

THE WEST ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER

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AT SF ARTS CENTER, MALTZAN SHOWS OFF HOW IT'S DONE

WHAT'S GOING ON

One of the prevailing trends in the design of cultural buildings is to provide a look at how the sausage is made, or, put differently, to show off the work that goes on at the back of the house. This idea is particularly potent when it comes to arts education. Michael Maltzan's just-unveiled Mashouf Performing Arts Center at San Francisco State University (SFSU), which features not one but five performance spaces knitted together with transparent classrooms, is a good example. It's a dream project where theories about creativity, interdisciplinary collaboration, and public

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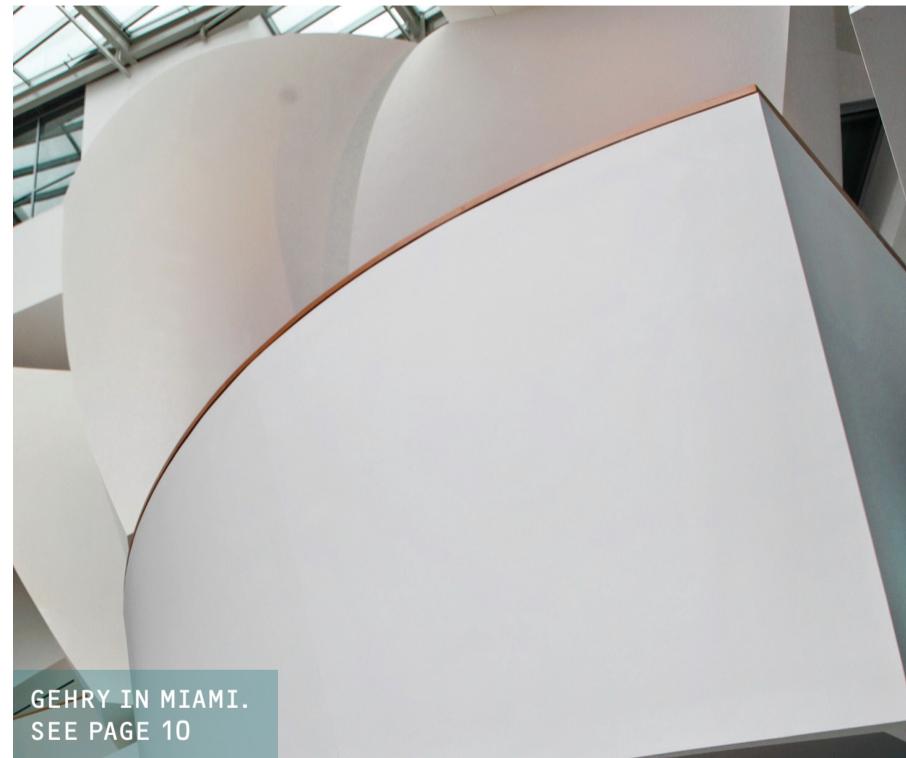
FIELD OPERATIONS SHOWS OFF LATEST PARK PLANS

SANTA MONICA PASTORAL

Despite recently losing Eli Broad's new museum to Downtown LA, Santa Monica still has a very high profile design project moving forward: the Palisades Garden Walk and Town Square. Located on seven acres

of land between Santa Monica City Hall and the Santa Monica Pier, the \$25 million project, designed by James Corner Field Operations, was presented at its sixth and final workshop with the

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GEHRY IN MIAMI.
SEE PAGE 10



LOSSES LEAD TO BEVERLY HILLS FOCUS ON PRESERVATION

A symbol of luxury in America, Beverly Hills likes to think of itself as the tops in many categories. But preservation isn't one of them. After the recent demolition of three significant properties—John Lautner's Shusett House, Sidney Eisenshtat's Friars

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LA BIKE PLAN RETHINKS URBAN DESIGN

TWO-WHEELIN' AMBITION

Early this month, LA City Council voted unanimously to adopt a revised Bicycle Plan, radically improving its bike infrastructure. The latest iteration—the plan hasn't gone through a comprehensive update since 1996—outlines a 1,680-mile network of

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HOPES ARE HIGH THAT AMERICA'S CUP 2013 WILL SPEED DEVELOPMENT OF SF WATERFRONT



REGATTA DAZE

After flirting with Newport, Rhode Island, the organizers of the 34th America's Cup sailing competition, which will take place in 2013, have in the end committed to San Francisco. It's a promising match in a number of ways. Silicon Valley-based Oracle

CEO Larry Ellison, the event's most visible booster, can see his team defend the cup on (almost) home turf; sailing fans get to see the action from the shore, unlike past America's Cup races; and the city gets additional funds and a

[continued on page 6](#)

COURTESY 34TH AMERICA'S CUP



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VOLUME 05, ISSUE 03 MARCH 30, 2011. THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER'S WEST COAST EDITION (ISSN 1552-8081) IS PUBLISHED TEN TIMES A YEAR (JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, DECEMBER) BY THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER, LLC, 21 MURRAY ST., 5TH FL., NEW YORK, NY 10007. SEND ADDRESS CHANGE TO: 21 MURRAY ST., 5TH FL., NEW YORK, NY 10007. FOR SUBSCRIBER SERVICE: CALL 212-966-0630. FAX 212-966-0633. \$3.95 A COPY, \$29.00 ONE YEAR, INTERNATIONAL \$160.00 ONE YEAR, INSTITUTIONAL \$149.00 ONE YEAR. ENTIRE CONTENTS COPYRIGHT 2011 BY THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

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TWO-WHEELIN' AMBITION continued from front page interconnected bikeways, with about 200 more miles to be added every five years. Bike boulevards or "traffic-calmed quiet streets where bikes are a priority" were also introduced, deploying signage, street adjustments, and traffic diverters, which slow cars down and create a safer biking environment.

The plan introduces three new bicycle networks for LA, with a citywide system of bike boulevards, shorter neighborhood paths, and "Green" paths near beaches, parks or other recreational areas.

"In the past the city has only done about 8 to 12 miles a year, so the commitment to do 40 miles a year is a great step forward," said Alexis Lantz, Planning and Policy Director for the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, one of the major voices that shaped the plan.

THE RIGHT WAY

On March 17, *The Architect's Newspaper* hosted a panel discussion in Culver City called BetterHomeBuilding on improving large-scale residential development in Southern California and getting architects more involved with the process. The exchange was one of the liveliest I've been part of in a long time. Clearly, there is much to say and learn about this topic.

All it takes is a visit to the Inland Empire, Orange County, the outskirts of Sacramento or many parts of Silicon Valley to understand that the mass produced housing stock in our country has become, with a few welcome exceptions, architecturally, urbanistically, and morally bankrupt.

Homeowner interests—and to some extent even their tastes—are dictated by a group of well-heeled homebuilding companies, and the banks agreeing to fund them selectively, that often have little stake in architectural quality. Their "designs" are vastly unoriginal, have little to do with respecting or taking advantage of context, and are particularly obsessed with a drippy nostalgia. They rarely connect to any sort of human-scaled or mixed-use neighborhoods, and contribute little to the overall urban fabric. Design is one of the smallest factors considered. Much more important are economies of scale, cookie-cutter replication, a sense of "prestige" or perceived luxury—and, of course, profit whether for the developer/banker in the moment or for the homeowner at resale time.

Architects are not a vital part of this process. As architect William Krisel, who has a long track record of being involved in these kinds of projects, said on the panel, architects have in large part "abdicated their role" of building across America.

To get back in the game, architects need to take several steps. For one they can team with developers or develop their own solutions for affordable homebuilding. Fledgling examples include developer/architect teams like Proto Homes, Piece Homes, and even the low cost work by Marmol Radziner at Mountainview mobile-home park. These schemes take advantage of mass production technologies but still respect design as a way to solve problems. Architects—who have a reputation for catering only to the rich in the realm of housing (including high cost prefab schemes)—are not entirely innocent. It starts at school, where they need to teach budget and business and a little less ego—and continues in their practices. And they need to learn, as Krisel did, how builders work and how to offer them the most value. How many architects have been to a homebuilders show? How many really know what homebuilders need from them?

Of course, easier said than done. Architects have been trying for years, and most feel like they've been banging their heads against a (faux) brick wall. The market has become much more complicated, and builders larger and more bound to their public shareholders than in Krisel's day. Architects need the organizational support of groups like the AIA, the American Planning Association, and others. If more than 90 percent of our country's building is not being done by architects then that's an institutional issue. And these groups, as well as publications like *AN*, have an obligation, too, to make it clear to all (not just to other architects) that there is inherent, and bankable, value to good design.

Despite the prevalent idea in the homebuilding community that contemporary design is the kiss of death, there is an audience for it. And it is the obligation of the smart architect to figure out how to combine the contemporary with the affordable in a way that catches the eye of enlightened developers. Only then will developers, and eventually banks, follow as these schemes show they can turn a profit. Sure, it will be a lengthy process, but architects can't expect a quick fix. Nor is it about making all building contemporary—but there should be more options for homeowners. But quality should not be optional, no matter the price point. Anyone who doubts the ability of top architects to make high quality but affordable designs should look at the elegant, responsive, comfortable, and inspiring tract houses made by Krisel, Jones and Emmons, Cliff May, and developers like the Eichlers. It can happen again. In fact, it is urgent that it does, because unless something is done our landscape will continue to be marred with poor quality, banal sprawl that is actually very carefully thought out: just not from a design perspective. **SAM LUBELL**

The city currently has only 378 miles of existing and planned bikeways.

Major road changes could begin as soon as July on 7th Street from Koreatown to Downtown and will include a "road diet" with a car lane in each direction replaced by a bike lane. The city's first bike boulevard will likely be on 4th Street and Catalina, also in Koreatown. While there are no final designs, a rendering from Aaron Kuehn of AARLINE shows how an S-shape "diverter" would move cars off the bike boulevard. The city is looking at using part of the Measure R funds earmarked for bicycle and pedestrian projects to fund it.

"Mobility hubs" offering various travel options and services, are also on the table, said Claire Bowin, a planner at the LA City Planning Department. One station is already planned for the plaza fronting the Los Angeles

Convention Center. Contracted by LA's Community Redevelopment Agency, Deborah Murphy Urban Design + Planning designed a one story, 2,300-square-foot facility with a generous 4,800-square-foot canopy and an LED display wall with integrated photovoltaics. Its amenities include restricted long-term parking, bike lockers, a repair shop, as well as changing areas and showers. The station is being funded through the Metro's 2009 call for projects and may be implemented in 2012. Others are planned, but are still in very early plan stages.

Other policies in the works to make LA more bike-friendly include lobbying the state to include bicycles in its definition of "traffic," mandating more bike parking spaces in neighborhoods, and starting awareness-education programs. **CARREN JAO**

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across one or two floors down and see each other, even call out, 'Hey, John! Come up here!' said Jernigan.

While Gensler plans to maintain the jewel box's 1970s architectural style, it will take advantage of the building's 100-foot wide and 30-foot high windows to create a splashy interior, making use of bright colors, especially the firm's signature

red, meant to draw eyes inward. "We want people to see the building and think unequivocally 'Oh, that's the Gensler building,'" said Jernigan. The design team is also using parametric software to generate surface patterns on aluminum, which will be laser cut and used as a feature wall in the new office.

Gensler is fast-tracking construction of the space. Steel has already been bought for the new floor addition and the building's reinforcements are being upgraded to take the additional load.

According to Jernigan, construction should be finished by mid-October, and ready for move-in by November. **CJ**

Architect: Gensler
Client: Gensler
Location: 525 South Flower Street, Los Angeles
Completion: Fall 2011

UNVEILED

GENSLER'S DOWNTOWN LA HEADQUARTERS

Architecture giant Gensler has announced its move to downtown Los Angeles after 20 years in Santa Monica. The firm recently signed a 12-year lease to occupy the top two floors of the three-floor "jewel box" that sits between two 52-story towers at City National Plaza. Like the towers, the jewel box is clad in glass, but behind the glass Gensler plans to install a color-changing "curtain" made of lasercut metal panels and LED lighting.

A six-month study led by the firm's Strategy & Brand Design Studio director Lance Carlson found that most of the work at Gensler was done in groups rather than in

"focused, heads down work." As a result, the firm's current H-shaped office layout, which effectively compartmentalized teams, will give way to a more open and transparent layout built for group work. Gensler is amping the number of collaborative spaces from eight to 30 in the jewel box. Conference rooms and collaborative areas will be placed at the nucleus, while more private spaces will be at the fringes.

The firm plans to convert its two floors into three by adding a mezzanine level that will hang from the top floor, and a large central atrium to allow sunlight to stream from the 30-foot by 50-foot skylight, creating what principal Rob Jernigan calls a "vertical connectivity zone" to create more opportunities for interaction. "You'll be able to look

engineering firms like Parsons-Brinkerhoff, Arup, and HNTB, are moving the projects toward construction with preliminary studies, with the scope of their work divided into nine sections across the state, and proceeding independently. A total of nine regional contracts were awarded in 2007, most of them lasting five years.

The first 120-mile segment of the project is scheduled to begin construction in 2012, linking Fresno to Bakersfield, a strategic decision allowing the Authority to build the 220 mile per hour high-speed section first and then move both northward and southward simultaneously.

The move from planning into design began with the February 8th publication of an RFEI (Request for Expressions of Interest) in the Design and Construction of the Fresno to Bakersfield section, and the future "design, construction, funding, operations, and maintenance" of any part of High Speed Rail's Phase 1 program, planned for completion by 2020. Due March 16, this is not a formal Request for Proposals but, according to the Authority, a way for it to refine what it's looking for, and an opportunity for the professional community to provide input.

"Anything we can gain from the RFEI is important to us," CHSRA CEO, Roelof van Ark told an industry

well known. First, some overall numbers: There will be 800 miles of track and up to 24 stations, running from San Diego to San Francisco and Sacramento. According to the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), a trip from Los Angeles to San Diego will take one hour and 18 minutes, and a trip to San Francisco will take an astonishing two hours and 38 minutes.

