

# THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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ROYBAL SCHOOL OPENS IN DOWNTOWN LA

### A NEW START

The new courtyard was built on a former oil field.

MAGNUS STARK FOR LAP/USD

On September 3, Downtown Los Angeles' Edward R. Roybal Learning Center (aka Central Los Angeles High School #11), a

colorful new school just blocks from the heart of the city's skyline, finally opened its doors for students after a roughly 20 year

wait. Yes, 20 years.

Formerly known as the Belmont Learning Center, Roybal, which sits over part of the Los Angeles Oil Field just west of the 110 Freeway, is one of the most notorious building projects in California history. Since its inception in 1988 the school, which has cost almost \$400 million, has been delayed, partially demolished, in limbo, and finally redesigned by local architects WWCOT.

With a design by McClarand Vasquez & Partners, the school was largely complete when construction, which began in 1997, was halted in 1999 after tests revealed methane and hydrogen sulfide gases in the ground. Later examination in 2002 showed that the site sat on a major earthquake fault. The school's fate was unclear until WWCOT took over in 2003, restarting construction in 2006. The contractor was Hensel Phelps, and the project manager was Rick Hijazi of TBI and Associates, a consultant to the Los Angeles Unified School District.

"Our lawyers advised against it," said Andrea Cohen Gehring, **continued on page 11**

**THE ALL CLEAR:**  
GLASS 08: HIGH TECH AND LOW, PLUS NEW PROJECTS AND PRODUCTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD. PAGES 17-22

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ARCHITECTS DESIGN FOR SF'S SLOW FOOD NATION

### BUILDING AN APPETITE

Slow Food Nation '08

Jensen Architects' welcome pavilion.

ADRIAN GREGORITTI

Over Labor Day weekend, San Francisco hosted a blow-out celebration of the Slow Food movement, and architects showed up for the party.

Hailed as the largest festival of American chow in history—some called it the "Woodstock of food"—the event was the offspring of Slow Food, the 19-year-old organization that has become a global force for sustainable food culture. Showcasing

local tastes, products, and agricultural innovations, the first-ever event drew more than 50,000 visitors to venues throughout the city.

As they hungrily sought out California merlot, charcuterie, and sauerkraut, visitors also found fresh architecture in the form of pavilions built pro-bono by 15 local firms who were tapped by organizers to integrate gastronomy with green design.

Participating architects **continued on page 9**

SF PASSES ONE OF THE STRICTEST GREEN BUILDING MEASURES IN US

### GIANT GREEN STEPS

On August 5, Mayor Gavin Newsom signed into law San Francisco's Green Building Requirements Ordinance, putting into effect one of the nation's most stringent building energy codes. Amended to the existing municipal building code, the ordinance will enact requirements through the year 2012. The measure must first be approved by the California Energy Commission before being officially put into effect on November 3. **continued on page 5**

ECONOMIC DOLDRUMS HITTING WEST COAST ARCHITECTS

### Crunch Time

It's that time again.

With the economy on a sustained downturn, West Coast architects are once again scrambling to stay afloat, and attention is shifting from design challenges to financial ones. The next six to 12 months could prove to be the tipping point between pain and disaster.

According to the monthly AIA's Work On The Boards survey, architects' billings over the last six months, while stabilizing slightly in the last couple, have measured the lowest since the organization began tracking them 13 years ago. And the worst region of all right now **continued on page 6**

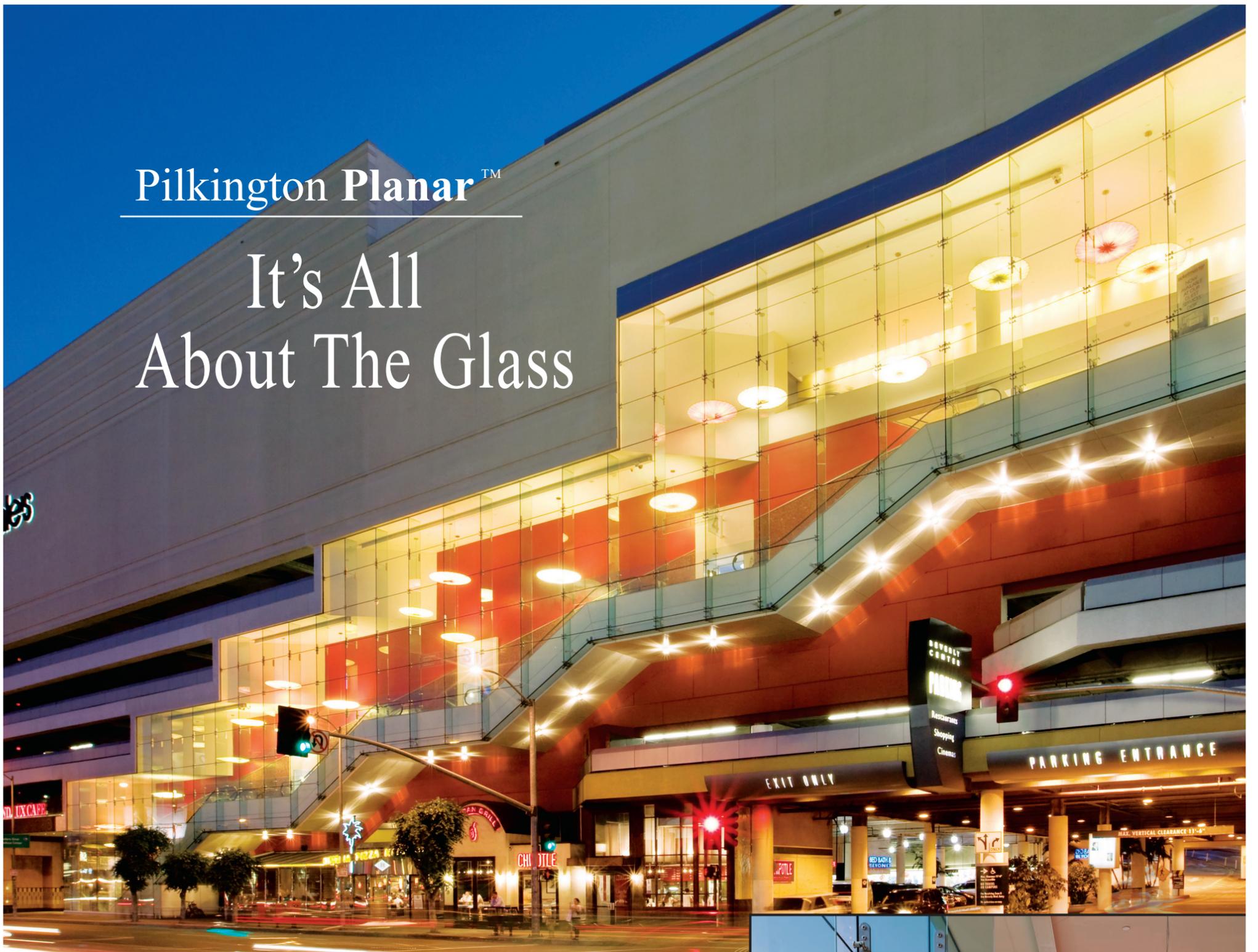
SANTA MONICA'S NEW STAGE: ELI AND EDYTHE BROAD'S NEWEST CULTURAL ENTERPRISE. SEE PAGE 15



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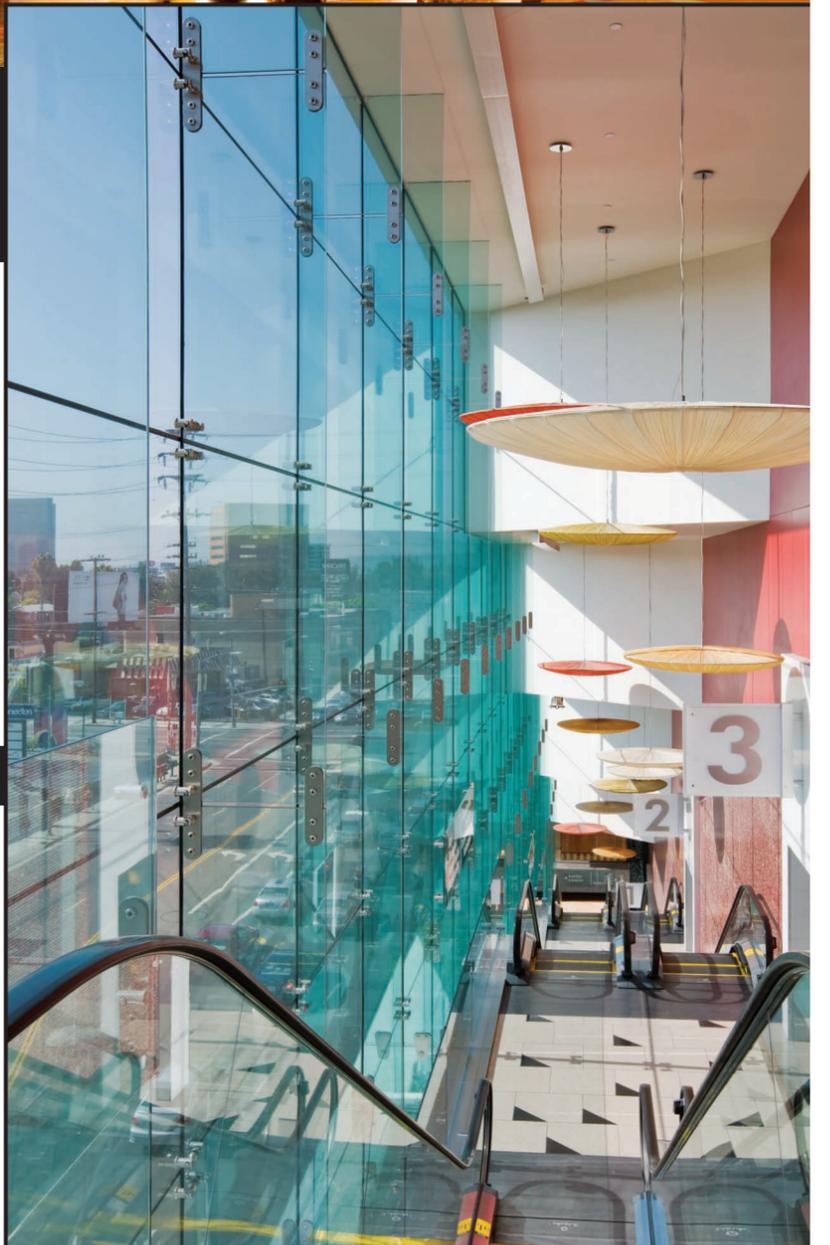


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## DENSITY BEGETS TRANSIT, TRANSIT BEGETS DENSITY

At the end of August the California State Senate passed SB 375, a landmark piece of legislation that, among other things, aims for less sprawl, more transit oriented development, more public transportation, and more affordable housing.

Its passage is a big step in moving the state into a direction in which it can actually maintain its monumental growth without ruining its landscape and driving itself into oblivion. At press time the Governor had not yet signed the act, but he should do it, and soon.

Unlike the majority of legislation that passes the Governor's desk, this bill brings few monetary costs and has virtually no losers, except select NIMBYs and those that want to maintain the harmful status quo. Specifically the bill calls for a laundry list of improvements including: seeking better regional planning coordination; requiring congestion management plans throughout the state; targeting reduced vehicle emissions; asking for all state funded planning studies to take into account greenhouse gases; calling for state agencies to study new developments' effects on travel; and protecting parks near new developments. Of all its improvements perhaps the biggest are making CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review easier on affordable housing, sustainable communities, and transit oriented developments, and forcing developers planning new projects to identify "significant farmland" or a "significant resource area" as being next to or on infill sites. These sites, furthermore, can only be developed if there is "no feasible alternative," and if the land is efficiently used with a minimum of 10 units per acre.

In other words, this should make unplanned sprawl much harder. And to make up for the loss of cheaper housing in the state's untouched lands the logical solution is encouraging affordable housing closer to existing development. This is what's done in Europe, where sprawl is often strictly limited by greenbelts (another idea that should be considered here someday) and offset with affordable housing and public transit.

This isn't Europe, of course. We have a long way to go until we have an efficient mass transit system. Passing a plan like SB 375 also requires providing better transit options than cars. Hence voters need to look at plans on their upcoming November ballots asking for improved transportation. In LA, a ballot measure calls for a half-cent per dollar sales tax increase, which could grab between \$30 and \$40 billion for both road and transit projects over the next 30 years. The Metro Gold and Green lines would be extended, a rail link to LAX added, and capacity would be added to the I-5 and I-605, to name a few improvements. We can talk all we want about containing sprawl and limiting traffic, but we need to come up with feasible alternatives to do this. Voting yes on initiatives like this is the only way to finish the job that SB 375 has started.

SAM LUBELL

## LETTERS

## FAIR AND BALANCED, REALLY

Thanks very much for your objective, thorough, and well-written critique of our project and the process that accompanies it ("Camp—or Bust?," CAN07\_08.13.2008). Contemporary design within an historic precinct is an important issue that goes way beyond this project. Your article calls this to question, and the discussion should continue in a neutral forum. We are pleased that *The Architect's Newspaper* is able to provide a constructive platform for this ongoing dialogue.

RICHARD GLUCKMAN  
PRINCIPAL, GLUCKMAN MAYNER ARCHITECTS  
NEW YORK

## ALL EYES ON AN

I wanted to follow up on the feedback I have received since the article on my house appeared in *The Architect's Newspaper*, as it might be interesting to you and your readers ("House of the Issue," CAN07\_08.13.2008). Since it appeared, I have gotten no less than 20 comments from people as varied as Thom Mayne and my old students from USC who saw the piece and wished me congratulations. That is pretty amazing, considering I only got two well-wishers after a spread of my work appeared in a long-established national design magazine. So as far as Southern California is concerned, AN seems to be very well read by just about everyone.

WARREN TECHENTIN  
PRINCIPAL, TECHENTIN BUCKINGHAM ARCHITECTURE  
LOS ANGELES

## CORRECTION

In the article "Brave New World" (CAN 06\_07.16.2008), Patrick Vaucheret's name was misspelled. Also, SMWMM was incorrectly listed as part of the design team led by the IBI Group. We regret the errors.

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## A SHINY INSTALLATION FOR LA FORUM'S NEW HEADQUARTERS

## FRAME GAME

For years the LA Forum has been seeking a permanent home for its architecture events and exhibitions. Under former executive director Michael Pinto, they came close once, nearly nailing down a space in the Frogtown neighborhood of LA. This year, the search finally ended, thanks to the foresight of incoming board member Ingalll Wahroos-Ritter, who is also associate director of Woodbury University's School of Architecture. Ritter approached the school about using its storefront exhibition space, located cheek-by-jowl with nightclubs and lingerie shops in Hollywood. "Against all odds—perhaps as befits the lore of our city—we ended up getting lucky on Hollywood Boulevard," quipped executive director Mohamed Sharif

of their new address, which they took over, rent-free, in August.

Although the Forum will continue to hold events in locations across the city, Sharif said the group needed a "place of its own" to maximize efficiency and simplify logistics. It's a win-win situation for both the non-profit and the school, Sharif said. "We will try to use our new address strategically to produce institutionally memorable and worthwhile content," he said. "In return we're activating what was previously underutilized and cementing our relationship with Los Angeles at its most primal."

