balance between daylight and energy savings. Obviously the glazing technologies are getting better and better; we can now afford to have windows that have a significant amount of glazing without killing the energy budget in terms of cooling and heating costs.

Window sizing is really kind of an art form. Some spaces are great to have floor-to-ceiling glazing, but there are a lot of environments where that is not appropriate—it is too much peril, it doesn't make people feel relaxed and enclosed. So getting the right balance of opaque, solid exterior walls to glazing is probably one of the major things we can do to create a comfortable environment on the interior.

Biophilic design really comes into play when we are talking about the shape of the space, the materials we use, and the views outside. In terms of trying to create natural environments in the city, it is a challenge and what we've tried to do with our projects is to create many terrace spaces and outdoor spaces so people can still view, at least in the foreground, some natural landscapes.

And then obviously creating spaces that aren't so hermetically sealed where people can view the sky, the changing weather, and different

light patterns coming into the space. Not just having good daylighting, but having that pattern change how it impacts the space during the day—it can keep people more alert.

At Live Work Home up in Syracuse we had a particular challenge because Syracuse gets half the amount of natural daylight as the rest of the country. It is a particularly gray place. So we created this screen around the house that was perforated and had a pattern that we digitized from a photograph of daylight coming through a tree canopy. With that randomized pattern we were trying to mimic how you might feel if you were walking through a forest.

That screen allows daylight to filter into the building in different ways. On the north side, we painted the interior face of the screen with a reflective white coating so the sun from the south would reflect off that in a pattern and bounce back onto the porch area as well.

**Is biophilic design a selling point? Do developers and prospective buyers want these strategies incorporated into buildings?**

I think from the developers' standpoint, for residential, certainly; everyone is interested in outdoor terraces and we are trying to explain why it is a good thing beyond just a marketing tool. Even if people don't understand the science behind [biophilic design], they get the fact that, yes, looking out of your living room onto an area of plantings and trees that is changing with the seasons is better than looking across the street at another building. People naturally understand that even if they can't put it into words.

In terms of biophilic design, people do feel healthier when they are looking at a natural landscape, so I think that is pretty well understood and has been for a long time.

Architects always talk about blending the indoor and the outside. How many times have you heard that? It is something that we have

all understood, and I think we are in a better position now because there's actually some real hard data behind it. That body of knowledge lets us control it more instead of just randomly putting some planting outside on a terrace. We can really enhance the design of that by understanding that it should be changing, it should be moving, there should be taller parts and smaller parts, there should be areas where you feel protected and areas where you see over.

**There are a lot of biophilic and sustainable design practices incorporated into One Bryant Park, which is LEED Platinum, but then a [New York City benchmarking] report comes out and says the building is using twice the amount of energy as the Empire State Building. So what are the tangible benefits of using these types of designs?**

For Bryant Park there is a difference between energy that is generated on-site versus energy that is generated remotely. The thing is it is a bank of trading floors at the end of the day, so it has one of the most intense energy usages of any building type that can exist in the city; but a lot of that energy is produced on-site.

About 75 percent of the power that is produced by power plants actually gets lost through the transmission of that power to a building. When you're producing that on-site, that loss doesn't exist anymore. So in terms of the overall energy use and pollution, those things have to be factored in and rarely are. It's normally just some numbers that are coming up in a meter and it is not taking into consideration the building type and also where that power is coming from.

Where we really caught the interest of the bank and the developer—this was a joint venture between Bank of America and The Durst Organization—was when we started talking about employee retention.

When you employ somebody there is a certain amount of startup time where they are being pretty inefficient, and when you lose somebody and somebody new starts, there is obviously a huge financial cost there. So creating spaces that people want to be in, where they do have access to daylight and they do feel better, it helps with employee retention and also reduces sick days.

In terms of the air that is getting delivered to the space, it is at a higher filtration. The outdoor air in the city obviously isn't that great, so if we can filter that air to high levels we can reduce the amount of respiratory problems and other reasons why people may end up taking sick days.

Employee retention and creating healthy workspaces is a huge tool that we have in our toolbox.

**Where do you think these technologies and tools will take things in the future?**

I think biophilic design is something that people are going to start employing more. We are never going to tear down a city and build a forest again so we have to start employing more educated techniques of bringing back the actual environment in such way that we can cohabit with it. That is something that has to get pushed forward.

There are more and more children being brought up in the city and they have less and less ability to really understand what nature is; they tend to come across it in a very condensed, small environment.

How do we expect future generations to care about the environment if they don't even understand what it is?





KEN HAYDEN/COURTESY SELLDORF

The Selldorf-designed Mesa at Amangiri exploits the dramatic landscape of Southern Utah, offering sweeping views of the rugged terrain from the interior, while also carving out intimate and shaded areas for quiet and relaxation.



Hospitality

The Mesa  
at Amangiri

Canyon Point, Southern Utah  
Selldorf Architects

Set within the craggy, serene desert landscape of Utah's canyon country, the Mesa at Amangiri, a villa from Aman Resorts, rises quietly from the earth, a subtle counterpart to the sandstone formations that speckle the surroundings. Designed by New York-based Selldorf Architects, this is the first of 36 private villas planned for the remote Canyon Point location, which will share services and amenities with its neighboring Amangiri Resort. Intended to maximize views but





The interior palette is warm and neutral, much like the desert landscape, with teak and Douglas fir accents, sandstone floors, copper doors, and stucco walls.



also maintain a restrained footprint, the villas are positioned so “you are really part of the landscape,” explained Sara Lopergolo, partner at Selldorf Architects, and sited to avoid direct views of other villas, creating a sense of privacy. “[While] also being very careful about how the villas are inserted so not to disturb the topography. The desert flora is very fragile. We had to proceed very gingerly,” she added.

The inside, designed to complement not compete with the stunning vistas,

is configured to provide ample opportunity to enjoy the landscape from different perspectives while also offering tucked-away areas for repose. Residents enter through a shaded courtyard, leading to an entry hall, or through the kitchen on the left side of the villa.

There is, as Lopergolo characterized it, “a public bar of living” comprising a living and dining room with sliding glass doors that look out onto the swimming pool and the desert and peaks beyond. Two stucco walls act as an

“organizing device between the public and private,” partitioning the communal spaces from the pavilion housing the bedrooms on the right side of the villa. Upstairs, two additional bedrooms and bathrooms accommodate more guests. Outside, a terrace wraps around the main volume, giving way to more nooks and crannies.

“When you are designing in such an enormous vista, you also want spaces that retreat from the view. The courtyard is meant as a place to sit and get away

from the view sometimes,” said Lopergolo.

Warm, yet neutral materials—consisting of stucco, sandstone floors, teak and wire brush douglas fir accents, and copper doors—gently play off the dynamic tones of the landscape. The firm used a palette of dark metals and pale colors to “evoke a vacation but also to feel like it is a home all year-round.” In the bedroom, a custom-designed concrete and teak bed serves as the central organizing feature in the space. A comfortable

bathroom includes plenty of storage, and an elegant marble vanity. On the opposite side of the villa, a Bulthaup kitchen in soft earth tone and grays provides another inviting place to congregate.

The specific orientation of the villa was not only a means of enhancing views, but also a strategy for mitigating heat gain and providing shade. The implementation of brise-soleils and geothermal heating and cooling were tools to make the building

more energy efficient.

