Trolleys are back in fashion, and the latest addition to the runway is the Seattle Streetcar, a 1.3 mile route that connects Seattle’s fast developing South Lake Union district with Westlake Center, the city’s downtown commercial hub. With similar lines transforming downtowns in Portland and San Francisco, this alternative option is gaining traction against traditional underground subways and bus lines. Open for business in December after 18 months of rapid construction, the Seattle Streetcar has developers and city officials starry-eyed with visions of a smoothly integrated system.

NEW BUILDINGS BRING STARCHITECTS TO UCLA

WESTWOOD, HO!

While the red brick Italian Romanesque core of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is an ubiquitous presence on LA’s western skyline, the school is not often on the lips of those discussing great contemporary Southern California architecture. That may be about to change, as Westwood has been altered by three new campus structures by architectural heavyweights Richard Meier, Rafael Viñoly, and I.M. Pei.

The new buildings—still intended, say campus officials, to blend with the school’s overall aesthetic—include Meier’s recently-completed Broad Art Center, Viñoly’s just-finished California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI), and I.M. Pei’s continued on page 8.

SETTLEMENT DECIDES FATE OF NIGHTCLUB AT THE AMBASSADOR HOTEL

R.I.P. THE GROVE

In late December the Los Angeles Conservancy and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) reached a settlement in their longstanding battle over the historic Coconut Grove Night Club, a Los Angeles icon that had been a vital component of the now-demolished Myron Hunt-designed Ambassador Hotel since it opened on Wilshire Boulevard in 1921. The result: the Conservancy will allow the LAUSD to demolish the Grove and replace it with a replica using new materials and containing an auditorium and lounge for the Central Los Angeles New Learning Center #1. The 4,000-plus student complex under construction is on the site of the Ambassador Hotel, which was dismantled in 2005. In return the LAUSD will contribute $4 million toward the Historic Schools Investment Fund, which provides grants to help repair and restore historic LAUSD schools.

The cabaret-style, continued on page 4

SPF: A GIVES LACMA WEST A FACELIFT. SEE PAGE 3

SEATTLE GETS A NEW STREETCAR

TRANSIT NAMED DESIRE

Trolleys are back in fashion, and the latest addition to the runway is the Seattle Streetcar, a 1.3 mile route that connects Seattle’s fast developing South Lake Union district with Westlake Center, the city’s downtown commercial hub. With similar lines transforming downtowns in Portland and San Francisco, this alternative option is gaining traction against traditional underground subways and bus lines. Open for business in December after 18 months of rapid construction, the Seattle Streetcar has developers and city officials starry-eyed with visions of a smoothly integrated system.

MORPHOSIS IN MADRID

CURTAINS UP ON BROADWAY?

PROTESTING TRANSBAY

WORK STARTS ON NEW SAN FRANCISCO URBAN CENTER

COMMON GROUND

San Francisco’s political and development scene is weird. The only people in the closet are Republicans. Liberals are aligned with downtown business interests and perceived as conservatives. Neighborhoods are so well organized they can stop all kinds of development. Local developers chuckle and call the process “a barrier to entry” for out-of-towners. For several years, a nonprofit think tank called San Francisco Planning and Urban Research...
Out with the old and in with the new. For as long as California has existed, that has been the unoffcial mantra here, as sun-worshippers have flocked west to start over.

But the truth is, no matter how much we want to run from the past, protecting it can be an important way to enrich the future. And not just for nostalgic, touchy-feely reasons. In fact, historic preservation can be one of the great sustainable and economic forces we have at our disposal.

As we point out in this month’s feature, restoring the wonderful old movie palaces of Broadway (p. 12) could be a key component in turning around downtown Los Angeles’ fortunes. Politicians, residents, and preservationists have noted that a revived Broadway corridor, with a world-class draw like these sumptuous theaters, as well as restaurants and stores, could link the major developments going up on either end of Downtown at Grand Avenue, on Bunker Hill, and at L.A. Live in South Park.

Other cities have seen their fates reversed with historic preservation. The renovation of the art deco hotels of South Beach helped to turn that area from an afterthought into one of the world’s party centers. While not its top priority, New Orleans is banking on its history to help draw people back in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. And from Westwood to the West Village and from Beacon Hill to North Beach, many cities’ most popular neighborhoods to live in and visit are their historic areas.

But while we should embrace history’s restorative effects, we need to keep a clear view of its limitations. We can’t let our focus on history impede our ability to move forward and create innovative architecture and urban design. And we must be aware that restoring neighborhoods often means gentrification, aka throwing out the less-wealthy locals. Just take a look at much of gentrified Manhattan, where soaring prices for old and new buildings have forced all but the most solvent to the outer boroughs for affordable housing. In New Orleans, many argue that preserving old buildings will further distract from the plight of the poor. Here in L.A. the fates of Broadway’s many less-upscale, often Hispanic-run stores have yet to be directly addressed. Questions on this subject to councilperson Jose Huizar, who is admirably spearheading the restoration of Broadway, have so far gone unanswered. If the area becomes more successful will there be rent control? Will existing stores and other establishments get an upgrade or an affordable lease? Will they be zoned out of existence?

It’s not too early to be formulating answers to these difficult questions. Linda Dishman, executive director of the member-rich but funding-poor Los Angeles Conservancy (whose Broadway Initiative, established in 1999, has played a major role in the area’s turnaround) says she thinks many of Broadway’s existing establishments have the capital to stay, since a few already pay up to $10 per square foot, higher rents than some stores in New York or even Beverly Hills. But it’s important to develop a plan not only for maintaining historic buildings and turning around neighborhoods, but also for embracing the establishments and populations already rooted in those neighborhoods. Only then can preservation really live up to its name.

CORRECTIONS
In our report, “Green Lantern” (ICAN 06-12.07) about the new Grand Rapids Art Museum, the name of a founding partner of why Architecture, designers of the museum, was omitted. The partner is Yo-ichiro Hakomori. We regret the error.
NOT FEELING DWELL

We thought an announcement that Dwell was debuting a narrow magazine printed with more soy inks on recycled content paper, saving about 930 trees per issue, was a sign that the erratic publication had finally settled on a theme: Sustainability. But when we got the February issue in our hands its dire condition seemed more convoluted than ever: Was this Modernism For Dummies, a Design Within Reach catalog, or straight-up shelter porn? The redesign rallies a cavalcade of new fonts—many completely unreadable over the splashes of gratuitous color—and overcrowded pages bisected by bizarre dotted lines. Former staffers have expressed frustration with the mag’s bi-polarity, but insist it’s nothing new. “Dwell’s biggest problem has always been that the message from the very top has been very confused,” a past contributor tells us. “I suspect the editors aren’t really being given total control now and so what we’re seeing is a really watered-down version of what they probably wanted to do.” The changing vision of founder Lara Hedberg Deam and publisher Michelle O’Connor Abrams notoriously didn’t mesh with the pub’s two previous editors-in-chief, Karrie Jacobs and Allison Arieff, who both left the magazine very publicly at odds with its philosophy (more than 20 staffers also departed in Arieff’s wake). But it seems the current editor-in-chief Sam Graeves might not mind letting Deam and Abrams steer the ship. Graevs is reportedly devoted to his budding music career: Windsurf, an electronica duo where he performs with a musician calling himself Sorcerer, and a solo project under the name—we swear we’re not making this up—Hatchback. We hate pretty good, too.

MIAMI VICES

There were rumors that sales were not as scintillating at Design Miami this year, but we’ll let you be the judge: The two most talked-about installations were trashy—a Tokujin Yoshioka installation of white plastic straws and Stuart Haygarth’s chandelier made from used water bottles—and almost everyone mentioned that the Swarovski crystal lights by heavyweights Diller Scifidio + Renfro looked more like glowing scrotums. Yves Béhar emerged as a big winner at the One Laptop Per Child party, where he sold seven works by Jorge Pardo, John Baldessari, Olafur Eliasson and others to raise funds for the project. Perhaps the bling was located elsewhere, like around the neck of hip hop producer Pharrell Williams, who hung with Arik Levy’s posse, and later showed up at the tattoo parlor manned by Tobias Wong, Josée Lapace, and Eavesdrop alum Aric Chen. According to Chen, Williams was so psych on the limited-edition tattoo designs by designers like Tord Boontje, Vito Acconci, and Hella Jongerius, he wanted to contribute his own design. Okay, maybe next year, Pharrell, but only if you bring Justin Timberlake.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Robert A.M. Stern may have already gotten the gig, but surely he could use some help designing the George W. Bush Presidential Library, right? The Chronicle of Higher Education is holding a competition to deliver Stern a wealth of ideas. Standard architecture contest rules apply, with one catch: Your entire concept must fit on the back of an envelope. Readers will vote on the best design, the winning designer will get an iPod Touch, and the architecture world will earn the undying admiration of the Republican Party. Deadline is February 1. To vote, visit chronicle.com/indepth/architecture/architecture-contest.htm

SEND TIPS, GOSSIP, AND PARTY SOUVENIRS TO SLUBELL@ARCHPAPER.COM

LESS LIMELIGHT FOR MAJOR TRANSFORMATION OF NON-BROAD MUSEUM

Although it hasn’t gotten much attention, another firm besides Renzo Piano Building Workshop is working on a major commission at the LA County Museum of Art (LACMA). Culver City-based SPF: A in November finished its first schematic designs for the renovation and transformation of LACMA’s May Company Building, just west of Piano’s almost-completed (and just snubbed by its namesake) Broad Contemporary Art Museum. The May building, known as LACMA West, now contains small exhibition spaces, offices, and warehouse-like storage. Many of its windows are boarded up. It will be transformed into a major exhibition site containing much of LACMA’s contemporary art collection, as well as a restaurant, book shop, and special event spaces. The firm was commissioned for the project in August.

