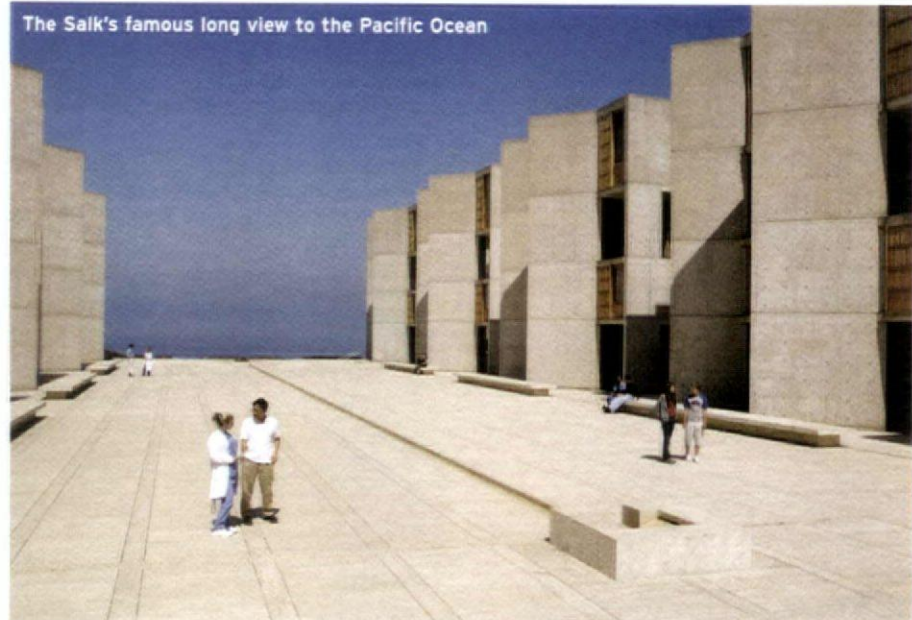


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The Salk's famous long view to the Pacific Ocean

COURTESY SALK INSTITUTE

PLANNED EXPANSION LANDS SALK INSTITUTE ON ENDANGERED LIST

DON'T BLOCK THAT VIEW

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

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 that **continued on page 6**



A LONG BEACH MUSEUM OPENS DRAMATIC EXPANSION

MOLAA

HOLY? MOLAA!

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 **continued on page 6**

GO WEST, DEVELOPERS!
MEGAPROJECTS AND SKYSCRAPERS ON THE RISE ACROSS THE GOLDEN STATE PAGES 16-19

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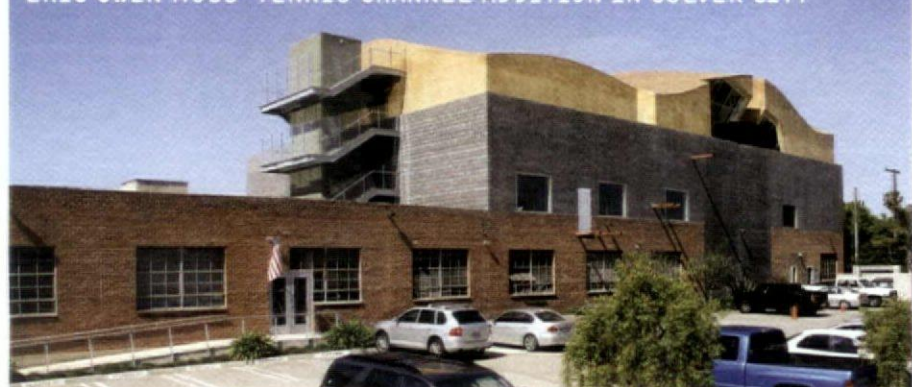


GEORGE YU,
1964-2007

COURTESY CAROL YU

I met George Yu at UCLA in 1988 when I served on his thesis jury. Very shortly thereafter I hired him to work with me at Morphosis, where he stayed for a few years before venturing out to start his own design practice, George Yu Architects. About a year after **continued on page 3**

ERIC OWEN MOSS' TENNIS CHANNEL ADDITION IN CULVER CITY



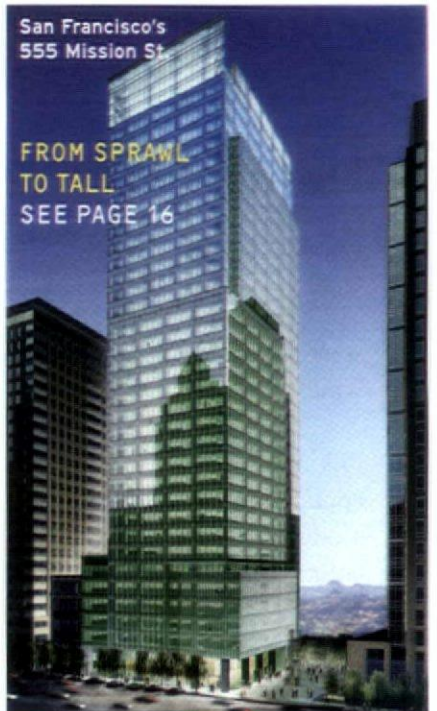
ERIC OWEN MOSS ARCHITECTS

ABOVE THE FRAY

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 & Backlash).

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 Baths 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 **continued on page 5**



San Francisco's
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FROM SPRAWL
TO TALL
SEE PAGE 16



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Kneejerk 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 townscapes 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. California'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 voice. New York's community boards are legendary for fighting development monstrosities and putting heat on the planning department. San Francisco has a similar system. But cities like LA and San Diego have barely organized. Creating forums like these may be a futile task this late in the game, but we won't know unless we try.

Thirdly, the various planning departments themselves need to stand up to developers and set the agenda. They need to revise long out-of-date masterplans that were created with developers' priorities in mind; they need to create an environment that is open to innovation in a state that—despite its liberal reputation—often rejects change; they need to develop a regional spirit and cohesion in an atmosphere where each municipality is concerned only with itself. California is full of architects just waiting to prove that innovative (and not always expensive) development is still possible. We'll only find out whether it's possible if we help ourselves.

GEORGE YU, 1964-2007 continued from front page receiving his devastating cancer diagnosis, George asked if he could stay in my apartment in New York while he was there alone on business. The apartment is not much, but it has a lot of architectural memorabilia and an amazing 32nd-floor view of Midtown Manhattan.

He spent several quiet days there, he told me, walking all over the city, gazing at the amazing evening skyline from the apartment. We had lunch when he returned to Los Angeles, and he reported that he had had an epiphany while he was there. George said the world had never looked more beautiful to him. Everything was in sharp relief, the sounds, the sights, the colors, the life of the city.

He said, "Thom, I am happy." This was an astonishing statement from a dying man—it is a memory that will stay with me forever. I could not immediately understand how that simple sentence could possibly be true, but then I started to think about the George that I knew. He was a man who lived in the present moment, who spent little time worrying about what was ahead of or behind him.

He worked, he had amazing talent and facility, he was a gifted communicator and teacher. He was a generous and thoughtful friend and partner. It was all of those qualities that were beginning to bring him the success he so richly deserved in all arenas of his life—more work, more friendship, deeper relationships with family and friends.

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 but not realized, reveal the maturing of a gifted talent whose interest in digital and technological design strategies was clear, yet 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 a thing of the past, he had an absolute confidence that everything would be okay for those he was leaving. He was happy. This is what one needs to know about George to understand everything about him. **THOM MAYNE**