Selldorf has already completed schematic designs for three other villas. While each will contain similar design components, such as the palette, the organization of the houses will differ according to the topography of the specific site. “The floor plans flow very well,” said Lopergolo. “These houses have to be for entertaining many people as well as be intimate enough for a family—it is about striking a nice balance.”

**NICOLE ANDERSON**



Hospitality

# Coopers Hall

Portland, Oregon  
Lorraine Guthrie Architect



DINA AVILA

Lorraine Guthrie transformed this Quonset hut—a one-time service center at a car dealership—into a light and airy winery tap room. The lofty space, sliding glass walls, ample daylight, and string lights at night, combine to bring the feeling of the outdoors inside.

Coopers Hall in Portland, Oregon, is a winery-cum-taproom that finesses the rawness of an industrial space with the delicacy of its natural environment. Principal architect Lorraine Guthrie described how Coopers Hall began when A&R Development purchased a Quonset hut—a light steel-frame structure that had originally served as a service center for a car dealership. The structure is unique in the Portland area, so when A&R partnered with AlexEli Vineyard, ChefsTable, and Restaurant St. Jack to build Coopers

Hall, Guthrie's team "let the building lead the way" toward a space that reflected the desired experience: organic yet urban, light-hearted yet refined. Guthrie stripped the hut down while retaining key elements: a mezzanine that became a dining area, and a northern wall full of windows that allowed patrons to enjoy the sunlight while hinting at an outdoor experience. Indeed, a handful of picnic tables cooly suggest that patrons might actually be sitting outside, and a west-facing wall that slides open during

business hours furthers patron's access to the outdoors. Between the sunlight received through the open wall and the windows, lighting is optional well into the evening hours. Once the sun does set, delicate white string lights that hang over the dining tables lighten the structure's industrial edge while continuing the feeling of an outdoor space. A large concrete and steel staircase leads to the ground floor, where fermenting barrels rest upon the burnished concrete floors. Accent lighting around the

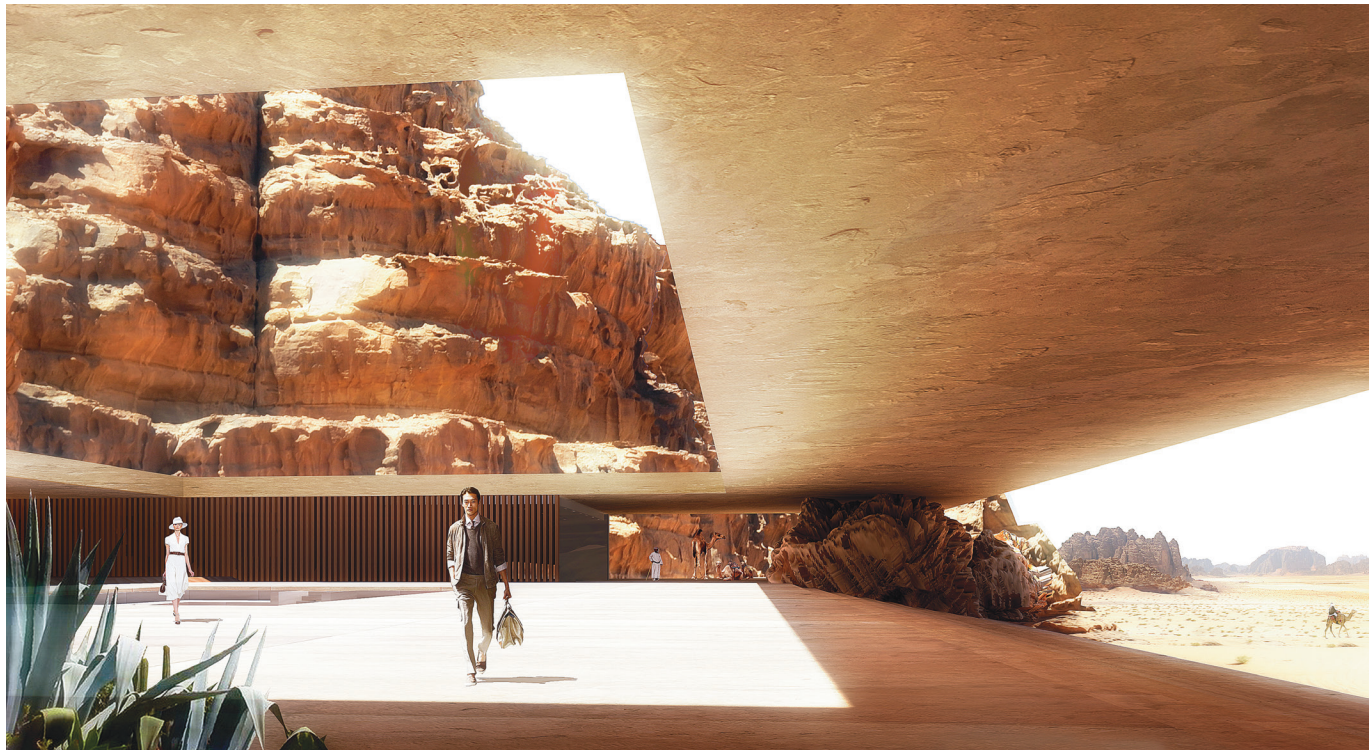
barrels brightens up the space while also giving a nod toward one of its more unique features: wines on tap. While most wineries use bottles, Coopers Hall elects to store its wine in mini kegs shelved behind a gleaming tile wall that spans the bar's back. Not only do the kegs allow the wine to last longer and eliminate the need for 30,000 glass bottles each year, but they also offer a refreshing take on the winery experience. These seemingly small details not only economize the operation, they uncork pretense, allowing

participants to enjoy the experience of fine wine and dining without the fussy accoutrements. Still, "sumptuous but simple" details such as walnut table tops, stools remade from oak staves, and a Scandinavian-inspired, dark-stained wood bar show how luxurious simple can actually be. Guthrie sourced locally for most the design elements, although she was clear to state that reclaimed wood played no part of the project: "that's been done to the point of cliché," she said. "We actually

painted the bottom half the bar white in response to that." White walls top to bottom complement the bar space, while also showcasing the hall's airiness. A variety of plants in Rainier Beer buckets hang from the ceiling, bringing a touch of nature indoors, though as Guthrie noted, a winery, by definition, pays tribute to the outdoors. "The whole process is organic," she said. "You're drinking wine in the same place it's fermenting." What could be more natural than that?

ELISIA GUERENA





Hospitality

## Wadi Rum Desert Resort

Wadi Rum, Jordan  
Oppenheim Architecture & Design

Steal yourself for a weekend, sans smart-phone, to a majestic landscape where luxury consists of silence and candlelight. Thus is the concept behind architect Chad Oppenheim's Wadi Rum Desert Resort, a facility recessed entirely into sandstone monoliths in the Jordanian desert. The founder of Florida-based Oppenheim Architecture + Design hesitates to bill it as a building, dubbing it instead a "subtractive space" that defers entirely to the natural topography while creating livable environs for human beings through minimalistic sculpting of rock.

Using long-armed excavation machinery resembling a jackhammer, the 72 guest lodges were carved like geometric pockets out of the rock, some built into existing caves that were "amplified" for space. "[The guest rooms] are sculpted into these existing crevices and geometries of the rock. We formed it so that it's as discreet as possible, hiding them in the shadows based on studies of the sun," explained Oppenheim.

The Spartan fixtures and fittings of each guestroom, such as platforms for the beds and the hand-sculpted bathtubs, rise out of the rock à la *The Flintstones*. Meanwhile, the rooms feature tent-like canvas entrances to fend off blustery desert winds. Each room is separated by up to 50 feet for privacy. Made of rammed earth and cement mixed with local red sands, the structural walls and supports are nearly indistinguishable from the rock.

