

# THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

## 04\_04.30.2008

CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

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CHARLES CALLISTER

### CHARLES WARREN CALLISTER, 1917-2008

Charles Warren Callister died in Novato, California on April 3. Although he grew up in New York, Florida, Ohio, and Texas, he finally settled in San Francisco, making a name for himself as a preeminent post-war California architect. As a teenager, Callister studied art at the Witte Museum in San Antonio, leading to the formal study of architecture, art, and sociology at the University of Texas at **continued on page 10**



SHORT LIST ANNOUNCED FOR NEWEST SF BAYFRONT DEVELOPMENT

The San Francisco Giants' proposal, designed by SMWM with Beyer Blinder Belle and Atelier Ten.

COURTESY SMWM

## WATERWORLD

The San Francisco Port Commission was scheduled, as of press time, to announce a short list from among the four teams competing for the right to develop China Basin Seawall Lot 337 (SWL 337), a 16-acre site on the waterfront immediately south of AT&T Park, home of the San Francisco Giants. An RFQ issued last October elicited concepts

from competitors that included Lot 337 Community Developers (Boston Properties with Wilson Meany Sullivan, and Kenwood Investments); the San Francisco Giants with The Cordish Company and Farallon Capital Management; and Build Inc, Cherokee Investment Partners, and Urban Green Devco. A team comprised of **continued on page 13**



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BOORA ARCHITECTS

HOUSE OF THE ISSUE. SEE PAGE 14



RICHARD BARNES

GEHRY DESIGNING THIS SUMMER'S SERPENTINE PAVILION IN LONDON

### CHEERS, FRANK

Frank Gehry seems to have a major commission in every world capital, but he's somehow missed London, one of today's architectural hotspots—until now. In January, he was chosen to design this year's Serpentine Gallery pavilion, a temporary structure that goes up every summer adjacent to London's Serpentine Gallery, a well-known space for art exhibitions and galas in London's Kensington Gardens. The pavilion series, now entering its ninth year, has included fantastical projects by the likes of Oscar Niemeyer, Daniel Libeskind, and Rem Koolhaas. Last year's pavilion by Snøhetta partner Kjetil Thorsen and artist Olafur Eliasson was delayed until early fall, **continued on page 7**



COURTESY SERPENTINE GALLERY

ENVIRONMENT AND ENGINEERING BUILDING STARTS OFF UNIVERSITY GREEN KICK

### SUSTAINABLE STANFORD

As concern over global warming sweeps the country, the nation's leading universities are emerging as shrewd advocates, combining unparalleled brainpower, youthful idealism, and commanding institutional reputations to tackle environmental issues. Last month, Stanford University took center stage with the opening of the Jerry Yang and Akiko Yamazaki Environment and Engineering Building (Y2E2), an interdisciplinary research center intended to house environmental research while serving as a model of sustainable design.

The first of four buildings to rise on Stanford's new Science and Engineering Quad, Y2E2, designed by Portland-based BOORA Architects, is expected to achieve or exceed its performance goals, consuming 56 percent less energy and 90 percent less water than a comparable, conventionally-designed building—while adding just three percent to the overall construction cost, which totaled \$80 million. "We wanted a **continued on page 12**

**STONE REVEALS THE ORIGINS OF ENDEAVOURS TO IMPART CULTURE.**

**AND THE CUTTING EDGE.**





Time	Destination	Airline	Ter	Pass. In	Remarks
16:20	London/Heathrow	BA0852	1	161-165	DEPARTED 16:55
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16:45	London/Heathrow	OK4010	1	210	GATE CLOSED
19:00	Palma Mallorca	OS0996	2	200-201	CHECK-IN
19:00	Ibiza	OS0997	2	210-230	CHECK-IN
19:00	Tenerife	OS0998	2	200-240	CHECK-IN
19:00	Las Palmas	LH3287	1	121-124	CHECK-IN
19:00	Dusseldorf	OK0882	1	171-173	GATE CLOSED
19:05	Barcelona/El	OK0804	1	141-157	BOARDING
19:10	Risa	LH3285	1	141-157	BOARDING
19:10	Bucharest/Otopeni	OK0434	1	121-124	BOARDING
19:10	Frankfurt	OK0674	1	141-157	BOARDING
19:15	Istanbul	HA0823	1	152-153	GATE CLOSED
19:15	Dublin	OK0676	1	141-157	BOARDING
19:20	Budapest	OK0448	1	141-157	BOARDING
19:20	Cork	OK0720	1	141-156	BOARDING
19:20	Ozle/Gardermoen	OK0646	1	141-157	BOARDING
19:20	Milan/Malpensa	OK0676	1	141-157	BOARDING
19:25	Manchester	OK1493	1	166-167	BOARDING
19:30	Tallinn Ulemiste				
19:35	Zurich				

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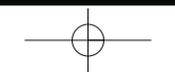


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VOLUME 02, ISSUE 04 APRIL 30, 2008. THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER'S  
CALIFORNIA EDITION (ISSN 1552-8081) IS PUBLISHED TEN TIMES A YEAR  
(JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER,  
OCTOBER, DECEMBER) BY THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER, LLC, 21 MURRAY  
ST., 5TH FL., NEW YORK, NY 10007. SEND ADDRESS CHANGE TO: 21 MURRAY  
ST., 5TH FL., NEW YORK, NY 10007. FOR SUBSCRIBER SERVICE: CALL  
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## VELVET-ROPE PUBLISHING

Exclusivity. It's become an obsession for most architectural journals that covet the distinction of publishing a prestigious project all by themselves. Try to print an innovative or beautiful building, and you'll often come up against: "We're sorry, but *The New York Times/Dwell/Architectural Digest* is thinking of/planning on/definitely publishing this project so we can't let you have it." Or, "you'll have to wait at least eight months on the off-chance that it's published." It's happened to us several times this month alone. And it's irritating for a small but ambitious publication like ours.

Let's not forget why we're here. Architectural journalism should be a means of ensuring that as many people as possible can see architects' innovative work. Of course, it's about business, but it's also a means of providing both information and inspiration to designers and to the public. We should be trying to ensure that good design is recognized as widely as possible, and that it multiplies.

The obsession with exclusivity severely limits our ability to get the word out, and ensures that amazing achievements will be stuck in one magazine with a certain readership at a certain socio-economic level. Getting there first happens, of course, across journalism, but in design journalism, spreading the word ought to take precedence.

Of course, as the editor of a smaller architectural publication, it's a no-brainer to protest against larger pubs' better access. But when I worked at a much larger, more established magazine, I felt the same way. I used to see my magazine squabble with its chief rival and laugh as we tried to force their photographers from entering "our" buildings to take shots. Episodes like this were commonplace. And it continues. A wonderful project is now off-limits to us for at least eight months because someone is thinking about perhaps publishing it somewhere else. The architect is just as perplexed, caught in the crossfire of dueling magazines and newspapers. "It's like stepping into a minefield" is the constant refrain we hear from anxious architects. "Tell us what to do."

First know this: No magazine can afford to alienate a talented architect. The editors themselves are aware of this. If, say, *Architectural Digest* threatens to cut off an architect who strays, they might just do that—until the next great project comes along. Strong work is irresistible, and no publication is going to turn its back on something special. To say otherwise is intimidation, pure and simple. What to do? Fight back by resisting exclusivity agreements. Further, I encourage publications to look beyond their egos and immediate self-interest for the good of the profession. I understand that all publications want to appear fresh and original. But they can still do that with an individual point of view and without leaving architecture to the few over the many. There are plenty of projects out there, and if we stayed on top of them, this would never be an issue. Otherwise, if we want our field to stay out of the public discourse and in the realm of irrelevant, out-of-touch elitism, then that's just what we'll get.

SAM LUBELL

STOREFRONT OPENS TEMPORARY  
LA SPACEPOP GOES THE  
ARCHITECTURE

A sojourn on Sunset Boulevard is de rigueur for any starry-eyed Los Angeles newbie, and on April 11, the storied street welcomed LA's newest temporary resident, a pop-up gallery by the New York-based Storefront for Art and Architecture. The six-week LA outpost represents the 25-year-old non-profit's first stop on a global tour, bringing exhibitions and events to communities around the world.

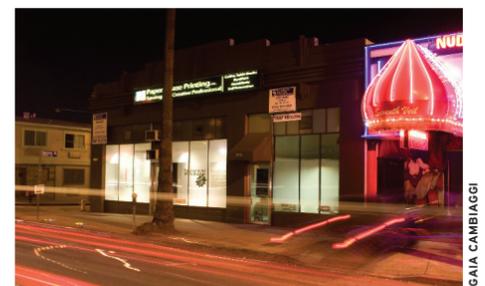
"We've remained a very small organization all this time, which allows us to kind of tap into these different networks and cultures," said executive director Joseph Grima, alluding to the Storefront's international reach when in need of partners and collaborators. "It makes it possible for us to access these clusters with a very light touch."

Inspired by renegade boutiques like that of Japanese fashion house Comme des Garçons, the Storefront is experimenting with installations in urban environments and at global art and design gatherings. Storefronts in London and Yokohama are planned for later this year, as well as potential forays into less-expected cities like Tehran and Mexico City.

"LA was a no-brainer," said Grima about choosing a site for the first pop-up, but when it came to picking a neighborhood, he didn't want the expected locations like Culver City or Chinatown. When PaperChase Printing in Hollywood offered their empty print room, right next door to the Seventh Veil strip club, Grima jumped at the location. "It's upmarket and expensive, but also has this latent seediness. I like the contrast." The 800-square-foot space designed by Storefront's in-house New York team acknowledges the printworks' environment, while a partition built through the middle provides a clean, white backdrop for the inaugural exhibition on the architecture of the Communist era photographed by Frédéric Chaubin, *CCCP: Cosmic Communist Constructions Photographed*. The French photographer traveled throughout the former Soviet Union, discovering extraordinary structures designed by architects who were working in a hermetically-sealed culture, yet operating with an unrivaled amount of creative freedom.

The exhibition had a very natural LA connection, after American Apparel founder Dov Charney saw the show in the Storefront's Soho location last year. "Dov really loves this exhibition," said Grima. "He emailed me the next day and wanted to put it on the front page of the American Apparel website, which he did." Fittingly, American Apparel—along with help from the LA Forum and the art marketing group ForYourArt—sponsored the Storefront at its temporary Sunset Strip address. **ALISSA WALKER**

## Temporary "Storefront" on Sunset Boulevard.



GAIA CAMBIAGGI

## LETTERS

## PARK MERCED COMPLAINT

Here's a side note to your Park Merced story ("Next Big Thing," *CAN* 02\_02.27.2008): The developers who have so quickly targeted the area as a transit-oriented development and gobbled up the surrounding parcels, are using the "green" label to promote their total tear-down of the area. Sustainability-wise, the \$130 million being sunk into the buildings is also part of what's being torn out. This is highly unsustainable. The owner and the San Francisco State University (SFSU) did not do their homework on the property, its concept, or its original outline. It was also noted to the City of San Francisco numerous times that there was questionable prior sales of land to the SFSU foundation as part of their masterplan that annexed property that was

a prior amenity of Parkmerced. The SFSU masterplan ignored this in the proposed development of University Park South.

The SFSU masterplan must still pass through individual EIR's on developments in Parkmerced, including the Creative Arts Center proposed for the one open recreational site formerly a part of Parkmerced's original property boundary. The original sale of the land was a deal between the City and County of San Francisco and MetLife meant to provide housing—specifically, affordable rental housing—to the area for people who could not afford to buy a home. The city's general plan specifically states that the property was to be protected and used to expand on the rental housing and open space. But we see no such efforts by developers to protect and expand the exist-

ing rent-controlled rental stock.

The need for architects to step up on the rental housing issues, and the need for basic well-designed communities that are not only "for profit" and unaffordable to the majority of the community is what should be driving Skidmore Owings & Merrill's and the owner's vision, and not the proposed densification that will quickly ruin any semblance of well-integrated and well thought-out preservation and sustainable densification that could occur through transfer development rights and proper maintenance and improvements to the original design and landscape.

AARON GOODMAN  
PARKMERCED RESIDENTS' ORGANIZATION



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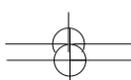
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER APRIL 30, 2008

EAVESDROP: ALISSA WALKER

## HOME SHOPPING NETWORK

Preppy fashionistas got a midcentury modern treat while perusing the paisley chinos of J.Crew last month, where **Richard Neutra's** Kaufmann Desert House was featured prominently as a backdrop in the retailer's catalog and website. We're only a *little* disgusted by the current owners shamelessly cashing in on Neutra's legacy—after all, **Edgar J. Kaufmann** himself was a department store tycoon—but we were curious about the impeccable timing of the high-profile exposure, since the 1946 house is expected to fetch around \$25 million at Christie's International in May. A rep from Christie's claims the J.Crew shoot was coincidental but “certainly welcome,” and tipped us to the fact that the house is also working hard in ads for glam-tastic 7 For All Mankind jeans. Also likely surprised by the shoot were **Leo Marmol** and **Ron Radziner**, whose firm Marmol Radziner handled the home's extensive renovation in the late 1990s. The firm declined to comment about their handiwork being used to sell summerweight cashmere cardigans, but perhaps all the attention will help spur interest in another Marmol Radziner desert property up for sale. Their 2005 prefab prototype in Desert Hot Springs has plummeted from \$1.85 million to \$1.495 million since it went on the market in February.

