Abandoning its plans for a Christian de Portzamparc-designed museum in Hollywood, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) has announced its intention to build its movie museum inside the historic May Company building.

**RESTORATIONS UNDERWAY AT EAMES AND VDL HOUSES**

**Icon Renewal**

If you were to ask Los Angeles architects to name two of the most influential Modernist residences in the city, their responses would invariably include Charles and Ray Eames' own residence and Richard Neutra's VDL House. These glass and steel homes located in Silver Lake and Pacific Palisades are renowned both for their innovations—prefabrication, modular construction and indoor-outdoor porosity—as well as for their sheer beauty within classic Southern California sites. But both homes, like many of

**NEW SUBWAY LINE THREATENS LA CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS**

**RAZING THE ROW**

After breaking ground on the second phase of its Expo Line in September, The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO) is getting ready to rev up its latest multi-billion construction project, the “Subway to the Sea,” a westward extension of its Purple Line, much of it along Wilshire Boulevard. A vote scheduled for the end of the year will give the final go-ahead to the $9 billion dig, which has been delayed for nearly two decades. If LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is able to convince the Republican-controlled House to release federal subway funding on an accelerated schedule, construction will begin in Koreatown as early as next year. By 2019 the first trains would start rolling—eventually making it all the way to Santa Monica within the mayor’s ten-year timetable. But before the cutterhead starts its grinding through the alluvial sands, clay, and methane-filled ground beneath Wilshire, the agency

**NEW PARKLETS PROGRAM**

**PARALLEL PARKS**

Los Angeles has finally begun to follow San Francisco’s parklet phenomenon. The City by the Bay already has 16 popular mini-parks, most located on former street-side parking spaces or other city-owned rights of way. In mid-September LA leaders announced plans for its parklets program in partnership with

**Farming Out**

Moore Ruble Yudell (MRY) Architects & Planners recently beat out eight other design firms, winning a commission to build a “low impact” city containing its own farming infrastructure in China. The developer of the project is COFCO, China’s largest food importer and exporter. ARUP will be

**MAKE IT SHINE:**

AVM’s ANNUAL LIGHTING ISSUE ON MAJOR ARCHITECTURE WORKS AND THE DEMANDS THEY PUT ON LIGHTING. PLUS PRODUCTS: BRIGHT LIGHTS/ BIG SPACES. SEE PAGES 13, 15.

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good for apple, good for architects

We all knew it was coming, but the news of Steve Jobs’ death still shook most of us as if a close relative had passed.

We all have our own reasons for grieving this man that we had never met. But one factor we all have in common is that for better or worse, Jobs had more of an impact on many of us than presidents and Nobel Prize winners. His products, and the culture they created, touched us every day, and, more accurately, every minute.

It’s this aspect of his legacy that can be a lesson to architects and to anyone designing public spaces. The greatness of Apple’s products, honed immeasurably in Jobs’ second stint at the company since the late ’90s, is that they are designed to make the user experience as pleasurable as possible.

Architects often forget this cardinal rule of production. I’ve heard several tell me that they’re happy if they’re pleased with their designs, even if their clients or neighbors are not.

Architects don’t make spaces for themselves, but for others. In the hyper-competitive world of technology design, this plays out quickly. If people aren’t happy with their products they shift to something else. Even if it’s not as apparent, the same goes for architecture. If they don’t listen to what people want, architects will fail and lose the business.

Jobs, like the Eameses and other innovators before him, separated himself from the pack by combining Apple’s legendary functionality with a perhaps more legendary sense of design. It’s the reason that people wait in line for Apple’s products, that iPads are the subject of museum shows, and that Apple’s stock price has reached ridiculous levels. It’s not flashy design—in fact the products are minimal to the extreme—it’s their beautiful, sophisticated design merged seamlessly with functionality.

“The details are not the details. They make the design,” said Charles Eames, who along with the rest of his office is currently the subject of several shows as part of the Getty’s Pacific Standard Time series of exhibitions.

And this seamless, detail-obsessed design, of course, was combined with Jobs’ other genius: marketing. He was not only a technical and design wizard, he was a promotional genius, combining the cool of his products with ads that were equally hip—another seamless transition. Marketing sense is a talent that so many architects lack.

But no design can flourish without being properly sold, and the business end of design is at least as important as the creative end.

While it’s true that in architecture and design less is often more, in marketing more is always more, and it’s something that Jobs knew from the beginning, when he launched Macintosh with an inspiring Super Bowl ad.

“Architecture is the will of an epoch translated into space,” said Mies van der Rohe, the master of minimalism. Jobs taught us that in this age of distraction and short attention spans, functionality merged with striking design in an equally seamless package still stands out above the rest. If architects and designers shirk any of these elements, they will probably take the same path as the Zune did against the iPod. Ever heard of Zune?

""
The latest hipster enclave has arrived in Echo Park. Mohawk Bend is a retrofit of a 100-year-old Vaudeville theater that had been sitting empty for over 25 years. The architects, the busy firm Semiclass, separated the 10,000-square-foot eatery into several distinct, and industrial-vibed spaces: the Quad, an informal eating area with a cathedral ceiling and views of the open kitchen; the Pub, a boisterous communal eating area surrounded by exposed steel; and the Ramona Room, the restaurant’s main dining room, an enclosed atrium full of original brick, plantings, and vaulted skylights. The glass wall abutting this room is an arresting, grided quilt of opaque, translucent and transparent glass that evokes the area’s Modernist masterpieces. Spacecraft, separated the space instead of a smaller section of it: “I told him to take out the whole space.”  

