On June 6, the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla found itself on a list that no one wants to be on: the World Monuments Fund's (WMF) annual inventory of the 100 most endangered cultural and architectural sites in the world. The institute, a research center housed in a world-famous modernist complex designed in 1963 by Louis Kahn, is on the list, according to the fund's announcement, "because of a planned construction project that would partially obscure its iconic view of the Pacific Ocean from its paved courtyard." That project, a three-story building known as the Campus Community Center, located on the northwest mesa of the institute's property, will include a library, meeting rooms, administrative offices, and a dining facility/faculty lounge. The fund says that the building "threatens to breach the 30-foot height limit along the coast" and that it is "clearly visible" from the Luis Barragan–designed courtyard.

According to the last U.S. census, the Hispanic population of Los Angeles County has exceeded 4.5 million, roughly 46 percent of the county's total population. Yet LA's only venue for Latin American art, the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach, founded in 1996, has long been

Eric Owen Moss's Tennis Channel Addition in Culver City

After a few frustrating competition near-misses (in Kazakhstan, Mexico, and Russia) and an unsuccessful bid to regenerate the Queens Museum, Eric Owen Moss has returned to his old stomping grounds, Culver City. In July he completed the most recent structure in Hayden Tract, the gritty development begun in the 1990s by Frederick and Laurie Smith, to which Moss has already contributed more than ten unusual buildings (including Stealth, Beehive, The Umbrella, and Slash & Backslash).

The new structure, 3555 Hayden, provides offices and postproduction facilities for the Tennis Channel, a cable network. It is also a return to an old way of doing things. Very old. Moss calls it "Trajan Over Nero" or "T.O.N.," likening it to how Trajan's Bath in Rome were built over Nero's Golden House in AD 110. The Culver City building is set right over an existing 1940s brick warehouse and a concrete block addition he built as the channel's sound studio in 1996.

The 4,843-square-foot addition curves in a wavelike motion that mimics the shape and color of the surrounding hills. Its exterior consists of a steel skeleton and foam panel sprayed with rust-colored fiberglass. Its columns and beams are directly attached to those of the existing...
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Knechel describes many California residents' reaction when they hear a new development is coming to town. This explains the common divide between the so-called compassionate locals wanting to preserve their townscape and the so-called money-hungry developers who want to profit from them.

But while it's understandable that most people fear development considering its too-often poor quality, this blanket fear among neighbors is out-of-date and irrelevant. Time moves forward, economic forces continue to push, populations expand. New development, whether people like it or not, is going to come. The issue is not whether it should come, but how it should come.

Not all development needs to look like a big box store or a gated community, hideously blighting a town or officiously turning its back on the surroundings. This issue of AN gives us a chance to show what quality development can sometimes look like, thanks to the efforts of talented architects and developers. Teams are creating developments that are architecturally stunning, city-sensitive, pedestrian-friendly, affordable, economically self-sustaining, public-transport-ready, and environmentally sustainable.

Unfortunately such projects are the exception, not the rule. The nature of the development's growth may pretend to be governed by cities and their planning departments, but developers—and their often profit-first mentality—still rule. Too many developments still cater to cars, not to communities. Most ignore the cities around them. And their styles are more representative of a generic, idyllic yesteryear or an assembly line than of an architect's hand. Many hide behind the rosy illusion of sustainability (aka greenwashing) and through slick marketing campaigns that tout luxury living over any more far-sighted social agenda.

This is where communities come in. Fighting against all development is pointless, but fighting against bad development is possible. How to do this? First of all, the culture of architecture in the state has to change. The more the public knows about architecture's potential, the less it will settle for watered-down mediocrity. Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco need easily accessible centers for architecture where the public can learn more and ask questions. It needs to nurture the organizations that it has, such as the AIA, the A+D Museum, the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), and the LA Forum. None have permanent, public spaces yet, although the forum just announced plans for one downtown (inside Pugh & Scarpa's new Fuller Lofts), and SPUR is in the process of building one.

Secondly, communities need to develop forums where they can have a social agenda.

The work George did has been well documented and admired within the global architectural community. Of more than 65 completed projects, his recent work for Honda Advanced Design offered an original and inventive solution for a creative office environment using state-of-the-art technologies borrowed from the automobile industry. His larger projects in Asia, some designed in collaboration with John Parnell. His successes never overwhelmed his focus on the sensory experience of the human being. His successes had little to do with ambition and everything to do with commitment to the present moment, the project at hand, the class he was teaching, the family he was making. I say George was my teacher because he offered me something I had never glimpsed before: a man truly at peace at the end of his too-short life. George shared with me that he had come to a place of acceptance with his own death. There were no regrets, anger was not an issue, and there was a sense of peace at being a part of something greater. He was happy. This is what one needs to know about George to understand everything about him. THOM MAYNE
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A LIVING LEGEND
As the Wired-backed sequel to the LivingHome prototype broke ground in July in the posh Crestview Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles, LivingHomes CEO Steve Glenn was preparing for yet another premiere—on the big screen. Glenn penned the story that was adapted into the feature film Good Luck Chuck, a romantic comedy slated for August release starring Jessica Alba and Dane Cook. We hear the tale is based on Glenn's own life, which sounds great until you hear the premise: Cursed by a ten-year-old girl he refused to kiss, Charlie Logan has been unlucky in love ever since, and every woman he sleeps with finds true love with the next guy she meets. If this sounds appealing to any of you single ladies out there, we're pretty sure Glenn still lives (alone) in the Santa Monica LivingHome. His address and phone number are plastered all over the website.

DESIGN FOR SALE
An eBay account can get you pretty much anything these days, especially if you are in the market for one-of-a-kind architectural treasures. For instance, the entire Northern California town of Bridgeville (pop. 30), including dozens of historic buildings, is currently on offer for the low, low price of $575 million. SCI-Arc's enormous site-specific installation Dragonfly is in need of a home. The Buro Happold and EMERGENT collaboration was listed on eBay by user "Twiscombe" (that would be designer Tom Wiscombe) at a minimum bid of $15,000, but the auction closed July 4 with no takers.

ALL HAILED AT AIA/LA
Although AIA/LA president Michael Enomoto claimed its recent facelift made it an "appropriate venue" to celebrate the best in Los Angeles architecture, the ballroom at the Beverly Hilton felt more "1985 Prom" than "2007 AIA/LA Design Awards." A Lifetime Achievement Award went to Norma M. Sklarek, the first female African American architect to be licensed in the United States, and John Ruble and Buzz Yudell were awarded Gold Medals to the biggest cheers of the evening. Award wrangler Julie Taylor managed to squeeze herself into plenty of the awardee photos, and although none of the other winners made speeches, Thom Mayne felt the need to command the mic when picking up his Twenty-Five Year Award for the 2-4-6-8 House. He was upstaged, however, by a mysterious young male architect from the Morphosis team who dared strut across the stage in a rebelliously unblack denim jacket.

Exposed glue-lam wood beams each have a custom curve.

Celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck isn’t shy about opening new establishments. He now runs 14 restaurants, not to mention close to 50 Wolfgang Puck Cafes and Gourmet Expresses around the country. The seventh in Los Angeles alone is Red Seven, which opened in June on the first floor of the Pacific Design Center’s (PDC) Blue building in West Hollywood. The name refers to Puck’s seven LA eateries, and to the PDC’s planned Red building, a Cesar Pelli design that broke ground this March. The space, which seats 110, was designed by Martin Vahlra, principal at New York design firm PROJECTS. It unites a minimalist backdrop with intense, enigmatic moments. The long, rectangular space's white walls and ceilings, which subtly change heights, are reminiscent of the gallery spaces at New York's MoMA, as if Puck wanted the design to defer to the food as art galleries defer to the art. But this Zen-like atmosphere is punctuated by exciting elements: square red sofas, backlit L-shaped perforations in a black lacquer finished wood wall, an oak bar with a metal finish and flamed stone top, driftwood attached to wall niches, and a clean, laminated tempered-glass backdrop at one end of the restaurant that makes it seem larger. A simple patio in back provides a great space to see, be seen, and look at the expansive PDC in all its glory.

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A new home for contemporary Hispanic Art in Long Beach. The restored gallery spaces remain in the 1929 roller rink section of the building (called the Hippodrome, the rink was converted into a senior medical center in 1985). The lofty space’s shiny wood floors and barrel-vaulted ceiling were preserved, and it now holds about 13,000 square feet of reorganized and simplified exhibition space. A large event space at the east end of the site is built inside the old warehouse, which is connected to the skating rink with an exterior wall lined with a horizontal column of square-shaped cutouts. Outside the building is a new 15,000-square-foot sculpture park designed by Long Beach architect Chris Brown, who was managing architect on the project.

While the architecture is memorable, the art inside is equally impressive. Galleries are divided geographically (North America, Mexico, South America, etc.) and by type of art (pop art, optical art, representational art, etc.). Well-known artists include Eduardo Kingma, Enrique Chagoya, and Carlos Cruz Diez.

The museum, founded by Robert Gumbiner, is located in Long Beach’s emerging East Village Arts District. The expansion was paid for by a capital campaign that began about five years ago.

Mauricio Minotta said that the institute conducted computer simulations and ground surveys to confirm that the view wouldn’t be impacted.

"From the image that we’ve seen, we feel it does look like it intrudes on the site," said Henry Ng, the WMF’s executive vice president. "It is the land and the siting that are integral to the genius of this design." Ng added that the National Trust for Historic Preservation recently reported to the City of San Diego that the plans would intrude on the view. Local preservation groups, such as the Friends of Salk Coastal Canyon and Coalition to Save the Salk, have agreed and have pointed out that the new buildings will disturb the habitat and landscape of one of the state’s last undisturbed coastal canyons. As for the other two new buildings, Minotta noted that the future laboratories would damage the view of the Pacific Ocean from the courtyard “grossly erroneous and irresponsible.” The statement added, “The original masterplan created by Jonas Salk and Louis Kahn included future development west of the courtyard and throughout the site.” Salk’s director of communications
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Angling the addition’s facade, above, minimized its impact and made for bright interiors, above right.

Gentrification can occasionally foster good design rather than vulgar excess. As the humble cottages on narrow lots in Venice rise past the $1 million mark, the challenge for architects is to satisfy the expectations of new buyers without destroying the character of the community. Invariably, some developers have maxed out their sites with dumb boxes, but it’s exciting to see how other people have curved their greed and developed inventive solutions. Last year, three young architects collaborated on a trio of two-story additions for a young Persian couple, giving them an extra 2,500 square feet to enhance their 900-square-foot bungalow without overwhelming its more modestly scaled neighbors.

The couple works at home—he’s an entrepreneur, she’s an artist—so they wanted private work spaces, a separate area in which to live and entertain, and a rental unit for income to offset the cost of the expansion. They contacted Ali Jeevanjee, who was then working at Gehry Partners, and he brought in SCI-Arc graduates Steffen Leisner and Philip Trigas. Together they adopted a subtractive design strategy, carving away at a block that represented the total addition and redistributing it to the front, middle, and rear of the long, skinny site. To conform to code, they cut away one side to accommodate a walkway, and they angled each two-story block to maximize sunlight in the front patio and the central courtyard. The angled gray stucco facades and the opposed pitch of the three corrugated metal shed roofs introduce a lively rhythm in the progression of volumes strung out along a linear axis.

The sequence of spaces begins with the front addition, cut away to create a porch, and containing a library, study, and second-floor meditation room that includes tapering walls, an inclined ceiling, and a high window to frame the sky. This addition attaches itself to the front of the original bungalow, with its gable roof and tie rods, which is now a dining room and kitchen. Through this space one walks through a bracing arch that frames the newly attached concrete-floored living room and upstairs master bedroom. The snug bedroom borrows space from the stairwell and from the bathing and dressing area on the opposite side. At the rear of the site, beyond a wedge-plan courtyard, is the third pavilion. It contains a rental apartment at ground level and the wife’s studio above, from which a top-lit stair leads to the roof terrace, where a shutter rolls up to reveal an expansive opening framing a panoramic view over the neighborhood.

The design went through several iterations, allowing the clients to critique the models at each stage. Leisner describes the pavilions as “follies,” but each is carefully calibrated to play off the others. Not a foot was wasted and every feature does double duty or offers more than one perspective. Large and small openings are carefully positioned, and they complement expanses of blank wall. Landscaping adds another layer of richness. Water splashing from a pool in the front patio, a wide-branched olive tree, and a profusion of flowering plants are reminiscent of the land the wife left as a child, 20 years ago.

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LA AND SF IN RACE TO MAKE PRIVATE BUILDINGS LEED COMPLIANT

Los Angeles and San Francisco passed green building standards for municipal buildings in 2003 and 2004. Now both cities are getting the ball rolling where it really matters: proposing new green building standards for private development.

On June 19 the City of Los Angeles unveiled a draft proposal that would require all new buildings of 50,000-plus square feet or 50-plus units to be LEED compliant. The city also would provide financial incentives and expedited processing for LEED Silver or Gold projects. Meanwhile on July 11, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom’s new Green Building Task Force issued a report to the mayor recommending that the city use LEED standards for large commercial buildings and higher-residential buildings. The proposal calls for incentives like development bonuses, property assessment equalization, and fee reductions; and it suggests that developers meet LEED Gold standards by 2012. Neither code recommends immediately legislating green building standards for smaller buildings, although San Francisco’s proposal discusses phasing in such requirements down the line.

Despite this limitation, such standards would go a long way toward reducing the environmental impact of buildings in California, since so many large projects are privately owned. Boston is currently the only U.S. city to have adopted such standards. According to the American Institute of Architects, buildings account for nearly half of all greenhouse gas emissions and about three-quarters of all electricity generated at power plants. “Greening our building standards will help the city achieve its sustainability goals, whether it is reducing our carbon footprint, preventing urban runoff, or diverting materials from landfills,” said LA City Council President Eric Garcetti in a statement.

Both plans must be passed by their respective legislatures before moving forward. LA’s proposal would likely be drafted and ready for review by various city commissions and city council members by September or October, said Sam Siegel, Legislative Deputy for Garcetti. Mary Leslie, Los Angeles Business Council (LABC) president, predicted that it may take about six months for it to pass City Council. The San Francisco proposal must pass that city’s Board of Supervisors. The San Francisco task force is aiming for new standards to be put in place by January 2008.

