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TRANSIT TRAVESTY

Gleaming plans for LA's Union Station were presented last month at the unveiling of Metro's six "vision plans." The schemes are full of public spaces, downtown connections, and landscape integration from the likes of stars like UN Studio, Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Foster and Partners and Ingenhoven Architects.

The problem: none of the plans will ever be realized. This was just a design exercise that had no weight on the selection of the master plan, a development comprising some 42 acres that Metro owns around the station. That selection will be made on the basis of qualifications, interviews, and implementation strategies.

Metro is now the richest and most powerful public agency in Los Angeles, largely thanks to more than \$30 billion from local ballot measure R. And there is no greater example than this that Metro is largely deaf to the needs of the design community and in turn to the community at large. On the surface, this pseudo design competition seems to be a cynical ploy to raise public (or perhaps more accurately, potential developers') "excitement," which it most resoundingly did not. Let's give LA citizens some credit. They can smell a cop out.

It's nothing new for LA County's transit agency to attract criticism for its design policies and design efforts. Just look at their headquarters, designed by Orange County firm McLarand Vasquez. This banal beige building beat out none other than Frank Gehry's inspired design. And what about transit-oriented developments (TODs) like Hollywood and Highland and Wilshire and Vermont? Nobody would call these projects anything but suburban-style non-architecture.

Christopher Hawthorne of the *Los Angeles Times* derided Metro's new Expo light rail's design for being "aggressively banal." After riding on the line, I actually found the work much better than I expected. I particularly liked the still-developing landscaping and the well executed, somehow calming stations. (Perhaps, I was just responding to the lack of riders.) But I would not call the design sophisticated. The wavy canopies and blue columns, suggesting the ocean, have a hint of corniness, especially because so much of the line is located in gritty parts of the city, not by the ocean. Urban sophistication is something that's sorely lacking throughout the city's transit system.

But it's not only a lack of elegant design that hampers Metro. It's that the bureaucracy is organized to promote engineering and the bottom line over design at every turn.

The jurors selecting the master plan designer include no architects or anybody with significant design expertise. It does include Cal Hollis, a planner who came from the world of redevelopment; Jenna Hornstock, also involved with planning and development at CRA; and Roger Moliere, a legal and real estate expert who engineered Metro's Joint Development program (the creators of its TODs).

While the Union Station Master Plan will no doubt provide helpful guidelines, development at Union Station will at the end of the day be determined by the developer leasing property on the site. How much input will design advocates—or the public—have on the design? They've had little say in Metro's previous developments. Will this be any different?

Signs aren't promising, in spite of the appeals from one of Metro's few design advocates, Martha Welborne, executive director of Countywide Planning. And here's a very bad sign: with its upcoming Purple Line extension along Wilshire Boulevard, Metro is planning to demolish the current Architecture and Design Museum, a promoter of architecture, design and, incidentally, public transit, along with several other galleries and art spaces, for a station that could easily go elsewhere. Next door, the Peterson Automotive Museum will not be touched. Need I say more? **SAM LUBELL**

LOS ANGELES GIVES GO-AHEAD ON EXPANDED SOLAR PROGRAM

Sunnier Outlook

Sunshine is obviously an abundant resource in Los Angeles, but it's been woefully underutilized. Compared to other major U.S. utilities, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) ranks last in solar capacity per capita and still gets 45 percent of its energy from coal.

In April, LA City Council approved a measure that paves the way for a 10-megawatt demonstration program—enough to power 10,000 households—that reimburses residents for the solar energy they produce.

The program prioritizes building types with large rooftops such as condominiums, parking structures, and warehouses that yield

more solar power for less cost and create another source of revenue, a plus particularly in low-income neighborhoods.

"We have to make sure there's a good geographic distribution and different types of buildings," said Mary Leslie of the Los Angeles Business Council (LABC), a leading advocate of the program. "Solar programs have tended to cluster in affluent areas. We want to disabuse that."

The program also helps LADWP determine an optimal amount that residents will be reimbursed for creating solar energy through a bidding process.

The demo is just the tip of the iceberg. LA rooftops have the potential to generate as much as 5.5 gigawatts of energy, enough to offset the needs of half a million LA households, according to a study by the Luskin Center for Innovation at UCLA. LADWP plans to add 65 megawatts

to the program later this year. An additional 75 megawatts is expected by 2016, for a total of 150 megawatts, enough to power 34,000 homes.

Still, environmental economist J.R. DeShazo, who heads the Luskin Center, said LADWP has to take bigger steps. Commissioned by the LABC, the center designed a program that would, in the long run, produce solar energy as cost effectively as gas, and found that the sweet spot is a 600-megawatt program, which prioritizes large rooftops, phased in over ten years. The larger program would power 136,000 homes.

Not that this initial step isn't good news. The LABC has forecast that the 150-megawatt program has the potential to create 4,500 jobs, generate \$500 million in economic activity, and offset 2.25 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions by 2016. **CARREN JAO**



LA's Bureau of Engineering announced on April 12 that it would issue an international competition for designs to replace the damaged Sixth Street Bridge, a viaduct connecting downtown LA to Boyle Heights, just east of the Los Angeles River.

The 3,500-foot-long bridge, which spans the LA River and rail lines on opposing embankments, opened in 1932, one of 14 bridges city built in an era of unprecedented civic architecture. The bridge may be the city's best known and most beloved; its art deco concrete piers and parabolic steel-truss arches make it an icon of quiet industrial beauty.

The span was constructed using on-site mixed-concrete, a fatal error leading to a chemical reaction in which the concrete eats away at itself, causing incurable decay that continually weakens the structure. Preservationists had hoped to save the bridge, but lost a key City Council vote in November.

City Engineer Gary Lee Moore said a \$401 million cable-stayed bridge will be built in its place. The design competition, which opened on April 25 with a Request for Qualifications, is soliciting designs for a new bridge following a somewhat curved alignment, slightly different from the dying 79-year-old span.

According to Deborah Weintraub, chief deputy city engineer, a "design aesthetic advisory committee" of between seven and 15 members, selected by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and area councilmember José Huizar, will shortlist three entries. The firms, who will each receive a \$50,000 stipend, will have approximately three months to complete their designs. The winner will be chosen by city engineers and the state's highway building division.

"The city has embraced the idea that a bridge can be more than a utilitarian structure connecting two points," a gratified Alex Ward, chair of Friends of the Los Angeles River, said after the announcement. Ward, who had pressed officials to underwrite a competition, said, "We were like a broken record for two and a half years."

Moore said he had "begged" federal and state officials to free up the funds to carry out the competition. "I believe we've got to be able to look the community in the eye and say, 'Yes, we had to take down an iconic bridge. But now we're guaranteeing we're giving you the best.'"

Skeptics have wondered why the project is limited to cable-stayed designs. City engineer Moore was upbeat, however. The cable-stayed bridge, he said, "allows the greatest creativity of design." The city selected that bridge type from among 15 choices, based on input from its Community Advisory Committee.

Shortlisted designs will be unveiled sometime in early fall. **GREG GOLDIN**

Cover image: Lobby life at AOL.
PHOTO BY JASPER SANIDAD



OPEN> BOUTIQUE



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238 North Larchmont Boulevard
Los Angeles
Tel: 323-391-1884
Architect: Bernheimer Architecture

ERIC LAIGNEL

Upscale grooming boutique Malin+Goetz has just opened its first store on the West Coast. Located in LA's cozy Larchmont Village, next to main street shops and traditional buildings, the modern store stands out, ironically, for its minimalism.

The "modern apothecary," as the company describes itself, has a dark gray boxlike facade fronted by a single glass door that was created out of a former bay window. The store's restrained logo sits over the entry.

Inside, New York architect Andrew Bernheimer riffs on the brand's elegant, understated product packaging. He designed a narrow space highlighted by two complementary flanks. The left side has a white, floor-to-ceiling gridded shelf system that reads like a single piece of cabinetry, despite being made with eight units. The design, notes Bernheimer, is a loose reference to the street grid in the company's hometown, New York, and to the designs of Piet Mondrian and Charlotte Perriand. The other wall is solid gray, etched with an etched grid of milled MDF that echoes the motif.

There is one cozy, rustic element to balance out all this minimalism: a long wood table that the owners found in an antique shop in upstate New York. It is an apothecary, after all. **SL**

EAVESDROP> THE EDITORS

WTF WI-FI

That didn't take long. We hear that the funds promised for the LA Unified School District's innovative prefabricated prototype schools by the likes of **Craig Hodgetts, Swift Lee** and **Gonzalez Goodale** have been routed instead to updating LAUSD schools' wifi systems. We know that getting on the Internet without a cord is cool, but more important than shelter from the storm? Say it ain't so! Now that the program is on hold there is one silver lining. It appears that LA's charter schools are jumping over themselves to get a prefab prototype. Stay tuned.

GOING LOCAL

We hear from a source that the mighty Pritzker family from Chicago (namely **Anthony Pritzker**) has built an ultra-large estate in Beverly Hills. A 49,000 square foot chateau, to be exact. We haven't been able to identify who the architect is, but it's apparently a firm "from Paris." We're a little disturbed that the Pritzkers would want to create a French Renaissance-style home instead of the modernist designs they promote with their awards—not to mention hiring locally. But maybe this means a sop to a West Coast architect for the next Pritzker?

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EHDD's Lands End Lookout Visitor Center.

GOLDEN MOMENT

Along some of San Francisco's most stunning coastline, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy has just completed two new visitor centers, the Lands End Lookout Visitor Center and the Golden Gate Bridge Pavilion.

The Lands End Lookout, designed by EHDD, is a thoughtful gem of concrete, wood, and glass that's completely at home perched above the rugged coastline that once was home to the Victorian-era Sutro Baths. The siting completes, in Delphic fashion, the progression of man-made structures from the ruins of the baths to the Cliff House, past venerable Louis' Restaurant, and culminating at the visitor center.