The five-story streamline moderne building at 6067 Wilshire was designed as a May Company department store by AC Martin and Samuel Marx in 1939. The structure’s most recognizable element is the cylindrical, gold-colored tower and deco signage on its northwest side. LACMA purchased the property in 1981, opening it for exhibits in 1989. SPF: A will keep the facade intact, repairing and replacing worn-out elements and bringing the building to code. The northeast corner will be changed to accommodate a “signature” display, although that element has not been worked out, explained SPF: A partner Zoltan Pali.

Inside, the firm will open up once chopped-up spaces, creating open-plan gallery and work spaces, and using a minimal palette meant to defer to the artwork. The mezzanine, now boarded up, will be opened and connected to the entry to create a dramatic, double-height public space. The third and fourth floors will be used for offices, and the top floor will include a boardroom and outdoor gathering and exhibition spaces. The project will be completed in 2010, and fundraising is in full swing.

ONEWORLD LOUNGE

LAX International Terminal
Los Angeles
Designer: Gensler Architects

Since its creation in 1984, the Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX has offered little in the way of luxury; a real thorn in its reputation as an international airport. To remedy the situation, the airport recently opened up two floors for four new first class lounges, helping it compete with airports like San Francisco’s recently revamped SFO, which has become a favorite among world travelers.

The nicest of these new lounges is the OneWorld Lounge, designed by Gensler, which consolidates the operations of Cathay Pacific, British Airways, and Qantas. The new business class and first class sections combine a cool, contemporary aesthetic with a warmer abstraction of outdoor LA living.

The entryway features a large media wall projecting images of nature and travel, with walls and flooring made of light Italian limestone. Timber screens divide the spaces behind into pantries, lounges, internet stations, and a bar. Rooms are lined with slatted American Walnut, resin walls embedded with seagrass, back-painted glass, and textured plaster. The lounges also feature private bathrooms and showers, reinforcing the overall spa mood.

The aesthetic aims to unify airlines representing Asian, British, and Australian cultures, said architect David Loyola. “It was harder than you think to get a consensus.” He points out, however, that first class travel is no laughing matter for people who pay as much as $35,000 for a first class ticket to Australia.
The Conservancy had organized an injunction on December 7 to stop demolition of the Grove, arguing in an October 26 lawsuit that the LAUSD’s claim that the club was “technically infeasible” to maintain had not been clearly proven. A court date to decide the building’s future had been set for February 28. But in a statement the Conservancy said it decided to give up the fight due in large part to the increasing realization that true preservation of the site’s remaining resources had become impossible due to what had already been lost. Much of the Grove had already been damaged by LAUSD construction crews and looked like a shadow of itself sitting alone in the Learning Center’s construction site. The Conservancy will also drop its effort to save the Ambassador Hotel’s pantry—where Robert Kennedy was assassinated—which is now housed in pieces off-site.

The other, perhaps more important, factor was the District’s agreement to donate $4 million to the Historic Schools Investment Fund. That fund, administered by the California Community Foundation, was established in 2005 with $4.9 million in settlement funds from the 2004 lawsuit over the Ambassador Hotel’s demolition. LAUSD’s decision to give up the Grove was “technically infeasible,” said the new school’s project manager John Kuprenes. The LAUSD board, amid disrepair and the LAUSD gained ownership of the buildings in 2001. In 2004 the LAUSD board voted to dismantle the Ambassador in favor of the new complex, designed by Pasadena-based Gonzalez/Goodale Architects, but opted in its final impact report to preserve and reuse the Grove and its adjacent coffee shop. That plan was scrapped earlier this year when the District’s engineers noted that the building lacked “integrity and seismic stability,” said the new school’s project manager John Kuprenes. The LAUSD board then approved an additional environmental impact report on September 25 of last year; with a plan to tear down the Grove and rebuild it in the same dimensions using newer materials.

The Academy has recently decided to amend its original plan and now hopes to find a way to share the space. “We will be in communication with the small groups or to see how we can work with them on staying there, and seeing how their uses can be incorporated into our long-term uses,” he said. “We are committed to the historical use of the Flower Mart.”

Despite incremental changes over the last few years, the big idea behind the SPUR Urban Center has not changed. Dialog around planning and development in San Francisco can now be based on factual information that is readily available, rather than on rumor or fear. The transparent building symbolizes that aspiration. KENNETH CALDWELL

To call the Academy of Art a ubiquitous presence in San Francisco is almost underselling its massive footprint. The 78-year-old university occupies 32 properties in several different neighborhoods, 27 of which they own. Such visibility has come at a cost, as the school’s property-buying spree has brought less-than-favorable reviews from residents who accuse the school of evicting low-income tenants and exacerbating affordable housing. But a new master plan for the school presented on December 6 has generated the most bitter opposition yet to the Academy, mostly because it reveals the purchase of South of Market’s (SoMa’s) much-loved Flower Mart, a building they plan to convert into a sculpture studio. The move would effectively evict the Flower Mart’s 30 vendors, growers, and wholesalers.

Active in the Academy’s presence on the ground is the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force, a community group that wants to keep large institutional development out of their neighborhood. “Our real purpose is protecting small businesses in this tight industrial zone,” said task force chair Jim Meko. The task force proposed a 45-day moratorium on new institutional uses, which was approved by the city’s Board of Supervisors in December.

City officials, on the other hand, are concerned about the school’s ongoing failure to file proper applications for its needs. According to widely-reported figures, the school has racked up 44 permit and zoning violations over the years. That’s more than any institution in recent memory, noted Lawrence Badner, zoning administrator for the city planning department. “They seem like they have a problem with understanding that they need to follow the law.”

The Academy is currently in escrow with the property’s owner, and the former owner has already served vendors with eviction notices. However, according to Sam Lauter, a public affairs consultant for the school, the Academy has recently decided to amend its original plan and now hopes to find a way to share the space. “We will be in communication with the small groups or to see how we can work with them on staying there, and seeing how their uses can be incorporated into our long-term uses,” he said. “We are committed to the historical use of the Flower Mart.”

Land-use attorney Sue Hester is not optimistic about this claim. Just before a Supervisors’ meeting in January, she said it’s more likely that the Board will extend the moratorium for another 22 months. “The Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and Planning Commission are all outraged and frustrated with the Academy,” she said. “They have more than just a tin ear. They are missing a soul.” ALISSA WALKER

Although the organization’s meetings and events are open to the public, the organization itself has been hidden away in a warren of tiny offices on Sutter Street. For some time, SPUR has wanted to “go retail” and convey transparency while accommodating a growing membership.

In early 2007, SPUR selected local firm Pfau Architecture to design a new, 14,000-square-foot headquarters that began construction this month on busy Mission Street in the Yerba Buena Gardens arts district. It will contain meeting rooms, exhibition spaces, a library, and perhaps most important, daylight. Rarely are architects seen as philanthropists, but the varied forms of glazing, tiles, and louvers, not to mention the programs, excited so much interest that the architecture community that many firms pledged tens of thousands of dollars each to get the building constructed. Companies with deeper pockets, such as developers and contractors, have been big donors as well. SPUR also secured a grant from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment and financing through the California Municipal Finance Authority. Individual citizens have made up over 80 percent of the donations, according to the architects. SPUR has now reached the mark where construction can commence and groundbreaking is scheduled to take place in mid-March.