The facility relies on natural ventilation of the stonework configurations rather than synthetic climate control, and even fires are eschewed in favor of fur blankets to keep warm at night. "The resort is open mostly in the temperate times. The environment is quite pleasant eight out of 12 months, so it wouldn't be open in the heat of summer or the depth of winter," said Oppenheim. "It's more about the luxury of isolation, of a sky without sound, without light." While the resort has zero electrical lighting, it is outfitted with requisite 5-star luxury facilities, such as restaurants and a spa that "harnesses water through very primitive channels." But do not expect electrical outlets in the guestrooms. "The only thing we have is hot water that gets brought in through solar power," explained Oppenheim, adding that after dark, check-ins would be greeted by candlelight.

However, the cliff-face architecture is confronting a crag of its own. Initially slated for completion in 2014, construction was halted by tribal tensions after the Arab Spring. "Essentially the land was obtained from the tribal groups and the government of Jordan and then tribal groups wanted to re-trade the deal years later," said Oppenheim. When queried about a new completion date, Oppenheim responded: "That's a good question."

KINDRA COOPER

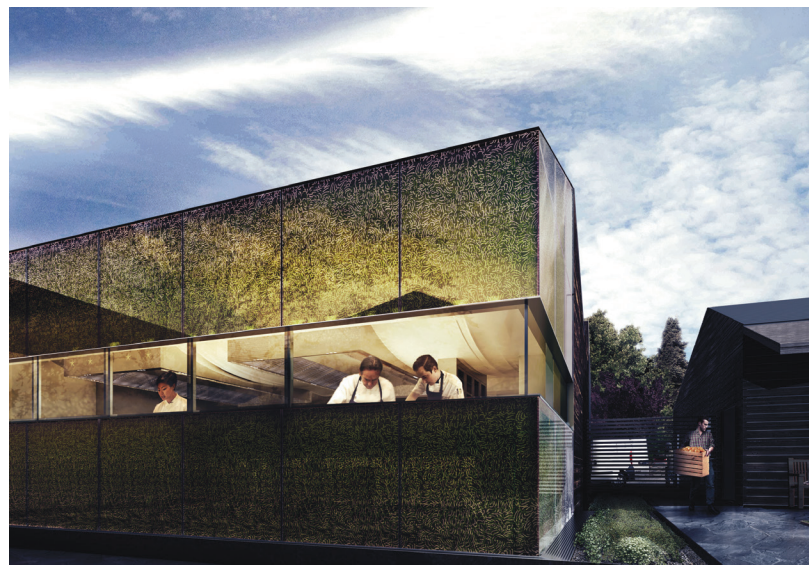
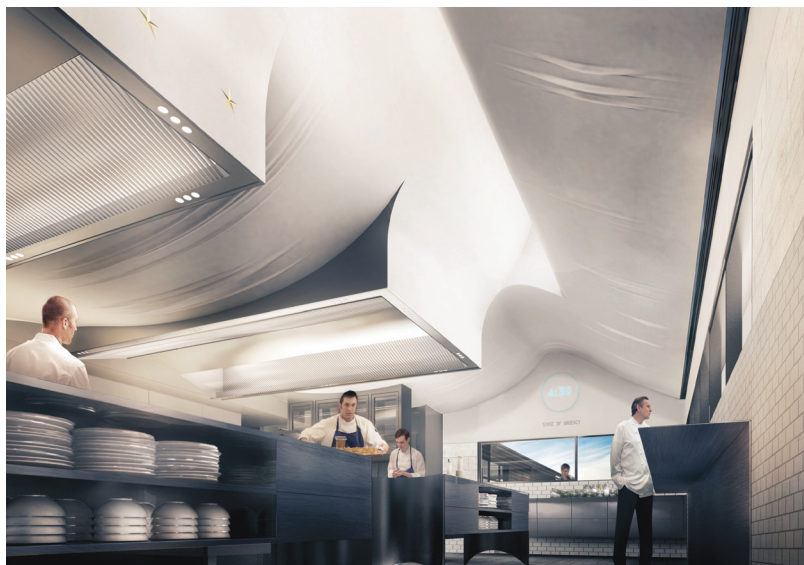


Though it may never be completed due to tribal tensions, the Wadi Rum Desert Resort takes luxury to new levels of primitivism. The cave dwellings are unencumbered by electrical fixtures of any kind, focusing guests on the silence and isolation of the desert.



COURTESY OPPENHEIM ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN





COURTESY SNØHETTA

Designed to evoke the motions of food preparation and service—the movement of a chef's hands, the spreading of a tablecloth—the expanded kitchen of The French Laundry connects cooks and diners with a newly landscaped garden. The kitchen cladding is printed glass. Its sculptural ceiling conceals a sensor-controlled ventilation system.

### Hospitality

## The French Laundry

Yountville, California  
Snøhetta, Envelope A+D,  
Harrison & Koellner

The French Laundry—the Napa Valley restaurant in Yountville, California, known for nine-course dinners that change daily—is getting a makeover. Chef Thomas Keller has teamed up with design partnership Snøhetta (lead design architect and landscape architect), Envelope A+D (executive architect), and Harrison & Koellner (kitchen designer) to bring a new interpretation to the globally famous restaurant. Having just celebrated a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year, the restaurant is undergoing a renovation to expand its courtyard and will feature

a new kitchen and kitchen annex. The original two-story restaurant with several dining areas will remain untouched.

The French Laundry, which is on the National Historic Register, was originally a saloon built by a Scottish stonemason at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and later housed a French steam laundry in the 1920s. In the 1970s the mayor of Yountville converted the building into a restaurant and sold it to Chef Keller in 1994.

The new design seeks to create a more immersive experience for guests while adding much-needed expanded spaces for the culinary, service teams, and the extensive wine collection.

The landscape design reworks how guests enter the restaurant and enlarges the garden. The new courtyard and approach features elements like integrated grass pavers, a stone basalt wall, wood lattice fencing, and steel-bordered beds. Ornamental plantings like blooming almond trees help bring contrast to the neutral color scheme. And cutouts in the stone wall serve as windows, giving visitors and passerby a peak into the

garden and restaurant beyond.

A new kitchen annex on the property will house a wine cellar with room for over 14,000 bottles of wine, and other spaces like dry goods storage and areas for kitchen prep. The new kitchen is 25 percent larger than the existing one, and closely integrated into its site. Chef Keller imagined it being like the Louvre Pyramid by I. M. Pei that boldly links the new with the old. “A printed glass wall forms the primary facade of the kitchen facing the garden where guests arrive,” said Craig Dykers, principal and founding partner of Snøhetta. “The pattern on the glass is an interpretation of the movement of the chef's hands while at work. It is presented in shades of green so that the image becomes an extension of the surrounding garden.”

The kitchen itself is outfitted with a high-performance, sensor-controlled ventilation system integrated within a custom ceiling fabricated by Kreysler & Associates. “Inside the kitchen is a softly undulating ceiling that mimics the feeling of a tablecloth being lifted over

a table,” explained Dykers. The form helps to reduce ambient noise, while skylights in the ceiling as well as along the periphery of the kitchen bring in lots of natural light. The white-on-white kitchen also features materials like antimicrobial Dekton Quartz counters and ranges by Hestan Commercial.