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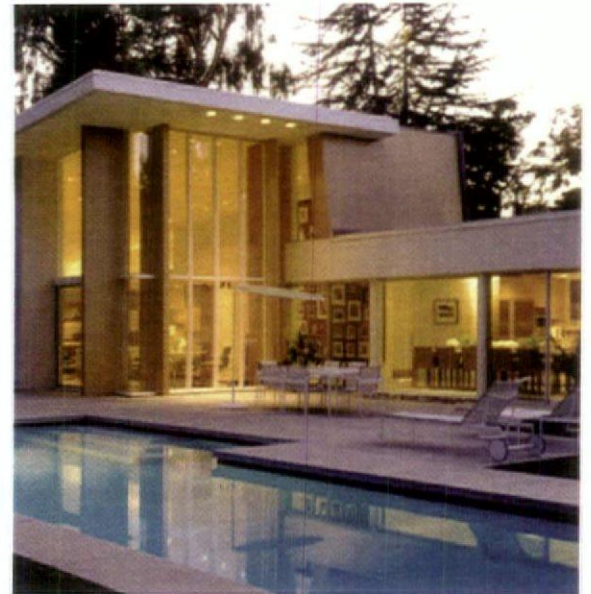
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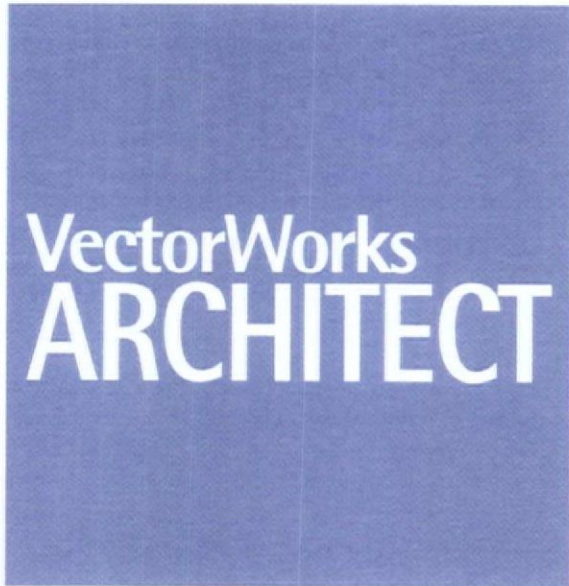


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A LIVING LEGEND

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

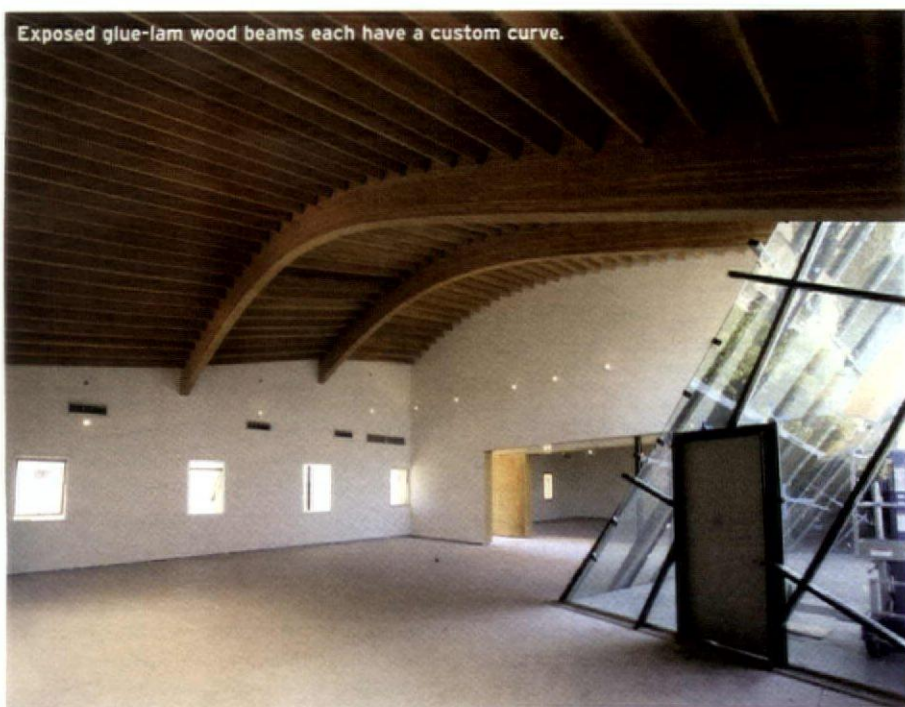
An eBay account can get you pretty much anything these days, especially if you are in the market for one-of-a-kind architectural treasures. For instance, the entire Northern California town of Bridgeville (pop. 30), including dozens of historic buildings, is currently on offer for the low, low price of \$1.75 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.

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



ERIC OWEN MOSS ARCHITECTS

ABOVE THE FRAY continued from front page structures. "It's the next generation of conceptual assembly," said Moss, who is known for making buildings that are as much experiments in building methods as they are architectural sculptures. Spraying the fiber-glass allowed the architect to avoid using separate pieces, panels, or joint fittings, and saved significant amounts of money.

The building's core structure is made of a series of long glulam wood beams and CNC milled joists, each with a unique curva-

ture, made off-site, directly from Rhino computer models. The beams are exposed on the interior, providing a dramatic backdrop for the facilities, which are loosely divided by the building's curves but still left very open. On the north side, a dramatic glass-and-steel fault thrusts outward, acting as a small gathering space with views toward projects like *Stealth* and *Beehive*. Employees can also gather on the uncovered roof spaces and look out over the expanding architectural empire that is Hayden Tract. **SAM LUBELL**

OPEN > RESTAURANT

> RED SEVEN

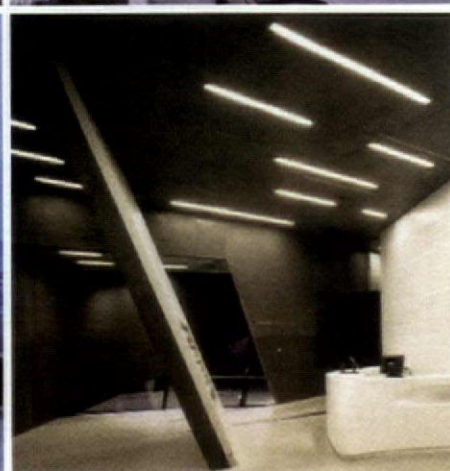
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COURTESY WOLFGANG PUCK

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 Vahtra, 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 zenlike 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.

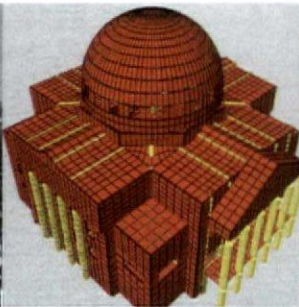


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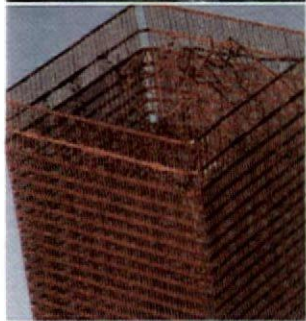
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MOLCAETE continued

from front page surprisingly small. Its 20,000 square feet of space consisted of a renovated warehouse and former roller skating rink-cum-medical-center. The only museum in the western United States to feature exclusively contemporary Hispanic art, it was easy to miss.

No more. This June the museum opened a \$10 million expansion designed by Mexican architect Manuel Rosen, with a contemporary look guaranteeing that no one will drive by without noticing. The project doubles the privately owned museum's overall space to 40,000 square feet, providing such new facilities as a library, a gift shop, a screening room, an art studio, and an additional 15,000-square-foot sculpture garden.

The blonde stucco building (recalling adobe structures as well as the sand of the nearby beach) is set in a rocky, desertlike landscape

and highlighted by two 40-foot-tall square arches that rise above the facade and meet in the middle. One arch represents the Latin American population, the other represents the American population, said Rosen, who worked on the project for about eight years. Outdoor spaces and structures include a Barraganesque waterfall, a reflecting pool, and a blue cylinder-shaped structure that holds the museum's new offices. Blue and purple, pointed out Rosen, are often seen in Mexican villages, as are the blue fins (in steel) that provide shade and help unify the horizontal lines of windows.

The building's canopied entry—set at a 45 degree angle to enhance its presence from the street—welcomes visitors into a large lobby, whose tall ceilings seem even taller thanks to a hanging aluminum ceiling that seems to float. To its west are new offices. To the east

A new home for contemporary Hispanic Art in Long Beach.

the restored gallery spaces remain 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 Kingman, 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.

SL

DON'T BLOCK THAT VIEW continued from front page separates the institute's two Kahn-designed concrete research buildings.

The community center is part of an update to the 1962 masterplan. Developed by NBBJ last year, the masterplan will help accommodate a research staff that has almost quadrupled since the Salk's founding. The plan still needs funding and city approval. It also includes a new laboratory building to the east of the main complex and a support center for researchers and their families to the southwest. In a report, WMF officials note that these plans have been criticized because the support center includes a "fitness and day care center... uses never intended by Kahn," while the science center is a "big box" building "obscuring the public's view of the Kahn building from Torrey Pines Road."

In a statement, the institute called the WMF's claim that the new development 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

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 not look like it intrudes 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 will have a glass atrium in their center to allow views to the original building, while the support center is a necessary element for families. "They always wanted residential space for visiting scientists. They couldn't predict there would be families with children who would need to put families in day care," he said.