## GRAND NEW PLAN

Would it be Eavesdrop without another installment of Grand Avenue Watch 2008? Only a month has passed and we've got more big news, namely, that Dubai's royal family has saved yet another flailing American development. Istithmar World Capital, which is 100-percent owned by the government of Dubai, was approved in March as a major investor for the stalled project, dumping \$100 million toward a much-needed construction loan. Istithmar chairman **Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem**—who also established the company that's building those notorious manmade Palm Islands—made headlines last month when he publicly threatened European Union financial organizations who attempted to regulate his activities. Note to all the rabble rousers at CRA/LA: Do *not* piss off the Sultan. But the promise of serious Dubai coin seemed to buoy the prospects of developer Related Companies in more ways than one: **Stephen Ross**, CEO of Related, purchased half of the Miami Dolphins in February for \$550 million. So, to recap: Groundbreaking is now scheduled for April (uh-huh, riiiiiiight), it's now called “The Grand,” **Frank Gehry** couldn't care less, and the Miami Dolphins finished last season with a 1-15 record, making them the worst team in the NFL.

## ANCIENT HISTORY

**Steven Holl?** Who's Steven Holl? Even though Holl won a 2002 competition that named him as architect of the \$300-million, multi-year renovation of the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles, he's all but extinct from the project today, which just completed its first phase. Structural and restoration work of the 1913 building is credited to **Brenda Levin** with **Jorge de la Cal** from CO Architects as the project architect. (Exhibition designers will be named soon as well, which we're almost certain will be **Hodgetts + Fung**.) But a recent press event made no mention of Holl. A representative for the museum says it is “really just trying to focus on the 1913 project right now.” But after doing our own digging, we found that funding for the second phase, which would include Holl's proposal, is non-existent. Holl, it would seem, has gone the way of the dodo.

SEND TIPS, GOSSIP, AND PARTY SOUVENIRS TO [SLUBELL@ARCHPAPER.COM](mailto:SLUBELL@ARCHPAPER.COM)

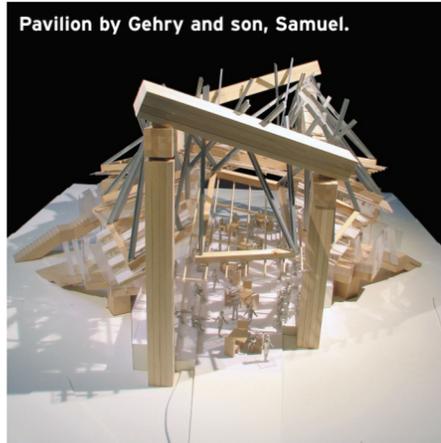
**CHEERS, FRANK** continued from front page and the gallery turned to Zaha Hadid to save the day with a cluster of fabric mushrooms that opened just in time for the summer party season.

The design of Gehry's structure was unveiled at the end of March. Engineered in collaboration with Arup, it will consist of large wood planks and several glass planes that will project in various angles and directions. Its supporting beams and columns of different lengths will create a warped envelope accentuated by disjointed wooden members that appear like spikes emerging from the top and sides of the structure. The project will serve as an amphitheater for live events and, explained Gehry, as “an urban street,” running from the park to the Serpentine's gallery.

The pavilion will be Gehry's first built structure in England. His only other completed UK building is the Maggie's Center cancer hospital in Dundee, Scotland, completed in 2003. For the Serpentine project, he is collaborating for the first time with his son Samuel Gehry, a designer.

The pavilion will be sited on the gallery's lawn for three months. Since 2001, it has attracted up to 250,000 visitors every summer, and is accompanied by a program of public talks and events. Generally, the pavilion opens in July. As with all the previous designers, Gehry will have a maximum of six months from the time of his invitation to complete the work. **SAM LUBELL**

Pavilion by Gehry and son, Samuel.



COURTESY SERPENTINE GALLERY

OPEN &gt; EXHIBITION

### > THOMAS THE T. REX LAB

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County  
900 Exposition Blvd.  
Hodgetts + Fung Architects



RYAN MILLER / CAPTURE IMAGING

Thomas the T. rex Lab is a “paleo-odyssey” designed by architects Hodgetts + Fung for the LA Natural History Museum. Over 18 months, Thomas—one of the most complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* specimens on the planet, unearthed several years ago in Montana—will be cleaned and analyzed before an audience in the exhibition's functional laboratory. In 2010, the completed Thomas skeleton will become a permanent resident of the museum's original 1913 building, now being renovated by Brenda Levin Associates and Jorge de la Cal of CO Architects.

Hodgetts + Fung have consulted for Disney's Imagineers on rides at Disneyland, and it shows. Visitors move through a corridor along a black wall of informational graphics that serve as footnotes to the brightly-lit lab behind a wall of steel and one-way mirror glass. The effect is cinematic, with the scientists in Thomas-branded white lab coats cast as stars. Two pods of thin-wall steel tubing and MDF sheathing jut out from the wall, allowing visitors unprecedented visual access to archeologists carefully air-buffing debris from a *T. rex* femur. Cubbies on either side of the pods employ holograms and synthetic bones for hands-on exploration of what's happening inside.

Hodgetts and Fung worked with scientists to create a pristine “clean room.” Elements like the pods, although serving the audience, are also carefully considered workstations with the same equipment as traditional forensics labs. **AW**



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STUDIO VISIT &gt; MICHAEL MALTZAN



MICHAEL MALTZAN ARCHITECTS

“It has taken ten years to break out, exactly as Thom Mayne told me it would,” admitted Michael Maltzan. It’s a rueful confession that many architects can make: no matter how great your talent, success is often slow in coming. Projects flame out or are crippled by a lack of funding. Maltzan has struggled for recognition because his work alternates between shoestring social projects and ambitious geometries that demand meticulous construction. LA’s Inner City Arts complex launched the practice in 1995, and that led to an arts center at Harvard-Westlake School and the minimalist precision of the Hergott-Shepard house in Beverly Hills. MoMA QNS, a warehouse conversion that served the

museum as a temporary facility in Queens, NY, and the Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum in Westwood were frugal and complex. All won acclaim, but new commissions were few and scattered. The Rubik’s Cube of the Scoville-Turgel residence went unrealized. Now the firm is on a roll, with a wide spectrum of projects in development or under construction. The ambitious projects are imaginative both in their bold, highly-recognizable forms and in their clever manipulation of program. For instance, the executive offices for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena (scheduled for 2010 completion) will be an asymmetrical pentagon rising six stories to help departments maintain their own identities

**Above, left and right: Pirelli factory offices in Milan. Opposite page, top: the Pittman residence in La Crescent; middle, the Fresno Metropolitan Museum.**

while communicating via circulation routes through the building’s main atrium. The Fresno Metropolitan Museum (completion date not determined) deftly takes advantage of the building’s surfaces; the rooftop will have its own amphitheater, and the public plaza at the museum’s base, formed via folds in the building’s envelope, acts as a meeting space and as a unique facade element.

MICHAEL WEBB

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**PITTMAN RESIDENCE**  
2008

A house in La Crescenta for two highly regarded painters, Larry Pittman and Roy Dowell, should be completed by September. The clients will keep their small 1952 Richard Neutra house for guests and an office, and move to a site down the slope. Maltzan was inspired not by art but by the games mathematicians play, turning rectangles into segmented figures. He has created a heptagon—a seven-sided figure that is more dynamic than a hexagon or octagon—with an open plan and an inner courtyard. It's the alter ego of Neutra's transparent box. You enter through a narrow wedge opening up into a succession of spaces that unfold one by one as you move around or across the interior. There's a large, deeply inset window on the facade of the living area; elsewhere, the spaces are lit from the courtyard or from a clerestory that frames the mountain tops.

**FRESNO METROPOLITAN MUSEUM**  
COMPLETION TBD

The Fresno Metropolitan Science and Art Museum was first designed in 2002, and the plan has evolved substantially since then. Maltzan wanted the building to seem to float, creating a shaded public plaza at the base, and to compress the spaces above. Working with engineers, the architects devised a novel system of structural beams that would support the load while minimizing their own weight. The diagram of forces generated a folded underbelly that becomes a fifth facade of the building and is animated by reflected light from a shallow pool. The museum is organized around a series of science galleries and a large flexible art gallery, while a rooftop amphitheater offers views over the city. No completion date has been set.

**PLAYA VISTA CENTRAL PARK**  
2009

Maltzan's interest in landscaping finds full expression in a wedge-shaped park linking two sides of a new commercial campus in Playa Vista, north of Jefferson Boulevard. It was inspired by the allées and parterres of the Palais Royal in Paris and other formal European gardens, as a green alternative to the conventional corporate plaza with its paving and planters. Here the space is designed for exercise and relaxation, with rows of trees defining what the architect calls "bento boxes" devoted to different sporting activities. Colored plants cover the berms that enclose a botanical garden. The nine-acre Playa Vista Central Park should be completed next year.



COURTESY MICHAEL MALTZAN ARCHITECTS

**PIRELLI OFFICES**  
COMPLETION TBD

A competition-winning design of 2005 for the redevelopment of a Pirelli factory into new offices in Milan is still in limbo. The Italian tire company relocated its production activities and requested a gateway to the existing complex. Maltzan designed twin 135-foot towers linked by a wide bridge that serves as a covered piazza. An X-frame rising up through the building supports suspended facades. Trapezoidal lightweight concrete panels are set at a carefully calibrated angle on each facade to block direct sun and allow for natural ventilation. The plan allows for 16 distinct leasable zones, which can be reconfigured to suit the needs of individual tenants.

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**CHARLES WARREN CALLISTER, 1917-2008**  
continued from front page Austin. In 1941, drafted into the Army, he helped build the Alcan Highway in Alaska with the Corps of Engineers and later served as a pilot in the Army Air Corps.

After World War II, Callister, his wife Mary Frances, and their two sons moved to Northern California, where he and his former Texas classmate Jack Hillmer (1918-2007) established an architectural practice. They were both active in Telesis, an organization of architects, planners, and artists charged with optimism, idealism, and an ambition to take part in creating a better world. Their first project, the Hall House in Kentfield (1947), was designed with rough redwood recycled from a stable and built on a post-tensioned concrete slab, considered to be the first residential application of that new technology in the United States. The house attracted national recognition in both the professional and popular press.

In 1950, Callister established an independent practice just across the Golden Gate in Tiburon, which expanded to an east coast office in Amherst, Massachusetts in the 1960s. The firm designed custom houses, churches, and entire communities, winning many awards, including the National Lumberman's 1965 Wood Structure Design Award. In 1983, Callister received the prestigious San Francisco Art Commission Award of Honor. His most recognized designs are the Christian Science churches in Belvedere (1952) and Mill Valley (1955), California; the Mills College Chapel (1958) in Oakland, California; and the UC Santa Cruz Field House (1955). Rossmoor (1964), a retirement com-

munity in Walnut Creek, California, gained the firm national attention. Warren was an early pioneer among architects, bringing high-level design into major housing developments and new communities. Callister's design partners included Jack Hillmer, Jack Payne, Jim Bischoff; David Gately, Michael Heckmann. Most recently, he worked with Barry Peterson on a church in Capitola, California, now under construction.

Callister's design process depended on walking the site and listening, a technique he learned from the photographer Minor White, who had chronicled the Hall House extensively in 1947. "You leave yourself open and it all starts flooding in. You're listening for more than superficial things. The most powerful things come in when you listen. You have to find the architecture, you don't come to it preconceived," Callister once said, later writing: "From the beginning, the really great interest for me has been in the development of an architecture that is as free of style and trends as I can possibly achieve. The great lesson to be discovered in the Bay region lies in the shared response of clients and associates to the social, spiritual, and natural environment in creating together appropriate designs that belong to the natural environment and that are rooted in the nature of the clients. I believe, even more so now than in the beginning, that unique and appropriate architectural design is inherent in the process of working and designing and building with others, in actually generating the architecture wherever it is."

**RICHARD EHRENBERGER AND CHARLES SHOLTEN**

SFMOMA BREAKS GROUND ON  
ROOFTOP SCULPTURE GARDEN

## UP ON THE ROOF

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is shaking things up by tearing down walls. In early April, the museum broke ground on a new 11,400-square-foot sculpture garden that will serve as an extension to the building's fifth-floor galleries. The rooftop garden is the work of San Francisco-based architect Mark Jensen, who won SFMOMA's invited competition that he entered with former business partner Mark Macy in 2006. The project is the first major alteration to the museum's original design, a symmetrical arrangement of white walls and black granite floors orchestrated by Mario Botta to mixed public enthusiasm almost 20 years ago.

Construction of the sculpture garden will require knocking down an exterior wall on the fifth floor and replacing it with a 55-foot-wide panoramic window, located on axis with the museum's famous fifth-floor catwalk and looking directly out onto the new sculpture garden. The window will cantilever a few feet beyond the wall supporting it, creating a strong visual connection to the outdoor area and defining one edge of the square-shaped garden. The other edges are framed by 12-foot lava walls covered in ivy, and another sliding glass wall that opens into an enclosed pavilion.

Structurally, the addition of the sculpture garden will have a relatively modest impact on the existing building. Yet conceptually, Jensen's design was inspired, he said, by "the intersection of sculpture, space, and light" and represents a lightness and transparency that will serve as points of contrast to the austerity of Botta's original design.

"There are so many different ways that you can talk about this project," Jensen said. "But in the end, you do just come back to the romance of how you want to spend your time up there."

The garden will sit atop the roof of an adjacent eight-story parking garage, built by the museum in 1999 on the Minna Street lot directly behind the main building. It is expected to be open to the public by the end of this year.

The building's Minna Street facade will undergo the only visible change to the building's exterior. A luminescent glass corridor connecting the fifth-floor galleries with the rooftop space will float atop the massive four stories of concrete clad in faux brick beneath it.