After the kitchen demolition closed the restaurant to the public for the first four months of 2015 (with staff temporarily relocated to Ad Lib, a pop-up restaurant in the Napa Valley Silverado Resort and Spa), The French Laundry reopened for business in early April, albeit with the culinary team working out of a temporary kitchen installed in four shipping containers designed by Envelope A+D. The full renovation is expected to be complete by this fall.

“Chef Keller has always wanted this to be among the most advanced kitchens in the world,” said Dykers. “This meant working with atmosphere, technology, and ergonomics. A good kitchen balances intimacy with high-energy.”

ARIEL ROSENSTOCK



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MAY

WEDNESDAY 20 LECTURES

Think Bigger, Dig Deeper: Scaling Up Energy Conservation Measures

6:00 p.m.

Center for Architecture

536 LaGuardia Pl.

cfa.aiany.org

Current Work: David Chipperfield

7:30 p.m.

The Cooper Union

The Great Hall

7 East Seventh St.

archleague.org

EVENTS

Tour: An Industrial Building Becomes a Very Modern Residence

5:00 p.m. h

542 West Grant Pl., Chicago

aiachicago.org

Latin America in Construction: Cities

11:30 a.m.

Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53rd St.

moma.org

THURSDAY 21 LECTURES

Women in Industrial Design: A Changing Field?

7:00 p.m.

Museum of Art & Design

2 Columbus Cir.

madmuseum.org

The Art of Social Change Series: Art as Activism

8:30 a.m.

Washington University

St. Louis

Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts

1 Brookings Dr. St. Louis, MO

samfoxschool.wustl.edu

EVENT

Parsons Festival: Designing Multiplicity

10:00 a.m.

Parsons The New School for Design

66 Fifth Ave.

newschool.edu

EXHIBITION CLOSING

Life in the Sky: The Elevated City

Walker Art Center

1750 Hennepin Ave.

Minneapolis, MN

walkerart.org

SATURDAY 23 EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Nomad Studio: Green Varnish

Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

3750 Washington Blvd.

St. Louis, MO

camstl.org

Northern Lights: Scandinavian Design

Philadelphia Museum of Art

2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy.

Philadelphia, PA

philamuseum.org

Clifford Ross: Landscape Seen & Imagined

Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art

1040 Mass MoCa Way

North Adams, MA

massmoca.org

MONDAY 25 EXHIBITION CLOSING

Tools: Extending Our Reach

Cooper Hewitt Museum

2 East 91st St.

cooperhewitt.org

TUESDAY 26 EVENTS

2015 IDEAS City: NY

9:00 a.m.

New Museum

235 Bowery

newmuseum.org

Preserving the Fabric of our Neighborhoods

6:30 p.m.

Museum of the City of New York

1220 Fifth Ave.

mcny.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Paper, Rock, Pixels

UC Berkeley: College of Environmental Design

Environmental Design Library

210 Wurster Hall

Berkeley, CA

ced.berkeley.edu

LECTURE

Transforming Suburban Downtowns Through Innovative Street Design

6:00 p.m.

Lafayette Community Hall

3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Lafayette, CA

aiaeb.org

SATURDAY 30 EVENT

Frank Lloyd Wright Home Tour

1:00 p.m.

Fawcett Home

21200 Center Ave.

Los Banos, CA

aiaf.org

SUNDAY 31 EXHIBITION CLOSING

Big Pictures

Cincinnati Art Museum

953 Eden Park Dr.

Cincinnati, OH

cincinnatiartmuseum.org

JUNE

TUESDAY 2 EVENT

AIASF and DBIA Present: Design Build in the Eye of the Beholder

6:00 p.m.

AIA San Francisco

130 Sutter St.

San Francisco

aiaf.org

WEDNESDAY 3 LECTURES

Green Building Products and Technologies Seminar

8:30 a.m.

AMA’s Executive New York Conference Center

1601 Broadway

cfa.aiany.org

Building Enclosure Council: Case Study on the Botanic Gardens Science Pyramid

1:00 p.m.

AIA Colorado Conference Room

303 East 17th Ave.

Denver, CO

aiacolorado.org

A Conversation with Fallingwater Director Linda Waggoner

7:00 p.m.

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

600 Museum Way

Bentonville, AR

crystalbridges.org

THURSDAY 4 EVENT

Friedrich St. Florian: Designing the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC

6:00 p.m.

Cherry Hills Country Club

4125 South University Blvd.

Englewood, CO

aiacolorado.org

Experience Design: The Integration of People, Process and Place

12:00 p.m.

Center for Architecture

1218 Arch St., Philadelphia

aiaphiladelphia.org

Context Volume 2: What’s the Big Idea?

6:00 p.m.

SILO in Makers Quarter

753 15th St., San Diego, CA

sdaif.wildapricot.org

SATURDAY 6 EXHIBITION OPENING

Noah Purifoy: Junk Dada

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

5905 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles

lacma.org

SUNDAY 7 EVENT

Iconic L.A. Tours: Lautner Sheats-Goldstein Residence

10:00 a.m.

Lautner Sheats-Goldstein Residence

10104 Angelo View Dr.

Los Angeles

aialosangeles.org

TUESDAY 9 LECTURE

Digital Media and Memorials: Joseph DeLappe and Marita Sturken

7:00 p.m.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

5905 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles

lacma.org

THURSDAY 11 EVENT

First Human-Centric Lighting Conference

8:00 a.m.

Seattle Mariners Safeco Field

1250 First Ave. S, Seattle, WA

aiaf.org

FRIDAY 12 EXHIBITION CLOSING

The Past Retooled, The Present Rebooted

District Gallery

740 East Third St.

Los Angeles

aialosangeles.org

EVENTS

30th Annual Transport Chicago Conference

8:00 a.m.

University at Illinois Chicago

Student Center East

750 South Halsted St., Chicago

transportchicago.org

AIA San Antonio Summer Conference & Expo

11:00 a.m.

Center for Architecture

1334 South Flores St.

San Antonio, TX

aiaa.org

Columbus Arts Festival

11:00 a.m.

Scioto Mile

Columbus, OH

columbusartsfestival.org

SUNDAY 14 EXHIBITION CLOSING

Piranesi: Imaginative Spaces

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

4525 Oak St., Kansas City, MO

nelson-atkins.org

THURSDAY 18 LECTURES

Seeing with Nature’s Mind: Permaculture Patterns and Principles

12:00 p.m.

Seasons Rotisserie & Grill

2031 Mountain Rd. NW

Albuquerque, NM

aianewmexico.org

Works and Humanitarian Activities by Shigeru Ban

7:30 p.m.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

5905 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles

lacma.org

SCREENING

Making Space: 5 Women Changing the Face of Architecture

7:00 p.m.

Laguna Art Museum

307 Cliff Dr.

Laguna Beach, CA

lagunaartmuseum.org

FRIDAY 19 EXHIBITION OPENING

Heather Roberge: En Pointe

Sci-Arc

960 East Third St.

Los Angeles

sci-arc.edu

FRIDAY 26 EVENT

David Thaddeus ARE Seminar: Structures

8:00 a.m.

AIA New Orleans Center for Design

1000 St Charles Ave.

New Orleans, LA

aianeworleans.org

JULY

FRIDAY 17 EXHIBITION OPENING

10 Years 10 Stories

AIA New Orleans Center for Design

1000 St Charles Ave.

New Orleans, LA

aianeworleans.org

SATURDAY 27 LECTURE

Art + Studio: Hydrosatial Hanging Sculptures

1:00 p.m.

