

# THE WEST ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER 06\_07.18.2012

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SOM AND MARK CAVAGNERO ASSOCIATES TO TRANSFORM  
SAN FRANCISCO'S MOSCONE CENTER



COURTESY MOSCONE CENTER

## CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

A decade after its last major expansion, San Francisco's Moscone Center is planning to enlarge its space by potentially half its current size, adding 250,000 to 400,000 square feet to its current 1 million square feet. Helming the potential additions and reconfigurations is the joint team of SOM and Mark Cavagnero Associates; they beat out a slew of contenders, including AECOM, Gensler, and HOK, designers of the original center in 1981.

As part of developing a 25-year-old masterplan, the firms are designing a new identity around "an iconic architectural presence for Moscone," said SOM's Craig Hartman. "The Yerba Buena neighborhood has become a cultural and commercial hub, so it's important that the convention center also live up to 21<sup>st</sup>-century expectations of what the city should be."

The expansion is spurred by client demand and the competition **continued on page 4**



BRIDGING ART  
AND SCULPTURE.  
SEE PAGE 6

CLIFF GARTEN

GSA SELLING LA COURTHOUSE  
TO PAY FOR NEW FACILITY



COURTESY LA OBSERVER

## Court Order

Mired in budget shortfalls and scandal, the General Services Administration (GSA) couldn't afford to build a new office building next to its planned federal courthouse in downtown LA without some help. The agency recently **continued on page 5**

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT 10

## facades

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SF'S PUC AIMS TO BE GREENEST  
UTILITY IN THE LAND



BRUCE DAMONTE

## SHOWING OFF

Gardens in building lobbies improve air quality and soften the interior aesthetic, but the garden that's sprouting inside the new headquarters of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (PUC) does something extraordinary. Treated sewage flushed from the floors above courses through the gravel-lined patch, removing methane and other impurities before the water is funneled back up for reuse within the building's bathrooms.

The water-recycling facility is among a long list of green features in the new 13-story building at 525 Golden Gate Avenue, which was crafted to help the city agency practice the same water and energy conservation practices that it preaches. Opened in late June, it's expected to use less than half the water typically used by a similar office building, pull 33 percent less energy from the grid, and secure a LEED Platinum rating.

Agency officials could **continued on page 3**

SOUTH PARK NEEDS NEW BOND MEASURE FOR PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS



COURTESY FLETCHER STUDIO

## PLUS ONE

The delightfully quirky neighborhood of South Park—clustered around San Francisco's oldest park—is hoping to get a modern makeover.

Originally developed in 1855 as a West

Coast version of a London square, houses and offices line a verdant, one-acre oval. The South Park commons is one of 15 parks and other facilities that would be the beneficiaries of a **continued on page 2**

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## MAKE IT URBAN

I recently sat down with Downtown LA blogger and advocate Brigham Yen to talk about his neighborhood. The subject was Downtown and how even as it makes an amazing comeback with an unprecedented influx of stores, restaurants, offices, and apartments, there are still some people who don't seem to get what it means to be urban.

For every storefront welcoming pedestrians, there still seems to be a chain store that wants to keep things the way they've always been. Yen told me that In-N-Out Burgers had been interested in moving Downtown but couldn't understand why it couldn't install a drive-through. He noted that other establishments, from drug stores to fast food restaurants, still insist on building strip-mall-style parking in heavily pedestrianized precincts, ruining any sense of street front or walkability.

Such businesses need to get over it and realize that the whole city does not need to be a bastion of suburban-ity. With its immense population, density, and energy, LA can no longer pretend to be a suburb. A city has got to be a city. That doesn't mean ruining LA's peaceful neighborhoods. It means densifying its urban commercial and retail corridors in an intelligent fashion. And Downtown is a prime example of one of these corridors. Its urbanity is a prime reason why it's becoming so popular again.

This is becoming even more important as the city begins to shift its policies more aggressively toward mass transit and related density. By the time the funds for Measure R, the city sales tax paying for \$30 to \$40 billion worth of projects, run out, the city will have increased its rail lines from about 60 miles to 120 miles.

A major test of Downtown's continued development will come when Walmart moves its newest Neighborhood Market, a smaller version of its superstores (though still pretty big at 33,000 square feet) into Chinatown, on the north edge of Downtown. LA's citizens, who have already engaged in a major protest against the retail giant's plans, need to be vigilant to make sure that Walmart doesn't further decay the fabric of a neighborhood, and the city, at a vital turning point.

Of course, every area needs business and jobs, and Walmart will certainly help serve a niche for those looking for goods and groceries. But the company needs to be sensitive; even though, so far, it hasn't substantially proven its desire to do so. I've seen a few Neighborhood Markets, and a few seem to fit well into the urban grid with street front presences, transparent facades, and even some contemporary detailing. But most have suburban-style strip parking in front and blank facades that seem to tell pedestrians they're in the wrong place.

Walmart isn't the only giant chain store to reach Downtown LA. Target, for instance, is opening a CityTarget inside the three-story 7<sup>th</sup> and Figueroa mall, on the west edge of downtown. The store will be much bigger, at 100,000 square feet. But unlike Walmart, Target consistently creates permeable, street-side entrances, and contextual, contemporary-style frontages. Granted there's still tons of parking, but at least it's underground or in a large structure behind the building. Most Walmart stores—whether they are Supercenters or Neighborhood Markets—basically look like giant industrial boxes or McMansions on steroids, clad with cheap Spanish tiles or Italianate cornices. This isn't acceptable for Walmart or any business that comes Downtown.

As the economy continues to turn around and development makes its way into Downtown LA and other dense urban areas, we need to maintain the urbanity, albeit an urbanity tempered with amenities like parks, public spaces and bike-lanes, that makes our cities more viable, exciting, and livable. What happens now, as the recovery is in its infancy, will set the stage for future development. This is a turning point. Let's take advantage. **SAM LUBELL**



FLETCHER STUDIO

Renderings of Fletcher's re-shaped South Park, with its central green and flanking plazas.

**PLUS ONE** continued from front page \$195 million San Francisco Clean and Safe Parks Bond, should it pass in November.

The community hopes to speed forward with the first phase of the renovation, which will address storm water improvements, ADA accessibility, and a portion of the design vision, by applying for \$250,000 from the city's Recreation and Parks Community Opportunity Fund, and supplementing it with local fundraising.

The masterplan by David Fletcher of Fletcher Studio envisions a park with a "picturesque meandering path" and with a plaza on either end (currently, the program is concentrated in the middle).

"The residents came to us with a very contemporary vision that they could fundraise around," said Fletcher.

Should the community get its grant, the east end of the park will be reworked first, with a concrete platform that can be used as both seating and a stage. The overall scheme awaits the passage of the bond. But by taking the initiative, South Park residents are hopeful that they'll get that east plaza and a less soggy lawn. **LYDIA LEE**

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## LETTERS

### CHUTES AND LADDERS

I found your editorial ("The Intern Catch-22," CAN 05\_06.27.2012) to be unfair since you only presented one side of the story. First, as background: I have been a licensed California architect since 1950. When I was an architectural student, I worked as an unpaid intern (for Paul Laszlo); I have also worked as a minimum-paid intern; I have worked as a paid-junior draftsman, renderer, modelmaker; I have worked as an intermediate draftsman; I have worked as a fully-paid senior draftsman; I have worked as a fully

paid designer. I have had my own architectural practice (with partners) since 1950 starting with zero employees and eventually expanding to 60 employees, all paid, in two office locations.

With that history, I feel qualified to now render my opinion on unpaid interns. When one is going to school, the student pays tuition for his/her education. A true architectural intern is merely extending his/her education without paying tuition. The architect is the teacher and devotes time and space to the intern to continue that education. This

procedure actually costs the architect a lot of time and money. Nothing that the intern produces in that period has any monetary value to the architect. I have been a teacher to many interns who are now licensed architects. Each one says the same thing: I never learned so much about the profession as I did as your intern. Whenever an intern reaches the level of competence and talent, I always put them on the payroll. That is when they become of value to the architect in a financial way

In conclusion, unpaid internship is an

apprenticeship that I and every architect before me had to go through. It is merely an extension of schooling in areas that one cannot learn while attending architectural school. I hope it continues. It doesn't lower the bar, to the contrary, it raises the bar. Working for an architect in an office environment is invaluable and cannot be equaled in any other way. Architects invest time and money to educate the unpaid intern. End of opinion.

**WILLIAM KRISSEL**  
**LOS ANGELES**

## HARD CORE CAKE OFF

On a recent sunny day in Silver Lake the Materials & Applications gallery got folks together to eat cake. In honor of the group's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary M&A hosted an architectural bake-off called "Elevate Your Cake," with groovy deliciousness by an impressive group of designers. They included **Predock Frane; Chu + Gooding; Escher GuneWardena Architecture; Gensler; Deegan Day; Deutsch; Patterns; Noah Riley Design; Warren Techentin; Barbara Bestor; MASS; Osborn; Modal Design; Taalman Koch; and Andy Goldman.**

That's right, this was no amateur night. These were serious architectural cakes. Chu + Gooding's cake, "Inopportune Totem," looked like a porcupine had mated with a death-by-chocolate. Warren Techentin's entry, "cubisphere," was made up of Japanese Mochi and chocolate cake balls. It looked like a cube made of colorful (but edible) golf and ping pong balls stacked on each other. After several of the cakes were raffled off everybody got down to business: eating the rest.