The center houses interpretive exhibits of the site and its history as well as a cafe and shop. The view of the coast, including the famous Seal Rocks, is so well framed through the transparent east-west axis that one can imagine that the vista is better than it was prior to the building. In one of those small, deft moves that demonstrates the architect's care for the site, the structure is rotated several degrees off the east-west axis to maximize the view corridor.

"To build on this magnificent site required a design that fights the fog and salt air while capturing the inspiring view, history, and culture," explained EHDD's Jennifer Devlin.

Around the coast to the northeast of Lands End sits the Golden Gate Bridge and its new Bridge Pavilion by Jensen Architects. While visually pleasing and technically strong, the 3,700-square-foot building doesn't integrate into its site with the same success as the Lands End project. The bright reddish-orange building is clad in cementitious panels and has a simple

rectangular plan, with a minimal clerestory roofline and a glass storefront entrance. The north facade is a nearly unbroken mass of solid wall; one can only see the bridge from the entry area. In a location where natural beauty and the bridge's stunning engineering are free for the looking, this building has an inward focus.

The interpretive exhibits housed in the Bridge Pavilion, telling the story of the 75-year-old bridge, are well done. A magnificent scale model of one of the bridge towers is housed in the pavilion. It was used for structural testing during the construction of the bridge.

The charming historic Roundhouse, situated closer to the bridge and on higher ground, affords visitors some great photo opportunities. Restored by EHDD, the Roundhouse has been returned to its original configuration. Its circular plan, surrounded by glass, affords sweeping views.

The Golden Gate National Park Conservancy has done an admirable job in getting both the Lands End and Golden Gate projects funded (\$4.5 million and \$4 million, respectively), designed, and built. Without the efforts of this private organization, neither project would have been realized.

GEORGE CALYS



Jensen Architects' Golden Gate Bridge Pavilion

GEORGE CALYS

artek

"A chair is not just a seat, it is the key to the whole interior."

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 30, 2012

ON THE TRACKS OF LOS ANGELES' NEW EXPO LINE



COURTESY METRO

LA'S TRANSIT DREAMS COMING TRUE?

Believe it or not, Los Angeles is on its way to becoming a world-class transit city, and a pivotal new light rail line just opened to prove it.

On April 28, the opening of the Expo Line ushered the city into a new transit era. This 8.6-mile route from downtown to Culver City not only serves a traffic-weary swath of the city, but gives Angelenos the rail line that will metaphorically make the city whole again, traveling the width of the LA Basin to reach

Santa Monica as early as 2015.

The line has been funded by Measure R, the half-cent sales tax that is funneling an estimated \$40 billion into local transportation projects over the next 30 years.

Unlike some recent additions to the system, like the Gold Line Eastside Extension, it should be heavily used: Metro expects 27,000 boardings per day. When the line is complete to Santa Monica, ridership could be as high as 67,000 per day.

An art installation on the Expo line.

Designed by Los Angeles-based Parsons, with support from Gruen Associates and Miyamoto International, the Expo Line has been in the works basically since Southern Pacific offered the right-of-way for sale in 1988. Yet the completion of the \$940 million project was delayed over a year, particularly by community groups concerned with at-grade crossings. It's a shame, since the stations that are the most effective (and attractive) are those that are on street level, not hovering above the busier streets on concrete pylons.

Unlike the themed stations on the Gold or Red Lines, the Expo Line has a unified design. "This is a contemporary project," said Jorge J. Pardo, Metro's director of creative services, who oversees both station design and public art. He says the line-wide design is better for the customer, who needs to see the stations as landmarks. "There's a reason this design can continue all the way to 4th and Colorado," he said, referring to the intersection in Santa Monica where the line will terminate.

The stations are unassuming and largely indistinct. Perforated metal sunshades undulate over simple steel tubing painted in a cool blue, which on most days is exactly the color of the LA sky.

On the platforms, the canopies cast constantly changing shade patterns. Yet besides the digitized waves traced in the air, the infrastructure almost seems to disappear, allowing the framed views into the adjacent neighborhoods to become the visual focus of the stations.

Roland Genick, lead designer for architecture and urban design at Parsons, said he hopes that the design for the line is somewhat subconscious for riders. "I think with a system that people use on a daily basis, it is very important that there are bits of interest and surprises that one discovers over time, leading to a more layered understanding and appreciation."

As a ride, the Expo Line delivers visual punch as you sail down the tracks: the gorgeous new "front yard" garden of the Natural History Museum, USC's stately towers, rusted-out Exposition Boulevard auto-body shops, expansive views of the Baldwin Hills, and Culver City's bubbling downtown (for now the line terminates at La Cienega and Jefferson). Neighborhoods along the way have already been preparing for the line's arrival, with transit-oriented developments dotting the route all the way to Santa Monica. The line could pave the way for high-quality urban development becoming a model for the city and the region.

But the train cars themselves put

us at the back of the pack. Unlike the shiny silver Breda cars of the Gold Line, the Expo Line uses the boring, boxy white cars that are also found on the Blue Line because they share the same track for two stations. However, a recent announcement that Metro is buying 200 sleek rail cars from Japanese manufacturer Kinkisharyo International might improve the look of the line considerably. (Now if only we could bring that rail car manufacturing to Southern California.)

The quibbling continues over another route, and the Purple Line, known as the "Subway to the Sea, is now estimated not to reach Westwood until at least 2025. Still, one thing has become clear: Angelenos can't wait for subways to network our neighborhoods. We need more light rail routes, more dedicated busways, and more bike paths, and we need them now. The Expo Line has proved to the city that we not only deserve world-class transit, we can also demand it.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 30, 2012

SHORTLISTED TEAMS UNVEIL VISION BOARDS FOR LA'S UNION STATION AREA



VISION OF THE UNION

COURTESY GRIMSHAW/GRUEN

Spoiler Alert: The schemes you are about to see, while inspiring and informative, will not become reality.

Such is the strange state of affairs at LA's Union Station, where LA County's transit agency, Metro, asked the six teams they've shortlisted to masterplan the 42-acre area it owns around the station to present "vision boards," containing conceptual renderings—with no specified limitations—for the neighborhood as it might look in the year 2050.

The boards, presented in front of a packed house at the station on April 25, will hold no weight in the selection of the master planner. That choice will be made, by the end of June, on the much more nuts-and-bolts basis of qualifications, interviews, data collection, draft alternatives, and implementation strategies, a.k.a. the "scope of work."

"It's about fun and inspiration and the future of Los Angeles," said Martha Welborne, Metro's executive director of Countywide Planning, of the vision boards. She appears to be fighting an uphill battle to get the bureaucratic and engineering-driven agency to embrace design. "It's about opening up their imagination before they have to get serious about the limitations," she noted, of the architect-engineer teams' proposals. She added, for emphasis: "These are not

going to get built."

All six shortlisted teams embraced the unusual challenge, developing proposals for the Union Station site. While the proposals were strikingly different, all sought an area that would become a civic destination that is better connected to the larger city as well as to Southern California's climate and landscape. Union Station, while beautiful, is currently an island in an urban wasteland, cut off from the cultural riches around it, including downtown Los Angeles and El Pueblo de Los Angeles, the city's historic center.

While the Request for Qualifications specified architecture and engineering teams, due to the intense urban knitting required to rethink the area, landscape firms—including SWA, Mia Lehrer + Associates, West 8, and Peter Walker and Partners—have taken on large roles as well.

EE&K and UNStudio proposed a plan called *Meet Me at Union Station*, which includes a large, new layered building behind the station with a mixed-use program and that is integrated with staggered public spaces both above and below, largely open to the elements. Grimshaw and Gruen's plan envisions large, glassy buildings along the perimeter of the site, as well as a giant folding planted bridge, which appears to be

programmed with either residential or commercial uses, connecting to downtown. In the nearby distance are a series of solar arrays spreading out like flowers.

Foster+Partners and IBI Groups' plan puts forth east/west and north/south axes of mixed-use activity emanating from the station, and a gigantic new park extending all the way to the Los Angeles River. Moore Ruble Yudell Architects and Planners/Ten Arquitectos/West 8 called for practically no new buildings around the station. Instead they focused on a series of "shaded groves and lush courtyard gardens," both in front of and behind the station. NBBJ/Ingenhoven Architects also focused on the courtyard typology, creating what NBBJ principal Jonathan Ward called "not a glass-and-steel icon but an iconic experience" around the station. The transit center would have large green plazas in front and back, with the train tracks covered with a giant planted infrastructure.

"Towns are not created by buildings but by the voids between them," noted Ingenhoven managing director Ben Dieckmann.

Finally Renzo Piano Building Workshop/Parsons Transportation Group put forward a proposal that Piano described as all about "concentrating energy." Its highlight: giant drip-castle-like buildings inspired

Grimshaw/Gruen's scheme suggests a raised bridge connecting to downtown LA; Below left: NBBJ and Ingenhoven's heavily planted scheme; Below right: EE&K and UNStudio's plan would be packed with staggered public spaces.

by desert landforms, rising behind Union Station like fingers. The team proposed planting the bases of the buildings with a "living skin," in a similar fashion to Piano's California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco.

"We're using this project as a reimagining of what California could have been if it were more driven by its natural qualities," noted Parsons' Roland Genick.

Since the schemes will not be used to determine the winner of the RFP, the results stand as colorful proposals to solve the egregious problems of the station's neighborhood, and with much of downtown. Almost every team envisioned caps over freeways and planted bridges linking to the rest of the city. Most proposed greenery in and around the Los Angeles River. The majority added density, greenery, and mixed uses and removed major urban blights, including two large jails and other forbidding buildings. One of the few major differences between proposals was in how closely large buildings would be placed to the existing landmark train station. The overall square footage for the transit-oriented site could measure up to 6 million square feet—including offices, residences, retail, entertainment, parks, and a potential high-speed rail station—a staggering amount of new building near the center of the city.