During the time required to secure funding for the $12.5 million building, construction costs, however, have escalated. The building also became more green and more transparent. According to architect Peter Pfau, the mechanical and lighting systems are now more efficient. The building will also be an environmental showcase, showing visitors how the counters are made from recycled paper, how the handrails are made from recycled sunflower seeds, and how the green roof works. As San Francisco moves forward with a green ordinance (a policy that SPUR has a strong interest in), citizens will be able to literally see what it takes.

According to the architects, two recent factors have influenced the design including renaming the Mission Street stairway in glass, so people moving between floors activate the stairway, and creating a street-level display area that resembles full-size retail shop windows. This display area will feature models and drawings. As Jim Chappell, president of SPUR, said, “In the future, something like the Transbay Terminal competition models could be in our front window, and we could solicit immediate feedback.”

Another hope is that citizens will access planning documents for their neighborhoods. As a model for SPUR, Chappell cites Paris’ Pavillon de l’Arsenal, where planning information is organized by neighborhood and publicly available.

To call the Academy of Art a ubiquitous presence in San Francisco is almost understating its massive footprint. The 78-year-old university occupies 32 properties in several different neighborhoods, 27 of which they own. Such visibility has come at a cost, as the school’s property-buying spree has brought less-than-favorable reviews from residents who accuse the school of evicting low-income tenants and exacerbating affordable housing. But a new master plan for the school presented on December 6 has generated the most bitter opposition yet to the Academy, mostly because it reveals the purchase of South of Market’s (SoMa’s) much-loved Flower Mart, a building they plan to convert into a sculpture studio. The move would effectively evict the Flower Mart’s 30 vendors, growers, and wholesalers.

Active in the Academy’s presence on the ground is the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force, a community group that wants to keep large institutional development out of their neighborhood. “Our real purpose is protecting small businesses in this tight industrial zone,” said task force chair Jim Meko. The task force proposed a 45-day moratorium on new institutional uses, which was approved by

The Conservancy had organized an injunction on December 7 to stop demolition of the Grove, arguing in an October 26 lawsuit that the LAUSD’s claim that the club was “technically infeasible” to maintain had not been clearly proven. A court date to decide the building’s future had been set for February 28. But in a statement the Conservancy said it decided to give up the fight due in large part to the increasing realization that true preservation of the site’s remaining resources had become impossible due to what had already been lost. Much of the Grove had already been damaged by LAUSD construction crews and looked like a shadow of itself sitting alone in the Learning Center’s construction site. The Conservancy will also drop its effort to save the Ambassador Hotel’s pantry—where Robert Kennedy was assassinated—which is now housed in pieces off-site.

The other, perhaps more important, factor was the District’s agreement to donate $4 million to the Historic Schools Investment Fund. That fund, administered by the California Community Foundation, was established in 2006 with $4.9 million in settlement funds from the 2004 lawsuit over the Ambassador Hotel’s demolition.

The Academy has recently decided to amend its original plan and now hopes to find a way to share the space. “We will be in communication with the small groups or to see how we can work with them on staying there, and seeing how their uses can be incorporated into our long-term uses,” he said. “We are committed to the historical use of the Flower Mart.”

Despite incremental changes over the last few years, the big idea behind the SPUR Urban Center has not changed. Dialog around planning and development in San Francisco can now be based on factual information that is readily available, rather than on rumor or fear. The transparent building symbolizes that aspiration. KENNETH CALDWELL
**Need BIM Technology?**

Incorporate BIM technology when the client and project demand—without turning your firm upside down.

VectorWorks Architect’s approach to Building Information Modeling (BIM) lets you improve your design process instead of trying to replace it. Design the way you want with technology that allows you to work faster while reducing drawing errors—but keeps you in total control. Link plans, elevations, sections, perspectives, reports and even rendered views, so a change to one updates the others. Export models via IFC to a growing selection of validation, analysis and construction programs. To learn more, call 1-877-202-8866 or visit us at [www.vectorworks.net/california](http://www.vectorworks.net/california)

**VectorWorks Architect 2008—Flexible to Fit Your Workflow**

Image courtesy of WMCRP Architects, Maryland
TWO MUSEUM PROPOSALS UNVEILED IN SAN FRANCISCO

PRESIDIO FACE-OFF

Gluckman Mayner Architects’ white-on-white scheme.

“Sometimes,” said Richard Gluckman, New York–based architect of the proposed Contemporary Art Museum at the Presidio in San Francisco, “respectful preservation must building in concert with or in contrast to the existing structure.”

It is Gluckman’s “in contrast to” approach for the museum, which he highlighted at a recent public meeting, that has instigated impassioned debate among some San Franciscans. “Horrible! It’s the rape of the Presidio,” wrote one San Francisco Chronicle blogger. Another more favorable contributor wrote, “I still don’t get it. Why must history live in a bubble? Why are we afraid to interact with it?”

The design by Gluckman, a principal at Gluckman Mayner Architects, is one of two proposals for cultural institutions at the Presidio’s Main Post—the heart of the former military base-turned-park and location of its oldest existing buildings—unveiled at a public meeting at the Presidio Officer’s Club on December 3. If chosen, Gluckman’s museum would be funded by Gap founder Donald Fisher and his wife Doris, and would display items from the Fisher’s private collection of 20th-century art by Andy Warhol, Frank Stella, Alexander Calder, Chuck Close, and Richard Serra, among others. The museum would also accommodate rotating exhibitions.

The competing proposal, submitted by Bogatay Architects on behalf of the Presidio Historical Association, is the 48,000-square-foot History Center of the Golden Gate, a museum that would explore the history of the Presidio and its place in U.S. history in seven galleries dedicated to different themes. The Presidio Trust, a federally appointed organization whose mission is to “preserve and enhance the Presidio as an enduring resource for the American public,” will select one of the two proposals in early 2008, a trust spokesperson said.

Gluckman’s proposed building, a two-story, 100,000-square-foot minimalist composition of rectangular forms, boldly sets itself apart from the surrounding 19th-century military barracks and Mission-style Officer’s Club, while still acknowledging their presence. Gluckman abstracted the distinctive white porches that line the exterior of the barracks; a cantilevered glass observation gallery on the north facade recalls their jutting form and inherent function, and the white mullions take cues from their slim white columns. And like the whitewashed brick structures throughout the Presidio, the Contemporary Art Museum is clad in white masonry.

Bogatay’s design takes a more self-conscious approach, directly borrowing its form and architectural flourishes from its neighbors. With its pitched roofs, Spanish tiles, and small-paned windows, the building succeeds in conveying what the architect described as a vaguely military look. “Maybe I’m a bit conservative,” said Lucia Bogatay, the project’s lead designer, “but things you add to a historic district should be discreet.”

While quite different, both proposals conform to the Main Post Planning and Design Guidelines that stipulated, among other things, that the new work be differentiated from the old while remaining compatible in size and scale. Gluckman noted at the meeting that “the disintegration of historic and contemporary styles strengthens and preserves the integrity of both.” And yet the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of his design for the Contemporary Art Museum take inspiration from their surroundings. “The Montgomery Parade Ground is incongruous among other things, that the History Center would not be a carbon copy of its surroundings, nor compete with the historic buildings at the Main Post, she added. “This is a National Historic district,” she said. “As such, it needs to be treated more carefully.”

NICOLE ONCINA
brushed
Emeco Navy 1006®
Made with 80% recycled aluminum
Standard U.S. Navy issue since 1944
Used by Petty Officer FTG3 | Tony Kost

polished
Emeco Navy 1006®
Made with 80% recycled aluminum
Selected by Bon Restaurant Paris 1999
Used by Parisienne socialite | Amelia-Louise Enright

timeless. timeless.
emeco.net
"The existing style of the campus is extremely important in making any decisions regarding architecture," said campus architect Jeff Averill. "New buildings must have a contextual response to the campus. We have a framework, a palate of materials that we use. Of course, there are exceptions, and these three new buildings have more exceptions than other projects."

Completed last fall, Richard Meier and Partners' Broad Art Center is a welcome top-to-bottom renovation of the original Dickson Art Center by William Pereira. Completed in the early 1960s, the cast concrete building was ill-suited to making art from the get-go, due to its low-light, dense studios and poor ventilation. Then, damage from the Northridge earthquake of 1994 was so extensive that renovation or demolition was the only answer.

"This space is all about creating the best possible light and space for teaching and making art," said principal architect Michael Palladino of Richard Meier and Partners. "Our goal was to pull all the weight off the face of the building and to reuse it at an appropriate scale. We took a lighter concrete system, a palette of materials that we use. Of course, there are exceptions, and these three new buildings have more exceptions than other projects."