Woodbury also sanctioned a competition to alter the space for exhibitions, which was first announced in April. In its call for proposals said Sharif, the LA Forum was looking for a design that responded "flexibly, temporarily, and singularly to both underscore our presence and frame our activities within a space shared with others." After narrowing the field in May to finalists Oyler Wu Collaborative, F-Lab, and Kuth Ranieri

Architects, with honorable mentions to assemblage+ and Pablo Maida Architect, Oyler Wu Collaborative was selected. Partners Dwayne Oyler and Jenny Wu questioned the part of the brief that dictated the liner should be moved in and out of the shared space and began exploring something that could be "tucked out of the way" when not needed. "There were more straightforward approaches," said Oyler. "But a large element goes beyond just solving the problem to make it a spatial experience."

Oyler and Wu designed 16 96 x 40-inch modular pieces made from aluminum tubing that are installed as a 40 x 15-foot spine along the ceiling. The hinged designs function like teeter-totters, allowing counterbalanced arms to lower down into the space when needed; and retracting back when not in use. The effect is less industrial-looking and more like a tangle of paperclip necklaces. "It's always an amazing result when it ends up better than the renderings," said Wu.

The forms are uncannily appropriate for the

upcoming exhibition, *Lineweights*, on Predock Frane Architects. The armature is also a good metaphor for the group's mission, noted Sharif: "To frame discourses on architecture and beyond." But Sharif found the piece's theatrical nature more intriguing, as he marveled at how the backlit metal shapes tossed silhouettes against the gallery walls. "Alfred Hitchcock's star is just a few steps east," he said. "I think fate was involved." **ALISSA WALKER**



Oyler Wu Collaborative's installation for LA Forum's new space.

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EAVESDROP: ALISSA WALKER

## CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

We always say that during political campaigns, architecture gets short shrift. But lately some major issues of the presidential race have hit close to home, and we're not just talking about the infrastructural implications of a "Bridge to Nowhere." Like the question about how many houses **John and Cindy McCain** own! We were most intrigued with #162, the McCains' Phoenix residence that was profiled in the July 2005 issue of *Architectural Digest* (and savvily sold in 2006). Once Cindy's brick-and-shake childhood home, the ranch-style house was frosted over in stucco by local architect **Neal Sheiner** in the 1980s. Details from the decade-appropriate "Southwestern style" included a Kachina doll collection, a mantelpiece from Guadalajara carved with their initials, and frightening evidence of McCain's obsession with "exotic carpets." Of course Democrats had their share of architectural criticism when detractors knocked **Barack Obama's** Greek temple-themed stage—calling it Barackopolis, Egobama, take your pick. Those trying to pin the senator as a style-over-substance celebrity were rewarded with a whopper of a connection: The Doric-columned set was designed by the same team that puts together **Britney Spears'** python-slithering playgrounds.

## THE SINGLES SCENE

A dashing **Clive Wilkinson** was named the *New York Times'* Most Eligible Bachelor in a three-page spread that included shots of Wilkinson poolside and shirtless (just kidding about that last part) at his modern three-bedroom home in West Hollywood, which friends apparently call Club Clive: "When I finished this place," Mr. Wilkinson said, "there was a lovely Dilbert quotation I wanted to put up: I wanted to make the house so beautiful 'that girls would forget my innumerable failings.'" Yowzers! The one question on writer **Barbara Graustark's** mind was how to um, fill those three bedrooms: "'I'm one person right now,' Mr. Wilkinson agreed...I hope it doesn't stay that way." Interested women should send headshots and resumes to us for review...Over on the other side of town, Silver Lake's perpetual hostess, architect **Barbara Bestor** and photographer **Jon Huck** (his swinging pad is among those featured in her book *Bohemian Modern*) transformed Mexican restaurant Casita del Campo into the equivalent of a middle school mixer for the local designerati. Bobbing among the sea of marg-slamming architects was the fluffy head of actor **John C. Reilly**, while celeb DJ **Mousa Kraish** (*Superbad*) spun grind-worthy beats like **Bel Biv DeVoe's** "Do Me." Oh. Yeah.

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### GIANT GREEN STEPS continued from front page

According to the ordinance, commercial office buildings over 25,000 square feet will be required to meet minimum LEED certification. Beginning in 2009 the requirement will be increased to a LEED Silver rating, and it will increase to LEED Gold by 2012. Tenant improvements over 25,000 square feet will have until 2010 to reach LEED Silver and 2012 to reach LEED Gold. Mid-size office construction between 5,000 and 25,000 square feet will not have to meet a LEED rating, but will be required to achieve a minimum number of LEED credits (three by 2009, four by 2011, five by 2012) relating to water efficient landscaping, water use reduction, construction debris management, and energy use.

Residential construction will have a slightly more relaxed standard; high-rise residential buildings will need to meet LEED Silver by 2012. Single family and mid-size residential housing will use the alternate GreenPoint Rated system, which uses more prescriptive requirements. By 2012 residences will need to obtain 75 GreenPoints. To encourage re-use of existing buildings, the ordinance awards additional credits for the restoration of historic architectural features and increases credit requirements for projects that demolish existing building stock.

Most cities' green building ordinances are less far reaching, and many limit requirements to basic LEED certification, rather than Silver or Gold. For example, Los Angeles' much-discussed order, which goes into effect on November 1, requires meeting basic LEED certification and only applies to residential and commercial construction

larger than 50,000 square feet.

Amazingly, the new San Francisco ordinance has come up against little opposition. Laurence Kornfield, San Francisco's Chief Building Inspector, noted that because the measure was to be phased in gradually, and was prepared with input from the Mayor's Task Force on Green Building (composed of developers, contractors, building owners, and architects), various interest groups were able to quickly come to a consensus. Rich Chien, the city's Private Sector Green Building Coordinator, said he also found little negative reaction to the new regulations. Tyler Krehlik, associate principal with Anshen+Allen Architects, San Francisco, noted that his firm's experience with one of the city's green pilot projects, the Laguna Honda Hospital, demonstrated that "any feasibility, technical challenges, or cost issues can be overcome."

While the LEED and GreenPoint rating systems will be used as performance standards for the San Francisco plan, actual certification will not be required. In lieu of a LEED/GreenPoint application, a third party reviewer may be used to certify that the credits have been met. The city is still working out the implementation of the ordinance, but anticipates it will be part of the normal building application process. In addition to the LEED/GreenPoint standards, San Francisco's commercial and residential construction will also have to exceed current California Building Energy Efficiency Standards by approximately 15 percent.

ERIC LUM

OPEN &gt; SHOWROOM

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Architect: CCS Architecture



Since opening this summer, the electric automaker Tesla's new flagship store in Westwood shines like a beacon for motorists stuck on the often-clogged 405. The showroom also elevates the car from a means of transportation to an art form, thanks largely to Cass Calder Smith (CCS) Architecture's luxurious yet minimal design.

CCS "up-cycled" two existing warehouse spaces to create a single new 9,000-square-foot space to show and service the ultra-sleek cars. The exteriors were fused together by raising the rooflines to a uniform height. Only a block from the freeway, the viewing gallery welcomes visitors both from the main street and the back alley with subtly branded signage. Once inside, the lofty ceilings make the space seem vast. The cool, concrete floors are punctuated by three long, communal tables made from walnut, where guests learn about their new cars. The space is sparsely decorated, focusing all attention on the three or four showcased cars as if they were works in an art gallery.

Much like a chef's kitchen, the garage and workshop are clearly visible through a fire-rated glass wall, so buyers can watch with bated breath as their long-awaited Roadster gets delivered and inspected. **HAILY ZAKI**



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PETER TOLKIN PROJECTS

## UNVEILED

PASADENA BIKE  
TRANSIT CENTER

With the possibility of \$5-a-gallon gas looming on the traffic-choked horizon, the timing couldn't be better for the announcement of a new Pasadena bike transit center. The 1,450-square-foot competition-winning modular bike storage unit designed by Peter Tolkin Projects is scheduled to be installed outside the city's Gold Line Memorial Station by the beginning of 2009.

"We wanted to try to establish something with iconographic ability that

could be used in multiple locations," said Tolkin about the design of the center, which was inspired in part by the Art Nouveau Metro entrances in Paris. Using steel tubing similar to that used in bike frames, Tolkin created a canopy that swoops above the traditional U-rack locking unit. Polycarbonate panels installed between the tubing create shade and protection from rain. At night, photovoltaic lights installed on top of the structures emit a soft glow for safety and also act as a beacon.

The modules will be fabricated locally using computer-controlled manipulation that

bends the tubing into place. Thirteen five-foot-long modules that can each hold four bikes will be fastened together, creating protected storage for 52 bikes. Since the units are extremely lightweight and require no special anchoring hardware, they can be installed like public benches, using an epoxy-secured bolt in a cement slab.

This particular site occupies an old transit right-of-way being leased to the City of Pasadena, and sponsored by a grant from Los Angeles' Metropolitan Transportation Authority. But Tolkin thinks the unit's modular flexibility will help to make it adaptable for other stations along the Gold Line. "In our fantasy there'd be a bunch of these at different stations around the city," said Tolkin, an avid cyclist and biking advocate. "Our practice is interested in more projects that really support this new kind of urbanism and the issues with increasing density." **AW**

**Architect:** Peter Tolkin Projects  
**Location:** Pasadena, CA  
**Client:** City of Pasadena  
**Completion:** Spring 2009

**CRUNCH TIME** continued from front page is the west, due in large part to its dependence on the now-burst housing bubble.

From an informal survey of architects across California we learned that everyone has been hurt in some way by the economic slide. While the residential market has been hardest hit, few sectors appear secure. Every firm had at least one project that had been stalled or cancelled because of the economy. Most are depending on contracts that were secured before the downturn and are having increased difficulty finding new work.

Smaller firms seem to have been hit the hardest, particularly those with projects bunched in the same building type and those without big-money clients. Larger firms have fared better, especially because most have a wide diversity of work, and have been able to focus on more dependable (for now) international and institutional markets.

But everyone is mobilizing to find solutions. For now only a few firms have had to take drastic measures by letting staff go. Notable layoffs include a widely reported

round by Gehry Partners earlier this summer, which has yet to be confirmed by the company, and a layoff of about 10 percent of the staff by CO Architects after a couple of large projects were scrapped.

Other remedies include looking more aggressively for work, pumping up marketing efforts, and accepting projects that just a year ago most firms would never dream of taking.

"You don't avoid anything anymore," said James Gates, a principal at San Diego firm Public. His eight person firm recently saw two major residential commissions in the city get scrapped, projects that the firm was depending on to get them through the next two years. "You do some of the nasty remodels. You make sure it's done on time without mistakes. You have to show you're committed."

Firms are also trying to get into more stable sectors, and are competing mightily for institutional projects. But with the larger firms getting into the same boat, it's not easy.

Mark Cavagnero, principal at San Francisco firm Mark Cavagnero Associates, points

to a recent competition for a small theater addition in Aspen, Colorado. Other firms in the running included Polshek Partnership and Barton Meyers.

"Two years ago these firms would never be chasing a \$15 million project," he said.

Other firms have focused efforts on non-building realms like research and development. But no matter what they come up with almost everyone says that they may have to take more severe measures if the downturn continues for a while longer.

"We can lumber along through the end of the year, but if things don't change, 2009 could be hard," said Cavagnero, whose office has 30 people.

Cavagnero, among others, hopes things will pick up with a new presidential administration at the end of the year. But the anxiety is palpable, and everyone seems on edge.

"For a long time no one felt obliged to ask how others were doing," said Bill Leddy, a principal at San Francisco-based Leddy Maytum Stacey. "Now when I see my peers they wonder 'how's it going for you?'" **SL**

## SILVER LAKE RESERVOIR FACES CHANGING TIDES

## OPEN MEADOW



Six-acre meadow with the reservoir in the distance.

SAM LUBELL

The decade-long quarrel over whether Silver Lake Reservoir's grassy six-acre meadow should be opened for public use has spawned a less-than-idyllic dialogue among local residents. With the meadow now on target to open in the spring of 2009, it appears those in favor of the project have won the land battle. But since the reservoir itself is scheduled to be decommissioned in 2015, issues both large and small regarding the future of this beloved oasis remain undecided.

The 795-million-gallon reservoir sits in an upscale, architecturally-rich neighborhood that features residences designed by Richard Neutra, John Lautner and Frank Lloyd Wright, among others. In 1997, Mia Lehrer & Associates was commissioned by the Department of Water and Power to develop the Silver Lake Master Plan for the reservoir and its adjacent land. Unveiled in 2000, the plan included a jogging path around the reservoir and possible designation of the meadow as a park.

While debate over the meadow predates the tenure of Councilman Eric Garcetti (District 13), his support for opening the space has angered many opponents of the project. One such group, Silver Lake Friends and Neighbors (SLFANS), cited increased traffic, lack of pedestrian safety, and loss of wildlife habitat as compelling reasons to keep the gates locked. Those concerns drew accusations of NIMBYism from open meadow proponents. More dramatically, SLFANS warnings of increased crime and graffiti ignited claims of codified racism on blogs and message boards.

On January 14, 2008, Garcetti officially announced his plan to open the meadow to the public. Under the plan, a portion of the six-acre meadow will be landscaped and is to be designated for "passive recreation." Activities such as soccer games and barbecuing will be prohibited. Additionally, the meadow will remain fenced off and will be closed at dusk. Councilman Tom LaBonge (District 4), whose jurisdiction includes the bluff that abuts the meadow to the north, said that area would be off-limits and left "for wildlife only."

Shelley Marks, President of the Committee to Save Silver Lake's Reservoirs (CSSLR) sees the plan as an effective compromise.

"It addresses the concerns of people who have questions about security, access and habitat," she said in a press release through Garcetti's office. Screenwriter and Silver Lake resident Ben Queen agrees, "They're not building The Grove. It won't become overwhelming. I think it'll be manageable and people will be pleasantly surprised," he said.

An issue not yet decided is whether to install a traffic signal at the intersection of Silver Lake Boulevard and Earl Street to provide a safe pedestrian crossing to the meadow's southern entrance. The idea has some residents apprehensive over increased cut-through traffic. Garcetti's spokesperson, Julie Wong said, "we are going back to the DOT [Department of Transportation] and see if there are any alternatives that might address those concerns."

With most other operational issues already decided, and District Director of Community Development Heather Repenning working with the community's Meadow Advisory Board to finalize design and landscaping issues, the debate will likely shift to the future of the reservoir itself.

The 45-foot-deep reservoir was drained in January 2008 after bromate, a naturally occurring carcinogen, was detected. Now refilled, Silver Lake Reservoir (along with nearby Ivanhoe Reservoir) will be taken offline in 2015 and replaced by underground storage tanks at the Headworks Spreading Grounds in Griffith Park. While the decision to decommission the reservoir is not directly related to the bromate contamination, it does comply with a federal law designed to secure public water supply.

Proposals for the reservoir's future have ranged from filling it in and creating expanded parkland, to reducing the size of the man-made lake and naturalizing its shoreline. The latter option would retain local homeowner's cherished water views while providing continued access to an emergency water supply for firefighters.