Consultants, led by major



COURTESY AECOM

MODERNIZATION DRIVE ADDS 50 NEW STATE COURTHOUSES

COURT APPEAL

Across California many county seats are marked by historic courthouses, graced with stately domes, columns, and other references to ancient times. But a wave of new construction is bringing new courthouses of some contemporary distinction to more than half of the counties in California, from one-courtroom buildings high in the Sierras to a 71-courtroom facility in San Diego. The selection of architects is equally wide-ranging, with 36 firms ranging from established names like HOK, Richard Meier + Partners, and SOM, to small but well-regarded offices like San Francisco's Mark Cavagnero Associates and San Diego's Safdie Rabines Architects. In February the state's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), which is running the \$6.7 billion modernization program, announced the commission of the last 13 projects for a total of 59.

"We're not trying to make palaces, but we have an unparalleled opportunity to make a significant addition to 50 civic centers and downtowns," said Clifford Ham, principal architect for the state's Office of Court Construction and Management. "We're going to be changing

the context of a lot of communities." The wave of court building was prompted by legislation in 2002, which transferred responsibility for court facilities from the counties to the state, an arrangement that about half the states in the U.S. have arrived at. The funding comes from a bond measure passed in 2008 (Senate Bill 1407). To date, seven courthouses have been completed, with the remainder anticipated by 2016.

Judging by the designs revealed so far, there will be great variation in what the courthouse of the 21st century looks like: it could be a modern office tower or an updated lodge. Breaking ground this spring, AECOM's Long Beach courthouse is a five-story glass-and-steel building with a large courtyard and naturally-lit courtrooms. Contra Costa County's courthouse, designed by HOK, has a handsome limestone facade and a green roof. The more modest one-story, single-courtroom Plumas-Sierra courthouse by Nacht & Lewis has a pitched roof and wood-beamed ceiling. "We made a conscious effort to employ architects that may not have done court buildings before, instead of just the six or eight usual suspects," said Ham.

New design guidelines emphasize functionality, durability, and ease of maintenance, as well as sustainability and energy efficiency (LEED Silver is currently prescribed). Each wave of projects has also brought the architects together for a design excellence forum. "You can sense the holistic attention they're giving to the program, which is quite different from the usual project-by-project focus," said Mallory Cusenberry of the Sonoma firm RossDrulisCusenberry, which is working on courthouses in Plumas and Sutter Counties. "I think it will help create a consistently high level of performance where the quality of all the projects are raised by the quality of the others." **LYDIA LEE**



THE LATEST ON CALIFORNIA'S HIGH SPEED RAIL PLANS

TRACKING

In February Vice President Biden announced an additional \$53 billion federal investment in National High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail funding in the next six years, helping bring the total amount of funds for California's High Speed Rail project up to well over \$3 billion, with possibly more coming as a result of the \$2 billion rejected by states like Florida, Wisconsin, and Ohio. Money may be pouring in, but little else about the project is

group in early March in LA. The formal Request for Proposals will be released by the end of this year, he said, and the first construction contracts should be awarded in the second half of 2012.

The Authority has suggested that it will pursue design/build project delivery, which, considering the scale of the project, suggests the use of the same multi-national engineering firms currently working on alignment and environmental studies. Still, van Ark has affirmed that the CHSRA is making a special effort to include small businesses and will encourage its large contractors to do the same. "We want to deal fairly with our small business partners," said van Ark.

In general, station design, according to recently drafted Authority guidelines, will support local development standards and goals, privileging transit-oriented development, sustainable infill, and some additional amenities (parks, bike lanes, etc.) around station sites. The first two stations to be unveiled—HOK's glassy Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center and Pelli Clarke Pelli's swooping Transbay Transit Center—have been designed as intermodal centers supporting both local and regional rail.

Visual Design Guidelines, in partnership with the City of San Jose, for the San Jose-Merced project section, governing both "functional and iconic design" in the city. In addition, "Citizen Working Groups" will be part of the Visual Design Guideline process, signaling a transparent methodology for the CHSRA in urban areas.

Meanwhile on March 3 the Authority moved forward with an "alternatives analysis," further studying station designs, track alignments, and community concerns. So far the CHSRA has conducted over 800 community meetings.

With nearly \$10 billion committed so far by the State of California and at least \$3.3 billion coming from the Federal government, the CHSRA continues to advocate for private sector funding as well. How that will fall into place is still unknown, but the RFEI is meant to help the Authority figure that out. In the meantime, preparations for construction continue, in the hope that funding will be in place as it is needed.

NOAM MAITLESS



THE CULT OF BJARKE

From the line of people snaking fully around LACMA's main auditorium on March 3, it looked like a rock star had arrived. And it was, sort of. The Danish starchitect and marketing genius **Bjarke Ingels**, founder of BIG (Bjarke Ingels Design), was giving one of his high-energy lectures. Way beyond the usual slides and navel gazing, this talk was mostly of music videos: including the man himself riding a bike around his Danish Pavilion at the Shanghai Expo (scored by the Black Eyed Peas); and another featuring a couple of young Parkour experts jumping around his Mountain Dwelling in Copenhagen (this time to the music of Notwist). He also showed off his comic, er, book, *Yes Is More*, which he describes as "An Archicomic on Architectural Revolution." This man has the star-making routine down—Worked at OMA: Check. Graphic novel: Check. Unlimited energy: Check. Clever catch phrases: Check. Funky hair: Check. Bingo!

CAMEO CLASS

A couple of months ago we reported that LA's resident starchitect, **Frank Gehry**, would be teaching a graduate class at USC. We now hear that Frank won't be flying solo. He will be *leading*, while most of the actual teaching will be done by a group including architect **Aaron Neubert**; Gehry Partners architects **Edwin Chan** and **Craig Webb**; and KCRW design reporter **Frances Anderton**. The topic: rethinking LA's Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), originally designed by **Arata Isozaki**. The studio will also re-examine LA's ephemeral Grand Avenue.

OFF THE TRACK

High-speed rail advocacy group RailLA has hit a bump in the road. A power struggle on the board has led to the resignation of almost half its members. The long and short seems to be that some of the board wanted the organization to be policy-driven, while others want it to be education and support-driven. Remaining board members say it's about two members moving out of town, and that the mission remains the same. In any case, double the fun. We now have our first ever (as far as we know) high-speed rail splinter group: Rethink LA (www.rethink.la), dedicated to re-imagining the city from an, ahem, holistic point of view.

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SFSU's main auditorium.

level running the length of the complex. Four smaller theaters, to accommodate all sorts of performances, will follow in two more phases.

"The building is almost like a city. It is meant to act like a small campus with those spaces and connective elements," said Maltzan. "There's one continuous horizontal layer, which connects across the entire project and many different disciplines. With informal as well as formal spots, in the choreography of that mix, you create the culture of the college."

The triangular site will inform the complex layout of the building, which will emphasize slanted lines, from the sloping balconies in the main performance hall to the zigzagging framework over the ramps. Triangular shapes will be repeated in large outdoor courtyards interspersed among the major performance spaces. At the corner of the site pointing to the center of campus, the horizontal circulation band, raised elsewhere, will dip down to earth to provide an easy entryway for artistically inclined students. The precise facade material had not been determined at press time.

The entire building will be wired to capture performances and rehearsals, and broadcast studios will allow students to edit performances in real time. The team of subcontractors includes Nagata Acoustics and Sonitus, who both worked on Frank Gehry's New World Symphony hall in Miami.

WHAT'S GOING ON continued from front page engagement all come to the fore.

SFSU offers the largest program for arts training in Northern California; its alumni include Annette Bening and Danny Glover as well several prominent producers and directors. The school's programs in drama, dance, music, and broadcast journalism had been grouped together in a 1956 building that suffers from poor flow and lack of universal access.

"We knew we needed to build a new classroom space, but we also wanted a calling card to solicit partnerships with public arts institutions," said Kurt Daw, Dean of the College of Creative Arts. "It needed to be an iconic building, and we had a real mandate to look for someone very forward-thinking about the arts and nonprofits in general."

Maltzan prevailed in an RFQ process that narrowed down the competition to a short-list of six, including Diller Scofidio + Renfro, who are designing the nearby Berkeley Art Museum as well as Eli Broad's new museum in Downtown LA.

The \$250 million performance and education center, which will comprise a total of 242,000 square feet, has no obvious precedent at a public university. The first phase of construction will include a 1,200-seat opera-style theater and an undulating circulation

area. The arts center will not be visible from the main approach to the university on 19th Street; but it will give SFSU a new visual identity on its west side along Lake Merced Boulevard. The LEED-Gold project will be funded by a \$200 million state bond measure, which has yet to be submitted to voters, along with \$50 million from private donors. The school has raised \$12 million of the \$18.5 million needed to kick off the first phase. It hopes to break ground by 2013 and finish all phases of construction in nine years. **LL**

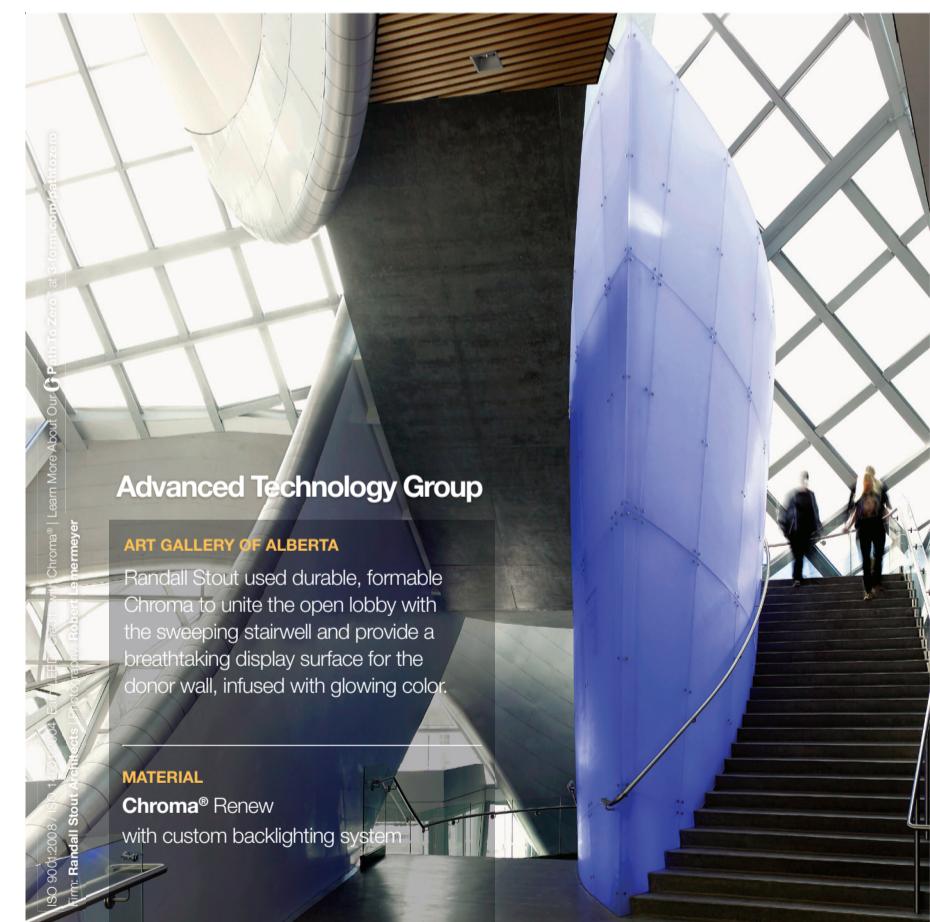
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COURTESY MUSEUM ASSOCIATES/LACMA

Renzo Piano has finally completed his work at LACMA with Ray's, a restaurant named after Ray Stark, the late film producer whose Fran and Ray Stark Foundation played a major role in the museum's transformation. Like much of Piano's work at LACMA, the eatery—located next to Piano's new outdoor pavilion and across the way from his Broad Contemporary Art Museum (BCAM) and Resnick Pavilion—is a simple modernist structure, with large floor to ceiling glass walls meant to soak up its artsy surroundings. Red I-beams and a thin canopy punctuate an otherwise minimal composition. Perhaps the most compelling elements are the space's fine art pieces, many from the museum's collections. This includes teacups from Eva Zeisel, Russel Wright, and Keith Murray; a large interlocking hanging textile by Bernard Kester; cube-inspired video art by Brody Condon; and classic furniture by Charles and Ray Eames, Herman Miller and Eero Saarinen. The simple space adds a dose of mid-century liveliness to the west end of the ever-evolving museum.



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COURTESY FIELD OPERATIONS

Clockwise from left: The park's restrooms will be built into a hillside; the Grand Bluff's steel viewing platforms stand out; the Discovery Bay's large slides will be wide enough to fit several people at a time.

According to Switkin, plants will be plentiful and varied, an effort to diversify the city's limited vegetation and to emphasize Southern California's subtle seasons. Trees and plants will include western sycamores, torre pines, ficus, oaks, and strawberries; other plantings will include four- to five-foot tall wild grasses, native wildflowers, and several types of succulents.

In order to draw people in from a congested area near several major streets and even a freeway, the firm has created notable architectural elements. Most will be made of stainless steel slats and complemented with curved precast concrete benches. The most dramatic will be the large clamshell-shaped steel viewing platforms located on the Grand Bluff.

"You have so many other attractions in Santa Monica. The Palisades Park, the Santa Monica Pier, and the 3rd Street Promenade. This begged for a new and unique identity," pointed out Switkin. The project will go to the city council for a vote this June. Construction is expected to start next spring, with completion by spring 2013. **SL**



SANTA MONICA PASTORAL continued from front page Santa Monica community in late February.