"The kind of things that are incorporated into the building in terms of function and technology take health care into a new era," said Averill. Utilizing more than three million pounds of travertine—clearly evident on its facade—the one million-plus-square-foot, 10-story hospital is on a four-acre site at the southwest corner of the campus.

Richard Meier and Partners' Broad Art Center.

Enduring Quality, Eternal Design

The FSB 1020 model is the clearest embodiment of the "good form" of the 1950s. This is a lever handle that flourishes by dint of the organic flow of its moulded-to-the-hand design and because it somehow looks symmetrical without actually being so. Johannes Potente’s intention with this design was to provide a dynamic counterpart to the linearity of doors.

FSB 1020 is one of four models designed by Johannes Potente that, in the summer of 1998, were added to the permanent collection at the MoMA in New York.

There is always a name behind the levers of FSB.
Transforming a cramped, outdated, cookie-cutter 1960s bungalow into an open, contemporary, peaceful oasis within a $425,000 budget is almost impossible. But, says San Diego architect Jennifer Luce, it helps to use a little music. The 2,300-square-foot house, located in La Jolla, California, was renovated for Greg Lemke, a scientist at the nearby Salk Institute whose other passion is classical composing. Luce took advantage of the client’s skill by working with him to produce a house that, like the best music, is unified by a single theme but enriched by its variations.

The unifier in the Lemke house is a central “spine,” a much-needed storage system clad with grey lacquered MDF and quartz zinc. It contains bookshelves, closets, and art display spaces that divide the kitchen and living space. Thanks to this system, Luce was able to open up and pristinely simplify the rest of the house. The open plan of the living room and kitchen allows visitors to see from the new glass front door all the way to the new back sliding glass doors, whose floor to ceiling height opens up the space, as do new windows that line almost every square inch of the living room and provide views from the hilltop location all the way to the ocean.

The variations come on all sides of the spine, moves that lend the renovation a modern complexity. Dark, epoxy-coated concrete floors provide glamour and create stunning reflections. Contemporary countertops and cabinets (carefully concealing elements like the refrigerator and dishwasher) are made of a varied grid of bleached oak, painted steel, and polycarbonate. Their lightness, and the kitchen’s white walls, contrast strikingly with the darker hues surrounding them. The nearby bedroom, bathrooms, and study have been opened up and fitted with a similar material palette and with modern windows and sliding doors, while outdoor landscaping has been modified with a simple yet graceful combination of pebbles and concrete. Lighting is minimal but unexpected, using unique fixtures that give the house a cozy but elegant feel, a mix between a retreat cabin and an art museum. Luce’s renovation is a simple but drastic improvement that has transformed a suburban afterthought into a striking, unified, dazzler. “It’s a reinvented version of the house,” says Luce, who calls the rest of the neighborhood a takeoff on a typical Midwest 1960s development, with closed walls, narrow windows, and generic plans. “It’s got its own cadence and rhythm, and its simplicity helps us choose a few elements that really make it exciting.”

Once a bungalow, now a glass house. Left: Master bath.
The competition-winning social housing project in Madrid that Morphosis completed in December offers a dramatic contrast to the bland brick towers of middle-class apartments that surround it. A gleaming white complex of cubic blocks, patios, and walkways, it evokes the hill villages of Andalusia or the casbahs of North Africa. Located in Carabanchel, a master-planned community bordered by the ring road to the southwest of the city, it is one of 27 projects in the area sponsored by EMVS, the Madrid housing agency. The construction budget was a frugal $90 per square foot; and the completed units are offered for sale or rent at a third of the market rate.

Morphosis principal Thom Mayne rose to the challenge. “We’ve had to make a practice of building inexpensively,” he said. “I share the idealism of the early modernists, and the client gave us free rein conceptually as long as we met the budget.” For this first venture in Spain, Mayne’s team collaborated with BDU Estudio de Arquitectura, a fledgling Madrid firm founded by Begona Diaz-Urgorri, who briefly worked for Morphosis and gained experience building another innovative project for EMVS.

Residential construction in Spain is booming. Government agencies estimate that 900,000 units were built last year—almost as many as were constructed in the rest of Europe during that time. In part the increase is due to a surge of immigration, in part to a frenzy of speculation, but most of the privately financed houses and apartment blocks are conventional in design and poorly constructed. Public housing is much more adventurous, and Mayne’s vision, which was fleshed out by Diaz-Urgorri and Morphosis project architect Pavel Getov, is a brilliant reworking of vernacular architecture in the tradition of Le Corbusier and Team TEN.

The architects stacked the two-bedroom apartments in a thin-section, seven-story slab that runs along the north side of the site. The street facade has small openings, and the apartments open up to south-facing terraces at each level. A four-story block defines the south boundary, and these two bars of small units bracket a village-like complex that show how concrete duplexes with a podium of parking below. A broad paseo shaded by aluminum mesh canopies that will support a variety of flowering plants, bisects the complex from north to south, connecting to a network of narrow passages. Public plazas alternate with inner patios.

“We tried to create an infrastructure for social interchange, with neighbors meeting casually and conversing from one space to another,” says Mayne. To keep construction costs down, the architects played variations on a simple, three-dimensional module, and emulated the standard building system of concrete frames and stuccoed brick infill. Mesh-covered styrofoam panels on the building support are mounted on steel poles to define the paseo. The mature trees that Morphosis had wanted to plant were eliminated as an economy, and the plantings have yet to soften the edges. The project’s success in Madrid has given Morphosis the confidence to apply its approach to buildings in the rest of Europe. The firm is currently working on a $150 million facility in Dallas, TX, announced in December.

“Morphosis shows the continuing tradition of Le Corbusier and Team Ten. The crumbing Spanish Colonial Revival courtyard apartment, now vacant and quarantined behind a chain-link fence, was Bukowski’s home from 1963 to 1972, a decisive period in the author’s life. At De Longpre he split his time between grueling shifts as a postal worker and hours spent diligently pounding out his pages at the cramped typing desk. Of course, he also found time for drinking. De Longpre was also where he transformed himself from a virtually unknown writer into an internationally celebrated author, having written Post Office, Factotum, and his newspaper column Notes of a Dirty Old Man there. “I laid down my guns,” he said of that prolific time and place, “and the gods finally answered.”

Nearly 14 years after Bukowski’s death, his old studio refuge has been answered—by gods, but not by disciples. Ecotouric Tours co-founder Richard Schave and photographer Lauren Everett spearheaded the effort to save the property from demolition after coming across a posting on Craigslist advertising the 12,500 square-foot plot as a prospective teardown. Actively prior, the quiet pair have transformed the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission to intercede. Everett hopes to see a writers’ community take root at a revitalized Bukowski Court, a notion that Bukowski, who proudly displayed his “Outsider of the Year” award at De Longpre, would likely have disregarded.

Concurrently, Schave is involved in a similar campaign across several buildings south of De Longpre to save the former residence of Ask the Dust author John Fante. Bukowski was instrumental in resurrecting the work of his nearly forgotten hero in the 1980s. After the Cultural Heritage Commission toured De Longpre on November 1, designation of Bukowski’s bungalow as a cultural landmark seemed all but assured. Unfortunately, the property’s owners, Victoria Gureyeva and Aleksandr Konovolov, did not share Schave and Everett’s enthusiasm for the hard drinking bard of East Hollywood. A lawyer representing Gureyeva filed an eleventh hour extension opposing the designation on the grounds that Bukowski was a Nazi sympathizer.

The allegations stem from a 2003 article titled “When Bukowski Was a Nazi,” written by playwright and estranged Bukowski acquaintance Ben Pleasants. His claims consist mainly of unrecorded conversations with Bukowski and the alleged existence of pro-Nazi stories seized by the FBI—unseen to this day, despite Bukowski’s file being a matter of public record. Ultimately, the commission was unmoved by the last-minute attempt to discredit Bukowski, who was stymied apolitical throughout his life.

The commission typically dedicates up to 50 landmarks each year, mainly for architectural significance, although they do allow for recognition of sites important to the city’s cultural and social history. The unremarkable stucco casbah certainly would not earn a revere from the wrecking ball on its architectural merits. The court was built between 1922 and 1926 by Pacific Ready Cut Homes, a Los Angeles-based firm that sold 37,000 high quality kit homes using clear, old-growth lumber between 1909 and 1945, as practical California bungalows replaced ornate Victorians. The rectangular, utilitarian structures that comprise Bukowski’s Court have flat, red clay tile roofs, an open porch with square, untrimmed columns and—like their famous former tenant—present a rough, unadorned facade that speaks to the Bukowskian ideal of living in the working poor in a way and to an extent that is rarely seen in American cities. The Madrid housing agency has boldly pursued its goal of providing superior housing at minimal cost, and its program deserves to be emulate here. MICHAEL WEBB

MICHAEL WEBB
LA-based John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects (JFAK) recently completed schematic drawings for one of the largest, most unusual buildings ever to pop up along a Southern California Freeway.