If there were any tea leaves to be found at the bottom of the recently drained basin regarding the reservoir's ultimate fate, they may have been read by Councilman Garcetti who said through his spokesperson that he intends Silver Lake Reservoir to remain a "body of water." **MIKE SCHULTE**

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OPPOSING INITIATIVES TO FIGHT TRAFFIC  
DIVIDE THE CITY

# A RIFT IN SANTA MONICA

To understand the severity of Santa Monica's traffic problems, visualize this: Of the beachside city's 85,000 citizens, only about 10,000 people both live and work there, which means that 60,000 people arrive daily from other parts of Los Angeles to fill its 70,000 jobs. That's about 150,000 people coming and going every weekday, all of whom seem to be lined up along Cloverfield Boulevard at 5:30 in the afternoon.

It was this mounting frustration that earlier this year led a group of citizens organized by the Santa Monica Coalition for a Livable City (SMCLC) to propose the Residents Initiative to Fight Traffic (RIFT), a 15-year measure which would cap commercial development at 75,000 square feet annually in an effort to curb traffic. In August, RIFT received more than twice the 5,000 signatures needed to place it on the bal-

lot. In November citizens will be voting on the referendum, now known as Proposition T. An opposing group, Save Our City, which includes citizens, politicians, and about 60 local architects, supports an existing document—the city general plan's Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE)—which calls for smart growth over limited growth and more nuanced solutions for combatting the crippling traffic.

"Rift" could also describe the breach between Santa Monica's residents and politicians, who are deeply divided over various solutions to traffic and development. After decades of enthusiastic growth, Santa Monica is a victim of its own success. High-rise luxury hotels and high-end retail line the once-decrepit coastline. And Santa Monica's uniquely dense, walkable community has made it one of the most desirable places in the Los

Angeles area for companies to locate, luring headquarters for mega-companies like Sony, Yahoo!, and MTV. But want to leave in time for dinner in Silver Lake? Forget it.

If implemented, Proposition T would amend LUCE in hopes to stop some of those drivers from having a reason to come into the city. The 75,000-square-foot cap would last until 2023 and would not include uses like residential, parking, schools, or hospitals. Proposition T also makes allowances for ground floor "neighborhood-serving goods, services, or retail uses" in mixed-use developments where 100 percent of the housing is affordable. According to supporter, rent control board member and planning commissioner Jay P. Johnson, RIFT pre-empts what will be almost certain future battles over city development policies, which he called "undefined" when it comes to height and density. "My experience tells me that as key crossroads of decision making are passed, the collective ability to 'go back' or reverse course is highly unlikely, since many big money stakeholders exert their influence, privately and publicly, to maintain the direction," he said.

"To say we can stop traffic and do it by stopping development sounds fantastic, but the devil is

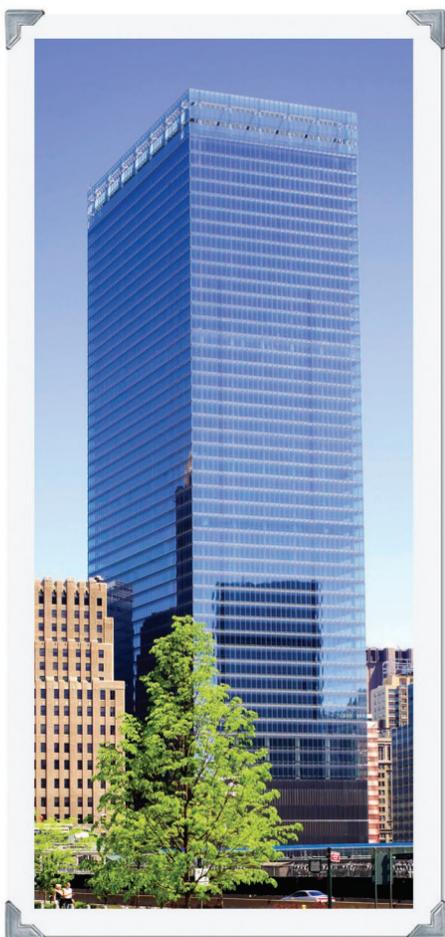
in the details," said Gwynne Pugh, principal of Santa Monica firm Pugh + Scarpa and one of the key organizers of Save Our City. In his role as chair of the city's planning commission, Pugh points to LUCE (a document he helped research and draft), which he said would address many of these same traffic issues but in a more comprehensive way. LUCE's plan calls for mixed-used projects and dense transit centers in hopes of creating more "complete" neighborhoods that will discourage residents from using their cars. It also includes a focus on affordable and workforce residential development (for young professionals making around \$70,000 a year) to house more Santa Monica residents closer to jobs and services. In addition, the plan will explore many more options for employers like flex hours, biking incentives, and shared parking.

LUCE has already been approved by the city council and planning commission, and is now in the environmental impact report stage. It could be implemented within the next six months, but if the November initiative is approved, Pugh said, "it would be obliterated by RIFT." In June, Pugh + Scarpa held a fundraiser for Save Our City that was also an educational event

for architects. Of prime concern to the group were transit-oriented projects anticipated at places like Bergamot Station, for the expansion of the Expo Line. With the 75,000-square-foot cap, Pugh said the developments won't be able to achieve the proper mix of high-density residential and commercial floor space, potentially jeopardizing the future of a sorely-needed public transit line, as well as the eventual "Subway to the Sea."

Making special allotments for public transit projects like the Expo Line activity centers raises questions about how exactly Proposition T will be enforced. It has not yet been decided whether the 75,000 square feet per year would all be allotted at once, and which projects would get precedence, although the measure allows for "borrowing" square footage from future years if necessary. Johnson says the cap simply ensures that projects are carefully thought out and overdevelopment won't happen. "My choice was too little or too much," he said. "I chose too little since it can be corrected by increasing the amount in the future. If we go with too much, and are wrong, we cannot correct the error by tearing down buildings." **AW**

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COURTESY HGA ARCHITECTS

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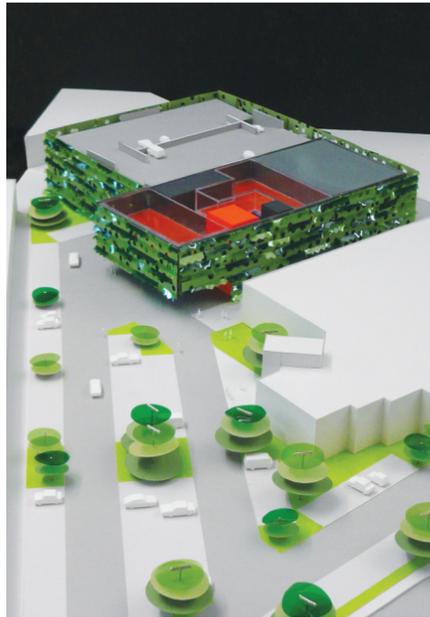
California State University Northridge students will be welcomed to campus by the 50-foot-tall transparent glass wall of the new Northridge Performing Arts Center when the project is completed in 2010.

HGA Architects is working with general contractor C. W. Driver on the center, which will span 163,000 square feet. It will include a 1,700-seat, multi-purpose concert hall, 250-seat black-box theater, classrooms, and a new broadcast facility for KCSN public radio. The center will host performances ranging from orchestra to opera, theater and Broadway shows, dance, film, and student productions.

The \$98 million project's travertine and stone tiled main lobby will face west and overlook a reflecting pool, trees, and planting areas through the center's 140-foot-wide glass curtain wall, explained Jamie Milne Rojek, project manager with HGA. It will also include a staircase stretching up three levels to the upper balcony and rooftop terrace. In the auditorium, the balconies are wrapped in ribbons of a transparent finished hickory.

The new center will have no official rear entrance, and loading docks and service functions will be deftly hidden behind moveable screen walls. **LISA KOPOCHINSKI**

Architect: HGA Architects  
Location: Northridge, CA  
Client: California State University Northridge  
Completion: 2009



COURTESY CLIVE WILKINSON ARCHITECTS

CLIVE WILKINSON WINS KCRW COMMISSION

MAKING RADIO WAVES

In August Clive Wilkinson Architects won a commission to design a new building for the popular Santa Monica-based public radio station KCRW.

The station, which is the largest public radio affiliate in Southern California, is located on the campus of Santa Monica College

(SMC). Its growth over the years has forced it to scatter its facilities throughout SMC's main campus. The new building, located on one of SMC's satellite campuses, about a mile north of the main campus, will help KCRW modernize and consolidate.

The 35,000-square-foot structure, located on the site of a large parking lot off of Stewart Street, just north of the 10 Freeway, will include office and recording studio spaces. Plans are still very preliminary, but an initial concept model reveals a simple three-story building covered in a green screen of ivy. "The idea was for simple, stealth, inward-looking buildings," said Wilkinson.

Construction funding is subject to a bond measure due in November, and the proposed cost of the project has not been disclosed.

As part of the commission the firm will also be carrying out modifications to the SMC satellite facilities adjacent to the planned KCRW building, including new landscaping and a renovation of the Academy of Entertainment and Technology building.

Other firms shortlisted for the commission included Gensler, HLW, Morphosis, and CO Architects.

While Clive Wilkinson Architects is known for its interiors projects, the firm, says Wilkinson, is aggressively pursuing ground up work. Besides the KCRW building the firm just won commissions to design a mixed-use building for handbag maker Harvey's in Santa Ana, and to renovate the 450,000-square-foot headquarters for Finnish communications giant Nokia, in Helsinki. **SL**

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TOM BONNER

MARK TAPER FORUM COMPLETES \$30 MILLION RENOVATION

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

On September 14 Los Angeles' Mark Taper Forum reopened its doors after a \$30 million makeover. The renovation, carried out by local firm Rios Clementi Hale, enhances the theater's look and comfort. But most importantly it brings the theater's somewhat makeshift technical operations into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The renovation was made possible through a \$4.9 million allocation from LA County with the addition of donations from several individuals, foundations, and corporations.

The 745 seat circular theater clad in an abstract precast relief by Jacques Overhoff was built in 1967 by modernist architect Welton Becket. It makes up one third of Becket's original Music Center in Downtown LA's Bunker Hill,

along with the Ahmanson Theater and the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

Visible changes include a new raised entrance hall, a much larger lobby including better views of its signature Abalone tile mosaic, and a swanky new below ground lounge. The renovation also incorporated new lighting, improved sightlines to the stage, new staircases, new and larger bathrooms, and a fairly conservative but more comfortable décor, including widened seating, new carpeting, and new zebrawood wall paneling and walnut trimmed ceilings. The theater's dominant colors are now olive and brown, replacing a mostly blue palette.

But the most radical changes to the theater took

place backstage, where supporting the cramped, outdated theater's productions had often been a supreme challenge.

"I thought to myself how can you work here?" said Jennifer Reynolds, a senior associate for Rios Clementi Hale, commenting on the mazelike hallways of the former backstage spaces.

Improvements here include a larger loading dock, more space directly behind the stage, a new green room, new dressing rooms, a new hair and makeup studio, and new prop and wardrobe rooms. Much of this new space was made possible by relocating the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems to the building's roof. Work also included installing new electrical systems; new ceiling panels and baffles for better acoustics; new catwalks; a new sound mixing booth; and the addition of elevators replacing a difficult system of ladders and steep stairs.

Perhaps the biggest challenge, said Reynolds, was working within the constraints of the theater's circular shape, which resulted in an endless series of tight wedges. But the firm was able to navigate the geometrical challenge successfully.

"We called it a Swiss watch. It didn't want to change, but we changed it," said Reynolds. "The people who work here are giddy." **SL**

**BUILDING AN APPETITE** continued from front page varied from giants like Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, which designed a "soap box" for farmers to share stories, to smaller practices like Stanley Saitowitz | Natoma Architects, which contributed a bread pavilion, complete with baking area and museum. Also pitching in were socially-motivated firms like SMWM, which built a water station made from recycled water bottles, and also developed the event's Civic Center masterplan. Other participants included David Baker + Partners, who with CCS Architecture designed the festival's outdoor vendor stalls and eating area, and Jensen Architects (designer of the welcome pavilions), Winslow Architecture (wine pavilion), and IDEO (compost exhibit).

Most of the temporary structures were erected inside a 50,000-square-foot pavilion called Taste, located at Fort Mason, the cultural center on San Francisco's northern waterfront. There, the reigning design mood was one of critical earnestness. Architect Cary Bernstein designed a charcuterie pavilion, for instance, that displayed the history of meat production through paintings and photography, to educate visitors about the interdependence of food and health. With photomurals of ranches and graphics of chicken feed, Bernstein illustrated the principle that "whatever the animal eats, we eat." Her pavilion was designed with re-use in mind; even the artworks were re-purposed

for permanent display in local restaurants.

Events at other venues reiterated this holistic theme. At City Hall Park, Mayor Gavin Newsom devoted over a quarter of an acre to a "Victory Garden," designed by John Bela, co-founder of the artists' and designers' collective REBAR. Modeled on the homegrown vegetable gardens tended during World War II, the pleasantly unmanicured space demonstrated small-scale food production, particularly backyard farming within the city limits (a movement that will get a boost this year when the group gives away 15 free starter gardens in San Francisco).

The scale and enthusiasm for this first-time festival—all major events were sold out well in advance—were not only a testament to a growing respect for environmental interdependence, but to architecture's role as part of the conversation.

Landscape architect Kevin Conger, of CMG, who assisted with the City Hall garden, noted that "getting our food production closer to the consumer is essential, both so we understand where food comes from, and also so we reduce the carbon footprint of production and shipping."

Beyond backyard gardens, Slow Food's use of green materials—reclaimed lumber, hay bales, recycled berry crates, bundles of native California tule reeds—showed that good design can be an essential part of our low-carbon diet. **PAUL ADAMSON**

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

SAN DIEGO WEIGHING OPTIONS FOR ITS CIVIC CENTER COMPLEX

WINNER...  
OR NOT?



Zimmer Gunsul Frasca's sail-like proposal for the city hall building.

million. Developer Hines of Houston was paired with architect Cesar Pelli, and developer Gerding Edlen with architect Zimmer Gunsul Frasca (ZGF), both of Portland.

But on August 15, Hines withdrew from the San Diego competition after an independent financial analysis from Jones Lang LaSalle, commissioned by the city, showed the Hines plan was more costly (an estimated \$784 million over 50 years) than Gerding's (\$628 million over the same time period), even though it was less ambitious.

Both developers submitted plans to the city to raze the current 1960s-era buildings and replace them with new city offices while reopening the street grid interrupted by the current configuration of government buildings. Gerding's proposal offered an eye-catching 500-foot-tall City Hall building with a sail-like design topped with wind turbines, as well as more than two million square feet of private development on the surrounding blocks, all built over three phases. "This is first and foremost a place-making endeavor," said Tom Cody of Gerding Edlen. "The site now has an oppressive inertia. It's a void in the livable urban

fabric of San Diego." Hines went more conservative (a valid strategy given San Diego's past budget difficulties), with a simple four-story glass City Hall looking out on a plaza with an accompanying office building.

But while Gerding Edlen and ZGF are now the lone candidates for new construction, they're not assured of winning the job. Jones Lange LaSalle also identified five additional low-cost options, such as continuing to lease and renovate the city's existing facilities, or building a city hall outside of the downtown area. Yet Jones Lang LaSalle found both the Gerding and Hines proposals saved the city more over the 50-year time frame.

"I've always said our biggest competitor was the do-nothing alternative," says Cody. "The city has been in a rut with that development for decades."