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green lighted by the museum in the beginning temporary removal of those artifacts, officially indication of the home’s prominence. The century design, Living In A Modern Way, a clear of LACMA’s exhibition on California mid-cen- living room objects is now on display as part of Century Plaza Hotel in Century City.

now working to renovate Minoru Yamasaki’s and Neutra’s Kaufmann House. They are Garcia House, Albert Frey’s Loewy House and Neutra’s Kaufmann House. They are now working to renovate Minoru Yamasaki’s Century Plaza Hotel in Century City.

The Eames House’s entire collection of 1,800 living room objects is now on display as part of LACMA’s exhibition on California mid-cen- tury design, Living In A Modern Way, a clear indication of the home’s prominence. The temporary removal of those artifacts, officially green lighted by the museum in the beginning of the year, allowed the Eames Foundation to begin its long-planned renovation along with the restoration of the home’s great icons. The foundation has raised about $250,000 for the project, which they estimate will cost roughly $1 million and take about two and a half years. Additional money is being raised through a series of fundraisers at the house—the next one will take place on December 15. They hope to complete much of the job while the living room objects are still at LACMA.

Because of the house’s importance, the restoration is more like a research assignment than a typical home makeover, pointed out Frank Escher and Ravi GuneWardena, who, like the Eames family, are obsessed with getting every detail precisely correct. The job, they say, is like that of cleaning a famous painting. The emphasis is on maintaining as much of the original structure as possible; historic integrity is all. “A replica is not the real thing. It’s important that the building show its history,” said Escher. “We decided to keep the house exactly as it was when Ray died—no editing.”

The obsession with authenticity means no replacements. Thus in order to keep some water-damaged walls near the home’s north slope, the team will conduct thermographic readings to find mold and cracks. Outside they will take core samples of the building’s paint to determine what it was painted with in 1968, the date when Ray passed away. And to ensure that the house can remain open to the elements but be better protected in the future, the Getty has been brought in to conduct an extensive climate monitoring project that will last about a year. Other adaptations will include restoring wood walls, cleaning and performing maintenance on the house’s exist- ing climate control system, fixing (not replac- ing) windows, and general all-round clean up and repair work. Another partner on the project is Griswold Conservation Associates.

To further guarantee accuracy the Eames family has collected 200 hours of oral history from those who have known the house well, and performed extensive inventories on the house and its structure. They’re also consulting the original plans, located at the Library of Congress. “We wanted a thorough understand- ing,” said Ray and Charles’ grandson Eames Demetrios, who is compiling the oral histories.

“Now is the time to learn all these things.”

One item will have to be replaced: the floor. The ceramic tiles contain asbestos. To make sure the replacements are as accurate as possi- ble, the team is laying out several sets of tiles in their entirety to determine the best match. The team is also putting together a roadmap for future maintenance to “help the house remain intact for the next 250 years,” said Escher.

As for whether the home’s interior will open to the public after the renovation, Demetrios is skeptical: “I find it hard to imagine that could happen,” he said. But there will always be Member Appreciation Day in the summer when the home’s living spaces are open to Eames Foundation supporters.

On the other side of the city, along the Silver Lake Reservoir, Leo Marmol and Ron Radziner along with students and faculty at Cal Poly Pomona are slowly—very slowly—restoring Neutra’s VDL, originally built in 1933 and rebuilt in 1964 after a fire. Funds for the project come from the university, which owns the house; tours; book, print, and DVD sales; and from individual donations. The university has spent about $55,000 so far and has raised about half of what it needs for the next phase.

The project, which started back in 2007, is proceeding from the top down as funding becomes available. That has primarily meant repairing water damage and sealing the house to keep water out. Once the exterior is stabilized, the team will then focus on the house’s worn interior.

The first phase—including new electrical systems, a new penthouse roof, repairs to the top floor trellis, metal parapet replacement, plumbing concealment, and drain replace- ment—was completed last year. The next phase, which began in December and is still ongoing, includes new flashing, new decking, re-painting, a new roofing system, and the repair of other deteriorated elements.

“It’s a perfect world we’d do it all next week, but in terms of what they can afford, the idea is to bite it off one phase at a time,” said Leo Marmol, principal at Marmol Radziner, who has also worked closely with Richard Neutra’s son Dion on the project. The firm’s devotion is demonstrable: not only is it working on the project pro bono, but Marmol Radziner is also helping with fundraising.
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the street from LACMA, down the block from Santa Barbara to be in this project,” said Edward Cella. “It’s a dream of anchor a stretch known as “museum row.”

According to Metro’s latest environmental station. It is slated for 2013 completion. The context is irreplaceable. And we can’t move out for five years and then come back. Besides, the new buildings won’t be anything like what we have now. They’ll be commercial or mixed use or big hotels, nothing like the reasonable spaces and rents we have now.

Under California law, Metro does not have to assess the impacts on cultural institutions less than 50 years old. Still, according to Metro spokesman Dave Sotero, the agency “prefers to negotiate a fair agreement with any property owner before the agency uses eminent domain proceedings.”

The project focuses on the agricultural zone, and includes an Agricultural Botanical Garden and Greenhouse plus demonstration plans for a light rail train station. It is slated for 2013 completion. Overall completion is unlikely before 2020.

STEPHANIE JONES

The 2,834-acre “Agriculture-Eco-Valley” is intensely mixed-use. Although local government will most likely direct the relocation of existing villages, the Chinese government will be reviewing and approving each phase as Eco-Valley rolls along.

The project is to be organized around a multi-modal transport loop called the “Ring of Discovery” that will connect all the development zones, accommodating pedestrian, bicycle, and bio-fuel-powered buses. It would also link to a smaller loop for programmable Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) vehicles to move around the main commercial and tourist hub of the Eco Valley. The Ring would also connect to a series of “Discovery Pavilions” that would display educational materials and programs related to developing technologies for agricultural, farming, and residential uses.

