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DESIGNERS TAKE A HIT WITH GOVERNOR'S CONTROVERSIAL BUDGET CUTS

AGENCIES AWAY



Roger Sherman's 12803 Washington Project.

COURTESY RSA + UD

In January California Governor Jerry Brown proposed—among \$12.5 billion in budget cuts—eliminating the state’s over 400 redevelopment agencies and redistributing their funds directly to cities and counties. The move, if passed this spring, would disband the agencies as soon as July. Brown hailed the proposal as a limit to the state’s bloated bureaucracy and a necessary evil in budget-strapped times, but there are no shortage of opinions on the idea. Some claim that redevelopment funds deliver money to much-needed areas that would otherwise be ignored by investment; others say that they are just corporate charity and playgrounds for **continued on page 7**

SLO's flexible school prototype.



COURTESY SLO

PREFAB PROTOTYPES SHAKE UP LAUSD

TOP CLASS

Better late than never. After completing a multi-billion dollar school building program that produced what even some of its administrators admit was fairly conservative architecture, the LA Unified School District (LAUSD) decided to abruptly reverse course when devising prototypes for both new schools and replacements of its thousands of temporary classrooms. Under the leadership of an ambitious new facilities director, the district even went back to the drawing board to find more inspiring proposals after approving its initial short list. The result is a compelling range of largely prefabricated, **continued on page 10**

LA CULTURAL CENTER EXPOSES BEAMS AND BONES



DE/JUEDA STUDIO

URBAN

ARCHAEOLOGY

Despite the recent discovery of human remains on the site, workers at Los Angeles’ Plaza Cultura y Artes continue development of the almost-complete Mexican cultural center and public garden. “It doesn’t change anything. It only enhances our point that this is where Los Angeles started,” said Miguel Angel Corzo, President and CEO of LA Plaza. The remains were found on the site of an early 19th century cemetery. Records show that the remains **continued on page 3**



UAE PARLIAMENT GOES TO LA'S
EHRlich ARCHITECTS

Desert Upset

Culver City-based Ehrlich Architects has won the competition to design a new parliament complex for the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi, beating out major international firms Foster & Partners, Zaha Hadid Architects, and Massimiliano Fuksas Architects. It's the most remarkable upset victory for an LA architect since 1987, when then-upstart Frank Gehry triumphed over three Pritzker Prize laureates in the contest for the Walt Disney Concert Hall. (Ehrlich employs 32 people; Hadid has 450 and Foster over a thousand.) At a time when California offices are especially hard-hit, this victory of David over Goliath is a morale booster for every struggling firm. Firm founder and principal Steven Ehrlich, who spent **continued on page 2**

LITTLE BLACK BOOK

HERE'S OUR ANNUAL COMPILATION OF INSIDER RESOURCES THAT THE ARCHITECTS OF THE MOST NOTABLE 2010 BUILDINGS CALL WHEN THEY NEED THE BEST. SEE PAGES 13-18

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FIRMS ARE STARTING TO HIRE FOR WORK CLOSER TO HOME

SPRING THAW

The gloom has not fully lifted, but the clouds have parted enough to let in a little sunshine. And the forecast is for better weather ahead. That's the meteorological take on what West Coast architects are saying about their businesses following two grim years of recession and layoffs. Some are hiring again, although not in big numbers, and are preparing for a backlog of stalled local projects to start moving forward. “We are cautiously optimistic,” said William H. Fain Jr., a partner at LA-based Johnson Fain. While the domestic construction field is still **continued on page 11**

A STEP UP AT UCSF.

SEE PAGE 4



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MOVE THE WHEELS FASTER

Reading through a recent issue of *LA Weekly* I came across a lengthy story about an anti-development “crusader” named Cary Brazeman called “Community Watchdog Cary Brazeman Fights Villaraigosa’s Crusade to Allow Development Everywhere.”

Brazeman, a brand consultant who has worked for several real estate firms in the past, is fighting against the mayor’s overzealous attempts to push projects through city planning despite legitimate objections by neighbors and design review committees. As I’ve said in a past editorial, I agree with him to some degree on that front.

But he’s also fighting against new city zoning changes meant to simplify and streamline the planning department. Brazeman’s group, LA Neighbors United, calls the recent reform efforts “gutting” the code and a means for over-development. And he calls its supporters “rejectionists” who want to destroy LA.

Let’s set the record straight. These proposed zoning regulations are not intended to, nor would they, spur new development on their own or cause any other sort of citywide disasters. Just the opposite.

Their goal is to make development more straightforward than the ridiculous, disjointed, outdated process the city now forces architects and developers to go through. As city planner Alan Bell told *AN* when the measures were first introduced, “Things just have to become more efficient.”

Among other things, the zoning changes will create consistent protocols for many procedures including timelines for approvals, reviews (allowing for shorter review processes for minor projects so as not to hog time from the bigger ones), and the modification of existing projects. Right now there are few standardized procedures, and approvals can take years, getting lost in a maze of departments and rules. These regulations haven’t been changed since the 1940s, so they’re woefully out of date.

The AIA/LA recently released a list of of proposed streamlining measures that go even further. In it, they call for improved city planning response time, improved online resources, clearer requirements, and more transparency, among other things.

Nonetheless, Brazeman and others continue to go in the other direction. Dick Platkin, an LA-based city planning consultant, has written of the existing zoning codes: “these hurdles are often time-consuming, but they assure that efforts to circumvent the city’s zoning code are subject to a careful public review and debate.” But time doesn’t always mean thoroughness. The current codes don’t call for careful review and debate, they just make it more confusing and drawn out.

For some reason in slow-motion Los Angeles, government efficiency—or other diversions from the status quo—are often regarded with suspicion. Similar protests have been mounted against Mayor Villaraigosa’s efforts to speed up the construction of new rail lines in the city, or even to build them at all.

Of course, I support anyone’s right to protest government maneuvers. I just think they happen to be confused on these points. The status quo hasn’t gotten architects far enough in LA. Let’s take a deep breath and clean things up. Then we can look with a clearer head and a cleaner slate. **SAM LUBELL**



COURTESY EHRLICH ARCHITECTS

DESERT UPSET continued from front page
part of his youth in Morocco, has been refamiliarizing himself with traditional Islamic architecture for the new project, but it won’t be his first in the UAE region. His 2009 Helal House, located on a desert site, has a huge crescent-shaped roof and exterior patterned cast aluminum screens. For the parliament, Ehrlich, his associate Patti Rhee, and the project team created what Ehrlich describes as “a harmonious balance of Islamic heritage and global modern aspirations.”

The plan is simple: a circle within a square. A soaring dome, inspired by a five-petaled desert flower, will shelter the assembly building and dominate the waterfront site. Deep concrete ribs will provide a self-supporting structure exposed to the open hall’s interior.

“We embraced the symmetry we found in many Arab buildings and reinterpreted the dome as a shade structure,” said Ehrlich. “I made a trip to Istanbul to see Hagia Sofia and the Blue Mosque, but I also abstracted the humble vernacular with its thick mud walls and small openings.” The 1.4 million-square-foot complex will be embraced by offices rising from a podium. These structures will be terraced to suggest wind-sculpted sand dunes.

In the summer the temperature in Abu Dhabi tops 125 degrees, often with 90 percent humidity, but Ehrlich was determined to create a building that would be sustainable both passively and actively. “We wanted to control sun exposure on each surface and create shade rather than admitting large amounts of heat and pumping it out mechanically,” he explained. Perforated screens will limit sunlight, and the building’s thermal mass will play a vital cooling role, complementing more high-tech sustainable elements like a rooftop solar thermal system.

The building will be located on the Corniche, Abu Dhabi’s large coastal boulevard, facing the Arabian Gulf. Its dome will be visible for miles across the water, glowing dramatically at night. The completion date has not been determined, and the project’s budget is confidential. The local architect will be Abu Dhabi-based Godwin Austen Johnson. **MICHAEL WEBB**

LETTERS

CONTESTED GROUND

The recent article about architects enlarging their scope to include landscape architecture (“Budding Relationship,” *CAN*01_02.04.2011,) causes great concern to me as a trained landscape architect. The tone of the piece suggests architects are equally suited to create successful landscape designs. The implied ease with which this is accomplished misrepresents the specialized knowledge of landscape architects.