Called MIRA, a reference to a star system in which two luminaries rotate around each other (i.e., the US and China), the two million-square-foot building—by far the firm’s largest commission to date—will be a showroom facility for higher-end Chinese furniture, automobile, textile, technology, and fashion companies to display their products for commercial buyers in the United States. Up until now, much of this process has involved U.S. retailers flying to China to visit dispersed suppliers.

The brainchild of Taiwanese developer Jason Chung, MIRA sits strategically alongside the CA-55 freeway near the junction of the 405 and 5 freeways in Santa Ana. The design includes three levels of parking, four levels of showrooms, 50,000 square feet of exhibition space, an auditorium, café, restaurants, lounges, and a business center. Chung is still securing funding, but Kimm said construction should begin in early 2010.

To take advantage of the building’s freeway location, JFAK clad the 1,900-foot-long, 110-foot-tall reinforced concrete structure in perforated metal panels fitted with LED signage advertising various Chinese brands. The signage uses two types of LEDs: a “mediamesh media-facade” system in which LED light strips integrate into the exterior mesh fabric of the building, and a “light-house LED panel system” that works on the more clearly defined paneled areas of the facade. The designers carried the LED signage through to the inside of the building, as well. A 10,000-panel rooftop photovoltaic system, producing more than 1.5 million watts of electricity each day, will provide most of the electricity needed to power the LEDs.

Like many new Chinese buildings, MIRA’s form is symbolic of nature. Shaped like a koi fish, a respected animal in Chinese tradition that also happens to have a very shiny skin, the building’s bright, twisting profile will have a pointed, glazed “head,” its entrance, supported on slender steel columns, and a large steel “tail” that twists upward to form the roof.

The architects clad the base of the building, which houses parking, in a stainless steel mesh “green screen” that will be planted with vines. Visitors will enter the cavernous, naturally ventilated and lit exhibition hall, which is meant to showcase larger items and encourage informal interaction, at the northeastern edge of the site. From there, they can use the building’s glass and steel circulation “funnel” to travel from the exterior podium all the way to the rooftop via a series of escalators.

JFAK organized the showrooms as a simple system of back-to-back modules faced entirely in glass. The public walkways that surround them are punctured with freestanding pods that house services like conference rooms, offices, miscellaneous services, and rest areas. Each office block has access to its own planted courtyard, and the building’s top level includes a series of gardens, viewing platforms, offices, and restaurants.

In addition to the solar panels, the sculptural roof is planted with native vegetation to absorb rainwater and filter carbon dioxide. The green roof slopes into a green wall that drops down into the building, forming the focal point of an indoor garden space. Wind turbines on the roofs of the restaurant volumes will help further power the building.

“Finally, a truly 21st century proposition,” said Kimm of the project. “A global clientele, a huge, unwieldy, complex program, and a surreal and placeless site. We’re really excited.” SL
PALACE REVIVAL

NEW HOPE FOR BROADWAY'S OLD MOVIE PALACES
BY SAM LUBELL
this month the city announced an
been renovated and reopened, and
redevelopment. Two have recently
and so hope remains for their
became fronts for stores.
churches in recent years. Others
mold. Some were converted to
shuttered, collecting dust and
of these stunners still remain
town hit rock bottom. And most
began to take over and as down-
the 1980s and 90s as multiplexes
entertainment world, closed in
movies and vaudeville ruled the
Most of the 12 structures,
opened in the 1920s and 30s when
styles; and architect S. Charles
 theatrical combination of
architectural elements from the
French Renaissance syle. Its ornate upper
auditorium (facing page) is
The Orpheum Theater’s sumptuous

Sexy, transformative new develop-
ments have directed a bright spot-
light over the past few years on
downtown Los Angeles, including
the ambitious Grand Avenue
project, the gargantuan LA Live!,
and the slew of residential lofts
popping up everywhere. All the
while, downtown has been sitting
on an existing cultural (and perhaps
economic) gold mine that has been
virtually ignored: the amazing his-
toric theaters of Broadway, hailed
by many as the greatest collection
classic movie palaces in the
country.

Most of the 12 structures,
opened in the 1920s and 30s when
times when movies and vaudeville ruled the
entertainment world, closed in
the 1980s and 90s as multiplexes
began to take over and as down-
town hit rock bottom. And most
of these stunners still remain
shuttered, collecting dust and
mold. Some were converted to
curches in recent years. Others
became fronts for stores.

But they were not destroyed;
and so hope remains for their
redevelopment. Two have recently
been renovated and reopened, and
this month the city announced an
agreement with several theater
owners to try to bring back more.
The sumptuous theaters,
whose festive marques still dot
much of Broadway, are breathtaking,
harking to an era of opu-
ence and excitement that is almost
impossibly dazzling. They include
architect G. Albert Lansburgh’s
Orpheum (1926), a French
Renaissance-style theater whose
ornate columns, chandeliers, and
intricately-carved embellishments
recall the Paris Opera House; May
Company department store archi-
tect A. C. Martin’s Million Dollar
Theater (including new
lighting and design guideline
program, provide incentives
streetscapes, implement a historic
improve Broadway’s sidewalks and
provide more parking (particularly
at Pershing Square), improve
Broadway’s sidewalks and
streetscapes, implement a historic
lighting and design guideline
program, provide incentives
including tax breaks and expedited

The rest of Broadway, much like
today’s Canal Street in New York,
is dominated by a lively, but
gritty and disjointed collection of
jewelry dealers, discount clothing
stores, pawn shops, electronics
showrooms, and bridal shops.

But the longtime neglect of
the theaters and their street may
be over, say some local politicians
and conservationists. With the
surrounding development of
downtown lending momentum,
an effort has been building to
reopen some of the theaters,
becoming a vital part of down-
town’s turnaround. Already the
1,970-seat Orpheum, owned for
many years by developer Steve
Needleman, was beautifully reno-
vated in 2001 (at a cost of about
$4 million) by Fisher Sehgal Yanez
Architects and Kelly Architects,
and is now used for live theater,
music shows, and tv specials
(including an American Idol
episode). Its lobby and auditorium
have new paint, new rugs, new
seats, new sound, electrical, and
plumbing, and carefully cleaned
marble, gold leaf, and bronze
ornamentation. Its upper floors,
where once garment factory
workers toiled, are now rental
lofts (renovated by David Gray
Architects for $5 to 6 million).

A less intensive but still effec-
tive renovation of the Million
Dollar Theater (including new
paint, new rugs, and substantial
cleaning) by Santa Monica-based
Donald Barry is nearly complete.
Robert Voskanian, a managing
partner at the theater, says it
should reopen by February. The
Los Angeles Theater, which has
been undergoing renovation over
the last twenty years or so, is
already available for rent, hosting
events like a Jules Verne Film
festival last December. Rumor
has it that other theaters may be
converted into nightclubs or even
boutique hotels.

Equally significant, on January
28, City Councilmember Jose
Hustar was set to announce a part-
nership with Broadway’s theater
owners in which both sides pledged
to help fix up the theaters and
Broadway in general. As part
of the initiative, called “Bringing
Back Broadway,” the city would
provide more parking (particularly
at Pershing Square), improve
Broadway’s sidewalks and
streetscapes, implement a historic
lighting and design guideline
program, provide incentives
including tax breaks and expedited

and conservationists. With the
surrounding development of
downtown lending momentum,
an effort has been building to
reopen some of the theaters,
becoming a vital part of down-
town’s turnaround. Already the
1,970-seat Orpheum, owned for
many years by developer Steve
Needleman, was beautifully reno-
vated in 2001 (at a cost of about
$4 million) by Fisher Sehgal Yanez
Architects and Kelly Architects,
and is now used for live theater,
music shows, and tv specials
(including an American Idol
episode). Its lobby and auditorium
have new paint, new rugs, new
seats, new sound, electrical, and
plumbing, and carefully cleaned
marble, gold leaf, and bronze
ornamentation. Its upper floors,
where once garment factory
workers toiled, are now rental
lofts (renovated by David Gray
Architects for $5 to 6 million).

A less intensive but still effec-
tive renovation of the Million
Dollar Theater (including new
paint, new rugs, and substantial
cleaning) by Santa Monica-based
Donald Barry is nearly complete.
Robert Voskanian, a managing
partner at the theater, says it
should reopen by February. The
Los Angeles Theater, which has
been undergoing renovation over
the last twenty years or so, is
already available for rent, hosting
events like a Jules Verne Film
festival last December. Rumor
has it that other theaters may be
converted into nightclubs or even
boutique hotels.