The teams would not criticize the process for obvious reasons, and many spoke highly of the focus and direction it has given them. "After the initial moment of anxiety, it was inspiring," noted Grimshaw principal Vincent Chang. "It got us asking good questions," added EE&K associate principal Jonathan James Cohn. "Now the DNA is set. We know the things that we want to accomplish."

The shortlisted teams, which have already beat out heavyweights like Zaha Hadid, OMA, Morphosis, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, have already completed their interviews. Metro staff is scheduled to recommend a winner by June 28, and the master-planning process is set to begin by July and be completed in two years.

Meanwhile, when asked why there had been no design competition, Metro's Welborne noted various reasons, including a lack of funding, a huge amount of square footage, a complex program, and question marks such as whether high-speed rail would be happening at all. She also noted, "We do what the board wants us to do."

"As usual, LA is different," she added. **SL**



COURTESY NBBJ/INGENHOVEN ARCHITECTS



COURTESY EE&K/UN STUDIO



COURTESY DLR GROUP WWCOT

UNVEILED

BROAD STAGE EXPANSION

Eli Broad is getting a new neighbor. Well, at least his namesake building, the Eli and Edythe Broad Stage, is.

The Santa Monica theater in April unveiled a \$12.3 million addition to its Renzo Zecchetto-designed Broad Stage performing arts center, which opened in 2008. This time the architects will be DLR Group WWCOT.

Located just east of the existing theater, the new building will, combined with the Broad and an existing administrative building to the north, carve out a new plaza space for Santa Monica College, the building's owner.

The project, paid for with

a 2008 public bond issue, will feature a multi-use, 165-seat music hall and a rehearsal room, music lab, and storage above.

The chief design challenge for the architects, pointed out DLR Group WWCOT principal Andrea Cohen Gehring, was "How do you add a building to an iconic structure like the Broad?" The goal, she said, was to complement, not mimic or overpower that structure.

The firm started with the Broad Stage's "beautifully composed series of materials," which come together, said Gehring, "like music." Set back slightly from the Broad, the minimal building will, like its neighbor, have a glazed facade and a large composite-wood-panel cantilevered canopy. But unlike that building, which is inward facing, much of the new building will reveal its

inner workings, particularly the movement of people on its upper levels. The rest of the palette will include fiber cement board, precast board-formed concrete, corrugated metal paneling, and structural glazing.

Inside, a double-height lobby will contain a large aluminum art wall, inspired, said project architect Juan Pedro Alvarez, by how light enters the building. Accordion-style sliding glass doors will allow the building to open up completely to the plaza outside.

The building is aiming for LEED Silver. Its resurfaced courtyard will contain native plants and swales to retain storm water runoff. Stage two of the project includes a new masterplan calling for, among other things, burying the theater's existing surface parking and replacing it with another plaza. That plan will also include another building containing a gallery, offices, and classrooms.

Other firms in the running for the project—chosen via Request for Proposals—were Brooks + Scarpa Architects and Moore Ruble Yudell Architects and Planners. **SL**

Architect: DLR Group WWCOT
Client: Santa Monica College
Location: Santa Monica, CA
Completion: 2014

FINAL PIECE OF PLAYA VISTA UNDERWAY Runway Takes Off



COURTESY JOHNSON FAIR

Runway, the final component of the long-debated and litigated Playa Vista project, will finally break ground in August, delivering a much-needed commercial and civic center on the site of an airport once owned by Howard Hughes. Often derided for its suburban character, Playa Vista is continuing to evolve after 30 years on the drawing board, with the forthcoming addition slated for 11 acres adjacent to the Ballona Creek Wetlands and the Pacific Ocean.

Designed by Los Angeles-based architecture and planning firm Johnson Fain, the \$260 million project, developed by master developer Playa Capital Company and Runway site owner Lincoln Property Company, will be located at the site's former runway (hence the name).

Design lead Scott Johnson and his team spent three years designing before the project cleared the California Supreme Court. With a targeted opening date of 2014, Runway will add 200,000 square feet of retail, including a movie theater, shops, and restaurants, 420 apartments, and 25,000 square feet of creative office space.

"In theory, it's an exceptional location," said Johnson. "It's hard to build near the ocean today. And it's the newest part of the city."

Since its earliest conception, developed by local firm Moule & Polyzoides, Playa Vista has been an experiment in New Urbanism, though much of the original master plan was abandoned after numerous lawsuits and market cycles. Runway retains the original concept's ambitions, especially

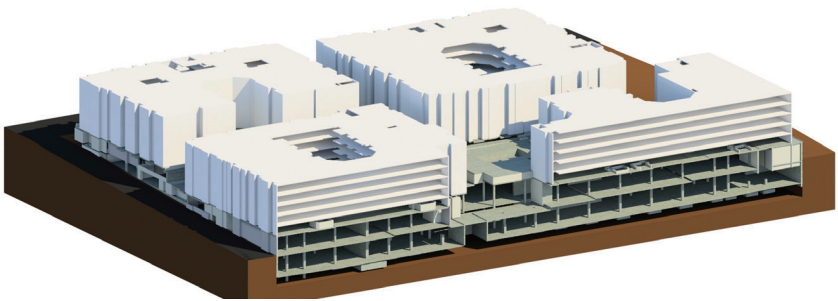
regarding pedestrian scale, landscaping, and what Johnson calls a "heightening of the public realm."

The most prominent element will be a five-story, lantern-shaped vertical circulation structure that does extra duty as a people mover, social gathering place, and public art. The design team also called on traditional urban place-making concepts by breaking the Runway site's 11 acres into smaller blocks. Rios Clementi Hale led the landscape design work. To activate the streetscape, the design team placed residential units above the commercial and retail uses in a mixed-use arrangement that tops out at a height of four stories.

The project diverges from Playa Vista's New Urbanist progenitors in a strict adherence to contemporary architecture style. Johnson describes Runway as "beach industrial." He is careful to point out, however, that Runway will not be a thematic environment. Only contemporary materials will be used, such as steel, tile, timber, and self-rusting Cor-ten steel—materials, Johnson said, "that will gain quality with weathering."

JAMES BRASUELL

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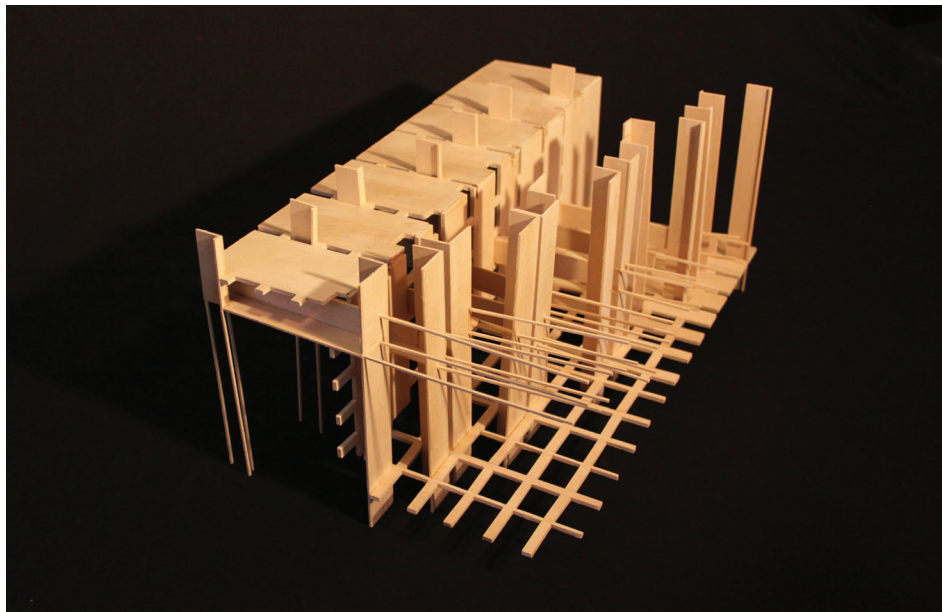
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 30, 2012



PHOTOS: QUITO BANOGON; RENDERING: JEREMY AFUSO; MODEL: JENN POPE

LA ARCHITECTURE FEEDER BUILDS DIVERSITY FOR THE PROFESSION

LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Take a look around most architecture offices and you'll notice a sea of white, upper-middle-class faces. There are so many reasons, from cultural divides to architects' meager salaries and job prospects, but perhaps the most important is the lack of access to affordable architectural education. After all, most top-tier architecture schools cost well over \$30,000 a year.

One little-known but increasingly appreciated Los Angeles school is doing its part to address the problem: the Los Angeles Institute of Architecture and Design (LAIAD), located in the city's Koreatown neighborhood.

While not on the tip of many tongues, the Institute, founded in 2001 by architects William Taylor and the late Bernard Zimmerman, recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. It teams significant architectural expertise with local West Los Angeles College's affordable resources (including that school's non-architecture courses) to serve as a feeder into top schools from around the country.

The idea is not to send students right into the workforce, but to prepare them for top architecture programs—building their expertise and their portfolios—at a very affordable price. Taylor, calls it an “alternative portal,” or a “peer school.” Classes take place at night because most students have day jobs.

Tuition costs \$3,200 per semester. Annual tuition at Yale School of Architecture, by contrast,

costs \$39,450. Tuition at Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) costs about \$34,000. Once going through LAIAD's two-year undergraduate program, students enter fully accredited architecture schools in their third year, many with scholarships. Students at the school's Graduate Preparation program build their portfolios to enter grad programs from the start.