Landscape architecture training is built on a keen understanding of natural systems, including but not limited to: horticulture, soil sciences, storm water management, micro-climates and seasonal conditions. Just as

important is the focus on design principles of the built environment, similar to architects, but with an intimate understanding of the interaction of individuals within the landscape along with an attention to scale, mass/void, balance, harmony, materiality, longevity, sustainability and flora/fauna in the natural environment.

Specifically, the article addresses Playa Vista park. As a landscape design, Playa Vista creates the sense of “outdoor rooms” as envisioned. However, the design of vast spaces, faceted slopes, aggressively fenced recreational courts, undefined edges, and dynamic angled walks provide little sense of scale or experience from one room to the next. The overall composition is lost in the parts that make the whole.

The feeling is one of exposure rather than embrace along the perimeter. The design of this and other projects in the piece resonate well in plan, but fall flat through experience.

The most successful moments within the featured projects are when architecture and landscape meet, allowing the landscape to envelope the architecture, or provide green roof/living systems technology or create a nestled resting place as at Freelnad Buck’s Hunters Stand Cabin. However, the tone is tilted significantly in the direction of architects as designers with support provided by landscape architects.

Landscape architects, when embraced as a design peer with specialized training in the

integration of design and nature, offer more to a project than “valuable techniques.” It’s of great concern that future landscape design opportunities may be helmed by architects or landscape professionals revert to the antiquated role of plant material selector rather than finely-tuned designers and engineers of the outdoor environment. Here’s hoping that a better understanding of the unique role landscape architects play within the architectural design community will be better understood and appreciated in the future.

DUANE BORDER
MELENDREZ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN
LOS ANGELES

SFMOMA SHUFFLE

No announcement has been made, but we hear from several of our reliable sources that **Gensler** is out as architect of record of **Snøhetta's** \$480 million expansion to **SFMOMA**. It's rumored that their replacement will be **Leddy Maytum Stacy**. In fact, Leddy Maytum is about to give its first presentation to the city Arts Commission's Civic Design Review Committee. No word on why Gensler was pushed out, but perhaps it's because **Art Gensler** is a past member of the SFMOMA Board of Trustees (a wee conflict of interest)? Or perhaps since Gensler is also working as executive architect on **Eli Broad's** new museum, SFMOMA didn't feel like sharing? More likely the first one.

STARCHITECTS, HOLLYWOOD STYLE

Spider-Man may be tangled up on Broadway, but out in LA the *real* Spider-Man, **Toby McGuire**, is apparently constructing a superhero-worthy lair: a new house in Silver Lake designed by **Peter Zumthor**. That inspired choice of architect gets us thinking about the other great celebrity commissions of late (few and far between, in fact, since most celebs are living in gaudy McPalaces). Last month we mentioned **Michael Ovitz's** selection of **Michael Maltzan** for his compound/gallery/home. And how about **U2 guitarist The Edge** commissioning San Diego architect **Wallace Cunningham** to design his beautiful, if environmentally questionable, house in Malibu? Or, speaking of those beautiful bluffs, how about the unnamed star who commissioned **Tadao Ando** and **WHY Architects** to design their house above Paradise Cove? Oh, architects, if only you could reveal all your celebrity clients—we know you're holding out on us!

SEND MUSEUM MEMBERSHIPS AND STAR MAPS TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM

URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY continued from front page should have been relocated when the cemetery became part of the adjacent LA Placita Church in 1844. While LA Plaza spokeswoman Katie Dunham demurred on what exactly was uncovered, Corzo said the remains come from diverse origins including various Native American tribes as well as Europeans.

"The discovery at the cemetery was big for all of us, so we're working carefully to honor it but to still keep on schedule. So far, I think we're doing it," said Mark Rios, principal at Rios Clementi Hale Studios, whose firm is responsible for the L-shaped green space that hugs the site's northern perimeter.

In response to the discovery, the 2.2-acre cultural center's design will change only slightly, said Corzo, staying on track to meet the target opening date of April 9. A walkway that originally ran straight from Main Street to Spring Street will now curve to avoid the site of the finding. The change, now up for board approval, seems to be the simplest solution for a project so close to completion.

Situated near El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, the site of Los Angeles's founding, LA Plaza will be a museum and cultural center charting the history of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles and Southern California. "It seemed very appropriate to locate it here," said Corzo.

The center will occupy two of the city's oldest buildings from the Victorian era—the 1888 Vickrey-Brunswig Building and the 1883 Plaza House—and include the 30,000-square-foot public garden. Vickrey-Brunswig is a five-story brick structure supported by large wooden columns, while the Plaza House is the two-story building just beside it. Vacant since the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, both buildings have been rehabilitated by Harley Ellis Devereaux. The firm seismically retrofitted the campus by introducing brace framing and connecting the two buildings.

The lobby, designed by Chu+Gooding, incorporates several nods to Mexican-American culture. Glazed tiles with blue-green and reddish hues contain a pattern inspired by an ancient Zapotec site in Mitla, near Oaxaca. In the restrooms, ceramic tiles pick up the green-gray colors and tree-like branches of the saguaro cactus.

In the oldest sections of the building, the original wood frame coupled with the added structural support meant a cobweb of elements that proved to be a challenge to incorporate into the design. "One of the big problems was that things aren't straight—the framing's not straight, the columns aren't straight, the floors aren't level," said Chu+Gooding principal Rick Gooding. His firm addressed the issue by creating simple, clean spaces in these areas. Brace frames were encased in walls, forming partitions. Drop ceilings were strategically added to reduce noise and help disguise larger mechanical systems.

In the rest of the center, however, Chu+Gooding exposed as many of the historical elements as possible, subtly paying homage to the building's long history in the city. They retained most of the high ceilings to maintain the expansive atmosphere of the interiors, and original Douglas fir columns are left exposed but partially wrapped with medium-density fiberboard to prevent visitors from scratching themselves on the splintery old wood.

The outdoor portion of the site will include an edible learning garden, classrooms, an outdoor kitchen, patio, and performance area that can host as many as 1,500 people. A vertical learning wall features flora from six native ecosystems of Southern California. A dynamic perimeter is created by media screens on exterior fences composed of MicroTiles—rear projection units that together form a large video wall-style display.

To create a festive ambiance typical of Mexican celebrations, Rios Clementi Hale also designed bright canopies made of tubular steel supports and polymer coated fabric. One canopy will go up by the stage area, which opens up to the main lawn, and another will be placed at the main lobby entrance.

LA Plaza is one of the five cultural institutions supported by the County of Los Angeles. The center has also received grants from the California Heritage Commission, Save America's Treasures, and private foundations. So far, \$20 million has been spent during the course of the project, said Corzo, and an additional \$3.5 million is needed to cap off the capital campaign. **CARREN JAO**

> HOUSE OF AIR

926 Mason Street
West Crissy Field
San Francisco
Tel: 415-345-9675
Architect: Mark Horton/
Architecture



ETHAN KAPLAN

The concept itself is breathtaking—a giant indoor trampoline park!—but the interior architecture of the House of Air takes the idea to new heights. Working within the shell of a historic biplane hangar, San Francisco firm Mark Horton/Architecture walled off a section on each side with blue Polygal, illuminating the translucent material with an energetic pattern of fluorescent light tubes nested cleverly in the C-shaped metal studs framing the wall. Behind the Polygal are a café on one side and showers and restrooms on the other with party rooms and offices above. A catwalk, bridging these two upper levels, cranks up the drama of the space and is also the best place for observers to catch the action in the "Colosseum," a trampoline pit where dodgeball games are played. High-flyers get a good view of the Bay through the immense glass hangar door custom made by Schweiss. **LYDIA LEE**



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Clockwise from top left: Upper terrace gardens; the building hugs the S-curve of the hillside; landings serve as break areas, connecting to labs below and offices and conference rooms above; researchers use exterior ramps to get to labs.