**JULIE KIM**



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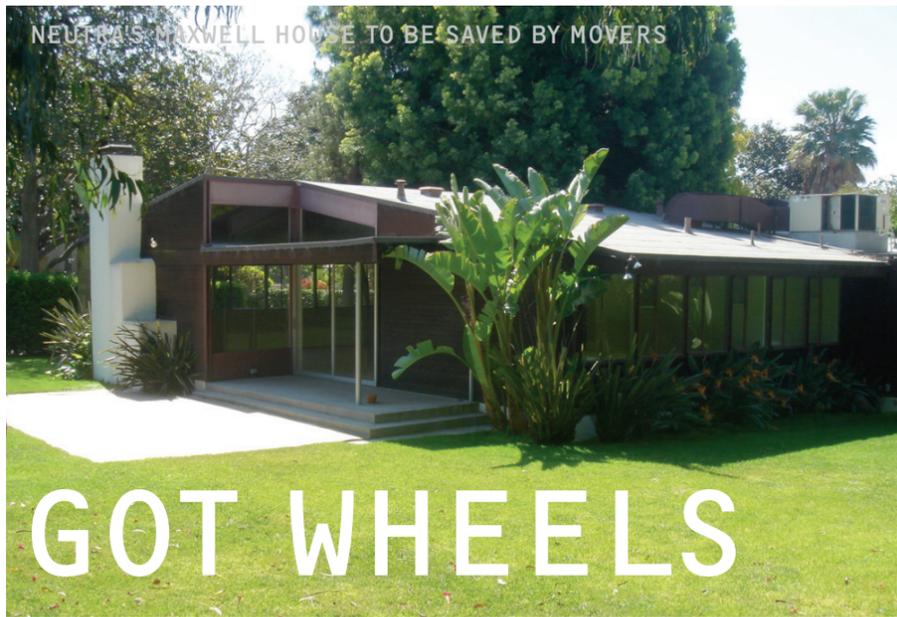


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Sold in 2004 without so much as a nod to its pedigree, a house designed by Richard Neutra in 1941 has narrowly escaped demolition. The Maxwell House, located at 475 North Bowling Green Way in Brentwood, California, will be moved in early May to Angelino Heights. The almost 1,800-square-foot home, built for musicians Charles and Sybil Maxwell, is considered a significant example of Neutra's work because of its unusual peaked roofline and triangular, glazed gable openings. While a nasty preservation battle rages on about Neutra's Cyclorama Center at Military Gettysburg National Park, local fans can breathe easy—this house has been saved.

Jim Brandlin of Brandlin & Associates, an accounting firm, and his wife Karen purchased the property in Brentwood over three years ago, planning to build their dream home and unaware that the house was architecturally significant. In fact, they were looking into demolition permits when a local appraiser informed the couple that the home was designed by Neutra and that they might want to reconsider. Brandlin and his wife immediately changed course and decided to sell the home to anyone who would move it. It was even posted for a flash on eBay, creating a heated buzz among local preservationists.

Princess Bovlanna, a small real estate developer in Angelino Heights (she uses the name for professional reasons), heard about the house and purchased it from the Brandlins. She is planning to sell once she has re-assembled and renovated it. Architect Gordon Olschlager has been hired to oversee the relocation project, and the firm Korn Randolph, Inc. has been

hired to design the landscape. Bovlanna said the move is a painstaking procedure, which will cost around \$50,000 and involve the house being sliced into three pieces to accommodate passage through its very narrow street). Once it has been lifted off the foundations via crane, it will be moved on a flatbed truck and then put back together on the new site. "The re-assembly is going to be like an advanced paint-by-numbers," Bovlanna said.

According to Brian Linder, a broker with Deasy/Penner & Partners and an expert on midcentury modern properties, this isn't the first Neutra house to be moved. He noted that another Neutra home for sale in Santa Monica—the Leon Barsha Residence, at 302 Mesa Road, built in 1938—was saved from destruction by an early expansion of the Hollywood Freeway and moved in 1963 to its current location in Santa Monica Canyon. Linder, who posted the home on eBay over three years ago and also hosted a salon on the topic, admitted that bureaucratic red tape can slow the process considerably. "This type of move is definitely not for the faint of heart or the novice," he admitted. "It is very important. No one wants another Maslon." He was referring to the 1962 Neutra house that was purchased by a private party in 2002 and then demolished 30 days later.

"This is definitely Team Neutra," said Bovlanna. "I would never have been able to do this without all the help from the major players." She continued, "What do you do in your life after you move a Neutra? Once this baby lands, I'm having a major career change," she said. "It's time to open a restaurant." . **KIMBERLY STEVENS**

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**SUSTAINABLE STANFORD**

continued from front page center-piece for Stanford's environmental movement," said Jeffrey Koseff, the Perry L. McCarty Director of Stanford's Woods Institute for the Environment.

The Woods Institute, one of Y2E2's main tenants, brings together experts in science, engineering, economics, and law—specialists whose paths rarely cross in typical academic environments—to collaboratively address four core research areas: energy and climate, land use, fresh water, and oceans. The School of Engineering and related departments have also made Y2E2 their home.

At first glance, the building's homage to Stanford's historic quad—intended to bridge Frederick Law Olmstead's original campus plan with the adjacent, more contemporary medical campus—obscures the boldness of Y2E2's vision. Taking cues from vernacular design moves already in tune with the environment, Y2E2 deploys updated arches and a clay-tile roof that belie the advances realized within.

Inside, shared spaces including lounges, kitchens, and meeting rooms are clustered around four atria, color-coded to signal a core

research area. A key component of the building's conservation strategy, these operable atria bring light down through the building's three floors to the below-grade laboratory level and help to regulate indoor air quality and temperature. They also allow for interaction between floors.

"We wanted Y2E2 to educate people about the real possibilities of sustainable design," said Isaac Campbell, BOORA's design principal for the project.

The atria are part of a comprehensive strategy that includes chilled beams and energy recovery systems for heating and cooling, recycled and renewable materials, low-flow toilets, and water recycling systems. The design also integrates three different types of solar technology (monocrystalline, polycrystalline, and thin film), making the building itself a testing ground for new technology.

Despite the achievements in energy and water conservation, Y2E2 currently is not expected to achieve LEED certification. According to Koseff, when the project was getting underway four years ago, California's spikes in energy costs were still very much a concern.

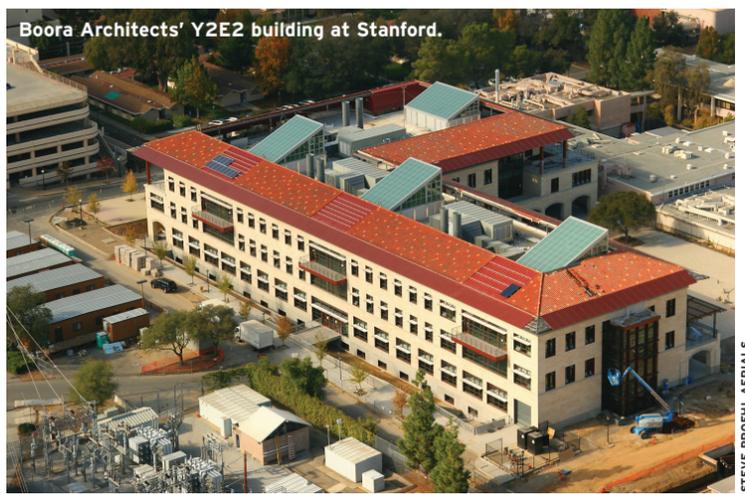
At the same time, water supplies were expected to strongly influence

future development. While the project leaders recognized the value of the LEED brand, they wanted the design team to be able to pursue the best possible energy and water solutions independent of the LEED criteria.

The lessons learned from Y2E2 are already influencing future development at Stanford. Since learning that building operations are responsible for 98 percent of its carbon footprint, Stanford has turned its attention to improving the performance of all its facilities, funding retrofits of existing buildings, and last fall, creating a new Department for Sustainability and Energy Management to oversee campus operations, utilities, and transportation. The university's green strategy also addresses recycling and purchasing.

Perhaps most importantly, data on Y2E2's ongoing operations will be a model for Stanford in the future. Based on Y2E2's performance projections, the university has agreed to fund the added cost of extending Y2E2's performance goals to the remaining Science and Engineering Quad buildings, with plans to raise the bar on sustainable design even higher across campus.

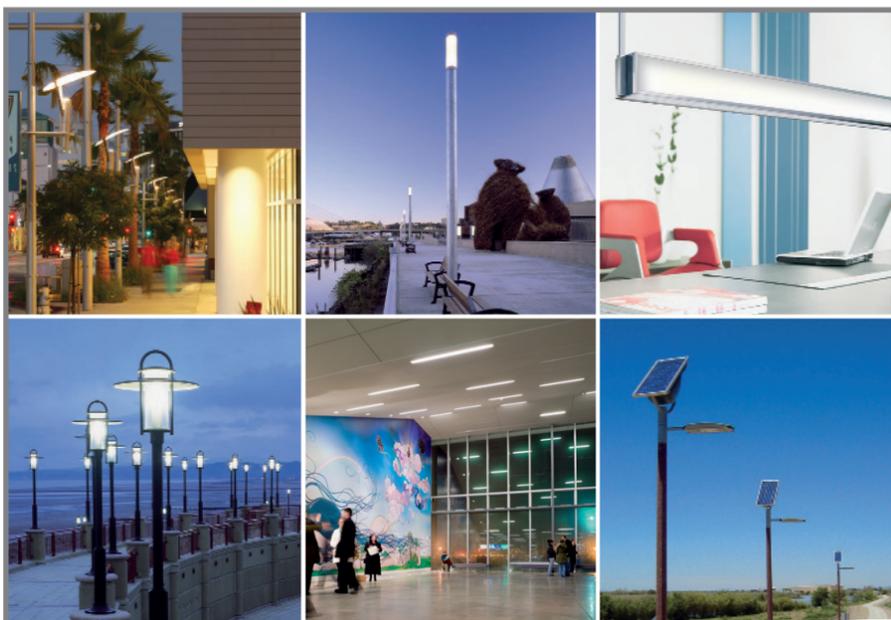
**YOSH ASATO**



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**WATERWORLD** continued from front page  
Seawall Partners (Federal Development with Lehman Brothers, and Construction Management and Development) was still in the running at press time in early April.

SWL 337, a landfill site that was once part of San Francisco Bay, is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Port Commission. Most port property is limited to water-related functions, but the state passed legislation last October allowing the California State Lands Commission to approve other uses for this and three other sites, including office and residential uses. According to Diane Oshima, waterfront planning manager for the port, this law is intended to enable the port to generate increased revenues to pay for preservation of its historic piers and other historic buildings, and for the creation of open space along the 7.5 miles of San Francisco Bay waterfront now managed by the port.

SWL 337 is the northeastern segment of Mission Bay, a rapidly developing district of the city anchored by University of California San Francisco's new biomedical campus. The site's northern edge looks across China Basin Channel (also known as McCovey Cove after Giants Hall-of-Famer Willie McCovey) to the Giants' stadium. The port's goal, according to the RFQ document, is a "mixed-use urban neighborhood... demonstrat[ing] the best in sustainable development" and generating "significant revenues to fund the port's historic preservation and waterfront open space needs." The development must also accommodate parking on the Giants' game days, while at the same time supporting public transit.

Each of the development concepts proposes a distinct mix of uses and organizing strategies. Lot 337 Community Developers' scheme is the most conventionally urban, carrying the city grid to the water's edge. John Ellis, director of urban design for the planning firm WRT Solomon E.T.C., the lead planning firm for Lot 337, emphasized the importance of a normative pattern. "Each block looks like a piece of the city, rather than a 'project,'" he said, noting that the regular grid, sub-dividable into smaller parcels, will accommodate inevitable changes in the program.

The San Francisco Giants proposal, designed by SMWM with Beyer Blinder Belle and Atelier Ten, is likewise organized according to a traditional grid. An entertainment district anchored by a 6,000-seat music hall fronts a five-acre park designed by Hargreaves and Associates, looking northward to AT&T Park and eastward to the Bay. In addition to 875 residential units and 790,000 square feet of offices, the scheme offers 400,000 square feet of what SMWM partner Karen Alschuler described as "fine-grained support" for the site's corporate and institutional Mission Bay neighbors.

Build Inc.'s team of local architects—Jim Jennings, David Meckel, Peter Pfau, Stanley Saitowitz, and John Worden, along with urban planner John Kriken—proposed an explicit critique of previous Mission Bay development suggesting "a simplified and relatively conservative modernism of punched openings and large-scale gestures." According to lead developer Loring Sagan (who is also an architect), the site is fundamentally a gateway between the city and Mission Bay, so its principal axis is an extension of the Lefty O'Doul Bridge as it crosses China Basin. Spanning this oblique axis is a high-rise residential tower intended to be a new icon for the city.

Considered a long shot, the Seawall Partners' scheme, by C.Y. Lee of Taipei with local architects Patri Merker, treated the entire site as a single, raised, planted parking podium, out of which rise four point towers. *San Francisco Chronicle* urban design writer John King dismissed the concept, saying that it suggested "1950s urban renewal rather than 21<sup>st</sup> century San Francisco."

The findings of a seven-member advisory board, which includes newly appointed San Francisco planning director John S. Rahaim, were presented to the Port Commission at its April 8 public meeting. By April 22, it is anticipated that the Port Commission will have approved the development teams to be invited to participate in the Request for Proposals (RFP) phase of the development solicitation process. The short-listed teams will be invited to produce more detailed development proposals, with a final selection expected later this summer. **TIM CULVAHOUSE**

View from the 16-acre waterfront site.