SL



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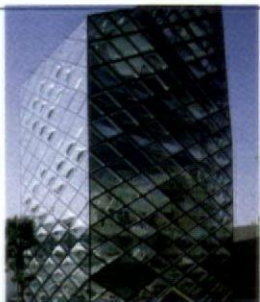
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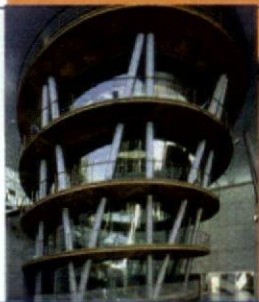
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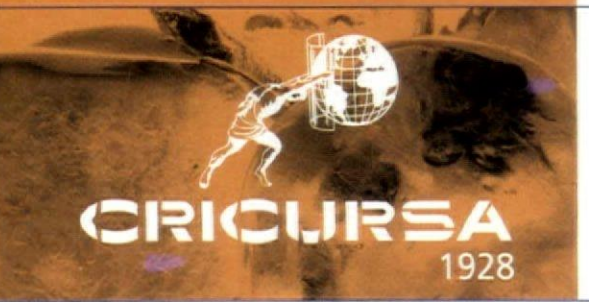
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Angling the addition's facade, above, minimized its impact and made for bright interiors, above right.

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. Inevitably, some developers have maxed out their sites with dumb boxes, but it's exciting to see how other people have curbed 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



CHRISTOPHER CULLITON

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

GOING PRIVATE

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 would also 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 highrise 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

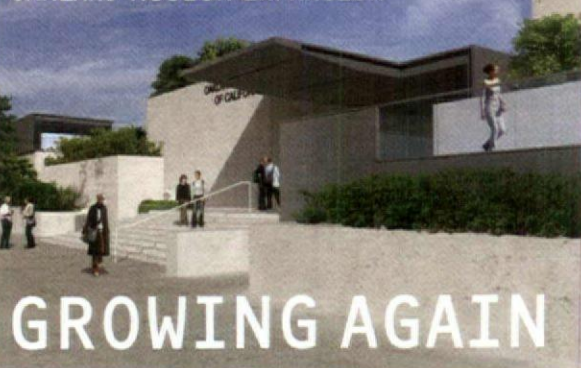
nearly half of all greenhouse gas emissions and about three-quarters of all electricity generated at power plants.

"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 codeveloped 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. **SL**

LOCAL FIRM DESIGNS OAKLAND MUSEUM EXPANSION



GROWING AGAIN

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 con-

sulted on the feasibility of the museum's masterplan in 2000. So, too, was Mark 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 con-

vert outdoor courtyards into galleries by adding a light-weight steel framework (saw-toothed to make room for clerestory windows) covered with thin zinc paneling to contrast with the heaviness 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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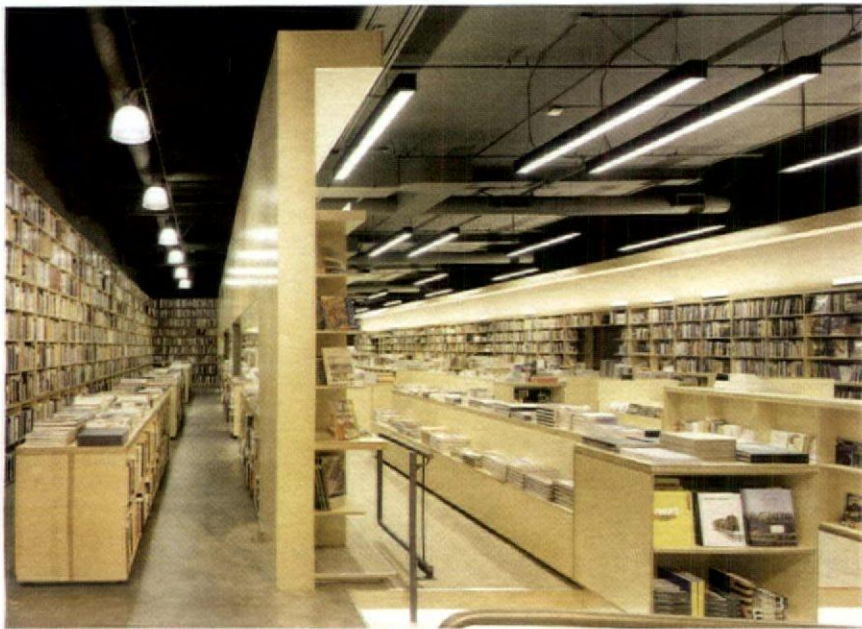
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THE CHILDREN'S PLACE HQ IN PASADENA

FOR WORK OR PLAY?



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. **MW**

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AT DEADLINE

CALI VALLEY SKIPPED

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.

GANSEVOORT NIXES LA

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."

UP, UP, AND AWAY

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.

CALIFORNIA'S FIRST SOLAR APARTMENT COMPLEX



COURTESY COMMUNITY HOUSING WORKS

SOLAR GAIN, EVERYONE WINS

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-

Every roof and carport is topped with photovoltaic panels at Solara, near La Jolla.

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." SL

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AIA LOS ANGELES 2007 DESIGN AWARDS

The AIA Los Angeles Design Awards are presented annually. This year there were 25 winners chosen from 385 entries.

GOLD MEDAL
Buzz Yudell, FAIA;
John Ruble, FAIA

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
Norma M. Sklarek, 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 Lin, NONdesigns
Brand Name Label

MERIT
Santa Ynez Residence
Frederick 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
Randolph Duke & Tobin,
Interior Designers

FORNARINA London
Giorgio Boruso Design

Ocean Park Housing
Michael W. Folonis,
AIA & Associates

CITATION
One-Window House
Touraine 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

AK LIVE/WORK
Sant Architects

Rip Curl Canyon
Ball-Nogues Studio

Helios House
Office dA & Johnston
Marklee

Redelco
Pugh + Scarpa Architects

Orange Grove Lofts
Pugh + Scarpa Architects

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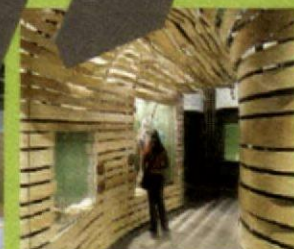
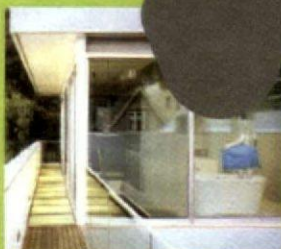
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The soaring 120-foot-high roof, left, at the new cathedral in Oakland is made of Douglas fir glulam beams, below left. A model of the luminescent interior, below right

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 glimmers 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 hooked onto 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 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 primordial truth: Here in the Bay Area, even the most sacred build-

ings are subject to earth-bound 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 recentering the weight of the building when ground movement ceases.

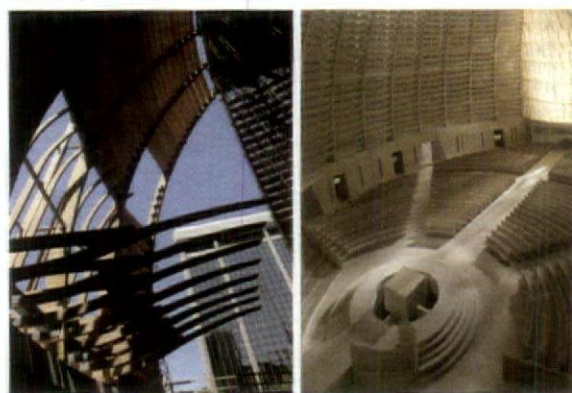
Once inside the sanctuary, Hartman talks in metaphors. He describes the concept behind the prefabricated "alpha" and "omega" walls, installed in the cone-shaped voids above the entryway and behind the altar. "These represent larger ideas of beginning and ending, creation, and last judgment,"