Last year Gerding Edlen won the US Green Building Council's inaugural Leadership Award for its sustainable developments in Portland and Los Angeles. The company made its name on the Brewery Blocks redevelopment project in Portland, which transformed the former Blitz-Weinhard brewery into a multi-block shopping, office, and housing development, all LEED-rated. ZGF, a past winner of the AIA national firm of

the year award, has designed large institutional projects in Portland, such as the Oregon Convention Center, the MAX light rail line, and a major recent expansion of the Portland International Airport.

Although their city hall design seems to resemble a ship's sail, which would recall San Diego's extensive maritime history, ZGF's Doss Mabe insists it was unintentional.

"The shape is driven partly by sustainability concerns: maximizing the ability to bring light deeply into the floor plates but minimize the west sun," he explained. "Normally in San Diego there's not enough wind (for turbine generation), but the shape of the building will cause a difference in wind pressure on the west and east side that causes the wind to flow at a higher speed. We didn't talk about sails while we were working on the design. But anytime a building creates its own metaphors, that makes us feel like we're hitting or connecting with people."

The San Diego City Council is expected to vote on the final plan by November, after receiving an official recommendation from the City Center Development Corporation (CCDC), the city's urban renewal agency. **BRIAN LIBBY**

This fall, two developer-architects were expected to compete for the design of San Diego's new four

block downtown Civic Center Complex—including a new City Hall—with a budget of at least \$600

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COURTESY WWCOT

**A NEW START** continued from front page design principal at WWCOT. "But we decided that someone had to step up and something positive had to happen on the site." The result, she said, was incredibly rewarding. "It's probably the most interesting, complex, and exciting thing we've ever done in the history of this firm," she added.

And certainly one of the most challenging. First the firm led the removal of mold and vermin and the replacement of deteriorating systems from the long-abandoned site, which Gehring referred to as a "new ruin." To manage gas contaminants the team built a mitigation system that traps gases through sand, soil, and a plastic membrane and, when levels are high, vents them through conduits located in and around the school. To manage the earthquake threat the firm ensured that all buildings were set back the minimum fifty feet from the fault. That meant demolishing one of the school's four classroom buildings and its administration building. Replacement structures include another classroom building and a multipurpose building that includes a cafeteria, a library, a bookstore, music and dance rooms, and the school's maintenance offices.

The final result of the 2,800 student, 310,000-square-foot, 104-classroom high school is a thoughtful merger of the new buildings and the original four story design. The aborted first attempt cost about \$175 million and the new work cost \$200 million, said Hijazi. To save money the firm maintained the original staggered structures along Beaudry and First avenues, wherever possible. They covered over the school's original red colors with a patchwork of green, white, yellow, and beige meant to reflect city's desert environment and create visual interest. "We decided to create a tapestry that would be less bulky and create a strong pattern," said Gehring. Its colors and composition are further echoed in the landscaping, by Rios Clementi Hale, a centralized series of pathways and green spaces dominated by drought tolerant plants. The lower-lying and sleeker new buildings lie on one side of this inviting central green and the bulkier, more institutional original buildings wrap around the other.

The firm further decentralized the once behemoth school, creating small learning communities that are differentiated inside by color, each with its own administration facility. To

**The Roybal Learning Center on First Street and Beaudry Avenue.**

take advantage of the climate WWCOT not only centered activity on the large green courtyard but built outdoor stairways, outdoor cafeteria seating, covered walkways, and dramatic overhanging rooftops for the new buildings. A large metal mesh screen on First and Beaudry serves as the main sign board for the school visible amid the bustle of downtown streets. From the protected green one sees the skyscrapers of downtown shoot up dramatically behind the rest of the school.

The 33.5-acre-site contains several fields and a large gym, and just next to the school Mia Lehrer Landscape Architects created the rolling 9.5-acre Vista Hermosa Park, which is shared by the school and the local community. It is the first new park in downtown LA in decades.

After so many years on the project everyone involved has finally let out a sigh of relief. "It's just fantastic," said Hijazi. The first iteration of the school was a mess, but this time things, he said, went surprisingly smoothly. "There were arguments, but we worked together seamlessly, like a team, and finally got this thing done." **SL**

Large covered areas create indoor/outdoor classroom and recreation spaces.



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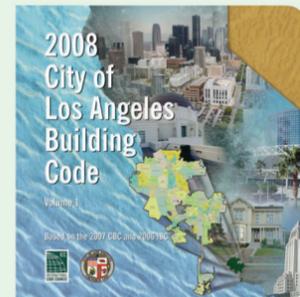
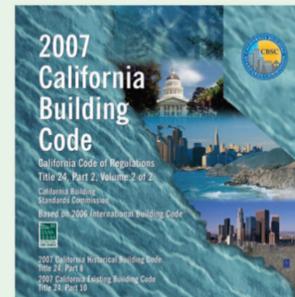
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 24, 2008



Clockwise from top left: Exterior is clad in colored fiber cement panels; the house seen in the landscape; seating area with built-in banquette; the library has 16-foot-tall bookshelves; a corner window with glass floor.



separated by small gaps. In collaboration with Dorrie, he experimented with light and dark greens that complemented the various plantings. In the end, the three exterior shades were picked to match leaves plucked from young ficus vines nearby.

Approaching from the main house, a mid-century ranch, floating concrete steps through a black-stone lined weir create a transition into the space, as does the drama of swinging open a wide pivoting wenge wood door. The same wood rings the kitchen with sleek storage, and simple acid-edged concrete creates the flooring. A bright plexiglass backsplash in a shocking chartreuse radiates from behind the bar, which runs the length of the kitchen and is aligned with the bathroom's vanity beyond. Vertical windows in the pale green walls of the bedroom and library create constantly changing slices of blue sky and the canopies of pine.

Stepping through a corridor of two-foot-wide glass into the library creates another dramatic moment of transition. Outside, on either side of the walkway, are spiky rows of deep green snake plants that give the feeling of standing inside a mirrored image, repeating to infinity. In the library, the room transforms into two very different spaces. From the built-in couch, facing back into the kitchen, the view is dominated by the room's "intellectual" elements, a 16-foot-tall bookshelf, accessible by a lime green rolling ladder. Facing the other direction is the "spiritual" area, with a spectacular canyon vista, further enhanced by a 4-foot by 7-foot cut-out of the floor that's been replaced with laminated glass. Istanbulu surveyed both perspectives before settling contentedly on the couch. "Every time I'm here it feels very whole, very complete," he said. **AW**

Gazing at the electric-green cube he designed, which appears to hover atop a vibrantly-landscaped hill overlooking Coldwater Canyon, architect Aleks Istanbulu said, "It's not about a big architectural gesture, it's more about respect." Santa Monica-based Istanbulu built the guesthouse for Paul Markovits, a commercial real estate investor and

photographer, and Dorrie Markovits, a graphic designer who cultivates native plants on the property's steep hillside nursery.

Originally planned as a single "contemplation room," the space eventually grew to include a bedroom and bath for a guest unit and a full kitchen for entertaining. The 855-square-foot space is divided into two parts, with

the entry opening into the low-rise kitchen and bedroom, and to the right a double-height library accessed through a glass entryway.

Istanbulu wanted the house to blend seamlessly into site, functioning more like an element of the terraced gardens. Yet striking that respectful tone required Dorrie and Paul to venture far beyond the clean lines

and muted tones of classic modernism. "The bold trapezoid pattern on the exterior panel was proposed to us midway through the project," said Dorrie. "It was a shock to us since we had envisioned the standard rectangular use of concrete board." Instead, Istanbulu conceived a pattern of three fibrous cement panels made of diagonal and parallel lines,





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ALL IMAGES DAVID LENA EXCEPT FAR LEFT TIM STREET PORTER



Left: Sculptural plaster and mahogany baffles for the multiple-purpose stage. Below: The exterior's south facade.



BENNY CHAN

AN INTIMATE PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE OPENS IN SANTA MONICA

## WEST SIDE STORY

Frank Gehry will no longer have to drive downtown to get his fix of contemporary music at Disney Hall. The Broad Stage offers acoustical excellence and even greater intimacy ten blocks from the ocean on Santa Monica Boulevard. Renzo Zecchetto, a protégé of Charles Moore, who established his Santa Monica office in 1990, began designing this 500-seat theater a decade ago, and its inaugural gala is scheduled for September 20. The name is apt, because it celebrates Eli and

Edythe Broad's endowment, as well as the breadth of the programming. The stage is designed to accommodate opera, dance, and orchestral concerts, as well as soloists, chamber groups, and readings, and the goal is to achieve an ideal relationship between performers and public.

Dale Franzen, a former opera singer turned impresario, collaborated with Piedad Robertson and Chui Tsang, successive presidents of Santa Monica College, to create a theater that she will program part

time, allowing the college to use it for educational activities and rentals the rest of the year. As a veteran of the world's opera houses, Franzen understood how important it was to engage audiences, face-to-face, and her partners wanted to enhance the standing of the college and reach out to the community. Dustin Hoffman, who took his first classes in drama at SMC, chaired the artistic advisory board and led the fundraising.

The Broad Stage was designed from the inside out. Long before the

exterior was finalized, Zecchetto worked with acousticians Ron McKay and Chris Jaffe of Jaffe Holden to shape the auditorium. Convex baffles of hard plaster and carved mahogany arch inwards within a cube of space, emerging as a wooden wedge above the masonry walls. The 50-foot height of the volume allows the sound to resonate, and the baffles direct it to the fan of orchestra seats, shallow balcony, and stage boxes to either side. Voices require no amplification, and sound is dampened by drawing fabric drapes behind sliding screens of perforated wood. Sounding boards can be raised and lowered above the proscenium, and two more conceal the lighting gantries. As in Disney Hall, function generates beauty, and the drama begins before the curtains part. From the back of the auditorium the rounded wood prows and angled white stucco planes that frame the stage resemble yachts in full sail, with the stage boxes as suspended dinghies. The planes are layered and backlit, presenting constantly shifting perspectives and turning the auditorium into a habitable sculpture. The performers have the best view of all; from the edge of the stage all the elements form a single symmetrical composition as in an 18<sup>th</sup>-century European court theater.

There's a similar, though subtler, shift of expressive forms as you walk around the exterior. Zecchetto placed the theater to the north of the site, linking it to a former elementary

school he remodeled to serve as classrooms, offices, rehearsal spaces, and a 99-seat black box theater. Parking is wrapped around three sides, though this may eventually be put underground so that the open space can be landscaped as a public plaza. A mahogany canopy extends from the southwest corner to define the entry and protect an outdoor gathering place. The upper level is fully glazed above a broad band of dark basaltic stone that clads the inner and outer sides of the concrete frame. The iron-free glass serves as a welcoming lantern at night and reveals the tapered wood enclosure of the auditorium. The two-level lobby acts as a sound and thermal buffer, and is naturally cooled by ocean breezes that are drawn in from the west and evacuated through a ceiling compressor to the east. Angled hoods conceal mechanical services on the west side and are modeled by sunlight.

The site is owned by the State of California, sparing the theater the tortuous city design review that blocks adventurous architecture in Santa Monica, and the context is banal, with a tire store and generic apartment buildings to either side. However, SMC wanted to be a good neighbor and responded to local residents' concerns about increased traffic by scaling back the original plan for 750 seats. That reduced the cost of construction (estimated at \$45 million) and potential income, but enhanced the artistic experience. **MICHAEL WEBB**

### AT DEADLINE

#### HOORAY FOR HOLLYHOCK

The city of Los Angeles will receive \$1.9 million in state funding to restore Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House in Barnsdall Art Park. The national historic landmark in Los Feliz was built from 1919 to 1921. It was partially restored after undergoing damage from the 1994 Northridge earthquake. The funding will be used to complete and expand on that work, city officials said. Project Restore, a city agency, will oversee the renovation, which is expected to be completed in 2012.

#### LA COUNTY JOINS GREEN PARADE

LA County passed its green building ordinance in August at the Regional Planning Commission. It is actually

three ordinances; one for green building (requiring LEED for buildings over 10,000 square feet, and all new green standards for all development), one for drought tolerant landscaping (limiting turf and promoting native species and rain gardens), and Low Impact Development (which requires all stormwater to be managed on site for new developments).

#### MORPHOSIS GETS MORE WORK

With his Cooper Union Academic Building nearing completion in New York City, Thom Mayne has been selected to design yet another educational facility: the permanent home for Emerson College's Los Angeles Center. The Boston-based institution has maintained an LA-based entertainment-focused program for 20

years. Its approximately 95 students currently take classes in a rented Burbank space and live in the nearby Oakwood Apartments.

#### PLANNING COUP

On August 30, the California Senate passed SB 375. The bill, introduced by State Senator Darrell Steinberg, aims to reduce commute times and greenhouse gas emissions by discouraging approval of distant subdivision developments, studying traffic, and funding public transportation. At press time the bill was scheduled to go before Governor Schwarzenegger for final approval.

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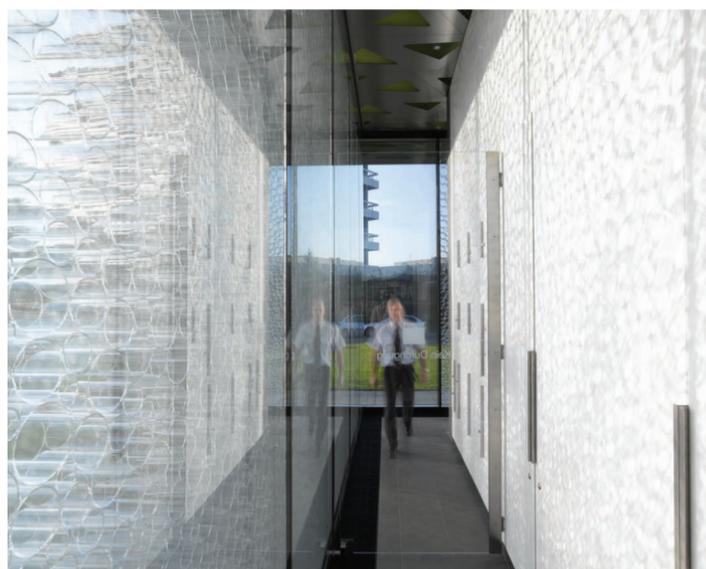


## glass dynamics

IF THE FUNDAMENTALS OF GLASS HAVEN'T CHANGED MUCH OVER THE LAST MILLENNIUM, THE WAY ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS ARE USING IT TODAY MOST CERTAINLY HAS. FOR OUR ANNUAL GLASS REPORT, AN SPOKE TO MATERIALS SCIENTISTS AND MANUFACTURERS PUSHING THE LIMITS OF ITS APPLICATIONS, AND FOUND TECHNOLOGICALLY DYNAMIC PROJECTS AROUND THE WORLD, FROM ENVIRONMENTALLY EFFICIENT LAMINATES AND POLYCRYSTALLINE SOLAR CELLS TO INNOVATIVE STRUCTURAL SAFETY GLASS AND LO-TECH VINYL FILM SUNSCREENS.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 17, 2008

TRUMPF GATEHOUSE  
DITZINGEN,  
GERMANY  
BARKOW LEIBINGER  
ARCHITECTS  
WITH  
WERNER SOBEK



DAVID FRANCK

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF  
GLASS' TWO-WAY STREET

## In The Clear

BY AARON SEWARD

The great pursuit in glass architecture, and thus the technology that feeds it, is and has been for energy efficiency. More specifically, it is the elusive quest to design the most transparent building possible while at the same time mitigating heat gain and glare delivered by the sun. The failure thus far to achieve a balance between fulfilling this architectural ideal and creating an environmentally responsible and comfortable built environment was aptly illustrated by the recent backlash against glass condos. *The Wall Street Journal* ran an article this August chronicling

a spate of horror stories from residents who didn't anticipate what it means to live in a glass house at the beginning of the new millennium. The harrowing details included faded furniture, the impossibility of watching television during the day, peeping Toms ogling daughters, Windex sizzling to an impossible-to-remove gunk, and cooling systems unable to compensate for the unfettered glory of the sun.