Museum of Fine Art, Houston

Beck Building

5601 Main St.

Houston, TX

mfa.org



THE ARCHITECTS  
Storefront for Art & Architecture  
97 Kenmare Street  
New York, NY  
Through May 30

Protocols have changed in the globalized arena of architectural production. *The Architects*, a film by Amie Siegel, explores the inner workings of global architectural offices in New York City today, conveying the pulse of the high-pressure profession through a cross-section look into the offices of architecture firms from Fifth Avenue to downtown to Brooklyn. As a single unfolding visual, the film depicts silent conversations between the architecture, location, object, and character, raising questions of scale, agency, and power. As a whole, the footage aims to explore the collective body of architects globally today. The film was originally commissioned by Storefront as part of OfficeUS, the United States Pavilion at the 2014 Venice Biennale of Architecture.



DRAWN TO LIGHT  
Joseph Bellows Gallery  
7661 Girard Avenue  
La Jolla, CA  
Through July 3

This group exhibition explores photographers’ unique ability to use light to shape the descriptive and emotional content of their photographs. *Drawn to Light* features seascape and urban photography by Anthony Friedkin, Steve Kahn’s *Corridor* series, and architectural images by Grant Mudford. Breaking waves kissed by glinting sunlight and more characterize Friedkin’s tonally rich, black-and-white images of the Pacific Ocean. Kahn’s photographs, meanwhile, explore the hallways that connect private rooms in old apartment buildings in Los Angeles, where dim lighting at the ends of the corridors draws viewers right into the photograph. These snapshots were taken from the last segment of the artist’s *The Hollywood Series*. Mudford’s images, meanwhile, capture institutions such as the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in an unexpected light.

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Eladio Dieste. Church in Atlantida, Uruguay, 1958.



LEONARDO FINOTTI/COURTESY MOMA

# THE POETICS OF AN ARCHITECTURE OF DEVELOPMENTALISM

**Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955–1980**  
Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53rd Street, New York, New York  
Through July 2015

*"Modernity [can] be measured neither exclusively nor principally by the number of industries or machines... what counts is the development of the intellectual and political critique."*  
Octavio Paz, 1983

*"The exhibition is intended to challenge the notion of Latin America as a testing ground for ideas and methods devised in Europe and the United States. It brings to light the radical originality of architecture and urban planning in the vast region during a complex quarter century."*  
Barry Bergdoll, Patricio del Real, Carlos Comas, and Pancho Liernur

This opening statement by the curators is a radical statement of advocacy for a new history of modernity. After the quarter-century defined here as "The Age of Developmentalism" we are rapidly changing our views about the automobile and the city and are speculating on the future of the sprawling network of urbanization both in North and South America. The exhibition is laid out in the form of a modern space without a single axial view that can instantly give us the entire picture. Instead, we encounter the instruments of architecture: drawings, models, photographs, and film. All are seen through the lens of development by way of more than 500 works gathered from Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico.

To paraphrase the four curators, a complex historical process was taking place within the varied geographies, nation states, and political ideologies of this vast region. The opening and

closing rooms of the exhibition elegantly frame this historical process. In the opening room, we see President Kennedy in Caracas inaugurating with active diplomacy the U.S.'s "Good Neighbor Policy." The Cold War achieved the re-establishment of democratic rule in Venezuela and at the same time the establishment of dictatorial rule in Cuba. Also greeting us on these introductory screens we see works of the first generation of architects that pre-date the timeframe of the show. Among the highlights are the exquisite construction documents of Amancio Williams House over a Stream; the sketches and perspective views of Juan O' Gorman's School of *Industrias Técnicas* of 1932, published in *Architectural Record's* special 1937 issue on Mexico; and Luis Barragan's colorful sketch of an Islamic influenced fountain.

The exhibition goes beyond the normal clichés of "paymasters in Washington and Moscow" and argues for the role of architecture in modernizing all the nations of the Americas. In all fairness, I must disclose that I was a member of the large advisory committee for the exhibition. Our first visit to Caracas included a zealous guard threatening to arrest us on spying charges while we were looking at the beautiful wood models of Tomas Sanabria's Banco Central de Venezuela (1962–75). This extraordinary building was probably omitted from the show because of the difficulty in dealing with Venezuela and Cuba at the moment.

And so, after a long hiatus, MoMA has produced a show of fundamental interest both to artists and architects who believe in the discipline of architecture as an intellectual and artistic pursuit fundamentally engaged with the

notion of improving society at large. To tell this complex story, approximately 500 original works are on display, some of which are being exhibited for the first time anywhere. I was delighted with the vicarious pleasure of seeing original documents, such as Lucio Costa's faded, type-written sheets of 8½-by-11 paper, illustrated by incisive miniature hand drawings. This was the competition entry that won and thus created—in a few years—the most famous new capital city of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Very few cities of the age were planned and built from scratch, and diplomats and pundits alike immediately declared the capital city of Brasilia a failure. Peter Mattheissen wrote in *The Cloud Forest: A Chronicle of the South American Wilderness* (1961) that when he arrived at the construction site of the unfinished Brasilia in 1960, notwithstanding his naturalist bias against all cities, "Brasilia is less inspired than pretentious, a brave new city cunningly disguised as a World's Fair."

The focus on the urban legacy of Latin America is brought to life in the synchronized film clips of six rapidly growing cities: Havana, Caracas, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, and Mexico City. Among my favorite destinations in the exhibition is the wonderful *mise en scene* of the architect in his house: Henry Klumb standing before his home in Puerto Rico, and Jimmy Alcock posing in front of his pyramidal concrete and steel "tree-house" overlooking Caracas. The CVG building by Jesús Tenreiro Degwitz is a beautiful and innovative use of steel and brick that reminds us of how this particular building aspired to be the foundation for a new society in the last of the large-scale urban experiments of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century: Ciudad Guayana on the Orinoco River in Venezuela.

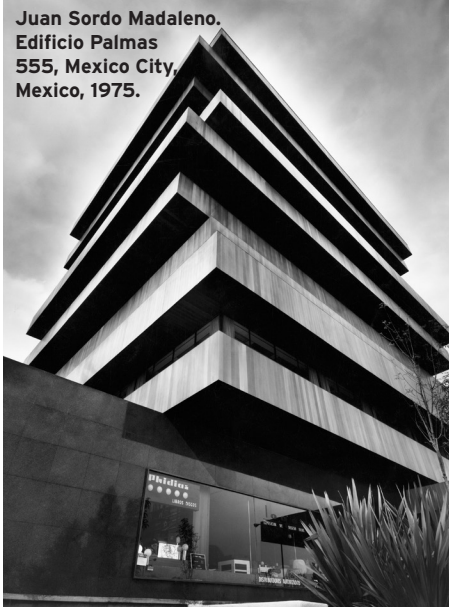
The exhibition is not organized chronologically, by nation, or by building type and does not deify any stylistic classification of the "experimental architecture" of Latin America. Instead we find new paradigms of public space, new institutions, and a new cityscape mostly built by public works of governments who believed in architecture as a means to solve urgent problems of infrastructure or housing, and who recognized the propagandistic value of a radical architecture in establishing the identity of a new national ideal. Anchored to a place and time of origin, the original documents provide another layer of aesthetic pleasure that tells us a history including multiple sub-plots framed by the central idea of "Desarrollismo."