Attention, San Francisco: a spaceship has landed in your backyard. The shiny silver form of Rafael Viñoly's Ray and Dagmar Dolby Regeneration Medicine Building is a stunning discovery lurking at the back of the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). The most exciting local building to be erected since the California Academy of Sciences and the De Young went up in Golden Gate Park, this structure—at once sharp and lithe, rational and poetic, industrial and organic—is an appropriately futuristic home for the cutting edge of research and is the most adventurous work from the architect in some time.

The building brings together all of UCSF's stem cell researchers, who will number about 250 when it is fully occupied. Most of the 80,000-square-foot space is devoted to compact rows of lab stations, accompanied by offices for scientists and a few conference rooms.

One of Viñoly's primary achievements was to make a virtue out of an incredibly difficult site. UCSF's main campus backs up sharply against the city's daunting Mount Sutro, and the remaining unbuilt land had a 60-degree slope. The structure is cantilevered 100 feet above the foot of the mountain and supported by an exposed foundation—a steel space frame on concrete piers.

The long, thin building contours to the landscape, hugging the slight S-curve

of the hillside. Bordered by a winding road, it also progresses upward in four blocks, but the actual organization of the building isn't really apparent until you are inside. From the exterior you see only its sleek, windowless hull clad in corrugated steel. Unfettered by the prescriptions that stunted the firm's design for the Helen Diller Family Cancer Research Center at UCSF's Mission Bay campus, and liberated from the street grid, Viñoly and his team were able to proceed with a purer architectural vision, including an elegantly utilitarian material palette and a more organic shape.

The grid is solidly in place elsewhere on the UCSF campus, which was built out—and up—in the 1960s and 70s. The only entry to the research center is across

a glass-enclosed bridge from UCSF's main school building. From here, you are intimately aware of the physical gap that lies between the mid-century, 16-floor structure and its gleaming new neighbor, as well as the leaps that Modernism has taken in the intervening years. You can also see the outdoor ramp that allows researchers to get to their particular lab via a short but thrilling outdoor hike, as well as the many staircases that invite exploration of the upper terrace gardens. At the top of the building, there are splendid views of the northern end of the city, including Golden Gate Park and the Golden Gate Bridge.

While building a tall, skinny tower would have reduced foundation costs, Viñoly and his team proposed a design

that would encourage interaction and collaboration. The research area is essentially one continuous floor, with four grade changes. Because the labs are apt to shrink and grow over time, the ability to spill over to the next lab space and remain visually connected was important. At each of the three junctions between levels, there is a landing with a break area and kitchen: a natural gathering spot. Labs are located a half-flight down, while small banks of offices and conference rooms are located a half-flight up. This split-level approach, borrowed from residential architecture, efficiently distinguishes public from private spaces. Across each landing, the next lab space begins. Within the labs, the open plan was designed for maximum

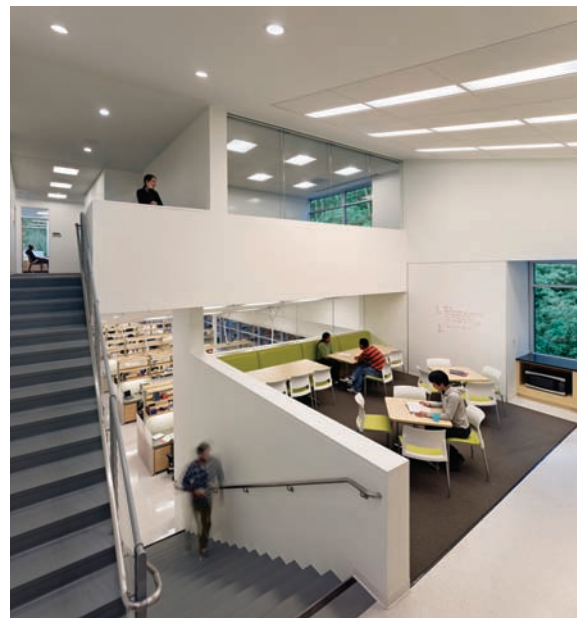
flexibility, with wiring harnesses and flexible plumbing routed overhead and lab benches that can be easily disassembled.

The building also does an exceptional job of bringing in the natural world and is expected to receive LEED Silver certification. While the public, campus-facing side is opaque for privacy, the hillside façade has an expanse of windows that look into a forest of eucalyptus trees—a green mural along the laboratories' back wall. Each of the four sections has a terrace garden lush with grasses, softening the corrugated metal.

Alas for architecture fans, the building has no public access. It is not visible at all from the closest street, Parnassus Avenue. But a determined observer can get

a good view of the exterior by taking Medical Center Way at the east end of campus to the Regenerative Medicine loading dock. The \$94.5 million project was partially funded by California Proposition 71, where voters allocated \$3 billion for stem cell research and facilities in 2004.

The UCSF center is the sixth of 12 such projects in the state, but thus far the architectural ambitions have not matched the magnitude of scientific endeavor. This is one case where they have. Without going in for gimmicks—one can easily imagine another architect going on about the complexity of the cell—Viñoly has created a thing of beauty and mystery that, when dissected, reveals itself to be an intelligent adaptation to the natural world. **LL**



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COURTESY PORTLAND JAPANESE GARDEN

and natural light. Balazs Bogнар, Project Architect, explains that the goal is “that the buildings are not thought of as a series of semi-detached objects but as a coordinated sequence that leads to the main event: the gardens themselves.”

Ed McVicker, president of the Garden’s board, said that Kuma’s design “really demonstrated that he understood the importance of building structures within the landscape, not dominating it.” He added, “Bringing on a Japanese architect makes sense. It fits our vision and process for this garden.”

Ground-breaking will take place following the garden’s capital campaign. However, McVicker says completion would be timed to the Garden’s 50th anniversary in 2013.

ALLISON MILIONIS

Architect: Kengo Kuma
Client: Portland Japanese Garden
Location: 611 SW Kingston Avenue, Portland
Completion: 2013

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UNVEILED

PORTLAND JAPANESE GARDEN

After a rigorous two-year selection process, Japanese architect Kengo Kuma has been chosen to lead the expansion of the Portland Japanese Garden. The addition to the 48-year-old garden, originally designed by Tokyo Agricultural University professor Takuma Tono, includes a cultural and education center, a gift store, and a public teahouse. The project will be built adjacent to the garden’s parking lot and outside its admission gates.

Using local natural materials such as wood and weather-treated papers, Kuma’s concept blends contemporary architectural elements with traditional Japanese vernacular. For instance, the stair-stepped, exposed wood *Komorebi Living Room*, as Kuma calls it, was developed as an abstraction of taruki construction, he said. It allows natural “dappled” light through while also providing generous views of the garden and the Northwest forest beyond.

The new building designs will vary slightly according to function and will take advantage of varying views



STEFANO PALTERA

STUDENT COMPETITION UPROOTED FROM NATIONAL MALL

CLOUD OVER SOLAR DECATHLON

Student teams working to design and build twenty solar homes in time for this October’s Solar Decathlon were taken by surprise when the Department of Energy (DOE), the competition sponsor, announced a change of venue. Traditionally held on the National Mall, the international exhibition of sustainability has yet to settle into a new home.

The move was announced January 11th, but at press time no new site had been named, confounding students who had based their designs on the climatic and site conditions on the National Mall.

Citing wear and tear caused by crowds and construction, Bill Line at the National Parks Service said the venue wasn’t the right fit. “The Solar Decathlon is certainly a worthy cause, but construction of so many homes and the equipment involved literally rips up the National Mall,” Line said. “The American public has charged the National Parks Service with maintaining the National Mall as a place they can be proud of, not an

area that’s torn up.”

In November the Parks Service completed the National Mall Plan, a document four years in the making that outlines a strategy to restore the revered public space. Line insists that the Parks Service did not kick the Solar Decathlon off the mall, rather in December, Secretary of Energy Dr. Steven Chu and Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar mutually agreed to find a new home for the event.

Tom Welch, a spokesperson for the DOE, said officials are searching for a new location and expected an announcement sometime in February, but he declined to give a date. “Everything is open to consideration,” Welch said, “We’re not limiting our search to Washington, D.C.”