## MOVING TIME

It's that time again. With the economy still gasping, it's time for struggling firms to get bought by behemoths and for other firms to split up. Among the rumors we've been hearing, LA firm **Kanner Architects** is rumored to be close to being swallowed by New York firm **Ronnette Riley**. **Dan Meis**, who only just recently left **Populous** to go off on his own, may soon get bought out, although we're not sure by whom. And after Phoenix-based **Will Bruder's** partners recently bought him out his firm **Will Bruder + Partners** is now split into two firms called **WORKSBUREAU** and **Will Bruder Architects**. Why can't we just stay together anymore?

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Louvers adjust automatically in the SFPUC building's stairwells; Below: Entrance passage.



BRUCE DAMONTE

**SHOWING OFF** continued from front page learn within a year whether this is the nation's greenest public building. That's how long it may take to finalize its LEED score. "The PUC really wanted to make a statement about the city's commitment to sustainability," said architect David Hobstetter of KMD

Architects, designers of the project.

Hobstetter had been working since 2000 with the city to design a replacement for a boarded-up building at this prominent site near City Hall that was irreparably damaged by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Following a political spat over whether

"That is an example we want to set," said Ed Harrington, general manager of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. "We hope this will generate enthusiasm among other people to say, 'We can do this. This makes sense to do.'"

**JOHN UPTON**



RAY KATCHATORIAN

### > BEACHWOOD CAFÉ

2695 North Beachwood Drive  
Los Angeles  
Tel: 323-871-1717  
Designer: Barbara Bestor  
Architecture

If you drive high into the hills of LA's Beachwood Canyon neighborhood, you may or may not discover a hidden treat: Silver Lake architect Barbara Bestor's newest creation, Beachwood Café. The project is a renovation of the former Village Coffee Shop, a local fixture that was badly in need of an update.

Bestor has become a specialist at creating low-key but hip neighborhood favorites, designing Silver Lake's Intelligentsia Coffee and Hollywood's Lou Wine Bar. For this project she employs a similar raw and modern yet somehow rustic/bohemian (although Bestor hates that word) architectural style combined with vivid use of art and graphics.

Exposed wood beams and a cottage-like interior, including menu blackboards, charming window seats, and Magnolia Cupcake-style wood furniture are offset with an edgier palette of bright geometric yellow-and-blue flooring, loud "Holly Hobbie" floral wallpaper, as Bestor puts it, hanging exposed bulbs, a few Chinese lanterns, and midcentury-style wood chairs. One important element: quilted white vinyl baffles hang strategically from the ceiling to provide much-needed sound insulation. Overall the architecture matches the neighborhood perfectly: a stylish clientele living amid the storybook houses of the original Hollywoodland development. It's cooler because it doesn't have to tell you it's cool. **SL**

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MICHAEL HEIZER/ LACMA

INSTALLING LAND ARTIST MICHAEL HEIZER'S ROCK AT LACMA WAS NOT EASY

## ROCK OF AGES

LA's most famous rock sits at home above a 456-foot cement trench behind the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA).

In June, land artist Michael Heizer's *Levitated Mass* assumed a prominent location on the LACMA grounds—visible from Sixth Street and within skipping distance of Renzo Piano's splashy new additions, including the Resnick Pavilion, the Broad Contemporary Art Museum, and Ray's restaurant. "The Rock" is already a local celebrity: its journey from a quarry in Riverside County attracted national attention and an occasion for public celebration at its stops along the way. But despite the hoopla surrounding its portage to LA, *Levitated Mass* is not just about hype.

On the day of *Levitated Mass*'s unveiling to the public, LACMA director Michael Govan distinguished the artwork from Chris Burden's *Urban Light* installation at the museum's entrance, which beckons the public to come in and play on the busier Wilshire Boulevard side of the grounds. Govan called *Levitated Mass* a "temple" that creates a "big, empty space for quiet—a more contemplative environment."

As a visitor approaches *Levitated Mass*, a Cor-ten ring creates a weathered threshold around the installation. Entering the 456-foot concrete trench below the rock gives museum goers access to the negative space below. Descending into the 15-foot-deep trench and standing below the rock provides the crux of the installation's potential for escapism. "As you descend into the trench...it's just the sky and the rock," said Govan.

Two stainless-steel embed plates at the center of the trench bear almost all of the rock's weight, according to Bill Hanson of Matt Construction, which acted as general contractor for the project. The embed plates are cast into either side of the trench, and the central segments of the trench are reinforced with rebar. According to Meg Thomas, project manager at Aurora Development, the rock was chipped to create a contact system for the embed plates and then lowered onto the plates using a gantry system. Once lowered onto the plates, the rock was set in high-strength grout and drilled to the plates at nine points using

1-inch threaded rods held in place with epoxy.

Many of the design details of *Levitated Mass* prioritized technical requirements above aesthetics. The cement trench rises above the decomposed granite of the surrounding grounds to waist height; otherwise the building code would have required a glass railing. ADA-mandated handrails make an unavoidable contribution to the interior of the trench. And two of the concrete trench's more noticeable characteristics have more to do with nuisance abatement than artistic panache: the skimcoat cover on the concrete will make graffiti easy to wash away and recoat, and triangle notches on both ends of the trench are meant to keep skateboarders off the concrete.

The \$10 million installation has already drawn thousands, but the question remains whether it was all worth it. Mixed reviews in the art world indicate that not everyone is sold on the expense and environmental impact, but the public interest sparked by the rock is indisputable, and visitors drawn to LACMA by the rock will find a solid and permanent presence. Said Govan, "The whole point is to see this static, huge object amid skyscrapers, billboards, and cars. What you get is a contrast with the energy of the city." **JAMES BRASUELL**



MATHEW IMAGING

GEHRY DESIGNS SETS FOR LA PHIL'S DON GIOVANNI

## Build, Maestro

One reason Los Angeles' Walt Disney Concert Hall is one of the world's finest is that it was designed strictly as a symphonic venue, with no accommodation for theater or opera. But lacking a fly loft, proscenium, curtain, orchestra pit, or wings, and with limited stage area and lighting possibilities, it is spectacularly unsuited for the dramatic arts.

But that didn't stop the LA Philharmonic from recently branching out into opera, with a fully staged production of Mozart's

*Don Giovanni*. Sets were designed by the hall's designer, Frank Gehry, and the costumes by Rodarte.

Upon entering, one immediately saw a layered black backdrop and a dense foreground of clustered white sculptural forms, with an elevated orchestra platform in between. Gehry said that the foreground and backdrop were not meant to be symbolic, but the white elements, some as tall as nine feet, have been described as marble, waves, and icebergs. They resembled clusters of people in white robes, and

the dark background evoked the Commendatore, a murdered basso nobleman turned into a reanimated stone statue.

Executing the evocative white and black sculptures was not easy. Designed in model form by crumpling paper, they were built onstage by Gehry's staff using 80 rolls of 9-foot-wide paper hung on concealed wooden frames. In the end, Gehry said the executed set "did not look like the model at all." And because some of the singers physically interacted with the sculptures, about a fifth of them had to be repaired and reshaped after each performance.

The architect, who worried that most architects "overdo it" when designing for theater, called the process "a very valiant experiment." He added, "The director [Christopher Alden] had neophyte crazies [Gehry and Rodarte] to work with. It was bold and instructive." The 80-something Gehry particularly admired the spirit of the LA Phil's 20-something music director, Gustavo Dudamel: "He's an experimenter; he'll jump off cliffs."

The Philharmonic's pairing of Mozart with architects will continue with Jean Nouvel taking on *The Marriage of Figaro* next year, and Zaha Hadid doing *Così fan Tutte* in 2014. **JOHN PASTIER**

**CONVENTIONAL WISDOM** continued from front page posed by other cities adding to their convention capacities. "A lot of our regulars are growing and a lot of groups that would like to be in there can't fit," said Joe D'Alessandro, president and CEO of the San Francisco Travel Association, a private nonprofit representing the city's tourist industry, which is driving the expansion.

While the architects are in the preliminary stages of planning, the RFP outlines two new buildings and a major underground expansion. The new construction could include a sizeable addition to Moscone South, a six-story, 260,000-square-foot building along its Third Street frontage; Moscone East, a four-story, 240,000-square-foot building that would take the place of the current Moscone Center garage on the other side of Third Street and connect underground with the existing center; and a Howard Street Connection, a 11,000-square-foot underground facility between Moscone North and South. The last major expansion was Moscone West, completed in 2003.

The final budget will depend on the solutions proposed by the architects, but will be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Funding will be supplied through a public-private partnership

with the San Francisco Tourism Improvement District (TID) and the city of San Francisco. Established in 2009, the TID levies a tax of 1 to 1.5 percent on hotel-room revenue to capture revenue for future projects.

In addition to growing in size, the architects hope to tie Moscone's blank perimeters into the South of Market cityscape. "Right now, Moscone is like an idiosyncratic uncle that you have to deal with—there are some difficulties involved. Like most convention centers, it's a black box and very internalized," added Hartman. "We have the opportunity here to really engage urbanistically. There's a great opportunity along Third and Fourth streets to remove the service ramps and exit ways and turn them into active street fronts."

The jigsaw puzzle is not only spatial but logistical. "The most challenging aspect is to give them that beautifully designed iconic building while finding a way to keep the convention center operational during all the phases of construction," said Mark Cavagnero. The intent is for each firm to lead the design of one major building after the initial design stage. Completion of the first phase of construction is anticipated for 2017–18. **LL**

**COURT ORDER** continued from front page announced its plan: a property swap. It hopes to sell its landmark art deco courthouse at 312 North Spring Street to help pay for the construction of the new facility, near First Street and Broadway. The agency will release an RFQ for the new federal building in the coming months.