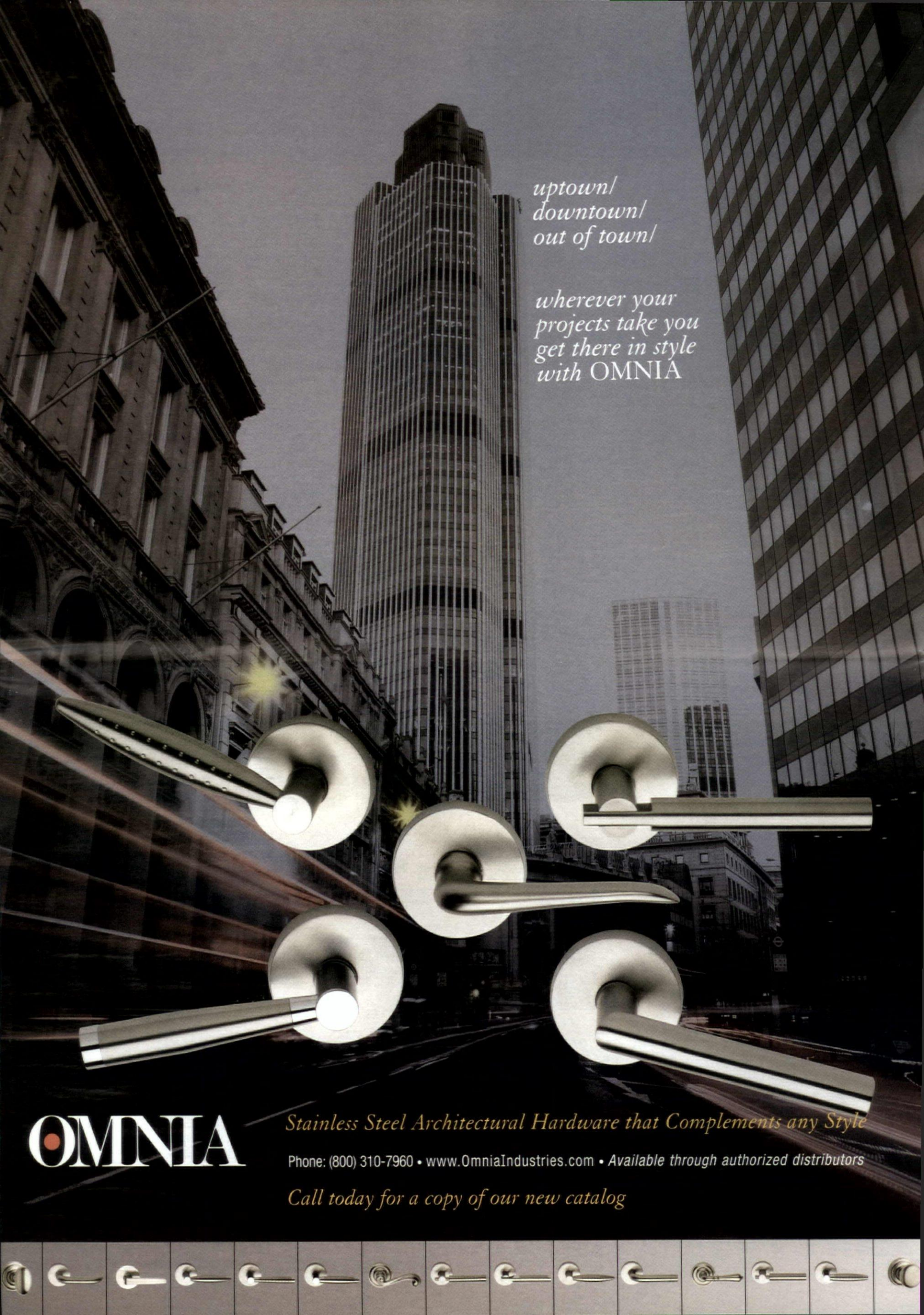
Hartman explains. Their surfaces will be constructed of large aluminum panels comprised of interconnected triangular flaps. Each flap on the "alpha" wall will be fixed into a unique position to let in a small amount of light that will in turn reflect off of the inner surface of a neighboring flap: the 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 backlit 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."

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.

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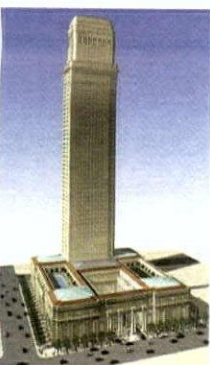
With sprawl reaching its breaking point, at least for the time being, California's largest cities—LA, San Francisco, San Diego—are about to experience an unprecedented proliferation of highrises. Each city has at least 15 new skyscrapers planned, most of them luxury condominiums. Below is a selection 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 condos, luxurious interiors, and amenities like pools and roof decks are often the goal with architecture as an afterthought. However, there is some pioneering architecture, too, showing off creative manipulation of form and structure, alternative 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.

The influx of vertical living and working space promises to transform the entire region into a denser, more urbane landscape.

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.

COMPILED BY: ALISSA WALKER, JAVIER ARBONA, KIMBERLY STEVENS, SAM LUBELL.

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.



THE CENTURY

Architect: Robert A. M. Stern Architects
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.



PARK TOWER

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

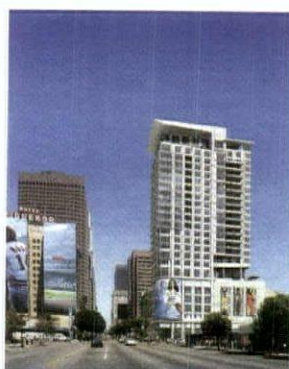
The building will have a double-height retail space at its base, while at its top ribbons of glass will extend from the east and west curtain walls and loop over the uppermost floor, forming a translucent roof.



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-and-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.



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.



1200 CLUB VIEW

Architect: Keating/Khang Architecture
Developer: Fifield
Height: 22 stories
Completion: 2009

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



VUE

Architect: GMPA Architects
Developer: Carlisle Galaxy San Pedro
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.

SAN FRANCISCO



MILLENNIUM 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 facades 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 multifloor openings set on the vertical.



201 FOLSOM STREET

Architect: Heller Manus
Developer: Tishman Speyer
Height: 45 stories; 35 stories
Completion: Undetermined

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



INFINITI

Architect: Arquitectonica with Heller Manus
Developer: Tishman Speyer
Height: (Spear St.) 42 stories; (Main St.) 37 stories
Completion: March 2009

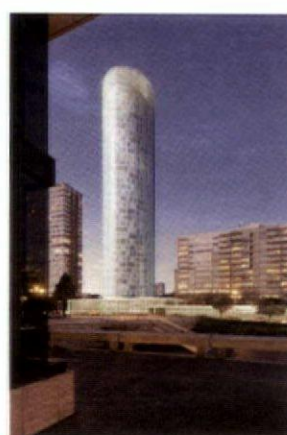
Infiniti's two soaring glass walled towers and two treetop podiums will house 650 new luxury condominium residences.



THE CALIFORNIAN AT RINCON HILL

Architect: Keating Khang
Developer: Fifield 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: Adco 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 Architects and Hornberger + Worstell
Developer: 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.



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.



VANTAGE POINT CONDOMINIUMS

Architect: S2 Architecture
Developer: The Pointe at Balboa
Height: 42 stories
Completion: 2009

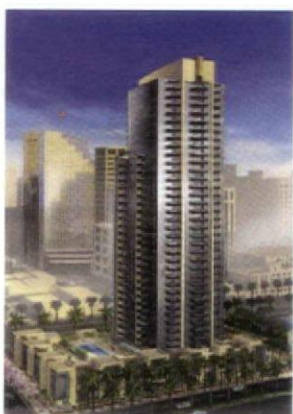
The gateway entry of the project will be identified by a plaza water feature, while the building mass will step primarily from south to north enabling views in all directions.



ONE LIBRARY CIRCLE

Architect: Austin Veum Robbins Partners
Developer: Avion and Centurion
Height: 41 stories
Completion: Undetermined

This mixed-use highrise will include five stories of below-grade parking and a configuration including 124 two-bedrooms, 28 one-bedrooms, and eight three-bedrooms.



BAYSIDE AT THE EMBARCADERO

Architect: ARC Design International
Developer: Bosa Development
Height: 36 Stories
Completion date: August 2009

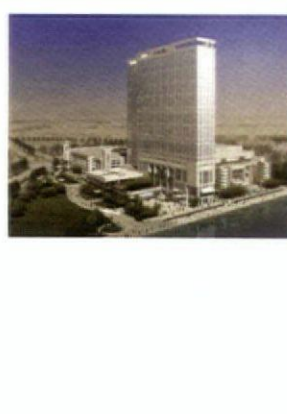
Located adjacent to a major transit corridor downtown, this 36-story tower is surrounded by four levels of apartments and town homes along the street front. Its slender profile will include a setback at the 29th floor for an open view corridor.



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.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2007

Three giant developments, California-style

New Towns



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/PLANNERS: 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 storm water 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
ARCHITECT: PARDEE HOMES / STANDARD PACIFIC HOMES

Centennial (right) 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 town homes, and 4,000 apartments. Neighborhoods will be comprised of separate pedestrian-scaled villages (connected by trail and shuttle) 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.