Students involved with the competition have organized an online petition campaign, already amassing thousands of names in support of keeping the competition on the 700 acres often called “the nation’s front yard.” The petition points to official Solar Decathlon rules holding teams liable for damage to the mall.

“We’ve been working on this project for over a year and a half,” Reed Finlay, Project Manager of SCI-Arc and Caltech’s entry, told AN. Their project, CHIP 2011, which includes a snug wrapping of vinyl over cellulose insulation, canted rooftop PV panels, and a sloping cantilever intended—prior to the venue change announcement—to highlight a view of the Washington Monument, has involved 60 students and over \$100,000 in donations. “The Mall gives exposure and credibility to what we’re doing,” he added. “I think they’ll be surprised with the backlash.” **BRANDEN KLAYKO**



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Vrilakas Architects' CRA-supported Gateway on Fremont;
Below: the firm's Broadway Lofts.



AGENCIES AWAY continued from front page corruption. However, for the design community the consensus is pretty straightforward: the move would be a disaster.

Ron Vrilakas, principal at Vrilakas Architects in Sacramento, estimates that if Brown's proposal is passed his firm will lose work on about \$40 to \$50 million in projects and will have to lay off much of their staff. "The only work that's still got life from the last 18 months is work that has a public financing component and specifically redevelopment agency funding," said Vrilakas. "Without those it's a pretty grim result."

Vrilakas adds that without California Redevelopment Association (CRA) funding, his city will continue to sprawl rather than sustainably grow from infill and the redevelopment of underserved neighborhoods. "We have a delivery system of development that's built around sprawl. That's the path of least resistance," said Vrilakas, who said he's open to taking a look at cutting the agencies but finds their "full scale elimination" to be "draconian," "short-sited," and deprives cities of much-needed investment. "What other department has been singled out to be eliminated entirely?" he said.

Evan Westrup, a spokesperson for Governor Brown, said that "current redevelopment projects" will continue, while cities like LA are creating agreements with their redevelopment agencies to protect present and future projects (LA's agreement would put aside \$930 million for such work).

Despite their inefficiencies—and their often too-cozy

relationships with developers—redevelopment agencies provide a huge amount of work to architects and builders, and their wholesale removal would pull the rug out from under these firms just as a modest recovery is starting to take hold. The CRA reports that redevelopment activities support over 170,000 construction-related jobs a year. Moreover, the move would stall or cancel billions of dollars worth of major projects in cities statewide from buildings, parks, and mixed-use complexes, to entire neighborhoods like the Clean Tech Corridor just east of Downtown LA.

The focal point for the Corridor and a project supported by CRA funding is a three-acre Clean Tech Innovation Campus—75,000-square-feet in an existing masonry building of office and demonstration space for clean-tech research and development companies. The project is likely moving forward, but similar projects could be in jeopardy.

Westrup argues that the measure will not completely obliterate redevelopment funding, but that it will "return power to the local level," giving cities the choice of what to do with redevelopment funds. "Essentially

it eliminates a state subsidy for private development," said Westrup. "It doesn't preclude cities from continuing to redevelop; it gives cities the choice of where their scarce dollars would go."

As for the hit on future investment, a recent California Legislative Analysis Office report on the budget states that "the state's costs associated with redevelopment have grown markedly over the last couple decades, yet we find no reliable evidence that this program improves overall economic development in California."

But while he admits that some redevelopment agencies are "dysfunctional," LA architect Roger Sherman is very impressed with the economic turnarounds produced by others, including Culver City's, where he is working on a \$13 million mixed-use project that was funded in part by the Culver City CRA.

He adds that much of Culver City's impressive recovery—and its resulting tax windfall for the city and state—was made possible by the work of the local CRA. "It's very hard to generalize. In some cities they've been very effective," said Sherman. "It's all about execution."

SL



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An early Charles and Henry Greene home in Claremont, California—one of the first the brothers worked on outside of Pasadena—has gotten a second life courtesy of local architects HartmanBaldwin. New owners Andrew and Blenda Wright tapped the firm to update the 1903 Darling-Wright house with sustainable features while maintaining its Arts and Crafts heritage.

The house is the first historic home in California to earn a GreenPoint rating,

a LEED-counterpart that measures a home's sustainability based on resource conservation, indoor air quality, water conservation, energy efficiency, and contribution to the community.

The home represented a turning point in the Greenes' career: with it the brothers began taking a holistic approach right down to furniture designs and lighting sketches. When the Wrights purchased the home in 2007, it was "in fairly rough shape," said

Alan Brookman, project architect, and a former docent at the famed Greene & Greene Gamble house in Pasadena. Earlier ill-advised remodels had compromised the structure. The hand-crafted windows and siding had been replaced more than once, and the floor was past its last sanding.

In its quest for sustainability the firm first reconsidered the insulation. "You get more bang for your buck fixing up these little things before moving to solar panels or win-



ALEXANDER VERTIKOFF

dows," said Brookman. Because of the home's board and batten interior and shingle exterior, air had basically moved freely through the house's skin. HartmanBaldwin insulated the building with closed cell foam and blown in cellulose, allowing the firm to downsize the heating, ventilation, and cooling systems.

The firm then replaced the badly oxidized 1990s shingles with those that echoed the size and shape of the original. Original window frames were re-used where possible, and because the house stands on a relatively busy street, dual-glazed windows replaced the original plate-glass windows, helping

with noise reduction and energy efficiency. Craftspeople reproduced the front door and replaced damaged flooring.

The firm either re-used fixtures or replaced them with historically sensitive ones. LED lights were installed inside Greene and Greene-style fixtures in the kitchen and dining room. In the breakfast nook, John Hamm of Hamm Glass Studios replicated a fixture Charles Greene sketched for the entry hall published in a 1903 *Academy Architecture* article. Additional vintage-style bathrooms were put in—complete with low-flow 1921 reproduction toilets with low wall-hung tanks, faucets, and showerheads.

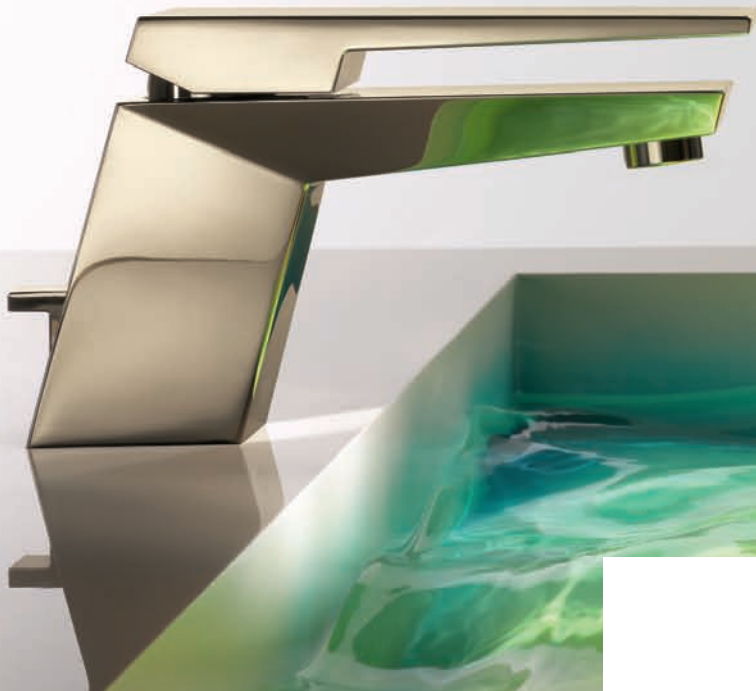
Far left: Darling-Wright's Greene and Greene house in Claremont has been renovated to be sustainable. Left: Fixtures and paneling have been reused and replaced with historically sensitive options.

In making upgrades, HartmanBaldwin sought to make reversible as many modifications as possible, "so that if somebody wants to come back and return the house to the pre-renovation condition, they can," said Brookman.

Since the Wrights required a larger garage, the firm found another interested buyer for the original 1921 garage and had it moved. Construction waste, including cardboard, plastic and aluminum, were also recycled.