"This plan would save millions in tax dollars and ensure the North Spring Street courthouse does not become another excess property on the government's books," said Dan Tangherlini, acting administrator for the GSA. (His predecessor Martha Johnson recently resigned.)

GSA spokesperson Traci Madison denied that the move was a result of recent scandals at the agency, in which several people, including Johnson, were accused of lavish spending and other improprieties. "The Administration's strong push to aggressively dispose of unneeded property and improve the utilization of our assets, prompted us to identify a cost-effective plan to address the future of the courthouse located at 312 North Spring Street," said Madison.

The streamlined Spring Street courthouse, built in 1940 by Gilbert Stanley Underwood, is a Los Angeles landmark. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. But the building, said the GSA, had become outdated and was in bad need of renovation. Madison said it also still needs to be appraised for its actual value. The GSA

estimates that its value "will yield a federal building of approximately 150,000 to 175,000 square feet."

In addition to the funds from the sale, the move, said the agency, will save more than \$10 million per year in lease costs, and save more than \$250 million in renovation costs. The move will also help the government consolidate employees scattered across the city. They'll now be located either in the new federal building or at the U.S. government's other buildings at 300 North Los Angeles Street and 255 East Temple Street. No buyer for the Spring Street courthouse has been identified, said Madison, who added, "We are optimistic that a private sector partner will be found."

The date for an RFQ for the new federal building is still some time away. "There are a number of actions that must take place in the planning process before we reach the RFQ stage," said Madison.

Thanks also to the new plan the new federal courthouse—adjacent to the new federal building—is still on schedule, said Madison, with a design-build team being chosen this fall and completion expected in 2016. The shortlist for that project, announced in April, includes SOM with Clark Construction; Yazdani Studio and Gruen Associates with Hensel Phelps; Brooks + Scarpa and HMC Architects with McCarthy; and NBBJ with Mortensen. **SL**



COURTESY OLSON KUNDIG ARCHITECTS

## UNVEILED

### FOSS WATERWAY SEAPORT

Rehabilitation of the Foss Waterway Seaport, a 45,000-square-foot maritime center in Tacoma, Washington, is underway. The building was originally part of the mile-long Balfour Dock that served as a cargo ship hub and wheat storage facility along the Thea Foss Waterway, located off the Puget Sound. Olson Kundig Architects is leading the renovation of the original timber-frame warehouse, one of the last remaining pieces of the city's 19<sup>th</sup>-

century waterfront. When completed, the seaport will be the largest maritime heritage and education center on the West Coast.

Previous improvements have included permanent pilings and replacements of the building's roof and wharf. The current phase, which began in March, removes the aging brick exterior, replacing its frontage with a pewter anodized aluminum curtain-wall system using high-performance glass. The interior will be organized via a series of boxes that will include an exhibition hall for a heritage museum, classrooms for marine ecology and maritime history

programs, a children's learning center, and a boat shop.

The exhibit hall will feature exposed 150-foot-long timber trusses, a nod to the building's original scale, to its working past, and to the region's ancient trees. "The structure of the building is like a heroic sculpture. The building is a real community treasure," said Jim Olson, design principal and project leader. The exhibit hall will reopen in spring 2013, with total renovation completed by 2014. **ARIEL ROSENSTOCK**

Architect: Olson Kundig Architects  
Client: Foss Waterway Development Authority  
Location: Tacoma, Washington  
Completion: 2014

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There are rare artists whose work crosses so many disciplines that categories fall short. And Cliff Garten's "civic sculptures" stretch into the worlds of architecture, landscape architecture, urban infrastructure, and masterplanning.

His jumbo-sized pieces consist of LED-illuminated sculptures, street furniture, landscapes, chandeliers, and even bridges that, while they visually dazzle, are also capable of transforming neighborhoods. They are most successful when Garten partners with enlightened civic engineers who know the value of rendering the public domain on a user-friendly, human scale. Pieces such as *Sea Spires* and *Avenue of Light* have even been economically uplifting, helping businesses flourish within an active pedestrian environment.

With a Master of Fine Arts in sculpture from the Rhode Island School of Design and a Master of Landscape Architecture from Harvard Graduate School of Design, Garten moved to LA in 1999 and established a studio in Venice.

He recently made the news for his involvement with LA's new Expo light-rail line. His original scheme, highlighted by eye-catching canopies and developed with LA architecture firm ZGF and LA landscape firm Melendrez, was not realized as he envisioned. "The plan was lost at a point when political changes in the MTA caused a complete reorganization of the project," Garten said.

An advocate of civic collaboration, Garten is well aware of the challenges for an artist. "In the context of how American infrastructure projects are organized, art tends to become the window dressing of the project rather than an essential element of the infrastructure," he noted. "If we want infrastructure that we can take pride in owning and using, some of the fundamental aspects of how our culture regards our infrastructure and how the design professions in consort with government build our infrastructure will have to change," he said.

JACK SKELLEY

YORK BRIDGE  
REDMOND, WASHINGTON

The sinuous bridge supports cars and pedestrians on decks that curve over the river. Underneath are the Sammamish River and a bike trail. Garten collaborated with Entranco and AECOM engineers to represent "flow" both over and under the bridge, with braided aluminum panels, including railings. The result is elegantly lyrical in its appearance and comfortable in its human scale.

SEA SPIRES  
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

Though not as towering as Garten's other light sculptures, the 16-foot, LED-illuminated, stainless-steel figures of *Sea Spires* are equally interactive. Standing sentry-like at a key pedestrian corner, they are curvaceous shapes evocative of underwater—or perhaps interplanetary—denizens transparently afloat. Though monumental, they resist the opacity and plopped-down appearance of much public art.

AVENUE OF LIGHT  
FORT WORTH, TEXAS

The project consists of six stainless-steel sculptures that incorporate LED illumination and rise 36 feet along the median from Lamar Street to Main and Commerce streets. Each sculpture is composed of 100 stainless-steel plates, slightly turned from the preceding plate and welded together. The plates are designed to create a vanished edge depending on the angle at which they are viewed. Straight on, each sculpture appears translucent. Lights shoot up the center as well as the outside of each sculpture to reflect the edges of the metal.

RIBBONS  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

A landscape architecture project in the courtyard of the historic Federal Building at 50 United Nations Plaza, *Ribbons* is created within an adaptive reuse project by HKS. Garten reframed the courtyard as a site-specific artwork, using recycled concrete and a permeable ground plane. The design transforms the classical symmetry of the original design by Arthur Brown, Jr., by retaining its axial connections, but inserting a sculptural matrix of paving, seating, fountains, and plantings. Serpentine elements seem to emerge and submerge across the open space.

CORRIDOR OF LIGHT  
ROSSLYN, VIRGINIA

These towering illuminated sculptures combine public art masterplanning with sustainability. The curved, stainless-steel sculptures—some pieces stretching 26 feet high and suggesting floating jellyfish or helixes—reflect LED lighting in changing patterns. They also knit together the North Lynn Street corridor by creating a sustained identity. Real estate values have increased accordingly. The project's funding was a partnership between the public works and public art departments, the Rosslyn business improvement district, and the Rosslyn Renaissance planning group.

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1



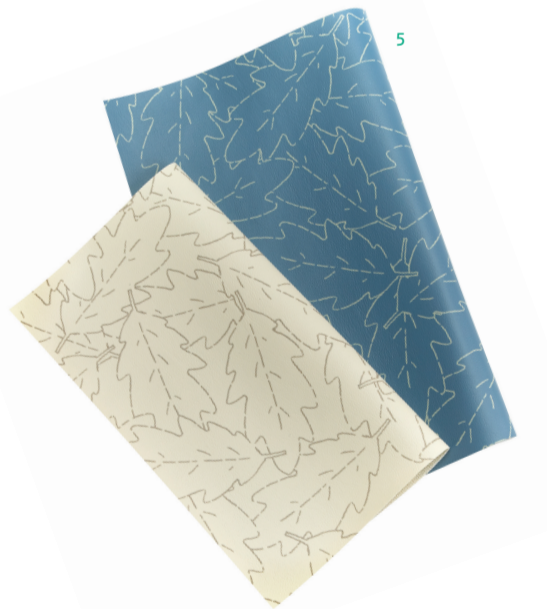
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4

# ALL NATURAL

FLOORING AND FABRIC BRANDS PUT DOWN ROOTS WITH THESE TRIBUTES TO MOTHER EARTH. BY PERRIN DRUMM

## 1 KAMANI KNOLL LUXE

Named after the Kamani flower and inspired by Hindu patterns, Knoll creative director Dorothy Cosonas combines a modern, almost mid-century floral with old-world screen-printing techniques in a 100 percent cotton fabric.

[knoll.com](http://knoll.com)

## 2 REFORESTATION BLIK

As with their online-sold T-shirts, these self-adhesive fabric wall tiles by Threadless are based on user-submitted designs. Nontoxic and free of PVC and phthalates, they come two per pack and are easy to apply to walls or customizable to fit almost any surface.

[whatisblik.com](http://whatisblik.com)

## 3 BROOKLYN MUSEUM BENTLEY PRINCE STREET

Adhering to the company's "7 Fronts of Sustainability" credo that includes conducting life cycle assessments on all products, this digitally printed nylon flooring, depicting sea glass and river rocks, achieves climate neutrality with carbon credits purchased to offset emissions.