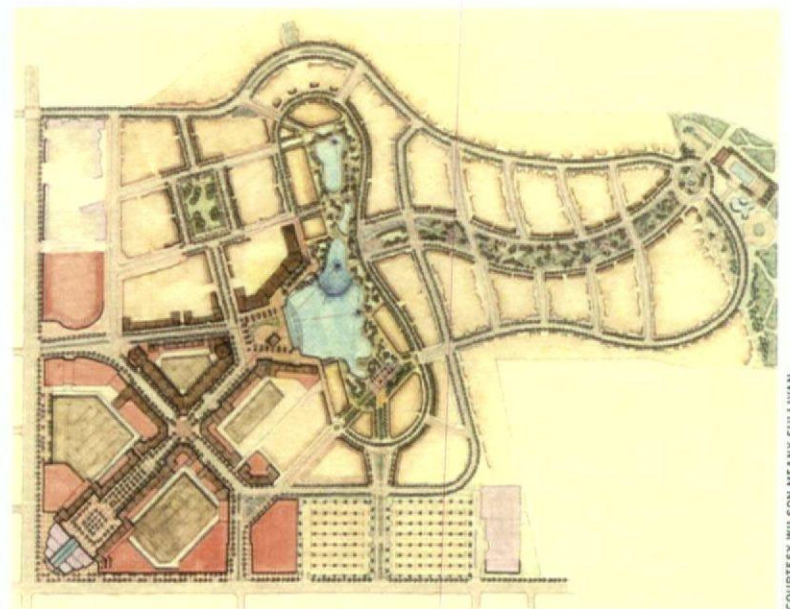
Architecture will include a mix of regional housing styles, and the landscape will emphasize native plants and trees. Almost half of Centennial's 11,700-acre site will be set aside as permanent open space with 21 parks, and an active system of trails, greenways, and pedestrian paths.

HOLLYWOOD PARK

DEVELOPER: WILSON MEANY SULLIVAN AND STOCKBRIDGE REAL ESTATE FUNDS ARCHITECTS
MASTERPLAN: 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, 300 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.

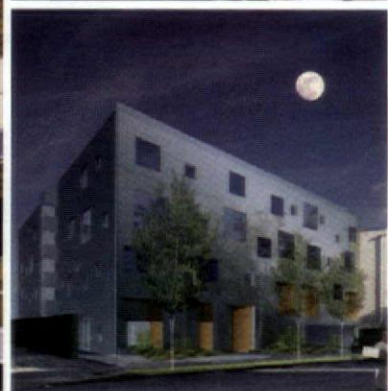
ALLISON MILIONIS



COURTESY NBC UNIVERSAL

COURTESY TEJON RANCH COMPANY

COURTESY WILSON MEANY SULLIVAN



COURTESY LORCAN O'HERLIHY ARCHITECTS; PREDOCK FRANE ARCHITECTS; SPF:a

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 prototypical homes,” says Loring, who recalls the pleasure of living in Mies van der Rohe’s Lafayette Park community in Detroit. In 2002, he founded Habitat (named for Moshe

Safdie’s 1967 landmark in Montreal) to develop architect-designed condominiums. Five buildings have been completed, five more are in design or construction, and more than 200 units are in the pipeline.

By establishing a model for others to follow and confirming that there’s an enthusiastic (and profitable) market for good design, Loring is following in the footsteps of John Entenza and his Case Study House program. The optimism and idealism that inspired Entenza’s venture thrived in the 1960s, and the subsequent retreat into an imagined past 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 Stenfers, 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.

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 in Hollywood, Hadrian Predock and John Frane created interlocking apartments in four different configurations within a simple 15-unit box. “As a former architect, Richard has more sympathy for the design process than the typical developer,

and he has the vision to take even greater risks,” says Hadrian Predock, principal at Predock_Frane.

Though real estate is in the doldrums and housing starts are down, Loring sees a bright future for his niche market. “Single-family houses are becoming unattainable,” and many childless couples don’t want the hassle of maintaining a house and find condos more desirable, he says. “The prejudice that modernism is cold and unfriendly disappears when buyers experience the apartments. Everybody likes the natural light, fresh air, and feeling of calm. We use a lot of color and wood cabinets to bring a feeling of warmth.”

The biggest obstacle for Loring and his peers is community opposition to growth. Residents in desirable neighborhoods contest every change in zoning, in part because of the dumb boxes that have already been dumped on them. Locals fought the Kings Road project and there is now a moratorium on development in R3 and R4

Gardner 1050 (above, left) by architect Lorcan O’Herlihy was completed in 2006, while the Detroit Street Housing (above, right) by Predock_Frane is under construction. The interiors at Whitsett by SPF:a are pared down but have double-height rooms (top right).

zones of West Hollywood. Planners and politicians have long urged the need for densification, especially along transportation corridors, but they defer to their constituents. “LA needs more courageous political leadership,” says Loring. “It’s bound to grow—how does one handle that intelligently?”

Habitat respects neighbors by not maxing out its sites, but it’s currently building its first midrise building (in Hollywood) and expects to go higher in future. “Now that we no longer have this field to ourselves, we have to differentiate our product,” says Loring. “We’ll continue to upgrade construction, branch into mixed-use, and focus on sustainability. But we have no masterplan; it’s one step at a time.”

MICHAEL WEBB

LA developer makes good design a top priority

The Architect’s Developer

AUGUST

SATURDAY 18

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Carrie Ann Baade, Fiona Hewitt, Corey Sandelius, Nicola Verlato, Trevor Young
Billy Shire Fine Arts
5790 Washington Blvd.,
Culver City
www.billyshirefinearts.com

Lauren Bon Bees and Meat
ACE Gallery

Los Angeles Institute of
Contemporary Art
5514 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.acegallery.net

Tyson Reeder
Jack Hanley Gallery
945 Sun Mun Way,
Los Angeles
www.jackhanley.com

WITH THE KIDS

Kiel Johnson, Christian Tedeski
ARKidTECTURE:
Crazy Clubhouse
10:00 a.m.
Architecture and
Design Museum
5900 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.aplud.org

FRIDAY 24

EXHIBITION OPENING

Brian Dewan, Leon Dewan
The Habit of Innovation
Another Year in LA
2121 North San Fernando Rd.,
#13, Los Angeles
www.anotheryearinla.com

THURSDAY 30

Neil M. Denari Architects
On the Map: Alan House
3434 South Bentley Ave.,
Los Angeles
www.laforum.org

SEPTEMBER

TUESDAY 4

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Nicole Fein
Nelleke Beltjens
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 Neufeldt, Bob Roan
The Un-definition of Time
Artamo Gallery
11 West Anapamu St., Santa
Barbara
www.artamogallery.com

STREET CRED San Francisco:
Architecture and the
Pedestrian Experience
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

FRIDAY 7

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Jenny Wunderly
Julie Baker Fine Art
246 Commercial St.,
Nevada City
www.juliebakerfineart.com

Veronika Kellndorfer
Lichtspiel

Christopher Grimes Gallery
916 Colorado Ave.,
Santa Monica
www.cgrimes.com

SATURDAY 8

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Allison Miller
ACME.
6150 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.acmelosangeles.com

Karl Benjamin

Dance the Line
Louis Stern Fine Arts
9002 Melrose Ave.,
Los Angeles
www.louissternfinearts.com

Koh Byoung Ok

Andrew Shire Gallery
3850 Wilshire Blvd., #107,
Los Angeles
www.andrewshiregallery.com

Sherie Franssen

Jancar Gallery
3875 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1308,
Los Angeles
www.jancargallery.com

Tatzu Nishi

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.dencontemporary
art.com

SUNDAY 9

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Angela Cartwright
Soul Dwellings
A Studio Gallery
4260 Lankershim Blvd.,
Studio City
www.astudiogallery.com

Gil Garcetti

Women, Water and Wells
Fowler Museum of Art
208 Charles East Young Dr.,
Los Angeles
www.fowler.ucla.edu

WEDNESDAY 12

EXHIBITION OPENING

Martin Schoeller
Institute of Contemporary Art
9430 Wilshire Blvd.,
Beverly Hills
www.acegallery.net

THURSDAY 13

LECTURE

Beth Gates Warren
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

EXHIBITION OPENING

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

SATURDAY 15

EXHIBITION OPENING

Josh Agle
Conspicuous Consumption
Billy Shire Fine Art
5790 Washington Blvd.,
Culver City
www.billyshirefinearts.com