Aside from these issues of individual comfort and livability, it seems clear that, when looking at how we might **continued on page 26**

Inside the Gatehouse, Plexiglas tubes are sandwiched between a double facade of non-bearing low-emission float glass (right) that softens light entering from without and bounces light from within at night, making the building glow (left). A 60-foot cantilever steel canopy (top) is laser-cut into a honeycombed pattern lit with LED lights. Previous page: Thomas Phifer and Partners' 1099 New York Avenue.

Trumpf, one of the world's leading manufacturers of machine and laser tools, won't open its 90,000-square-foot expansion in Ditzingen, Germany until mid-2009, but one can get a sense of what's to come from the spectacular Gatehouse, which was designed by Barkow Leibinger Architects of Berlin and opened on the Trumpf campus in late 2007.

A honeycombed membrane of stainless steel cantilevers 60 feet over and floats above a 400-square-foot rectangular glass box that houses a reception and waiting area. The roof is a pattern of triangles that compress based on the changing structural forces over its surface. The roof, which was fabricated in-house at Trumpf, is an interesting formal experiment and a celebration of Trumpf's advanced laser technology, but it is the Miesian glass box beneath that endows the sizeable overhang with its dramatic effect.

With engineering consultant Werner Sobek and manufacturer Glaszentrum Schweikert, Barkow Leibinger developed a 12-inch double non-bearing facade of two layers of low-emission float glass that gives the impression that the planar roof hovers in thin air. However, as Frank Barkow explains, the dynamic roof sits on a core of four columns inside the box while connected to the glass facade by an accordion-shaped rubber gasket that was developed by the team of engineers and architects specifically for this pavilion. Between the two glass surfaces of the facade, the architects stacked Plexiglas tubes of varying diameter, which provide subtle shading to the interiors. The team developed a custom detail of dark Plexiglas structural posts that run vertically between the glass sandwich panels, which are stronger than glass and make the whole facade read as a transparent plane. The interior glass panel is operable to allow for the occasional cleaning of the tubes, which are glued together for easy access. Together, the double facade, the tubes, and the screens lower the cooling costs of the pavilion. It is at night, when the honeycomb roof is lit by LED lights and when the Plexiglas tubes trap the light from the interiors between the layers of glass in an eerie-looking blurry effect, that the Gatehouse appears ready to drift off in a world of its own.

**DAVID VAN DER LEER IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

XICUI  
ENTERTAINMENT  
COMPLEX  
BEIJING, CHINA  
SIMONE GIOSTRA  
& PARTNERS  
WITH ARUP



The buildings designed for the Beijing Olympics hardly lacked in spectacle, but New York architect Simone Giostra created one that is aimed more toward the gallery crowd than gym-goers. The 24,000-square-foot media wall called Greenpix, which covers the entire facade of the six-story Xicui Entertainment Complex, is an all-glass facade that collects solar energy during the day and gives off tantalizing patterns of vibrant colors at night. Unlike many similar (though smaller) media walls, typically used for display advertising, this one was created to showcase video works. For its opening, Greenpix's lead curator Luis Gui worked with Shanghai-based curator Defne Ayas, who commissioned pieces by artists Aaijiao and Shi Chieh Huang of China, and Varara Shavrova of Russia.

However inspiring it may be from an aesthetic perspective, it is the system's sustainability that is of most interest to Giostra, who developed the wall in collaboration with Arup. Together with two German glass manufacturers, Schueco and Sunways, they created a technology to laminate polycrystalline solar cells into glass panels. "It is the most radical example of photovoltaic technology applied to an entire building envelope," said Giostra. The solar panels have been embedded in the glass panels, some of which are set at an angle, in a pattern of varying density that depend on the nature of the spaces inside and their requirements for daylight. These solar cells provide energy to the roughly 2,300 LED light points, which are intentionally distributed at a lower resolution than generally used for media walls, contributing to the wall's special abstract quality.

The standard media wall is designed to have an even light intensity throughout the course of a day, but the brightness of Greenpix's diodes depends on the weather. After a gray day the facade glows subtly at night, whereas a sunny day results in a feast of color. Arup tested over 200 different full-scale prototypes on site in Beijing for more than a year to see what combinations of interlayer, treatments, thickness, solar cells, and textures provided the highest possible performance. The combination they finally installed is projected to maintain 80 percent of its nominal efficiency for the next two decades, during which the wall is expected to become a platform for site specific works made by future generations of video artists.

DVDL



COURTESY SIMONE GIOSTRA/ARUP/ROGUCU

Polycrystalline solar cells embedded in glass panels, some set at angles to capture more light (top), channel energy to 2,292 LED points of light. Depending on the weather and the amount of light gathered during the day, the façade radiates from a subtle glow (below, right) to an intense Roarshalk of color (below, left) at night.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 17, 2008



1099 NEW YORK AVENUE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
THOMAS PHIFER  
AND PARTNERS



SCOTT FRANCES

With its strict height limits and bevy of bureaucratic institutions, the District of Columbia has long favored architectural harmony and conformity over innovative design. How refreshing, then, to see a commonplace glass-box office building raise the bar for design in the Capital without disrupting the city's intended uniformity.

Designed by New York-based Thomas Phifer and Partners, 1099 New York Avenue is an eleven-story, 173,000-square-foot office building, developed by Tishman Speyer, with a crystalline facade that expresses its materiality and, thanks to meticulous detailing, offers what Phifer calls a subtle "sense of surprise." "Jerry Speyer wanted a special building with a unique skin," said Phifer, "and he wanted to do it in D.C." On first glance 1099 might look like a particularly well wrought version of the ultra-glassy office building—at times perfectly transparent, at others so reflective as to nearly disappear—such as SOM's World Trade Center Seven. As you get closer, however, you see that rather than striving for a pure planar surface, Phifer has created something, literally, more multifaceted.

Rather than using a curtain wall system, Phifer opted for a custom window wall over the building's thin concrete frame (Washington's height limits make ultra thin floor plates a must). Each pane of glass is tilted five inches in both plan and section, giving the building a sense of depth and shimmer. "We wanted it to be a detail, rather than a gesture," Phifer said. "If it had been a big gesture, that would give away the sense of surprise." A cast stainless steel clip, visible from below, supports the pane. "The clip expresses the weight of the panes." The five-inch deep by eight-inch long clips also add to the texture of the facades.

The large twelve-and-a-half-foot long by five-and-a-half-foot wide low-emission Viracon panes function like shingles, allowing water to run down and drip off the facades during storms. At ground level, an installation by artist Matthew Ritchie helps enliven the streetscape. The building, which follows the contour of the lot where the Washington grid is bisected by a diagonal avenue, responds to its site, respecting its context while showing that even a small speculative office building, with the right attention to detailing, can reflect higher ambitions.

**ALAN G. BRAKE IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR AT AN.**

**IN THE CLEAR** continued from page 24 reduce our overall carbon footprint, glass (our most ubiquitous contemporary building material) is a good place to start. A study issued by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), a member of the national laboratory system supported by the U.S. Department of Energy, estimates that windows are responsible for 2.15 quadrillion BTUs of heating energy consumption and 1.48 quadrillion BTUs of cooling energy consumption within the United States annually, or 30 percent of building electrical loads

nationwide. The same study estimates that an overnight replacement of the nation's window stock with existing high-insulating glass technologies, such as low-emittance coatings and multi-pane units, would result in energy savings of approximately 1.2 quadrillion BTUs, while a similar upgrade to future technologies, currently under research and development at LBNL, could save a potential 3.9 quadrillion BTUs.

Oddly enough, these future technologies seek to improve energy ratings by taking advantage of the

very quality that seems to be glass' greatest weakness: its transmissiveness. "Glass is one of the few building materials out there that allows energy to flow both ways at the same time," said Chris Barry, technical director at glass manufacturer Pilkington. "In the summer that can be beneficial by allowing heat to escape the interior, while in the winter it lets in the sun's warmth." Ever since the oil embargo of the 1970s, when energy costs went through the roof, the industry has been trying to make glass walls behave more **continued on page 28**

The lobby at 1099 New York Avenue features a glass wall installation (top) by New York-based British artist Matthew Ritchie. A custom curtain wall on a concrete frame consists of glass shingles (right) held with cast stainless steel clips that animate the overall building (left).

CHAPELLE DES  
DIACONESSES  
VERSAILLES,  
FRANCE  
MARC ROLINET



In Versailles, in a park dotted with trees, sits the Chapelle des Diaconesses, a cocoon of superimposed pine wood strips inside a triangular glass structure. The small chapel, which opened to the public in 2007, replaced a large cloth tent that the Protestant Community of the Deaconesses used over a period of 20 years for its largest ceremonies. French architect Marc Rolinet's modern interpretation of religious architecture subtly refers to this former place of worship. The sisters of the parish requested a chapel that would be firmly rooted in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that "offers modern people an interior that combines beauty, intimacy, and celebration, and that invites them to reflect and find peace."

Rolinet set out to design a lightweight glass structure that follows the hilly topography of the site and provides an arcade between the wood and glass that is now used for quiet reflection. The envelope, made out of laminated safety glass with a structural interlayer by DuPont and manufactured by Saint-Gobain, protects the wooden chapel from the weather and forms an optimal acoustic barrier to the railroad station close by. Stronger than conventional laminating materials, the interlayers help create safety glass that protects against bigger storms, larger impacts, and more powerful blasts. The layers become an engineered component within the glass, holding more weight, so the glass can serve as a more active structural element in the building envelope. And they do all this while increasing framing system design freedom and improving long-term weather resistance. Marc Rolinet stated, "The structural calculations performed by DuPont and Saint-Gobain Glass enabled us to reduce the glass thickness, increase the pitch, and lighten the supporting structure." Without the structural interlayer, the glass would have been thicker—and therefore more expensive. It also allowed for a direct integration of the fixing devices into the laminated inner glass layers. The structure spans a large distance, and allows for a minimal number of steel girders. But in the end it was the mirror-like effect that convinced Rolinet to use this material instead of conventional laminated glass—an effect that now at certain points of the day allows for a spectacular reflection of the charming park surrounding the chapel. **DVDL**

M. MOULINET/POLKOP/COURTESY ROLINET & ASSOCIÉS



The chapel is enclosed within a lightweight glass structure (left) made of a DuPont SentryGlass Plus structural interlayer laminated with SGG Stadip safety glass from Saint-Gobain Glass. The interior of the chapel and the overall triangular shape (left) retain the same raw but intimate sensibility of the original tent structure. The interior chapel (above) is an upturned wooden shell clad in pine strips individually steam-curved on site.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 17, 2008

LOFTS @ 655 6<sup>TH</sup>  
SAN DIEGO  
PUBLIC

JIM BRADY

**IN THE CLEAR** continued from page 26 like brick walls in terms of insulation values. This has been successful to the point that today people who have installed low-e solutions in their homes are complaining that when they sit in their breakfast nook in the morning they feel cold. The alternative to this approach is what is commonly known as “smart glass” or “switchable glazing,” in other words, a glass unit whose opacity or reflectiveness can be altered to deflect or transmit more or less of the sun’s energy, thus creating a dynamic barrier that can be optimally tailored to environmental conditions as they change throughout the day or the year.

Smart glass has been developed in a number of varieties, including polymer dispersed liquid crystal, suspended particle, and electrochromic devices. Liquid crystal glass has become popular for privacy screening (it was famously used in Rem Koolhaas’ Prada stores), but it has no energy-saving benefits. Basically, two layers of glass sandwich transparent electrical conductors enveloping a thin layer of liquid crystal droplets. When in the “off” position, the liquid crystals scatter light, giving the unit a milky white appearance, but when an electrical current is applied the crystals align according to the electric field and assume a transparent state. The change between these two states is

instantaneous and there is no middle ground between them.

Suspended particle glass is almost identical in its assembly, except that microscopic rod-like particles, rather than liquid crystals, float in a fluid between the conducting and glass layers. Without an electrical current, the rods fall into random organizations and tend to absorb light, whereas when a current is applied they align to allow light to pass through. Unlike liquid crystal, suspended particle devices can be dimmed to allow more or less light and heat to pass through.

Both of these systems require a small but constant electrical current to remain transparent, while the third system, electrochromic, requires a current to affect the change in transparency, but once that change takes place the current is no longer needed. This system is currently the focus of most smart glass research at LBNL. The system works by passing a burst charge through several microscopically thin layers on the glass surface, activating a layer of tungsten oxide and causing it to turn from clear to dark. The reverse change takes place when the charge is passed the opposite way. A mirror system has also been developed that transitions from clear to reflective. Electrochromic systems remain transparent across their switching range—between approximately

five and 80 percent transmittance—and can be modulated to any intermediate state.

According to Eleanor Lee, a building technology expert at LBNL, electrochromic glass is on the cusp of being ready for large-scale use, but there are still several impediments. “It’s an emerging technology,” said Lee, “people don’t know about it, it costs more than available systems, and there are many unknowns.” The building industry is notoriously sheepish about using new materials, as the cost of a major failure could be ruinous, but what the technology needs to get off the ground is exactly the type of investment that a large project would provide. Lee pointed out the New York Times Building, which significantly boosted the research and development of external and motorized shading systems. “Manufacturers are willing to do a big project,” she said. “That amount of money would give them the start up cost to bring in the people to engineer the product.”

Another sticking point, of course, lies with the architectural leadership, who will have to decide whether or not they’re willing to allow the external aspect of their buildings to be tossed about willy-nilly by the whimsy of occupants and the demands of the passing sun.

**AARON SEWARD IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR AT AN.**

Lofts @ 655 6<sup>th</sup>, a seven-story, mixed-use project that opened last December on the edge of San Diego’s East Village and Gaslamp districts, uses an innovative glass system to distinguish what is a fairly simple structure from the city’s many other new residential buildings.

The project is one of the few new rental properties in a city awash in high-end condos. In order to save money, maximize space, and create a more authentic loft-like ambience than the traditional configurations that are dressed up to look like lofts, and which are so so common today in San Diego, local firm Public built a huge concrete box at the core of the 106-unit building. The 100,000-square-foot structure then steps down to the east to address the neighborhood.