[bentleyprincestreet.com](http://bentleyprincestreet.com)

## 4 BAVARIA MAHARAM

Known for design work that "explores the macabre, the bizarre, the historical, and the everyday," Antwerp-based Studio Job used traditional farmland scenery of livestock, tools, and crops with a flattened perspective in a complex woven jacquard construction for a quirky upholstery touch.

[maharam.com](http://maharam.com)

## 5 EXCURSION CF STINSON

One of six new patterns for the Voyages collection by Michael Graves, Excursion is inspired by the architect's love of travel and his commitment to designing high-performance upholstery for environments that require durable, easy-to-clean surfaces.

[cfstinson.com](http://cfstinson.com)

## 6 PATCHWORK GARDEN DOMESTIC CONSTRUCTION

The pattern for Patchwork Garden comes from an antique sewing sampler found in an old chest in a farmhouse that "the girls," as they call themselves, at Brooklyn-based Domestic Construction collaged with paper. The image is then digitally printed on a polyester textile fused to a foam-rubber backing that is skid resistant and machine washable.

[domesticconstruction.bigcartel.com](http://domesticconstruction.bigcartel.com)

Fireworks marked the opening of Sacramento's Green Line extension in June.



COURTESY SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT

# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

AN AUTOCENTRIC CULTURE SETS A HIGH BAR FOR THE REST OF THE NATION AS MASS TRANSIT—LED BY LIGHT RAIL—CHUGS AHEAD ON THE WEST COAST. BY SAM LUBELL AND ARIEL ROSENSTOCK

National attention focused on the recent opening of the Expo Line, an 8.6-mile light rail route that connects downtown LA with Culver City. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Before all is said and done, Los Angeles—long stereotyped as a car-only city—will have more than 100 miles of public transit lines, as the West Coast, home to the nation's first light rail line in San Diego and to its most comprehensive light rail system in Portland, continues to add a slew of new rail.

New lines, stations, infrastructure, and transit-oriented developments are popping up and in planning stages in and around Seattle,

Portland, San Francisco, Sacramento, Los Angeles and San Diego. And if you count West Coast-adjacent cities such as Phoenix and Denver, there are even more. Los Angeles and Seattle are set to double their offerings while Marin and Sonoma are just beginning to add rail to the mix.

Of course, this transit explosion isn't just a local trend. According to the American Public Transportation Association, from 1995 through 2010, public transportation ridership increased by 31 percent—a growth rate higher than the 17 percent increase in the U.S. population. In part this shift is a result of people

returning to urban cores. But perhaps the most compelling reason for the expansion is the crippling impact of traffic in the region and in the country, and its accompanying demons—sprawl, pollution, and climate change. Municipalities are creating new land-use strategies—some a result of new anti-sprawl laws like California's SB 375—that emphasize walkability and dense development near rail.

As a testament to their popularity, most recent rail projects and extensions along the coast have been paid for not just through federal largesse but by local ballot measures such as LA's Measure R,

San Diego's TransNet, and Marin and Sonoma County's Measure Q.

"The biggest surprise for all of us wasn't that we envisioned it, but that there was so much support," said David Mieger, deputy executive officer of countywide planning and development at Metro, LA's transit agency, of Measure R. "In 2008, we got two-thirds of the voters in the county. Motherhood and apple pie usually doesn't rate that high."

Opponents, particularly neighborhood groups fighting tax increases and construction disruptions, charge that rail's extensive costs aren't worth the benefits; they say that ridership still isn't what it should be.

For instance the new Expo Line's ridership has so far reached only half the projected load. "Every commuter rail project in the country has exceeded ridership," answered Matt Stevens, a spokesperson for Sonoma-Marin Area Rapid Transit (SMART). Mieger adds that, unlike just a few years ago, a good portion of riders in LA are now "discretionary," meaning that they choose to take public transit, even though they don't have to.

Rail doesn't just provide architects and engineers with jobs designing stations and related infrastructure; it can also completely transform municipalities' land use patterns,

ushering in transit-oriented development and walkable streets. Cities have been incorporating these plans into their new approaches to land use and will continue to do so. Metro, for example, has developed an extensive transit-oriented development program in Los Angeles that has spurred the creation of more than a dozen pedestrian-friendly, transit-adjacent projects. "This is a planning solution, not just a transportation solution," said Metro's Mieger. San Jose "is directing new growth to build out downtown in a more urban way," said Gabriel Metcalf, executive director of San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), which just opened a new office in San Jose. He warns though that in Silicon Valley "they're fighting some pretty big forces and some pretty entrenched traditions" favoring sprawl and the automobile.

The return to rail is, in some surprisingly convenient ways, a return to the past. Many of these lines were built on the rights of way of existing train and trolley systems that were active in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and abandoned in favor of cars and buses around mid-century. LA's Expo Line runs on a former right-of-way of the Los Angeles & Independence Railroad. Marin and Sonoma's runs on a right-of-way owned by the Southern Pacific Railway.

Of course rail isn't a flawless solution. Besides pockets of under-use, rail and light rail are still far from reaching the tipping point on the West Coast. In LA, for example, 80 percent of the city's residents still don't live within convenient distance to rail. The recession has stalled plans that were even more ambitious. For instance slower returns from Measure R's tax-related funding have forced the completion of LA's Purple Line subway extension beyond 2030. (LA Mayor Villaraigosa hopes his 30/10 program will significantly speed projects up). And architects and engineers claim that regulations regarding rail design—often overseen by public utilities commissions rather than design or building experts—are still not suitable for innovation. But the progress is palpable, making cities feel more like cities again. "For a lot of these cities these lines and stations are the biggest things affecting their development in years," said Roland Genick, of LA-based Parsons Corporation, which oversaw the Expo Line and is now working on LA's Gold Line Foothill extension.

#### SAN DIEGO

San Diego, the city to first reintroduce light rail to the West Coast (and to the country) back in 1981, now has 53 miles of light-rail track. Its most recent extension in 2005, the green line, extends from Old

**Top to bottom:** Preliminary conceptual rendering of LA's Purple Line extension station at Wilshire and La Brea; New train on San Diego's Green Line extension; Future Union Square stop for San Francisco's T-Central light rail subway.

Town San Diego out to Santee, east of Qualcomm Stadium. The extension stretches about six miles and five stations, closing what was a gap in the system's loop through the city.

Plans for an 11.2-mile extension from old town to UC-San Diego in La Jolla is set to be in place by 2018, said San Diego Metropolitan Transit System spokesperson Rob Schupp. Most likely the line will be an extension of the city's blue line. Roughly \$1.2 to \$1.8 billion for the project comes from a local sales tax called TransNet, which will provide half the funding. The remainder of the money will come from federal funds.

Even posh La Jolla was "all for it," said Schupp. In addition to the new lines last year, the city added \$700 million worth of retrofitted light-rail vehicles (64 in all) to its Silver Line, which was completed in 2005.

#### LOS ANGELES

The city's newest transit line is the Expo light-rail line, an 8.6-mile route now running from downtown LA to Culver City. By 2015 the Expo is expected to extend to Santa Monica. Designed by Parsons, with support from Gruen Associates and Miyamoto International, the line has been funded mostly by Measure R, a 2008 city sales tax increase estimated to eventually bring in from \$30 to \$40 billion. About 35 percent of that, up to \$14 billion, will go toward rail projects.

The measure also funded an extension of Metro's Gold Line into East LA and is helping fund the Gold Line Foothill Extension, stretching farther into the San Gabriel Valley. Other city transit projects—totaling 12 in all—include the Regional Connector, a 1.9-mile underground light-rail route linking the city's Gold and Blue lines; extensions of Metro's Green Line to LAX airport and farther into the South Bay; and the Purple Line subway extension down Wilshire Boulevard all the way from downtown to Westwood and, funding allowing, to Santa Monica. In fact, by the time Measure R's funds are all spent, LA's rail lines will have doubled, from about 60 miles to about 120, said Mieger.

Partially as a strategy to reflect LA's diversity and partially because each line has its own construction authority, the stations along each route are widely different. The Expo's minimal stations are highlighted by wavy metallic canopies and blue steel frames; Foothill takes on gabled roofs and a traditional vernacular; and the Gold Line into East LA has an explosion of colors and forms.



COURTESY METRO



COURTESY SAN DIEGO MTD



COURTESY SFMTA



Rendering of SMART's Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) train.

COURTESY SMART

#### BAY AREA

San Francisco opened its first light-rail line in over 50 years in 2007 with its T-Third line, which included 5.1 miles of light rail spread over 18 stations. The line has proven a huge success and brought San Francisco up to seventy miles of light-rail track. The next move for the T-Third is the T-Central subway, an underground extension of the line another 1.7 miles from Mission Bay into downtown, with stops in South of Market, Yerba Buena, Union Square, and Chinatown. The project is funded primarily via the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program, with about \$942 million coming from that source. A combination

of federal, state, and local sources will provide the remaining funds. The line is slated to open in 2019.

Outside of San Francisco is the Sonoma-Marina Area Rail Transit (SMART) project, largely funded by Measure Q, a 0.25 percent sales tax passed by voters in the two counties in 2008. SMART will provide rail service along 70 miles of the historic Northwestern Pacific Railroad alignment. Slowed by the economic downturn, the plan is to open a 38.5-mile initial operating segment between Santa Rosa and San Rafael by 2016, with additional segments to be opened as funding becomes available. Ultimately it will extend 70 miles. The project is the first

passenger rail project in Marin and Sonoma counties since the 1950s. According to spokesperson, Matt Stevens, designs for the stations have still not been finalized, although Zimmer Gunsul Frasca (ZGF) did complete preliminary work.