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Few architectural stories are as torturous as that of the former William Morris Agency headquarters in Beverly Hills. But that hasn’t stopped a good but compromised piece of architecture from rising in a prime location amid the Golden Triangle’s jumble of luxury, kitsch, and craziness.

Encouraged by the city of Beverly Hills, which was terrified of losing one of its most prized businesses, the prestigious Hollywood agency hired Gensler in the boom times of 2005 to design their ambitious new operating base. As was common in those faraway days, no expense was spared. The unrealized project was full of ambitious elements including an open, multi-story lobby and floating walkways. It was meant to scream to the world that William Morris meant business and—more to the point—could compete with rival CAA’s building in Century City, also designed by Gensler.

But a few years later the agency merged with entertainment giant Endeavor, and all bets were off. The agency first fired Gensler as the interior designer and started talking to Neil Denari. Then the infamous Ari Emmanuel—brother of Rahm and inspiration for Jeremy Piven’s character Ari Gold on the television show Entourage—decided he wanted nothing to do with a building that was designed for his former adversary. Today, the building is rented by penny-conscious MGM.

Out of the Darwinian rubble, Gensler has managed to create an urban intervention that is still worth talking about. The project is a 6-story, 192,000-square-foot building fronted by glass curtain walls. Of all the architectural moves, the most effective is the firm’s treatment of the envelope. To ensure that the massive building fit in with its smaller neighbors, Gensler decided to shift its top floors thirty feet south on Beverly Drive. The move opened up an effective new rooftop space to the north and a large overhang to the south (its underside clad with elegant Ipé). This maneuver not only solved the problem of scale, but it also gave the building a stronger identity among a sea of boring glass and stucco-clad buildings.

The courtyard, raised a story behind the building, is another highlight. Tables there have great views of the city and the mountains beyond, and the connection to the café inside is seamless. A thick lawn is in just the right place where it contrasts effectively with a wall of cleft-faced basalt—a great counterpoint to the glossiness of the main facade above.

To further identify the building and break down its mass, the architects effectively utilized a series of vertical metallic fins, while a series of colored glass windows are slightly less successful. The colored glass lends rhythm and a touch of splash, as with the firm’s JW Marriott-Ritz Carlton building at L.A. Live. Here however, Gensler gets a little carried away with the alternating blue and gray patterns. Emphasizing the innovative shifts in the envelope would be enough excitement. Nevertheless the building sits very well within its context. For its size it manages to blend seamlessly into its neighborhood of Jimmy Choo and Prada boutiques, not easy for an office building. The addition of retail on the first floor along the street, at some future point, will be another vital urban element.

Inside the results are a little more mixed. The lobby is scaled down significantly from the original design but still double height, which feels appropriate if less awesome. A grand staircase from the courtyard provides the all-important Hollywood entrance. A long, thin ramp without any handrails is another dramatic entry point from the street. But silver laminated wood feels a little too clinical, like an airport. Still the splashes of dark wood are elegant and welcome. Inside, IA Interior Architects created a patchwork of cubicles for a space that feels luxurious but not groundbreaking. Nevertheless the building sits very well within its context. For its size it manages to blend seamlessly into its neighborhood of Jimmy Choo and Prada boutiques, not easy for an office building. The addition of retail on the first floor along the street, at some future point, will be another vital urban element.

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Gensler architect Li Wen described the strategic use of Ipé throughout, including the exterior, as an effort to introduce “warmth and sophistication.” It works. In fact, in spite of the obstacles and the problems, Gensler has created a strong building. It’s not the showpiece that William Morris once envisioned, but it’s a welcome addition in a city where notable architecture is in very short supply. SL
WALL POWER

In an age of accelerating digital platforms and a decelerating economy, the City of West Hollywood’s expenditure of $35 million on its new library might seem a little puzzling. Even more unusual is the city’s investment in not one but two highly visible public art programs for the complex. The first of these programs, featuring the work of street artist Shepard Fairey (of Obama “Hope” poster fame), was a casualty of controversy and city politics early on. The city, under the guidance of well-known art consultant Merry Norris, almost hired Fairey back in 2009 as part of its public percent for art program. But as Fairey became embroiled in a lengthy copyright lawsuit over his iconic depiction of President Obama, the city council’s support for the artist began to wane. As a result, the city “started all over again,” explained Norris. After a more rigorous approval process, the city not only again selected Fairey to create a mural for the entrance to the City Council chambers but also commissioned sculptor David Wiseman to create a site-specific installation in the interior stairwell. Fairey, who sought the public’s input for his mural, created a floor-to-ceiling celebration of West Hollywood’s history and culture, depicting local landmarks like the art deco Sunset Tower Hotel, the Roxy, and the Emerson Tile sign. Wiseman’s piece, a soaring series of branches emerging from the walls, ascends towards the skylight in the stairwell atrium. The bronze and porcelain sculpture provides a visual connection to the adjacent 5-acre park and sycamore trees planted near the site. “I latched onto the idea of ghosts of indigenous species reclaiming their space,” explained Wiseman. “It welcomes people, and transitions them between the outside and inside.” Perhaps overshadowing the city’s own public art program, the Museum of Contemporary Art has also spearheaded a temporary street art program at the library, which sits across the street from its own West Hollywood outpost at the Pacific Design Center. MOCA Director Jeffrey Deitch, hoping to promote the museum’s recent exhibition “Art in the Streets,” was stymied by LA’s mural ordinance and found West Hollywood much more welcoming. Although the proposals still went through city approvals.