LAIAD does not offer an accredited BArch or MArch, just a certificate. But all classes are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), so students generally don't have trouble transferring credit, said Taylor. Agreements with SCI-Arc and Otis College of Art and Design make the process even easier, and the school is working on additional deals with California State University–Long Beach and Woodbury University.

Many community colleges offer architecture programs that are also far cheaper than typical architecture schools, said Taylor. But that education is often geared toward a “vocational” and “technical” angle, not aimed at getting kids into more design-oriented programs after graduation.

The school, for now, is located in a nondescript office building in Koreatown, over a bunch of beauty shops and pizza joints. LAIAD grads include former attorneys, CPAs, a rabbi, and a boxer. But the results have been impressive. Students have moved on to SCI-Arc, USC, Woodbury, Harvard, Yale, and other institutions.

“The portfolio is the great equalizer,” said Taylor, who is also a principal at TFO Architecture. Almost anyone who wants to go to LAIAD can get in, and all can get help through financial aid, “even if they're really, really broke,” said Taylor.

Classes at LAIAD are similar to those at other architecture schools, including seminars, studios, and reviews. But the point, said Taylor, is not to make students experts in formal gymnastics, but to develop a “form language” to create arrangements based on specific ideas and logical systems.

“It lights up a different imagination,” said Taylor. “The hardest part of architectural design is making decisions.” Students are discouraged from making CNC models at first.

Francisco Palomares, 36, a recent graduate, is now excelling at SCI-Arc, a school where he had been rejected years earlier. The reason was his portfolio, which he beefed up at LAIAD. “It's definitely prepared me well,” Palomares said. “I know how to approach everything logically, step by step.”

SCI-Arc professor Marcelo Spina says he was impressed with Palomares' grasp of technology and of architectural principles: “What he did not know, he knew or had the intuition where to find out, which in the culture of specialization that we live today, is an essential quality for progress.”

Judith Kinnard, president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ASCA), lauds schools like LAIAD for addressing the “concerning” costs of architectural education and the lack of diversity, which she says has only gotten worse as the economy has deteriorated. “We're all aware and very concerned about the debt issue for our graduates,” she said, adding, “It's

Top: LAIAD Instructors William Taylor (left) and Carl Smith (right) interact with students; Above, left and right: Rendering and model by LAIAD students.

great to give more students the opportunity to engage in architectural education.”

But she does worry about some students graduating with only a certificate, not a full architectural education, and moving into the field underprepared. “I'm a little nervous about encouraging students to take part in non-accredited education. There's no oversight of that,” she said. “They are perhaps advancing the notion that it's perfectly appropriate to move into professional licensure without achieving a professional degree.”

Taylor assures critics that 90 percent of students who finish the program move on to a BArch or an MArch program. Besides, “We go through curriculum committees to make sure our courses are in keeping, just like they do,” he added.

And if you take a look around a classroom you'll see students from every ethnicity and social class. The student body is 60 percent minority, a refreshing change for architectural education. In one studio students were creating balsa wood models to reflect architectural systems, with results similar to Sol Lewitt's permutations. In another they were preparing “language models” for an architectural competition. Many have stayed up late nights and have the telltale look of any architecture school student. Isn't opportunity grand? **SL**

PREDOCK_FRAME TRANSFORMS A NONDESCRIPT HOUSE INTO A LUMINOUS RESIDENCE

LIGHT BOX



JIM WELCH AND ANDREW DURHAM



In the dining/ kitchen area, custom-designed lacquered white cabinetry is minimal and efficient, off-set by art and Frank Gehry chairs. Above: Extruded window frame and extended outdoor space atop the concrete deck.

LA-based Predock_Frane are in the process of transforming a claustrophobic and nondescript stucco residence in the middle of Venice into a luminous white box with a twist, called 4th House. The architects implanted the home and studio with countless other white boxes, creating a textured, spacious, three-dimensional tapestry that takes perfect advantage of its site.

Frane's 1,500-square-foot home has a simple white face, which floats over a raised concrete slab and copious native vegetation, with three protruding steel cubes: one in front of the doorway, creating an effective delineation between inside and out; and two in front of the windows, creating a sitting bench and a daybed.

Inside, squares are everywhere, conserving space, providing illumination, expanding the envelope's surface, and even encouraging breezes. In the open-plan kitchen and living room they form a bar, an island, stream-lined cabinetry, and an enormous skylight, supplemented with edgy contemporary art. A large window behind the kitchen leads the eye toward a small side garden. In the bathroom, another huge skylight also connects to the bedroom, providing each room with warm light.

Large, square glass doors at the rear draw your eye to the oasis-like backyard, formerly for parking and storage. This textured yard is divided into squares for a bocce ball court, a pebble garden/dining area, and a Japanese soaking tub. The garage has been turned into the firm's office, another amply skylit space that is sure to make other architects jealous. **SAM LUBELL**

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 30, 2012



LIBERATED FROM THE CUBE

AOL WANTED AN ENERGETIC VIBE FOR ITS NEW PALO ALTO OFFICES AND DESIGNERS O+A DELIVERED

As wealthy tech companies continue to descend upon Silicon Valley to complete their tech 2.0 makeovers, one of the biggest surprises has been AOL. Despite its purchase of *The Huffington Post* and various new ventures, the old-school (at least by tech world standards) company

still wasn't known for innovation or risk. Perhaps that's why they asked O+A to design an edgy office. The design, points out O+A director of design Denise Cherry, is meant to embody the new mantra of AOL: "transparency, collaboration, creativity, playfulness." It's also designed to rekindle the "the energy of a startup."

Built into an existing office building, the makeover uses unfinished materials, exposed ceilings, and concrete floors to suggest a rough-around-the-edges feeling, contrasted with simple, white walls and

punctuated with a high-energy palette of colorful carpeting, modern furniture, sculptural neon lighting, and bright, custom graphics.

"We wanted to play with this idea of stripping back the building to its basics as a parallel to the focus of AOL's new culture," said Cherry. Thus, sanded-down and sealed oriented strand board (OSB), typically a construction-grade material, lends walls and benches a finished but still raw finish.

Spaces are casually organized to reflect

the current philosophy that "an idea can happen anywhere," said Cherry. The open plan is dotted by groupings of loud furniture and fiberglass-clad "pods" to allow intense congregation or alone time; a "town hall," a large, bright space that is the core of the office, makes room for larger groups. More traditional conference rooms are also available for those few times when workers need to have an old-fashioned meeting. **SL**





Facing page, clockwise: Lobby lights “Mod” pendants from Lite Control; Custom conference pods with acoustics by Auralex; Lounge seating by Blu Dot, Espada and conference tables by Mash Studios. **This page, clockwise:** Glassed-in conference rooms, kick-back spaces, and white-board walls for writing ideas; Informal seating in reception; Workstations by Inscape with Herman Miller seating.



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**PILA CHAIR**

BY RONAN AND ERWAN BOURULLEC

MAGIS

Solid ash legs combined with plywood back and seat create a chair that is light but structurally strong.
magisdesign.com**MIA STACKABLE CHAIRS**

BY JEAN NOUVEL

EMU

Defined by its hieroglyphic profile, the aluminum and steel MIA chair now in production by Emu was originally designed for a restaurant at the Nouvel-designed RBC Design Centre in Montpellier, France.
me.emu.it**DALA STOOL AND OTTOMAN**

BY STEPHEN BURKS

DEDON

A mesh frame of powder-coated aluminum provides a structural shell, which is interwoven with an eco-friendly synthetic fabric to create a colorful family of outdoor seating.
dedon.de**LUMINOUS TABLE**

BY TOKUJIN YOSHIOKA

GLAS ITALIA

Inspired by light's relationship with the material world, Tokujin Yoshioka designed a table completely of clear glass whose sand-blasted legs add an element of contrasting opacity.
glasitalia.com**ROPERO WARDROBE**

BY ALEJANDRO VILLAREAL

HIERVE

This glass and oak modular wardrobe or shelving unit displays rather than conceals allowing users to select candy-colored backdrops of drawers and shelving.
hieve.com**DOODLE SOFA**

BY FRONT

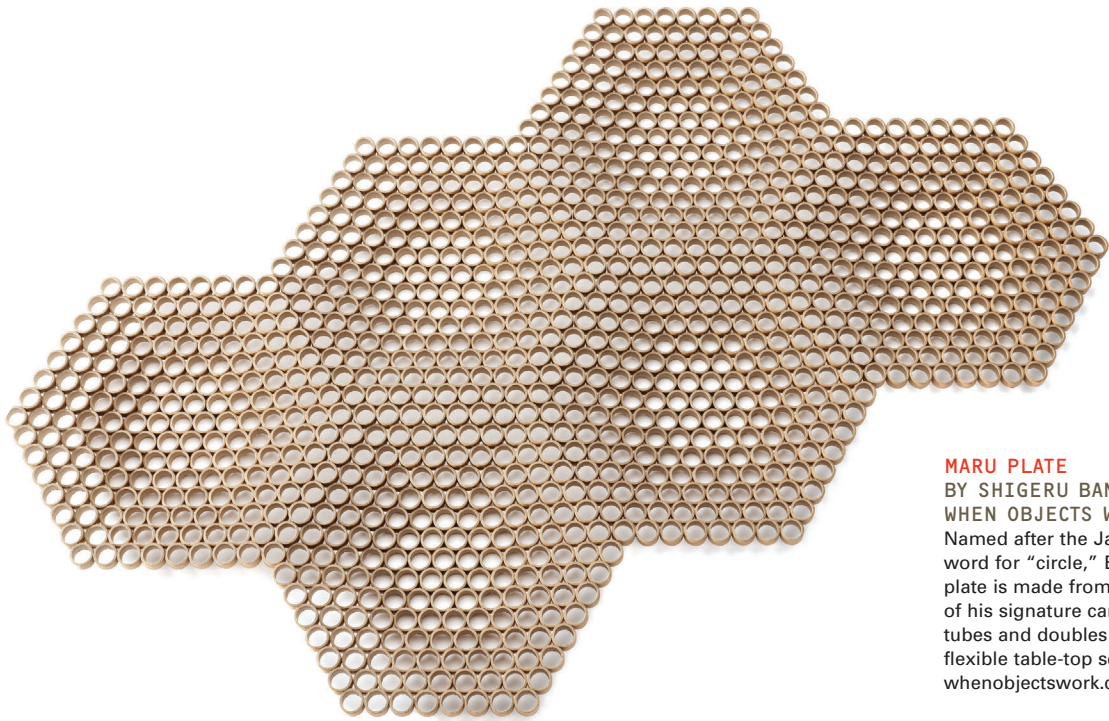
MOROSO

The pattern quilted into this leather sofa is based on accumulated doodles the design team sketched during design meetings.
moroso.it**WORK** HARD, **PLAY** HARDER