Meanwhile in Silicon Valley the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is overseeing a the Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project, extending light rail by 2.3 miles and four stations in San Jose. But the big news in that area comes with heavy rail. The VTA is overseeing a \$2.3 billion, 10-mile, two-station extension of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system (BART) into Silicon Valley from Fremont

to North San Jose. A total of \$900 million is coming from the Federal New Starts program, with \$1.18 billion coming from the local half-cent Measure A sales tax. Design-build is being overseen by the joint venture team Skanska-Shimmick-Herzog. The second phase, still in project development, will reach six miles and four stations running through downtown San Jose and ending in Santa Clara. That would cost about \$3.6 billion, largely because it would be underground.

#### SACRAMENTO

Sacramento's contribution to the transit extravaganza is the 1.1 mile extension of its green line from downtown Sacramento north to the city's river district. The extension just opened on June 15, to big crowds and even fireworks. The city is also planning a \$270 million, four station, 4.3-mile extension of its blue line from Meadowview road to Cosumnes River College. A team of design-build architects, including Vrilakas Architects and MFDB Architects, have produced station designs unique to their locations. "We want our stations to reflect their neighborhoods," said Sacramento Regional Transit District Architect David Solomon "It's easier for the riders and it makes for better community building."

#### PORTLAND

With a mature and extensive system of 82 miles of track and 85 stations operating since 1986, Portland has been a model for city officials

throughout the nation for how light rail can work. In 2011, over 41.2 million riders boarded Metropolitan Area Express (MAX), according to the local transit authority, TriMet.

There are currently four lines operating and a fifth—the Portland-Milwaukie MAX light rail Orange line—under construction and expected to open in September 2015. It will extend to Milwaukie in Clackamas County, 7.3 miles south of the current Yellow line that runs from the Expo Center to Portland State University.

The ten stations along the Orange line will feature a mix of landscaping and public art to reflect the character of each surrounding neighborhood. The Lincoln Street/Southwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Station in the Halprin District will include a vegetated trackway dubbed an "eco-track"; at the SE Tacoma/Johnson Creek station, a Bike and Ride station will provide secure parking for over 100 bicycles; and at the OMSI/SE Water Ave station, two artists have proposed a large "sonic dish" that will reflect sound and light as nearby commuters pass by.

Half of the \$1.5 billion project is being financed by the Federal Transit Administration, with the remainder coming from local, regional, and state sources, including \$250 million in bonds financed by future Oregon Lottery revenue. This is the most expensive line Portland has ever built because it traverses urbanized land and adds a new bridge, the first to cross the Portland section of the Willamette River since the opening



COURTESY TRIMET



COURTESY SOUND TRANSIT

**Above:** Rendering of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Bridge. **Left, above and below:** LMN Architects designed the University of Washington Station and pedestrian bridge for Seattle's University Link line.

of the Fremont Bridge in 1973.

When open, by September 2016, the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Bridge in the South Waterfront District will be the first multi-modal car-free bridge in the nation. TriMet hired Donald MacDonald of MacDonald Architects, as the lead designer and chose a cable-stayed bridge design, which would help maximize horizontal and vertical clearance on the busy river and keep costs lower. Approximately 1,720 feet in length, the bridge will feature two towers and include, in addition to a light-rail track, dedicated bus lanes and two 14-foot wide paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.

#### SEATTLE

Light rail in Seattle had a shaky start ten years ago. Initially it was met with fierce opposition, then a threatened loss of funding, and eventually the resignation of the former CEO of Sound Transit, the agency that serves the Puget Sound region. But finally, after almost a decade of debating and lawsuits, the first light-rail line in the city, Sound Transit's Central Link, opened in July 2009, a 15.5-mile route connecting downtown Seattle to Rainier Valley and SeaTac Airport.

The city is now pushing forward with a huge light-rail program,

with a total of 36 miles planned by 2023. This includes the University Link (U-Link) a 3.1-mile underground section running from downtown Seattle north to the University of Washington, scheduled to open in September 2016. There are three more planned sections: a 1.3-mile section south toward Tacoma to open in 2016; a north leg to Northgate and eventually Lynnwood that will open in 2021; and a 14.5-mile extension east over the I-90 bridge through Mercer Island to Bellevue that will open in 2023.

Construction of the U-Link is now underway. At the University of Washington station, designed by LMN Architects, a pedestrian bridge will traverse Montlake Boulevard, linking the upper campus, the University of Washington Medical Center, and the 27-mile Burke-Gilman Trail, affording views on a clear day of Mount Rainier.

Total funding for the U-Link project is \$1.9 billion, with \$750 million derived from a blend of grants from the Federal Transit Administration, including a TIGER I competitive grant, as well as local support. In 2008, voters approved the Sound Transit 2 measure, increasing sales tax and motor vehicle excise tax.

"It's so nice to discover that after all these years we're not done yet, and we can still change our cities," said SPUR's Metcalf.

**SAM LUBELL IS AN'S WEST COAST EDITOR.**

**ARIEL ROSENSTOCK IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT 10

# facades —

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## TRENDS

## THE MANY SIDES OF FACADES

Architects are using facades to push the green building revolution. Advances in technologies like glass fabrication and performance-modeling software have been a key to making this happen. But now that the first wave of high-performance buildings have been in play for a number of years, the industry has new post-occupancy data applicable to the next generation of energy-efficient buildings. Software is also helping people collaborate in unforeseen ways, allowing architects to do productive, real-time work with fabricators and facade consultants no matter their

geographic location.

And with improvements in digital design software, architects are not just creating building enclosures that passively reduce a building's energy consumption. Facades are now active participants in their interior and exterior environments, with operable components and energy-collecting systems that can power many of the functions within. Photovoltaics continue to grow in popularity; one report from NanoMarkets, an industry analyst, estimated the total market for BIPV glass will reach \$6.4 billion in revenues in 2016, compared with

\$1.5 billion in 2012.

Material advances, too, are making building skins more efficient. Architectural products are slimming down: long a staple of European rainscreen design, thin-form ceramics only a few millimeters thick are taking their place on building exteriors as a lightweight, high-design option for a range of projects in the United States. Concrete is also having a revolution as a facade material, with new advances in ultra high-performance mixes that are lightweight and can be manufactured almost anywhere in the world. Glass-fabrication technology

is allowing fabrication of larger panels, reducing material consumption for many projects. Metal, too, is being modeled in new and exciting ways. While structural steel systems continue to bend, twist, and conform innovatively, the world's most cutting-edge architects are showing that their fascination with bending, perforating, and finishing metal continues. Ultimately today's facades are more than the sum of their parts, allowing not only these buildings but our cities as a whole to function more efficiently than ever. **JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ**



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# JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

ARCHITECT: SKIDMORE,  
OWINGS & MERRILL  
LOCATION: NEW YORK, NEW YORK

FACADE DETAIL:  
ENCLOS



Long scattered over several Manhattan buildings, the John Jay College of Criminal Justice decided several years ago to unite its facilities with one vertical campus. Designed by SOM, the new 625,000-square-foot building doubles the size of the school's facilities, adding classrooms, labs, auditoriums, offices, and student spaces to meet increasing enrollment. The building's stacked, cascading layout allows students to collaborate across disciplines, and the architects wanted this function to be visible from the exterior as well. Framed glass setbacks for the cafeteria, labs, a 250-seat classroom, and large lounge area highlight the building's diversity from the street and emphasize the "transparency of justice," said the architects. The rest of the building has a skin of aluminum panels and fritted and transparent low-e-

coated insulated glass units, all fabricated by Viracon, which are arranged in a staggered pattern on all four sides (every third panel is transparent). The typical panel dimension is 6 feet, 8 inches by 15 feet.

Baker Metal Products provided extrusion fabrication and subassembly services, and units were later assembled at the Eprata, Pennsylvania, facility of facade design/build consultant Enclos. Enclos conducted two laboratory performance mock-ups to confirm each curtain wall system's performance, with validation including on-site water chamber and hose testing. Because of the college's urban location, installers used three methods to install 240,000 square feet of facade: hydraulic crane, pallet stacker, and monorail systems. Enclos also provided installation services

for the building's metal panels, canopy and soffits, louvers with steel supports, and glass and aluminum doors.

Depending on how it is approached, the facade presents a different effect. Vertical fins with depths of 3 to 11 inches encircle the building in bands. Finished with silver mica-flake paint on one side and silk-screened with red dots on the other, the fins make the building look red when seen from the east and approached counterclockwise. The effect connects the building with the brick facade of nearby Haaren Hall, the college's main location previously, and with North Hall, a former shoe factory building. From the other direction, aluminum and glass materials fit with the school's newer glass-clad neighbors on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

# BRIDGESTONE AMERICAS CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

ARCHITECT: SOL HARRIS/  
DAY ARCHITECTURE  
LOCATION: AKRON, OHIO

FACADE DETAIL:  
FIRESTONE



This year, Nashville-based Bridgestone Americas celebrated the opening of its new 265,000-square-foot technical center in Akron, Ohio. Designed by Ohio-based Sol Harris/Day Architecture, the facility is one of the company's three technical centers worldwide; the others are in Rome and Tokyo. The project houses a research laboratory that the tire maker uses to test new tire compounds, as well as prototype and quality-control engineering offices and additional office space for almost 450 employees. A pedestrian bridge with custom ceramic-frit glass spans Akron's South Main Street to connect to a new 400-car parking structure on the nearly 25-acre campus.