An environment born out of new financing structures and changing client expectations has project teams racing to meet design and construction deadlines that would have been unheard of a decade ago. Now firms deal with this new world will determine their ability to sustain themselves in the future. With six months or more being cut from many new project schedules, “it’s the time needed to let things sit and vet things out that’s being compromised,” said Carlos Madrid, the Soto project designer for AECOM. With the slow economy, most firms don’t have a choice but to say, “yes” to compressed timelines, no matter how demanding. “You cross your fingers and close your eyes,” said Madrid. Though accelerated design and construction schedules leave architects in a frustrating position from a quality-control standpoint, they have big payoffs for building owners. The amount of money saved by purchasing lower-priced steel before drawings are done or landing a big tenant by being first to the market may far outweigh the costs of change orders resulting from hasty decision-making. “In all honesty, that might be the smartest thing you can do for the project,” said Rob Jernigan, principal and managing director of Gensler Los Angeles, of the financial risk mitigating strategies many private sector clients are using to hedge against market volatility. “The good news is that through BIM models we’re getting more efficient, effective, and smarter about how to phase projects,” he added.

As more public-sector clients enter partnerships with private-sector entities, the pace of government projects is changing, too. “These days we’re doing more work on a public-private partnership basis, where time is money,” said LA-based AECOM principal Paul Danna. “Once a contract is awarded, the sooner the project can be completed, the greater the financial benefits to the team.” Many eyes are on the firm’s Long Beach Courthouse (left), the first civic building in the United States to be delivered through a public-private partnership. Under a performance-based infrastructure agreement, a consortium that includes AECOM will be responsible for financing, designing, building, operating, and maintaining the 500,000-square-foot building for 35 years. More common in Europe and Canada, the arrangement could hold promise for U.S. public buildings as well.

The courthouse began post-competition development in the new plan, being broken ground in May, and should be occupied by the fall of 2013. In this case, keeping a fast-paced construction schedule is in everyone’s best interest, even the private contractor. “There is a heightened concern, awareness of quality, and thoughtfulness about maintenance that comes to bear because our team will be responsible for this period of time,” said Danna. “While it is adding pressure because of timing issues, the nature of the delivery method is in support of developing better-quality buildings for the long term.” Architects will know for sure in almost no time. JENNIFER K. GORSCHKE
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panasonic.net/sanyo

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www.lumisolair.com

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Architects and lighting designers balance multiple needs and goals to put the best shine on their projects.

Reinventing a shed to create a vibrant, functioning office is no mean feat. In Claremont, the New York firm LTL Architects has transformed a former maintenance building through a series of dynamic light installations that help to define office and communal spaces for staff at Claremont University Consortium. “Lighting design has an integral role within architecture,” said Paul Lewis of LTL, a practice whose buildings often stand out for their feature lighting and theatrical signage—including its recent Arthouse in Texas and the fluorescent tube displays, Light Structures.

On larger projects, Lewis’ practice often works closely with the lighting experts Lumen. For the Claremont building, the challenge was to get balanced light across the whole 42,000 square feet. “We wanted to achieve a distribution of light that was equivalent to the natural light,” said Lewis. “We knew we wanted to keep the natural light, the LA sunshine. It was a matter of figuring out ways to damper it and have dimmable meeting rooms.”

The inherited building, with its poured floors and non-flexible service core left only the ceiling and walls for a canvas. LTL’s solution was to pierce the roof with solar tubes rigged up to a sensor system, EcoTech, which detects light levels and responds by phasing light in and out from three-foot circular discs of fluorescents installed at intervals between the tubes. In the center of the office, the light is diffused through baffles, hung to form a lowered ceiling, or “cloud” as Lewis and Nelson Jenkins of Lumen call it. To avoid designing through addition, Lewis brought Lumen on at an early stage in the project. “Some of the initial ideas behind the LED screen came from conversations with the lighting designer about how to activate a space,” said Lewis. Taking on a consultant’s role, Lumen’s expertise in lighting technology as well as its creative input took LTL’s ideas and made them into realities. “They had an idea that the lighting would look random,” said Jenkins, “and we’d tell them what equipment to use and how to integrate it.”

The Claremont block isn’t just a harmonious environment of subtle tones and hidden light sources, there is also an aspect of drama, too. Jason Krugman Studio’s LED wall wraps porcupine-like bristles of blue lights around the central core of the otherwise column-free space.

“We wanted to animate it through interactive technology,” said Lewis. Weaving this playful feature into the space was a collaborative effort in which Krugman took LTL’s design and made it his own, developing LED pieces, the wiring, and logistics of the piece. “Lighting was a way to perform a certain function,” said Lewis. “But it also provides a psychological impact based on its aesthetic; LEDS, for example, are seen as spatialized artwork, as well as bringing light in a pragmatic sense.” The client’s most important motivation was the desire to erase the associations of the building as a disused maintenance block. It’s unlikely employees will mistake it for a maintenance building, however. Even the entrance draws office workers in with its slatted wooden wall threaded with lights.

GWEN WEBBER
The Vanke Center in Shenzhen, China is a culmination of architect Steven Holl’s long-time pursuit to defy gravity. Although physically elevated above ground on broad concrete pillars, the secret behind this levitation effect is the building’s lighting design.

“Steven thinks of light as an integral material, like stone or glass,” said Jason Neches a principal at L’Observatoire International, the New York-based lighting design firm. The firm’s contribution to the design is evident: the solid concrete-core supports, for example, which house the circulation up to the first floors, are wrapped in glass and lit to give the impression that the building floats.