TOBI-ISHI TABLE
BY BARBER OSGERBY
B&B ITALIA

Inspired by the smooth stones used in Japanese gardens, the burnished finish of this prototype table comes from an applied mineral coating; ultimately the designers envision versions in solid wood and stone. bebitalia.com



MARU PLATE
BY SHIGERU BAN
WHEN OBJECTS WORK
Named after the Japanese word for "circle," Ban's hot plate is made from slices of his signature cardboard tubes and doubles as a flexible table-top sculpture. whenobjectswork.com



SUPERHEROES SEATING
BY STUDIO GLIMPT
CAPPELLINI

A multicultural mash-up, this seating series is made from thread rolled around tubing, a technique inspired by Vietnamese craftsmen, then accented with a punchy pattern by Swedish graphic designer Malin Koort. cappellini.it



DRIFTED STOOL
BY LARS BELLER FJETLAND
KAMI BENCH
BY CLAESSION KOIVISTO RUNE
DISCIPLINE

Discipline, a new design collective based in Italy, is recruiting talent from all over. Norwegian Lars Beller Fjetland created an ash wood stool whose cork seat is naturally water-repellent. Claesson Koivisto Rune developed the bamboo Kami Bench for assembly without hardware. discipline.eu



SOURCE SODA MAKER
BY YVES BEHAR
SODASTREAM

This redesign of the popular carbonation machine is activated simply by pushing the bottle into place. Featuring an LED user interface and streamlined form, the Source will be available in late 2012. sodastreamusa.com



IMAGES COURTESY OF RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS

The practical and durable meet the whimsical and experimental at this year's international furniture fair in Milan. By Molly Heintz

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 30, 2012



CLEAN CUT

SO-IL DESIGNS
A MINIMALIST OFFICE
AERIE IN NEW YORK

A plane of light, translucent scrims, and monumental desks define the ethereal new offices for media-production company LOGAN. It's a space where the work is the focus and all clutter and distraction have been stripped away.

"We wanted to avoid doing the standard loft renovation," said Ilias Papageorgiou, an associate principal at SO-IL, the architects for the project. Most of the employees of this firm and video company work on a contract basis, so the office serves as a touchdown space for a variety of collaborators. "The space can accommodate people as the company expands and contracts," he said.

The ceiling is a backlit,

stretched PVC membrane that creates an even light throughout. "It's nearly shadowless," he said. Two custom tables extend the length of the two side-by-side spaces. A clear glass wall divides the space to create a conference room and semiprivate offices. Nylon scrims cocoon the entire space, including the windows, to varying degrees of opacity when viewed at different angles. The ghost-like outline of the windows and old pipes are faintly visible through the scrim. "We wanted to show traces of the old building," he said.

A series of soundproof rooms arranged in an L shape frame the space. The rooms are lined with custom pleated-felt walls, prefabricated by Toronto-based FELT Studio. While informality reigns at most media companies, SO-IL makes the case that serenity boosts productivity.

ALAN G. BRAKE

Above and inset: Nylon scrims by Gerrits; stretched PVC ceiling by Newmat; custom Corian work surface with LG Hausys electronics;
Below: Custom walls by FELT Studio.



BRIGHT SPOTS

THE TREND IN LIGHTING IS IN CRAFTED TECHNOLOGY WITH AN EMPHASIS IN SUSTAINABLE SMARTS. BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ

1 SILVERBACK
KIBISI AND
LOUIS POULSEN

Founded in Copenhagen by Lars Larsen, Bjarke Ingels Group, and Jens Martin Skibsted, KiBiSi has teamed up with Louis Poulsen Lighting to launch Silverback, a minimal silver fixture with a white diffuser. An LED version will be launched in fall 2012.

louispoulsen.com

2 MANTA RHEI
SE'LUX

Light fixture manufacturer Se'lux and media installation design firm Art + Com have released a new collaboration called Manta Rhei. The kinetic light sculpture is made with paper-thin OLED modules and in future iterations will be scalable to clients' needs.

selux.us

3 PLASS
FOSCARINI

Plass—the name combines “plastic” and “glass”—is inspired by traditional Murano glassmaking techniques but instead uses rotational molded transparent polycarbonate to achieve a radius and curve that could not be produced with glass.

foscarini.com

4 EYES E4 PENDANT
SENSES

Slated for release in fall 2012, the Eyes collection from Senses has been remade with handcrafted glass shades and will include a new pendant version. Each of the cube's six touch-sensitive sides can be switched on and off.

spirit-of-senses.ch

5 POTENCE PIVOTANTE
NEMO

The result of a rediscovery project with Charlotte Perriand's daughter, Nemo put the Potence Pivotante lamp into industrial production last year and is now extending the range with double-length.

nemo.cassina.it

6 PIANI TABLE LAMP
FLOS

Available in black, white, red, and green, the Piani table lamp by the French Bouroullec brothers seems a throwback to the library lighting of yore, but with an LED light source and a catch-all base for small items, the piece is thoroughly modern.

flosusa.com

7 CSYS LED TASK LIGHT
JAKE DYSON

Industrial designer Jake Dyson has introduced his CSYS LED Task Light, which uses heat pipe technology to divert heat from LEDs. The lower temperature increases the light's lifetime, allowing more than 160,000 hours of continual use.

jakedyson.com

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SIEMATIC

Last month, SieMatic's BeauxArts.02 kitchen collection made its New England debut at the company's Back Bay showroom in Boston, just a few months after its first U.S. introduction in New York. To create the second interpretation of the BeauxArts line, the company continued its successful partnership with Chicago-based designer Mick Di Giulio. The redefined design includes lighter, more linear components and proportions in addition to new finishes and modern elements, like steel- and glass-fronted cabinets.

"The BeauxArts.02 provides our designers with new freedom," said Walter Banta, marketing manager of SieMatic Möbelwerke USA. "The new elements can be combined to create both transitional and contemporary kitchen designs."

Integration with the company's S2 designs is one of the unique benefits of BeauxArts.02 (also shown on page 19).

"A variety of finishes and style elements come together to create a truly unique kitchen," said Banta, who added that while white kitchens are still very popular, new color introductions including Sterling Gray and Lotus White tie in with contemporary palettes as well.

Looking to the future, SieMatic remains focused on design leadership by integrating the kitchen with other living areas in the home. That's the idea behind the company's other recent introduction, FloatingSpaces shelving. "We have offered shelving systems in the past, but the FloatingSpaces panel and shelving system allows architects and designers

to seamlessly blend kitchen and living spaces, creating more options than ever before."

Available in a full range of finishes, the line includes flexible wall configurations and functional elements available in many lengths and materials to further integrate living space into the kitchen. Though Banta won't give anything away, he hinted that the company plans to release more designs in this vein at the company's annual in-house products exhibition, HausFair, in September.

JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ

SieMatic BeauxArts.02 the latest interpretation



Designed with Mick De Giulio, BeauxArts.02 is everything you want in a kitchen and everything you'd expect from a SieMatic original. See more online and at your nearest SieMatic showroom.



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SieMatic



This summer, the New York showroom of GD Cucine will launch Seta, the Italian company's latest modern kitchen design. Designed with understated details and new storage options, the system offers a clean backdrop for a range of interior styles. Flat doors can be fitted with a variety of hardware profiles, such as a new slim, recessed pull attached to the top or bottom of drawers and cabinets. The line also includes new drawer hardware from German manufacturer Blum, an integrated LED lighting system for cabinet interiors and exteriors, and new storage fittings for trays and cookware.

"People want a more natural finish," said Simone Biscontin, GD Cucine's design director. To meet the demand, Seta presents a range of new door finishes including a rough-hewn oak called seggettato, which can be combined with new laminate finishes that replicate stone and with smooth lacquers available in 19 colors.

Another of the company's 2012 introductions comes from a recent partnership with their Italian neighbor, tile maker Cottoveneto. "We are collaborating with them to create kitchen door fronts covered with micro-mosaic tiles made from stone," said Biscontin. "It is customizable for the client. If they come in with a drawing we can replicate it."