Ensuring as much of the home was salvaged or re-used was a meticulous process, but everything was worth it in the end, relates Brookman. "As we were finishing the house, I could really see that it was turning out to be something special." The Darling-Wright house looks ready to survive yet another century. **CJ**

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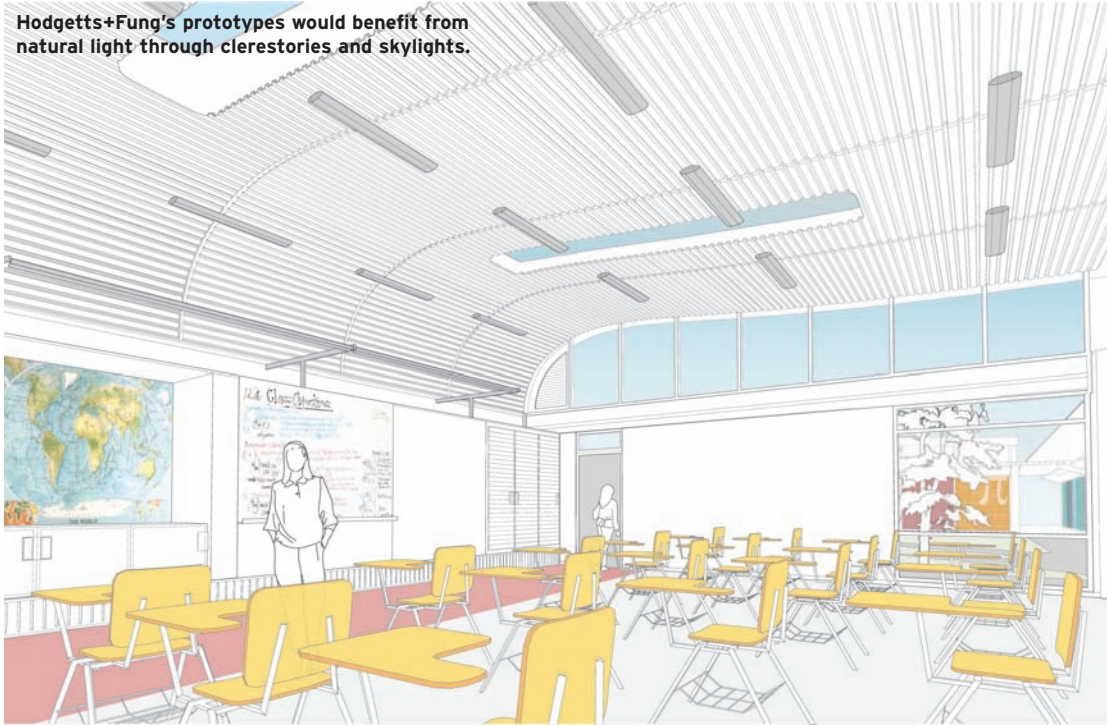
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Gonzalez Goodale's scheme would have a canted rooftop with concealed solar panels.



COURTESY GONZALEZ GOODALE

Hodgetts+Fung's prototypes would benefit from natural light through clerestories and skylights.



COURTESY HODGETTS+FUNG

TOP CLASS continued from front page
kit-of-parts schemes from local firms Hodgetts+Fung, Swift Lee Office (SLO), and Gonzalez Goodale. The designs can be built quickly, cheaply, and en masse, ranging in size from 6,000 to 30,000 square-

feet. They also aim to be flexible, sustainable, and easy to maintain. The district plans to build four to five projects initially, and if that goes well, many more. Larger architectural prototypes could also serve as new schools, libraries, or recreation

centers.

The designs met the needs of a district now forced to do more with less. Its close to \$20 billion in bonds has been mostly spent and its staff reduced drastically. "The opportunity to do something like

this was always there, and we knew it, but no one was willing to do it," said Gloria Lee, principal at SLO.

The LAUSD currently has about 9,300 temporary classroom buildings. Most are drab, aging, out of character with their neighboring schools, and falling apart. Their replacement came up as part of the district's large master planning effort. After an initial RFP in June, the district narrowed the initial group of 80 proposals to a short list of mostly box-like and uninspiring designs. But then top district officials decided to broaden the list to include more ambitious proposals. The winning designs were chosen in December. The designs will cost from \$270 to \$400 per square foot to build, estimated LAUSD special facilities project manager Brianna Garcia.

"We thought what we had was a bit too conservative. We were convinced that we should bring in new ideas," said Richard Luke, the district's deputy director of planning and development, who admits that the LAUSD's recent wave of schools were hemmed in by their incredibly fast turnaround schedule. In order to encourage smaller firms to enter, the district also removed its usual pre-qualification requirements. The effort to innovate and improve efficiency has been pushed by the district's chief facilities executive, James Sohn, who came from the LA Community College District and replaced director Guy Mahula just over a year ago.

Hodgetts + Fung's smaller prototypes, measuring about 6,000 square feet, will have ultra-light prefabricated fiberglass roofs and flexible modular composite walls with fiberglass skins. The roofs will be slightly curved (like surfboards) to provide more structural stability. system of solar panels to maximize solar exposure. Units will be lit by clerestory windows and skylights. The modules can be joined together for expansion and laid out in an endless amount of configurations.

"I can't believe they're letting us do this," said Hodgetts, who points to the prefabricated, off-the-shelf, industrial-style systems as part of a great local tradition started by the likes of Neutra and Eames. "It's a no-brainer. It's so easy to build and replicate. A five year old could do it."

"We've never built anything with a fiberglass roof," added Garcia.

SLO's design is the most eco-friendly. The two-story, 25-30,000 square-foot buildings, which can be used to make anything from 24-unit classroom buildings to libraries, will have a rigid steel moment frame exostructure complemented with a changeable inner structure that will allow for flexible floor plans. Their patterned steel skins can be clad with varying panels, from steel mesh to vegetated screen walls, allowing for climate control and exterior variations.

The firm is hoping their modules will be net zero, which would be a first for the district. Their mechanical systems would include electronically-controlled fresh air intake, no refrigerant, and under sill units that minimize footprint and allow for the structures to be opened up with courtyards and other public spaces.

"We want more air, more light, and a low environmental impact. It will teach students about science, technology, and environmental responsibility," said SLO principal Gloria Lee.

Gonzalez Goodale's scheme is a modular shell structure with a sloped roof and prefabricated glass curtain walls that maximize light and airiness. The prototypes can be re-organized to adapt to changing sites and educational models. They include concealed solar rooftop panels that magnify light to a single point and can be about twice as efficient as normal solar cells. They'll be clad with rigid-frame rain screen shells that provide insulating air spaces, and can be metal, plastic, or any material, pointed out firm principal David Goodale.

"We might pay a little more to develop the prototypes, but after we finish a few it will be much cheaper and more flexible than your typical fixed building," added Goodale.

Garcia noted that the work on the prototypes would begin immediately. Luke said the facilities department was trying to secure at least \$64 million from owed state construction funds for the new prototype effort. Future funding could come from recently-passed Measure Q, a \$7 billion measure going to school modernization. Those funds won't be available until 2014. **SL**



SLO's plans call for a faceted and changeable metallic skin.

COURTESY SLO

SPRING THAW continued from front page weak, he said he is receiving calls from U.S. clients who "can't postpone planning and positioning any longer."

At the depth of the recession Johnson Fain downsized dramatically, from about 100 to a low of 43 staffers, but recently climbed back to about 55. While large urban planning and residential projects in China and Taiwan have been major sources of work, the firm has recently taken on domestic planning projects for the HemisFair Park in San Antonio, Texas, and some older LA school campuses.

"We are not through it yet," said Donnie Schmidt, a senior associate at Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects in LA. "But I'm glad to see the U.S. is beginning to show some life again." His firm recently signed on two consulting architects to help with new office and housing projects. A mixed-use building and resort plan in Hawaii is also on the horizon.

There is a large pool of unemployed architects to draw from. When Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects ran an ad on Archinect.com in December, they received about 350 resumes the first day, with applicants ranging from recent grads to "senior people with 20 to 30 years of experience," said Schmidt. "I've never seen anything like that."