Vanke’s complex interior spaces posed a particular challenge for L’Observatoire in spite of the firm’s familiarity with Holl. “Its diverse program meant that different parts of the project were advancing with different schedules,” said Neches. As well, its setting in China meant that traditional practice puts the finishing touches in the hands of local designers “to nurture local industry,” as Neches put it. In the underground auditorium, for example, L’Observatoire only took it through design development before handing it back to Holl’s Beijing office for final specifications of the lighting fixtures.

According to Neches, Holl has a clear vision before the designers even come to the table, and they are asked to provide feedback on the quality of light rather than have vital creative input. “However,” said Neches, “there is always flexibility so we can affect a change if we think it will make the space better.” In the case of the “bowtie” staircase area, which was difficult to read in plan and section, L’Observatoire used a 3-D physical model to test and demonstrate various lighting fixtures and options for the interior. As a result, track lights have been integrated into folds and facets of the bowtie with areas of highlights, while in a cove at the wall, there is an uplight to encourage people to gather.

The Vanke’s relatively monochromatic interior relies heavily on lighting to create different atmospheres. “We have a lot of opportunities with Steven,” said Neches. “These are the benefits of working with an architect who thinks of light as another building material.”

Minimalism was the rallying cry at the University of Chicago’s new Mansueto Research Library. Chicago-based architecture firm Murphy/Jahn buried the book stacks—enough for 3.5 million volumes—in a cavernous subterranean vault and enclosed the only above-grade level, which houses a reading room, circulation desk, and book care facility, in a glass-encased steel grid shell structure. While the fritted glazing allows ample quantities of controlled natural light to flood the library during the day, at night an electrical lighting scheme was required. German lighting design firm Lichtplanung had to devise a way to implement an artificial lighting scheme within the space that would not mar the pristine quality of the architecture.

“The challenge was to have a very simple and minimalistic solution,” explained Michael Rhode of Lichtplanung. “Helmut Jahn loves light, but he does not like to see light fixtures.”

Fulfilling the library’s lighting needs required both direct and indirect sources that could both fill the space with general illumination and also highlight certain areas. The design team at Lichtplanung had to study the architecture carefully in order to find places to discretely integrate luminaires. For the indirect lighting, the team settled on nesting their sources—low profile compact fluorescent fixtures—atop the ventilation kiosks that intersperse the reading room. From the top of the kiosks the lamps shine up to the roof of the grid shell. While black on its outward facing side, the glass’s fritting is grey on the interior side, creating a surface that captures the uplight and diffuses it throughout the space.

Direct lighting proved more of a challenge to the team since the clean lines of the grid shell structure didn’t offer any handy place to conceal fixtures. The only option, in fact, was to integrate the sources into the steel structural members. This meant choosing the smallest possible lamps with the highest possible output. The team selected HIT spotlights (tubular metal halide high intensity discharge lamps) outfitted with antiglare reflectors, which pump out an incredible 100 lumens per watt. The lamps range from 70 to 150 watts, with those closer to the floor of lower wattage and those towards the top of the dome of higher wattage. These two sources provide all of the general illumination for the library. The team also implemented task lighting throughout the space, such as at the reading and circulation desks, where more focused light was needed. Aaron Seward
Advanced fabrication technology has unfolded exciting architectural opportunities. What was once thought impossible is now reality. Together with innovations in materials, it has enabled new facade solutions where design and function come together in almost limitless ways. Now more than ever, collaboration between architect and fabricator empowers each to stretch their imagination, creating challenging projects that are inspiring the next era of designs. The METALS IN CONSTRUCTION 2012 FACADES CONFERENCE brings together leading designers and fabricators to explore this collaboration through case studies of recent work and roundtable discussions. Presented by the Ornamental Metal Institute of New York and The Architect’s Newspaper, this one-day event is the first in a series of conferences created to help designers and builders understand the ways in which technology can transform design aspirations into reality. From using BIM for communicating effectively with fabricators, to examining new resources for curtain wall design, the conference offers an unprecedented opportunity to survey the possibilities of designing with metals in the digital age.

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October 26, 2011

DIARY

OCTOBER

Wednesday 26

Lectures

Steven Steinberg, Lisa Majchrzak, and Walter N. Vernon
Mission possible: Exporting design services (Haiti)
5:30 p.m.
AIA SF
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.asia.org

Jordi Trujo and Sylvia Felipe
CED Lecture Series
6:30 p.m.
College of Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
112 Wurster Hall
Berkeley, CA
www.ced.berkeley.edu

Abel Romero
SFNOMA Presents:
Latin American Architects in the U.S.
2:00 p.m.
Los Angeles
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Resnick Pavilion at LACMA
www.lacma.org

Friday 28

Lectures

Brye Sarte
Design for Sustainability: Sustainable Infrastructure and the Future of Engineering
1:00 p.m.
College of Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
112 Wurster Hall
Berkeley, CA
www.ced.berkeley.edu

California Design, 1930–1965 Tour
2:00 p.m.
Resnick Pavilion at LACMA
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

November

Tuesday 1

Event

Jaye Cortez, Kamau Daaswood, Jason Johnson, Thea Monney, Shihan Van Clief
Constant Elevation: The L.A. Black Arts Movement through Spoken Word
7:00 p.m.
Hammer Museum
10889 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

Wednesday 2

Lectures

Allison Arieff, Stephen Kieran, Robert Kronenburg, Michael Webb
Motoopia: A New Age for Modular Construction
5:00 p.m.
University Park Campus
USC
Los Angeles
arch.usc.edu

Jose Oubrerie: Architecture in a Time of Uncertainty
7:00 p.m.
Keck Lecture Hall, SCI Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.scian.edu

Thursday 3

Event

Blindfield Tour of MOCA Galleries by Liz Glomm
Engagement Party: Like a Patient Ethanolized Upon a Table
7:00 p.m.
MOCA Grand Avenue
250 South Grand Ave.
Los Angeles
www.moca.org