Built to LEED Gold specifications, the technical center does not rely on just one enclosure system to function efficiently. Instead, it incorporates a range of efficiency-enhancing products from Bridgestone's Firestone Building Products division, including the S-4500 Aluminum Panel Rainscreen System, Flat-Lock Stainless Steel Wall Panels, UC-600 Aluminum Exposed Fastener Panels, UC 500 Aluminum Soffit Panels, S-200 Aluminum Column Covers, Aluminum Sun Screens, and LS-1 Light Shelves. Using the company's suite of products also helped the project stay on a tight schedule—from its February 2010 groundbreaking to its official opening in April 2012.

In addition to the light shelves and screens, reflective roofing and a vegetative roof reduce the building's cooling requirements, while an on-site cistern collects water for irrigation. A high-performance, triple-glazed facade system uses United Architectural Metals UAM 275-925 TRIPLE, a thermally broken unitized curtain wall system designed to accommodate Viracon's 1-3/4-inch triple-glazed units across 50,000 square feet of curtain wall.

# BURJ KHALIFA

ARCHITECT: SKIDMORE,  
OWINGS & MERRILL  
LOCATION: DUBAI, UAE

FACADE DETAIL:  
GUARDIAN



In an arid climate like Dubai's, a building's enclosure system is its most important protection against days that average a high of 108 degrees in summer. This is especially true for the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa, whose 2,650-foot height is clad in more than 1.8 million square feet of Guardian SunGuard Solar Silver 20 and Guardian ClimaGuard NLT Low-E glass.

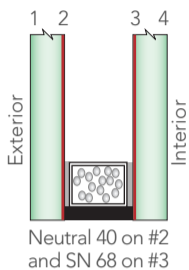
The project's glass provides an anti-glare shield for the strong desert sun, and a high light reflectance to keep the interior from overheating. It also withstands extreme desert temperature swings and strong winds, all while meeting the SOM architects' vision of a matte silver reflective color for the building without use of tinted glass or ceramic frit.

Guardian's first conversations with the architects included discussions about glass thickness calculations based on wind loads, as well as calculations that took into consideration glass movement and temperature differences between the ground floor and the top of the tower during each season. Stress on the glass caused by the temperature difference between production and installation conditions was another important consideration in determining glass thickness.

The glass is positioned vertically in the facade frame and segmented around the tower to avoid the visibility of small distortions that occur during the heat-strengthening process of glassmaking. (In a completely flat facade, the high reflective glass would show more distortions.) Heat-strengthened glass has been subjected to a heating and cooling cycle and is typically twice as strong as annealed glass of the same thickness and configuration. Throughout the manufacturing and installation process, Guardian instituted tight quality control to ensure that the building's nearly 26,000 panels would live up to the standard of the record-breaking structure.

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can easily see outside. HKS's selection of SunGuard products also improved the building's energy efficiency and created a comfortable setting for children and families. The building is LEED Certified Silver. For complete performance data, project photos and other ways to Build With Light, visit [SunGuardGlass.com](http://SunGuardGlass.com). Or call 1-866-GuardSG (482-7374).

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A leader in design-forward "ecoresin" based materials for indoor and outdoor architectural applications, including the high-performance polymer Koda XT with 100 times the impact strength of glass and made with 40 percent preconsumer recycled content.  
3-form.com

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dri-design.com/corianec

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Eter-Color is a fully compressed, autoclaved, fiber-cement panel for interior or exterior applications. The panel is through-colored and is available in a variety of formats.  
fibercementproducts.com

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formica.com

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The California-based custom fabrication shop specializes in the design, engineering, and manufacture of composite products for architecture, sculpture, and industrial applications.  
kreysler.com

**LUMINORE**

A cold-spray application process applies a protective layer of metal over a variety of exterior facade surfaces, including concrete, fiberglass, and foam.  
luminore.com

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High-density stratified timber facade panels use Everlook, a special overlay that dramatically increases the normal life of the panel, improving UV resistance and color stability.  
parklex.com

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Trespa Meteor panels are ideal for use in innovative and functional ventilated rain-screen cladding systems, on their own or in combination with other materials.  
trespa.com



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**COTTO D'ESTE**

Italian manufacturer of porcelain stoneware floors, also makers of Keralite an ultra-thin ceramic tile for cladding.  
cottodeste.it

**LAFARGE DUCTAL**

Ultra high-performance concrete technology increases options for new and renovated facade designs with new shapes and finish options.  
ductal-lafarge.com

**LAMINAM**

Porcelain stoneware slabs measuring 1000x3000x3 mm allow for high-performance, lightweight ceramic ventilated facade designs in a range of finishes.  
laminam.it/en

**MARAZZI**

Porcelain stoneware for ventilated walls is available in multiple colors and styles; large-format tiles resist abrasion, fading, graffiti, and harsh weather conditions.  
marazziarchitectural.com

**NBK CERAMIC**

This Hunter Douglas Company makes large-size terra-cotta rain-screen elements in custom pre-cast and baguette formations. TERRART product line offers a suspended facade system using ventilation and pressure-equalizing elements for building envelope protection.  
nbk.com

**PALAGIO**

Specializing in turnkey rain-screen facades, the company makes terra-cotta tiles designed for easy installation with stone, porcelain, and metal on a pre-engineered substructure.  
palagiousa.com

**SHILDAN**

Shildan provides ceramic sunscreen products and energy-efficient facades, as the exclusive North American representative of the German terra-cotta innovator Moeding, known for its patented horizontal aluminum clip and attachment system.  
shildan.com

**TAKTL**

New TESL8 panels allow for the production of unique facade systems available at a standard VECTR panel price, enabling large-scale facade patterns.  
taktl-llc.com

**VIRACON**

VE-45, a new low-emissivity coating, improves the balance between visible light transmittance, solar control, and enhanced U-values.  
viracon.com

**YKK AP AMERICA**

The architectural product manufacturer has introduced the YUW 750 XT unitized wall system for low- to mid-rise commercial buildings to its enerGfacade product line.  
ykkap.com



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## GLASS

**GLASPRO**

The structural and architectural and glass manufacturer has a 75,000-square-foot California fabrication facility in which to create technically advanced custom glass.  
glas-pro.com

**GUARDIAN INDUSTRIES**

Guardian and Pythagoras Solar now manufacture and market SunGuard Photovoltaic Glass Units (PVGU) for commercial buildings.  
sunguardglass.com

**OLD CASTLE GLASS**

From a major supplier of architectural glass systems and custom curtain and window walls, Old Castle has evolved to providing entire integrated building systems.  
oldcastle.com

**PPG**

New commercial building products include a passive-solar, low-e glass for cool climates and a self-cleaning glass for skylights, canopies, and other sloped glazing.  
ppg.com

**SAGE**

This spring the French glass giant Saint-Gobain acquired Sage, makers of electrochromic smart windows that can tint and block light using only 0.28 watts per square foot of glass.  
sageglass.com

**SOLADIGM**

Based in Milpitas, CA, Soladigm specializes in green building products, including the introduction of a new energy-efficient dynamic glass manufactured in collaboration with Guardian Industries.  
soladigm.com

**SOUTHWALL AND PLEOTINT**

New high-performance insulating glass is the first to combine suspended-film and sunlight-responsive glazing technologies to reduce solar heat gain and increase energy savings.  
southwall.com

**TGP ARCHITECTURAL**

Technical glass product manufacturer provides innovative specialty glass, including the new linear self-supporting channel glass, Pilkington Profilit, and steel framing systems.  
tgpamerica.com

**VIRACON**

VE-45, a new low emissivity coating, improves the balance between visible light transmittance, solar control, and enhanced U-values.  
viracon.com

**W&W GLASS**

The architectural glass and metal contractor specializes in curtain walls, storefronts, entrances, ornamental metal, skylights, and Pilkington Planar ssss structural glass systems.  
wwglass.com



COURTESY CAMBRIDGE ARCHITECTURAL

## METALS/MESH/TENSILE FABRIC

### ALPOLIC

Alpolic/fr is an advanced fire-retarding exterior cladding composed of a mineral-filled, fire-resistant thermoplastic core sandwiched between two thin metal skins. [alpolic-northamerica.com](http://alpolic-northamerica.com)

### BIRDAIR

Tensile architecture reduces material usage and increases daylight. Tensotherm with Lumira aerogel fabric membrane now optimizes rooftop thermal efficiencies. [birdair.com](http://birdair.com)

### CAMBRIDGE

Streamlined manufacturing and pre-engineered systems are customizable to an architect's vision for any type of project in the United States and internationally. [cambridgearchitectural.com](http://cambridgearchitectural.com)

### DORALCO

The custom architectural metal company specializes in innovative custom metal fabrication for projects seeking LEED certification. [doralco.com](http://doralco.com)

### FABRAL

The Lancaster, PA-based metal roof and wall system manufacturer is known for standing seam roofs and standing seam roofs paired with solar. [fabral.com](http://fabral.com)

### FIRESTONE BUILDING PRODUCTS

The new SunWave SMRT is a solar-powered day-lighting solution that brings high levels of diffused natural light into buildings, reducing lighting energy consumption by 50 to 80 percent. [firestonebpco.com](http://firestonebpco.com)

### GKD

The Capital Gate Tower in Abu Dhabi is clad with a GKD Tigris stainless-steel splash that eliminates more than 30 percent of the sun's heat from the building. [gkdmetailfabrics.com](http://gkdmetailfabrics.com)