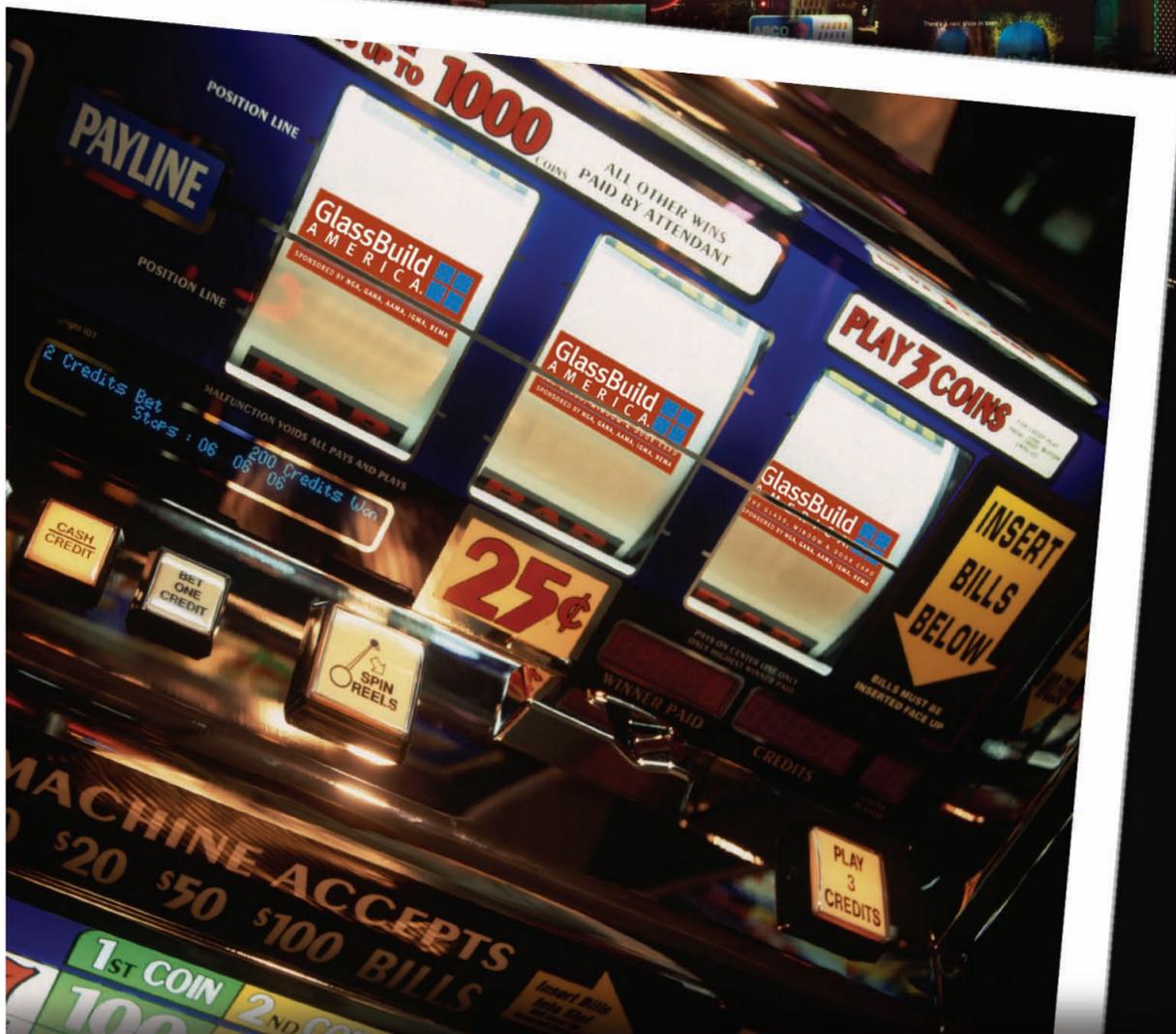
The infill glazing system cladding the core is made up of a varied pattern of small and large glazed squares. All are very transparent, but highly energy-efficient, with a U-value of .41. To further animate the facade, Public hung an irregularly spaced clear tempered glass screen system over the project’s west-facing balconies. The screen is fitted with a perforated vinyl film—similar to the films used to create many billboards—that displays a sepia-toned photo-abstract of live oak trees, created by photographer Philipp Scholz Rittermann. Not only does the screen add complexity to the building, but its shading helped the building pass its state-mandated requirements for solar gain.

When the film needs to be replaced in about five years, the firm hopes the developer will hold a call for entries to find a new artist, thus ensuring a new look for the building. “Our only agreement with the city is that the new image not be distasteful or commercial,” said firm principal James Gates. The building has been a hit, and is fully leased, despite being completed just prior to the recent economic doldrums. “We’re very proud of what we were able to get for the money,” said Gates.

**SAM LUBELL IS AN’S CALIFORNIA EDITOR.**

The seven-story building (above) containing 106 rental lofts is clad in a patterned system of large and small glass panels—the Starline 9000 series with 6mm clear and Guardian SN68 with 4mm clear—that are both highly transparent and energy efficient, with a fenestration U-value of .41.

# The Winning Combination



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## SEPTEMBER

WEDNESDAY 24

## FILM

**The Art & Science of Renzo Piano**6:00 p.m.  
San Francisco Main Library  
Koret Auditorium  
100 Larkin St.,  
San Francisco  
www.aiaf.org

THURSDAY 25

## LECTURE

**Leo Marmol**6:00 p.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St., San Francisco  
www.aiaf.org

## TRADE SHOW

**West Coast Green**Through September 28  
San Jose McEnery  
Convention Center  
408 Almaden Blvd., San Jose  
www.westcoastgreen.com

## FILM

**ID Film Festival**Through September 27  
Japanese American National  
Museum  
369 East 1st St., Los Angeles  
www.janm.org

FRIDAY 26

## SYMPOSIUM

**Sustainable****Communities 2008****Sim Van der Ryn,  
Paul Hawken,  
Jerry Brown, et al.**  
8:30 a.m.  
Westin St. Francis  
335 Powell St.,  
San Francisco  
cnu.org/  
sustainablecommunities08

## EVENT

**Intersections of****Sound and Space**6:45 p.m.  
Fowler Museum of Art  
308 Charles East Young Dr.,  
Los Angeles  
www.fowler.ucla.edu

SATURDAY 27

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Enrique Chagoya****Borderlandia**  
Palm Springs Art Museum  
101 Museum Dr.,  
Palm Springs  
www.psmuseum.org

## EVENT

**California Academy of****Sciences Grand Opening**Golden Gate Park  
55 Music Concourse Dr.,  
San Francisco  
www.calacademy.org

## WITH THE KIDS

**Sustainable Design for Kids**11:00 a.m.  
Marin County Day School  
5221 Paradise Dr.,  
Corte Madera  
www.aiaf.org

SUNDAY 28

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Hammer Projects:****Nathalie Djurberg**The Hammer Museum  
10899 Wilshire Blvd.,  
Los Angeles  
www.hammer.ucla.edu

## EVENT

**Grand Avenue Festival**11:00 a.m.  
Grand Ave., Los Angeles  
www.grandavenuefestival.net

TUESDAY 30

## LECTURE

**Building Green in San****Francisco: New Incentives****and New Requirements**6:00 p.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St., San Francisco  
www.aiaf.org

## OCTOBER

WEDNESDAY 1

## LECTURE

**Lawrence Scarpa****Art, Architecture and****Landscape: The Area Where****Overlapping Systems and****Communities Converge**6:00 p.m.  
Gin D. Wong, FAIA  
Conference Center  
Harris Hall, University Park  
arch.usc.edu

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Mick Reinman****Paint & Passion**Artamo Gallery  
11 West Anapamu St.,  
Santa Barbara  
www.artamogallery.com

THURSDAY 2

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Wade Hoefler**Elins Eagles-Smith Gallery  
49 Geary St., San Francisco  
www.eesgallery.com

Susannah Bettag

**Things You Shouldn't See**Frey Norris Gallery Annex  
456 Geary St., San Francisco  
www.freynorris.com

SATURDAY 4

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**20 Years Ago Today:****Supporting Individual****Artists in L.A.**Japanese American National  
Museum  
369 East 1st St., Los Angeles  
www.janm.org

L.A. PAINT

Oakland Museum of California  
1000 Oak St., Oakland  
www.museumca.org

Martin Kersels

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

SUNDAY 5

## LECTURE

**Sarah McPhee****Bernini's Beloved:****A Portrait of Costanza**4:00 p.m.  
The J. Paul Getty Center  
1200 Getty Center Dr.,  
Los Angeles  
www.getty.edu

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Faces Seen,****Hearts Unknown:****The Human Landscape of****Mexican Migration**Fowler Museum of Art  
308 Charles East Young Dr.,  
Los Angeles  
www.fowler.ucla.edu

MONDAY 6

## TRADE SHOW

**GlassBuild America**Through October 8  
Las Vegas Convention Center  
3150 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas  
www.glassbuildamerica.com

SATURDAY 11

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Angela Strassheim**Monterey Museum of Art  
MMA La Mirada  
720 Via Mirada, Monterey  
www.montereyart.org

Mark Dean Veca

**Phantasmagoria**Otis College of  
Arts and Design  
Ben Maltz Gallery  
9045 Lincoln Blvd.,  
Los Angeles  
www.otis.edu

SUNDAY 12

## EVENT

**2008 Art & Architecture Tour**10:00 a.m.  
Orange County  
Museum of Art  
850 San Clemente Dr.,  
Newport Beach  
www.ocma.net

TUESDAY 14

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Dialogue Among Giants:****Carleton Watkins and the****Rise of Photography in****California**The J. Paul Getty Center  
1200 Getty Center Dr.,  
Los Angeles  
www.getty.edu

WEDNESDAY 15

## EVENT

**MOBIUS LA**Through October 18  
Pacific Design Center  
8687 Melrose Ave.,  
West Hollywood  
www.mobiusla.com

THURSDAY 16

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Cunningham, Weston &****Adams: Modern Photography****at the Museum**Monterey Museum of Art  
MMA Pacific Street  
558 Pacific Street, Monterey  
www.montereyart.org

## FILM

**Mixed Feelings:****San Diego/Tijuana**(Phillip Rodriguez, 2002),  
30 min.  
7:00 p.m.Fowler Museum of Art  
308 Charles East Young Dr.,  
Los Angeles  
www.fowler.ucla.edu

SATURDAY 18

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**A "New and Native" Beauty:****The Art and Craft of****Greene & Greene**The Huntington Library, Arts  
Collections, and Botanical  
Gardens  
1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino  
www.huntington.org

Marco Brambilla

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

Anthony Goicolea

Sandroni.Rey  
2762 South La Cienega Blvd.  
www.sandronirey.com

THURSDAY 23

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Canstruction L.A.**The Water Garden  
2425 Olympic Blvd.,  
Santa Monica  
www.canstructionla.com

FRIDAY 24

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Oyler Wu Collaborative**SCI-Arc  
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles  
www.sciarc.edu

## EVENT

**Neutra House Project Event**Through October 25  
The Neutra House Project,  
Los Altos  
www.neutrahouse.org

SATURDAY 25

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Brian Chippendale,****Ajit Chauhan, et al.****At Home**Lincart  
1632 C Market St.,  
San Francisco  
www.lincart.com

Luke Smalley

**Exercise at Home**David Gallery  
5792 West Washington Blvd.,  
Culver City  
www.davidgallery.net

SUNDAY 26

## EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**2008 California Biennial**Orange County  
Museum of Art  
850 San Clemente Dr.,  
Newport Beach  
www.ocma.net

Hammer Projects:

**Aaron Curry**The Hammer Museum  
10899 Wilshire Blvd.,  
Los Angeles  
www.hammer.ucla.edu

MONDAY 27

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Eric Beltz****Histroy**Acune-Hansen Gallery  
427 Bernanrd St.,  
Los Angeles  
www.ahgallery.com

THURSDAY 30

## LECTURE

**Mark Klett****Stillness and Restlessness:****Watkins, Muybridge, and****Landscape Photography in****19th-Century California**7:00 p.m.  
The J. Paul Getty Center  
1200 Getty Center Dr.,  
Los Angeles  
www.getty.edu

## EXHIBITION OPENING

**Jim Dine: Poet Singing****(The Flowering Sheets)**The J. Paul Getty Villa  
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## INTENTIONS

The Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey  
Zuazua y Jardón S/N, Centro, Monterrey, Nuevo León,  
México  
Through October 26

In their latest exhibition The Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey examines the work of award-winning Mexican architect Enrique Norton and his firm TEN Arquitectos. Founded by Norton in 1986, TEN Arquitectos characterizes itself with an inclination towards modernism, yet subtly referencing tradition in their design, both in small-scale projects such as furniture designs to entire living, commercial and urban spaces. *inTENtions* explores how the typology of "the box," favored by modern architecture, has continually been transformed to adapt itself to multiple and diverse situations. Through a series of different projects grouped by typology, the firms' documents demonstrate the way they vary the typical notion of the box for each new commission. A total of thirty-five projects, including the National Laboratory of Genomics (pictured), presented through various stages of development are displayed and through maquettes, photographs, plans, renderings, vectors, and videos of the processes and variations the firm reveals how it goes through with each new project. *inTENtions* is on view through October 26.

SCANDINAVIAN MODERNISM:  
IN PURSUIT OF FUNCTION AND BEAUTYSan Francisco Airport Museums  
San Francisco International Airport Terminals  
Through October 26

With an emphasis on softer, more organic forms, natural materials, and fine craftsmanship, *Scandinavian Modernism* presents a vast array of furniture and objects that emerged from Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark from the late 1920s through the mid-1960s. Inspired by a larger social imperative than mere visual aesthetics, these designs were intended to enhance the enjoyment of everyday life by means of good design and affordability. More than 50 different pieces of furniture, ceramics, glass, and lighting designed by renowned Scandinavian modernists are on display, including Poul Henningsen's avant-garde PH lamp, 1927-28; Bruno Mathsson's bentwood Pernilla lounge chair, 1933-36; Arne Jacobsen's popular and highly regarded Ant chair, 1951 (pictured, right) and Series 7 chair, 1955; Hans Wegner's functional and elegant Valet chair, 1953 (pictured, left); and glass works by Nils Landberg and Ingeborg Lundin.

## CRAFTY MEN

Living Beautifully: Greene & Greene in Pasadena  
Pasadena Museum of History  
Through January 4, 2009



Charles Greene (far left) bicycling with friends.

This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gamble House, the Pasadena mansion known as the greatest Craftsman home ever built. To celebrate the house and the men who designed it, the Pasadena Museum of History, which is located catercorner from the Gamble, has installed a one-room exhibition about the architects Charles and Henry Greene. The show—which will be joined later this year by a photography exhibit at the Pasadena Museum of California Art and a major retrospective at the Huntington—delves into the upbringing and lives of the close-knit brothers, shedding light on the genius of their homes. The names Greene and Greene are so closely entwined with the buildings they designed that the men who elevated the humble bungalow into high art have all but disappeared into the work. The genuine value of this exhibit is the pair become individuals again, men of differing temperaments, talents, and pursuits. What emerges is a portrait of collaborators; Charles, more the artist than draftsman, Henry, a true builder with a love for making things.

The exhibition consists of photographs, correspondence, furniture, sketch books, shop drawings, hand tools, and dozens of personal artifacts, which are arranged, by and large, chronologically. The brothers' biographies begin much the same. Born just **continued on page 27**

COURTESY PASADENA MUSEUM OF HISTORY



The Lingotto Flat Factory in Turin, completed in 1925 and rehabilitated by Renzo Piano in 1989.

COURTESY JOHN WILEY & SONS

## SAVING MODERNISM

Preservation of Modern Architecture  
Theodore H. M. Prudon  
John Wiley & Sons, \$99.00

What were the midcentury modernists thinking? What hubris convinced them to take so many chances on experimental building materials and techniques? How cruel of them, in retrospect, to leave us to repair their stingy inch-thick spreads of concrete over rebar, and their futile attempts to seal windowpanes with zip-able gaskets or asbestos caulk, and their neglecting to include any flashing at all.