In January, 30 job postings from Southern California firms on Archinect were more than double the number in November. Nicci Solomons, executive director of the AIA's Los Angeles chapter, said her organization's website job listings are also up. At the worst of the downturn, there might have been just three postings—now it is more common to see a dozen or so. "It's certainly a thaw," she said, adding that there is a long way to go.

At AC Martin Partners in LA, president Kenneth Lewis said the Southern California economy remains a question mark. His firm has long had a major hand in higher education, but state budget problems will probably reduce construction at public universities, he said.

Like those at other firms, Lewis is finding that certain niches, such as multi-family residential buildings, retail, and adaptive reuse, are coming back locally and leading to more hires. His staff, from a high of about 100, is now at about 70, he said, thanks to assignments like retrofitting the Hall of Justice at the LA Civic Center and work on the proposed Wilshire Grand hotel, office, and residential towers in Downtown LA. At Valerio Architects, a 25-person LA firm that specializes in retail and restaurant design, an uptick in work has led to hiring five people over the past six months, according to Damon Pressman, business development coordinator. And West LA-based Nadel Architects, which had cut employment from about 200 to 100 in recent years, has hired back eight people in the past few months, mainly to help with international projects like a convention and sports center in Dalian, China. Domestically, the firm has worked on several multi-family rental residences and is starting to hear from a range of other potential clients. "The indicators are that there will be more activity in the near term, but it hasn't come to fruition yet," said Patrick Winters, a firm director. The mantra for many remains, wait and see. **L.J. GORDON**



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Michael W. Folonis
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“IBE Consulting Engineers was an integral part of the design process for the entire Annenberg Center for Information Science and Technology at CalTech. They were instrumental in helping us educate the client relative to innovative building systems that contributed to sustainability and creature comfort. Alan Locke’s personal attention during design, construction and building start up made a significant difference in the final results.”
Joseph Coriaty
Frederick Fisher and
Partners Architects

“For a gigantic firm like Thornton Tomasetti to give such amazing support to such a tiny project was not only unusual, but critical.”
Craig Hodgetts
Hodgetts + Fung

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Linda Taalman
Taalman Koch
Architecture



JOHN SUTTON

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“David Conant of **McKay Conant Brook** enthusiastically embraced the problematic nature of our sound space and devised numerous adjustments which are responsible for its acoustic excellence.”
Craig Hodgetts
Hodgetts+Fung

“Jill Pilaroscia at **Colour Studio** is my favorite color consultant because she is flexible and can get clients to make decisions. If the challenge is a restoration where the colors have to be replicated exactly she can uncover what those might be, even if they might be different from our current sensibilities. If no record exists, she always comes up with a palette that feels right for the building.”
David Wessel
Architectural
Resources Group



“**Veneklasen Associates** is very thorough. They give comprehensive analysis and have the ability to handle technical spaces.”
Donnie Schmidt
Lorcan O’Herlihy
Architects

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CALARTS WILD BEAST
MCKAY CONANT BROOK
HODGETTS + FUNG
ARCHITECTS

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TOM BONNER

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KEVIN DEFREITAS

BELOW RIGHT:
METALLOTUS
AERO WELDING
ELECTROLAND

BELOW LEFT:
LONG BEACH
RECYCLING CENTER
KNIGHT BUILDING
SYSTEMS
STUDIO 111

DARREN EDWARDS



ELECTROLAND, LONG BEACH RECYCLING

“Collaborating with **W.S. Tyler** on the LAPD Motor Transit project was a very positive experience. From the early design studies through the construction process, the firm was very knowledgeable and responsive as the design evolved to its finished state. W.S. Tyler's shop drawings and technicians were incredibly meticulous, which greatly improved the coordination process and the finished product. They were also able to provide

a painted graphic on the stainless steel mesh with digital precision - a finish that no other major competitor could offer.”
John Friedman
John Friedman
Alice Kimm Architects

“Custom tinted 12’ continuous slab concrete countertop from **Sonoma Cast Stone** incorporated two ramp sinks in the master bath suite—it’s a small miracle.”
Byron Kuth
Kuth Ranieri

“To weld stainless steel is really technical welding, and you have to really know your stuff. **Aero Welding** did an absolutely beautiful job.”
Cameron McNall
Electroland

“**Systems 32** is a great high end cabinet shop. They do our custom and itHouse flat pack systems.”
Linda Taalman
Taalman Koch
Architecture

“**Lamer Wood-working** was solely responsible for all custom wood furniture within the project. They worked hard not only in sourcing local wood [white oak] for the project but collaborated closely with the client to ensure quality of product was maintained. Being a small business, they were able to devote all of their attention and resources to the project during its duration.”
Randy Stegmeier
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RON COOPER

“I brought Mike Gehring of **Kaplan Gehring McCarroll** into the 16th Street Surgery Center design process because of what colleagues told me about him and his firm. I wasn’t disappointed. When I explained the issues we had regarding the lobby Mike immediately knew what to do and how to solve these issues.”

Michael W. Folonis
Michael W. Folonis Architects

“The **Peerless Lighting** pendant and wall mounted light fixtures are very versatile and provide a clean modern look. They add sophistication to the space. We use the Minimus fixtures from Energie for the same reason, they are one of our favorites.”

Peter Mitsakos
West Edge Architects

“**Horton Lees Brogden** provided incredible depth of knowledge in the lighting industry, including most of the current products available.”

Donnie Schmidt,
Lorcan O’Herlihy Architects

“**Guy Smith** is very knowledgeable about the products, specs, and options. He is especially good working on fine-tuning with our clients.”

Linda Taalman,
Taalman Koch Architecture

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“By making the upper half of the full height wall translucent we were able to keep the scale of the space very human even though it is quite large. The **Polygal** polycarbonate panels are great, easy to work with and lends just the right amount of translucency.”

Peter Mitsakos
West Edge Architects

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“Twentieth Art and Design is the best place for modern furniture in Los Angeles.”
Linda Taalman
Taalman Koch
Architecture

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Robert Gould
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“I have always found something that I like at **Galerie Sommerlath**. The people who work there and the owner are especially nice.

They have a large inventory spread over several locations.”
Dennis Gibbens
Dennis Gibbens
Architects

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“Metal Window Corp. has worked with us in-depth on our itHouse projects, which are essentially glass houses. They’ve helped us develop details and have custom made and co-fabbed unusual pieces.”
Linda Taalman,
Taalman Koch
Architeture

“When I first started to research building fenestration systems I thought there was no way I could ever be able to afford this firm. Well, that was clearly not the case. **Novum** has worked closely with my firm to develop a system that met our design criteria and budget.”
Michael W. Folanis
Michael W. Folanis
Architects

PASADENA WATER
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“Arcadia/Wilson Partitions storefront systems enable us to get a consistent look between storefront and standard door frames. The interior storefront system allows us to really leverage the courtyard, by making layers of space around it transparent, allowing views

from throughout the building.”
Peter Mitsakos
West Edge Architects
“Benson Industries was responsible for the design of the ventilated “double skin” glass exterior wall system for the project. They worked diligently to develop details closely with the

design team and ultimately executed a “skin” that is able to handle the demands of the climate and site effectively.”
Randy Stegmeier
Firm 151

- FEBRUARY

WEDNESDAY 23
LECTURE
Bjarke Ingels
College of Environmental Design Lecture Series
6:30 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
www.arch.ced.berkeley.edu

SYMPOSIA
Polytopes, The Architecture of Soundscapes:
A MediaSCAPES Symposium
7:00 p.m.
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

Innovations in Interactivity:
Where Technology & Placemaking Intersect
5:15 p.m.
The McLoughlin Gallery
AIA San Francisco
49 Geary St.
San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

THURSDAY 24
LECTURES
Jürgen Mayer
George H. Scanlon Foundation Lecture
7:30 p.m.
Ahmanson Auditorium
The Museum of Contemporary Art
250 South Grand Ave.
Los Angeles
www.moca.org

Louise Noelle
Taliesin West Lecture Series
7:00 p.m.
Taliesin West Pavilion Theater
12621 Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ
www.taliesin.edu

Tom Buresh and Danelle Guthrie
All Their Own: Designing for Themselves and Each Other
6:30 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
www.arch.ced.berkeley.edu