To experience an exhibition framed in this way, we are stimulated to make multiple and sometimes contradictory readings. To experience a mix of projects from different countries that are exhibited adjacent to each other offers a cross-reading that allows us to see each project differently. If Modernity was a European invention that some historians claim began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, then this period of post-war ideas about development in Latin America provides for a critical reading of the construction of modernity as a whole—as an emancipatory project that was doomed to fail. In the last room, entitled "Utopias," we see drawings that begin a systematic critique of "modern" architecture from the point of view of the inhabitant rather than the state sponsored architect. In 1980 we came to the end of the optimism inherent in the idea of progress—a moment when a systematic critique arose about the validity of governance reliant on a state-sponsored ideology of "developmentalism."

That post-war period, which was characterized by a belief in progress, is today confronted with a very different world-view. The chimera of "sustainable development," supposedly in harmonious interaction with nature, is a deceptive one when viewed from the point of view of "under-developed" nations. Could this ideology be replaced with a new strategy to shrink humanity's footprint by using nature and urban centers more efficiently?

The magnitude of the problems ahead is only hinted at in the Utopias room. For those of us who believe in the redemptive value of the architecture of the city, this extraordinary anthology of architecture should be seen as a springboard toward the renewed relevance of a socially committed architecture.

**CARLOS BRILLEMBOURG IS AN ARCHITECT IN NEW YORK CITY.**



GUILLERMO ZAMORA/COURTESY MOMA





COURTESY IPA

# A Big Interesting Mess

## An Inventory of What's Possible

A symposium at Pratt looked at the past of New York City affordable housing in hopes of discerning the future.

## Columbia University professor Richard Plunz discusses New York City affordable housing as part of "An Inventory of What's Possible."

as "neighborhood and community," "privacy," and even "food." She said, "We heard that housing should be affordable," and she showed some of the student projects that were inspired by these conversations. At the Forest Houses in the Bronx, students looked at the schools that surround the NYCHA development as a place to share school facilities like a library, a gymnasium, and computer labs with each other and with NYCHA residents by putting them on the housing authority campus.

Frederick Biehle, a Pratt professor and principal of VIA Architecture, had also considered restoring streets and reshaping the urban fabric in his studio that focused on the Ingersoll and Whitman Houses in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. He suggested "delineating public, semipublic, and private spaces" to counter the "sameness and banality" of the existing buildings. The studio proposed a new two-story base connecting two existing towers with semi-private space for residents and an interior courtyard with new institutional programs—a skating rink, a school, stores. "Each individual building gets to determine its own block. The metastasized scheme doubles the number of units, but the buildings' lower floors become more porous. Townhouses face the street." He described a number of possibilities and noted, "It's amazing that so many successful, doable projects were proposed."

In a morning session on "Stabilizing Neighborhoods," the moderator was Daniel Hernandez, the Deputy Commissioner for Neighborhood Strategies at the Department of Housing Preservation and Development and a Pratt professor. He noted the importance of early engagement in identifying issues and then implementing them, since "it's a moment when there is a lot of cultural change going on in the agencies."

NYIT Professor Nicholas Bloom described the promise of subsidized coops and said, "The word ownership comes up often in the mayor's document." He talked about the success of earlier subsidized coops, such as Village View in Manhattan and the Luna Park Co-op in Coney Island, which encouraged residents to take care of their neighborhoods. He proposed that NYCHA create a subsidiary to build some of these on their land on a nonprofit model, similar to what is done in Singapore. They might be built with FEMA funds in some areas, would "put more eyes on the street," and might be step-up housing for some NYCHA families. "There has to be a less strident conversation about underused land in NYCHA communities," he said.

Gabrielle Bendiner-Viani, a principal of Buscada who teaches at the New School for Public Engagement, discussed the Seward Park Urban

Renewal Area (SPURA). She described it as "a big mess but one that is interesting." In 1967, families were driven out but told that they could return when new housing was built. However, not enough was built for many families to return. She emphasized the importance of perpetuity in communities.

Benjamin Dulchin, who is a community organizer, not an architect, represents an umbrella organization for 101 community development groups. He is trying to help neighborhoods set agendas and develop policies by studying what has worked and what conditions made success possible. He said that while it is important to build permanently affordable housing, it is also necessary to focus on crime, economic development, and institutions to sustain a community.

Paula Segal, the executive director of 596 Acres, an organization that advocates for community gardens spoke, unsurprisingly, in favor of their preservation and of ownership of land by communities. She is particularly opposed to giving gardens to for-profit developers.

In a discussion period after their talks, Ron Shiffman said, "Displacement and speculation on land has become palpable in every neighborhood of New York. A lot of good planning came from neighborhood-based organizations. Let's start integrating some of the wealthiest communities."

Pratt faculty member Meredith TenHoor chaired a panel on Enabling Quality Design. She noted that in the 1970s, when cities were seen as failing, it was often the design of housing that was blamed.

Suzanne Schindler, who teaches at Columbia, discussed another historic example—Twin Parks in the Bronx (1967–75), which participants had visited the day before. She described the interesting variety of buildings, built by a group of 15 churches and synagogues with help from the state and federal governments and designed by well-known architects. The 2,300 apartments ranging from studios to five bedrooms "were created to stabilize the neighborhood but gang warfare happened right there." She asked, "What can we learn?" and answered, "It all depends, not just on design but on how a project is managed," showing a single loaded corridor completely blocked, plazas fenced in, she added, "You need to think about design along with management, security, and other factors."

Pratt professor David Burney commissioned innovative community centers from celebrated, mostly young architects when he was in charge of architecture at NYCHA in the 1990s and then headed the city's Department of Design and Construction during the Bloomberg Administration. "When I got to NYCHA, I found that there was still some money left for buildings but it was hard to spend. You couldn't build unless you could provide free land

and use the low income tax credit.

The Reagan Administration insisted on private developers, and the early attempts had been disastrous," he said. They found a community garden on West 84<sup>th</sup> Street and hired Castro-Blanco Piscioneri Architects to build 35 permanently affordable units. With Becker + Becker, they built two- and three-bedroom apartments in a contextual walkup building on 8<sup>th</sup> Street; at 189 Stanton Street they built supportive housing for families with AIDS designed by James McCullar. "There are ways of doing things that are different. All these projects are completely integrated into their neighborhoods," he pointed out.

TenHoor then asked the speakers, "How do we get quality? Who defines those standards?" Menking said, "At Sunnyside, the architects were deeply committed to quality and social scientists were part of it." He also noted the role that philanthropy had played in the past, citing Phipps Houses, The Robin Hood Foundation, and Common Ground. Burney suggested, "Reverse the notion that design costs money, that design is only for the wealthy." He also said, "As every architect knows, when you get to the end of the project, it's the landscaping that gets cut." He noted the importance of "health and the built environment. We are not number one in many things, but we are number one in obesity." TenHoor mentioned the role of the private sector, noting that Mayor Lindsay advocated it and that it attracted architects of the caliber who designed Twin Parks. Schindler mentioned "long term issues and short term issues. If someone is going to maintain it, they may build it differently."

Toward the end of the day, the president of the residents association at the five-story walkup First Houses (1936), Brendaliz Santiago, presented the tenants' point of view. "NYCHA doesn't communicate with tenants," she said, "but we want community residents involved in planning." Since New Years Eve 2014, though, she has been working closely with NYCHA. "With unity there is power."