### KALZIP

Kalzip is a multi-component system offering solutions and finishes for roofs, facades, and the entire building envelope. [kalzip.com](http://kalzip.com)

### RHEINZINK

A range of roofs and facades made of Rheinzink titanium zinc include modular rainscreen panels that allow for quick and cost-efficient installation. [rhein-zink.us](http://rhein-zink.us)

### SEFAR ARCHITECTURE

Vision, a metal-coated precision fabric interlayer is typically laminated within glass or other transparent materials to create unique aesthetic design possibilities in facades. [sefar.us](http://sefar.us)

### SYNTHEON

The ACCEL-E wall system combines the strength and performance of cold-formed steel framing with the insulation properties of expanded polystyrene. [syntheoninc.com/accel-e](http://syntheoninc.com/accel-e)

### UNI-SYSTEMS

Facilitated by a team of engineers, the company's kinetic architecture solutions turn buildings into mechanized structures that change with climate, need, or purpose. [uni-systems.com](http://uni-systems.com)

### U.S. ALUMINUM

This subsidiary of C. R. Laurence manufactures and supplies aluminum curtain walls, window walls, hurricane resistant systems, blast mitigation systems, and sunshades. [usalum.com](http://usalum.com)



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JULY

WEDNESDAY 18

EVENTS

**Constant Craving: Creating Dynamic Experiences for an Engagement-Hungry World**  
5:00 p.m.  
Intersection for the Arts  
925 Mission St., San Francisco  
aiaf.org

**Master of Public Administration Information Session**  
5:30 p.m.  
Seattle University  
901 12th Ave., Seattle, WA  
seattleu.edu

THURSDAY 19

LECTURE

**Days of Wonder: Machou Picchu plus Great Wall; A Lecture with Mike Torrey**  
7:00 p.m.  
Museum of Photographic Arts  
1649 El Prado, San Diego, CA  
mopa.org

SYMPOSIUM

**Bevan Dufty, Jeff Buckley The Foreclosure Crisis: Looking at the Bayview**  
6:00 p.m.  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

EVENTS

**GOOD Design: Rethink SoMa**  
10:30 a.m.  
San Francisco City Hall  
400 Van Ness Ave.  
San Francisco  
aiaf.org

**AIGA Reno/Tahoe Type Walk**  
7:30 p.m.  
Craft  
22 Martin St., Reno, NV  
renotahoe.aiga.org

**Brand Architect: How to Market Yourself at Any Stage of Your Career**  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St.  
San Francisco  
aiaf.org

FILM

**Urban Open Space Design—Transformation**  
12:00 p.m.  
AIA East Bay  
1405 Clay St., Oakland, CA  
aiaeb.org

FRIDAY 20

EVENT

**City Picnic: Annie Alley**  
12:00 p.m.  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

LECTURE

**Disabled Access Workshop**  
9:00 a.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St.  
San Francisco  
aiaf.org

EXHIBITION OPENING  
Toby Rose Exhibit

Main Office  
Fort Mason Center  
Landmark Building A  
Marina Blvd. and  
Buchanan St., San Francisco  
fortmason.org

SATURDAY 21

EVENT

**LA River Iconathon**  
11:00 a.m.  
LALA Gallery  
1335 Willow St., Los Angeles  
iconathon.org

WITH THE KIDS

**ARC.I.TEK: Envision the 2062 Seattle World's Fair**  
11:00 a.m.  
Seattle Center Intiman Playhouse  
201 Mercer St., Seattle, WA  
seattlearchitecture.org

SUNDAY 22

EVENT

**Soriano: Before & After: The Glen Lukens Residence**  
2:00 p.m.  
Lukens House  
3425 West 27th St.  
Los Angeles  
sahscc.org

MONDAY 23

SYMPOSIUM

**Pecha Kucha: What SJ Means to Me**  
6:00 p.m.  
San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art  
560 South First St.  
San Jose, CA  
spur.org

WITH THE KIDS

**Making & Museums Children's Summer Camp**  
9:00 a.m.  
Architecture and Design Museum of Los Angeles  
6032 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles  
aplusd.org

TUESDAY 24

EVENT

**Hollywood vs. Silicon Valley: SPUR's plan for High-Speed Rail**  
12:30 p.m.  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

WEDNESDAY 25

LECTURE

**Steve Reidy Working Together: Achieving Net Zero**  
12:00 p.m.  
AIA Seattle  
1911 First Ave.  
Seattle, WA  
aiaseattle.org

EVENTS

**How to Start Your Own Firm**  
6:00 p.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St.  
San Francisco  
aiaf.org

THURSDAY 26

EXHIBITION OPENING

**Local Color**  
San Jose Museum of Art  
110 South Market St.  
San Jose, CA  
sanjosemuseumofart.org

EVENT

**PECHA KUCHA/ FEMME FATALE VI**  
6:30 p.m.  
Architecture and Design Museum of Los Angeles  
6032 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles  
aplusd.org

SYMPOSIUM

**Collaboration: The Art and Science of Building Facades**  
8:00 a.m.  
California College of the Arts  
1111 Eighth St.  
San Francisco, CA  
facade.archpaper.com

FRIDAY 27

LECTURE

**Interpreting the California Building Code**  
8:30 a.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St.  
San Francisco  
aiaf.org

FORUM

**FOTE (Forum on the Environment)**  
12:00 p.m.  
AIA East Bay  
1405 Clay St., Oakland, CA  
aiaeb.org

SATURDAY 28

EVENT

**Heritage Home Tour**  
10:00 a.m.  
Architectural Heritage Center  
Location TBA  
visitahc.org

WITH THE KIDS

**inbeTWEEN Event: Adaptive Re-Use**  
11:00 a.m.  
SAF Offices  
1333 5th Ave., Seattle, WA  
seattlearchitecture.org

MONDAY 30

EVENT

**ARE Seminar: Construction Documents & Services**  
6:00 p.m.  
AIA East Bay  
1405 Clay St., Oakland, CA  
aiaeb.org

TUESDAY 31

EVENT

**Adaptive Reuse in Los Angeles**  
12:30 p.m.  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

LECTURE

**Bernard Maybeck: Architect of Elegance**  
6:00 p.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St., San Francisco  
aiaf.org

AUGUST

WEDNESDAY 1

EVENT

**USC XED**  
USC School of Architecture  
850 West 37th St.  
arch.usc.edu

FORUM

**Supportive Housing: the Bay's Area's Response to Ending Homelessness?**  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

EVENT

**Meet the Home Tours Architects**  
5:30 p.m.  
AIA East Bay  
1405 Clay St.  
Oakland, CA  
aiaeb.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

**SNOW: Colin McRae Solo Exhibition**  
The McLoughlin Gallery  
49 Geary St., San Francisco  
mgart.com

THURSDAY 2

EVENT

**Hunter's Point Community Center**  
3:00 p.m.  
Hunter's Point Community Center  
Galvez and Donahue  
San Francisco  
aiaf.org

FRIDAY 3

EXHIBITION OPENING

**Alexis Rochas: STEREO.BOT**  
SCI-Arc Library  
960 East Third St., Los Angeles  
sciarc.edu

TOUR

**UCSF Mission Bay Hospital**  
2:30 p.m.  
UCSF Mission Bay Hospital  
1625 Owens St., San Francisco  
aiaf.org

SUNDAY 5

EVENT

**Urban Hikes: Forgotten LA—Santa Ana Arts District**  
Time and location TBA  
Los Angeles  
aplusd.org

TUESDAY 7

WITH THE KIDS

**Design Your Own Cabin**  
10:30 a.m.  
Bellevue Arts Museum  
510 Bellevue Way NE  
Bellevue, WA  
bellevuearts.org

WEDNESDAY 8

EVENT

**Sustainable Building Advisor Program Info Session**  
6:00 p.m.  
Pacific Energy Center  
851 Howard St., San Francisco  
aiaf.org

SATURDAY 11

EVENT

**Marking the Forest**  
University of Oregon School of Architecture  
1206 University of Oregon  
Eugene, OR  
Eugene.aaschool.ac.uk

TUESDAY 14

EVENT

**Up Your Alley: Small Streets to Public Spaces**  
12:30 p.m.  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

WEDNESDAY 15

LECTURE

**Heather Fargo**  
6:00 p.m.  
AIA East Bay  
1405 Clay St., Oakland, CA  
aiaeb.org

THURSDAY 16

SYMPOSIUM

**Gerard Koskovich, Alan Martinez, Gerry Takano, et al. These Walls Can Speak: Telling the Stories of Queer Places**  
6:00 p.m.  
GLBT History Museum  
4127 18th St., San Francisco  
sferitage.org



COURTESY THE AUTRY

CALIFORNIA'S DESIGNING WOMEN

The Autry in Griffith Park  
4700 Western Heritage Way  
Los Angeles  
August 10 to January 6, 2013

It was uncommon for women to practice industrial design throughout late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, California's newness and frequent population growth provided various opportunities for women to get involved with the creation and production of design. Autry National Center's *California's Designing Women, 1896–1986* with works from over fifty women designers from California celebrates female designers who made major contributions to Californian and American design. The exhibition displays approximately 240 examples of textiles, ceramics, furniture, lighting, tapestries, jewelry, clothing, and graphics all inspired by California's amalgam of society which include Indigenous American, Chinese, Japanese, Anglo, and Mexican cultures. Upholding California's reputation for unlimited creativity, the displayed work includes materials such as wood, abalone, glass cotton, steel, silver, acetate, acrylic, and fiberglass, spanning a century of design movements from arts and crafts to art deco to mid-century modern and beyond.