Outside the kitchen, GD Cucine is also bringing one of their bathroom designs to the United States for the first time. The inaugural Fontane series designed by Enzo Berti, and part of the Dogi collection, brings wood finishes into the bathroom. Ash and oak are used not only for cabinets and shelving but even for bath and shower enclosures thanks to a special heat-treating process that renders the wood waterproof and stain proof. "It's a nice transition between a contemporary line and the more traditional," said Biscontin. "We see a lot of people asking for this." **JKG**

GD CUCINE



GD CUCINE

TECH TERRIFIC

A new generation of appliances designed to satisfy any home chef.
By Jennifer K. Gorsche



1 W
LA CORNUE

Designed by French architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, La Cornue's W line features a cabinet-like oven and matching three-drawer sideboard along with an induction table with matching remote-controlled hood in tempered gray glass and lacquered metal.

lacornueusa.com

2 ELITE TRIO
REFRIGERATOR
KENMORE

Kenmore's new 31-cubic-foot refrigerator has the most storage space of all the company's models, efficiently organizing space with an extra Grab-N-Go door compartment accessible from the exterior without opening both doors.

kenmore.com

3 SOUS VIDE SYSTEM
KITCHENAID
CHEF TOUCH

KitchenAid's Chef Touch sous vide cooking system seeks to bring professional low-temperature cooking technology to the residential market with a three-part system that includes a steam oven, shock freezer, and vacuum machine.

kitchenaid.com

4 BUILT-IN
SPEED OVEN
SMEG

Smeg's new speed oven is a 30-inch-wide mini oven that can cook meals 10 to 15 times faster than a traditional oven in a fraction of the space. The oven features ten cooking modes including convection, broil, and microwave settings.

smegusa.com

5 FREEDOM
INDUCTION
COOKTOP
THERMADOR

Thermador's new Freedom Induction Cooktop has a 6½-inch color touchscreen display that recognizes the size and shape of pots up to 21 by 13 inches and adjusts the cooktop accordingly while also controlling power settings and cooking times.

hermador.com

6 MONSOON DCBL
ZEPHYR

Ventilation hood manufacturer Zephyr has introduced a new full-size, one-piece liner insert hood that can duct vertically and horizontally. The system also features new Bloom LED lights, LCD controls, and DCBL noise suppression technology.

zephyronline.com

7 LCD REFRIGERATOR
SAMSUNG

Samsung's new LCD refrigerator features an 8-inch Wi-Fi enabled LCD screen with kitchen-specific apps that allow the user to upload and share photos, monitor Google calendars, check weather, and access recipes from Epicurious.

samsung.com



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newschoolarch.edu

WITH THE KIDS
Solving Social Issues through Design
5:30 p.m.
Seattle Architecture Foundation
1333 5th Ave.
Seattle, WA
seattlearchitecture.org

SATURDAY 2
EVENT
Cal-Earth Open House
10:00 a.m.
Cal-Earth
10177 Baldy Ln.
Hesperia, CA
calearth.org

SUNDAY 3
WITH THE KIDS
Big Family Day
12:00 p.m.
The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA
152 North Central Ave.
Los Angeles
moca.org

MONDAY 4
LECTURE
Jarrett Walker:
Human Transit—
Clear Thinking about Public Transit
6:00 p.m.
SPUR
San Francisco
spur.org

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TUESDAY 5
LECTURES
Thom Mayne:
Culture Now
7:30 p.m.
Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
hammer.ucla.edu

Knute Berger:
From Bobo to the Bubbleator—Seattle Social and Cultural Context in '62
7:00 p.m.
Center House, Seattle Center
305 Harrison St.
Seattle, WA
century21mod.com

EXHIBITION OPENING
2012 2x8:
Taut Student Exhibition
6:00 p.m.
Architecture and Design Museum
6032 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
aplusd.org

WEDNESDAY 6
EVENT
How Good Is Your Network?
Omni Hotel Los Angeles
251 South Olive St.
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org

THURSDAY 7
LECTURE
Sherilyn Adams,
Sam Davis, Bob Herman:
Transitional Age and At-Risk Youth Housing
12:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St.
San Francisco
aiaf.org

SYMPOSIUM
Approaches to Conserving Modern Architecture in the USA
7:00 p.m.
Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr.
Los Angeles
getty.edu

EVENT
Walking Tour:
Design Details Lions, Griffins, and Walruses, Oh My!
10:00 a.m.
Seattle Architecture Foundation Gallery
1333 5th Ave.
Seattle, WA
seattlearchitecture.org

TUESDAY 12
LECTURE
Michael Boyd:
Restoring Modernism
6:30 p.m.
Architecture & Design Museum
6032 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
aplusd.org

LECTURE
Susan Boyle:
Northwest Architects of the Seattle World's Fair
7:00 p.m.
Center House, Seattle Center
305 Harrison St.
Seattle, WA
century21mod.com

SYMPOSIUM
Beyond the Green Dream: Facing the Reality of Green Building Compliance
Josh Chaitin, Ric Cochrane, Joe David, et al.
8:00 a.m.
The Mountaineers Program Center
7700 Sand Point Way NE
Seattle, WA
aiaseattle.org

WEDNESDAY 13
EVENT
Local Innovation in Greenroofs: Wildlife, Plants, and Technology
6:00 p.m.
1212 Southwest Clay St.
Portland, OR
aslaoregon.org

THURSDAY 14
LECTURE
Fish Species Protection, Flood Insurance, and New Limits on Development
8:30 a.m.
University Club
1225 SW Sixth Ave.
Portland, OR
schwabe.com

EVENT
The Shifting Consumer Landscape: Housing Demand Drivers
7:00 a.m.
Multnomah Athletic Club
1849 SW Salmon St.
Portland, OR
oregon.uli.org

FRIDAY 15
THEATER
Deeper: Architectural Meditations at CounterPULSE—Lizz Roman & Dancers
8:00 p.m.
CounterPULSE
1310 Mission St.
San Francisco
counterpulse.org

SATURDAY 16
EVENTS
Walking Tour: South Lake Union—Extreme Makeover
10:00 a.m.
Seattle Architecture Foundation
2210 Westlake Ave.
Seattle, WA
seattlearchitecture.org

Elwha River Restoration Tour
10:00 a.m.
Olympic National Park Visitors Center
3002 Mount Angeles Rd.
Port Angeles, WA
wasla.org

From Factory to You: Kit Houses in Portland and the U.S.
10:00 a.m.
Architectural Heritage Center
701 SE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR
visitahc.org

WITH THE KIDS
ARC.I.TEK
11:00 a.m.
Intiman Playhouse at Seattle Center
201 Mercer St.
Seattle, WA
seattlearchitect.thenewhive.com

SUNDAY 17
WITH THE KIDS
Sunday Afternoons for Kids: World Builders
12:00 p.m.
Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
hammer.ucla.edu

TUESDAY 19
LECTURE
Theodore Purdon: Modern Building Technology
7:00 p.m.
PACCAR IMAX Theater, Pacific Science Center
200 Second Avenue North
Seattle, WA
pacificsciencecenter.org

EVENT
Architectural Walking Tour of Honolulu
9:00 a.m.
AIA Honolulu
119 Merchant St.
Honolulu, HI
aiahonolulu.org

FRIDAY 22
CONFERENCE
6th annual AIA|LA Design Conference @ Dwell on Design
9:00 a.m. ongoing through June 23
LA Convention Center
1201 South Figueroa St.
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org

SATURDAY 23
LECTURE
Neal Gorenflo, Shareable.net, and Robin Hahnel
Sharing Communities & Alternative Economies
11:00 a.m.
Portland Institute for Contemporary Art
415 SW 10th Ave.
Portland, OR
pica.org

EVENT
Walking Tour: Art + Architecture—Let the Streets Be Your Museum
10:00 a.m.
Seattle Architecture Foundation Gallery
1333 5th Ave.
Seattle, WA
seattlearchitecture.org

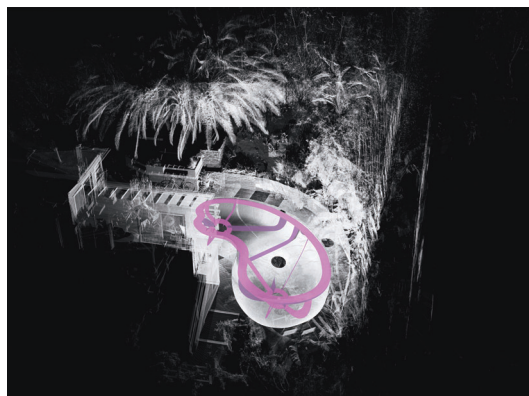
WEDNESDAY 27
LECTURE
David Owen:
A Conversation with the New Yorker's David Owen
6:30 p.m.
Adobe Systems Campus
345 Park Ave.
San Jose, CA
spur.org



EDWARD BURTYNSKY

EDWARD BURTYNSKY: OIL
Nevada Museum of Art, Feature Gallery South
160 West Liberty Street, Reno, NV
June 9–September 23

One of the most important topics of our time, oil and its industry serve as the departure point for the work of one of the most admired photographers working today. From 1997 through 2009, Edward Burtynsky traveled the world chronicling oil, its production, distribution, and use (Top: SOCAR Oil Fields #6, Baku, Azerbaijan, 2006; Above: AMARC #5, Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona, USA, 2006). Through 50 large-scale photographs, Burtynsky illustrates stories about this vital natural resource, the landscapes altered by its extraction, and the sprawl caused by the development of infrastructure needed to transport it. Behind the awe-inspiring photography is an epic tale about the lifeblood of mankind's existence in the 21st century. Curated by the Center for Art + Environment, *Oil* forces the viewer to contend with the scale and implications of humanity's addiction to energy.



COURTESY SCI-ARC GALLERY

BALL-NOGUES STUDIO:
YEVURUS 1, NEGATIVE IMPRESSION
SCI-Arc Gallery
960 East 3rd Street, Los Angeles, CA
June 19–July 8

On display at the SCI-Arc Gallery is Los Angeles-based architecture practice Ball-Nogues Studio's *Yevrus 1, Negative Impression*, which attempts to call into question the current fashionability of abstracted and digital forms. Through an assemblage of non-architectural objects represented very literally, the project represents a new type of site survey. The objects selected to be part of the structure were picked from the Los Angeles suburban landscape (a pool, above) and become the elements of an installation. The architects used digital scanning technology to make biodegradable paper-pulp castings of 1973 Volkswagen Beetles and speed-boats for a lookout tower in the gallery. *Yevrus* ("survey" spelled backwards) is a new technique pioneered by the firm that rethinks the site survey by utilizing it not as a tool for construction and engineering, but as a methodology of deriving form, creating structures, and realizing meaning.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 30, 2012

BUCKY BY THE BAY

The Utopian Impulse: Buckminster Fuller and the Bay Area
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 151 Third Street
Through July 29

A new exhibit at SFMOMA, *The Utopian Impulse*, considers Buckminster Fuller's influence on Bay Area designers. As Fuller's disciple Norman Foster is now hard at work on Apple's proposed ring, architecture and design curator Jennifer Fletcher raises timely and important questions about the regional legacy of this "anticipatory design scientist."