SUNDAY 16

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Cosima von Bonin
Roger and Out;
Gordon Matta-Clark
You Are the Measure
Museum of
Contemporary Art
250 South Grand Ave.,
Los Angeles
www.moca.org

SATURDAY 22

EXHIBITION OPENING

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

SUNDAY 23

EXHIBITION OPENING

Soundwaves:
The Art of Sampling
Museum of Contemporary
Art of San Diego
700 Prospect St., La Jolla
www.mcasd.org

THURSDAY 27

LECTURE

David Adjaye
San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art
151 3rd St.
www.aiaf.org

FRIDAY 28

EXHIBITION OPENING

Jamie Isenstein
Hammer Projects
Armand Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

SUNDAY 30

EXHIBITION OPENING

Francis Alÿs
Politics of Rehearsal
Armand Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

OCTOBER

WEDNESDAY 3

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Takehito Koganezawa
Artforum Berlin
Christopher Grimes Gallery
916 Colorado Ave.,
Santa Monica
www.cgrimes.com

THURSDAY 4

EXHIBITION OPENING

Dali & Film
Los Angeles County
Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Ave.
www.lacma.org

FRIDAY 5

EXHIBITION OPENING

Barbara Zucker
Another Year in LA
2121 North San Fernando Rd.,
#13, Los Angeles
www.anotheryearinla.com

SATURDAY 6

LECTURE

Cory Buckner
A. Quincy Jones
6:30 p.m.
St. Michael of
All Angels Church
3646 Coldwater Canyon Ave.,
Studio City
www.makcenter.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Will Rogan
Jack Hanley Gallery
395-389 Valencia St.,
San Francisco
www.jackhanley.com

SATURDAY 13

EXHIBITION OPENING

Virginia Holt
Jancar Gallery
3875 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1308,
Los Angeles
www.jancargallery.com

SUNDAY 14

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Patrick Chisholm
A Studio Gallery
4260 Lankershim Blvd.,
Studio City
www.astudiogallery.com

FRIDAY 19

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Carl Andre
Institute of Contemporary Art
9430 Wilshire Blvd.,
Beverly Hills
www.acegallery.net

Melissa Kretschmer

Institute of Contemporary Art
9430 Wilshire Blvd.,
Beverly Hills
www.acegallery.net

SATURDAY 20

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Anton Henning
Christopher Grimes Gallery
916 Colorado Ave.,
Santa Monica
www.cgrimes.com

Michael Hakimi, Jacob Dahl

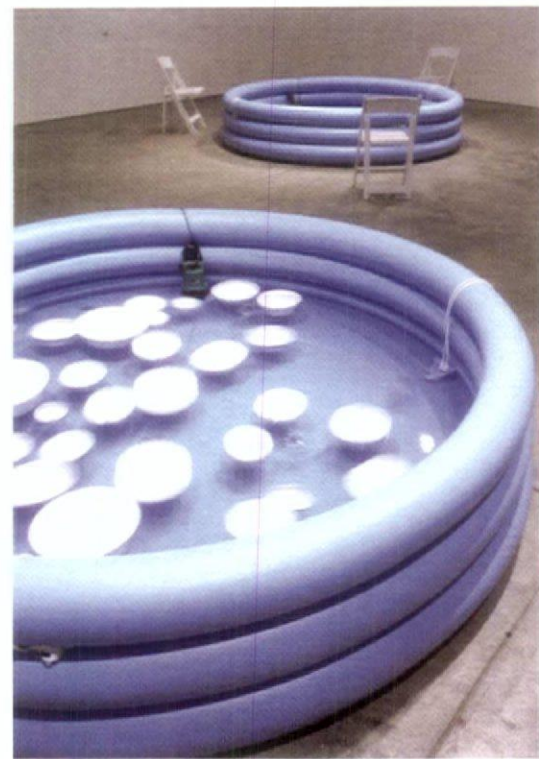
Juergensen, Bernd Ribbeck
Anna Helwing Gallery
2766 South La Cienega Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.annahelwing
gallery.com

SUNDAY 21

EXHIBITION OPENING

Robert Irwin
Primaries and Secondaries
Museum of Contemporary
Art of San Diego
1001 Kettner Blvd., San Diego
www.mcasd.org

LIST YOUR
EVENT AT
DIARY@
ARCHPAPER.
COM



PABLO MASON

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 *Telephones*. To create *The Diva Surgery*, Dario Robleto took the idea of mixing records to an extreme. He shredded albums by singers such as Ella Fitzgerald and Patsy Cline, placing the remnants in vials in a playfully absurd science experiment to distill the essence of female soul music. Céleste Boursier-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.



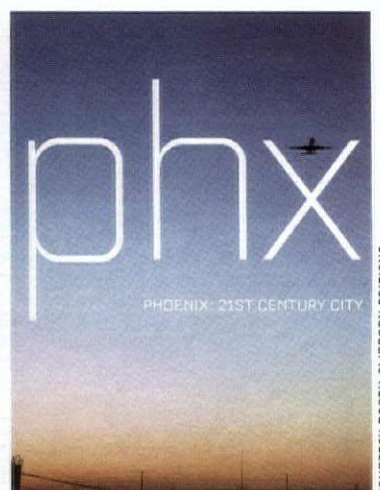
VERONIKA KELLNDORFER

LICHTSPIEL
Christopher Grimes Gallery
916 Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica
September 7 to October 13

Artists have long been fascinated with windows, whose frames lend themselves to surreal plays on reality and illusion. This exhibition features nine photos by German artist Veronika Kellndorfer, whose portrayals of windows of modernist Los Angeles residences tantalizingly play with reflection, multiplying some views but obscuring others. Her subjects include the Charles and Ray Eames residence, the Samuel Freeman house by Frank Lloyd Wright, and John Lautner's residence in Silver Lake (above). Kellndorfer's photo of the latter yields little view inside but captures a window's reflection of the exterior garden and woodwork. To prepare her photos for display, she converts them into silk screens and paints them onto huge glass panels, which offer reflections of their own, placing the viewer inside the image. These dissolutions of boundaries artfully embody the quality of modernist architecture that sought to converge inside and outside.

PHOENIX RISING

Phoenix: 21st Century City
Edward Booth-Clibborn
Booth-Clibborn Editions, \$49.95



Jones Studio's south mountain community (left).

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 scene there in the worlds of visual

art, fashion, graphic design, furniture, product design, and architecture.

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 devel-

opment 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 photographs 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:

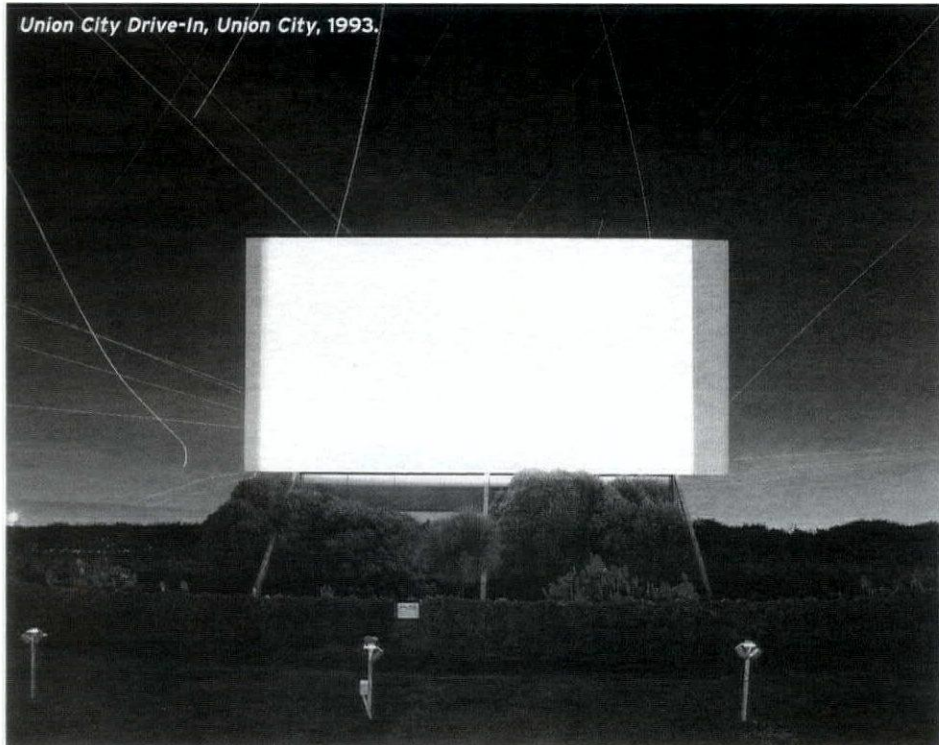
a short statement, a project name, a list of materials, not much more. Talented architects featured include several established firms, such as Jones Studio Inc., DeBartolo, and Will Bruder; younger firms, such as Richärd + Bauer

Architecture, Marwan Al-Sayed, CoLab, and blank studio; ASU faculty member Darren Petrucci; and landscape's representative, Chrissy 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 **continued on page 22**

Union City Drive-In, Union City, 1993.