As AN previously reported, Field Operations—the architects of New York's High Line, among other high profile parks across the country—

won the commission over a year ago, beating out teams including Gehry Partners and Peter Walker and Partners. Their highly ambitious, layered proposal will be broken up into a number of "systems," a collection of colorful and topo-

graphically diverse zones, each meant for a different use and experience. That will include view-centric hills, sheltered bays, and meandering pathways surrounded by plants, fountains, and small creeks. The Grand Bluff will afford

the best views of the ocean and neighboring vicinity; the Garden Hill will include the widest variety of plant life on the site; the Gathering Hill is meant for congregation and relaxation; and the Discovery Bay will be a play area for both children and adults and will feature an area shaded by large trees that will contain extra-large steel slides, forts, and other activities. A community focal point will be the Town Square, a flat area with a large reflecting pool meant to defer to the Art Deco architecture (and landmark status) of Santa Monica's City Hall.

"We want people to have several ways of experiencing the park," said Associate Partner Lisa Switkin, who added that "the topography gives it a very clear structure."

The sinuous, braided, and often hilly project was inspired largely by the Arroyo Wash, a dried riverbed that once ran through the site.

director of the Port of San Francisco, which owns the event's primary sites. After the 1991 Loma Prieta earthquake, the city developed a Waterfront Land Use Plan that restricts the waterfront to public uses and forbids hotels and high rises over water.

New construction agreed to by the city includes the \$25 million Brannan St. Wharf, a public green. The event authority will foot the bill for other permanent infrastructure improvements, including \$55 million to shore up Piers 30-32 just south of the Bay Bridge, and \$7 million to clear the Pier 27 site and remove the existing building. In return, the event authority will get long-term development rights for Piers 30-32 and Seawall Lot 330. The new Exploratorium science museum, designed by EHDD, is also expected to open around that time on Pier 15, so the entire zone between the Ferry Building and Fisherman's Wharf will see a flurry of activity.

A modern version of the industrial warehouses along the piers, the 96,000-square-foot, \$70 million cruise terminal is being designed as a flexible structure able to

accommodate various events as well as cruise arrivals and departures. The top level will be glassed-in on three sides, while the lower level will have glass roll-up garage doors to allow events to open to the outdoors. "We're trying to reflect the working nature of port buildings," said Ryan Stevens, director of design for KMD.

The event organizers estimate that the city will gain about 800 jobs lasting a year and up to \$1.5 billion in economic activity, as well as the undefined value of greater visibility in the maritime industry. "This really is a unique maritime use, and we hope it will activate people's imaginations about the possibilities of this area," said Stern.

SOM, who worked for the city on the presentation used to entice the race organizers to stay in San Francisco, had painted an architectural vision for the America's Cup. Their rendering of an amphitheatre that resembled an airy Calatrava bridge is, alas, likely to remain a rendering.

Stern pointed out, "The event is not about architecture—it's about the architecture of the boats."

LL



COURTESY 34TH AMERICAS CUP

REGATTA DAZE continued from front page significant impetus to improve its waterfront.

The event's infrastructure, temporary buildings, and event operations along a wide swath of the city's waterfront—including several piers and sites such as Fort Mason, Crissy Field, Alcatraz, and Treasure Island—are estimated to cost sever-

al hundred million dollars. To reach the finish line, the city is fast-tracking the EIR process, which requires approvals from at least 16 local, state, and federal regulatory agencies by the end of the year.

The master planning, engineering, and design of temporary structures is being overseen by AECOM, which has been involved since the city

began pursuing the project, while the event headquarters located in the new cruise terminal at Pier 27 will be designed by KMD and Pfau Long Architecture and is now on an accelerated schedule.

"We've had a plan for 20 years, but this gives us a huge ability to actually implement it," said Jonathan Stern, assistant deputy



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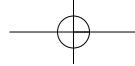


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Clockwise from top left:
The dark metallic skin is structural; the entrance awning; an open courtyard is at the core of the house; diagonal bracing at the roofline provides bracing against earthquakes; a balcony integrated into the structural facade.



When the earthquake hit, a house in suburban Tokyo by two LA architects stood its ground thanks to a close collaboration with a local engineer. Eric Kahn and Russell Thomsen of LA firm Idea Office recently completed the 1,050 square foot home for a couple in Saitama, Japan, a northern suburb of Tokyo. Neighbors came around to look at the construction site on a regular basis, not just intrigued with its foreign architects, but with the very contemporary design that clearly stood out from the rest of the street, whose homes—unlike common conceptions

of Japanese architecture—were mostly traditional.

The biggest challenge for Kahn and Thomsen was to accomplish tasks that seemed to be in direct opposition: to make the house feel open but private; make it feel big while being small; to avoid harsh sun but fill it with light; and to make it stand out but fit into the neighborhood.

While other houses in the neighborhood are set back from the street with small, basically ornamental, gardens in front, the architects built a steel-framed house that folds out at the entrance, containing a

grassy courtyard inside mounted with hovering steel benches and angled walls that unobtrusively provide extra bracing. The fold out increases the sense of space inside the house and provides privacy for the family.

"We brought a California idea to Japan," said Kahn, of the garden and terrace, not to mention the feeling of breeziness.

To maintain a sense of openness inside, the insulated metal panel skin has both punched openings on one side and sliding glass doors on the other. Kahn said that the building

likes to "leak" light, but receives no harsh direct sunlight.

A large steel brise-soleil and a steel mesh screen wall provide more sun protection and privacy. Polycarbonate panels on the lower level further enforce the effect of glowing sunlight matched with privacy; they also make the house appear to float. Meanwhile, the location of living areas on the second and third floors of the house at the rear of the site help the family maintain privacy; rounding out what is a densely packed, highly efficient volume.

Taking advantage of a

culture where contractors take utmost pride in their work, the architects were able to build this small but complex structure in just eight months; there were no fees for changes, and the architects and contractors were on the same page the whole time, say Kahn and Thomsen. The house's braced steel frame structure on a foundation of 24 concrete friction piles fortunately held up well in the country's recent earthquake, which was centered about two hours north of Saitama.

The structural steel skin is dark, helping the project recede, but its dramatic folding entrance is also a large draw for the neighborhood. In fact, the same neighbors who were once leery of the project now bring friends by constantly, as do the project's workers, who come regularly with their families to show off their work. **SL**

From left: The dark facade is lit from deep within; the open kitchen and main stair; floating stair continues to the lower level.





John Lautner's Shusett House was torn down last year. It was widely considered one of his early masterpieces.

Age Modern building, one of several important buildings designed by Sidney Eisenshtat, was taken down in the city's commercial district. The building was the home of famous roasts by the likes of Jack Benny, Frank Sinatra, Milton Berle, Sammy Davis Jr. and Billy Crystal, and was also eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Places. Eisenshtat was well known for high-profile buildings like the city's Temple Emmanuel. But the Friars Club was unprotected by Beverly Hills. According to Lait that demolition didn't require review because its owners had presented no proposed project for its site. (When asked if this represented a loophole in the city's preservation review, Lait replied:

"That's how our regulations are.") The empty site still has no specific plans.

Finally, in February Beverly Hills approved the destruction of Derrah's 1935 Durant Drive apartments, a five-unit colo-

THREE STRIKES continued from front page Club, and Robert Derrah's Durant Drive Apartments—preservationists, and some locals, have had enough with the city's lack of preservation laws.

Despite zoning regulations that allow for the listing of significant buildings, the city has no legal protections for historic properties: no preservation ordinance, and not even tax incentives for developers to renovate historic properties. And Beverly Hills isn't alone. More than half of LA County's cities do not have preservation ordinances to protect their historic properties.

"A lot of communities don't wake up to it until they lose something significant,"

said LA Conservancy director of advocacy Adrian Scott Fine.

The first recent loss came in August of last year, when the curving Shusett House (1950), considered one of Lautner's most important early works, was torn down by its owner, Enrique Manheim. Preservationists, including the John Lautner Foundation, had pleaded with the owner to keep or even move the house, to no avail. According to Jonathan Lait, Beverly Hills' Assistant Director for Community Development, discretionary review, which may have looked at the building's historic significance, is not mandated in the Shusett house's area of the city.

This January the 1961 Friars Club, a windowless, Atomic

nial building arranged around a generous courtyard, in favor of a 14-unit condo project. Derrah is famous for designing the ebullient Crossroads of the World in Hollywood, among other notable buildings. More than 500 local residents signed a petition against the destruction of the property. While that building did merit a review, Lait said the city decided that the need for affordable housing (which the condos will contain a portion of) trumped those of the building.

The Conservancy and other groups have called the losses a disaster for the city. "The character of the place can change real quickly if you don't pay attention," said Fine. "They're going to lose what makes the place unique unless they put in some laws that afford some real protection," added Brian Turner, an attorney for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Western Regional Office.

According to the Beverly Hills' General Plan, local regulations regarding historic resources are limited to the Beverly Hills Architectural Commission, which has the power to maintain a list of historic landmarks but holds

no authority over saving those properties. The city's zoning code reinforces the commission's ability to maintain a list of locally landmarked buildings, which could, for example, hold water in an environmental review process. But since the code was established in 1975, not a single property has been listed as a historic landmark.

"We need to carefully balance the need for preservation with property owner rights," said Lait, who noted that the definition of a cultural landmark in a city where

celebrities have lived in almost every building becomes very difficult. Architectural landmarks, he said, are more straightforward.

Lait says that the city is making strides to improve its preservation rules. On March 1 the city council directed its staff to develop an ordinance to allow local building owners to receive tax incentives for renovation through the Mills Act. Meanwhile the city is investigating a preservation ordinance but has made no movement yet.

"At present it's not an active work plan for us, but it is on our future work plan list. It's something that has been

discussed. We have some other things that are ahead of it," said Lait.

According to the LA Conservancy's most recent survey, over 50 cities in Los Angeles County lack historic preservation ordinances. "Some communities don't see it as a fundamental aspect of planning," said Fine, adding that many assume they can depend on inclusion on state and national registers for protection. But these lists, he said, are largely honorific. Protecting historic Modernist buildings can be even more challenging, since they don't always "look" historic, added Fine. "History didn't stop in 1945," he noted. A total of about 2,500 cities across the nation have historic preservation ordinances, said Fine. Los Angeles passed its ordinance back in 1962.

Fine added that the Conservancy would be happy to help Beverly Hills draft its own ordinance. "But it's up to the leadership to step up," he said. "It's not about freezing a community in time. It's about basic planning so you don't wipe away the history and character of your community."

SL

LIGHT DOES NOT ILLUMINATE, IT TELLS A STORY.

Ettore Sottsass

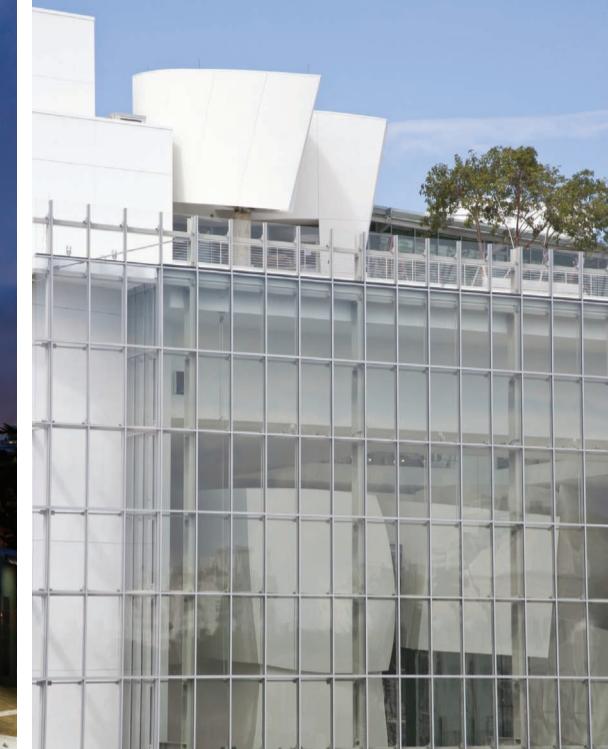
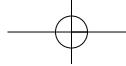


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CLAUDIA URIBE



Clockwise from top left: the building's main facade is part projection wall and part glass curtain wall; the glazed facade is reinforced for hurricane weather; the highly flexible auditorium has movable tiered seating; Gehry's expression is most evident in the interior.

Nearly five decades after founding his Los Angeles-based practice, Frank Gehry is such the quintessential starchitect that it is easy to forget that he was once a Southern California practitioner just working out problems—something that gets lost in his later, more expressive signature works. Venice and Santa Monica are peppered with his hits and misses. Without CATIA's sophisticated computer effects, the early works can be a mash-up of material choices and forms, but in hindsight, there's a delight in the awkwardness. So, it's a surprise to find that the New World Symphony

in Miami Beach, which opened on January 25, is pleasantly retrospective.

The 100,641-square-foot building is a part of a three-block development project in downtown Miami Beach, just steps from Lincoln Road. (Herzog and de Meuron's high-class parking lot, 1111 Lincoln Road, is several blocks away.) It's sandwiched between a 557-space parking structure that Gehry has designed at the back and a public park by Dutch landscape architecture firm West 8 at its front, with both sides feeding a music-going public into the building.

As an institution, the New World Symphony offers

professional training in orchestral music and performance to young music school graduates, so in addition to a 756-seat concert hall and public lobby, the building's hefty program required classrooms, rehearsal spaces, and offices. Yielding to Florida's strict hurricane restrictions, Gehry squeezed it all within four, mostly flat facades.