Two well-funded earlier exhibits—in Zurich in 1999 and in New York in 2008—mined the Fuller archive and resulted in major publications. Fletcher has taken a more modest approach that builds on her department's collections. In 1981, Fuller and graphic designer Chuck Byrne collaborated to produce a print portfolio, *Inventions: Twelve Around One*, that was a collage-like mix of

patent drawings and photographs of Fuller and his inventions. Fletcher uses the portfolio, a gift from Chuck and Elizabeth Byrne, as the exhibit's starting point, filling the anteroom with examples of Fuller's work in different media—Da Vinci-like drawings, handwritten notes, models, magazine articles, and blueprinted manifestos. There's also a one-hour excerpt from his videotaped oral history.

The adjoining main A+D gallery has a sampling of Bay Area work that either shows Fuller's direct influence or bears traces of his resonance. There are consciously futurist works like Ant Farm's 1976 Convention City, which anticipated *American Idol* and instant voting by imagining a stadium-like complex where on-site and virtual voters

could interact with televised political celebrities; Fuller-inspired publications like Stewart Brand's late-1960s *Whole Earth Catalog*, which began partially as a tribute to him; and Bob Gillis' mid-1970s Oval Intention tent, which applies Fuller's tensegrity structure to camping equipment. The current examples include real and conceptual work by Yves Béhar, Nicholas de Monchaux, Lisa Iwamoto and Craig Scott, Future Cities Lab, and Morphosis. My favorite was Future Cities Lab's *HYDRAMAX Port Machines*, with a moving, interactive roof that resembles two immense flapping wings. A film by Sam Green and Obscura Digital draws on Fuller's *Dymaxion Chronofile*, a 15-minute-at-a-time record of his daily life over 63 years.

After seeing the exhibit, the

designer and critic Yuki Bowman said to me that there's a digital-virtual side to Fuller and his Bay Area followers. Ant Farm's arena-like riff on Fuller's interest in global knowledge sharing, for example, evolves into Yves Béhar's cheap XO laptops—and ultimately to the mobile, cloud-tapping devices we all carry.

Focusing on Fuller's machine-age side ignores the aspects of his work that were concerned with how information surrounds, supports, and empowers us. The word "Dymaxion," which Fuller often used, derived its name from his "4D philosophy" which is about his desire to "do the most with the least," and about time as a potential means to do so.

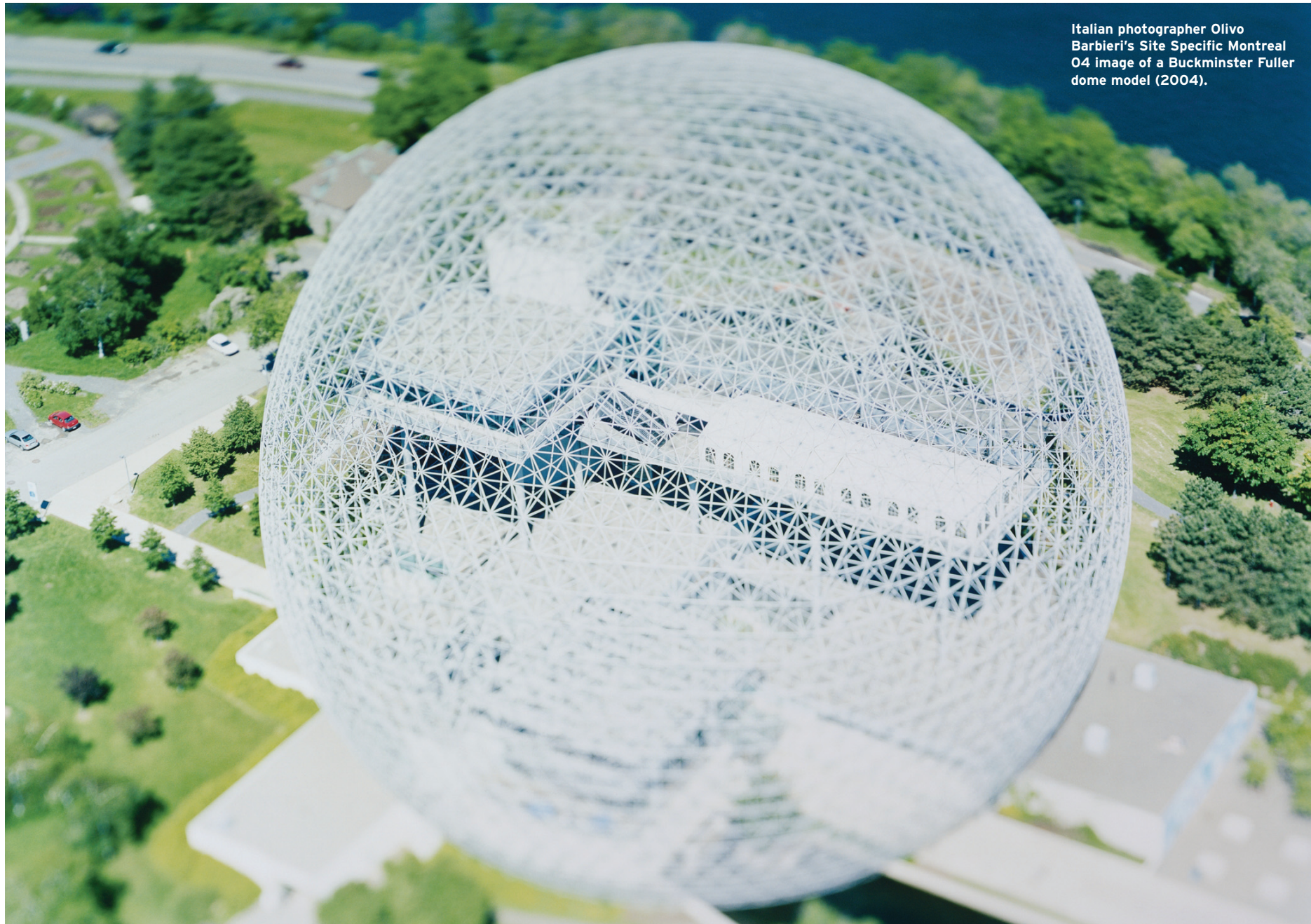
Along with technology and logistics, Fuller was interested in "world problem solving," anticipating the cloud of information that's now upon us. Its "lightness," which Apple's products exemplify, also speaks to "comprehensive ephemeralization," or "the doing of ever more with ever less," a principle that Fuller first articulated in the 1920s. In Silicon Valley, a good deal of workspace has been recalibrated to reflect the myriad ways that people "live different"

with time, as Steve Jobs might have put it, now that they're untethered.

Time is the ghost in Fuller's machines. While he sought to cut the weight of the Dymaxion House and speed its delivery, he also considered how peoples' use of time would affect not just its size and configuration, but its provision as a service. "You must dismiss the idea that we are organizing around a material unit," he said. Fletcher treats this element of Fuller's work as a leitmotif. It's present in the manifestos, in some of the texts that accompany the artifacts, and in the choices of Fuller-influenced work.

Fuller's intuition that our lives might increasingly leave their material moorings, liberating us to organize space and time as we individually desire, is what separates him from his modernist peers and from modern-day followers like Foster. It's why Fuller is still relevant today. This aspect of his thinking points to the cloud's urbane lightness and its built implications, potentially more interesting and germane to life in 2012 than Apple's suburban-style new campus.

JOHN PARMAN IS A FOUNDING EDITOR OF TRACESF.COM.



Italian photographer Olivo Barbieri's Site Specific Montreal 04 image of a Buckminster Fuller dome model (2004).

OLIVO BARBIERI

The Great Communicator

Piecing Together Los Angeles: An Esther McCoy Reader
Edited and with an essay by Susan Morgan, East of Borneo Books, \$34.95

Reyner Banham called her “the mother of us all,” and no one did more than Esther McCoy to win respect for Southern California modernism. David Gebhard and Robert Winter, who produced the definitive guide to LA architecture, praised her “one-woman crusade” to raise awareness of the city’s modernist heritage through her books on several generations of talent. Her essays and journalism were equally brilliant and even more influential, and the best of those short pieces are assembled in this anthology.

Don’t try reading it in bed or you may never get to sleep: the temptation to turn every page is too great. Lyrical, impassioned, alive with sharp phrases and insights, McCoy’s writing carries you along as it introduces a wonderful cast of characters: the Greene brothers, Frank Gehry, Irving Gill, Konrad Wachsmann, J.R. Davidson, and Cesar Pelli. There’s wonder in her voice as she describes the Bradbury Building as “a vast hall full of light” at a time when it languished in obscurity. She evokes the quirky spirit of Grandma Prisbey’s Bottle Village in Simi Valley and the mastery of Louis Kahn’s

Salk Institute in La Jolla. “Flat as a tortilla and sleek as a Bugatti” is her memorable description of *Arts & Architecture* magazine, and she matches that phrase with her sketch of its publisher, John Entenza: “His shoes and his mind were always nicely polished. Forever urban, no one was ever less seduced by the California sun. Yet it was the California sun rather than the hearth that was at the base of the Case Study Houses.”