Friday 4

Lecture

Charles Warren
Googlev: The Real Story
7:00 p.m.
Timken Lecture Hall, San Francisco
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
1111 8th St., San Francisco
www.cca.edu

October

Sunday 30

Talk with Jeffrey Vallance
Under the Big Black Sun:
California Art 1974–1981
3:00 p.m.
The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA
152 North Central Ave.
Los Angeles
www.moca.org

Saturday 5

Event

Lawrence Feringhetti
Art, Sex, Reading, and Conversation
7:00 p.m.
Meridian Gallery
535 Powell St., San Francisco
www.asia.org

Sunday 6

Event

The Air We Breathe
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfoma.org

Monday 7

Lecture

Ryue Nishizawa, SANAA
7:00 p.m.
Timken Lecture Hall
California College of the Arts
1111 8th St.
San Francisco
www.cca.edu

Wednesday 9

Lecture

Mark Foster Gage
Design Liquidity
7:00 p.m.
Keck Lecture Hall, SCI Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.scian.edu

Thursday 10

Film

California State of Mind:
The Legacy of Pat Brown
(dir. Sascha Rice, 2011)
7:00 p.m.
MOCA Grand Avenue
Ahmanson Auditorium
250 South Grand Ave.
Los Angeles
www.moca.org

Saturday 12

Event

House at 100:
Arts Festival and Gala
Love and Bullets: A San Francisco Love Story
7:00 p.m.
Meridian Gallery
535 Powell St.
San Francisco
www.meridiangallery.org

Sunday 13

Exhibition Opening
Patricia Esquivias
Hammer Museum
10889 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

Naked Hollywood:
Weegee in Los Angeles
MOCA
250 South Grand Ave.
Los Angeles
www.moca.org

Wednesday 16

Lectures

David Chu
Frozen Music
12:00 p.m.
AIA SF
130 Sutter St., 6th Floor
San Francisco
www.asia.org

Carolyn Merchant
Partnership with Nature
1:00 p.m.
College of Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
315A Wurster Hall
Berkeley, CA
www.asia.org

Friday 28

Lectures

Brye Sarte
Partnership with Nature:
Sustainable Infrastructure and the Future of Engineering
1:00 p.m.
College of Environmental Design
UC Berkeley
112 Wurster Hall
Berkeley, CA
www.asia.org

12:00 p.m.
Frozen Music
David Chu
www.classicist-nocal.org
San Francisco
Museum, The Presidio
The Walt Disney Family
315A Wurster Hall
Berkeley, CA
www.asia.org

Saturday 5

Exhibition Opening
The Air We Breathe
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfoma.org

Sunday 6

Exhibition Opening
Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World
Resnick Pavilion
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

Monday 7

Lecture

Alan Hess
San Francisco Modernism
6:00 p.m.
Nob Hill Masonic Center
1111 California St.
San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

Tuesday 8

Lecture

Dean Abemathy
Rome Reborn:
Visualizing the Ancient City of Rome
6:45 p.m.
The Walt Disney Family Museum, The Presidio
104 Montgomery St.
San Francisco
www.classicist-nocal.org

The American-German artist Lyonel Feininger, famous for his urban and landscape paintings, took up photography in 1928. Already a longtime collaborator with Walter Gropius—Feininger taught printmaking at the Bauhaus for almost a decade while Gropius was director—Feininger turned to the “mechanical” medium to explore the effects of light and shadow, reflections, and night imagery. A majority of his photographs have remained in relative obscurity. The exhibit Lyonel Feininger: Photographs, 1928–1939 at the Getty Center is the first U.S. venue to present a comprehensive collection of his photography. His photographs center on architecture: the hard geometric forms of the Bauhaus campus, pictured above, at night, and the Dessau railway station, as well as the urban and rural landscapes he encountered during his travels to Paris and the Baltic coast. The exhibit also presents his later work where, after the close of the Bauhaus by the Nazis, he became captivated by the surrealistic-life-like figures of mannequins in window store displays. Photographs by Feininger’s son, T. Lux—a student at the Bauhaus—is exhibited alongside his father’s, including his photograph of Karla Grosch in “Dance in Metal” at the Bauhaus, top. Feininger’s images, dominated by multiple exposures and dramatic contrasts, were captured using a Voigtländer Bergheil camera, which is on display along with his photographs. His explorations in photography as a means of creative expression and documentation marked the emergence of the German New Vision school of photography that began on the brink of World War II.

Light Fittings for Modern Architecture

www.dsa-lighting.com
Virtually every object in LACMA’s exhibit California Design 1930–1965 is both gorgeous and designed for daily life. The chairs, clothes, houses, vases, sound systems, and teapots show that the average Californian’s home could be enough to make the Sun King not only blink, but also drool.

California’s midcentury modern design is now an accepted totem for its rare mating of genius, technology, and commonplace functionality. Still, it’s thrilling to see the artifacts that excited the average Californian’s eyes and commonplace function—mating of genius, technology, and commonplace function—exciting the artifacts that excited the average Californian’s eyes.

The show reveals McCoy’s writing as interpretative, not the voice of an aesthetic but of a person of feeling. Of Schindler she says, “She was no toady, either. Her New Yorker short story, “The Important House,” deftly skewers a presumptuous photographer who jettisons the furniture in a newly completed, architect-designed house, causing the owner, Mrs. Blakely, to seek refuge in the only room the photographer hasn’t mucked with. Reading the story, you cannot fail to see Julius Shulman peaking out from behind the camera viewer. But as you walk the show you begin to wish for a definitive time line and more biographical information. Without the two catalog essays, by Morgan and co-curator Kimberli Meyer, you’re a bit blind to McCoy’s life: her upbringing in Arkansas, her move to literary New York, her entry into Bohemian Los Angeles. You get to know her words, but you want to trace them to the events of McCoy’s life.