Bob Birkeland, Erik Stromberg, Roger Leventhal, Melanie Mintz
Landscape Architects and the Burgeoning Field of Environmental Restoration
6:30 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

William Snyder
To Haiti and Back
11:30 a.m.
Historic Fifth Street School Auditorium
401 South 4th St.
Las Vegas, NV
www.aialasvegas.org

FRIDAY 25
LECTURE
Timothy Burroughs
Berkeley Climate Action and the Built Environment
12:00 p.m.
AIA East Bay Chapter Office
1405 Clay St., Oakland, CA
www.aiaeb.org

SYMPOSIUM
Complete Streets for Los Angeles:
The Vision and the Challenge
8:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
369 East 1st St., Los Angeles
www.aialosangeles.org

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

SATURDAY 26
EXHIBITION OPENING
Helios: Eadweard Muybridge in a Time of Change
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

EVENTS
Millard House
“La Miniatura” Tour
9:00 a.m.
645 Prospect Crescent
Pasadena, CA
www.savewright.org

Hollyhock House World Heritage Lecture and Tour
2:00 p.m.
4800 Hollywood Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.savewright.org

MONDAY 28
LECTURE
The Miller Hull Partnership Public Works
5:30 p.m.
Executive MBA Suite
University of Colorado
Denver
1250 14th St., Denver, CO
www.aiacolorado.org

MARCH
WEDNESDAY 2
LECTURES
Steven Holl
First Annual Raimund Abraham Memorial Lecture
7:00 p.m.
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

Malcolm Bell and Sandra Lucore
The Revolutionary Architecture of the North Baths at Morgantina, Sicily
7:30 p.m.
Auditorium, Getty Villa
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy.
Pacific Palisades, CA
www.getty.edu

EVENT
Long Beach Wood Solutions Fair
7:00 a.m.
Long Beach Convention Center
300 East Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA
www.aialb-sb.org

THURSDAY 3
LECTURES
John Cary and Courtney Martin
Humanscale Presents: Big Gifts, Deep Needs
6:00 p.m.
St. Regis Hotel San Francisco
125 Third St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

Michael Pinto
Taliesin West Lecture Series
7:00 p.m.
Taliesin West Pavilion Theater
12621 Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ
www.taliesin.edu

EVENT
Architectural Photography Exhibition Opening Reception
6:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St.
San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

FRIDAY 4
EXHIBITION OPENING
Rodarte: States of Matter
7:00 p.m.
The Museum of Contemporary Art
Pacific Design Center
8687 Melrose Ave.
West Hollywood, CA
www.moca.org

SATURDAY 5
SYMPOSIUM
Programming, Planning & Practice
10:00 a.m.
AIA East Bay Chapter Office
1405 Clay St.
Oakland, CA
www.aiaeb.org

WEDNESDAY 9
LECTURE
Scott Wilson, Bill DePoto, Laurie Barlow
Restoring Watersheds in Urban Environments
7:00 p.m.
AIA Los Angeles
3780 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.aialosangeles.org

SATURDAY 12
LECTURES
Erika Esau
The Transcontinental Bungalow: From Pasadena to Australia
4:00 p.m.
Ahmanson Auditorium
Art Center College of Design
1700 Lida St.
Pasadena, CA
www.gamblehouse.org

Adriana Navarro-Sertich, Eleanor Pries, Melissa Smith
CED Lecture Series: Branner Fellows
6:30 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
www.arch.ced.berkeley.edu

SUNDAY 13
EXHIBITION OPENING
William Leavitt: Theater Objects
7:00 p.m.
The Museum of Contemporary Art
MOCA Grand Avenue
8687 Melrose Ave.
West Hollywood, CA
www.moca.org

EXHIBITION CLOSING
Patrick Tighe, composer Ken Ueno, and fabricator Machineous: Out of Memory
SCI-Arc Gallery
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

TUESDAY 15
LECTURE
Kathryn Gustafson
Contemporary Landscape in the Urban Environment
7:00 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
www.arch.ced.berkeley.edu

WEDNESDAY 16
LECTURE
David Serlin
Arcus Lecture
6:30 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
www.arch.ced.berkeley.edu

SUNDAY 20
EVENT
Hughes Aircraft Campus Tour
10:00 a.m.
Los Angeles Conservancy
523 West 6th St.
Los Angeles
www.laconservancy.org

MONDAY 21
EVENT
SPUR Presents: 31st Annual Good Government Awards
5:30 p.m.
North Light Court
San Francisco City Hall
San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

TUESDAY 22
EXHIBITION OPENING
A Beautiful Machine
University Village
Shopping Center
3375 South Hoover St.
Los Angeles
www.fisher.usc.edu

WEDNESDAY 23
LECTURE
Michael Rotondi
From the Center
7:00 p.m.
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

THURSDAY 24
LECTURE
Jason Payne
Taliesin West Lecture Series
7:00 p.m.
Taliesin West Pavilion Theater
12621 Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ
www.taliesin.edu

FRIDAY 25
SYMPOSIA
Material beyond Materials: Composite Tectonics Conference on Advanced Materials and Digital Manufacturing
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

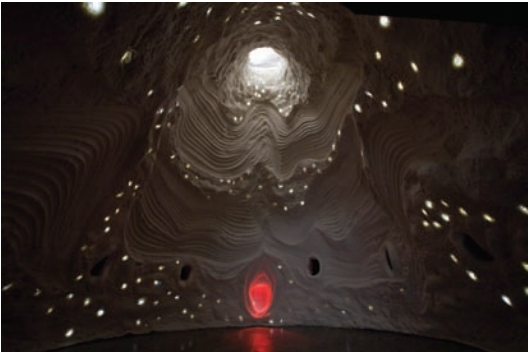
Design with Climate: A Bioclimatic Approach to Architectural Regionalism
9:00 a.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org



JOHN MCDERMOTT

ELEGY: REFLECTIONS ON ANGKOR,
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN MCDERMOTT
Sundaram Tagore Gallery
9606 S. Santa Monica Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA
Through March 12

In *Elegy: Reflections On Angkor*, John McDermott’s monochromatic photographs of the famous Hindu-Buddhist temple complex in the jungle of Cambodia are a haunting paean to an inspiring and sacred place. Made up of a complex of temples and holy spaces, which the World Monuments Fund called “one of the most significant buildings erected during the ancient Khmer empire,” Angkor is a site under siege from an influx of tourists as well as the elements of modern day life. Using specialized black and white film, McDermott captures the ghostly grandeur of the former the seat of the Khmer empire and produces sepia-toned silver gelatin prints, like *Twisted Tree, Ta Prohm, 2001*, above. He photographed the temple complex at Angkor before restoration efforts began on this UNESCO World Heritage Site, providing a glimpse of monuments in a state that no longer exists.



COURTESY SCI-ARC GALLERY

OUT OF MEMORY
SCI-Arc Gallery
960 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles
Through March 13

Out of Memory, a new exhibit from Los Angeles-based firm Patrick Tighe Architecture, composer Ken Ueno, and fabricator Machineous, urges visitors to explore the “convergence of sound, material, light, form, and technology.” Comprised of an installation by Tighe and a site-specific composition by Ueno, viewers can explore both landscape and soundscape within a gallery space. The parabola-shaped installation uses renewable polyurethane foam and is composed of layers of structural closed cell and acoustical open cell foams. It is a three-dimensional representation of a soundscape composition created by a spectrogram that maps frequencies and translates them into points and vectors. That data is then used to “robotically carve the interior surface of the volume.” Combined with the musical composition, one’s awareness of space, sound, and surface is heightened.