Equally significant, on January
28, City Councilmember Jose
Hustar was set to announce a part-
nership with Broadway’s theater
owners in which both sides pledged
to help fix up the theaters and
Broadway in general. As part
of the initiative, called “Bringing
Back Broadway,” the city would
provide more parking (particularly
at Pershing Square), improve
Broadway’s sidewalks and
streetscapes, implement a historic
lighting and design guideline
program, provide incentives
including tax breaks and expedited

PALACE REVIVAL

NEW HOPE
FOR BROADWAY’S
OLD MOVIE PALACES
BY SAM LUBELL
this month the city announced an

redevelopment. Two have recently

mold. Some were converted to

shuttered, collecting dust and

of these stunners still remain

town hit rock bottom. And most

began to take over and as down-

the 1980s and 90s as multiplexes

movies and vaudeville ruled the

entertainment world, closed in

1960s and 90s as multiplexes

to come to an end. And as downtown hit rock bottom. And most of these stunners still remain shuttered, collecting dust and mold. Some were converted to churches in recent years. Others became fronts for stores. But they were not destroyed; and so hope remains for their redevelopment. Two have recently been renovated and reopened, and this month the city announced an agreement with several theater owners to try to bring back more. The sumptuous theaters, whose festive marques still dot much of Broadway, are breathtaking, harkening to an era of opulence and excitement that is almost impossibly dazzling. They include architect G. Albert Lansburgh’s Orpheum (1927), a French Renaissance-style theater whose ornate columns, chandeliers, and intricately-carved embellishments recall the Paris Opera House; May Company department store architect A. C. Martin’s Million Dollar Theater (1918); Sid Grauman’s first theater, a baroque combination of Spanish, Western, and Moorish styles; and architect S. Charles Lee’s unbelievably lavish Los Angeles Theater (1931), with its Corinthian columns and plasters, three-tiered fountain, huge crystal chandeliers, and lavish staircases, and opera boxes. Others, like the State, the Palace, and the Tower, are equally impressive. Though still standing, they look forlorn, like musty old mansions in the opening scenes of a horror flick. The State has been converted into a church, the Catedral de la Fe, while others, like the Rialto and the Arcade, have become storefronts for selling clothing, cell phones, music, and even aquariums. The rest of Broadway, much like today’s Canal Street in New York, is dominated by a lively, but gritty and disjointed collection of jewelry dealers, discount clothing stores, pawn shops, electronics showrooms, and bridal shops. But the longtime neglect of the theaters and their street may be over, say some local politicians and conservationists. With the surrounding development of downtown lending momentum, an effort has been building to reopen some of the theaters, becoming a vital part of downtown’s turnaround. Already the 1,895-seat Orpheum, owned for many years by developer Steve Needleman, was beautifully renovated in 2001 (at a cost of about $4 million) by Fisher Sehgal Yanez Architects and Kelly Architects, and is now used for live theater, music shows, and tv specials (including an American Idol episode). Its lobby and auditorium have new paint, new rugs, new seats, new sound, electrical, and plumbing, and carefully cleaned marble, gold leaf, and bronze ornamentation. Its upper floors, where once garment factory workers toiled, are now rental lofts (renovated by David Gray Architects for $5 to 6 million). A less intensive but still effective renovation of the Million Dollar Theater (including new paint, new rugs, and substantial cleaning) by Santa Monica-based Donald Barry is nearly complete. Robert Voskanian, a managing partner at the theater, says it should reopen by February. The Los Angeles Theater, which has been undergoing renovation over the last twenty years or so, is already available for rent, hosting events like a Jules Verne Film festival last December. Rumor has it that other theaters may be converted into nightclubs or even boutique hotels. Equally significant, on January 28, City Councilmember Jose Huizar was set to announce a partnership with Broadway’s theater owners in which both sides pledged to help fix up the theaters and Broadway in general. As part of the initiative, called “Bringing Back Broadway,” the city would provide more parking (particularly at Pershing Square), improve Broadway’s sidewalks and streetscapes, implement a historic lighting and design guideline program, provide incentives (including tax breaks and expedited

phones, music, and even aquariums. The Orpheum Theater’s sumptuous auditorium (facing page) is decorated in the French Renaissance style. Its ornate upper lobby (above) features Neo-classical balustrades and Corinthian pilasters lit by bronze chandeliers.
Among other things, the Broadway Initiative, started in 1999, has its own effort, called the Broadway Study. "I want to see a Broadway that is walkable, shoppable, an enjoyable pedestrian area that provides entertainment, restaurants, retail amenities to the people of Los Angeles," he said.

Michael Delijani, whose Delson Investment Company owns several theaters on the street—the Los Angeles, the State, the Palace, and the Tower Theaters—could not be reached for comment. But he recently told the Wall Street Journal, "The timing is finally right for the revitalization of Broadway." All of his properties are available for rent, although the Los Angeles is by far in the best condition.

While the city should be lauded for its efforts, much credit for transforming Broadway goes to the Los Angeles Conservancy, a preservation group whose own effort, called the Broadway Initiative, started in 1999, has lobbied hard to use the theaters and Broadway’s other historic structures to energize the area. Among other things, the Conservancy has helped obtain federal money for historic building rehabilitation and has secured local legislation to support historic loft conversions and better parking. It has also helped create local design guidelines, a historic facade rehabilitation program, and has helped market the theaters with events like Last Remaining Seats, in which various theaters are open to the public for movie screenings.

The real battle is to convince business owners that these grand palaces are worth saving. Some are skeptical that the city’s recent maneuvering will get results, noting that there is little market for more theaters downtown and little money to do what needs to be done.

"To make a usable theater, it requires millions of dollars in investment," said Ed Katse, manager at the Orpheum. Kelsey says that while the Orpheum is turning a yearly profit, he doesn’t know if Needelman will ever make up the money he put into the theater.

"This happens every five to ten years; someone has a plan to save the theaters," he added. (For instance, the city’s Nighttime Broadway Initiative of 2001 yielded few results.) "But until you find someone who’s willing to spend millions, you can’t compete with other theaters in the area." He added that the addition of new facilities like the recently-opened Nokia Theater only adds more competition.

Huizar argued that the demand for theaters downtown is still high, pointing out that the Orpheum is consistently booked. He said that his plan will differ from those of the past since those plans had “lacked the ability to bring all sides to the table at the same time.”

Meanwhile, Voskanian at the Million Dollar Theater said he had not been informed of the initiative, evidence that the city has yet to reach out to all of the theaters. Others worry that all this new development on Broadway might displace a well-entrenched Latino community, which has brought life and commerce back to a street that was before pretty dead. The fate of many stores is still up in the air.

But for now, the mood is bright and the thought of these stunning palaces becoming an active part of Los Angeles makes even the most cynical people a little bit excited.

"It will be interesting to see how the owners respond to this," said the LA Conservancy’s executive director Linda Dishman. "We’re creating a vision and giving encouragement, but there are no guarantees."
Residents of LA, watch out—there’s a Vandal in your midst. His preferred mode of transport is a red hot-air balloon, perfect for quick getaways after enlivening the architecture of cities across the world with his graffiti. No scruffy kid, this natty outlaw sports a suit and a jaunty bowler hat. So who is this mysterious Vandal? The thus-named character bears a certain similarity to his creator, street artist Nick Walker. The Vandal and the street artist Walker’s works, including many elaborate stencil paintings and drawings, are on display in February. The works are not alone in their appeal. Kenna’s use of long exposures makes the da Vinci masterpiece, might make a cheeky appearance.)

With more than 7,000 acres of protected land, Monterey Bay’s Elkhorn Slough watershed is teeming with birds, otters, sharks, and seals, yet renowned photographer Michael Kenna’s serene images of empty landscapes draw attention to the beauty behind it all. A series of 33 silver gelatin prints taken in the late 1980s provide a window into the diverse topography of the slough, including a PG&E power plant, which takes on a peaceful monumentality through Kenna’s lens. In Moss Landing Power Station, California, USA, Kenna’s use of long exposures makes the electricity generators’ smoke seem like soft curling breath strokes against a horizontal pattern of wispy clouds. In Fense Poats, Tidal Lagoon, Elkhorn Slough (above), the black silhouette of a fence reflects onto a silver lagoon, separating the viewer from the seemingly endless natural landscape beyond. In this exhibit, Kenna captures the beauty present in two completely dichotomous environments: one distinctly inspiring, the other generally seen as repugnant. It leads one to wonder, what else might seem perversely beautiful if we looked at it through a different lens?