Born in 1904, McCoy grew up in the Midwest and moved at age 21 to New York’s Greenwich Village, where she supported herself as a writer by doing research for Theodore Dreiser, accompanying him to Moscow and Berlin. In 1932, she took a train to California and, emerging at a stop in San Bernardino, was seduced by the aroma of the orange groves. During the war she worked as an engineering draftsman at Douglas Aircraft and then became R. M. Schindler’s sole assistant, having failed to gain admittance to USC’s School of Architecture. “Less to unlearn,” was his comment as he hired her at \$1 an hour. Working on Schindler’s drawings in the Kings Road house

Right: Esther McCoy at work, 1985.

introduced her to the potential of architecture, as an art and a discipline, and launched her on a new career as a critic—though she continued to write fiction. *Five California Architects*, published in 1960, made her reputation. Her last essay, written a few months before her death in 1988 and reprinted here, was an introduction to the Museum of Contemporary Art’s Case Study House exhibition catalog.

“California changes everyone,” wrote McCoy. “The messages sent to the East hit the Rockies and bounced back. We were on our own, no one was watching.” That was not literally true—LA was closer in spirit to Europe than New York in the mid-20th century. Its exiles were able to realize their ideas and transmit them worldwide. McCoy called it a “private proving ground” that fostered experimentation. Sadly, that has become much less common as the city has grown and its arteries have hardened.

As editor of this anthology, and co-curator of a recent exhibition on McCoy at the MAK Center, Susan Morgan has immersed herself in her subject, culling a mass of material to select pieces that reinforce each other and contributing graceful introductory texts. Like Banham, who approached McCoy in 1965 with a sense of awe and then found



COURTESY SMITHSONIAN ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN ART

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life in words as well as she did for more than four decades.

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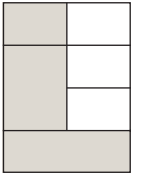
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The 1959 ASM Headquarters in Ohio includes an extraordinary double-dome by Buckminster Fuller. Recently renovated by The Chesler Group, the project has been photographed by Jeff Goldberg.
Photo © Jeff Goldberg/Esto

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- ☐ Planning/ Urban Design
- ☐ Real Estate/ Developer
- ☐ Media
- ☐ Other

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- ☐ Designer
- ☐ Draftperson
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- ☐ Other

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- ☐ 20-49
- ☐ 50-99
- ☐ 100-249
- ☐ 250-499



Rendering of OLIN's Constellation Park in LA's Century City (left).

park-poor city in the country right now.

For a long time with West Coast cities, at the end of the street there was the country, there was the ocean, and the mountains. They didn't pay attention to what they were doing with their cities because they could get out of them so easily. But as they became too big, then the mess they had made became obvious. So now it's very hard to go back and rip up old parts and do good public and civic space at the right scale.

In LA, I always think of the title of Roger Trancik's book, *Finding Lost Space*. I love that phrase. Because there's so much lost space in cities. A lot of our projects have been finding those and transforming them.

What's a good example?

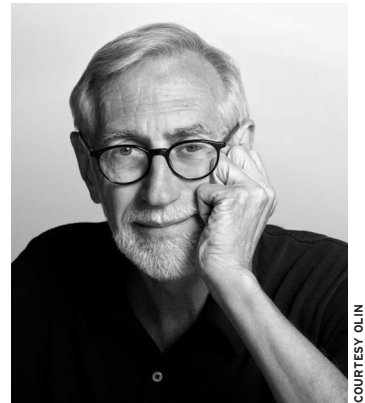
Columbus Circle in New York City. There never was a social space there until we said it could be done. People thought we were nuts. Who would go out in the middle of a five-way intersection with Central Park right next to it? Well, you go there and it's full of people. It's a place that never existed. You can make these places that people need if you make them right. We just did a little park in Portland, Oregon, that's full of people.

But one of the problems in Los Angeles is there's this wonderful tradition of lush private space and absolutely squalid public space. Private splendor, public squalor. There are a lot of rich people in Los Angeles and a lot of money sloshing around that's never been very civic. I can't think of another city that has so much money yet has so few patrons of the public realm and of public art. I'm astonished. The movie industry. Those people spend vast fortunes on themselves on silly stuff, and yet they could do it so easily. I've always been troubled by that aspect of Los Angeles.

When Ricardo Legorretta and I did Pershing Square, which everybody hates now, we gambled on the fact that Anglos would come down from the towers and Hispanics would come over, and of course they haven't. The citizens group that was the client collapsed and went away. One of the biggest disappointments of my life was our thinking that we knew what we were doing in that situation and we didn't.

Did you argue with Legorretta over adding more green to Pershing Square?

I didn't argue with him, but I should have. We were doing a place in the sun. It was heavily influenced by Latin America. But



COURTESY OLIN

nobody wanted to come.

People don't use parks in downtown LA. If there was a good one I think they would. They're starting to move back. I think the LA River plan, if that happens, will help. I think the notion of some of the little infill spaces, making nice spaces next to where people are, is very important. If one were to build a few pieces of really superb public landscape, people would come. But they have to be put in a good place.

Can you talk about your new office in LA?

Yes, we have a new office in LA. We're in Hollywood. So after all these years of resisting the West Coast we're finally here. We have a little park called Plummer Park under construction now in West Hollywood. We have Constellation Park in Century City. We're also working on a master plan for the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden.

We've worked with a lot of firms in LA. We worked with Richard Meier on the Getty. We work with Johnson Fain and Rios Clementi Hale. I work with Frank Gehry all the time. I love Frank. We've done three plans for Grand Avenue and they've all failed miserably. Right now I'm working with him on a new house. He had one going in Venice for a while. He dropped that but now he's doing a house in Santa Monica.

Los Angeles is one of the great world cities. Everybody knows it. And it has money and it has energy. It needs some direction, something physical. The transience of things gets on your nerves.

It seems like the merger of landscape and architecture is a fascinating new direction, especially when you have less open space.

I see that a lot of projects that are like what we've tried to do are now getting done. Even in America. When I was working with ZGF on a conference center in Salt Lake City, it's an enormous space. The roof is six acres. Four acres of which is an alpine meadow, and the sides are like a canyon with native vegetation. It's beautiful. We've been working on structures for over 30 years, but now it's the new normal.

Laurie Olin, recent winner of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Gold Medal, has worked on transforming public spaces around the world with Frank Gehry, Richard Meier, Peter Eisenman, Cesar Pelli, and Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, among many others. He sat down with *AN* West Coast editor **Sam Lubell** to discuss his award, his training as an architect, and his thoughts about landscape urbanism and the state of public space on the West Coast.

The Architect's Newspaper: Describe the role of landscape architects in the development of cities.

Laurie Olin: The great anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss said cities aren't an architectural problem, they're a cultural landscape. That might be troubling to some architects. But the aggregate is that this is a problem beyond the individual single project or single structure.

Most people still think of architecture as being about a building. In the mid-20th century we divided everything up into a bunch of different disciplines. So most architects had, through their training, the limitation of being building-centric. So my generation, a bunch of us, had to go find a way to work on something that intrigued us more, which was the ensemble. We didn't stop liking architecture; we started liking other problems and other pursuits. And so we had to take on systems. Systems aren't just transportation and social systems, but they're also natural systems. And, it turned out, for most of my career, landscape architecture has been the only discipline at the table that represents the natural world.

In the last decade or so many architects have become deeply engaged in ecology and energy and systems the way landscape architects have always been. Which is good and healthy and proper. And so we now realize

cities aren't just architecture. For a long time people tried to solve something called urban design. Some people tried to make urban design a discipline. We in landscape architecture would argue that urban design isn't a discipline, it's an activity that lots of disciplines do together. It's ensemble work. None of us can control it and none of us can do it all. So if you have a real ecological point of view, then you can do architecture, you can do landscape architecture, you can do planning. But you can't do it all in your office.

It's one of the things we do when we play together well. I find that it's good for me to work with other people who know more than I do about something else. Together we can do something better than we can do by ourselves.

And you think architects are more open to that than they were ten years ago?

All the guys I work with, yes. They're interested in what I do, but they just can't do it all themselves. I don't want to try to do a lot of the stuff that they're doing. And I worked in architecture and I was pretty good.

You're trained as an architect?

I am. I have a BArch from the University of Washington. Then I worked for some of the top architects in Seattle and then moved on to Ed Barnes' office in New York. But I wandered off. It wasn't that I was unhappy. It was that I was more in love with something else.

There are a lot of people from my generation who came to landscape architecture from architecture because it was seeing the limit of one's field and seeing the potential of another. It was like when Paul Klee decided not to be a musician when he was a student in Germany. It was because he knew his limitations as a musician and he didn't know what his limits were in art.

It seems like a huge advantage

to have that knowledge. You can transform cities.

Cities are very natural formations. And they're very organic. We can help direct the change. But no one person, no one architect, no one landscape architect, no one planner, no one agency or mayor directs it all. They can get a chunk for a period. It's like a forest. It's the big bundle of problems for our time. We're becoming more urbanized. Around the world, cities are growing everywhere. We like to be together. We need to be together. So learning how to make cities rich and fecund and great places to be so we're comfortable and healthy and happy is the biggest problem we face. The only way we'll not go crazy is to build beautiful, rich, life-enhancing cities. It's challenging to convince developers and officials that building those spaces that are not buildings are equally important if not more important for cities.

It's what we have in common. The majority of open spaces in cities are streets. That means the street system is too important to leave to transportation engineers. They're way too important to leave to just moving traffic. So I'm interested in cities because they are the design problem for a habitable planet.

You are working on projects all over the world.

Yes, but there are large chunks of the world we're not in and shouldn't be in. I think we need to work in places where we can be effective and we actually understand the culture somewhat. A lot. We need to be able to be effective and not just some colonial exploiter that's mining the place. I think we need to be working on a model that's a better model than the discredited models of our own culture. At the moment I have a couple of projects in France and one in London and one in Toronto and a few on the West Coast.

What about LA? It is the most

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