Karina Totah, Senior Advisor to the Chair of the New York City Housing Authority, explained, "The mayor gave the chair two directions: Reset your relationship with key stakeholders and create a plan for how you are going to make NYCHA survive." She said, "Safe, clean, and connected is the goal," and that engaging residents like Santiago to get resident input is a priority as well as dealing with short term financial problems, rehabilitating, and harnessing the real estate NYCHA already owns, and operating 138,000 units. "We are the largest landlord in New York City," she added.

The two-day event brought together architects, professors, students, community organizers, residents, and managers of housing projects. The conversation necessary to jumpstart Mayor de Blasio's ambitious housing plan has begun.

**JAYNE MERKEL IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

On April 9 and 10, the Institute for Public Architecture and Pratt Institute School of Architecture held "An Inventory of What's Possible," a symposium organized to discern what can be done to implement Mayor Bill de Blasio's ambitious plan to build 200,000 affordable housing units in the next ten years. The event consisted of visits to a variety of different public and supportive housing projects from various eras throughout the city, in addition to talks by professors, students, city officials, community activists, and the president of a residents' association. They discussed new ideas, historic projects, problems, possible solutions, and opportunities that the current affordable housing crisis presents.

On April 9, participants toured housing ranging in time from Strivers Row by James Brown Lord, Bruce Price, and Stanford White (1893) to Via Verde by Dattner Architects and Grimshaw (2012) and in space from Roland Wank's Grand Street housing in Lower Manhattan to Clarence Stein and Henry Wright's Sunnyside Gardens in Queens and Twin Parks in the north Bronx. Richard Meier; Prentice, Chan & Olhausen; and Giovanni Pasanella all have buildings at Twin Parks. The tour drove home the point that New York City's legacy is remarkable for its range, quality, and continuing success. It also showed that there are lessons to be learned—both positive and negative—from what has been built in the past.

After welcomes by Pratt Dean Thomas Hanrahan, and professor and AN editor-in-chief William Menking, panel discussions furthered historical perspectives, provided views of neighborhood activists, and presented new ideas about ways to attack the affordable housing crisis.

Jonathan Kirschenfeld, the founder of the Institute for Public Architecture, who had designed some of the

housing visited the day before, noted, "We have 50 years of research on the public realm at Pratt in the institute founded by Ron Shiffman (Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development, or PICCED) and now directed by Adam Freeman. Housing—and the way we think about the public realm and the interior realm—defines our humanity as a city. New York is the quintessential innovator in thinking about housing in a dense place, willing to take chances and create new types of housing."

Karen Kubey, who directs the Institute for Public Architecture, mentioned in an Institute Fellows residency program for stabilizing neighborhoods that took place last summer, noted that Michael Kimmelman had covered it enthusiastically in "Trading Parking Lots for Affordable Housing," in *The New York Times* on September 14.

Later in the day, when Institute Fellows presented the findings from their work, Miriam Peterson, Nathan Rich, and Sagi Golan described the "9 x 18" plan that Kimmelman had praised. They proposed a new parking policy, especially in areas near public transportation, an attempt to create streets that promote an active lifestyle.

"There is much more parking on NYCHA sites than on other urban blocks. The idea is to replace parking lots with parking structures that house community facilities," said Golan. "A lot of the residents were willing to trade parking space for other amenities." Another Institute Fellow, Kaja Kuhl, a Columbia GSAPP professor who goes to five neighborhoods every year with the 5 Borough Studio, talked about the importance of starting a conversation with each community. She uses "Postcards from Home" to learn how the residents view "home" and found that they see it





Philip Johnson's Wiley House (1952) as photographed for *Midcentury Houses Today*, a survey of how modernist houses in New Canaan, CT have aged and are being preserved.

of architects, and reporting on their conditions today.

Although fans of Palms Springs may take issue, you could argue that New Canaan was the epicenter of mid-century modernist American residential design. From the late 1940s through the 70s, the "Harvard 5" group of architects [and others similarly disposed] designed more than 100 outstanding examples of modernist houses in the town, enriching its already rarefied character as an exclusive exurb of New York.

The residences examined in *Midcentury Houses Today* suitably represent the range of contemporary states in which we find them.

The authors describe the second house that Eliot Noyes [one of the aforementioned "5"] built for his family in 1954 as a "time capsule." It is still owned by his family members and thus intriguingly fly-in-amber preserved. Similarly, John Johansen's 1956 Villa Ponte, despite having changed owners, is thrillingly unaltered, with its original gold leaf vaulted ceilings, ebonized cabinetry, and terrazzo floors intact. At the other end of the scale is the house Marcel Breuer

designed for his family in 1951. Today, although it maintains some of its original footprint, the rest of it—plus a 2-story addition—is completely new construction. Others have been remodeled, expanded, and upgraded in ways that offer subtle indicators of how our conception of "modern design" has evolved.

Of the New Canaan architects, Philip Johnson, Marcel Breuer, and Eliot Noyes all achieved some renown in their lifetimes; less so for the others who worked there, and the book provides them with well-deserved exposure. It's satisfying to see the work of Hugh Smallen and Alan Goldberg, both of whose approaches show a refinement of earlier modernist principles with more expansive proportions and richer materials to reflect shifting residential lifestyles.

Like most large format books of its type, *Midcentury Houses Today* is primarily about its images, and Michael Biondo's photographs do not disappoint, strikingly displaying New Canaan's singularity as a setting for these buildings and their exquisite relationship with the southern New England landscape of woods, ravines, creeks, and outcroppings.

The book does have its shortcomings. There's a paucity of period photographs. Each house is illustrated with a black and white

exterior shot, contemporary with the house's completion; many of them are no more than thumbnail size and none feature views of the interiors, depriving readers the opportunity of comparing the then with the now. In one case, the text refers to a set of 1954 Ezra Stoller photographs of one of the houses. Why didn't the book reproduce them? Are image rights that expensive?

And with regards to the contemporary illustrations, the reader accustomed to the "credits" appended at the back of most shelter magazines will be frustrated to discover no identification of those responsible for the interior design and decoration of the houses, to say nothing of an itemized list of sources and materials. And while there is reference to the forces threatening the remaining modernist houses in New Canaan, and, by extension, the rest of the country, the discussion is relatively limited.

Of course, *Midcentury Houses Today* isn't a home decorating magazine or a professional design journal; it's not really even a book about architecture and design. It's about documentation, not polemics, and preservation, not aesthetics. And as a preservation document, it's an excellent addition to the canon.

**PHILIP BERGER IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

## AS IS

*Midcentury Houses Today*  
by Lorenzo Ottaviani, Jeffrey Matz,  
Cristina A. Ross, Photographer  
Michael Biondo  
The Monacelli Press, \$65

Despite the feverish interest in mid-century modern design all over North America today, many houses from the period are endangered,

for a host of reasons, but primarily for their choice locations. An alarming number of the gemlike, relatively modest houses built half a century ago on the most picturesque sites have been scrapped and replaced; in response, the architecturally astute have scrambled to reassess the idea—or at least the timeframe—of the history to be preserved.