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At first blush, Abramson Teiger's Kelly House, located in Brentwood near the Getty Museum, appears to be a traditional modernist living space. Its form is based in the language of Le Corbusier, with a staggered series of three white cubes dotting the lush and gently sloping site. But the similarities end there, as the firm moves this tradition in its own abstract direction.

The house, built for a well-known media lawyer and his family, provides a warm, light-filled environment that is in constant contact with nature. On the layered exterior, each cube's fourth surface is clad with resin-coated wood Trespa panels, heightening its sense of three-dimensionality, while also helping to "break down the cubes," according to architect Trevor Abramson. Small stainless steel panels within these dark walls emphasize the presence of the rain screen on which the panels rest. Other walls, supported by thin pilotis, project from the surface of the house and appear to float. Second floor spaces that also appear to be suspended, are built with a solidity that contrasts with the glass-clad first floor rooms.

Inside, the house is warmed both with natural wood floors—lpê downstairs and bamboo upstairs—and with plentiful access to natural light and views. Ceilings are tall, ranging from nine to eleven feet, and gargantuan windows face the backyard, highlighted by a 20-foot wide opening that admits light into a second-floor hallway. Glass doors appear throughout the first floor, and on the second, a landing and passageway separating the cubes is also encased entirely in glass.

Elegant landscaping by designer Steve Silva directly abuts the house, including a small pond and a grassy plane that gently rises up to a beautiful pool, with the Getty in view just beyond.

Where many contemporary houses are built to look as large as possible, this one, while measuring 5,000 square feet, doesn't feel bulky. Perhaps that's because the spaces flow into each other so well—The house does not have an open plan, nor is it cellular—and because so much of it seamlessly connects to the outside. **SL**

The house is animated by varied windows, projecting planes, and a staggered plan. Clockwise from top, rear elevation; a plane projecting from the master suite; front yard elevation with artificial turf; the back of the house.

RICHARD BARNES



Image: Plank, Myto, Konstantin Grcic



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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER APRIL 30, 2008

GOOGLE  
WITH  
EI SOLUTIONS

Solar panels at the Google compound in Mountain View, California.

Remember the days when the only visible signs of solar power were a few ugly panels stuck to the roof of the kooky neighbor's house down the street? Fast forward two decades, scale that image up by a thousand or so kilowatts, and you could end up with a picture of the massive rooftop solar installation at Google's corporate campus in the heart of Silicon Valley. Located just off of Highway 101 in Mountain View—only a few office parks away from the Adobe and Microsoft campuses nearby—Google's 9,212-panel, 1.6 megawatt installation that opened one year ago is the largest in the United States.

Google cofounders Larry Page and Sergey Brin bought the campus in 2006 from financially troubled Silicon Graphics, Inc. After hiring Los Angeles-based Clive Wilkinson Architects to gut and redesign the interiors of the campus' four main buildings, designed in 1997 by the San Francisco office of Studios Architecture, their next move was to make the "Googleplex" as energy-efficient as possible.

Page and Brin called upon Robyn Beavers, a civil engineer

who had been working as Google's representative on construction projects, to become the new one-person department of Corporate Environmental Programs. Beavers spent much of 2006 coordinating the installation of over 9,000 panels atop eight buildings and two carports.

"So far, so good," Beavers said recently, a few weeks before the installation's first anniversary. "We haven't had any real maintenance issues—no broken parts or panels. Once, we came up here and found that one of the inverters had been switched off, but that's about it."

The panels offset about 30 percent of each building's peak energy loads. Although Beavers wouldn't reveal how much Google paid to buy and install the system, she estimated that it was saving the company thousands of dollars per month in energy costs, and that it would pay for itself over seven years. (The panels themselves are expected to last 30 years.) Google also received a handsome cash rebate through California's solar incentive program—which at the time of the installation gave awards based on the total number of

panels rather than the amount of energy produced. The California Public Utilities Commission and the California Energy Commission have since moved to a performance-based incentive system that awards commercial rebates based on the number of watts produced.

Since Google's goal was to cover the largest possible surface area, the installation period lasted six months—longer than average, claimed Beavers—due to the slight tilt and sharp angles of some of the roofs. "The architects made our rooftop experience very challenging," she said. "They're not your typical big-box roofs because only a few of them are flat with square edges."

To solve this problem, Google worked with EI Solutions, a solar integration company based in Marin County, to maximize the use of a prefabricated mounting system that could be configured to accommodate different roof conditions. The "spread-footed" racks sit lightly on the rooftops and are only anchored into the roof itself in a few places. (Even with such minimal infrastructure, the panels are designed to withstand winds up to 120 miles per hour.) Individual racks are strung



COURTESY GOOGLE

together using a "uni-strut," a common piece of hardware that clamps one rack to the next, and the angle of the slots is tilted to face due south. The modular system allowed installers to create arrays of varying lengths and helped them work around areas on the rooftop shaded by oddly-shaped covers to the building's mechanical and ventilation systems.

There is one problem, however—not with the installation itself, but with the wireless monitoring system Google engineered in-house. A hard drive within each inverter, a mechanism that sends

solar energy back into the grid, was intended to collect data on the number of kilowatt-hours produced and send it to a server through a wireless internet connection, but the signal was not strong enough to get continuous data.

"Being Google, we're obsessed with data and wanted to do it ourselves," Beavers said, shading her eyes with one hand to get a better look at the seemingly endless array of perfectly aligned panels. "It was a cool idea, but I think we'll go ahead and hard wire it now."

JK

COHOUSING APPROACH FACILITATES STATE'S FIRST LEED-GOLD CHURCH



# GROUP GREENING

This spring, the Berkeley, California, architecture firm of McCamant Durrett will receive a LEED Gold award plaque for its completion of the state's first green church, the third of its type in the country. The \$4-million structure, built for the Unitarian Universalist Church in Fresno, is also the first green building for Fresno County. Pacific Gas and Electric

Company considers the building the most energy efficient church in their network, and has already presented rebates to the church, as well as to its design team.

Kathryn McCamant said it was "the most fun project I've ever worked on. There was 100-percent consensus of the congregation behind the design. They never deterred from the program

once the vision and long-term plan were established and preached about in church." To make things run so smoothly, McCamant used a participatory development process outlined in her own book, *Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves* (Ten Speed Press), that she wrote with firm partner Charles Durrett. Although this is the first

The Unitarian Universalist Church designed by McCamant Durrett in Fresno.



COURTESY, MCCAMANT DURRETT

church her firm has designed, McCamant admitted that it required "all my cohousing skills about building a community with a group client."

The church has a large courtyard leading to a 400-seat sanctuary, constructed with low-VOC and non-toxic materials. It also makes use of energy efficiencies with its orientation to the sun, and with roof overhangs that shade windows in the summer and offer maximum daylight through Low-E2-coated glass combined with a Solar Reflective Index of 29 to keep the roof cool. The kitchen and bathrooms make use of plentiful natural light and shadowing. Additionally, the building uses 43 percent less water and features low-flow dual-flush toilets and waterless urinals made from

recycled plastic bottles. Low maintenance landscaping and drip irrigation also decrease water usage. During construction, waste was delivered to a certified recycling processor instead of going into landfill.

Subsequent phases of the completely green, 23,000-square-foot master plan will add a social hall, a day care center, adult and children libraries, a classroom wing, and a chapel. Meanwhile, McCamant Durrett is also designing Fresno's first residential green building, a 28-unit condo complex featuring a large common house arrangement to foster community involvement. Currently under construction, the building neighbors the Unitarian Universalist Church.

JEFFREY HEAD

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND LETTERS AWARDS 2008

1



1. Peter Zumthor, Summer Restaurant, Unfau island, Zurich, Switzerland, 2003
2. Neil M. Denari Architects, Alan-Voo House, Los Angeles, 2007
3. Atelier Jim Jennings Architecture, Visiting Artists House, Geyserville, CA, 2006

2



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: COURTESY, KUNSTHAUS BREGENZ; PHOTOWORKS/BENNY CHAN; TIM GRIFFIN

3



The American Academy of Arts and Letters has announced the 2008 recipients of its awards in architecture. According to a statement, the \$5,000 Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture, which is given "to an architect of any nationality who has made a significant contribution to architecture as an art," will go to **Peter Zumthor** of Switzerland. California had a strong showing, with Los Angeles-

based **Neil M. Denari** and San Francisco-based **Jim Jennings** each taking \$7,500 awards granted to architects "whose work is characterized by a strong personal direction." The historian **Kenneth Frampton** and architect **James Carpenter** also received \$7,500 Academy Awards as "designers who explore ideas in architecture through any means of expression."

The jurors, a who's who of the New York architectural

establishment, included Henry Cobb (jury chair), Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, Charles Gwathmey, Hugh Hardy, Steven Holl, Ada Louise Huxtable, Richard Meier, Cesar Pelli, James Stewart Polshek, and Billie Tsien. Awards are given in the fields of Art, Architecture, Literature, and Music and an exhibition honoring their work at the Academy runs from May 22 through June 15.

AT DEADLINE

## AMERICANA AT BRAND ALMOST REALITY

At long last, the ultra-hyped \$265-million, one million-square-foot retail-residential complex, Americana At Brand, is set to open May 2 on Brand Avenue in Glendale. The 16-acre project, the brainchild of The Grove developer Rick Caruso, will contain 100 condominiums, 238 apartments, a central public park called the Green, plazas, and, of course, more than fifty stores and restaurants. It will also have its own trolley. Not everyone is happy. Critics are already gearing up to protest the traffic, and to question opening such a project in tough economic times, but that shouldn't stop the biggest stampede this side of Calgary.

## ARCHITECTURE PHD AT USC

Beginning this fall, the USC School of Architecture will offer a new Ph.D. program in architecture. The initial focus of the program will be on the building sciences and technology, and it will "lead the effort to explore new knowledge and unknown territories," said USC School of Architecture dean Qingyun Ma.

## DOWNTOWN LA RENTS STABILIZING?

According to the recently-released Casden Real Estate Economics Forecast (released by USC's Lusk Center for Real Estate), with more than a dozen new apartment projects opened or slated to hit downtown Los Angeles this year, the area can expect to see rents stabilize. "It is an anomaly, because downtown was one of the tightest markets just two years ago," said Delores Conway, director of the Casden Forecast, in an interview with *LA Downtown News*. "There has been a lot of new supply to meet the demand."

## REDBUILDING HEADACHES

Neighbors of West Hollywood's Pacific Design Center's RedBuilding construction site have been complaining about the noise and dust since pile driving began a few weeks ago. The land on which the new RedBuilding at Pacific Design Center will stand is a soft sediment, requiring 1,900 piles driven to secure the structure's foundation. Neighbors claim that the Design Center should look into noise shrouds and other impact-mitigation measures.

## SECOND ACT

The long-neglected Music Center Annex, a building on Los Angeles' Bunker Hill that formerly housed the County Coroner's office, is ready to sing a new tune. Plans to replace the 1950s-era building with a new structure were announced at an April event for the Music Center, which also includes the Mark Taper Forum, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Ahmanson Theatre, and Walt Disney Concert Hall. Approximately 150,000 square feet of rehearsal space and offices would sit across Temple Street from the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. No architect has been named.

## DIAL-A-SPOT

San Francisco residents will soon be able to use their iPhones and BlackBerrys to look for parking spots in ten neighborhoods around the city. A pilot program called SFpark will embed sensors in asphalt that will allow drivers to use internet-enabled computers and phones to check real-time space availability. Drivers could also use their wireless devices to purchase meter time, with rates adjusted higher in peak hours to discourage driving during heavy traffic periods. Officials also hope to prevent endless circling and thereby reduce emissions and congestion.

## ORANGE CRUSH

The balloon ride at the Orange County Great Park remains grounded for the second time since it opened last summer after accusations that a pilot ignored safety guidelines. A letter from a passenger to the FAA prompted an investigation to find out if operators from Paris-based company Aerophile were flying the balloon too high and in dangerous weather conditions, including heavy clouds and poor visibility. The \$5-million tethered balloon ride, which is anchored in Irvine, is the main attraction for the 1,347-acre park during a \$14-million conversion from its former use as a Marine base.

## RIP LIVABLE PLACES

Livable Places, a seven-year-old, LA-based non-profit that advocated for land use policy reform and also developed innovative affordable housing, closed its doors on April 15. According to a statement released by Livable Places associate Joe Linton, the organization was simultaneously done in by the credit crunch and by the "glut of higher-priced houses," which lowered demand for new homes in the region. "The impact on the Southern California economy has been dire, and for Livable Places, the economic downturn has proved fatal," he said. The organization's Fuller Lofts in LA's Lincoln Heights neighborhood, designed by Pugh+Scarpa, is currently on hold.

## PRIME TIME URBAN FUNDING

The Canyon-Johnson Urban Fund, a private equity partnership between Magic Johnson and Beverly Hills-based Canyon Capital Realty Advisors, announced that its third round of financing will allow for over \$4 billion in new development and property upgrades in large cities throughout the country. Past efforts have been located in Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Miami, and Brooklyn.



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Image courtesy of WMCRP Architects, Maryland

**VectorWorks 2008**

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER APRIL 30, 2008

When George Mimnaugh set out to restore an original 1953 home designed by Case Study architect Rodney Walker that had been chopped up and turned into a triplex, his intention was to turn it back into the duplex it was originally intended to be and to respect the home's historic integrity.

"That restoration happened and everyone in the preservation community was thrilled," he said. "Unfortunately, I couldn't sell it."