Michael Tilson Thomas is the New World Symphony's founder and artistic director. He and Gehry are old friends, but the collaboration between these two icons at the peak of their respective careers seems uneasy. At a press

conference held the summer before the opening, the charismatic Thomas, attempting to act out the creative exchange between designer and client, interviewed Gehry in front of several dozen New York City journalists. Where Thomas' questions were expressive, Gehry's answers were perfunctory. The same can be said about the building's main facade, which is adjacent to the public park and speaks to their artistic collaboration. One half is MTT territory: a 7,000-square-foot white stucco exterior projection wall that will be used for a wide variety of outdoor video programming, including public simulcasts

of concerts going on inside. The other half is given over to an 80-foot-high glass curtain wall. The beefy structure needed to hold back the Gulf Coast's breezes by engineers Gilsanz, Murray, Steficek is behind the glazed surface. Gehry's sculptural gestures are kept to a minimum—just a few rain canopy flourishes to mark the entrance.

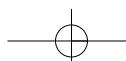
Once inside, Gehry gets a chance for playful geometries reminiscent of his beachier days. The composition recalls the village-like Edgemar Development in Santa Monica that he designed in the mid-1980s—smallish retail and gallery pavilions clustered around a central plaza. In Miami Beach, a sky-lit atrium cuts through the middle of the building. Although enclosed, it has the feel of a courtyard. Object-like practice and rehearsal rooms cluster in one corner (each wired to the teeth with fiber-optic cable and theatrical lighting for potential broadcast). An open, curvy stair ascends through the space, linking the ground floor to the concert hall's upper galleries and the academy's offices. All convex and concave surfaces are painted white, leaving them neutral enough to serve as backdrop for video projections or event lighting (think Design Miami). The blue

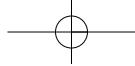
titanium canopy (Gehry's one metal moment) that shelters the glass concession bar is a singular hit of color.

Although similar in program, Disney Hall and the New World Symphony's performance space do not lend themselves to comparison. The two differ widely in scope, scale, and budget. The Floridian auditorium suffers from an overabundance of technical wizardry. Flexibility reigns: a shape-shifting main stage endlessly reconfigures and smaller performance platforms dot the hall; tiers of seating can be removed for dance parties or added for intima chamber music ensembles; a large window can be opened to the bustle of the street or shaded.

Meanwhile, a suite of video projectors and cameras are positioned to capture every move in the nearly all-white room. Gehry also designed the white and teal brush-stroke patterned seats upholstery (apparently to reflect a kind of cruise-ship chic). The project's limitations turned the atrium into a worthwhile nostalgic trip through the architect's mid-career oeuvre, but it's a free-for-all in the auditorium. With so many options, one wishes for more of the one with a little restraint.

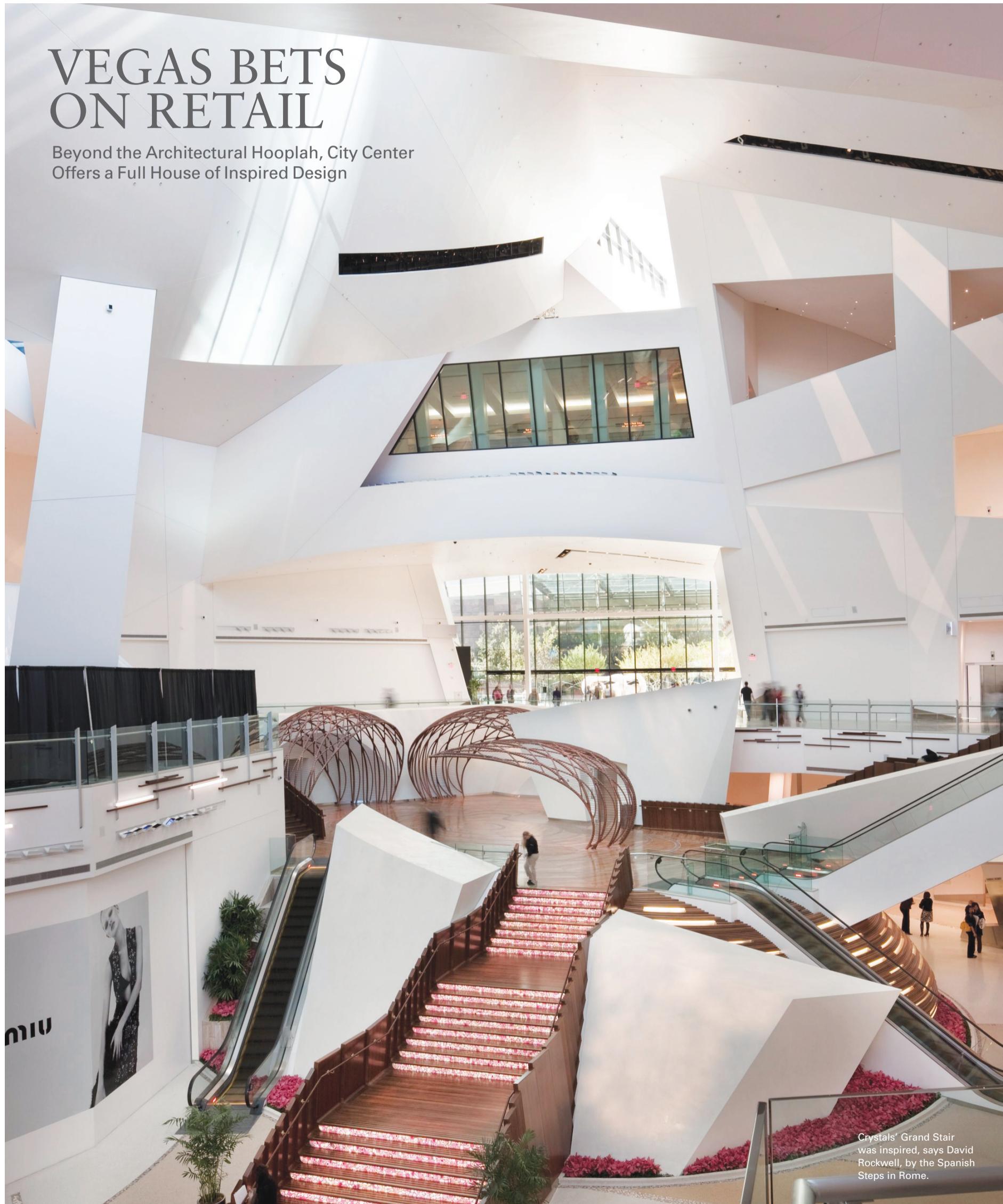
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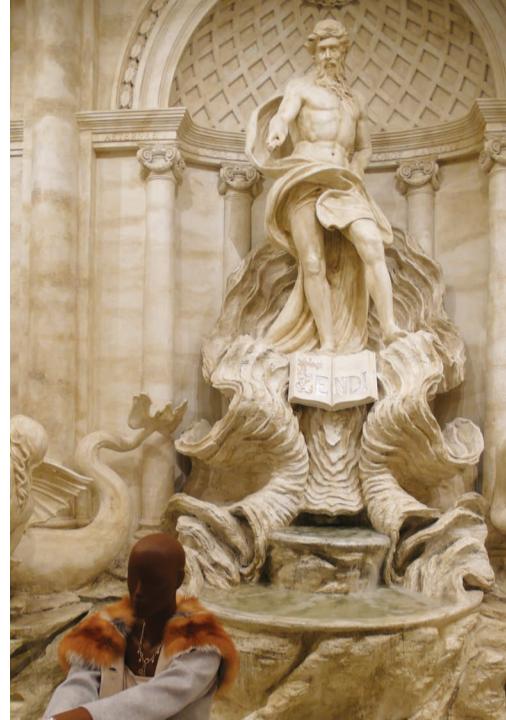
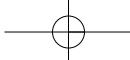
VEGAS BETS ON RETAIL

Beyond the Architectural Hooplah, City Center Offers a Full House of Inspired Design



Crystals' Grand Stair was inspired, says David Rockwell, by the Spanish Steps in Rome.

COURTESY LAS VEGAS CITY CENTER



SHOPS

The Las Vegas Strip may sparkle, but don't let that fool you: the city is still hurting. Casinos aren't as bubbly, hotel rooms are a lot cheaper, and shopping districts are not ringing with cash register ka-chings.

But the shine is still on ultra high-end retail companies like Gucci, Fendi and Prada. And for the intrepid design fan—wear sun-glasses!—these retailers offer plenty of new

twists on old retail formulas. Still new after a year, the emirate-grade retail at Las Vegas City Center's Crystals within the hotel/casino/residential/entertainment complex is ambitiously over-the-top, using contemporary architectural high-jinx to outshine Vegas' fake castles and faux world capitals.

Last year, the media went wild over the \$9 billion City Center, focusing on its

architecture. No surprise, it was built by a run of star talent, including Rafael Viñoly, Daniel Libeskind, Helmut Jahn, Norman Foster, and Cesar Pelli. But Crystals' retail designs hold their own with dynamic, layered, and sometimes surprisingly original designs.

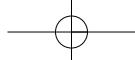
MGM, the complex's owner, encouraged the center's retailers to try different moves from their other stores.

And in the formula-obsessed retail world that wasn't easy. Most, but not all, obliged. And it paid off. Unlike other Vegas retailers, preoccupied with portraying extreme luxury over design innovation, these stores are making design the centerpiece: experimenting with creative forms, textures, technologies, and spatial experiences. While other new retail outlets have opened up in places like the Wynn's new Encore and at the Venetian's new Palazzo, and others, including Caesars' Forum Shops have undergone major renovations, none of them come close to the architectural ambition expressed here. When Crystals opened last year it was only 40% full. Now it's

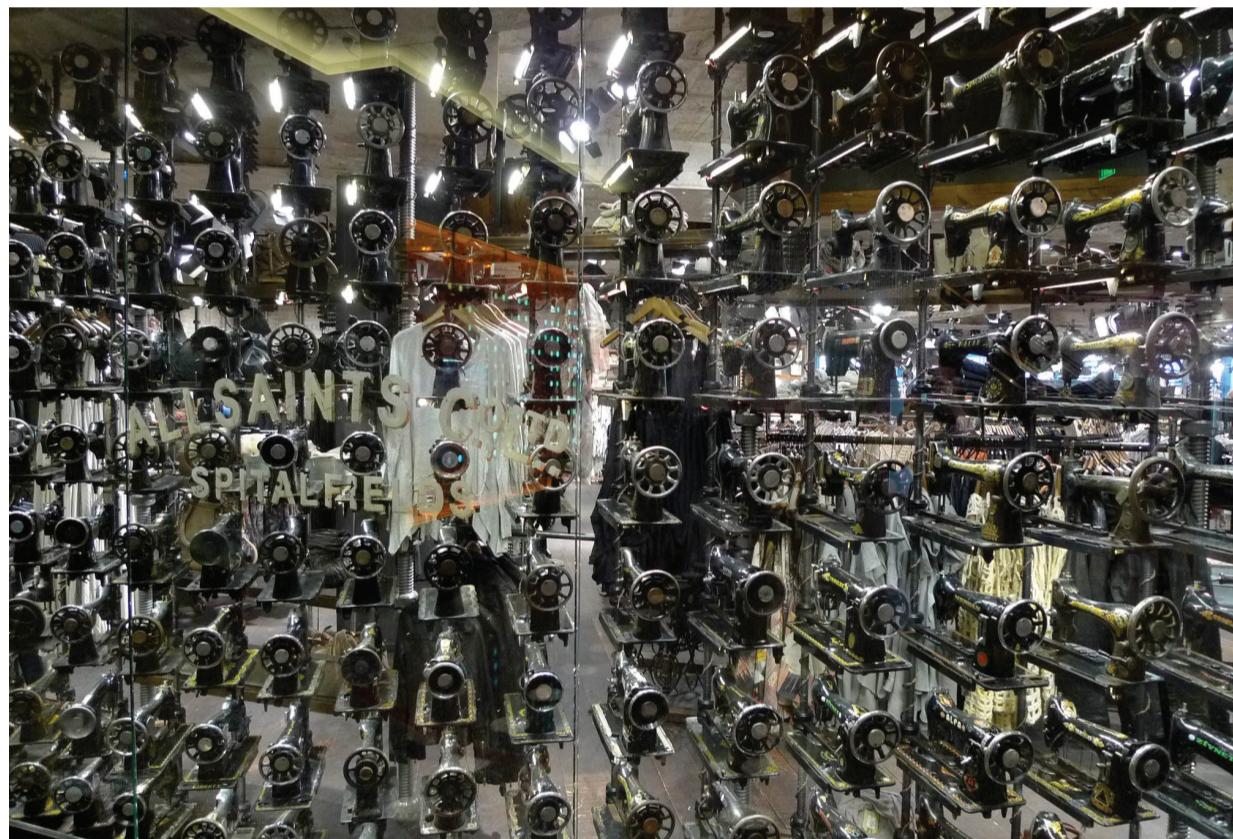
almost 90% occupied. The Crystals building was designed by Daniel Libeskind. Outside it shows the architect's signature angular edges as well as silvery metallic patina. Inside New York-based David Rockwell (who also designed the interior spaces for the Cosmopolitan Hotel and Casino next door, which opened this past December), helped envision the stores. He started the ball rolling with what he calls "a 21st century park" approach, filling the lofty, light-filled interior with exuberant hybrids—a bamboo and pink agate "Grand Staircase," trellises fitted with hanging plants, raw steel "trees," and the piece de resistance—a whopping, 70-foot-tall "tree house" made of

Clockwise from left:
Fendi's Trevi Fountain replica;
Marni's "bubble" relief walls;
Miu Miu's back-lit yellow facade;
and Cosmopolitan's Eat Drink adjacent to City Center.

mahogany and sapele slabs. At Crystals, foreground and background are equally important, and there is as much emphasis on atmosphere as on the actual merchandise. Prada, designed by architect Roberto Baciocci, uses dark and patterned steel tubes to provide a sense of texture, height, and visual rhythm—the company's values, in other words, are writ at every scale. Stainless



IMAGES COURTESY RETAILERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.