The Los Angeles plan was codveloped with Global Green, a sustainable building nonprofit, and the LABC. It came after a year of discussions between members of various city agencies, and after two months of focus groups consisting of environmental groups, architects, developers, and others. The ten-member San Francisco task force, which has been meeting since last March, is made up of developers, architects, and building industry members.

LOCAL FIRM DESIGNS
OAKLAND MUSEUM EXPANSION

When it comes time to expand a major public building designed 40 years ago, whom should you hire—the architect who masterminded the original design or someone who might put a fresh spin on a building that’s already gone down in architectural history?

Earlier this year, it came time for the Oakland Museum of California, ready to expand its art and history galleries and outdoor public spaces, to decide. On the shortlist were Connecticut-based Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo, who designed the museum and park complex in the mid-1960s and continue to expand the exhibition halls. Cavagnero Associates, the local firm that created the three-phase masterplan of 2000 and completed the first phase of that plan: the 2001 addition of the Daryl Lillie Art Education Center. In the end, Cavagnero won the commission to proceed with phase two, a $53 million, 210,000-square-foot renovation funded by Measure G, a 2002 bond measure, and by contributions made through the museum’s capital campaign.

To expand the exhibition halls, Cavagnero will convert outdoor courtyards into galleries by adding a lightweight steel framework (saw-toothed to make room for clerestory windows) covered with thin zinc paneling to contrast with the heavy-ness of the existing concrete structure. The same minimalist palette will be used for canopies that will cover the museum’s outdoor walkway and cantilever out and over the stairs leading into the museum’s Oak Street entrance.

But Cavagnero wasn’t awarded the commission because he intends to make any major overhauls. Nor will he be taking any credit for Roche and Dinkeloo’s scheme, which he calls “more sensitive and finely detailed” than most Brutalist buildings of its period. “We see the changes as a series of architectural interventions showing a visible amount of reverence for the original design,” Cavagnero said. “Our work will serve as a respectful counterpoint to the amazing building that’s already there.”

JULIE KIM

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The Children's Place headquarters in Pasadena, which opened in February, is the latest in a series of inventive building transformations by West Hollywood-based Clive Wilkinson Architects. These include a warehouse in Playa Vista that houses TBWA/Chiat/Day (1998) and a downtown bank that has become an appealing study center for the Fashion Institute of Design and Marketing (2002). The Children's Place, a fast-growing toy and clothing company that acquired The Disney Store chain in November 2004, quickly outgrew its former offices in Glendale. It then leased the Royal Laundry, a linked trio of prewar buildings, and commissioned Clive Wilkinson to design a new workspace within the 81,000-square-foot shell. Worn brick walls were washed, wooden joists and a sawtooth roof were sandblasted, and the concrete floor was patched. These tactile surfaces cued the warm red, yellow, and orange tones of the sleek plastic and foam additions to come. Jennifer Wu and other members of the design team developed initial sketches to create a vibrant interior townscape, in which "neighborhoods" of open work stations alternate with casual meeting places, and enclosed conference rooms and executive offices line either side of a "main street." This axis, which extends from the low entry area to the lofty two-level space beyond, was already in place, the architects strengthening it with a sequence of eye-catching structures. One conference room is enclosed on two sides with 200 multicolored blocks of foam. These can be quickly disassembled to serve as seating for a staff meeting. At the far end of the central axis is a glowing yellow honeycomb, comprising 500 translucent plastic hexagons that are riveted together and braced to the edge of the mezzanine at the highest point. They partially enclose a meeting area and double as a display unit. "We needed a robust storage system that could organize the chaos of their fantasy world and not look foreign to it," said Wilkinson.

On July 24, House Democrats voted to approve $104.4 billion for transportation improvements nationwide, though they excluded funding in the San Gabriel Valley for extensions of the Gold Line Foothill light rail and the Alameda Corridor East freight line. This caused the termination of the projects, which are located in Republican Representative David Dreier's district, though regional support was strong on both sides of the aisle.

The Gansevoort Hotel Group (GHG) has called off the proposed Gansevoort West that was to be designed by Stephen B. Jacobs and Andi Pepper. According to GHG, after renegotiating with the Chetrit Group, "GHG will wholly own and manage the Gansevoort South hotel and condominium development in Miami. The Chetrit Group will develop the 9th Street/Grand Avenue project in Los Angeles under a different brand name; GHG will not be involved."

The Irvine City Council voted 3 to 2 on July 25 to certify Ken Smith's $27.3 million budget for his Great Park project. Part of Smith's design for the Great Park includes orange air balloons for park visitors to ride up in and view the Orange County countryside below. According to The Orange County Register, councilmember Christina Shea took issue with the balloons, which will cost an additional $370,000, as well as $2.6 million in contingency funding. Those who supported the funding saw it as a confident step forward in the park's development that preserves the design team's aesthetic.
Somehow it took until this March for sunny California to finally get a 100 percent solar-powered community. It is called Solara, a 56-unit, 2.5-acre apartment complex in Poway, California, just east of La Jolla.

Designed by San Diego–based Rodriguez Associates, with consulting by Global Green, a nonprofit environmental organization, it was developed by Community Housing Works, a San Diego nonprofit. The project’s 141-kilowatt photovoltaic panels line the roofs of all seven buildings in the complex (including a 2,100-square-foot community center), and their carports. The panels provide direct electricity during the day, and tenants collect credit from daytime solar gain to pay for nighttime use. The electricity company, said Carlos Rodriguez, usually ends up paying tenants a credit. Panel installation cost about $1.1 million, but that amount was completely offset by state and federal energy rebates and tax credits (including a California Energy Commission Rebate, a California low-income tax credit relating to solar use, and a federal investment tax credit related to solar use). Stucco-clad apartments with shed roofs are built in what Rodriguez calls a “California contemporary style” that blends textured Spanish colonial and simple modernist forms with out- door elements like trellises, balconies, patios, courtyards, archways, and gardens. Apartments are differentiated by color (ochre, a brown-toned terra cotta) to make them more individual. The complex also features public art created by local artists: rubbings are cast into concrete; an art walk is composed of colored concrete with recycled glass cast inside; three 7-foot-tall sculptures made of steel and Plexiglas form “solar quilts” that spin on a rotating axle and depict various shapes and themes.

The project, which is also 100 percent affordable housing, has the smallest carbon footprint of any apartment complex in California, exceeding all local and state requirements, said project manager Mary Jane Jagodzinski. There are additional environmentally friendly elements including fly ash in the concrete, low-flow water systems, low-E windows, passive ventilation, and a cool roof created by a radiant barrier. “It’s amazing it took this long to get a project like this built,” says Jagodzinski. “We’re still wondering why more people aren’t doing this.”

Every roof and carport is topped with photovoltaic panels at Solara, near La Jolla. The project, which is also 100 percent affordable housing, has the smallest carbon footprint of any apartment complex in California, exceeding all local and state requirements, said project manager Mary Jane Jagodzinski. There are additional environmentally friendly elements including fly ash in the concrete, low-flow water systems, low-E windows, passive ventilation, and a cool roof created by a radiant barrier. “It’s amazing it took this long to get a project like this built,” says Jagodzinski. “We’re still wondering why more people aren’t doing this.”