He proceeded to take the house off the market and turn it into a single-family dwelling, trying to retain as much of the original spirit, but clearly not keeping to the original duplex blueprint. "It was one of the hardest things I've ever done, but in the end I was really pleased with the renovation and the house sold almost immediately," he said. "Not everyone has the deep pockets that it takes to turn these homes into museum pieces, nor is it always practical," he added.

For purists, turning the duplex into a single-family home is sacrilege. Others, who don't take issue with some architectural license and consider it a duty to bring a home into this century, find it refreshing. In a time when midcentury houses are either fetching millions or facing the wrecking ball, the restorations, renovations, and re-builds of architecturally significant modernist houses have become the subject of both pride and controversy.

According to Brian Linder, AIA, of Deasy/Penner & Partners, a "design-centric" real estate firm that has sold many significant midcentury properties in Southern California, there is room for both renovation and restoration. "Some buyers want things in pristine original condition, like a museum piece. Others need the home to be brought up to date, with new kitchens and baths, closets and room sizes, etc.,

that are more in line with our current lifestyles," he said.

But many in the architecture world are concerned that insensitive or poorly-executed renovations—whether they be for aesthetic or lifestyle reasons—will forever damage an architectural legacy. Alan Leib, chairman emeritus of the Los Angeles Conservancy Modern Committee, claims that the real issue comes with a lack of monitoring in the landmark process on both the local and state level. "Even if the house gets landmark status, it's almost impossible to truly save anything in the interior because the system states that it has to be 'exceptional' to be landmarked," he said. "Right out of the gate, that's setting you up for failure. The system makes it impossible to really monitor what's going on, and it makes it even more difficult to insure restorations are done thoughtfully."

One person doing his part to carry out sensitive renovations is Michael LaFetra, who has gained the reputation of being Angelenos' own modern house collector. He currently lives in a home designed by Ray Kappe, and owns nine other architecturally-significant properties. "I simply wanted to buy significant modern homes, restore them with integrity by bringing them back to blueprint, get landmark status and enrollment in the Mills Act, and then sell them," he said, referring to the state provision that allows owners to obtain tax reductions in exchange for maintaining or restoring their historic properties. To date, LaFetra has completed 13 meticulous restorations, including homes designed by Richard Neutra, Rudolf Schindler, and A. Quincy Jones, among others, and he continues to look around for more salvageable gems.

LaFetra tries to maintain the original form and update

the original materials, and he pointed out that if he finds a house that he would like to change, he doesn't buy it. (Not everyone is ready to make the sacrifices that living in a home built in the 1950s can require, but that doesn't stop many from buying them.) For instance, he and his fiancée looked at the Singleton House, designed by Richard Neutra and completed in 1960. Located in Bel Air, the house was in good condition and had a great site, but when they saw that the master bedroom could only hold a full-sized bed, they decided the house wasn't for them. "We're big sleepers and we require a king-sized bed," he said. "I didn't want my hands bloodied during the restoration if we had to take down a wall. It's better to move on and find a house that works for you."

LaFetra also uses only one contractor, LA-based Jeff Fink and Associates, who is known for his work on Rudolf Schindler houses, to insure all details will be attended to properly. He maintains that even though each house is dramatically different, good resources are often used over and over again. "What I love most about Jeff is that he takes his ego out of it and really lets the original architecture give the cues."

Robert Thibodeau of Du Architects, who worked on a restoration of Craig Ellwood's 1953 Johnson House notable for its emphatic use of standardization, agrees on the importance of maintaining as many original details as possible. "It was incredible as we stripped and polished and replaced, the house really started to feel alive again," he said of the careful work. He points out that compromises that impair the integrity of a home often come when owners are trying to sell the house for maximum profit.

A good example of this unfortunate phenomenon is the fate of the above-

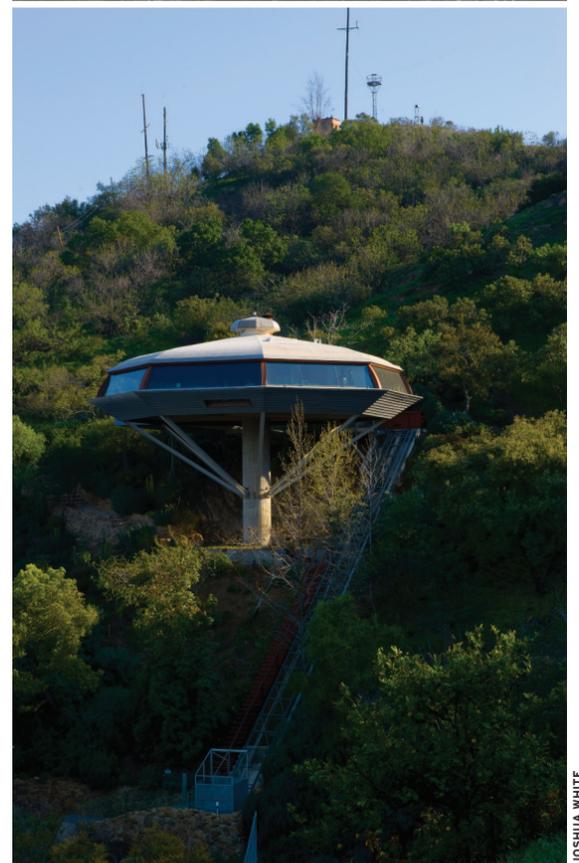
mentioned Singleton house. In 2004, it was bought by Vidal Sassoon, the hair-care magnate, who decided to change the house and then put it back on the market for \$20 million. The project included enlarging rooms, moving walls, and adding bathrooms and other amenities. The house is currently for sale and has been cause for major uproar in the preservation world. Many architects have openly admitted that they wouldn't consider it a Neutra anymore. One architect who spoke off the record said, "it was a travesty, a complete bastardization of a beautiful piece of architecture." The architect added that the saddest thing about the whole affair is that the home isn't selling. "The house now will not appeal to a Neutra lover and because it's not a McMansion, they're losing out on a lot of the potential buyers looking for a home in Bel Air."

Crosby Doe, a real estate broker who specializes in the sales of modern architecture, met with Sassoon when he purchased the Singleton house and took him to the Getty to view some 30 images of the home photographed by Julius Shulman. "It was incredibly disappointing," he admitted. "We had a complete disagreement about the restoration. It's really upsetting."

Leo Marmol of Santa Monica-based Marmol Radziner, which has carried out close to 20 midcentury modern renovations in the area, said that it is important to remember that homeowners almost always think they are doing the right thing. But he added that they should be able to do what they want. "With the attention that many of these homes get from the media and exhibitions comes a lot of social judgement," he said. "I think it's important to remember that there are a lot of factors that go into a restoration—time, budget,



JULIUS SHULMAN



JOSHUA WHITE

John Lautner's curvaceous Garcia House on Mulholland Drive (top) was completed in 1962 and has now been renovated by its current owner John McIlwee.

The architect's Chemosphere House (above), completed in 1960, belongs to publisher Benedikt Taschen, and was renovated by Silver Lake firm Escher GuneWardena who updated the windows and floors but otherwise tried to retain the original feel of the house.

# Tinkering with History

WHEN IT COMES TO RESTORING MIDCENTURY MASTERPIECES, IT'S SOMETIMES HARD TO KNOW WHAT'S BEST TO LEAVE ALONE—THE HOUSE OR THE HOUSE OWNER. KIMBERLY STEVENS TALKS TO BOTH PURISTS AND PRAGMATISTS

FEATURE  
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Craig Elwood's 1953 Johnson House (left) in Brentwood was restored by Du Architects, who stripped, polished, and replaced wood finishes and floors as necessary to maintain the original integrity of the house. Venice-based SH\_Arc replaced the wood, stone, plaster, and glass of Richard Neutra's 1956 Troxell House (below).

JOSHUA WHITE



PASEO MIRAMAR PHOTOS

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER APRIL 30, 2008

and a whole slew of other things. It can cause a lot of unnecessary anxiety for both the homeowner and the architect."

Still, his firm's recent renovation of Richard Neutra's 1946 Kaufmann House is now seen as the gold standard for meticulous work and an example of the sustainable value of many modernist homes—and the inestimable value of good clients. The home is expected to fetch more than \$20 million at auction next month. Its owners, Brent and Beth Edwards Harris, supported the firm's efforts to reproduce the sheet-metal roof, match the stone to replace what had been damaged, and even find original paint and fixtures. For Doe, the Kaufmann House is emblematic of what can and will continue to happen in the future. It is essentially the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. "The restoration was done beautifully and the homeowners have maintained the property meticulously," he said. He also pointed out that homeowners who are truly sensitive to the history of a home will be rewarded. "You don't take a Picasso and make changes," he said. "The value would go out the window." He paused. "Can you imagine what the guy who

bulldozed the Maslon House is thinking right about now?" he said, referring to the 1963 Neutra House in Ranch Mirage. "He literally threw millions of dollars away."

Still, changes to modernist houses are not always frowned upon. Sometimes they can help achieve the architect's original intention, thanks to increased funds or better technology. When Frank Escher of Escher GuneWardena Architecture was hired to restore John Lautner's 1960 Chemosphere House, he understood that the house was not completed the way Lautner envisioned it. Even though there were only four pages of original plans, little notes gave the team clues and a sense of direction during the process. "There were things that we were able to do in that house because we were given a cue from the plans," he said. He was able to create more seamless expanses of glass, and the kitchen floor was designed to be the way Lautner intended it to be, not the way it was actually built. "I was asked at the time why I didn't replicate the orange tile in the kitchen the way the original photographs showed it," he said. "I knew he intended to do a jagged slate floor and that's what we decided to do." He also spoke

about why it's important to hire experts. "I've seen so many poor examples of restorations and renovations where the architecture is ruined," he said. "These are not do-it-yourself projects. The best advice I can give people is to hire someone who knows what they're doing."

John McIlwee owns the Lautner-designed Garcia House, which was completed in 1962. When he and his partner purchased the home, they were given a notebook filled with snapshots and documentation of various changes made to the house over the years. "I really have to believe that every owner along the way had good intentions," he said, "but in most cases it was abominable." Though some of his changes strayed from the original blueprint—like turning four children's bedrooms into three, and subtly adding a new master suite—they believe that Lautner himself, who was very open to change, would have applauded the decisions they made along the way. "We have no problem going head-to-head with anyone about our house," he said. "We believe this house has been done correctly."

According to John Umbanhower of Venice-based SH\_ARC, the renovation

of Neutra's Troxell Residence, built in 1956, took cues from the original post and beam residence, but quite a few alterations were made. The footprint was changed and the house expanded to 3,000 square feet. A cantilevered addition to the master bedroom made the home more livable, and a pool (present in Neutra's original plan, but never executed because Dr. Troxell maintained he had the best pool in town already—the Pacific Ocean) was finally installed.

While the issues of standards, ownership, and actually living in a home continue to collide in unfortunate ways, LaFetra said that as people become savvier, the horror stories related to renovation should diminish. "That being said, the only way you can truly save a house and restore it sensitively and properly is to own it."

Real estate broker Doe believes it is still possible to live in a house built 60 years ago: "If people take the time to live in the house before they make drastic changes, they'll begin to understand how every day, the house will give something back to them."

**KIMBERLY STEVENS IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**



JOSHUA WHITE



PASEO MIRAMAR PHOTOS



JULIUS SHULMAN AND JÜRGEN NOGAI



TIM STREET PORTER



JULIUS SHULMAN AND JÜRGEN NOGAI

From the top, the exterior of Craig Ellwood's Johnson House, renovated by Du Architects; SH\_ARC added to the master bedroom of Neutra's Troxell House; the exterior of Neutra's Kaufmann House renovated by Marmol Radziner; the interior of the 1953 Rodney Walker home, a duplex that George Mimnaugh converted into a single family residence in order to sell.

Left, A decked interior space at the 1946 Kaufmann House to be auctioned by Christie's in New York on May 13. The estimate is from \$15 to 25 million.



Exterior detail of Rodney Walker's 1953 house. Former owner George Mimnaugh said, "Not everyone has the deep pockets that it takes to turn these homes into museum pieces, nor is it always practical."

TIM STREET PORTER

## APRIL

## WEDNESDAY 30

## LECTURE

**Zeroing in on Zero Waste**

5:30 p.m.

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

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**John Buck**Gallery Paule Anglim  
14 Geary St., San Francisco  
www.gallerypauleanglim.com

## MAY

## THURSDAY 1

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Inkie Whang**Frey Norris Gallery Annex  
456 Geary St., San Francisco  
www.freynorris.com

## FILM

**A First Quarter**(Lawrence Weiner, 1973),  
85 min.

6:30 p.m.

Museum of Contemporary Art  
250 South Grand Ave.,  
Los Angeles  
www.moca.org

## SATURDAY 3

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Carmine Iannaccone****Useable Histories**Solway Jones Gallery  
5377 Wilshire Blvd.,  
Los Angeles  
www.solwayjonesgallery.com**Incognito 2008**Santa Monica Museum of Art  
2525 Michigan Ave.,  
Santa Monica  
www.smmao.org**James Gilbert****(Don't) Want To Be****Anonymous**Couturier Gallery  
166 North La Brea Ave.,  
Los Angeles  
www.couturiergallery.com**Nina Katchadourian****Cerca Series**Museum of Contemporary Art  
of San Diego  
1001 Kettner Blvd., San Diego  
www.mcasd.org**Swap Meet**Raid Projects  
602 Moulton Ave.,  
Los Angeles  
www.raidprojects.com

## SUNDAY 4

## WITH THE KIDS

**2008 Imagination Celebration**

12:00 p.m.