MEMORY, PLACE, AND MYSTERY

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

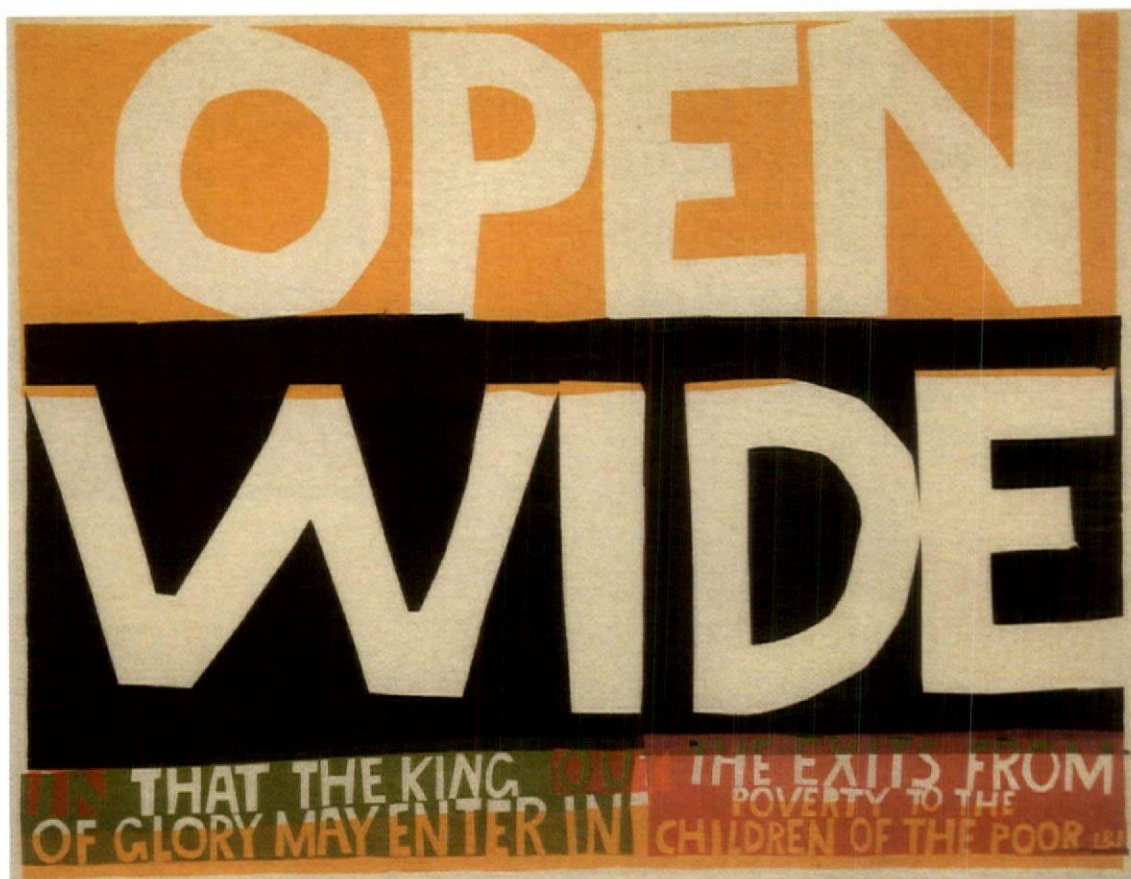
Japanese photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto doesn't do anything casually. He claims to ruminate on ideas for years before sharing them with anyone. Even his humorously titled lecture, "The History of How I Have Suffered at Spaces Designed by Star Architects," given at the de Young Museum on July 6, had a 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 countering 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 illusory photos of natural history dioramas and meticulous re-creations of 14th-century portraits using Madam Tussaud's elaborate wax figures. But the twists of seemingly real **continued on page 22**



COURTESY CORITA ART CENTER IMMACULATE HEART COMMUNITY; SERIGRAPH PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOSHUA WHITE

THE DRAWING NUN

Come Alive! The Spirited Art of Sister Corita
Julie Ault
Four Corners Books, \$29.95

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 of this country's most inventive graphic and poster artists. She created scores of memorable images: anti-Vietnam War protest signs, installationlike art exhibits, and book covers for such liberal Catholic poets as Daniel Berrigan. In 1968 she left the religious order without explanation, assumed the name Corita Kent, and began creating commercial designs for the likes of Neiman Marcus,

Revlon, and *Psychology Today*.

During this period, she completed her best known works, the 1971 gas tank mural in Boston and the iconic 1985 Love postage stamp.

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,

Wide Open, 1964, serigraph by Corita.

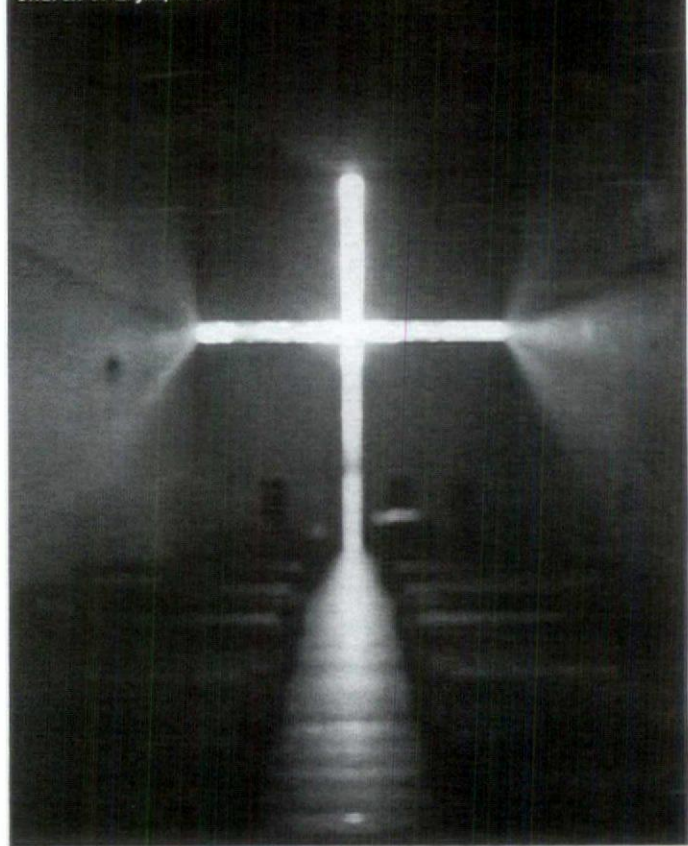
are clearly influenced by Mexican Day of the Dead parades. The vibrant and kinetic colors in these processions are as striking as the Marimekko dresses Corita favored when she disposed of her nun's habit, and they became visual highlights of the California pop movement. Corita credits Charles Eames as 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

Church of Light, 1997.



COURTESY THE ARTIST

MEMORY, PLACE, AND MYSTERY
continued from page 21

yet technically implausible images soon give way to the solitude of Sugimoto's enigmatic seascapes—compositions of water and air often noted for their echoes of Rothko—and the fruit of his struggles with architecture emerges.

Sugimoto first experienced his seascapes in concave formation at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., designed by Gordon Bunshaft. The effect of the museum's troublesome curved walls was so evocative that he recreated the format at the de Young, working with architect Mark Cavagnero. Seismic safety concerns thickened the wall into a sculpted mass that pairs the boundless seascapes on one side with the seemingly infinite *Sea of Buddha* on the other. The expansive curve offers a breathtaking vista overlooking ten different points in time and place united in a single horizon.

Memory and place are linked in the last sections of the show,

with selections from Sugimoto's film-length exposures of drive-ins and historic theaters lit only by the projection of movies, and a series of models illustrating complex mathematical formulas. The movie accumulates into a glowing white screen and illuminates the theater in the resulting image, a snapshot of passing time that also invites projections of one's own nostalgia.