SAM LUBELL



steel cones on the upper floors pierce the exterior wall like portholes—a slightly disorienting Alice in Wonderland at Studio 54 moment. Louis Vuitton's store, designed by interior star Peter Marino, uses the brand's omnipresent diamond-shaped logo as a shiny metallic backdrop—small logos are connected to form room dividers, for instance—cladding walls, staircases, and everything in between (including the store's 31-foot-tall chandelier). In a far corner and exposed to the street, Gucci's is the shiniest of all, with mirrored ceilings and walls and polished steel floors echoing the visitors as much as the merchandise.

Many shops inside Crystals use an elaborate centerpiece

to lure people inside. No one has gone as far as Fendi. A 50-foot-wide marble replica of Rome's Trevi Fountain towers along the opposite side of its Cor-ten steel entrance. The marble was shipped in from Italy in 19 pieces, and was carved by hand by Italian manufacturers Spazio Scenico. "If Rome existed in modern times it would be Las Vegas," a Fendi spokesperson put it. The classical fountain offsets a modern (but still weighty and, yes, baroque) palette that includes metallic room dividers; gold, silver, and salmon-colored travertine walls; ribbed laminate walls that create a sense of movement; and lava stone floors. Bulgari has a water

feature, too: a large tub and backlit fountain meant to resemble a melting glacier. Stella McCartney corralled a giant crystal horse made of 8,000 Swarovski crystals as its showpiece. As for facades, Chanel went abstract, Christian Dior did LED, and Paul Smith chose colorful Mondrian-like patterns.

Though the flash may dazzle, it also shows some real architectural confidence. Tiffany, for instance, opens to a huge stone and glass staircase, lit from beneath, emphasizing the curve of the stairs that shines through the 85-foot-tall glass façade. Marni's smooth, grey-painted curved walls suggest mid-century modern envisioned by a modern day fabricator.

They have been given a randomly convex and concave "bubble" relief pattern; backlit, they create shadows and a playful graphic composition of textures while occasionally showcasing accessories. The central display consists of a twisted metallic tube seemingly suspended in midair, called the "lasso," that encircles the boutique.

While Crystals is still the most architecturally adventurous retail group in Las Vegas, the newest kid on the Strip is the Cosmopolitan next door. That establishment, too, focuses on design, but to portray a slightly younger, edgier, and more hedonistic charm. Stores are slightly less expensive, and emphasize a breezy, light, and

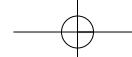
modern aesthetic. But they still don't shy away from the "gotcha" design element that captures the imagination. Droog, a contemporary furniture store that also considers itself a gallery, utilizes uplifted glass floors to show off its wares; All Saints Spitalfields put hundreds of antique

Singer sewing machines in its window displays; Beckley shows off sexy white curves like its neighbor at Louis Vuitton, but without the high priced materials. Despite the cheaper price tags here (versus Crystals, where a matchbox car will cost you \$90), design is front and center, not cowering in the background. Is Vegas regaining the influential design edge it had in its Rat Pack glory

Clockwise from left:
Paul Smith's patterned entry;
Inside Prada's controlled
slick look; Stella McCartney's
layered facade; Louis Vuitton's
logo-inspired chandelier
hanging in the stairwell; All
Saints Spitalfields' hundreds
of Singer sewing machines at
the Cosmopolitan.

days? The whole city seems to be on hold now so we don't know. But give it another year and we'll see if this is the new Vegas or just a blip on the city's notoriously ADD radar.

SAM LUBELL IS THE WEST COAST EDITOR OF THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER.



RESTAURANTS

In addition to promoting high-end retail architecture, City Center's master planners wanted to promote what David Rockwell calls a "climate-controlled, sustainable, fantasyland where people can shop, sleep, dine, and play." So naturally he imported impressive talent for the restaurant design. And they didn't skimp on the architectural details, or the energy. Without a doubt the highlight is Aria's Bar Masa, designed by New York designer Richard Bloch, who also designed Bar Masa inside New York's Time Warner Center. The lofty Japanese restaurant has a giant stepped structural concrete roof (executed with the help of Aria designer Cesar Pelli) reminiscent of a floating staircase. Bloch tempered the "heroic" scale of the roof with a 90-foot-long aluminum-framed fabric structure—lit with upward-facing LEDs—that echoes that staircase and creates what Bloch calls a "ceiling within a ceiling." This insertion—offset with concrete floors and large curtains of glass—makes the space feel cavernous, well defined, and somehow comfortable all at the same time. Just next door (and across a small indoor pond), Vegas. **SL**

by Bloch; a much more intimate version of Bar Masa. It's all about contrasts: grey tubular aluminum chandeliers hanging over bright yellow chairs; a warm wood wall across from a large purple wall and an adjacent glass wall. What sounds garish looks surprisingly subtle and refined on site. Just down the hall is Lemongrass, a Thai restaurant designed by New York design stars AvroKo, reminiscent of a Thai silk factory with a combination of dark woods, raw fibers, and textured fabrics creating a rhythmic and sometimes distracting backdrop. Yes, it's a little over the top but also elegant and with a touch of craft that contrasts nicely with corporate spaces nearby. Meanwhile a standout inside Crystals is KAA Design Group's Mastro's Ocean Club. That space features curving white leather booths, chairs covered in ochre leather, and banquets enveloped by the tree's curving timber beams. Adding a finishing touch to the dining space are glittering circular chandeliers made up of jewel-like, irregular glass shapes. Did we mention it was perched inside a three-story tree? Yes, this is still Las

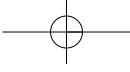


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JEFF GREEN PHOTOGRAPHY

Clockwise from top left:
Bar Masa, the Deuce,
Lemongrass, Shaboo,
Mastro's Ocean Club;
Jean Georges Steakhouse.



ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT 06

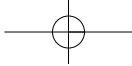
kitchenworks

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TRENDS: Sleeker kitchens are better, but integrated systems trump all.
COMPANIES: Spotlight on Valcucine, GD Cucine, SieMatic, Aster Cucine.
PRODUCTS: Cooktops, outdoor kitchens, new flexible vents and more.





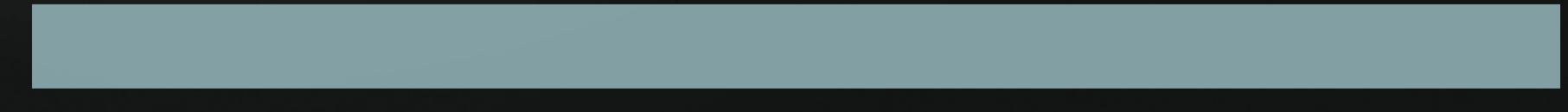
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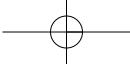
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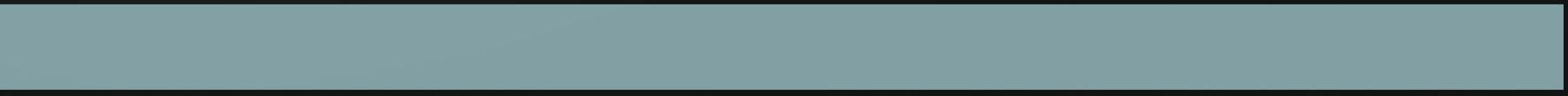
ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT 06

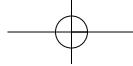
kitchenworks

Published by The Architect's Newspaper

www.archpaper.com

TRENDS: Sleeker kitchens are better, but integrated systems trump all.
COMPANIES: Spotlight on Valcucine, GD Cucine, SieMatic, Aster Cucine.
PRODUCTS: Cooktops, outdoor kitchens, new flexible vents and more.





TRENDS

NEW TURN ONS

It's safe to go back into the kitchen. According to a recent survey by the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA), 82 percent of kitchen and bath professionals anticipate an increase in kitchen remodels and sales volume in the first quarter of this year. Optimistic about the outlook, American and European manufacturers are unveiling new designs with never-before-seen technology and material options, hoping to capture the imaginations of a growing legion of at-home chefs across the country.

As Americans spend more time cooking at home, they want the results to prove it. It's no longer enough for the kitchen to look like a lab, it must function as if it were approved by the aeronautic industry. Bosch's induction cooktop with a new AutoChef Sensor can gauge the temperature of specialized cookware and can even beep when your steak is medium-rare or your pancake reaches perfect fluffiness. The cooktop boasts results that are more like those of a

gas range while using a fraction of the energy. For gas-cooking devotees, new models like Dacor's new 36-inch Distinctive Series cooktop, developed with BMW DesignworksUSA, have bigger burners and more ergonomic designs, allowing large pots to slide around cast iron grates with ease.

While it may be difficult to keep an 18,000 BTU burner under wraps, other appliances are going incognito. Once the eyesore of any kitchen, new ventilator technology is quieter and sleeker than ever. Unveiled late last year, Bulthaup's new winged air extractor or Elica's Victor model could be mistaken for expensive lighting fixtures. Ventilators are no longer just for the range. Put one over the dining table and a host can prep fondue, raclette, or teppanyaki to guests' amazement.

In a world that has now met the second-generation iPad, kitchen manufacturers are trying to keep up by installing touch screens and wireless connectivity in cabi-

net fronts and refrigerator doors. Instead of pasting kiddie art projects to the fridge, parents can monitor their Twitter feeds on Samsung's new LCD touch screen refrigerator, due out in June.

But along with electronic technology, material technology has moved to the forefront. Designers and architects with environmentally savvy clients are asking for recycled and recyclable content, but consumers also demand durability as often as good aesthetics for their money.

Educating American customers about new, lower cost, longer lasting laminates has been a challenge for the U.S. branch of German kitchen company SieMatic, who calls them only "select surfaces" on its web site. They wait until the customer is in the showroom to explain that it's a laminate, said Hans Henkes, the company's general manager of marketing and sales. "Their first reaction is usually, 'Wow,'" he said.

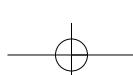
Offering finishes and styles in a range of price points has helped luxury

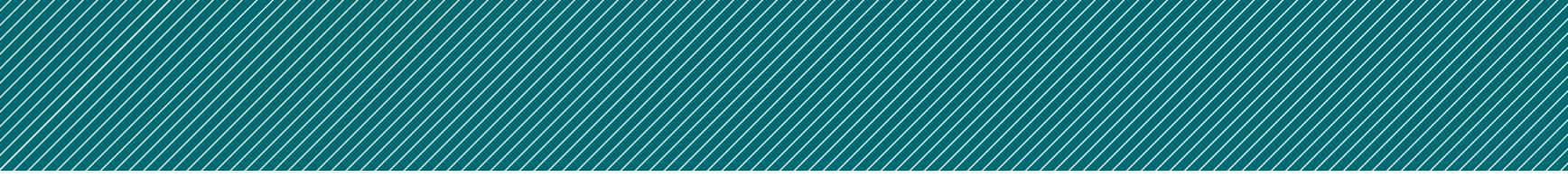
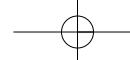
kitchen companies stay afloat during the economic downturn. In the suffering multi-family residential market, they are an attractive option for developers who want a brand-name kitchen to help market their units.

American company Henrybuilt captured a new market in 2009 when it launched the Viola Park brand as a lower-cost (\$15-\$20,000) alternative. Since then, it has also found that customers who could easily afford higher-priced lines were equally interested in Viola Park's design and manufacturing quality. At SieMatic, a new category called "IndividualDesign" describes systems for unlimited budgets, versus a "SmartDesign" category for styles suited to smaller budgets and floor plans.

At the end of the day, said Henkes, the distinction is almost like comparing first class to business class on a Lufthansa flight. "You're all on the same plane," he said. "You are getting the same quality."

JENNIFER K. GORSCHE





2



3



6



PRODUCT

New range and ventilator technology gets cooking



5

1 ELLITTICA
FALMEC

Manufactured in high-grade 304 stainless steel with polished steel features, Falmec's Ellittica vent hood is available in 70 cm wall-mounted or island versions that provide ducted or recirculating air. Etched tempered glass hides functional fluorescent lighting for the workspace below. The unit's North American launch is slated for May or June.

www.falmec.com
2 ARCHITECT SERIES II
VENTILATION
KITCHENAID

KitchenAid's new Architect Series II ventilation systems include the Commercial-Style Series, the 600 and 400 Series, and the Specialty Series with wall-mount, under-the-cabinet, and island-mount canopy hood options. Designed to suit a range of cooking surfaces and space requirements, the collection features ambient halogen lighting, automatic turn-on, timed auto-off, and tempered glass canopies.

www.kitchenaid.com
3 30-INCH GAS RANGE
SMEG

Smeg's new 30-inch series includes a stainless steel freestanding gas range with continuous heavy-duty cast iron grates to enable easy movement of large pots and pans. The central burner has an output of 17,000 BTUs, while the oven below has a usable capacity of 3.4 cubic feet with a triple-glazed removable door and halogen lights.

www.smegusa.com
4 BESPOKE COOKERS
STEEL CUCINE
(ALSO ON OPPOSITE PAGE)

Italian appliance manufacturer Steel offers bespoke cookers to suit a chef's specific needs. The new Derby range features two sizes and four color options, in addition to customizable features like a rotisserie and matching ventilation hoods. Genesi models can integrate barbecue plates or lava stone grills, deep fryers, and induction cooktops (see left). Lavoro (above) is one of Steel's new outdoor kitchen options.

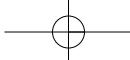
www.steel-cucine.com
5 COMBISSET GRILLS
MIELE

Designed to match the existing 12 elements of Miele's CombiSet series, two new barbecue grills have been introduced for indoor use. Available in 12- or 15-inch widths, the grills offer dual heating zones so that different foods can be seared, cooked, or warmed simultaneously. Cast iron grates over lava rocks evenly distribute heat to mimic outdoor grilling.

www.mieleusa.com
6 CI 491/492
INDUCTION COOKTOP
GAGGENAU

Gaggenau's new 36-inch induction cooktop is designed to fit large cookware, with five cooking zones configured for fast preparation of a range of dishes. A booster function enables even faster cooking, reducing energy loss. The cooktop is available with a stainless steel or frameless, flush-mounted design with a magnetic knob that can be removed for safety or cleaning.

www.gaggenau-usa.com



COMPANY PROFILE: VALCUCINE

Italian kitchen manufacturer Valcucine has had a lot of firsts since its founding in 1980. The company designed the first colored wood door and the first invisibly framed aluminum kitchen cabinet before it was 15 years old. In 1998, it created the Onlus Association, the first environmental protection association for manufacturers, and a little more than ten years later introduced Invitrum, the industry's only 100 percent recyclable glass and aluminum base unit. The popular unit uses recycled aluminum parts and a single 10 mm thick structural side panel to reduce raw material usage. Last year, the design won the company a Green Good Design Award from the Chicago Athenaeum.