Orange County Museum  
of Art  
850 San Clemente Dr.,  
Newport Beach  
www.ocma.net

## MONDAY 5

## LECTURE

**Eric Owen Moss**

6:30 p.m.

UCLA College of Architecture  
and Urban Design  
Perloff Hall  
Wyton Dr. and Hilgard Ave.,  
Los Angeles  
www.aud.ucla.edu

## TUESDAY 6

## LECTURE

**Apsara DiQuinzio,****Bruce Hainley****New Work: Paul Sietsema**

12:00 p.m.

San Francisco Museum of  
Modern Art  
151 3rd St., San Francisco  
www.sfmoma.org

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Bernd and Hilla Becher****Basic Forms**The J. Paul Getty Center  
1200 Getty Center Dr.,  
Los Angeles  
www.getty.edu

## SATURDAY 10

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Andrea Cohen****Walter Maciel**2642 South La Cienega Blvd.,  
Los Angeles  
www.waltermacielgallery.com**Dalton Jamieson,****David Leonard****Inside/Out**Julie Baker Fine Art  
246 Commercial St.,  
Nevada City  
www.juliebakerfineart.com**Julie Chang****Lordy Rodriguez**Hosfelt Gallery  
460 Clementina St.,  
San Francisco  
www.hosfeltgallery.com**Scott Musgrove**Billy Shire Fine Arts  
5790 Washington Blvd.,  
Culver City  
www.billyshirefinearts.com

## SUNDAY 11

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Mung Lar Lam****Ironings**Craft and Folk Art Museum  
5814 Wilshire Blvd.,  
Los Angeles  
www.cafam.org

## WEDNESDAY 14

## LECTURE

**Iana Quesnell**

6:00 p.m.

NewSchool of Architecture  
and Design  
1249 F St., San Diego  
www.newschoollarch.edu

## THURSDAY 15

## LECTURE

**Glenn Kaino****Disorderly Conduct: Recent****Art in Tumultuous Times**

7:30 p.m.

Orange County Museum  
of Art  
850 San Clemente Dr.,  
Newport Beach  
www.ocma.net

## EVENT

**Hospitality Design****2008 Expo & Conference**

9:30 a.m.

Sands Expo &  
Conference Center  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
www.hdexpo.com

## SATURDAY 17

## EVENT

**Joseph Giovannini****Daly Street Lofts Open House**

12:00 p.m.

2450 Daly St., Los Angeles  
www.makcenter.org

## SUNDAY 18

## LECTURE

**Phillip Kaiser, Skylar Haskard,****Paul McCarthy, et al.****Exploring Kaprow's****Environments**

3:00 p.m.

National Center for the  
Preservation of Democracy  
111 North Central Ave.,  
Los Angeles  
www.moca.org

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Terra Cotta Warriors:****Guardians of the First Empire**

The Bowers Museum

2002 North Main St.,  
Santa Ana

www.bowers.org

## WITH THE KIDS

**The Family Studio****Split That House!**

12:00 p.m.

San Francisco Museum  
of Modern Art  
151 3rd St., San Francisco  
www.sfmoma.org

## MONDAY 19

## LECTURE

**Jean-Philippe Vassal**

6:30 p.m.

UCLA College of Architecture  
and Urban Design  
Perloff Hall  
Wyton Dr. and Hilgard Ave.,  
Los Angeles  
www.aud.ucla.edu

## WEDNESDAY 21

## LECTURE

**Adriana Cueller,****Marcel Sanchez**

6:00 p.m.

NewSchool of Architecture  
and Design  
1249 F St., San Diego  
www.newschoollarch.edu

## THURSDAY 22

## LECTURE

**The 2030 Targets****CBECS and Energy Models**

6:00 p.m.

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

## FILM

**Eraserhead**

(David Lynch, 1977), 89 min.

7:00 p.m.

Museum of Contemporary  
Art of San Diego  
1100 Kettner Blvd., San Diego  
www.mcasd.org

## FRIDAY 23

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Philip-Lorca diCorcia**Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art5905 Wilshire Blvd.,  
Los Angeles

www.lacma.org

**Neil Denari's Research Studio****2006-2008****Urban Futures Chicago**UCLA College of Architecture  
and Urban Design  
Perloff HallWyton Dr. and Hilgard Ave.,  
Los Angeles

www.aud.ucla.edu

## VISIT

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

FOR

COMPETITION LISTINGS

## SATURDAY 24

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Tillman Kaiser****Don't Worry About the****Motion on the Ocean**

Honor Fraser

1337 Abbot Kenney Blvd.,  
Venice  
www.honorfraser.com**The Puppet Show****Bryce Busby****Super Faulty Reconfiguration**

Santa Monica Museum of Art

2525 Michigan Ave.,  
Santa Monica

www.smmao.org

**Emilie Halpern**

Anna Helwing Gallery

2766 South La Cienega Blvd.,  
Los Angeles

www.annahelwinggallery.com

## EVENT

**Joseph Giovannini****Daly Street Lofts Open House**

12:00 p.m.

2450 Daly St., Los Angeles  
www.makcenter.org

## SUNDAY 25

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Bruce Nauman****Elusive Signs: Bruce Nauman****Works with Light**Museum of Contemporary  
Art of San Diego

700 Prospect St., La Jolla

www.mcasd.org

**Fowler in Focus: Ceramics of****Papua New Guinea**

Fowler Museum of Art

308 Charles East Young Dr.,  
Los Angeles

www.fowler.ucla.edu

## WEDNESDAY 28

## LECTURE

**Lars Spuybroek**

6:30 p.m.

UCLA College of Architecture  
and Urban Design  
Perloff HallWyton Dr. and Hilgard Ave.,  
Los Angeles

www.aud.ucla.edu

## THURSDAY 29

## LECTURE

**Jonah Lehrer**

7:30 p.m.

Art Center College of Design  
950 South Raymond Ave.,  
Pasadena

www.artcenter.edu

**Jeanne S.M. Willette****Feminist Art from the 1960s****to the Present**

6:30 p.m.

Orange County Museum  
of Art  
850 San Clemente Dr.,  
Newport Beach

www.ocma.net

## FRIDAY 30

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Greg Lynn**

SCI-Arc

960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles

www.sciarc.edu

## SATURDAY 31

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**The Bellwether Effect:****At the Forefront of Design**

Arts Forum

653 Paseo Nuevo,  
Santa Barbara

www.sbcaf.org



THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM

**BERND AND HILLA BECHER****BASIC FORMS**The J. Paul Getty Center  
1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles  
Through September 14

A true partnership in every sense of the word, husband-and-wife team Bernd and Hilla Becher worked together for four-and-a-half decades, traveling throughout Europe and North America documenting its disappearing industrial architecture. Together, through the lens of their large-format camera, they captured black-and-white photographs of framework houses, lime kilns, cooling towers, blast furnaces, winding towers, gas tanks, silos, and other industrial structures. While *Basic Forms* includes plenty of industrial photographs, much of the exhibit pays homage to the Bechers' framework houses. *Framework House, Gable Side, Rensdorfstrasse 1, Salchendorf, Germany* (1961, above) is a typical image wherein the photographed object becomes the only subject within the frame. The photographs become more than impressions; they emerge as meticulous documents of the structures themselves. Organizing these prints into categories according to function and then arranging them into grids or rows, the Bechers quietly reveal the mystery of what they do by presenting their work in a straightforward manner of surprising potency.



CANDIDA HÖFER/MOCA

**INSIDE ARCHITECTURE:**  
**SELECTIONS FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION**The Museum of Contemporary Art  
250 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles  
Through May 25

Interior spaces are often a source of interest and inspiration for artists. *Inside Architecture: Selections from the Permanent Collection* examines that ongoing fascination with both domestic and institutional spaces. The exhibition includes drawings, paintings, and photographs by artists Kirsten Everberg, David Hockney, Candida Höfer, Luisa Lambri, Richard Prince, Paul Sietsema, Thomas Struth, and Paul Winstanley. *Deutsche Bücherei Leipzig IV* (1997, above) by Candida Höfer reveals the artist's cool and detached photographic approach of cataloguing the types of space where actual cataloguing occurs. From Everberg's paintings of historic rooms of the White House to Sietsema's collage works using photographs of art critic Clement Greenberg's New York City home, each artist provides us with different representations of interior spaces.

Bernard Rudofsky's 1929 watercolor of Santorini Island, Greece.



COURTESY GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

## THE LOCAL TOUCH

Lessons From Bernard Rudofsky  
Getty Center  
Through June 8

In the 1960s, curator, critic, architect, and social historian Bernard Rudofsky was probably as influential as Le Corbusier. A modernist dissident, he challenged the dogma of his contemporaries, saying, "The house has to become again what it was in the past: an *instrument* for living, instead of a *machine* for living. This would make all the difference in the way we conduct our

lives—like the difference between playing a violin and playing a jukebox." His 1964 MoMA exhibit, *Architecture Without Architects*, was a bombshell that forced a generation to rethink its attitude toward what he called the "vernacular, anonymous, spontaneous, indigenous, rural" architecture. The show traveled to 80 countries in 11 years. Yet today, Rudofsky is virtually unknown.

*Lessons From Bernard Rudofsky* is the first retrospective to examine the life and work of this peripatetic designer and critic whose fashion ideas, houses, exhibitions, and lifestyle questioned the myths of Western civilization. The show originated at the Canadian Centre for

Architecture and migrated to an architecture museum in Vienna before arriving at the Getty. Two hundred drawings, photographs, and blueprints plus 75 of Rudofsky's famous Bernardo sandals are now on display, pressed into a small gallery.

From the moment you approach the lobby doors of the exhibit, you know you are in for an awakening. Rudofsky, who was born in Czechoslovakia and raised in Vienna, was, above all, a sensualist, and Getty curator Wim de Wit announces this fact by laying a deep red-colored film over the 30-foot-tall windows flanking the entry. The lobby takes on a rosy glow; the ambient effect clues you in to Rudofsky's sense of whimsy and his role as

provocateur. The hue creates a feeling—a sensation—before the gears of the mind have the chance to turn. That's how Rudofsky liked to communicate.

The exhibition is loosely chronological, cataloguing the ways of life he witnessed during his constant world travels. It includes the impact of Viennese modernism, as well as Rudofsky's travels throughout the Mediterranean and to Japan. Because the show was originally mounted in a much larger space, the curators had to find a way to present the same information in a tighter format. They worked in layers. The walls are covered in floor-to-ceiling wallpaper depicting Rudofsky's architectural drawings and blow-ups of his photographs. In front of the large-scale wallpaper are models, paintings, clothing, and shoes Rudofsky actually made. Last are free-hanging screens with Rudofsky's aphorisms projected on one side (the right side of his brain, so to speak) and shots of his existing buildings projected on the other (the left side of his brain, presumably).

Where most architecture exhibits present long scrolls of text and often-confusing models and blueprints, here the layering provides an accessible visual and spatial summary. You are quickly able to orient yourself in relation to Rudofsky's ideas without having to pore over explanatory notes. His flat-soled, open-toed sandals, for instance, which he designed in the 1940s as a response to the confinement of men's brogues and women's pumps, unfold as an almost tactile **continued on page 27**

## THE ACCIDENTAL CRAFTSMAN

*Minka: My Farmhouse in Japan*  
John Roderick  
Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Every culture has a unique heritage of building, but few are as intricate and detailed as Japan's historic wood farmhouses. Known as *minka*, which means "house of the people," these rustic homes are famed for their heavy timbers, detailed joinery, and large open interior spaces. The nation's dwindling stock, dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, is now caught between the vogue for historic preservation and the vagaries of contemporary building codes.

*Minka: My Farmhouse in Japan* traces the life of one such building and its accidental owner, the renowned journalist John Roderick. His memoir blends architectural detail with cultural context relating to his life in Japan and the *minka* that he, feeling coerced by his adoptive family, purchased in 1965. Roderick chronicles how he acquired the 1734 structure, transported it over 100 miles from Ise to Kamakura, and painstakingly renovated it to contemporary standards. The book is further affecting in light of the author's death, at age 93, on March 11.

A longtime correspondent for the Associated Press, Roderick studied Japanese in 1942 under the War Department program. He began writing on China, however, where he lived among the Yan'an locals in caves in 1947 and reported on the Maoist escalation. Only in 1959 was he assigned to Tokyo, where he grew enamored of the "noisy, free-wheeling democracy of postwar Japan." A chance encounter brought him together with a law student named Yoshihiro Takishita. As their friendship blossomed, Roderick wistfully mentioned his taste for the "spare, clean, uncluttered lifestyle" of rural Japan. He soon found himself in possession of one "monster of a house" in a condemned village, for the sum of \$14.