The AIA Los Angeles Design Awards are presented annually. This year there were 25 winners chosen from 285 entries.

GOLD MEDAL
Buzi Yudell, FAIA;
John Ruble, FAIA

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
Norma M. Stilark, FAIA

HONOR
House in West Los Angeles;
Barton Myers Associates

University of Cincinnati;
Campus Recreation Center

Morphosis Architecture

United States;
Federal Building

Morphosis Architecture

MUFG Private
Banking Office

Neil M. Denari Architects

Bubbles
Fox Lib, NONdesigns
Brand Name Label

MERIT
Santa Ynez Residence

Fredrick Fisher and Partners Architects

Lehrer Architects Office

Lehrer Architects LA

700 Palms Residence

Steven Erlich Architects

Wayne Lyman Morse

United States Courthouse

Morphosis Architecture

Beuth Residence

Studio Pali Fekete architects (SPF:a)

OpenHouse

XTEN Architecture

Ralph Duke & Tobi Tobin, Interior Designers

FORNARINA London

Giorgio Bonnaso Design

Ocean Park Housing

Michael W. Forson, AIA & Associates

VOICE

One-Window House

Touchea Richmond Architects

Ministructure No. 16/

Book Bar

Michael Maltzan Architecture, Inc

Glencoe Residence

Marmol Radziner and Associates

Billy Wilder Theatre/

UCLA Hammer Museum

Michael Maltzan Architecture

Griffith Observatory

Pfeiffer Partner Architects

& Levin & Associates

Architects

UCLA Eli and Edythe

Broad Art Center

Richard Meier & Partners

Architects

AX.LIVE/WORK

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MODAA

(Museum of Design Art

and Architecture)

Studio Pali Fekete

architects (SPF:a)
Except for the hum of a distant jackhammer, it is strikingly quiet on the Christ the Light Cathedral's construction site in downtown Oakland. Strips of wood—100 feet long—sit neatly stacked along one edge of a wide staging area that will soon become Cathedral Plaza. A mason attends to an imperfection in the surface of a concrete wall that is otherwise unblemished. Beyond the Harrison Street thoroughfare, the midday sun glints on the surface of Lake Merritt.

The setting seems impossibly peaceful for a large urban construction site, where one might expect thoughts to be drowned out by loud hammering or the incessant beeping of reversing construction vehicles. But then again, this former 2½-acre parking lot—the future site of a $190 million, 224,000 square-foot campus for the Diocese of Oakland—already has the air of a sacred place.

Its focal point now, as it will be when the complex opens in fall 2008, is a soaring cathedral, a pair of inwardly-facing arcs whose paths delicately meet along the rim of an eye-shaped roof 120 feet in the air. The roof shape mimics the outline of the vesica piscis, a Christian symbol derived from the intersecting points of two identical circles. The arcs are made of pre-cut Douglas fir glulam beams, long curved ribs that comprise the cathedral's inner structure.

To tilt them into place a worker used a cable to grip the base of each rib while a crane hoisted to its tip, lifted it to meet the steel ring along the roof's perimeter, and held it steady while another worker secured the latch. A similar process was used to erect the cathedral's outer structure. The grid of wooden mullions will soon be shrouded in patterned glass panels—fully transparent in some areas and translucent in others—to add a final layer of mystery to the experience within.

Even now, with the structure exposed, the sight of the sacred building bears a dramatic contrast to the profane world of the 19th Street BART station three blocks away. "People should be aware that they are proceeding out of one world and into another. We tried to make that transition slow and distinct," explains Craig Hartman, the cathedral's architect and a partner in Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's San Francisco office.

The procession, up a sloped site, past a meditation garden, and into a large piazza like gathering space, culminates at the cathedral's entrance, a shaded foyer positioned at the southernmost point of the building's massive reliquary wall. Here, inside the oval-shaped concrete ring that surrounds the 21,600-square-foot sanctuary, the proportions are cozy.

Similar to a Gothic cathedral, the width of the nave is deliberately narrow to contrast with the expansiveness of the church's main sanctuary and to draw attention upward toward the baptismal font and up toward the ceiling, where a circular skylight reveals the heavens. Yet a view from the nave also reveals the prismatic truth: Here in the Bay Area, even the most sacred buildings are subject to earthbound catastrophe. Christ the Light replaces St. Francis de Sales, a Norman Gothic style church on San Pablo Avenue that was irreparably damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. One can peer into the cathedral's seismic "moat," a 3-foot gap in the foundation that allows the entire base to shift laterally in any direction. The system also uses a set of curved sliders attached to structural footings to separate the building's movement from the ground. During an earthquake, the sliders slip around on a concave steel plate and move back to their original locations, automatically readjusting the weight of the building when ground movement ceases.

As I craned my neck to look at the roof, it all started to come together: the porous image of Christ, glowing walls, a set of wooden arcs meeting along the outline of the vesica piscis. For a moment, I pondered the significance of the 100-foot height frame, before looking to Hartman for its symbolic origin. "I think that's the longest piece that could fit on a flatbed truck," he answered, as if to remind me that making other-worldly architecture is nonetheless ever subjected to everyday limits.

Hartman explains. Their surfaces will be constructed of large aluminum panels comprised of interconnected triangular flaps. Each flap on the "alpha" wall will be fixed into a unique position to let in a small amount of light that will in turn reflect off of the inner surface of a neighboring flap: the effect will transform the southern exposure into a softly glowing surface. By contrast, the "omega" wall panel will be perforated with 94,000 small holes that—when backed by diffused northern sunlight—will reveal a pixelated portrait of Christ. Hartman crafted the iconography to be abstract: "We didn't want there to be one image that says, 'This is what the church is.' Instead, we wanted people to have the ability to read into it what they wish."

"If I tried to make that transition—" Hartman says, "I would say, 'This is what the church is.' Instead, we wanted people to have the ability to read into it what they wish."
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With sprawl reaching its breaking point, at least for the time being, California’s largest cities—Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego—are about to experience an unprecedented proliferation of highrises. Each city has at least 15 new skyscrapers planned, most of them luxury condominiums. Below is a selection of the latest that have not already appeared in these pages. Many are in downtown areas, although a few are scattered in lower-density zones. Of course skyscrapers, with their high overhead and corporate clients, are often unadventurous exercises in high-end branding. And some of the new projects, with their generic names, blocky forms, and derivative styles, prove that point. At the same time, there is some pioneering architecture, too, showing off creative manipulation of form and structure, or even the latest construction technologies, high efficiency energy systems, and accessibility to transit and street level retail. A few are by elite architects like Pei Cobb Freed, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Robert A. M. Stern, Frank Gehry, and Arquitectonica.

But along with the promise comes new pressure on infrastructure that was never intended to support such density. That is, if these towers are built. Real estate experts appear confident that there is still room for development. But common wisdom suggests that the epic amount of construction is evidence of an overheated market that will have to contract, leaving some of these new skyscrapers partially empty until the market catches up. It’s a brave new world out there, at least, for the risk tolerant.