Curing such lingering problems without spoiling the design's original look has preoccupied architect Theodore H. M. Prudon for

some three decades. A Dutch-born preservationist, he heads a Manhattan firm called Prudon & Partners, as well as the U.S. chapter of the activist group DOCOMOMO (Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites, and Neighborhoods of the Modern Movement). He has long taught at Columbia University's preservation program, and is the go-to quote guy for journalists covering modernist buildings under threat or freshly restored.

In the preface of this 577-page survey, footnoted over 1,100 times, Prudon humbly writes, "no attempt to be comprehensive is made." He then delves into some 30 case histories in eight countries. Scattered from Sydney (Jørn Utzon's opera house) to suburban Connecticut (Wallace Harrison's fish-shaped First Presbyterian Church in Stamford), the buildings were completed between 1925 (Giacomo Mattè Trucco's Fiat factory in Turin) and 1974 (Edward Durell Stone's Amoco tower in Chicago). All but half a dozen still serve their original purpose, but that doesn't mean they've held up terribly well. In fact, many of them have been under repair since the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Prudon briefly chronicles each design and construction process, then analyzes and evaluates changes made over the decades. He doesn't just dwell on the techie details—the definitions of drawn, plate, float, and spandrel glass; the kinds of condensation problems and stone failures that may be incurable—he also offers keen-eyed preservation critiques. He particularly admires restorers going to heroic lengths to save or reproduce difficult building parts. When

the 1928 Zonnestraal Sanatorium in the Netherlands was converted into a health center five years ago, for instance, the preservation team scrounged up replicas of the drawn-glass windows, though they are streaked, distorted, and prone to crack. Prudon also praises grassroots amateur efforts: The owners of 1940s porcelain-enamel prefab houses called Lustrons, he points out, trade with each other for salvaged panels. "Lustrons are now treated almost like vintage cars," he writes.

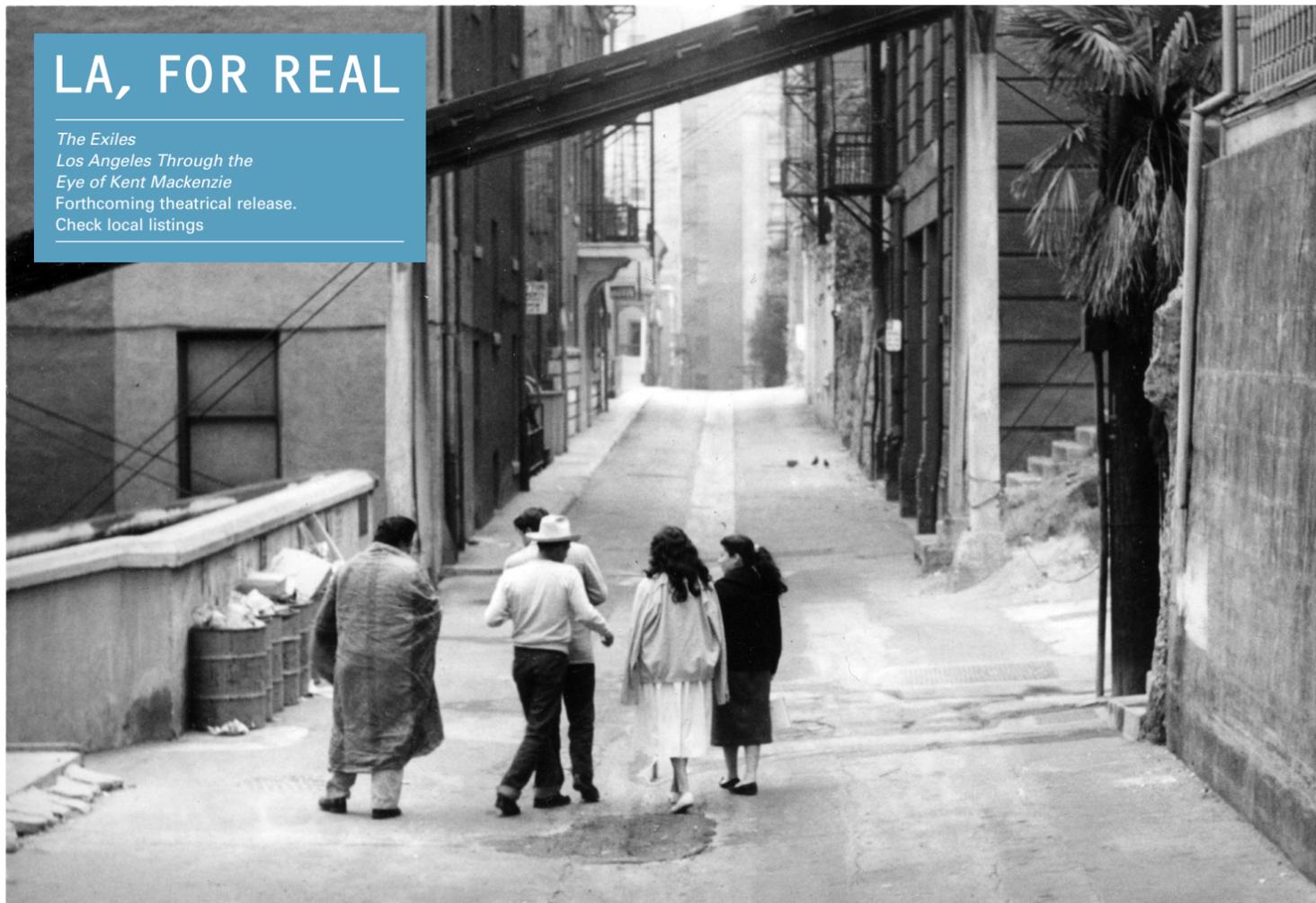
Wherever historic fabric has been disrespected, however, he doesn't mince words. "There appears to have been little or no discussion on material authenticity" during decades of restoration at Le Corbusier's 1931 Villa Savoye, he complains. He can even find fault with furniture arrangements at relatively well-kept landmarks like SOM's 1954 Manufacturers Hanover bank branch on Fifth Avenue: "File cabinets and chairs are often visible from the street, dominating the perception of the building and distorting the originally intended visual uniformity of the facade."

Yet he's willing to admit he might be proved wrong someday, since modernist preservation is still a fast-evolving field. He has no good answer yet for practitioners wondering how best to conserve decorative laminates and GFRPs: "Appropriate techniques and standards remain to be developed," he reports. And the jury's still out on the 1998 wholesale replacement of Lever House's corroding 1952 curtain wall—even though the original architect Gordon Bunshaft would likely **continued on page 26**

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

## LA, FOR REAL

*The Exiles*  
Los Angeles Through the  
Eye of Kent Mackenzie  
Forthcoming theatrical release.  
Check local listings



2008 MILESTONE FILM &amp; VIDEO

It used to be said that the real subject of Woody Allen's films was New York—framed through the lens of the great cinematographer Gordon Willis and the life of the comedic auteur. The same was never said of Los Angeles, no doubt because Hollywood was more interested in fiction than in fact. Turning a realistic, or even a poetic eye on the city might take a bit of the twinkle off the tinsel of Tinsel Town. Although Los Angeles was a frequent backdrop, in a sense the city was off-limits. And, while critics always have favorite renditions of the city, from *Sunset Boulevard* to *Blade Runner* to *Collateral*, none has captured the city as its central character.

The release of *The Exiles*, filmed in the late 1950s and released in 1961 by Kent Mackenzie, proves that Los Angeles has its celluloid poet—

one whose work has languished for nearly five decades and is only now being posthumously exhumed, restored, and celebrated. The restored version of *The Exiles* premiered in New York, in July. It has appeared since in screenings around the country (including a short stint in August at The Hammer Museum's Billy Wilder Theater), and is scheduled for a theatrical release early next year.

Mackenzie spent four years filming on Bunker Hill, the heights that once overlooked downtown Los Angeles. He followed his amateur actors/subjects through the streets, into the late-night bars and all-night movie houses, and through the Third Street tunnel that connected them to the world beyond downtown. He watched them in the hills of Elysian Park, documenting drum-

ming ceremonies whose rhythms seemed to waft across time and circumstance to the Great Plains, before the arrival of the White Man, and down, into the modern despair of living in a diaspora. In the glorious dark of a single night, Mackenzie, along with his cinematographer Erik Darstaad, illuminated the grit, the ennui, the Thunderbird-induced bluster of these men and women dancing along the margins and in the gutters.

Old Los Angeles is the setting, before the wrecking balls and graders and civic leaders sanitized the place. Its an ecology renowned LA historian Reyner Banham never thought of, and never could have guessed existed. This is Los Angeles in the raw, and disturbingly, refreshingly, unforgiving. And altogether urban.

The black-and-white film opens on a still of a five Native Americans, walking up an alley behind the ramshackle apartments that once lined the heights of Bunker Hill. The sun has just come up, and the three men and two women are heading toward the Sunshine Apartments after a night of carousing, boozing, fisticuffs, and dream-dancing—in an unforgettable scene shot at an empty lot, overlooking downtown, in Chavez Ravine, future home to the Los Angeles Dodgers. Just ahead, crossing above the alley, are the elevated tracks of Angel's Flight, the tiny funicular railway whose sad fate came to symbolize the transformation of Los Angeles from a twangy city of Dust Bowl refugees into a megalopolis of inscrutable dimensions.

The image captures a piece of

Down on their luck residents in the now largely unrecognizable Bunker Hill area.

Los Angeles as essential, and iconic, as Julius Shulman's (staged) snapshot of Case Study House No. 21. The narrative, of course, is entirely different. Here, there is no past, and certainly no future. There is only the oppressive present. The lives of these down-and-out Indians are entwined in the four-story apartment houses with crumbling brick and clapboard sidings and drooping iron fire escapes, and the alley with its overflowing dustbins and a plucky palm tree. They, and their buildings, are in a way synonymous. The disappearance of one meant the disappearance of the other. When the hilltop was shaved and flattened to clear the slums to make way, at first for nothing, and eventually for the cultural, civic, and business hub of the modern city, the area's authenticity evaporated. All of the life, and all of the memories of lives lived, were contained in those leaning doorways, rotten floorboards, and flophouse bedrooms. It was all razed.

*The Exiles*, then, is more than just a series of glimpses at buildings or streets or fictional characters placed among them. The movie hits upon the deepest meaning of architecture and the urban setting. Buildings are not solitary objects, meant to be ogled and photographed. They are expressions of the lives within and around them. The voiceover at the outset of *The Exiles* states that "What follows is the authentic account of 12 hours in the lives of a group of Indians who have come to Los Angeles, California." Those Indians, and the Los Angeles they came to, are indelibly printed on each frame of *The Exiles*. The unvarnished picture is a revelation of a disorderly, difficult condition, of the sort we prefer nowadays to plow under rather than embrace. Forty-seven years after it disappeared from view, Kent Mackenzie's film still resonates with the inner vitality of a city whose core was once, not that long ago, truly lived-in.

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

New York's Lincoln Center prior to its renovation by Diller Scofidio + Renfro.



COURTESY JOHN WILEY &amp; SONS

**SAVING MODERNISM** continued from page 25 have opted for the same solution. "Arguable but thorny," Prudon concludes.

For all his lively opinions and intriguing speculations, non-geeks may find the text slow going at times. Prudon has a tendency to repeat himself and to state the obvious: "The penetration of moisture can cause deterioration." Worse, the passive voice is much preferred by him: "Caused by lack of performance and the deterioration of the system and some of its component parts and further exacerbated by the unavailability of the original materials or shapes, each solution has to be resolved on a case-by-case basis."

Slog on, dear reader, and don't much mind the grainy black-and-white photos. Where else will you find so many resourceful suggestions for core-drilling new mechanicals

through 1960s concrete floor slabs, or substituting aggregate-coated epoxy for 1950s concrete window frames poured around stained glass? And for architects designing new from-scratch buildings, this book can serve as a helpful cautionary tale. "Our needs are both transitional and ephemeral, and the next change may occur more quickly than the last," Prudon warns. "Yesterday's sure thing is most likely tomorrow's obsolescence."

**EVE M. KAHN WRITES ABOUT ARCHITECTURE, PRESERVATION, AND DESIGN FOR PUBLICATIONS INCLUDING THE NEW YORK TIMES AND I.D.**

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**CRAFTY MEN** continued from page 25  
 15 months apart, Charles Sumner Greene (1868–1957) and Henry Mather Greene (1870–1954) were in some sense raised to be architects. In their late teens, they were sent to the Manual Training School of Washington University, in St. Louis, where the curriculum was a three year program of “carpentry, wood-turning, pattern-making, iron chipping and filing, forge-work, brazing and soldering, and the use of machine shop tools,” according to the exhibit text. To graduate, each student had to build an “actual machine...accompanied by a full set of the working drawings according to which the machine was made and the patterns used for the castings.”

This grounding in the practical arts, the exhibit makes plain, was the taproot of the Greene’s mastery of design. In the act of doing, their hands—and minds—were imbued with an intimate knowledge of materials. This first-hand and near-total knowledge of how to make things becomes visible in the furniture and drawings on display. Even something as basic as a bookshelf—two are included in the show, early pieces hand-made individually by each brother—is approached with the confident simplicity and elegance that would become their trademark.

The men studied architecture at MIT, then under the influence of the École des Beaux-Arts, and after stints with various Eastern firms, they followed their parents to

Pasadena. They arrived in the burgeoning city in August, 1893, and as a map from that year shows, Victorian architecture was all the rage. Within ten years, Greene and Greene would indelibly change that map, and the idea of life in Southern California.

The big picture that *Living Beautifully* sketches is not of architects as craftsmen but of architects whose understanding of craft was extended to a wider embrace of “the exotic nature of California as the western edge of a nation facing Asia,” as the show’s curator Bruce Smith notes. It is well known that Greene and Greene were part of the wider Arts and Crafts movement that took hold on American soil in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their inspiration was part William Morris, part Japan, but the result of Greene and Greene’s commitment to the honesty of materials and the beauty found in nature was nothing short of shredding the rectitude of the Victorian style, replacing stuffy formality with the fresh air drawn from the out-of-doors. This was both metaphor and fact.

The strands of these ideas are present throughout this exhibition. Seemingly little things, such as Charles’ mahogany box, with delicate hand-hammered copper scissor hinges, amplify the link between an architecture that expresses the yin and yang of the blazing sunshine and the deep shade of Valley Oaks and artistic workmanship. The natural surroundings—truly the ecology of southern California—are reinterpreted



Charles Greene house, 1908.

COURTESY PASADENA HISTORY MUSEUM

through craftsmanship. The hand of man is inseparable from the hand of nature.

Charles Greene had never wanted to be an architect. Late in life he wrote, “my father suggested that I enter an architect’s office. I had a feeling of keen disappointment. I wanted to be an artist.” In 1916, he abandoned the practice and moved his family to Carmel-by-the-Sea, on the California coast south of Monterey. By then, their practice was waning. Greene and Greene were largely forgotten. The new language of the southern California home they’d invented was eclipsed in an orgy of post World

War I Spanish Revivals, then Hollywood Regencies, and, ultimately, modernist post-and-beam houses.