Still, Sympathetic Seeing, reveals much, especially in the voice of McCoy. And, the 1922 Schindler House is a fitting and poignant exhibition choice. The house itself, Meyer notes, is “one of the primary objects in the exhibit.” McCoy worked in the house on and off through the late 1940s; her good friend, Dreiser, lived up the block; and Gill’s ill-starred triumph, The Showhouse, became a life-long advocate of innovative architecture.

Esther McCoy was known as the “founding mother” of Southern California architecture, an accolade she earned for her pathbreaking 1960 book Five California Architects. Her famous study is justly the starting point for any understanding of the heroic early days of modern architecture in California, and it is marked by an international pilgrimage that today, more than fifty years later, is stronger than ever. You cannot visit the houses of Greene & Greene, Irving Gill, Bernard Maybeck, R.M. Schindler, Richard Neutra and the generations that followed, without seeing them through the sharp, clear, and literate eye of Esther McCoy. She was, as the architectural historian David Gebhard remarked, “a one-woman crusade.”

Yet McCoy herself remains an almost unknown figure. “Sympathetic Seeing,” at the MAK Center at the Schindler House, is an effort to fill in the blanks. The exhibit follows the arc of McCoy’s work, beginning in the 1920s, when she led a bohemian life in Greenwich Village and was an apprentice to Theodore Dreiser, and ending with her valiant yet failed attempt to save Gill’s undisputed masterpiece, the Dodge House, from meeting the wrecker’s ball. Sympathetic Seeing is, at its core, a show about understanding architecture through words not images. “It wasn’t that architecture sprinkled fairy dust on Esther McCoy,” co-curator Susan Morgan commented. “It’s that she was a writer who found architecture." “So, this is a show about words, in the form of short stories, magazine articles, pamphlets, newspaper opinion pieces, brochures and essays. Some are the originals, others reproductions. When pieced together they describe the silhouette of a woman whose work as a labor activist during the Great Depression segued flawlessly into her writing as a champion of modernist architecture.

Her dream was to be a novelist, but poor health brought her to Los Angeles in 1932, where she used her pen to document the poverty of the city’s slum dwellers.
The Eames’ chairs have become so familiar that it’s easy to forget how revolutionary each of them was when first introduced about a half century ago. And the Eames’ fame overshadows their passion to communicate, as manifested in films, exhibitions, photography, and a score of related initiatives. The exhibition *Eames Words*, at LA’s A+D Museum, distills the essence of Charles and Ray, and their complementary skills. His pithy comments on the design process provide the text; her gift for color and arrangement breathe life into every corner of the room. The over-riding theme is announced on the side of the building: “the uncom-mon beauty of common things.”

Those mundane objects ranged from artisanal bread to a tumbleweed they brought back from a trip to the desert. In his Harvard lectures of 1971, Charles spoke with a sense of wonder about cords of logs, kegs of nails, hanks of wool, and reams of paper. In India, the couple delighted in the indigenous culture while writing reports for the new government, and they extolled the lota (a brass water pot used by peasants) as a triumph of poetry and practicality. They shared an enthusiasm for toys, collecting vintage examples of painted tin and wood and incorporating them into several of their short films. “Toys are not really as innocent as they look,” said Charles. “Toys and games are preludes to serious ideas.” Philip Morrison, an astrophysicist who narrated the Eames’ masterpiece, *Powers of Ten*, would show their film of hypnotically spinning tops to his graduate students at MIT as a release after two hours of mind-bending equations.

Deborah Sussman (who was a close associate of the Eameses and has made a brilliant career in environmental graphics with her husband, rocket scientist Paul Prejza) curated the exhibition with graphics designer Andrew Byrom. Another Eames alumna, Tina Beebe, recreated Ray’s breakfast table, to which a fortunate few were invited for good food and stimulating conversation. The interior of the Eames’ iconic house (minus the kitchen) has been recreated as part of the exhibition, *Living in a Modern Way*, across the street at LACMA. The bricolage of varied objects has been meticulously installed, but they’ve faded from sixty years of direct sun, and the spirit that animated them has largely fled. But at the A+D show, Sussman and Beebe, who helped create that vanished world, have restaged fragments of the originals with new materials as Ray would have done. As a result, the replica feels fresher and more authentic than the historic relics.

There’s another telling comparison between the two shows. At LACMA, the star vehicles are the streamlined Airstream trailer and Raymond Loewy’s impossibly sleek Studebaker Avanti. Both are triumphs of styling, expressive of their eras. In contrast, A+D displays an authentic WWII jeep. “Now that’s an automobile America should be proud of,” said Charles, who once wrote Henry Ford II urging him to make a plain black car as an alternative to two-tone dreamboats. “What I really want is a black car with feeling,” he added.

That same urge towards the simple and timeless is expressed in the juxtaposition of two classic modern chairs with Charles’ sharp comment that Rietveld subordinated reality to an intellectual concept, since Charles and his associates preferred to create a comfortable place to sit. In fact, the Eameses triumphed on both planes: their best work is inventive and practical and, like the humble objects they so admired, it’s infused with a timeless beauty. “What works is better than what looks good,” Charles insisted.

MICHAEL WEBB IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.
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Q&A

GAIL GOLDBERG

From October 25–28 the Urban Land Institute is hosting its Fall Meeting in Downtown Los Angeles. The new executive director of ULI’s LA chapter is Gail Goldberg, former director of LA’s city planning department from 2006 to 2010. Goldberg sat down to talk with AN’s West Coast editor Sam Lubell about her new job, about her time at LA City Planning, and about the myriad issues facing the city.