**Los Angeles**

**City House**
- Architect: Robertson Partners Architects
- Developer: The Titan Organization
- Height: 60 Stories
- Completion: 2010

The mixed-use, LEED Silver City House will be built with a concrete core, faced with cut-limestone from top to bottom, roofed with clay-tile and copper. The building will include a five-star hotel and commercial retail.

**Glass Tower**
- Architect: DeStefano + Partners
- Developer: Kalantari Group
- Height: 23 stories
- Completion: In construction documentation phase

The massing of the residential building is a simple rectangle, except at the corner where the oversized, stacked glass cubes will reflect the urban environment.

**The Century**
- Architect: Robert A. M. Stern
- Developer: Related Companies
- Height: 42 stories
- Completion: Early 2010

Situated on four acres in the heart of Century City, the 140 condominiums at The Century (a LEED certified building) will be comprised of two-to-four-bedroom residences and full- and half-floor penthouses and townhouses.

**717 West Ninth Street Tower**
- Architect: Mambo Architecture
- Developer: Meruelo Maddux Properties
- Height: 35 stories
- Completion: Early 2009

The tower, which will offer 214 loft-style units in the South Park district, will feature a glass curtain wall system using a blue-green staggered pattern to resemble a cascading waterfall.

**717 Olympic**
- Architect: RTKL
- Developer: The Hanover Company
- Height: 26 stories
- Completion: Spring 2008

Located on the northeast corner of Figueroa and Olympic, adjacent to the Staples Center and LA Live, 717 Olympic’s contemporary exterior will have floor-to-ceiling windows throughout.

**Concerto**
- Architect: DeStefano + Partners
- Developer: Sonny Astani
- Height: Two 28-story towers
- Completion: 2009

While the towers will have a modern glass facade, the ground-level spaces will be built with the materials, texture, and color of the existing historical buildings in the neighborhood.

**Park Tower**
- Architect: Kanner Architects
- Developer: CIM Group
- Height: 42 stories
- Completion: Unknown, in EIR phase

The building will have a double-height retail space at its base, while at its top ribbon of glass will extend from the east and west curtain walls and loop over the uppermost floor, forming a translucent roof.

**1250 Club View**
- Architect: Koating/Khang Architects
- Developer: Fifield
- Height: 22 stories
- Completion: 2009

An ultraluxury estate condominium tower comprised of 35 units over 22 stories.

**Vue**
- Architect: CMIA Architects
- Developer: Carlisle Gabay
- Height: 16 stories
- Completion: September 2008

Vue’s rectangular blocks mimic the stacked containers typical of nearby port of LA. Vertical elements take their cue from cranes, and floor-to-ceiling blue-green glass symbolize the ocean and sky.

**Compiled by:** Alissa Walker, Javier Arbona, Kimberly Stevens, Sam Lubell
**SAN FRANCISCO**

**MILLENIUM TOWER**
Architect: Handel Architects
Developer: Millennium Partners
Height: 60 stories
Completion: April 2009

Handel Architects designed a cool blue box and then sliced the top at opposing angles, giving the soaring tower a crystal-like quality. Aluminum fins will climb across the facade in a monumental ribbon pattern that spans over the slabs.

**ONE RINCON HILL NORTH AND SOUTH TOWERS**
Architect: Solomon Cordwell Buenz & Associates
Developer: Urban West
Height: 54 stories (South); 45 stories (North)
Completion: 2008 (South); 2009 (North)

The Rincon Hill pair will stand on a prominent bay-side mound. One Rincon Hill South will be taller; its height will be tempered by a bright white "grill" of multi-floor openings set on the vertical.

**201 FOLSOM STREET**
Architect: Heller Manus
Developer: Tishman Speyer
Height: 45 stories; 36 stories
Completion: Undetermined

In accordance with the city's Rincon Hill plan, 201 Folsom has a "traditional" neighbor- hood-scale base from which two squarish towers will rise. The corners will break apart into double-story balconies with glass faces.

**THE CALIFORNIAN AT RINCON HILL**
Architect: Keating Kang
Developer: Trifed Companies
Height: 42 stories
Completion: 2009

A defining moment as motorists approach the city on the Bay Bridge, the unusual tower will feature glass and balcony features on top of a town-house base.

**1333 Gough**
Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
Developer: Arco Group
Height: 38 stories
Completion: Unknown

If approved, this condo tower with retail at ground level will be on axis with the city's famous paraboloid-inflected St. Mary's Cathedral. Above the base would rise evanescent skin in an oval plan seemingly dematerialized towards the top.

**555 MISSION STREET**
Architect: KPF and Heller-Manus
Developer: Tishman Speyer
Height: 34 stories
Completion: 2008

In the vicinity of Cesar Pelli's JP Morgan Chase building, 555 Mission could be a great complement with its shiny mullions and lofty overlap of curtain walls, shearing the simplicity of the box.

**INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL**
Architect: Patri Merker
Developers: Hambrecht + Quist
Architect: Hampshire Properties/Continental Development Corporation
Height: 32 stories
Completion: 2008

This hotel will offer about 550 rooms near the Moscone Convention Center. Reflective glass and gigantic top-to-bottom pilasters recall Las Vegas Strip architecture. Facades of wavy glass resemble rippling water.

**555 MISSION STREET**
Architect: KPF and Heller-Manus
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**BLU**
Architect: Handel Architects
Developer: Malcolm Properties and Lennar Urban
Height: 21 floors
Completion: June 2008

The less private living areas face the front of this 21-story tower, all covered by a seemingly delicate flap of glass. The box slims down to allow sunlight into the public grounds adjacent to the project.

**SAN DIEGO**

**ELECTRA**
Architect: Chris Dikeakos Architects
Developer: Bosa Development
Height: 43 stories
Completion: January 2008

Electra will be the tallest residential building in San Diego and will incorporate the original San Diego and Gas Electric company buildings at its base.

**BAYSIDE AT THE EMBARCADERO**
Architect: ARC Design International
Developer: Bosa Development
Height: 36 Stories
Completion date: August 2009

Located adjacent to a major transit corridor downtown, this 36-story tower is surrounded by four levels of apartments and town homes along the street front. Its slender profile will include a setback at the 29th floor for an open view corridor.

**700 WEST BROADWAY**
Architect: Henry Cobb
Developer: Irvine Company
Height: 34 stories
Completion: Undetermined

The 34-story modern travertine and glass office building downtown will be adjacent to the Santa Fe depot and across the street from Lane Field.

**HILTON SAN DIEGO CONVENTION CENTER**
Architect: John Portman & Associates
Developer: Portman Holdings and Phelps Development
Height: 30 Stories
Completion: Undetermined

The tower hotel will be elevated at entry level to provide views of the bay from the main lobby and to allow direct pedestrian access to the waterfront.
In sync with California’s renewed interest in urban density and the rehabilitation of its decaying downtowns, a number of large-scale planned communities are sprouting up on the outskirts of the Golden State’s metropolitan areas, and they have an approach to planning that emphasizes community over the individual, walking over driving. In this issue, we highlight three of the most ambitious.