The company uses an anthropo-

logical design approach, carefully studying human behavior to make smart kitchens that seem to anticipate a place for everything. As its designers continually explored new functions for the kitchen, the company saw an opportunity to design for the entire home and last year introduced Valcucine Living. The designs are based on the idea that furnishings are replacing walls in contemporary homes, creating an opportunity for new pieces to divide spaces without shutting them off completely. The Living system designs aim to make large spaces more comfortable, while making small spaces more versatile.

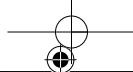
Valcucine remains focused on being an innovator in the kitchen, first and foremost. Its latest introduction, the New Logica system, is the second generation of a design introduced in 1996 and touted as Valcucine's

"new kitchen ergonomics system." Its offspring has many of the same carefully measured features—an 80 cm counter depth, large removable drawers, and Ala and Aerius lift-up door designs—but also includes a newly equipped back section capable of storing or concealing almost any piece of modern kitchen equipment, from small appliances and storage jars to a computer monitor or ventilation hood. The system also contains material advances to ensure its longevity, including a nano-layered top that resists scratches. Like Invitrum, the unit has recycled/recyclable components and a dematerialized design.

Even with the company's focus on recycled content, Valcucine knows its customers are not looking for a disposable kitchen; they are looking for an heirloom.

**TECHNICAL SPOTLIGHT:
GLASS BASE UNIT**
After lengthy material research, Valcucine created the industry's first fully recyclable glass base unit with additional parts made of recycled aluminum. The production process consumes only one-twentieth of the energy needed to use raw aluminum. Part of the design's intelligence is that it also cuts down on material usage by eliminating the side-by-side base unit traditionally found in kitchen cabinetry. Instead, the Invitrum's structure is supported horizontally, using a single carcass of 10 mm glass in place of the 36 mm thickness found in many chipboard designs.





credits on valcucine.it



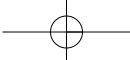
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Glass doors
Glass countertop
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design: Gabriele Centazzo

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COMPANY PROFILE: GD CUCINE

Founded in Treviso, Italy, in 1969, kitchen manufacturer GD Cucine opened their first United States showroom last year in Chelsea. The new 8,000 square foot, two-story flagship has the allure of an exotic car dealership, a racy orange model called Argento Vivo at its center.

Grounded in the traditions of fine cabinetmaking but keen to explore new technologies, GD Cucine frequently introduces new finishes to enhance wood textures and grains. The new Seta line and established Velvet collection both include heat-treated wood and tactile ("segghettato") wood. These kitchens' contemporary lines combined with more traditional materials, wood in particular, still inspire consumers, said the company's chief of operations, Alberto Paderi. The company has based several of its lines on this trend, including the classic Treviso line and forthcoming collections Kate and Gioiosa, featuring textured wood painted in warm country-side-inspired colors.

As the kitchen has become a second living room, and in some cases the primary living space, consumers have also asked for finely crafted metal and glass to complement their homes' modern furnishings. To meet the demand, GD sought to match the higher technology content of appliances with highly technical material fabrication. In 2009, Argento Vivo received the Chicago Athenaeum's Good Design Award as the first kitchen in the industry to use curved glass. Its illuminated circular island with a domed centerpiece that lifts

away to reveal an ice bucket reflects the company's vision of the kitchen as an entertainment center. (Recommended kitchen layouts almost always include an island or peninsula for serving guests.) Technical advances like creating seamless, curved glass and aluminum cabinet fronts turned cabinet walls into finely-tuned backdrops for entertaining. Recent additions including electrical socket pull-outs and low-consumption LED lighting allow the designs to look even more like furniture, while still working hard as food-preparation areas.

Learning about technical precision and material selection helps consumers feel more comfortable about purchasing a new kitchen in tough economic times. GD's pricing structure address a range of budgets while still providing good craftsmanship. Paderi sees consumers paying less attention to brand names, or the idea of focusing on "Italian-made." Instead, educating and enticing them with the longevity of its designs and materials has become the company's biggest selling point.

TECHNICAL SPOTLIGHT: CURVED GLASS & BUILT-INS

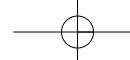
GD Cucine's Argento Vivo kitchen, shown with white back-lacquered frosted glass doors and countertops, and a central worksurface and sink in black Corian, was an industry leader with its curved glass design. The island's circular dining table takes the material a step further, integrating a recessed wine cooler/fruit bowl and internal LED illumination.





Click 380 **GD CUCINE**

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COMPANY PROFILE: **SIEMATIC**

In 1931 a company called August Siekmann Möbelwerke exhibited its first products at Germany's Leipzig Trade Fair. By 1953, they had sold more than one million of their "kitchen dressers." The same year, Siekmann presented its version of a reform kitchen, with interconnected cabinets and functional interiors. The company SieMatic was born in 1960, bringing with it the world's first completely built-in kitchen design.

Last year, SieMatic celebrated its 50th anniversary with a reincarnation of the 6006 model it introduced in its first year. The company credits much of its success to the kitchen's handle-free design, a revolutionary idea at the time. It has worked to tweak the continuous grip-channel design for better ergonomics and visual appeal, maintaining tight control of the machining of that one element as it has reappeared again and again over the decades.

The company is also forging ahead with completely new designs, based on the idea that the traditional family home has evolved into one big entertainment center. "The home is being more and more professionalized," said a release about two of SieMatic's newest kitchens, the S1 and S2. These are designed to integrate all of the high-tech components modern customers have come to rely on, including television and Internet.

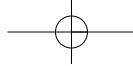
While SieMatic's newest kitchen takes a step back in time for inspiration, it is still determinedly forward-thinking. The BeauxArts.02, on which the company collaborated with Chicago designer Mick De Giulio, has a lighter, more linear look than its original 2006 design, also by De Giulio. Though the system has already been released in the European markets, it is in the larger U.S. kitchens that its many design elements come together best. The look is sophisticated, too, with dark ebonized walnut doors contrasting with stainless steel drawer fronts and polished

sterling grey glass.

"With the BeauxArts.02 look, where you've got symmetry and asymmetry, gloss veneer, matte lacquer, and other finishes—to put all of that into one design you need more room," said Hans Henkes, the SieMatic USA's general manager of marketing and sales. It also takes a strong eye for design. In that area, the company sees itself as a leader. "That is what traditional American kitchen manufacturers miss," said Henkes. "They are manufacturers, not designers. Leadership in design is where we want to position ourselves."

TECHNICAL SPOTLIGHT **MULTIMEDIA CABINET**

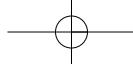
SieMatic's S2 Multimedia Cabinet features an integrated flat screen TV that projects on a swiveling arm to suit the user's needs. With a line that can connect to an outside media center, the cabinet provides full connectivity to the rest of the home. It can play a Food Network cooking show, stream Internet radio, or provide an iPod docking station with hi-fi audio. A "smart grid" function allows wireless communication with other devices, and the panel's control strip can activate any appliance in the house. When closed, the screen conceals useful storage space for "technical utensils."



SieMatic BeauxArts.02 the next generation



Everything you want in a kitchen. Everything you expect from a SieMatic original.
The stage is set. Coming soon in 2011.



COMPANY PROFILE: ASTER CUCINE

Last year at Eurocucina, kitchen manufacturer Aster Cucine debuted the Timeline kitchen, the Italian company's first collaboration with New York-based firm, Workshop/apd. Such collaborations between a major Italian kitchen manufacturer and a U.S. designer have happened rarely, if ever, but point to exciting potential for the future in kitchen design.

Jacob Kindler, U.S. managing director of Aster Cucine, was a longtime friend of Workshop/apd principals Matthew Berman and Andrew Kotchen, but it took years to persuade his nearly 30-year-old company that hiring an American team would give Aster a new insight into what American consumers want.

The collaboration considers

the larger scale of U.S. kitchens and the more traditional tastes of consumers here, while maintaining strict Italian manufacturing standards. The team used vintage European materials that could be rendered with modern lines, a combination that should please buyers considering the resale value of their home and fearful of being over-the-top modern, said Kindler.

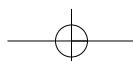
New York-based Berman and Kotchen drew upon historical craftsmanship and the importance of material selection in those trades to design the collection, combining sixteenth-century Venetian ceruse finishes, chemically patinated stainless steel, oxidized mirror glass, and wire mesh inspired by French country cabinetry. "It's a modern interpretation of traditional detailing," said Kotchen, "plus an Italian understanding of knowing how to put it all together."

The kitchens also showcase manufacturing techniques not usually seen in Italian cabinetry. Doors are built with inset handles, a style common to prewar American designs, but unfamiliar to Italian manufacturers. Aster also altered the manufacturing process by which they usually round the edge of a curved half-inch border at the base of the cabinetry to give it a cleaner line.

Because kitchens have become extensions of the living area, the Timeline series can be personalized with art panels by Toronto artist Murray Duncan. The etched pieces are incorporated as the customer desires, including as a backsplash or stand-alone cabinet. Their coatings of metallic paints, oil crayons, and resin, add another layer of complexity to the kitchens. The Timeline series is now exclusively on view at Urban Home New York.

TECHNICAL SPOTLIGHT: VENETIAN CERUSE

The Timeline collection's white oak cabinetry is treated with a technique that has stood the test of time. Ceruse originally referred to an ingredient known as "white lead." Mixed with vinegar, it was a popular form of makeup during the 16th century. Also used in paint, the term ceruse now refers to a (lead-free) finish for wood that reveals grain lines while leaving the overall base color of the wood intact. The result is a soft, ghostly patina that brings out the best of oak cabinetry.





Timeline by Aster Cucine

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MARCH 30, 2011

MARCH/APRIL 2011

MARCH

WEDNESDAY 30
LECTURES

Minsuk Cho
CED Lecture Series
6:30 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
College of
Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
arch.ced.berkeley.edu

Jesse Reiser
Projections and Receptions

7:00 p.m.
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

Ignacio Barandiaran,
Don MacDonald
Design Files: Robert I.
Schroder Bridge Project
Walnut Creek, California
8:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiASF.org

EVENT
2011 CRA Annual Conference & EXPO
9:30 a.m.
San Jose McEnery Convention Center
150 West San Carlos St.
San Jose, CA
www.calredevelop.org

THURSDAY 31
LECTURES
Joyce Cluess, Kidogo Kennedy, M. A. Greenstein
Salons for New Voices: Constructing Knowledge
6:00 p.m.
Allsteel Showroom
The Water Garden
1620 26th St.
Santa Monica, CA
www.aiASAngeles.org

Michael Corbett
Port City: The History and Transformation of the Port of San Francisco
6:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiASF.org

APRIL

FRIDAY 1
LECTURE

David Bergman
Planning in Five Dimensions
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

EXHIBIT OPENING
Barbara Bestor
Architecture: Silent Disco
7:00 p.m.
SCI-Arc Gallery
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

SATURDAY 2
EXHIBIT OPENING
Marco Breuer: Line of Sight
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
De Young Museum
50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Dr.
San Francisco
deyoung.famsf.org

TUESDAY 5

LECTURES
Stanford Kwinter

This is Your Brain on Design
7:00 p.m.
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

Jeanne Gang

CED Lecture Series

7:00 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
College of
Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
arch.ced.berkeley.edu

FILM

Events in the Environment

12:00 p.m.
Phyllis Wattis Theater
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
151 Third St.
San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

WEDNESDAY 6

SYMPOSIUM
"The Green Blueprint"

Designing for Sustainability
8:00 a.m.
465 California St.
San Francisco
www.aiASj.com

THURSDAY 7

LECTURE
C.R. Douglas, Dow Constantine

Leaders in Livability
5:30 p.m.
Daniel's Recital Hall
811 Fifth Ave.
Seattle
www.aiaseattle.org

FILM

Citizen Architect:
Samuel Mockbee and the Spirit of the Rural Studio

7:00 p.m.
Guild Cinema
3405 Central Ave. NE
Albuquerque, NM
www.aiaabq.org

FRIDAY 8

LECTURES
Jeremy Till

CED Lecture Series
6:30 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
College of
Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
arch.ced.berkeley.edu

Barbara Bestor,

Eric Owen Moss
Gallery Exhibition

Discussion
7:00 p.m.
SCI-Arc Gallery
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

SYMPORIUM

Kickin' the Bricks:
The Rehabilitation of Civic Center Residence

8:00 a.m.
Civic Center Residence
44 McAllister St.
San Francisco
www.ulic.org

TUESDAY 12

LECTURE

Cybele Trione Gontar
Creole Louisiana Architecture and Furniture 1735–1835

8:00 p.m.
De Young Museum
Koret Auditorium
50 Hagiwara Tea Dr.
San Francisco
www.aiASF.org

SYMPORIUM

Future Energy Conference

8:15 a.m.
Oregon Convention Center
777 NE MLK, Jr. Blvd.
Portland, OR
www.futureenergyconference.com

EXHIBITION OPENING

Public Library:
An American Commons

5:00 p.m.
San Francisco Main Public Library
100 Larkin St.
San Francisco
www.aiASF.org

WEDNESDAY 13

LECTURES

Rona Rothenberg
Retrospective of Courthouse Design 1990–2010

5:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St.
San Francisco
www.aiASvegas.org