You were thinking of retiring after you left the public sector, what made you join ULI?

I was perfectly satisfied to be in retirement. ULI actually came to me after about ten months of retirement. I have such a long relationship with them—as a trustee, as a past chair chapter. When they asked me to take this job, it occurred to me almost immediately that in the 25 years I’ve been involved with ULI they have never said no to me. So I was going to have a hard time saying no to them.

Is there anything you are eager to accomplish at ULI?

I am very familiar with the mission of ULI, and I am very comfortable supporting it. ULI is about bringing people together. It’s about education. It’s about learning from one another. It’s about research and thinking about the future. It’s about coming up with best practices and building great communities. Their priorities around sustainability, disadvantaged communities, and infrastructure are all things that I care about. It’s less about my agenda and more about my comfort with their agenda.

What’s interesting to me about ULI is its ability to get planners, architects, and developers together. Can you talk about that?

I think all of us who are in a field that contributes to building communities spend a lot of time in our own field. ULI feels like the single place where all those professions come together and can really learn from one another.

Each of us only contributes a piece of the process, and we are all dependent on the other pieces. Having access to an organization like this, where you can really learn about the full process, allows you to be a lot more successful in your own piece of the process. For example, it was so important for me as a planner to learn about development financing. That was just stuff that wasn’t taught in planning school. It wasn’t anything I was going to learn through APA or doing my planning job. But lack of understanding it could really get in the way of my being able to do good planning. If you as a planner don’t create a plan that a developer can really pick up, then you’ve got a plan but you don’t have that community that you’re trying to build.

Do you think architects lack the ability to develop an understanding outside of their particular field?

I think in the practical application of their profession architects who are busy and working for developers learn pretty quickly what’s financially and what’s not. But it’s not clear to me that architects or developers really understand policy development. They certainly don’t understand the political environment they’re working in. I think architects often get frustrated by planners, because if we don’t understand the cost of the things then we start telling architects what to do. Maybe we’re not communicating well either.

Politics is so deeply wound up with planning, architecture, and development in LA. Can you elaborate from your experience?

Every city has its own culture. LA for a large city doesn’t have a long history of planning. This is not a city where people sit down and really think about what the downtown or our communities ultimately should be. What we’re good at is transactions and big projects. We probably can do those better and maybe more creatively than other cities. As a result we often get some great projects in LA. But we don’t always bring them together to make a great neighborhood or community. Changing the culture of a city is very hard. It takes almost constant vigilance. There’s a tendency for the system to keep producing what it has always produced.

We’re a city that celebrates creativity and entrepreneurship. We’re open to people coming here with grand ideas. Because we don’t have a plan or a common consensus about what’s supposed to happen, we may have a little more open to somebody else’s great idea of what should happen. In other cities that have a process where public agencies, community members, and business owners have created a real vision and a consensus around a plan, they’re not as open to new creative ideas. Those cities typically support the implementations of their own plans. So developers can go to Vancouver, and if they want to build what the plan says, they can build it quickly. Because the agency would not have the struggle if they wanted to build something totally inconsistent with the plan. We don’t have a plan getting in our way, if you will, but it also doesn’t provide for the kind of predictability that most developers need.

LA’s culture must have been frustrating for you as planning director.

It was clear to me when I came here that there was an interest in promoting planning. We have not adopted any new elements of the general plan that make it totally consistent, and we haven’t implemented that framework in the community plans. We’re beginning in LA to update some of our community plans with implementation tools.

We’ve started about ten community plans. The Hollywood plan is coming forward, and there are four or five right behind it. There are 35 community plans to be developed in the city. We thought it would take three years. It’s taken much longer.

Now that we’re in a downturn it seems like a good time to do this kind of thing. Communities are much more open to looking at themselves in times when they’re not being inundated with projects. But economic times are perfect for not only bringing the community out to do community planning but also to think about setting the table for the recovery. Are we going to be ready when the economy starts to turn around? I think planners all make that case, but almost across the board we’re unsuccessful in changing a political environment where there are limited resources.

Did this resistance to planning have anything to do with why you left?

No. I knew it was going to be a battle. And it was not going to be a battle that was going to be won in five years or frankly ten years. It’s going to be an ongoing battle that involves more than any planning director. It needs community members and the development community all aligned to do better planning. I certainly never thought that I could walk in and change LA in five or six years.

I had hoped, and I believe that I did, push things in that direction. I think there’s a lot more conversation now about community plans and about implementation tools. There’s a lot more discourse now about urban design and about the quality of the public environment and pedestrian orientation. I think we initiated a new conversation. And the architecture and urban design communities certainly partnered with us to give planners and community members a common vocabulary to talk about the public environment.

When you have a place with a weak planning environment does that mean that developers and politicians call the shots? That’s certainly the environment we have here. Land use is very political in LA. The council makes a lot of decisions about land use based on projects and transactions that are being proposed.

So was there any one reason that you decided to leave?

As it became increasingly clear that priorities needed changing and there was less and less support for real planning—in fairness that’s in every every city—I had the architecture and urban design communities certainly partnered with us to give planners and community members a common vocabulary to talk about the public environment.

Let’s talk about the conference. This will be ULI’s 75th Fall Meeting. It will be held at LA Live. We expect six or seven thousand people from all over the country to come to LA. There will be tours all over the city to provide an opportunity for the visitors to get a comprehensive view of all the changes that are happening here. We’ll be talking about the financial situation and capital markets. We’ll be discussing development products, quality environments, and sustainability. There will be a strong focus on smart growth around transportation. It’s going to be a very exciting environment and a great party.
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