**UNIVERSAL VILLAGE**

**DEVELOPER:** NBC UNIVERSAL WEST COAST REAL ESTATE, THOMAS PROPERTIES GROUP

**ARCHITECTS:** MOORE RUBLE YUDELL, RIOS CLEMENTI HALE

NBC Universal recently unveiled its new “Vision Plan” to revitalize and expand Universal City—a 391-acre hilltop property adjacent to North Hollywood containing its television and film studios, Universal Studios Theme Park, and Universal City Walk. The plan will improve studio production facilities, freshen up and expand its theme parks and shopping facilities, add a 500-room hotel and a 3,000-seat theater, and upgrade parking and circulation. It will also include a 124-acre housing development.

Dubbed Universal Village, the new housing development (above) will include 2,900 units in low-rise townhouses and lofts grouped around courtyards. Housing for studio employees is also being considered. Tree-lined residential streets will connect to a town center with 100,000 square feet of commercial and retail space. NBC Universal has planned in addition 35 acres of open space anchored to the Los Angeles River by a trailhead park that feeds a system of trails zigzagging up the hillside.

Moore Ruble Yudell principal Buzz Yudell described building types as “diverse” and said that his team would look to the regional context and culture for inspiration. Universal Village will be submitted as a pilot project for the new LEED Neighborhood Development rating with green elements, including a comprehensive transit plan, open park space, landscaping with native plants, proximity of housing to businesses, and an integrated stormwater management system. The masterplan also emphasizes pedestrian and bike-oriented pathways. According to NBC Universal, a circulation system is being developed that connects to regional transportation and a community shuttle that would run on alternative fuel.

**CENTENNIAL**

**DEVELOPER:** TEJON RANCH COMPANY

**ARCHITECTS:** PARDEE HOMES/STANDARD PACIFIC HOMES

Centennial is planned as a new 23,000-home town about 60 miles north of Los Angeles. The 20-year phased plan, which will begin in 2009, calls for the construction of about 1,000 homes per year. The final tally includes 12,800 single-family homes, 6,200 attached condominiums and townhomes, and 4,000 apartments. Neighborhoods will be comprised of separate pedestrian-scaled villages connected by trail and shuttle to that will contain homes, shopping, parks, civic facilities, and recreational opportunities.

The community has plans for up to 12 million square feet of “employment-producing uses,” including retail shops, medical and professional offices, restaurants, entertainment venues, and schools.

Architecture will include a mix of regional housing styles, and the landscape will emphasize native plants and trees. Almost half of Centennial’s 11,700-acre site will be set aside as permanent open space with 21 parks, and an active system of trails, greenways, and pedestrian paths.

**HOLLYWOOD PARK**

**DEVELOPERS:** WILSON MEANY SULLIVAN AND STOCKBRIDGE REAL ESTATE FUNDS

**ARCHITECTS:** COOPER ROBERTSON & PARTNERS

Just three miles east of LAX in Inglewood, Hollywood Park (right) has been a thoroughbred racetrack and popular Los Angeles fixture for nearly 70 years. Once land-use entitlements are complete, the racetrack will shut its gates forever and construction will begin on a 238-acre mixed-use masterplan that includes a 120,000-square-foot casino, 3,000 residential units, 360 hotel rooms, 620,000 square feet of retail space, and 75,000 square feet of commercial space. There will also be 25 acres of open space and four acres of civic-use space. The project brief doesn’t include an affordable housing component or mention sustainability. However, there is ample space planned for commercial and office use, which would provide job opportunities for residents within their community.

ALISON MILLIONIS
In Europe, multifamily housing has long attracted the best architectural talent, and good design is available at all price levels. Not so in Los Angeles, where people still dream of single-family homes and commute to distant tracts to find something affordable. Young architects are lucky if they can secure a few one-off commissions, and most apartment buildings—including the so-called “luxury” towers on Wilshire Boulevard—have all the distinction of filing cabinets.

LA developer Richard Loring is trying, in a modest way, to change the equation. An architect turned contractor, who moved to LA from his native Michigan in 1981, he established the construction firm Archetype, which specialized in high-end residential projects, including several by the late Franklin Israel. “After 20 years, I wearied of doing what’s known as ‘gut work’ and more and you have to exercise restraint to make a profit and draw in more investors,” he says. Most of the 19 apartments in O’Herlihy’s Kings Road project (adjoining the Schindler House) have been presold at $1.1 million, a price that engendered greater flexibility in design than in developments where condos go for about $650,000. Even at that lower price architects have found ways to vary the mix. “The 12 units of Whitsett [in Studio City], are very pared-down, but we were able to incorporate double-height rooms and a slatted redwood screen,” points out Zoltan Pali of SPF:a. And on Detroit Avenue, Pali of SPF:a. And on Detroit Avenue, are very pared-down, but we were able to incorporate double-height rooms and a slatted redwood screen.”

Habitat for Humanity is everywhere apparent, notably in the historicist kitsch of Alan Casden’s developments at Park La Brea and Westwood Village. It’s hard to imagine who would want to live in such eyesores but comforting to know that a new paradigm has emerged. Habitat has commissioned some of LA’s best architects, including Lorcan O’Herlihy, SPF:a, Jeff Stefeners, and Predock, Frane Architects, to build in West Hollywood, Studio City, Glendale, and Pacific Palisades. “It’s a challenge to do good modern work—there’s nowhere to hide. It costs more and you have to exercise restraint to make a profit and draw in more investors,” he says. Most of the 19 apartments in O’Herlihy’s Kings Road project (adjoining the Schindler House) have been presold at $1.1 million, a price that engendered greater flexibility in design than in developments where condos go for about $650,000.

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**THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2007**

**AUGUST**

**SATURDAY 18**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Carrie Ann Baade, Fiona Hewitt, Corey Sandelson, Nicolae Veratto, Trevor Young
Billy Shire Fine Arts
5790 Washington Blvd., Culver City
www.billyshirefinearts.com
Lauren Bon
Bees and Meast
ACE Gallery
Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art
5614 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.acegallery.net
Tyson Reeder
Jack Hanley Gallery
945 Sun Mun Way., Los Angeles
www.ajackhanley.com

**FRIDAY 7**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Jenny Wunderly
Julie Baker Fine Art
246 Commercial St., Nevada City
www.juliabakerfineart.com
Veronika Kellendorfer
Lichtspiel
Christopher Grimes Gallery
916 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica
www.cggrimes.com

**SATURDAY 8**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Allison Miller
ACME
6150 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.acmelesangleles.com
Karl Benjamin
Daniel the Line
Louis Stern Fine Arts
9002 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles
www.loustithineartseas.com
Koh Byoung Ok
Andrew Shire Gallery
3850 Wilshire Blvd., #107, Los Angeles
www.andrewshiregallery.com
Sherie Rennert
Jancar Gallery
3875 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1308, Los Angeles
www.jancargallery.com
Tetsu Nishiy
Blum & Poe
2754 South La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles
www.blumandpoe.com
Teo Gonzales
d.e.n. Contemporary Art
6023 Washington Blvd., Culver City
www.denccontemporaryart.com

**SUNDAY 9**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Angela Cartwright
Soul Dwellings
A Studio Gallery
4280 Lankershim Blvd., Studio City
www.astudigallery.com
Gil Garcetti
Women, Water and Wells
Fowler Museum of Art
205 Charles East Young Dr., Los Angeles
www.fowler.ucla.edu