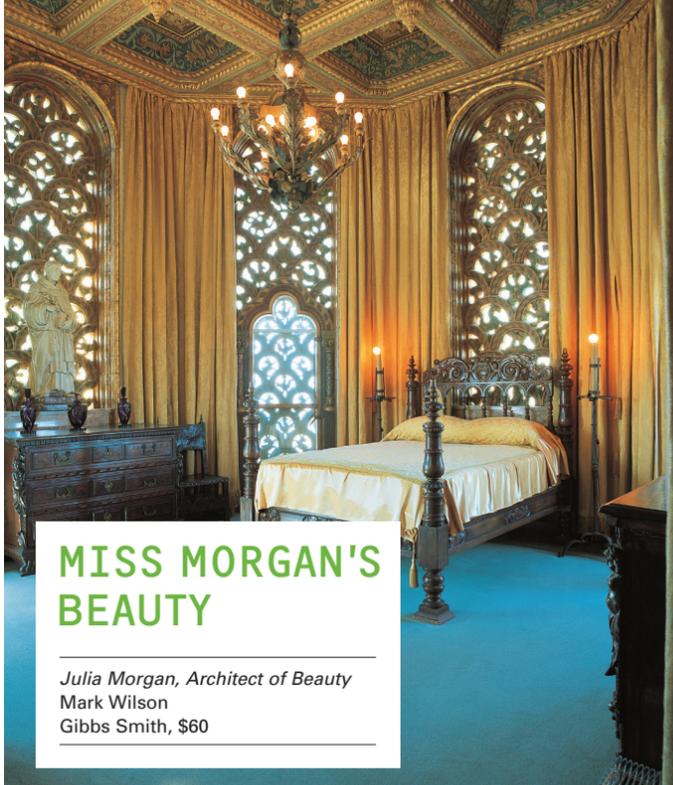
Roderick's friendship with the Takishitas offers the book's most intriguing material. Yoshihiro's parents, an ex-Imperial Army cavalryman and a kimono maker/historian, were instrumental in arranging the *minka* purchase. Abandoning his law studies, Yoshihiro became **continued on page 27**

Law student turned renovator, Yoshihiro Takishita, sits outside of the living room.



COURTESY PRINCETON ARCHITECTURAL PRESS

The South Celestial Bedroom at Hearst Castle, San Simeon.



## MISS MORGAN'S BEAUTY

*Julia Morgan, Architect of Beauty*  
Mark Wilson  
Gibbs Smith, \$60

So long as there is Hearst Castle high above the pristine California coastline, Julia Morgan will be known as the pioneering woman architect who designed William Randolph Hearst's opulent monument to money and lordly fiat. The collaboration began in 1919, when the publishing magnate entered Morgan's San Francisco office to discuss putting a simple bungalow atop a rugged peak on his 250,000-acre ranch near San Simeon. It ended nearly three decades later, and is usually mistaken for Morgan's entire oeuvre and her biography, too.

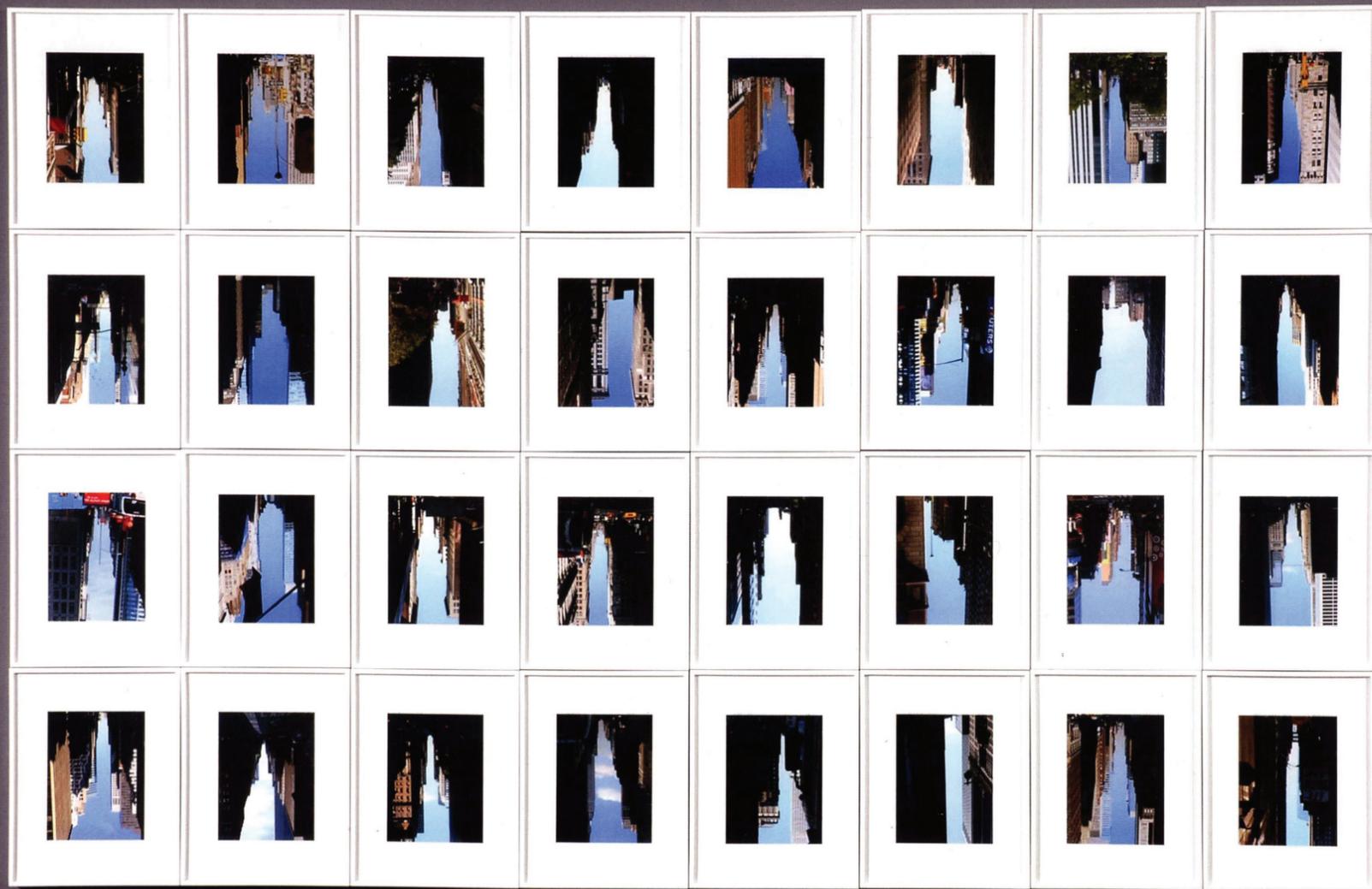
Down through the years, the connection became something of a stigma, summed up by the architectural historians David Gebhard and Robert Winter in their classic *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California*: "Like most of Julia Morgan's work, the architecture [at San Simeon] is dry, and exhibits little in the way of sensitive handling of overall forms and details. The client can

be blamed for the continual changes and growth of the project, but he cannot be blamed for the insensitive rendering of the architecture."

In *Julia Morgan, Architect of Beauty*, Mark A. Wilson hopes to undo this "snide assessment." His book is best read as a compendium of the diminutive and prolific Morgan's work. It is a surprise to learn that Morgan's productive years "spanned more than four decades, and her total output was greater than any other major American architect, including Frank Lloyd Wright." While she possessed a wide repertoire of styles, from Italian Renaissance Revival to Spanish Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival to Romanesque and Georgian, she was far from a crass interpreter of rich clients' fashionable tastes. An unmarried workaholic, Miss Morgan, as she was called throughout her long career, was in fact steeped in the ideals of Arts and Crafts. **continued on page 27**

MONICA LEE AND JOEL PULIATTI

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER APRIL 30, 2008

Peter Wegner's *Buildings Made of Sky* (2004-2007).

PETER WEGNER

## SPATIAL EXPLORATION

**Cut: Revealing the Section**  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  
Through June 8

Architecture exhibitions rarely capture the dynamic, life-sized nature of buildings; pictures, plans, and maquettes—their main tools—struggle to communicate ideas about volume and space. To tackle the professed subject of *Cut: Revealing the Section* at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), Henry Urbach, the Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design, deploys the sectional drawing and the idea of visualizing the vertical slice of a building. It's a noble, if bifurcated attempt to address this complicated issue while expanding formats and articulating curatorial style.

In the main wall label, Urbach notes that section drawings "remain elusive to

those not trained in the design disciplines." While the bulk of *Cut* is composed of sectional drawings and models from the museum's permanent collection, Urbach also includes three contemporary artworks with architectural implications and employs adventurous presentation strategies, which may have been honed in his previous identity as an art dealer running the gallery Henry Urbach Architecture in Manhattan's Chelsea.

A key question emerges from the exhibition: Can art function as a primer to architectural concepts? *Cut* opens with a small, nearly empty gallery (according to the curatorial statement in the space, it's 700 square feet). The room contains just one piece by

artist Peter Wegner. Here, Urbach reveals his interest in "enhancing our awareness—our interpretive grasp—of even the most familiar spatial arrangements." The conceit works especially well in identifying the gallery footage and volume—more often we're told the scale of a public space when it's vast and difficult to comprehend. This room is tangibly empty but also full of volume. It's the proverbial white cube and minimalist sculpture.

Further into the show Wegner's *Buildings Made of Sky*, (2004–2007) is a grid of 32 photographs of Manhattan street views hung upside down. Urbach uses the piece to open a dialogue about spatial perception. The orientation focuses attention on the sky space between skyscrapers, profiles that resemble tall buildings balancing on narrow foundations. These blue areas are both flat and infinite. When seen flipped, elements like street lamps and flagpoles jut at odd angles, tweaking notions of perspective and balance.

In a much larger gallery he includes Gordon Matta-

Clark's *Splitting*, the artist's classic 1974 sculptural bisection of a New Jersey tract house. Because of the literal act of cutting, it comes across as a key inspiration, represented here with film documentation and black-and-white photographs. In some of the pictures, the thin line of sky is visible between the two halves of the house, subtly alluding to Wegner's photos. *Splitting*, however, implies rather than shows a cross-section, though Matta-Clark lends physical weight and even rough, power-tool energy to the smooth demeanor of maquettes and drawings.

Massive amounts of labor are also a key to Wegner's elaborate, two-room sculptural installation *Guillotine of Sunlight, Guillotine of Shade*, (2007). A visual centerpiece composed of a million-plus pieces of brightly-colored paper stacked against a wall with slim edges facing out like book spines, it rises ten feet on both sides of a single wall. On one side, the paper is in shades of blue and green, on the other, warmer reds and oranges. Both spaces are infused with the tinted reflec-

tion of the paper. They exude a sense of dimension and heft—how much do these dense accretions weigh?

The three artworks serve as a preface to the standard display of wall-mounted drawings and Plexi-cased models, segregated in a separate section. They are more demure objects that don't compete with the artwork's visual scale. It also becomes clear that the artworks don't quite serve a pedagogical function because they use a different language. The drawings seem quite separate and are often more interesting for the regionally

significant buildings they depict—Mario Botta's SFMOMA, Timothy Pfleuger's Castro Theatre, MLTW's Sea Ranch Athletic Club. Perhaps the exhibition is a trial run, balancing art and architecture. How might it play with a more integrated mixture of media? That may call for a show of a much larger scale, but the idea adds a meta-edge to *Cut*, positing it as a cross-section of an exhibition model and suggestion of Urbach exhibitions to come.

**GLEN HELFAND IS A BAY AREA-BASED CRITIC AND CURATOR.**

Gordon Matta-Clark's *Splitting* (1974).

ESTATE OF GORDON MATTA-CLARK

**MISS MORGAN'S BEAUTY**  
continued from page 25

Her mentor was Bernard Maybeck, the Bay Area's most influential and unwavering exponent of buildings that harmonized with their surroundings through the use of natural materials and details drawn from nature. It was Maybeck who encouraged her to move to Paris to attend the École des Beaux-Arts, where, after two unjust rejections, she became the first woman to attend the prestigious academy. She returned to San Francisco and soon opened her own office in 1904, becoming the nation's first licensed woman architect with an independent practice. She retired 46 years later, at age 77, with 750 built projects.

She was, to say the least, industrious and dexterous—able to turn out equally polished versions of a shingled Craftsman or a Tudor mansion. Her most compelling work, however, was completed early, when the short-lived movement known as "First Bay Tradition" was in full swing. Among her triumphs were the St. John's Presbyterian Church on

College Avenue in Berkeley, the Sausalito Women's Club, the Saratoga Foothill Women's Club, and Merrill Hall at Asilomar in Pacific Grove. What these buildings had in common were modest proportions and modest materials that nonetheless evoked the timelessness of a wooded grove. St. John's sanctuary, for instance, was constructed entirely of exposed redwood. The ceiling is supported by cross-strut beams and the walls are paneled in russet-hued redwood. In these projects, she displayed an ability to orchestrate light and use craftsmanship to elicit deep feelings of comfort, spirituality, and majesty. Many of her later homes share this, but lack the purity and determined artistic vision of her earlier efforts.

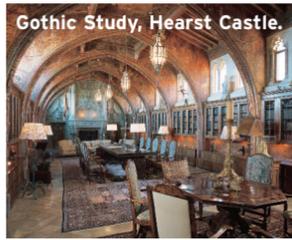
The bulk of Morgan's work is represented here in the photography, which takes us inside buildings and homes that have rarely been shown. It is fortunate that so much of Morgan's work still stands in good condition—and a testimony to the pride of ownership she inspired.

Throughout the text, how-

ever, Wilson almost never attempts to situate Morgan among her contemporaries or to place her within the movements that shook 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture from the time of Loos, when she entered the Beaux-Arts, to the time of Gropius, when she retired. Wilson avers, "Her legacy speaks clearly to anyone who takes the time to appreciate it: in the subtle beauty of her carefully crafted stairways; in the warm and intimate quality of her thoroughly liveable interiors; in the pleasing refinement of every detail of her exteriors; and in the graceful strength of the structural elements of her largest buildings."

All true, but not enough to situate Morgan's best work where it belongs: among the finest early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings in California.

**GREG GOLDIN IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**



Gothic Study, Hearst Castle.