*Midcentury Houses Today* offers a window into this shift in preservation priorities by spotlighting 16 houses in New Canaan, Connecticut, designed during in the 1950s and 60s by a select group



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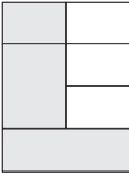
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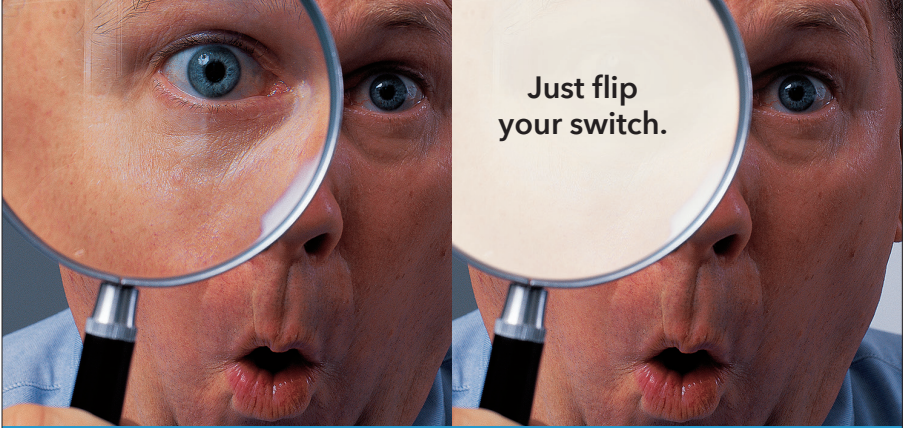
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Tadao Ando.



Early this month, the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St. Louis opened its newly renovated and expanded gallery (p. 22). As part of our coverage of the event, *AN* contributor George Huaiyu Zhang got in touch with Japanese architect and Pritzker Prize-winner Tadao Ando, who designed the original 2001 building and completed the expansion, to ask him about the process of revisiting his old project, what it was like to work with Mrs. Pulitzer and artists such as Ellsworth Kelly and Richard Serra, and how he finds working in the United States.

**George Huaiyu Zhang:** For you, what is the most important consideration behind this renovation? The construction for the new renovation was probably a lot smoother in terms of technological difficulties, but were there other challenges posed by the existing site and conditions?

**Tadao Ando:** I think that renovation is an architectural construct that regards existing structure as a site. Despite the restriction of the existing belowground structure, we aimed to create an entirely new space that exists only here by reconsidering the sequence of each space; the lighting systems and equipment; and each detail, proportion, and material of the finishing.

You often emphasize the importance of juxtaposition to create specificity of a place. As an example, you mentioned in one of your statements that to “intensify the emotion of entering a tall room, you need to experience it in relation to another lower space.” The existing Pulitzer galleries are known to have an emphasis on

natural light and spatial dynamics, and yet with the new addition being underground, there is no natural light introduced. How do you then reconcile and mediate between the old and the new in terms of the experience of light? How do you envision it becoming a coherent juxtaposition?

The extension plan proposed to add one small and one large gallery belowground and connect them to the existing gallery space in order to establish a new circulation. The loop-shaped route around the water court, which occupies the heart of the aboveground part of the museum, will be concluded through the new galleries. At the same time, each gallery space was designed to be able to hold exhibitions individually. In contrast with the existing aboveground galleries, where the natural light plays freely and spatial impressions fluctuate according to the time of day, the new belowground galleries do not allow the natural light. Giving greater importance to the contrast, we intended to design the new space on lower floors as a calm and serene space, compared with the dynamic and lively space on the upper floors. In between the two galleries, a foyer was located as a node to the upper floors. Visitors will walk through the entire building and feel three-dimensional spatial depth more clearly.

**Mrs. Pulitzer, in one of her speeches about the Foundation, observed that unlike many buildings which have no “there” there (or “thereness”), each space within the Foundation has a distinct character yet directly relates to the overall design. The specificity of this architectural piece has inspired a variety of artistic explorations that aim to directly and specifically engage**

**with the space. More recently, and with the upcoming reopening, there are explorations such as the Richard Tuttle show that Mrs. Pulitzer is curating, exploring spatial relationships with minimal materials. There is also the program series called *Press Play*, exploring and engaging the specific building through the experience of sound. In a sense the building itself has become part of the art. How do you personally envision arts and acts that engage with this space? Or rather, what kind of artistic interventions would you be interested in seeing in the space?**

I think that architecture which has “thereness” can be made in the design process, which in this case progressed as the client, architect, and artists exchanged opinions and proposals about the Pulitzer building from their respective standpoints. I am really interested in this process of dialogue. In the first stage of the project, the quality of the architecture steadily increased through uncompromising dialogues among the artists Ellsworth Kelly, Richard Serra, and us, and with Mrs. Pulitzer, our client. This collaborative work with them was extremely significant, making us think about the most basic elements of art museums.

In evoking a vigorous dialogue between the art museum and the artworks, the artists and the audience, we hope that the new gallery spaces will remain a constant stimulus.

**You were quoted in an article that you and Mrs. Pulitzer discussed the possibility of outdoor signage and cushions for the stairs during concerts, and that the issue of a sign for the building exterior is particularly interesting since it relates to**

The Pulitzer Foundation, in St. Louis, Missouri, recently hired Tadao Ando to expand his 2001 design.



ALISE O'BRIEN PHOTOGRAPHY; LEFT: KEITAKU HAYASHI

**how the building fits into the surrounding context. I know that you visited the Pulitzer after it was first opened. How do you feel about the way that the museum unfolded in its surrounding urban fabric? Last year, in 2014, there was also the PXSTL Pavilion being built right across the street. How would you see it in relation to the museum structure?**

I think that a building can't exist by itself in architectural meaning, and the influence that the building gives to surroundings must be considered when it is designed. We wanted to create not only a building, but also a new cultural center in St. Louis, in which the museum was one of the nuclei. In this meaning, it is a great success that a cultural area has been formed with the completion of the surrounding cultural facilities, which includes CAM and PXSTL next to the Pulitzer.

If designing buildings is only for novelty and creating bold forms, the completion of buildings will be the goal for architects. However, I assume the completion is another beginning of architecture. It is a great pleasure for me that I could see the process through which the building has been used by the Pulitzer and its visitors to enrich people's cultural lives.

**The Pulitzer was your first public building in the United States. Now that you're looking back after 15 years, and after having designed other spaces in America, such as the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and a currently in-design residential project in New York, how does designing in this country differ from designing in other places in the world?**

In the United States, a mature industrial society, exposed concrete finish is very difficult in financial and technical respects because it must be made by hand, one by one. However, we brought together an excellent team, which overcame this difficulty.

I always think that it requires a great team to create great architecture. In the design process,

I spend a great deal of energy to bring together a team, which includes the client, constructors, consultants, and executive architects, and engineers. We go to visit buildings together in each country, and sometimes we exchange our opinions about them at the construction site in progress. We try to have the opportunity to communicate to each other in our team as much as possible in order to achieve the shared goal of great architecture.

**What's next for you?**

In 1969, I made a start to my architectural activities by relying on passion alone. I was self-educated and had no connections or backing, so I naturally had no work. Running about determinedly, I tried my hand at very small residences and retail projects. Forty-six years have gone by since then. Today, public projects account for most of my work, and the places where I am building have been globalized over the years. Back in the day, I never even imagined my (in some ways) fortunate present circumstances, but this does not mean that my struggles have ended.

I am well aware that I would be able to work more efficiently if I built off of my accumulated experience and aimed toward refining and developing my work from the past. It is a self-evident truth that one can build more solid work if one just thinks about making cut-and-dried architecture within the bounds of the given frameworks. Even knowing this, however, I always find myself trying to come up with new things to attempt with each project in order to break away from the expected.

I have continued to believe in the limitless potential of architecture, which always allows one to turn each and every project into a new endeavor with the power of one's own imagination. In a sense, the moments in which I am striving intently in pursuit of architecture's possibilities are what drive me to live.

For me, “next” is still “another challenge in architecture.”



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