/22/08 12:09 PM  Page 2
Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff, Hawaiian Modern: The measure.

sprinkled over them for good

tionable Spanish-style ancestors,

developed from quis-

generic white condo towers of uni-

date. Honolulu became a sea of

development couldn't accommo-

date. Honolulu was riveted on the nascent mod-

cernism of the Hawaiian Islands.

On the cover of House Beautiful that July was the 1952 Liljestrand House, named Pace Setter house of the year. Fifty-three pages of the magazine revealed its angular form height, descended from ques-

Hawaii became a state,

factors forever soured Ossipoff's

Honolulu. At the heart of this iconic

elements, perched high above

redwood and glass, open to the

of the year. Thirty-five pages of

the architectural survey, the 1952 Liljestrand House. Ossipoff's unconventional use of
genre, while considering various

t factors that Hawaii's easygoing

land influences on its culture; and

bringing with it the inevitable main-

optimism. Hawaii became a state,

factors forever soured Ossipoff's

Honolulu. At the heart of this iconic

elements, perched high above

redwood and glass, open to the

of the year. Thirty-five pages of

the architectural survey, the 1952 Liljestrand House. Ossipoff's unconventional use of

genre, while considering various

t factors that Hawaii's easygoing

land influences on its culture; and

bringing with it the inevitable main-

optimism. Hawaii became a state,

factors forever soured Ossipoff's

Honolulu. At the heart of this iconic

elements, perched high above

redwood and glass, open to the

of the year. Thirty-five pages of

the architectural survey, the 1952 Liljestrand House. Ossipoff's unconventional use of

genre, while considering various

t factors that Hawaii's easygoing

land influences on its culture; and

bringing with it the inevitable main-

optimism. Hawaii became a state,

factors forever soured Ossipoff's

Honolulu. At the heart of this iconic

elements, perched high above

redwood and glass, open to the

of the year. Thirty-five pages of

the architectural survey, the 1952 Liljestrand House. Ossipoff's unconventional use of

genre, while considering various

t factors that Hawaii's easygoing

land influences on its culture; and

bringing with it the inevitable main-

optimism. Hawaii became a state,
The “extreme cantilever” consists of tensioned ropes framed by a wending network of aluminum tubing.

On a hectic stretch of Silver Lake Boulevard, strange and chimerical installations periodically burst into view from a narrow concrete courtyard, transfixing neighborhood residents and startling motorists with their seemingly dislocated beauty.

Materials & Applications (M&A) is a nonprofit gallery calling itself a “research and exhibition center.” It takes the latter part of that designation seriously. Founder Jenna Didier presents two installations each year. Resisting the elitism that frequently pervades the worlds of art and architecture is M&As principal charge. “The courtyard is open to the street and free to the public, and we host frequent open-air discussions,” Didier said.

The current installation, Density Fields, thrusts out over the rock garden at M&A, advancing the notion of public art by evoking connections with the surrounding neighborhood. Designed by husband-and-wife team Dwayne Oyler and Jenny Wu of the Oyler Wu Collaborative, Density Fields grew from a model that used geometric “lines of communication” to connect points within the courtyard, while also extending outward to neighboring buildings. By editing those geometric elements into the confined space of the M&A courtyard, they’ve created a complex, hovering “extreme cantilever” that is both tense and delicate. Adroitly blending sculpture and architecture, Density Fields is constructed from a bewilder- ing web of tensioned polypropylene ropes framed by a network of aluminum tubing. The sil- ver ropes, which tension the cantilever, shimmer in the evening light, resembling steel bridge cables. The densely woven “fields” created by the crosshatching lines of rope transform and shift as you examine the installation from different perspectives.

While the 26-foot cantilever hangs with a kind of malevolent elegance overhead and out of reach, furniture elements, such as a table and bench constructed of the metallic rope, gently bring the piece down to earth and provide a kind of humanizing anchor.

The notion of a dialogue between the geometry of Density Fields and the surrounding neighborhood arose out of a series of spatial ideas sketched out over the years, said the artists. Oyler Wu eventually sought to deploy those ideas as a rich spatial experience within the confines of the M&A courtyard, while also taking into account the environment beyond the site’s boundaries.

The choice of materials eloquently transmits the architects’ intent from sketch to execution; the delicately woven web buzzes with a taut conduc- tivity. At the same time, the cantilever seems to hover at the edge of stability, while retaining an awkward poise. In fact, the skewed energy of the neighborhood, a gentrifying hotbed of art and music, strewn with midcentury and Spanish Revival homes, with a modest infestation of ringbats. The permeable nature of the construction—dominating without overwhelming the courtyard—also meshes with M&As welcoming communalism.

The firm’s third summer project, much of Density Fields was welded and installed by volunteers and members of the Oyler Wu office staff. Passersby who travel down this unremarkable stretch of Silver Lake Boulevard might understandably not only draw into Density Fields but also be inspired by it.

WEB OF INSPIRATION

Density Fields
Materials & Applications
418 Silver Lake Blvd., Los Angeles
Through March

On a hectic stretch of Silver Lake Boulevard, strange and chimerical installations periodically burst into view from a narrow concrete courtyard, transfixing neighborhood residents and startling motorists with their seemingly dislocated beauty. The “extreme cantilever” consists of tensioned ropes framed by a wending network of aluminum tubing.

The hope of many Californians—then and now—was to be at home in a place in which light and air and landscape merged, a place in which all of nature and art might be bounded by a low garden wall. California Romantica reminds us that out of a bastard style such dreams were made.
Silvius sconce  
Ivalo Lighting  
www.ivalolighting.com

The flowing forms of water coursing across foliage and rays of sunlight filtering through forest trees inspired the look of this sconce designed by Roger Duffy and others from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Silvius may be used alone or in groups for a more dramatic effect (left). Equipped with clusters of interior LEDs, each 13-inch-by-24-inch-by-6-inch sconce can glow in white, red, green, blue, or a mixed color. And if a constant glow is too old-school, you can choose illumination that pulses or shifts between colors. It’s a light to suit every changing mood.

NAMI washbasin  
RAPSEL Spa  
www.rapsel.it

Italian designer Matteo Nunziati was cutting and folding two pieces of paper when he was inspired to create this origami-like washbasin. Crafted of Nikron, a new material similar to Corian, the washbasin’s light, boxy shape is all well-defined angles and flat planes. In short, it’s a quintessential minimalist bathroom fixture. Two 20-centimeter shelves create a vanity top, making NAMI a multipurpose item capable of being mounted onto the wall or attached to a washstand. In the United States, the new product is available at AF New York in Manhattan’s Flatiron District.

PARADISE’S LAST HOPE continued from page 17

nesting birds or grime to accumulate.

The most representative and intriguing element of Ossipoff’s philosophy manifested itself not in a structure but in a scathing cultural commentary: As AIA Hawaii chapter president in 1966, Ossipoff declared a “War on Ugliness” (though Ossipoff built one of the first of a wave of generic white towers, the Diamond Head Apartments, in 1958).

This direct attack on rampant overdevelopment, culturally insensitive design, irresponsible building practices, and lack of urban planning was widely reported in the media. One look at Waikiki Beach, and it appears to have been lost.

However outspoken in his expectations for Hawaii’s future, Ossipoff was not one to reflect upon his own work. He reportedly shrugged off any comparisons to other architects, and the exhibition is forced to do the same. A timeline, which cross-references Ossipoff’s life with Hawaiian politics, world events, and architectural milestones, further highlights these glaring questions about how (or if) Ossipoff connected to the architectural world at large. Although there are hints at influences—Frank Lloyd Wright is an obvious one—Ossipoff appeared to operate independently from their inspiration, or pretended he did. He attended a reputable school and—for Honolulu at least—it’s not too late. However, the high visibility of this exhibition, Ossipoff was not one to embrace of the jetliner is endangered: Ossipoff modernized in 1972. His eloquent appreciation of noted territorial Hawaiian architect Charles W. Dickey, but there are neither mentions of mentors nor apprentices who faithfully carried on his legacy. What is covered in depth is Ossipoff’s brusk, at times abrasive personality and his often-silent demeanor.

The exhibition does not explain whether this isolationist tendency was self-imposed or could be blamed on Hawaii’s remote location. Did the architect not receive commissions outside of Hawaii, or did he choose not to accept them? What prevented him from achieving fame outside the state? Was it his choice to perfect a kind of regionalism because of his love for Hawaii, or his desire to be the most celebrated architect in a small architectural community?