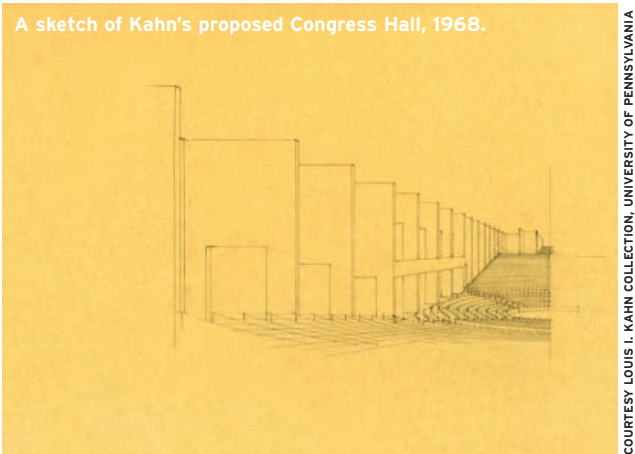
GRAND TIME

Kahn In Venice
Italian Cultural Institute of Los Angeles
1023 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles
Through March 19

COURTESY RICHARD SAUL WURMAN COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Louis Kahn in Venice, a modestly scaled exhibition of drawings at the Italian Cultural Institute (IIC) in Westwood, explores the creative interaction of Italy and America and an unrealized project by a great modern master. Travel sketches are juxtaposed with the architect's designs for the Palazzo dei Congressi, commissioned in 1968 by the tourist board of Venice. The exhibition was conceived by Francesca Valente, the visionary director of the IIC, who recently retired to Rome; and it was curated by architect Barton Myers, a student and associate of Kahn in the mid 1960s. "It was an unforgettable experience," Myers recalled. "And this was my chance to pay back and enlighten students for whom history begins with the 21st century."

Kahn was a student of the Beaux-Arts curriculum at the University of Pennsylvania, and sketching was an integral part of his design process. He loved charcoal because it allowed him to work quickly and erase with his hands, leaving traces of what was first there. The travel sketches in soft-toned or vibrantly-colored pastels are tiny works of art in their own right, but they are also clues to the way Kahn viewed the buildings and spaces that inspired him. Italy was a crucial stop in his yearlong tour of Europe in 1928–29, and he was architect



A sketch of Kahn's proposed Congress Hall, 1968.

COURTESY LOUIS I. KAHN COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

in residence at the American Academy in Rome at the end of 1950. Those brief sojourns shaped his subsequent work: the mix of intimacy and monumentality that distinguishes the Salk Institute, the Kimball Museum, the Dhaka Capitol and other masterpieces.

For the proposed site of the Palazzo dei Congressi, in the Giardini of Venice, he sketched a 460 x 100-foot suspension structure, supported on massive piers at either end to raise it above the flood level and minimize the number of caissons. The site was judged too sensitive by the city council, and the project was relocated to the Arsenale, where it was to bridge a canal. For this decaying shipyard, shielded from public gaze and hosting innovative art and architecture installations during the Biennales, it was an ideal solution. It would have been the second habit-

able bridge in Venice after the Rialto, as grand as the one proposed by Palladio.

A charcoal presentation drawing, eleven feet wide, shows the sweep of the building's underside, which evokes the Siena Campo as a natural amphitheater and supports banks of seating for 2,500. Kahn described it as a section through a theater in the round, where people would look at people rather than all face one way. A large site model shows how well it would have fit in amid the crumbling warehouses and still waters of the Arsenale. The Venetians were supportive, but the project quietly expired even before Kahn's death in 1974. As an associate explained, "Venice was waiting for money from Rome and the money never came."

MICHAEL WEBB, AN LA-BASED ARCHITECTURE CRITIC, WRITES FREQUENTLY FOR AN.



COURTESY METROPOLIS BOOKS

Chan Krieger Sieniewicz's Greater Boston Food Bank.

rediscovers some sense of the idealism that was the reason so many of us chose to be architects in the first place.

The book examines with illustrations the results of Public Architecture, the non-profit Cary once ran, which encourages architects to consider performing pro bono design work. Both Cary and John Peterson, founder of Public Architecture, have penned an opening pair of essays that compellingly explore the concept of pro bono. If you read nothing but those two essays, you'd have enough ideas to cause you to reexamine your own place in the profession.

The heart of the book, forty stories of completed pro bono projects, is a collection of photographic enticement and prose engagement. Not only do we see these projects well photographed, but we get the thoughts of the architects and clients in the accom-

panying text. How often do clients get to talk directly to the design community about their building project?

The projects, spanning the range of building types, are located across America and were designed by both large and small firms. The 39571 Project, with its broad sweeping roof overhangs designed by SHoP Architects in Katrina-torn Mississippi, is reminiscent of the great practitioner of social architecture, Samuel Mockbee. Fans of Bay Area architect David Baker will find his acclaimed Tassfaronga mixed-use housing project in Oakland designed for Habitat for Humanity. Big firms like Gensler are here as well: their KIPP Academy Campus in Houston exhibits an industrial aesthetic not normally expected from the company.

Implied is the idea that the architecture profession should be making a positive contribution to society at large. While on its surface that is not a radical concept, the history of building and urban

design in America is rife with examples of negative impacts. One would be hard-pressed to think of a more destructive series of projects than the Urban Renewal of the 1950's and 60's with its Pruitt-Igoue's and Cabrini-Green's.

Cary has not given us a definitive answer to how architects can achieve greater purpose and meaning in our professional practice. In an era where climate change, deep recession, and high unemployment reign, we will be expected to answer how we, as designers, builders, and planners, will shape home, neighborhood, city, and country for the greater good. The final answers are not in this book; what is found within its pages are the questions and glimpses from forty architects and clients who are doing some of the work that will be necessary for our future.

GEORGE CALYS IS AN ARCHITECT AND WRITER LIVING IN SAN FRANCISCO.

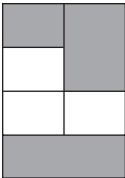
THE GOOD FIGHT

The Power of Pro Bono: 40 Stories about Design for the Public Good by Architects and Their Clients
Edited by John Cary, foreword by Majora Carter, and preface by John Peterson
Metropolis Books, \$40

If you came of age architecturally in the 1970's like I did, you deeply believed in the power of design to fix the world's woes. But somewhere, between the stair details requests for information, and client presentations your chosen profession became... a job. *The Power of Pro Bono*,

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Photograph © Jeff Goldberg/Esto
Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, Polshek Partnership, Architects

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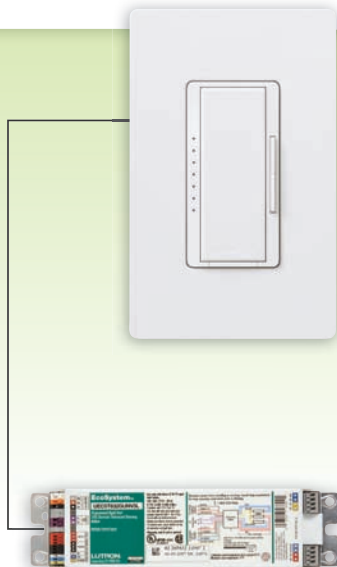
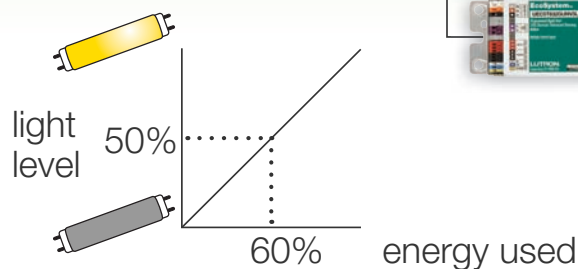
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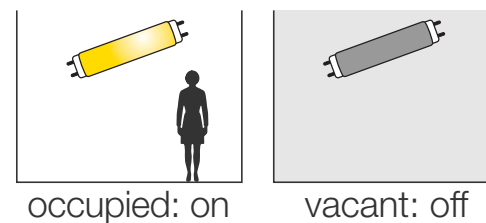
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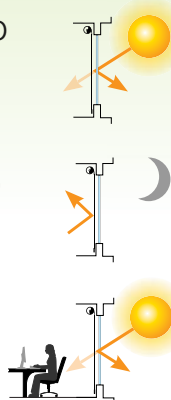
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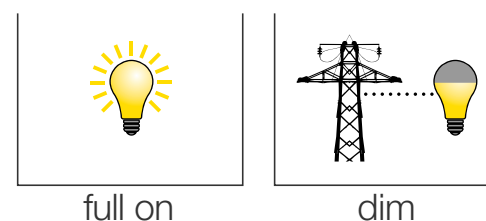
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