Sylvia Lavin

CED Lecture Series

6:30 p.m.
112 Wurster Hall
College of
Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
arch.ced.berkeley.edu

THURSDAY 14

SYMPOSIUM
Architecture in the Networked City

3:00 p.m.
Omni Hotel and Resort
675 L St., San Diego, CA
www.newschoolwestquad.com

EVENT

AIA San Francisco
Design Awards Gala

6:00 p.m.
War Memorial & Performing Arts Center
401 Van Ness Ave.
San Francisco
www.aiASF.org

FRIDAY 15

LECTURE
Landscapes for Living:
Post War Landscape Architecture in LA

8:00 a.m.
Ackerman Hall
UCLA
405 Hilgard Ave.
Los Angeles

SATURDAY 16

WITH THE KIDS
Family Day: Chico MacMurtrie

11:00 a.m.
Claire Trevor School of the Arts
UC Irvine
Irvine, CA
www.beallcenter.uci.edu

SUNDAY 17

EXHIBIT OPENING

Art in the Streets

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

EXHIBIT CLOSING

Exposed: Voyeurism, Surveillance, and the Camera Since 1870

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
151 Third St.
San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

TUESDAY 19

SYMPOSIUM
Green California Summit

8:00 a.m.
Sacramento Convention Center
Exhibit Hall & Class Rooms
1400 J St.
Sacramento, CA
www.green-technology.org

THURSDAY 21

LECTURE

Ed Vance

The Evolution of the Citizen Architect

11:30 a.m.
Historic Fifth Street School Auditorium
401 South 4th St.
Las Vegas
www.aiASvegas.org

FRIDAY 22

EXHIBIT OPENING
Undergraduate Thesis Presentations & 4th Annual Spring Show

SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

EXHIBIT CLOSINGS

Audience of Objects

SCI-Arc Library Gallery
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

Architectural Photography

AIA San Francisco Gallery
130 Sutter St.
San Francisco
www.aiASF.org

SUNDAY 24

EXHIBIT CLOSINGS

Schindler Lab, Round One

MAK Center for Art and Architecture
835 North Kings Rd.
Los Angeles
www.makcenter.org

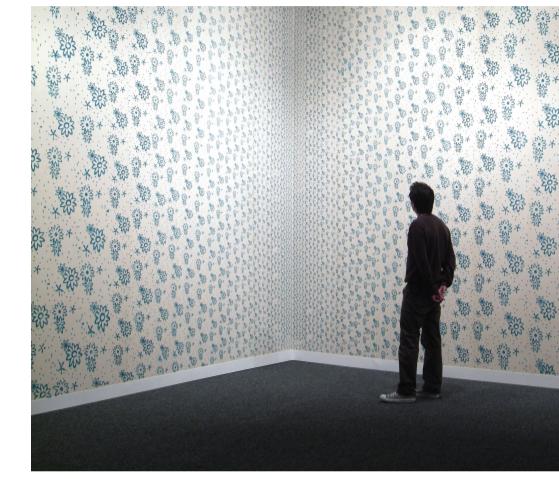
All of This and Nothing

Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

TUESDAY 26

SYMPOSIUM
Seventh Generation Thinking: Learning From the Past- 2011 NAEP Conference

8:00 a.m.
Sheraton Denver Downtown
1550 Court Pl.
Denver, CO
www.naep.org



BRIAN FORREST

ALL OF THIS AND NOTHING
The Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
Through April 24

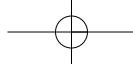


COURTESY SANAA

PARADESIGN

SFMOMA
151 3rd St.
San Francisco
Through June 19

ParaDesign, a new exhibit at SFMOMA, asks viewers to think about what design really is in light of modern conventions and conceptions of the term, especially in a world where the benefits of design are available (and affordable) for the masses at everyday retailers like Target or IKEA. It also looks at design from an almost skewed point-of-view in which "para" is taken to mean "beyond," "abnormal," "along-side" and "against." The more than 100 objects on view—some lumped into categories like "other" or "miscellaneous"—range from furniture to models to photography and videos and include works from Ron Arad, An Te Liu, and SANAA's Kazuyo Sejima + Ryue Nishizawa (their luxe *Tea and Coffee Tower*, above). Henry Urbach and SFMOMA Assistant Curators of Architecture and Design Joseph Becker and Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher organized the exhibition from works in the museum's vast architecture and design collection. With pieces clustered into pattern-like formations, the exhibition design itself makes use of reflective surfaces intended "to reinforce the 'para' element of ParaDesign and its capacity to act as a double or mirror to more professional and normative forms of design practice."



COURTESY FLETCHER STUDIO

Fletcher Studio's "Terrabungalo"
models were made largely out
of wooden stirring sticks from
Starbucks.

the model maker and the architect are revealed.)

In making a chipboard model of a Blue Bottle kiosk, Jeffrey Yip at Jensen Architects started with the square footage of the proposed kiosk and explored every conceivable iteration in chipboard. The winning concept: a simple box with a diagonal roof, which is a solar panel. Look for the full-scale, built version soon outside San Francisco City Hall.

Though the curator is interested in the convergence of craft and design, a number of works border more on fine art. Gensler's hand-crafted white-on-white facade study for a convention center in China is like a work on paper. The full-scale, laser-cut paper prototype of Matsys' C Wall, an exploration of honeycomb and Voronoi geometries, could easily stand on its own as sculpture.

Architectural and site models are skillfully executed. Yet the most intriguing models, as the curator intended, reveal the thought process of the designer and, sometimes, how they arrived at a chosen design after a process of elimination. Megan Werner of model making company zDP models, who is also trained as an architect, created uniform, palm-sized blocks of various materials after discovering that her architect clients were distracted by the design of architectural mock-ups in her office. She basically took the design out, so as not to distract clients. (In this case, the thinking of

a sneak-peak at what's under way. Haas Architecture's upcoming collaboration with Alonso King's LINES Ballet of San Francisco reveals the model for a chain-like, flexible wall that will react to the bodies of dancers. The model is foam because it was easy-to-work with and light, but large rectangular pieces of cardboard were ultimately chosen to make the set.

Most of the avant-garde projects on show do indeed make use of the digital process. Yet one shouldn't discount the low-tech. Fletcher Studio set an intern loose on a conceptual model for a stackable unit of homeless housing, allowing only materials salvaged from Starbucks. The resulting model, with protruding facades, is ingeniously crafted from wooden stirring sticks, paper coffee-cup jackets and display plastic. Innovation can be born of the most cutting-edge gadgets but also stubborn resourcefulness.

The show certainly accomplishes what the curator had hoped: piquing the viewer's interest about what will happen next with these projects. Models are a powerful tool to help architects explain and sell their work. Revealing the final outcome would ultimately demonstrate how successful these beautiful models really are at capturing the moment between concept and reality.

JOANNE FURIO WRITES OFTEN FOR AN.

SUPER MODELS

Crafting Architecture:
Concept, Sketch, Model
Museum of Craft and Design, 201
Third Street, San Francisco
Through May 29

If you think of model making from simple materials is the old-school approach to architecture, take a look at the new exhibition *Crafting Architecture: Concept, Sketch, Model* at the Museum of Craft and Design.

The show, which includes both handmade and digitally fabricated works, is less about the pull between the two methods (though some contrasts are revealed) and more about

the creative process. Since this is an institution dedicated to the intersection of craft and contemporary design, the exhibition explores how architecture is aided by craft and how models communicate and represent design strategies and intent.

"Making models helps architects connect to the tactility and materiality of a project. And the use of scale also helps in the development of design," said Mariah Nielson, the museum's curator, who also conceived of the exhibition. As part of her exploration, Nielson discovered that hand-craftsmanship is not about to go the way of the T-square. In fact, she thinks manual projects may be more embraced by architects because they are seen as an antidote to the increasingly digitized workplace.

To create the show, Nielson visited dozens of Bay Area companies, ending up with 24 works by architectural and landscape architecture firms,

two students, and one model maker. The models are roughly divided between the manually crafted—often using traditional materials like chipboard, basswood, and cardboard—and those that were digitally fabricated utilizing CNC (computer numerical control) and 3D modeling machines.

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Megan Werner of model making company zDP models, who is also trained as an architect, created uniform, palm-sized blocks of various materials after discovering that her architect clients were distracted by the design of architectural mock-ups in her office. She basically took the design out, so as not to distract clients. (In this case, the thinking of

ings are pushed past those limits, too. Randolph Ruiz offers 'Stead, the "Sustainable Technology Experimental Agricultural Dwelling," a farm and farmhouse built on the roof of a 292,000 square-foot warehouse in the San Fernando Valley. It's the ultimate combination of live-work and factory farming—ingenious yet wildly impractical. *Eat Me!* is Steven Purvis' "Aquaponic House," a three-story kinetic greenhouse and dwelling with a self-contained fish run, leeching pond, and chicken coop. This souped-up shed, which propels itself along steel rails, looks like a hybrid of a threshing machine and an outhouse; it's certainly not for your average backyard farmer who wants to till some soil. But, given the crisis that's underway, such an apparatus might become a necessity.

Wes Jones, who is the driving force behind the exhibit, offers something that on the surface seems more practical and realizable. Known for his fascination with the hardware of technology and for his acerbic cartoons, Jones now introduces the ELOV (pronounced "E-LOVE," I suspect), the "electric low-occupancy vehicle." In this action-packed comic strip, Jones ingeniously turns the dreams of highway engineers inside out. Forget high-occupancy vehicles. A shrunken car half the width of a smart car is the way to go. The skinny vehicle accepts two stubborn facts about Los Angeles' congested freeways: there is no room for more capacity, and drivers doggedly prefer to drive alone. So, the ELOV squeezes a solo driver into half an

existing lane. Re-stripe the lanes and you can double the volume of traffic. And, the midget (in a design reminiscent of MIT's "Stackable" concept car) jacks itself up to stand on its head in order to park perpendicular to the curb. No need for more parking lots which, as Jones points out, consume thirty percent of downtown real estate. Less is more.

Plainly, much of this is offered with a wink both hopeful and desperate. Wouldn't motorcycles, for instance, be just as good as ELOVs? Isn't one of the lynchpins of deep ecology a faith in sound rural practices that eschew factory farming? The exhibitors know the answers to these, and other more abiding questions. Aryan Omar, in eight hyper-realistic movie posters for a film series called *I'll Huff and I'll Puff and I'll Blow Your House Down* (the saga of a self-sufficient wind-gathering house in the Antelope Valley, "the ugliest house on the prairie," done up in bubble-gum pink in the model), tattoos his renderings with a running commentary. Aphorisms abound:

"Madness is badness of spirit, when one seeks profit from all sources," (David Hume) or "The use of solar energy has not been opened up because the oil industry does not own the sun" (Ralph Nader). Counterpoised against these *bons mots* are reviewers' blurbs: "This house is a job killer," says one; "Half of what you'd expect," says another. "Horrifying" shouts a third. Omar is clearly in touch with the prevailing dialectic in which the ideals of change are swallowed by the machina-

tions of corporate greed.

Likewise, Doug Jackson's entry, *Uneasy Green*, an environmentally-themed demonstration house fatally cantilevered from the roof of a Wilshire Boulevard office building. Pure folly, of course, but the house is designed to continually change its skin to produce energy from prevailing winds and sunlight. It too is a deliberate inversion: the occupants must live according to the whims of nature, rather than as masters of it. A cartoon, which is laid over the architectural drawings, offers a running dialog by a pair of white doves who flutter about the rooftop perch. They advise, "Even while you have attempted to solve the environmental crisis through the use of technology, this very assumption of the ability to control and master the environment underscores a crucial perceptual problem that has underwritten degradation of the environment."

That's certainly a mouthful. But it's also the point. What's splendid about this small show is its wit. Even if all you do is gloss over the renderings and models and cartoons—theyselfs worth the tour—you'll get a fairly high-wattage jolt. It's not easy to blot out these wild ideas, part Buckminster Fuller, part Lebbeus Woods. There is just enough realism here that, as with the best science fiction, things like a self-perpetuating hydroponic shed and a unabashedly ugly "wind" house feel close to the next, best, new thing.

GREG GOLDIN IS AN LA-BASED CRITIC.

Jones' ELOV cars stacking up on the highway.



COURTESY JONES PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE

MEAN AND GREEN

SOUPERTgreen
A + D Museum
6032 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles
Through April 14

There is a good deal of black humor in *SOUPERTgreen*, an exhibition by five Los Angeles designers who ponder how architecture can get beyond environmental bromides and use technology to promote "more exuberant, rad, boss, sick, and totally stoked green experiences." It's easy to let the eye skim past the word "sick," but sick is probably the applicable adjective here. Sick as in a bit jaundiced, a touch twisted. The show, at LA's Architecture + Design Museum, is by turns angry,

philosophical, and didactic, as much manifesto as an assemblage of drawings and models. The five LA architects, Wes Jones, Doug Jackson, Aryan Omar, Steven Purvis, and Randolph Ruiz, recognize that the grim facts of climate change require radical solutions, along with a liberal dollop of irony.

Start with the use of "SOUPERT" in the show's title. The architects have created an especially literal connotation: an automobile that has been pushed past its natural limits. And, here, build-

ings are pushed past those limits, too. Randolph Ruiz offers 'Stead, the "Sustainable Technology Experimental Agricultural Dwelling," a farm and farmhouse built on the roof of a 292,000 square-foot warehouse in the San Fernando Valley. It's the ultimate combination of live-work and factory farming—ingenious yet wildly impractical. *Eat Me!* is Steven Purvis' "Aquaponic House," a three-story kinetic greenhouse and dwelling with a self-contained fish run, leeching pond, and chicken coop. This souped-up shed, which propels itself along steel rails, looks like a hybrid of a threshing machine and an outhouse; it's certainly not for your average backyard farmer who wants to till some soil. But, given the crisis that's underway, such an apparatus might become a necessity.