Toward the end of the exhibition, Ossipoff’s last major project is given significant real estate. Almost every visitor to Honolulu experiences the delight of stepping off the plane and right back outdoors into the soaring lanais and palm groves of the Honolulu International Airport, which Ossipoff modernized in 1972. His eloquent embrace of the jetliner is endangered: A new masterplan for the airport might eradicate Ossipoff’s contributions. If that happens, the high visibility of this exhibition is perfectly timed. At best, it will convince another generation of planners and architects that the War on Ugliness is even more relevant than it was when first declared, and—for Honolulu at least—it’s not too late.

ALISSA WALKER IS BASED IN LA AND IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AN’S CALIFORNIA EDITION.
THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 30, 2008

MARKETPLACE

The Architect’s Newspaper Marketplace showcases products and services. Formatted 1/16 page, 1/8 page, or 1/4 page, black and white ads are available as at right.

CONTACT:
Frank Dantona
21 Murray St, 5th Floor New York NY 10007
TEL 805-520-2836 / FAX 212-966-0633
fmdmedia@spacesales.com

Wood-Mode, the leading custom cabinet manufacturer, can produce the product you want. From traditional to contemporary, Wood-Mode provides flexibility, quality and value. To learn more contact—

KB Associates
Factory representative
Northern California
650-212-6212
kbassoc@jps.net
www.wood-mode.com

At Ideate, Inc., our guiding mission is to provide the most extensive, high-quality information solutions. We offer an array of resources to help AEC professionals meet their technological needs and challenges. With services that include training, support, consulting, and community forums, Ideate’s repertoire of client offerings will ensure the professional development of your organization.

San Francisco   Santa Clara   Sacramento   Portland

Autodesk
Authorized Training Center: 888.662.7238 • ideateinc.com • education@ideateinc.com

Wood-Mode Fine Custom Cabinetry

A name you should know

california-architects.com
Profiles of Selected Architects
AN INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR IDEAS WHITE HOUSE REDUX

What if the White House, the ultimate architectural symbol of political power, were to be designed today? On occasion of the election of the 44th U.S. President, Storefront for Art and Architecture and Control Group challenge you to design a new residence for the world’s most powerful individual. The best ideas, designs, descriptions, images, and videos will be selected by some of the world’s most distinguished designers and critics and featured in a month-long exhibition at Storefront for Art and Architecture in July 2008 and published in Surface magazine. All three winners will be flown to New York to collect their prizes at the opening party. Visit www.whitehouseredux.org for full submission details and registration. DEADLINE: APRIL 2008

JURY
Beppe Colombari (Architectural Institute, New York)
Stefano Boeri (Editor-in-chief, Abitare magazine, Milan)
Liz Diller (Diller Scofidio + Renfro, New York)
John Wardle (Practical Design, Royal Institute of Design, Stockholm)
Vince Manghi (Adjunct Professor, California College of the Arts, San Francisco)
Mark Nulty (Chair of the Graduate School of Architecture, Columbia University)
Leandra Mault (Editorial Director, Surface magazine, New York)

Storefront for Art and Architecture
97 Nielsen Street, New York, NY 10013 212-414-0795
www.archpaper.org

CONTROL GROUP

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER, CALIFORNIA’S ONLY ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN TABLOID, IS PUBLISHED TEN TIMES PER YEAR.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

Mail this form with a check payable to: The Architect’s Newspaper, LLC.
The Architect’s Newspaper, 21 Murray St., 5th Floor New York, NY 10007

Company
Address
City/State/Zip Code
Email
Phone
RA License Number
Credit Card Number
Exp. Date

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Mail to:
The Architect’s Newspaper
516 West 18th Street, Suite 300
New York, NY 10011

CA RA
FREE*
$25
$45
$115**
$145

*Must provide RA number **Must provide proof of valid student I.D.

www.archpaper.org

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER
NEW YORK ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

UPCOMING ISSUES
AN 03_02.20.2008
RETAIL PLANNING
CA 02_27.02.2008
BEST OF RESOURCE GUIDE

AN 04_03.28.2008
EMERGING ARCHITECTS

www.archpaper.com / classifieds.htm
I winced when I saw the Times’ headline, “Next to MoMA, Reaching for the Stars.” Jean Nouvel’s new 75-story tower alongside the Museum of Modern Art reached back to Lyonel Feininger for inspiration, finally realizing his vision of an expressionist tower. It’s hard to imagine a stronger contrast to Cesar Pelli’s safely office-like MoMA housing or Yoshio Taniguchi’s recent, buttoned-down expansion. “To its credit, the Modern pressed for a talented architect.” Times’ critic Nicolai Ouroussoff wrote, but he goes on to praise Hines, the tower’s “remarkably astute” developer. “Hines asked Nouvel to come up with two possible designs... and made the bolder choice.” That’s Hines in New York.

This fall, Hines also won the last erection, the Transbay Tower falls somewhere else. Francis Pelli’s proposal for San Francisco’s less-than-stellar financial district anchors the twin-tower IFC complex. From a credentials standpoint, that’s valuable experience. Plus a tower that’s up-and-running is easier to price, even with differences in construction, than one-offs like Richard Rogers and SOM’s competing finalists. Armed with that knowledge, Hines played its trump card, offering up to $350 million for the land—more than twice what the other two developers were prepared to pay. That’s Hines in San Francisco.

Hines is Hines—the same smart operators, east and west. Given what they’re proposing for New York, blame for San Francisco’s less-than-stellar tower falls somewhere else. Jokingly called Dean Macris’ last erection, the Transbay Tower benefitted from the recently-departed planning czar’s determination to fulfill his long-time vision of a city skyline marked by three accentuated “hills”—two real and one manmade. This is the same vision that gave us One Rincon Hill, the first in a two-tower wonder by Chicago’s Solomon Cordwell Buenz. Compared to it, Pelli’s proposal is definite progress.

A lot of people have questioned the logic of Macris’ idée fixe, but that’s another article. The question here is how a competition that was advertised as clearly breaking new ground. This was another reason to wince, since a second major work by Mayne might finally put San Francisco on the architectural map.

Of course, Calatrava made the cut, only to have a falling out with his developer. Perhaps he was chosen, like Icarus, to exemplify the dangers of the creative edge. That left SOM, whose tower—while drawing on a Chinese precedent—alone showed the originality that the competition promised. With its blend of structure and sustainability, it presented a credible future for tall buildings in the earthquake-prone west coast. Plus, it was new, and that seemed to be what was wanted. (Unlike SOM’s, Richard Rogers’ peculiar tower was a throwback to his high-tech, frame-and-infill days, but vastly toned down with no real gain in use value, especially as office space.) SOM’s tower fit the bill, if the object had been to build a tower in San Francisco that broke the mold. In retrospect, no such luck.

The Transbay Tower reminds me of the new east span of the Bay Bridge, a chance squandered to do something on a par with the Golden Gate. San Francisco rises to its own occasions with about the same frequency as its earthquakes—maybe less frequently. In that sense, there’s no real mystery about the latest outcome. Still, it makes me wince.
integrate
Revit.
transform your
projects.

Revit – The Right BIM Tool for Integrated Project Delivery.

The right tools. The right people. Success comes with the right people on your team, the right tools, and an effective process. Ideate, Inc. is the West Coast’s leading provider of Autodesk Revit software, training, support, and consulting services. Contact our staff of Architects, MEP Engineers, and Structural Engineers to help you maximize profitability using the best BIM tool in the industry.

Autodesk
Premier Solutions Provider
Building Architecture
Manufacturing

888.662.7238
ideateinc.com
sales@ideateinc.com

SAN FRANCISCO  SANTA CLARA  SACRAMENTO  PORTLAND
"I went out to see the NY Times building and was very impressed with how well it is working. Below is a picture I took of the commissioned 8th floor, and you can see how much energy is being saved right in the picture…"

Francis Rubinstein
Staff Scientist
Building Technologies Department
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Actual unsolicited response. Used by permission.

the principle:
Dimming lights saves energy.

the strategy:
Automatically dim lights near windows when daylight is available.

the details:
www.lutron.com/nyt

the numbers:
Fluorescent fixtures with Lutron EcoSystem™ smart dimming ballasts — 15,000

Expected annual lighting energy savings — 40%

Annual CO₂ reduction — 410 metric tons

Creating a smart, sustainable building requires a collaboration of design, engineering, and innovative technology. The New York Times, their design team, and Lutron created a lighting control system that achieves a seamless blend of comfort, productivity, and energy savings.

As the global leader in daylight and electric light control, Lutron has been delivering style, innovation, and energy savings to buildings for over 45 years.

Call us to find out how Lutron lighting controls enhance your projects. 1.866.299.2073