Finally, architecture becomes the subject, but rather than exquisite details, Sugimoto seeks out each building's innate integrity by blurring the images. The de Young's architects, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, are said to have observed that Sugimoto's obscured images conjure the moment when an architectural vision first coalesces. Sugimoto takes a more critical view, though perhaps of that same moment, proposing that, when subjected to the out-of-focus lens, the essential idea of conceptually strong architecture still comes through, while weak architecture melts away. YOSH ASATO

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COURTESY BOOTH-CLIBBORN EDITIONS

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, to the galleries or alternative spaces where the work might be shown, or to Marwan Al Sayad's House of Earth and Light (left).

when the pieces were created.

If you are graced with better than 20/20 vision you might just be able to read the biographies of the artists and designers at the end of the book or read Nan's worthwhile essay in its white against sky-blue type. If you are a small-type reader, you might also discover that there are editorial themes organizing the work selected for inclu-

sion in the book. Sadly the visual accessibility of the little information offered is difficult, at best.

For anyone interested in reading about the work, not just looking at it, this publication will be quite frustrating. But it does give us an array of enticing things to peruse. This might be a revelation about the goal of the book: Entice us, but don't actually

show us anything in too much depth, lest we lose interest. If indeed you find yourself in "PXH" with this book in hand, as a hopeful art/design/architecture tourist, you'd best have your finger connected to the pulse of a wireless network to Google these creative souls, check their project lists, look for their galleries, or find their trail by some other means. BETH WEINSTEIN

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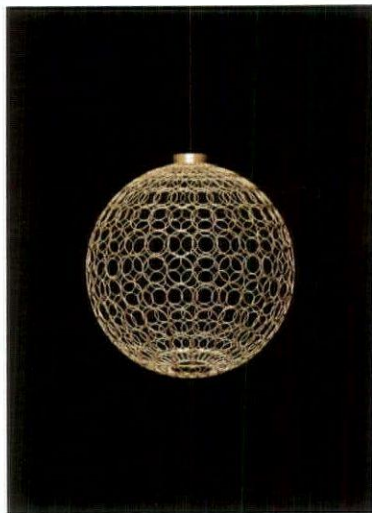
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Birdair, an international fabric roofing company, recently introduced TiO2, a titanium dioxide membrane that is as scientifically savvy as its name and green, too. This non-toxic tensile material is like a giant taut leaf that provides shade and works as a photocatalyst, absorbing UV radiation from the sun, oxygen, and water vapor to create oxygen ions that break pollutants down into natural elements. TiO2 comes in 12½-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 Mannou National Government Park in Japan.

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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.

RESOURCES

Above the Fray (p. 1): The fiberglass coating on the exterior of 3555 Hayden was supplied by Protective Coatings & Linings, 3856 Wilson Ave., Castro Valley, CA 94546, 866-457-3400, www.poolcoating.com.

The glulam beams were fabricated by Structurlam Products, 2176 Government St., Penticton, BC V2A 8B5, 916-797-5588, www.structurlam.com. The oak rafters were CNC milled by Spectrum Oak, 1038 North Lemon St., Orange, CA 92867, 714-997-5971, www.spectrumoak.com.

House of the Issue: Leisner, Jeevanjee, Trigas (p. 8): The general contractor was Calasia Construction, 825 Colorado Blvd., Ste. 112, Los Angeles, CA 90041, 323-256-2943. The stucco was supplied by LaHabra Stucco, P.O. Box 17866, 4125 E. LaPalma, Suite 250, Anaheim, CA 92807,

714-778-2266, www.lahabrastucco.com.

Work or Play (p. 12): The custom conference tables and cadenzas for Children's Place were made by Ilan Dei Studio, 2100 Zeno Pl., Venice, CA 90291, 310-302-9222, www.ilandeistudio.com. The strategy and programming consultants were DEGWA, 589 8th Ave., 23rd Fl., New York, NY 10018, 212-290-1601, www.degwa.com.

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, 20675 SW 105th St., Tualatin, Oregon 97062, 503-692-6900, www.westernwoodstructures.com.

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

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 politicians. 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 of a city that had a real history and a rich architectural tradition.

DEVELOPERS, POLITICIANS, AND
THE COST OF THEIR CONNECTIONS

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 politicization is 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 politicians. 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.

The Real Wealth of Cities

That demotic 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 greensward 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**.

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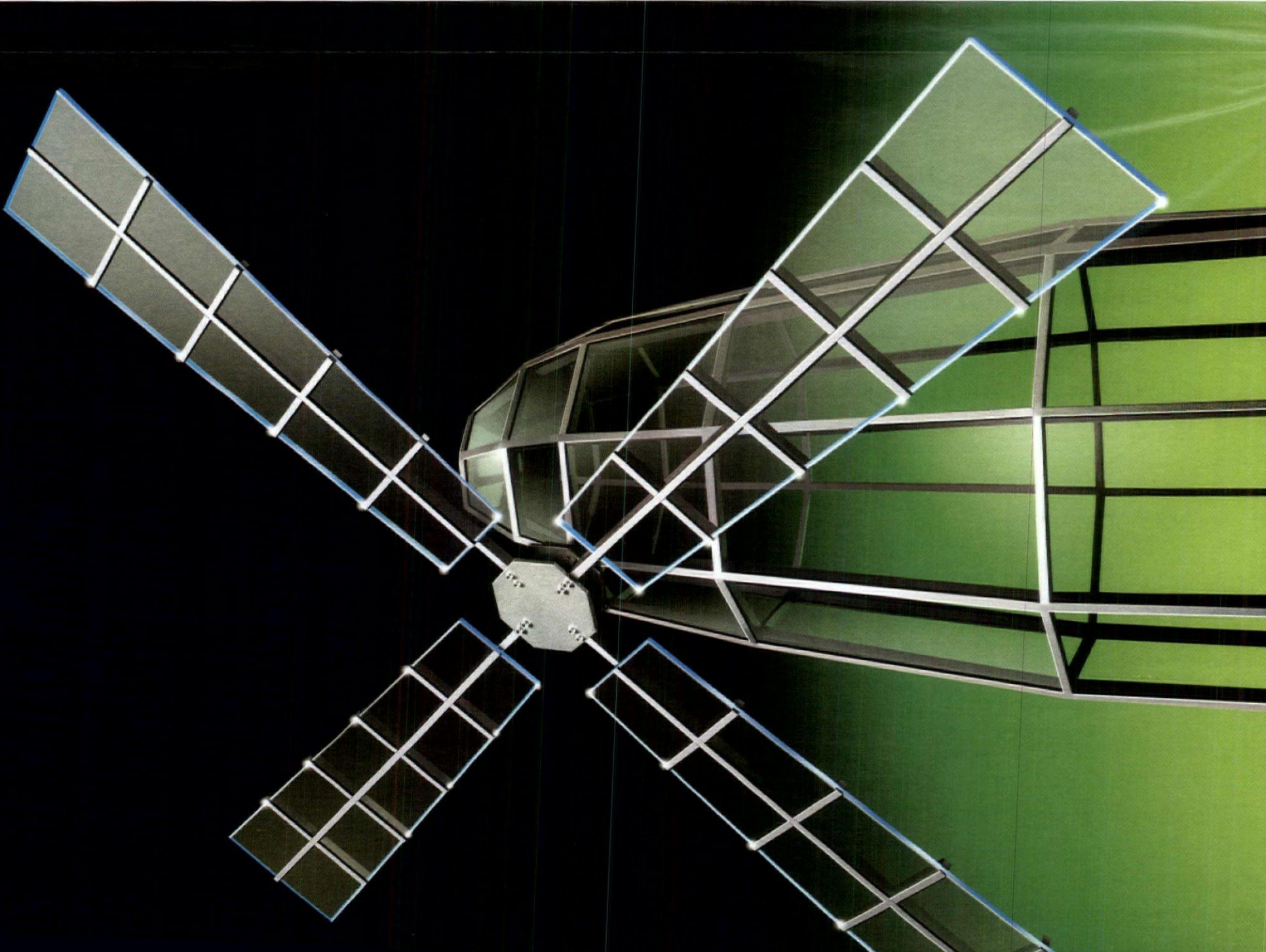
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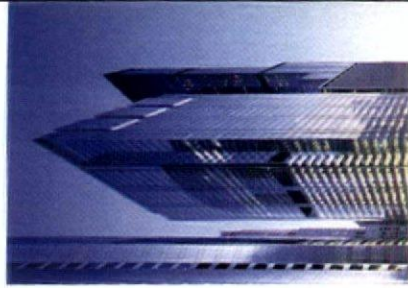


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