**WEDNESDAY 12**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Martin Schoeller
Institute of Contemporary Art
9430 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills
www.acca.org

**THURSDAY 13**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Edward Weston's Love/Hate Relationship with Los Angeles
7:00 p.m.
The J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr., Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

**SATURDAY 15**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Catania
Gallery C
1225 Hermosa Ave., Hermosa Beach
www.galleryc.com

**SATURDAY 22**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Nieves Book Art
Jack Hanley Gallery
945 Sun Mun Way., Los Angeles
www.ajackhanley.com

**SUNDAY 23**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

SOUNDWAVES: the ART OF SAMPLING
Museum of Contemporary Art of San Diego
700 Prospect Street, La Jolla
September 23 to December 30

DJs aren’t the only geniuses at sampling—artists are getting in on the action, too. In this exhibition of around 30 sound-related artworks, all sorts of cultural materials get the remix treatment. The beeps, rings, clicks, and dialogue of phone calls from famous Hollywood films come together in a rhythmic audiovisual collage. In Christian Marclay’s Telephone: To create The Diva Surgery, Dario Robleto took the idea of mixing records to an extreme. He shreded albums by singers such as Ella Fitzgerald and Patsy Cline, placing the remnants in vials in a playfully absurd scient experiment to distill the essence of female soul music. Celeste Bourrier-Mougenot’s Untitled series #3 (above) evokes sampling’s reliance on fortuitous combinations. His instruments are bowls and glasses that swirl and gently collide in motor-driven currents in three wading pools, which act as low-tech amplifiers for the chimes. It might not rock a club: it’s as soothing as church bells.

**SEPTEMBER**

**TUESDAY 4**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Nicole Fein
Nelisse Bettjens
Hosfelt Gallery
460 Clementina St., San Francisco
www.hosfeltgallery.com

**WEDNESDAY 5**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Clare Rojas
Miguel Branco
Gallery Paule Anglim
14 Geary St., San Francisco
www.gallerypauleanglim.com

**THURSDAY 6**

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

Max Neufeld, Bob Roan
The Un-definition of Time
Artspace Gallery
11 West Anapamu St., Santa Barbara
www.artsmagallery.com

**STREET CRED San Francisco: Architecture and the Pedestrian Experience**

AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaisf.org

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**DIARY ARCHPAPER.COM**
Edward Booth-Clibborn is making a reputation for having his finger on the pulse of the vibrant, youthful art, and design scenes in cities as far-flung as Moscow, Berlin, and "718" (aka Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx). His latest endeavor, *Phoenix: 21st Century City*, covers that long unnoticed global capital of culture: Phoenix, Arizona. Uh, Phoenix? One might be hard pressed to come up with Phoenix as the logical fourth in that series of world-class cities. But Booth-Clibborn is determined to convince us that there is indeed an emerging art, fashion, graphic design, furniture, product design, and architecture scene there in the worlds of visual culture. Phoenix, Arizona.

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Booth-Clibborn's introduction clarifies how this book undeniably differs from its predecessors—it features an emerging, as opposed to an established, city. Nevertheless, it is in keeping with his agenda: to call attention to specific cities as places with unique creative cultures. Nan Ellin's foreword, "Phoenix 21: Desert Metropolis," together with the introduction, offers valuable insight to the city's explosion in recent decades, the changing demographic and culture of the place, the emerging art scene, and the development of a particular "Arizona School" of architecture. The text is extremely informative and paints a picture of a place hopping with activity and full of potential.

Sadly, the cultural density and vibrancy referred to in the text is hard to locate in the physical realities of both Phoenix, the place, and PHX, the book. Miles separate the people, places, and events described. And although these moments of intensity do exist, the book reinforces the emptiness of Phoenix's physical space through the photos it presents as the graphic glue between types of content. Highlighted are the endless suburban developments of single-family homes extending out into the desert, iconic images of palm trees, local youths on skateboards, and '50s neon signage in kitschy graphic compositions are more reminiscent of high school yearbooks. What PHX does a nice job of is introducing us to a select number of local architects, artists, and designers. Their work is presented through glossy photos, some in elaborate four-page spreads, accompanied by minimanifestos and project statements that are so limited as to be almost pointless: a short statement, a project name, a list of materials, not much more. Talented architects featured include several established firms, such as Jones Studio Inc., DeBartolo, and Will Bruder; younger firms, such as Richard + Bauer Architecture, Manwan Al-Sayed, CoLab, and blank studio; ASU faculty member Darren Petrucci; and landscape's representative, Chrissey Ten Eyck. A few are homegrown firms, but many, like the general population, are transplants from elsewhere, drawn here by potential, previous employers, or just a passion for the severity of the desert.

Most of the projects are strong and exude a lean, mean modern spirit, with a spartan material palette, infused with a sense of playfulness. For those looking to escape from the land of balloon-frame construction and Cape Cod cottages, Phoenix might seem like Shangri-la. Desert Modern is everywhere! But don't forget the interstitial pages featuring pseudo-Spanish colonials and trailers, which make up much of Maricopa County's built environment. Likewise the

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**MEMORY, PLACE, AND MYSTERY**

**Hiroshi Sugimoto**  
*de Young Museum*  
*50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive*  
*San Francisco*  
*Through September 23*

Japanese photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto doesn't do anything casually. He claims to ruminate on ideas for years before sharing them with anyone. Even his humorously titled lecture, "The History of How I Have Suffered at Spaces Designed by Star Architects," given at the de Young Museum on July 6, had a sly agenda. His critique of impractical museum architecture ultimately illuminated his own gift for amplifying each venue's poetics through his installations.

Hiroshi Sugimoto, the artist's first major retrospective, currently on view at the de Young, is remarkable. The museum's subterranean gallery bows to Sugimoto, and he takes full advantage. Rather than counterpointing daylight-filled glass boxes (Jean Nouvel's Fondation Cartier in Paris) or an absence of vertical walls (Daniel Libeskind's Crystal at the Royal Ontario Museum), Sugimoto completely shrouds the gallery's geometry in darkness and uses carefully applied light and gray forms to craft a series of dreamlike realms.

The shadowy setting is particularly suited to Sugimoto's haunting black-and-white photographs, which he began creating shortly after he arrived in New York in 1974. Each of his series explores themes of time, memory, and perception.

The atmosphere is subtly playful at first, with Sugimoto's alluring photos of natural history dioramas and meticulous re-creations of 14th-century portraits using Madame Tussaud's elaborate wax figures. But the twists of seemingly real
It is hard to imagine today that a religious figure—let alone a nun—in the Catholic Church—would be an important pop culture artist. But in the 1950s and '60s, Sister Mary Corita (aka Frances Elizabeth Kent), a member of the Immaculate Heart Convent in Los Angeles, was one this country's most inventive graphic and poster artists. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installation-like works in the Catholic Church—would be family-friendly.