MONICA LEE AND JOEL POLLIATTI

**THE LOCAL TOUCH** continued from page 25 experience. The wallpaper shows a classical Roman sculpture of a foot, with the straps of a sandal laced between the toes, next to which are images of a symmetrical shoe beside a human foot. You can feel your foot being pinched, like the bound foot of a Chinese courtesan.

While the exhibit is functioning at this visceral level, it is also a précis of Rudofsky's critique of modernism. From his earliest watercolors of houses on the Greek island of Santorini and his photographs of beehive-shaped mud houses in Turkey to the blueprint of his own house in Malaga, Spain, designed like a Japanese pavilion, you begin to understand his argument that "architecture is not just a matter of technology and aesthetics, but the frame for a way of life."

It has been two decades since Rudofsky died at age 82 in 1988. By then, his influence had waned. Architecture and fashion had become largely a matter of technology and aesthetics. This retrospective demonstrates that if ever the principles of a more organic, humane architecture and design were called for, the time is now. We are scrambling to cope with a self-destructive environment of our own making—from home to office to footwear. Rudofsky believed there was a "satisfactory way" to live in harmony and pleasantly with ourselves and with nature, and a way to think and breathe and act freely. The Getty exhibit underlines his unique contribution and our pressing need to adapt some of his principles today. **GG**

**THE ACCIDENTAL CRAFTSMAN** continued from page 25 de facto project manager, scheduling the beam-by-beam dismantling and delivery of the house over narrow dirt roads and hairpin turns. He also navigated among dubious real estate agents and conniving local councils while coordinating workers from distant prefectures. Indeed, Yoshihiro, who eventually became Roderick's adopted son, was so successful in modernizing the house without sacrificing its historic integrity that he went on to a career as an antiquities dealer, renovating *minka* throughout the world.

Roderick's *Minka* is a quick read that will charm enthusiasts of Japanese architecture (or fans of whimsical memoirs), even if the author repeats himself on occasion and strays too often among anecdotal accounts of housekeepers or international visitors. The volume's black-and-white photos show the *minka* under reconstruction, but reveal little about the renovation's unique achievement as a hybrid of historical form and modern amenities.

Still, Roderick's sense of adventure and curiosity are vibrantly displayed throughout this tale, which illustrates the relevance of craft, tradition, and history to contemporary society. That much was clear to Emperor Hirohito of Japan, who awarded Roderick the Order of the Sacred Treasure in 1985 for his meritorious service to the nation.

**JAMES WAY IS A TOKYO-BASED WRITER AND DESIGNER.**

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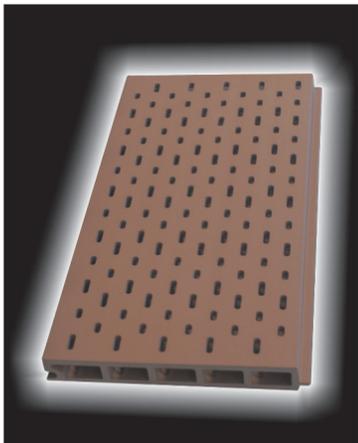
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## RESOURCES

**Sustainable Stanford** (p. 1): The ethnographic consultant for the Y2E2 building was Point Forward, 310 Sequoia Building, 2317 Broadway St., Redwood City, CA 94063, 650-298-9474, www.pointforward.com. The laboratory consultant was CAS Architects, 1023 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View, CA 94043, 650-967-6600, www.casarch.com.  
**House of the Issue** (p. 14): The general contractor for the Kelly House was 44 West Construction, 274 Muerdago Rd., Topanga, CA 90290, 310-455-2517, www.44west.net. The landscape architecture was done by

Steve Silva, 8033 W. Sunset Blvd., No. 850, Los Angeles, CA 90046. The cladding was supplied by Trespa North America, 12267 Crosthwaite Cl., Poway, CA 92064, 626-253-8161, www.trespa.com/na. The structural engineer was Sigma Design Structural Engineers, 336 N. Central Ave., No. 9, Glendale, CA 91203, 818-548-0112.  
**In Detail** (p. 16): The designer of the solar panel system at the Googleplex was El Solutions, 2171 Francisco Blvd. E., ste. H, San Rafael, CA 94901, 415-721-0123, www.eisvp.com.

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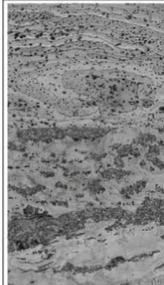
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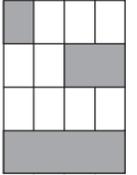
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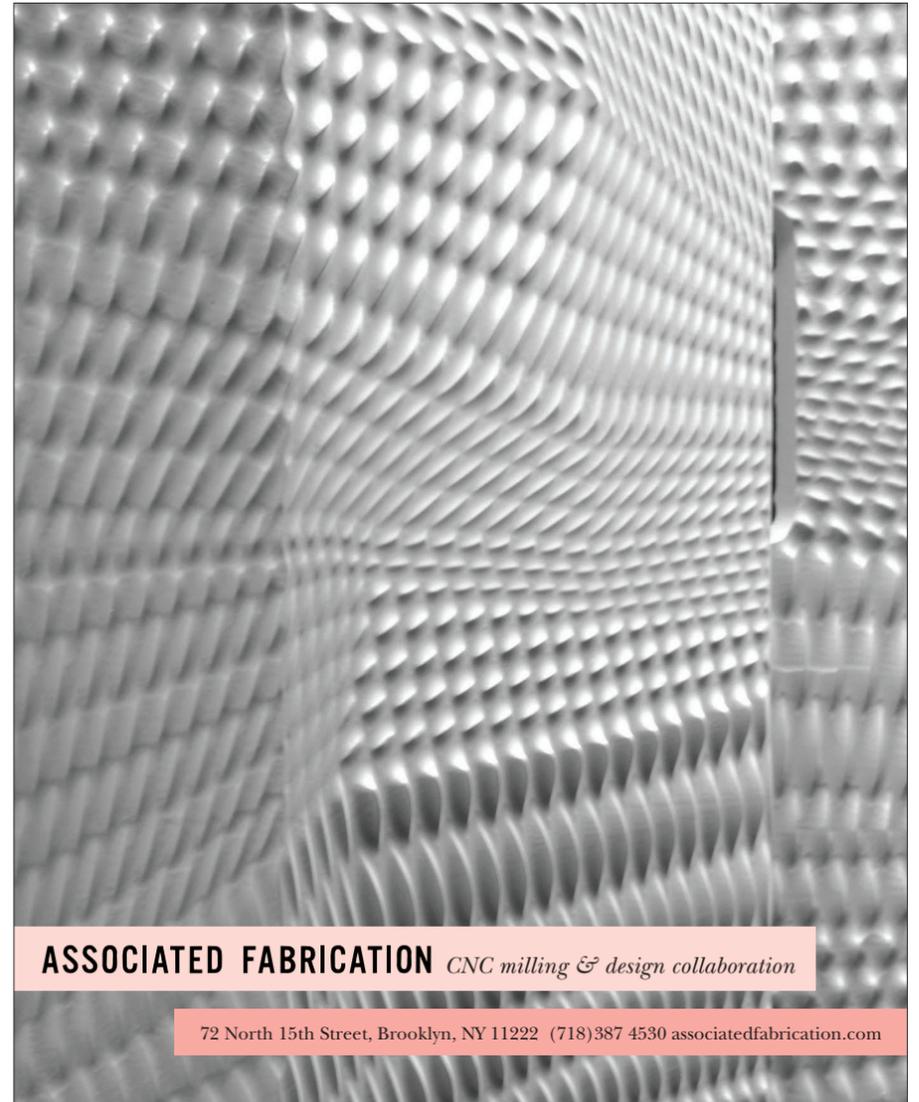
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Profiles of Selected Architects



COURTESY J.E. USHER

In the heady first days of his administration in 2005, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa handpicked Jane Ellison Usher, a legal adviser to former Mayor Tom Bradley and counsel to the 1984 Olympics, to be president of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission. He also selected the well-respected Gail Goldberg to be director of the Los Angeles City Planning Department. The two women set out on a course to deliver a great urban city to the mayor by adopting a manifesto entitled "Do Real Planning." The rich but brief document represented a change in perspective for City Hall: create a beautiful, livable, and walkable city by upholding overall planning strategies rather than allowing city council members to negotiate political favors with developers in individual districts. More than two years later, that vision is taking hits. Not only did the council cast off Goldberg's policy to protect lots currently zoned for industrial uses citywide, but Councilman Ed Reyes said that each councilperson should be free to determine planning policy in his own district.

Then came the council's adoption in February of SB 1818, a state bill that provides developers with density bonuses and other incentives in return for constructing affordable housing. When the city council passed an ordinance exempting

certain SB 1818 developments from environmental review processes (CEQA), Usher not only opposed the city and its planning department, but she suggested that neighborhood groups sue the city. With insiders wondering whether she would be removed from her position, we sat down to talk to her about the state of planning in Los Angeles.

**The Architect's Newspaper: Given the events of the last few months, is the era of "Do Real Planning" over before it has begun?**

**Jane Ellison Usher:** There are some foundational activities occurring in the city of Los Angeles that keep "Do Real Planning" alive certainly for me, and hopefully into perpetuity for the rest of the city. But here's what we're facing:

One, a planning department that culturally has not been as excited and aggressive as they needed to be to do real planning. There's a lot of leadership now at the top that's encouraging them to be more aggressive, to think out of the box, to behave and act differently, but I don't think there's a magic bullet.

I would add to that that there's quite a legacy of absence of planning in Los Angeles. There is some sense of entitlement on the part of the development community to live in a city where planning principals are secondary or perhaps tertiary. It will take us more time than we've had to turn that thinking around.

The third piece is the regular practice of the city council to defer to the home district whenever a planning issue is on the table. This practice has caused the city council to forget to think holistically about the city and about a vision that can be achieved if we're focusing on all the moving pieces at the same time.

**You openly invited neighborhood groups to sue the city over its implementation of SB 1818.**

I did.

**What's wrong with it?**

Part of my dissatisfaction was that my commission wasn't updated until the day the ordinance took effect. And on that score, I have to say that the planning department did its commission a disservice. But the other part of my dissatisfaction was when I read the final ordinance that day, I saw such departures from all of the "Do Real Planning" conversations that the commission had been having for the last two-and-a-half years. I was taken by surprise by the final product.

An awful lot of work went into [the ordinance] on the council floor and I will confess to you that I don't think that that's the optimal place for that volume of change to occur.

Then my eye falls, almost immediately, on language that I had never seen discussed and it does this because I'm a lawyer. I saw a word in the ordinance that means an awful lot to a land-use lawyer and that word is "ministerial." To a land-use lawyer, anything that is ministerial, by definition, doesn't require CEQA [environmental impact] review. The ultimate payday for a developer is something that is ministerial, and the ordinance was defining a large set of projects as ministerial. That surprised me.

I went back and looked at the CEQA clearance for the ordinance itself. In January, the planning director had offered the council CEQA: a categorical exemption for the ordinance. And the basis for its being exempt from CEQA was her description of how the ordinance would work, namely, every project using the ordinance's provision would have its own independent, individualized CEQA clearance.

So here you find an ordinance that's categorizing a large class of projects as ministerial and exempt from CEQA and the ordinance saying: Each project will have its own CEQA clearance. The two are inconsistent.

I took it a step further. In a brochure that the California APA had written for cities

as they worked on implementing SB 1818 ordinances, the California APA said that implementing ordinances must have an environmental clearance; they must go through CEQA.

So I stitched all of those pieces together and came to my own conclusion, which was that the city's implementing ordinance insufficiently attended to CEQA. Whether a court would agree with me remains to be seen, and may never be known. But it absolutely did bother me. **In your opinion, which group hinders Los Angeles from being a great city: those developers who don't respect the envelope or use mandates, or NIMBYs who fight structures in their neighborhood that could alleviate chronic problems such as affordable housing or mass transit projects?**

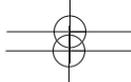
Well, it's funny. I don't think of anybody as being a NIMBY. Somebody coined that less-than-gracious phrase and it stuck. I was thinking about this, and I like to call these people WIMBYs in the city of LA. It's not "Not In My Backyard." I've met with countless members of residents and homeowners and neighborhood associations and neighborhood councils. Their question is: "What's In My Backyard?" I find them to be largely very responsible. They simply want to know: What's going to be in their backyard and have we provided the support and the infrastructure for whatever it is that is going to be located near them?

Those questions are smart questions, the right questions. So if I'm supportive and in league with those kinds of questions, what is it that I have to say to developers? Well, there again, I find the developers to be largely very reasonable. They just want to know what the rules are. So I don't blame the developers and I don't blame the homeowners. I find that the most blameworthy place is the department of city planning, which I think has let down both sides of the equation by not defining for them with sufficient specificity what our vision is for land use. **But doesn't that go to the city council and not the planning department?**

I think we should delineate—if you have a department that's insufficiently staffed and not directed to do real planning, you're going to have an unhappy outcome. Here we are at a crossroads, where we're asking the right questions, we're staffing up the department, we're focusing on rewriting all of the community plans with an eye to do real planning. If these plans arrive at the city council and as a consensus-building matter become adopted, we should see a different kind of city in the future, one with lots of predictability and much less uncertainty. If these plans arrive at the city council a year, two years, three years from now and are eviscerated—then you'll have your answer.

**The word on the street is that the mayor will quietly remove you because of the email you sent out on SB 1818. What's your response?**

I work in my role as the president of the commission at the pleasure of the mayor and on any day, at any time, it is absolutely his prerogative to remove me and that's a power unique to him and he should exercise it whenever he thinks the time is right.



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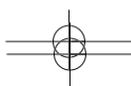
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