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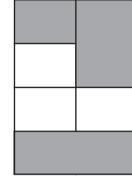
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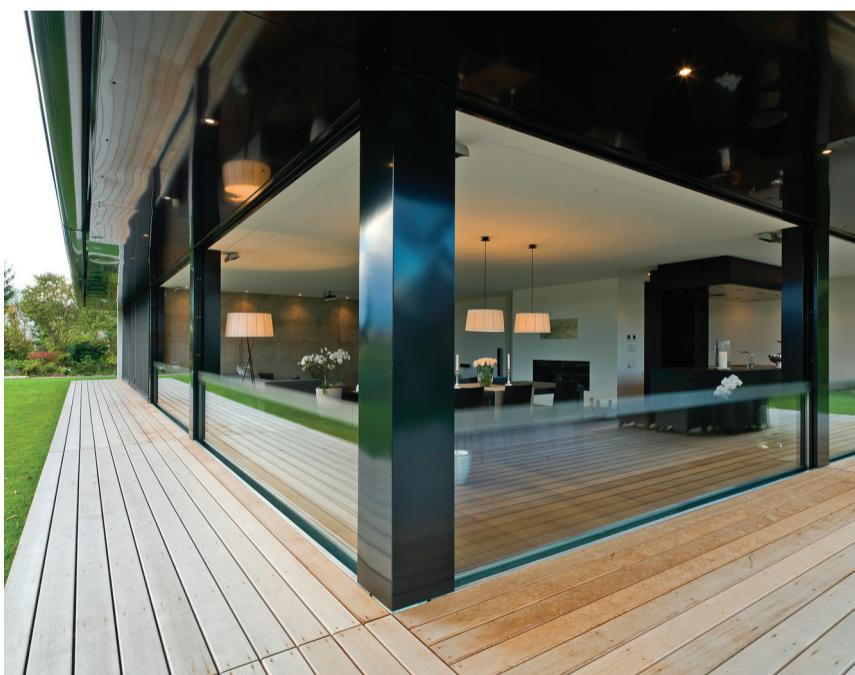
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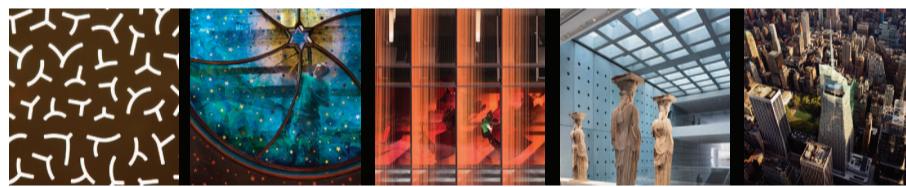
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Wilshire Boulevard Temple, which Levin & Associates is currently restoring and redeveloping.



COURTESY BREND A LEVIN & ASSOCIATES

Los Angeles is a city whose spirit lies in reinvention. It's always been a place where people have come to shed their history and begin anew. And that has made preservation in the city a sometime quixotic mission. Still, it is here that Brenda Levin, fresh from Harvard's Graduate School of Design, chose to stake her claim as a preservationist more than thirty years ago. Since then, Levin has become a leading proponent of the preservation movement in Los Angeles, restoring such landmarks as the Oviatt Building, the Wiltern, the Griffith Observatory, and the Bradbury Building, and along the way shaping the way Angelenos experience their city. Last fall the LA chapter of the American Institute of Architects honored Levin with its Gold Medal Presidential Award, the highest honor it gives to an individual. AN's Carren Jao talked to Levin about her recent award, the projects on her plate and the state of preservation in the city.

The Architect's Newspaper: How did you respond to the news that you were the recipient of AIA/LA Gold Medal?

Brenda Levin: Obviously I was pleased and honored, but I was also struck by a certain amount of symmetry, because the first recipient of the gold medal from the AIA/LA chapter was John Lautner, who actually provided me with my first employment out of graduate school. I thought, "John would probably be pretty pleased—and surprised!"

How did you get your start in Los Angeles and establish your reputation for preservation?

I came to LA in 1976. My first job was with Lautner for about two

years. Then, I came to work for a firm called Group Arcon. One day Wayne Ratkovich, who was a renowned developer in LA, came into the firm. He had just bought the Oviatt building, a 1926 Art Deco building on Olive Street. He wanted to renovate it and re-conceptualize it. The firm gave me that project as project architect. I worked on it from 1978 to 1980. In 1980, I started my own firm. Ratkovich offered to have me work on the Rex restaurant on the ground floor of the Oviatt. It had been a high-end men's haberdashery that sat vacant for many years. Traditional commercial real estate would have told you to put a bank on the ground floor of that building as opposed a high-end restaurant. It was before the resurgence there, so there wasn't a lot of street traffic or pedestrian traffic. Clearly, to put a high end restaurant in that space was a great risk for him, but that's exactly what he did. That's the project that started Levin & Associates.

I continued to work on the Oviatt building. Then Wayne went on to buy the Wiltern Theater, the Chapman Market, and the Fine Arts Building, so I just subsequently tracked with him. He was a very generous developer who allowed me to hitch my wagon to his star. In a sense, we became the experts in preservation solely by doing it. Not because there was a great body of history in Los Angeles of preservation.

You came to LA rather halfheartedly, but now the city is the epicenter for your practice.

How do you feel now about the decision you made to move out West three decades ago?

I was not terribly enthusiastic to come to LA when I first moved

because I was so much an East Coast person. My whole concept of cities was New York and Boston. Clearly LA didn't fit into that pattern or mold, but what I found in the city was openness.

It didn't even matter where you went to school or who you knew, it was much more "what can you do" and "if you do it well, we'll give you something else to do," or they'll take you to the next step, like my early relationships with Wayne Ratkovich and Ira Yellin when we did the Bradbury building and Grand Central Market. They were both people who just saw someone who was talented and passionate and let her go. That was an extraordinary opportunity.

I do not believe had I stayed in Boston or New York that [I would have] the career I have now. When I went back for my 10-year reunion at the GSD, I was the only one who had my own firm, and I was the only one who moved to LA. There you go.

When you moved out to the West Coast, it wasn't really with the intention to make a name in preservation, right?

Correct.

How then do you feel about being so connected to the preservation movement?

You're right, I didn't intend for preservation or adaptive re-use to become a considerable part of my work, but what I would say about it is that it has allowed me, in the new construction work that we do, to take some of those skills that I've learned over the years in dealing with existing buildings and translate that into an architecture that I think speaks to the most successful components of these older buildings.

I've also learned a lot about technical building construction. There is a quality of construction in the older buildings that I deal with that is often difficult to replicate in new construction.

What do you think were the biggest factors that contributed to the city's growing support for preservation?

I'd say the single biggest change in policy was Downtown's Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, which allowed you to convert commercial buildings to residential. That's when you saw the emergence of the Old Bank District on Spring Street, all these buildings that had once been the financial center of Los Angeles. That all moved up to Bunker Hill in the 60's. Those buildings remained vacant until the late 90s when the adaptive ordinance came into effect. Then, all of a sudden they had another life.

Before that, Broadway particularly was surviving on ground floor retail rent. It would support the entire building. The rest of the building could be vacant. With the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, the codes were modified to allow conversion without bringing the entire building up to code as a commercial structure and all of a sudden you saw this incredible resurgence in downtown Los Angeles, where the population went from the tens of thousands to close to 50,000. With that comes all the things we know and love about the city, which is the retail on the ground floor, the restaurants, the bars, the cleaners, all the support services that there was never enough of before. Now, it's truly fantastic.

Levin & Associates is tasked with designing the master plan for the Ford Amphitheatre, which will be unveiled later this year. What is the progress of that plan?

We are well on our way. The way we describe the master plan is that we're improving the Ford. In other words, improving the resource that's there—the 1,200-seat amphitheatre—with infrastructure, and then we're reimagining the Ford. [We are considering] what other facilities might be included to augment the resources the Ford has to produce

artistic programming for the county of Los Angeles. That might actually include new structures and new buildings that accommodate additional theater space or rehearsal space.

In improving and reimagining the Ford, were there any imperatives for your firm?

We've done many workshops, and two things have come out. One, retain the historic resource. Two, retain the natural character of the site. There was a lot of discussion on the contrast between

the two county resources there—the Hollywood Bowl and the Ford Amphitheatre. In the Hollywood Bowl, your back is to natural environment and your focus is to the built form of the stage. But at the Ford, the actual historic resource is behind you and what you're looking at is the canyon. Universally, the feedback that we've gotten is to preserve that view—preserve the integrity of the canyon.

Your firm is also responsible for the development of the Wilshire Boulevard Temple, the oldest Jewish congregation in Los Angeles. Could you share any updates on that project?

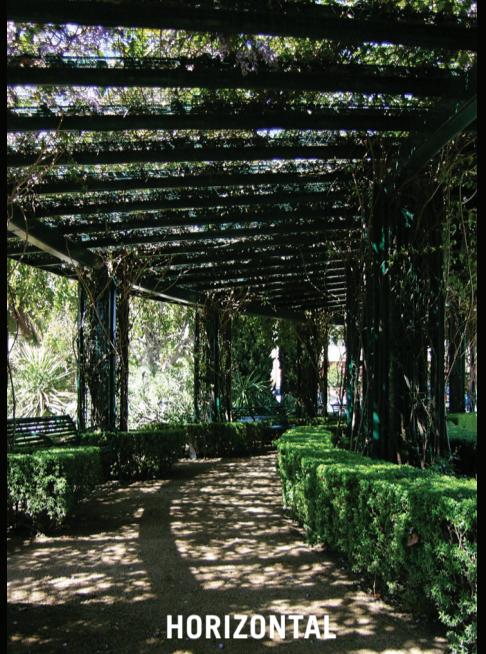
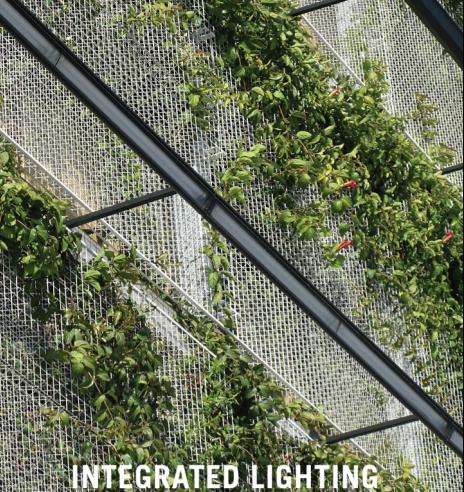
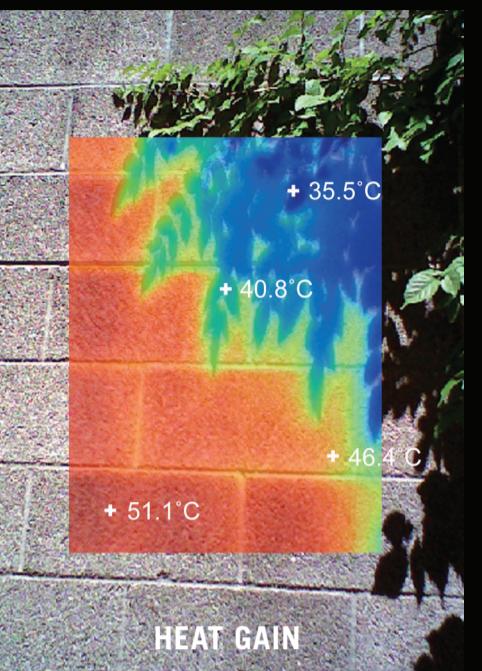
Our master plan looks at the long-range use of the site and proposes new structures. It divides the site into districts. Working from Wilshire and Sixth, the front district is the spiritual, administration and event district. The middle district is the school district. The last district is the parking and play district.... It's a very urban site yet the FAR is 6 to 1, so we could build a lot denser and taller, but chose not to. The entire site is organized around an internal pedestrian street. Off this pedestrian spine are varying size courtyards that take you ultimately to the spiritual heart of the complex. That's probably a ten-year phase development. A long time. Architecture really is a delayed gratification profession.

A lot of work has already been done in preservation for the city. What kinds of conversations do you see happening around that in the future?

Now the challenge to the preservation community is the buildings that are turning 50 years old, because 50 years is the threshold for historic. How do we treat this new body of work that came during a period of extraordinary expansion in Los Angeles? All of a sudden we have a new body of building typology from a period of time that is taking on historic significance. That's going to be the real challenge in leading that conversation. I believe that the Los Angeles Conservancy is clearly already involved in that.

Your firm has already shaped so many of the city's iconic structures. Is there any project that you want to work on?

My role model is Julia Morgan. The reason I mention her is because there's one more historic building, one more that I really want to do, which is the Herald Examiner Building, which is her building. I have worked on it for the Hearst Company, and hopefully when the economy improves that it will also come back. That to me is just a little bit of personal symmetry.

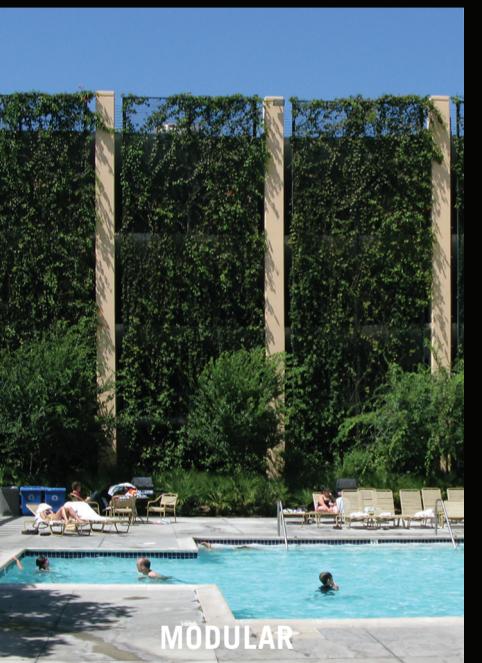


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