Julie Ault, an artist, cultural activist, and curator, has brought Sister Corita's work back to our attention in her book *Come Alive: The Spirited Art of Sister Corita*. Ault makes the point that Corita (along with Berrigan, who also wrote a critical history of the American Catholic Church) helped create a dynamic liberal orientation for her religious community and define a modern role for female religious figures in the church. However, while many of her progressive efforts to move the Catholic Church into the modern world have been abandoned by popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, we still remember her for the power of her graphic images.

Her best work in the 1960s used rich vibrant colors, exploded shapes, and words—many of them taken from commercial advertising. But Corita was also influenced by the vernacular culture of Southern California. The processions she organized in 1964 for Mary's Day and for a march that took place in front of the Watts Towers, featuring young women wearing brightly patterned and colored skirts and blouses and carrying posters made in Corita's print-making workshop, are clearly influenced by Mexican Day of the Dead parades. The vibrant and kinetic colors in these processions are as striking as the Marimekko dresses Corita favored when she disposed of her nun's habit, and they became visual highlights of the California pop movement. Corita credits Charles Eames as a major influence, and Ault claims that in turn Corita influenced artists as diverse as Ed Ruscha and Mike Kelly.

If Corita is little known today it has less to do with her convent lifestyle than with the fact that she rejected the art gallery system, which she saw as elitist, deliberately pricing her unnumbered editions of serigraphs, postcards, disposable exhibits, and murals very low, or simply giving them away free to churches, community centers, galleries, and fairs.

Corita was a unique figure in American art—an artist who grasped the beauty in the everyday and synthesized the two in ways that became a kind of pop wallpaper in America, as familiar as the commercial signs she copied. While she may have left her home in the church, she deserves a place in our cultural history, and this book provides a worthy start.

**WILLIAM MENKING**

**PHOENIX RISING**

continued from page 21

Selection of artists' work is extremely diverse, and there are some real treats to be discovered. But for the artists, we are given similarly scanty information: no references to find these folks, no posters or alternative spaces where the work might be shown, or to where the work might be shown, or to where the work might be shown, or to where the work might be shown, or to where the work might be shown, or to where the work might be shown, or to where the work might be shown.

Marwan Al Sayad's House of Earth and Light (left).
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Birdair, an international fabric roofing company, recently introduced TiO2, a titanium dioxide membrane that is as scientifically savvy as its name and green, too. This non-toxic tensile material is like a giant taut leaf that provides shade and works as a photo-catalyst, absorbing UV radiation from the sun, oxygen, and water vapor to create oxygen ions that break pollutants down into natural elements. TiO2 comes in 12’-foot-wide strips that can be used for small projects such as a table umbrella or connected together to cover a vast football stadium. There are three varieties of varying strength, thickness, and translucency. The thickest, the Ever Fine Coat (above), hovers over a playground at Sanuki Mennon National Government Park in Japan.


In Construction: Christ the Light Cathedral (p. 14): The concrete for the Church of Light was supplied by Webcor Concrete, 31145 San Antonio St., Hayward CA 94544, 510-476-2500, www.webcorconcrete.com. The glulam structural members were created by Western Wood Structures, P.O. Box 130, 29675 SW 109th St., Tualatin, Oregon 97062, 503-892-6900, www.westernwoodstructures.com.

GRA lighting fixture
Terzani
www.terzani.com
Designed by Bruno Rainaldi, this lighting fixture is composed of more than two hundred hand-welded metal rings intertwined in a shimmering orb. Its name, GRA, is an acronym for Grande Raccordo Anulare, the ring road that loops around Rome. Available in two styles, an oval fixture that’s around 20 inches wide and 9 inches high, or a 35-inch-wide sphere (above), these globes come in plated nickel, or a silver or gold leaf finish. It’s part of Terzani’s new Light is Queen collection, which features fixtures from Rainaldi and other designers, including Giulio Iacchetti and Prospero Rasulo. GRA and other products in the collection combine contemporary design with the time-honored Italian craft of hand welding.

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ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE
A duopoly has seized our cities. The marriage of politics and development has spawned huge, placeless projects that exist to repay their national and global backers for the added cost of doing business with urban politicians. The same politics are draining the life out of everyday projects, too. The result, across the board, is a deadening sameness. Even modest projects that would have sailed through entitlements a generation ago have fallen into a “case by case” hell of scrutiny by planning officials, neighborhood activists, and others with personal and political axes to grind. This expensive, drawn-out process affects local developers; building, restaurant, and shop owners; and ordinary citizens. It sucks design right out of most projects, as the rise of architect “fixers” attests. The best known of these firms make no secret of their ties to influential politicos. Their stock-in-trade is their ability to get projects approved with the developer's pro forma intact. The deals they help broker are one reason for the current crop of bulked-up buildings—to pay for the concessions the politicians extract from developers in exchange for their support. What has this cost us? Consider San Francisco’s Rincon Hill, littered now with oversized, overpackaged exercises in reductive commercial modernism, of which One Rincon is the crowning example—one of the city’s tallest and most visible towers, clad in what looks like men’s room tiling. Outside the core, the same thing is happening at midrise scale, except that the look is crass, inflated genre traditionalism. Take downtown Berkeley—almost every new housing project built there in the last decade falls into this category, making a theme park pro forma Intact. The deals they help cut our cities off from the main source of their vitality—the people who live there.

The Real Wealth of Cities
That demonic energy is ascendant in virtually every other sphere. It has transformed the entertainment industry by allowing filmmakers and musicians to find their audiences directly and giving them back the means of production. We see the same thing in food and wine, as consumers understand the connection between their culinary pleasures and the astonishing variety and fecundity of our regions’ networks of small-scale producers. These traditions are alive. We need to revive their equivalent in city making, freeing development from the grip of politicians and policy makers who see everything new as an excuse to exact their price or impose their taste. There are instances of governments serving as enlightened patrons. Much more often, though, what gives us pleasure in our cities is the result of smaller acts of patronage and risk-taking—the same grassroots force that’s driving our revolutions in food and entertainment. By increasingly dictating the look and feel of our cities, at every scale, politicians and officials are making it harder and harder for this creative energy to find physical expression. This is robbing our cities of their authenticity—increasingly, they look the same, feel the same, are the same.

This is not an argument for laissez-faire, but for a return to the rule of law in urban development. At a time when we need to add density and connect people to transit, we also need to be sure that what we’re building adds up to real places that make room for many actors and actions—not just for the long-rehearsed acts of a self-chosen few. Even as cities grow denser, they still should allow for constant human influence, whether we’re talking about a vibrant streetscape, the expressive torso of a well-scaled building, or a greenhouse of terraces and balconies. They need to be sufficiently open-ended so that we, the people, can shape and reshape them. That’s our right as citizens and as city dwellers.

JOHN PARMAN writes for San Francisco's Line (www.linemag.org) and Urbanist.

View of Lincoln Hill and South of Market in San Francisco.

It’s the same story at street level. For at least part of the year, the indoor/outdoor living our cities offer needs a porosity and mutability to accommodate it—roofs and balconies that come to life every spring, storefronts that open out to side-patios, and open spaces that neighborhoods can make their own. Providing this was part of our urban tradition, a kind of common law to which cities and people adhered instinctively. It was lost as our cities grew larger, and politicians and planning officials exercised more and more control over development. The resulting imbalance in the development process has cut our cities off from the main source of their vitality—the people who live there.

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