*Living Beautifully* is a modest exhibit that requires a great deal of care in viewing. The show doesn’t have the visual punch that a gallery full of Greene and Greene furniture might. It isn’t likely that someone not already interested in their architecture is going to become a convert from this show. But that’s hardly the point. What this exhibition delivers is subtle connection between the brothers’ lives and the architecture they envisioned. **GREG GOLDIN**

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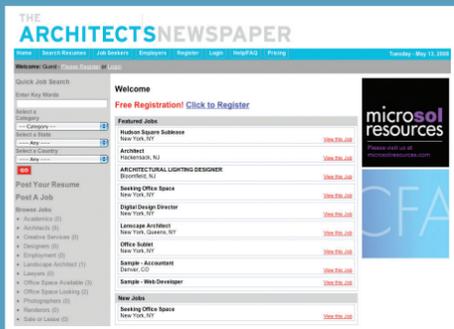


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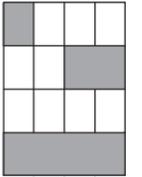
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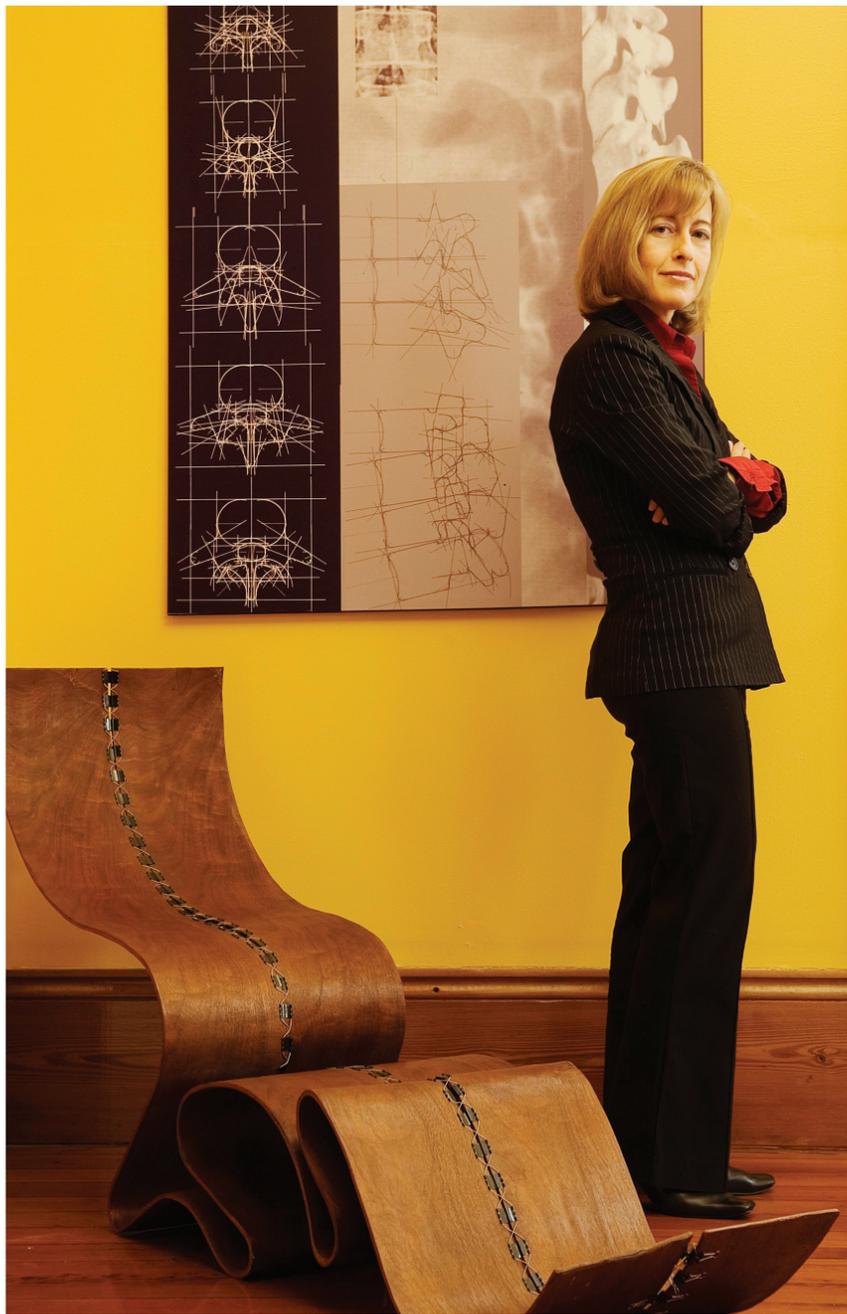
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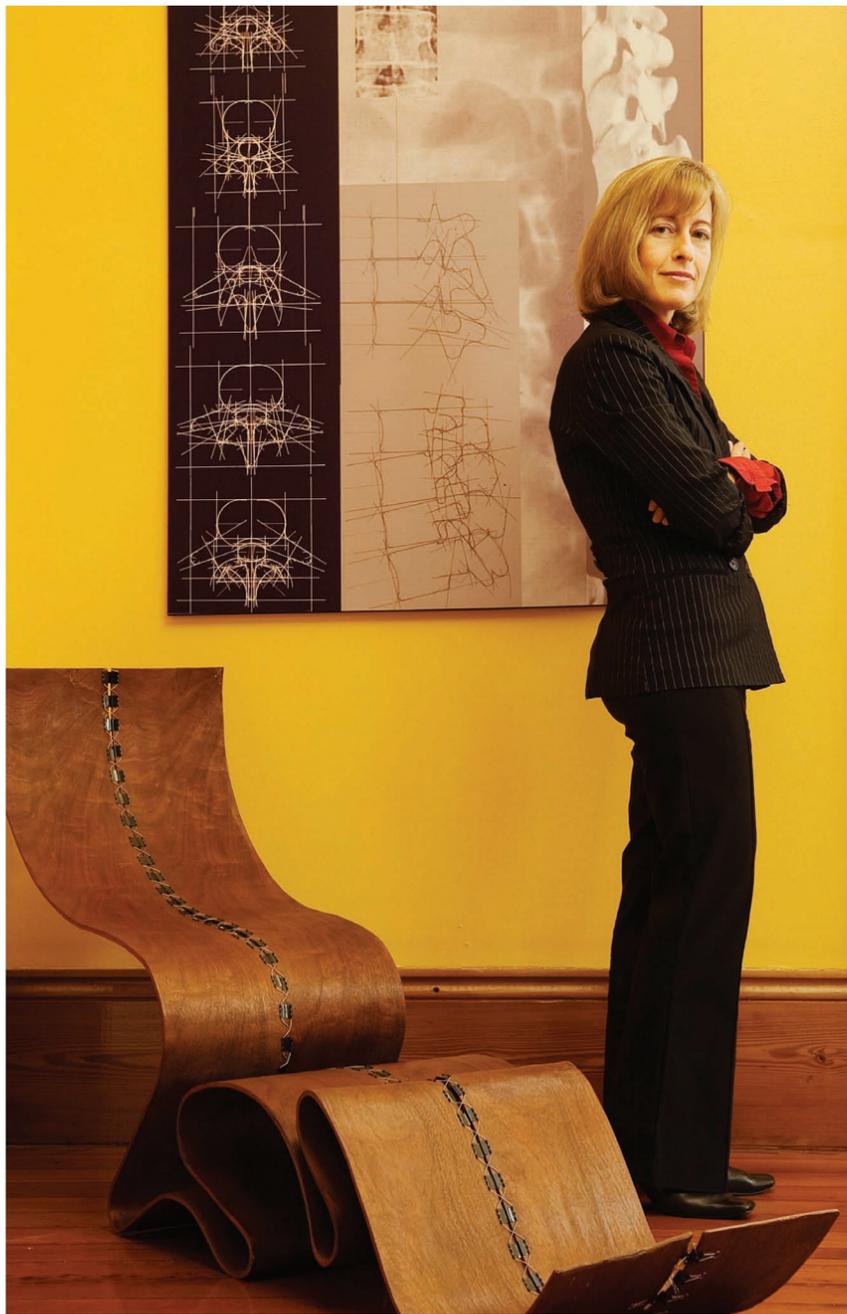
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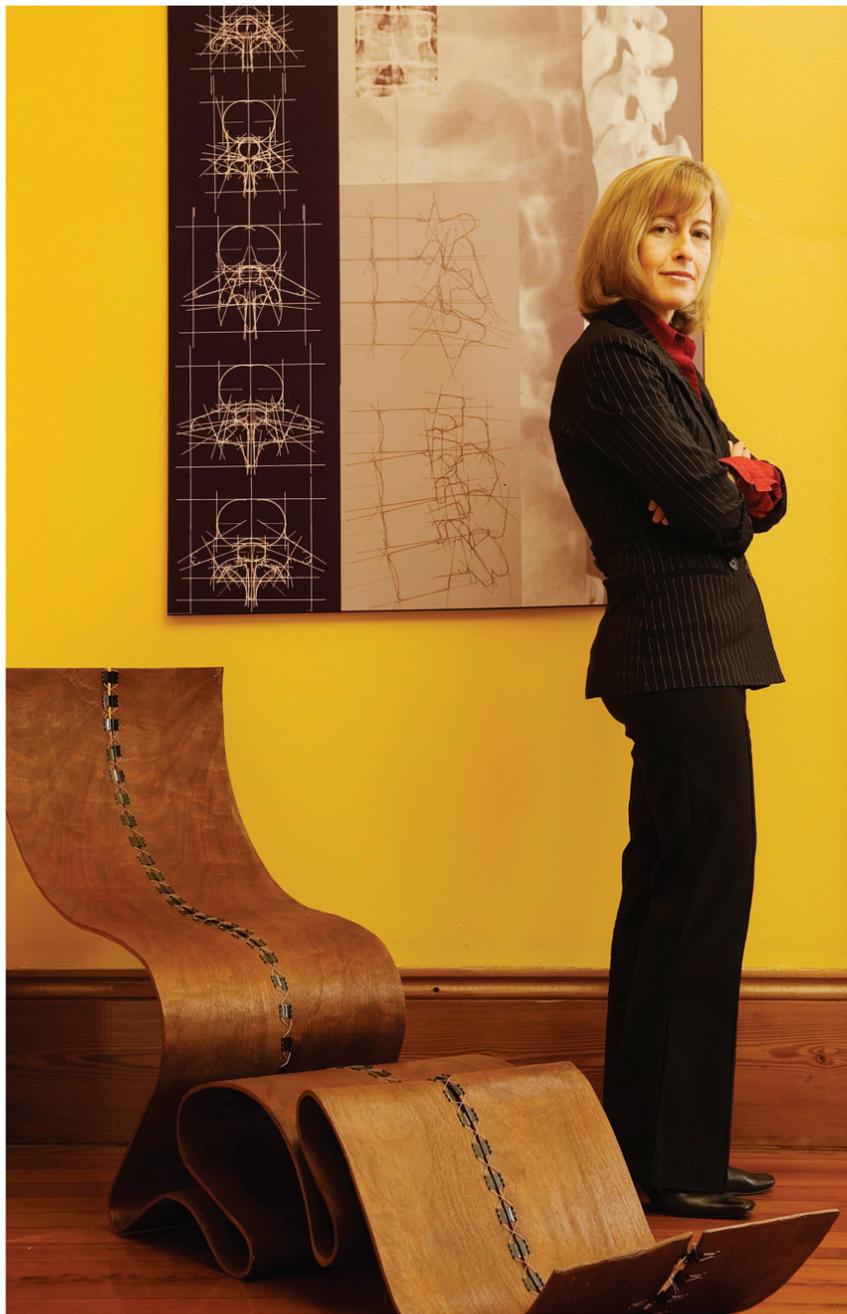
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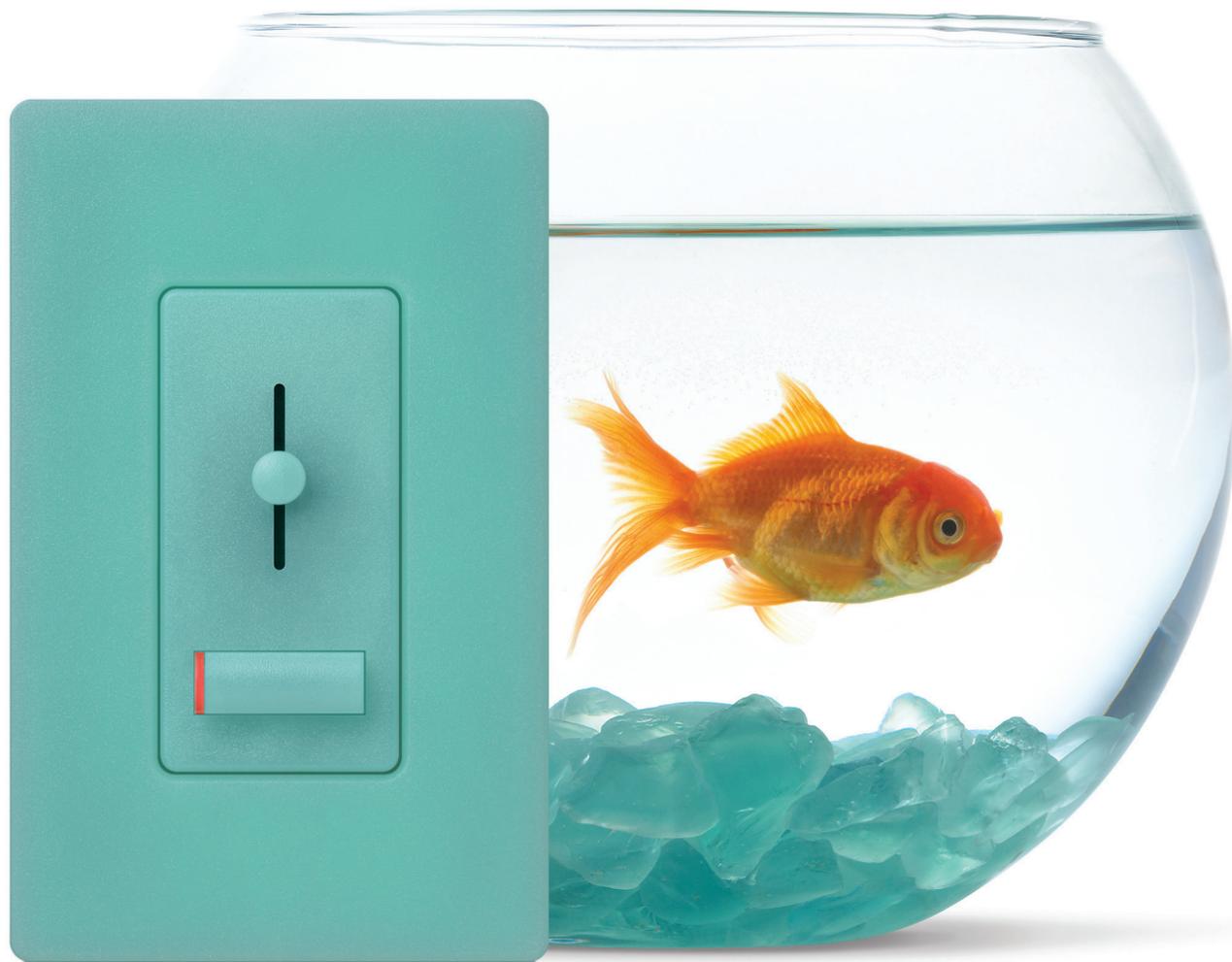
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