COURTESY SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART

LOCAL COLOR

San Jose Museum of Art  
110 South Market Street  
San Jose, CA  
July 26 to January 13, 2013

The way people experience color can be subjective, as preference for a particular color is a personal one. Artists, however, have evoked certain emotions such as pleasure or gloom by manipulating color in value and hue in their pieces. San Jose Museum of Art's *Local Color* explores the effects of color through a range of works selected from their permanent collection, displaying over twenty artists who experimented with color. Viewers will be able to experience a myriad of emotions as they venture through this multihued exhibition which will include simple black and white pieces as well as saturated, colorful works. From the modest palette of blue, gray and black in the hypnotic painting *Wheel* by Barbara Takenaga to the luscious and bright colors featured in Bischoff's photographs of Barbie dolls, the exhibition's various pieces will allow visitors to recognize color itself as a medium in art.

## Hand and Hearth

*Handmade Houses: A Century of Earth-Friendly Home Design*  
By Richard Olsen  
Rizzoli, \$45



Interior of the Muennig House in Big Sur.

LUCY GOODHART/KODIAK GREENWOOD

At first glance, one can already tell *Handmade Houses: A Century of Earth-Friendly Home Design*, by former *Architectural Digest* editor Richard Olsen, is a different type of architecture book. While sharing the hefty weight and handsome visuals of other tomes, the book surprises readers with a personal, informative narration of a forgotten type of architecture and an intimate glimpse inside 23 homes from around the world.

A “handmade” house is perhaps the antithesis of the machine-made homes many of us know today. The movement blossomed in the late 1950s to early 1970s, with architects, untrained builders, and designers going into the country and making their own homes in protest against the turbulent events of the time. By turning their backs on the mainstream, they embraced pioneer architecture similar to old farmhouses. They used reclaimed materials and architectural salvage, imbuing each space with a distinctly human touch. They built with a pioneer spirit, away from the restrictive guidelines of building codes.

*Handmade Houses* grew out of Olsen’s observation that another back-to-the-land movement has burgeoned after **continued on page 24**

## BLUE BOOK

*Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America*  
ed. Joan Ockman (Rebecca Wilson, Research Editor), MIT Press, \$50.00

**Left: A 1969 student poster for the Learning From Las Vegas studio at Yale School of Architecture.**

Education has long been the object of much discussion among architects, yet this present volume constitutes the first comprehensive history of North American architectural education. Whereas most scholarship has focused on a particular school, pedagogue, era, or curricular component, Joan Ockman’s book—while making no claims to be all encompassing—aims, in her words, “to open up as many avenues as possible for future inquiry and, in doing so, to work against the tendency to produce a canonical history.” By and large, the book achieves this objective, partly owing to its binary structure, which combines telescopic breadth with more microscopic glimpses into particular themes. Part one comprises a broad chronological account from “Before 1860” to the year 2012, with chapters written by Dell Upton, Michael J. Lewis, Ockman, Mary McLeod, and Stan Allen. Part two is encyclopedic in structure, containing short topical essays by different scholars. By thus adopting both a chronological and a thematic approach, this compendium is able to trace changes in broad trends over time while including more focused investigations into particular components of architectural education.

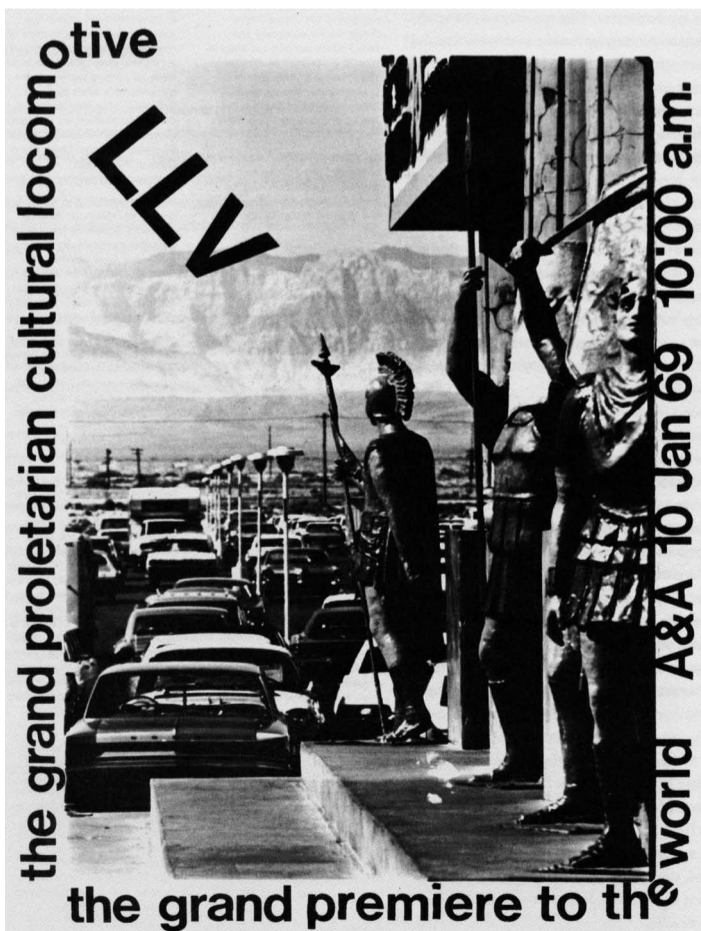
Despite the profession’s long-standing interest in education, it is not so surprising that this book is the first of its kind, given the daunting

challenges of such a project: first of all, there is the quandary of how to broach the staggering number of schools, each with their diverse casts of characters—educators as well as students. Perhaps in view of this difficulty, Ockman solicits contributions from an institutionally diverse roster, including educators from no fewer than 30 schools within the U.S. and Canada. The book maps key tendencies and events across an impressively wide range of schools, both public and private, with the possible exception of the final chapter, “1990 to 2012,” which chronicles an educational discourse occurring mostly within the Ivy League. As for how student activities are integrated into the book, numerous illustrations of student work provide some evidence of material practices occurring in design studios.

Another challenge for such a book lies in the work of contextualizing architectural education—already a broad field—vis-à-vis other histories. McLeod’s chapter, for example, presents a history of feminist, civil rights, and countercultural movements. Ockman opens her chapter with the United States’ Cold War investments in scientific research at universities. If there is, however, one contextual link which remains less explored than we might wish, it is the connection between histories and theories of architectural education and those of general education, which might have helped contributors avoid citing familiar discourses of the architectural profession to account for practices within architecture schools. Of course, there

exists no hard line segregating professional discourse from educational discourse (since educators are usually practitioners), but one distinguishing function of education is its reliance on underlying assumptions about epistemology and psychology. One could argue that theories of how human beings learn have had a remarkable impact on changes within the profession itself, given that educating architects requires a teacher to translate an otherwise personal and inarticulable process of design into a communicable system. Such pedagogical systems (as clearly demonstrated two centuries ago by Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand’s *Précis*, and again with the 1970s turn toward digital systems of design) have had the effect of reorienting the profession towards established protocols, toolkits, and systematic techniques of creative production. Arguably, architecture’s educational methods have had impacts on design and technologies reaching far beyond the walls of the university or the discipline. The book’s contributors certainly do discuss the systematization of design processes, but these cases are treated as indicative of the professional preoccupations of people who happen to be educators, rather than as processes indebted to an educational interest in epistemological systems. To put this more simply: The development of teaching methods driving the profession toward technologization is not a possibility covered in this book.

Overall, Ockman’s book provides a rich, dense, **continued on page 24**



COURTESY VSBA

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 27, 2012

**BLUE BOOK** continued from page 23 and macroscopic treatment of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century architectural education, and its high-quality writing renders it a great pleasure to read. Yet there remains the difficult challenge of accounting for architecture schools' increasing global spread, digital embrace, and reliance on privately funded research. Seeming to accept "technology" and "globalism" as having swept architecture schools along in their inexorable tides, the book's treatment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century does not provide great insight into how methods of architecture education may have actually helped instigate such tendencies, e.g., not only through the recent tradition of sending design studios on trips to the Global South, but, more broadly, through a long tradition of treating processes of the imagination as codifiable, communicable, and thereby reproducible through systems of global and technological exchange.

**GINGER NOLAN IS A NEW YORK-BASED ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN.**

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Exterior of the Breen House in Big Sur.

KODIAK GREENWOOD

**HAND AND HEARTH** continued from page 23 the tragic events of 9/11, as more people have sought solace in the country and in self-reliance. Olsen had unknowingly started on a five-year journey of discovery. Apart from design-build experiments, handmade homebuilding is rarely discussed in architecture

schools, Olsen explains. As a result, it's been all too easy to bypass this architecture type.

Learning a new branch of architectural history is a lot to ask of a reader and Olsen tries to make it as easy as possible. He provides many visuals and writes a concise, macro view of the movement, tying in key

players and events that happened along the way. In a separate chapter, he compiles a worldwide survey of the movement's antecedents, citing Antoni Gaudí, Bernard Maybeck, and even Carl Jung.

The heart of the book lies in his chapters of individual homes. Working with photographers Lucy Goodhart

and Kodiak Greenwood, Olsen offers warm shots of homes ensconced in nature. Occupied for more than four decades, the homes aren't spic-and-span but earthy and homey. Often I would catch myself staring at the photographs, amazed at the determination and creativity it took for the homes' builders to turn the world's refuse—driftwood, burned wood, sod—into beautiful dwellings.

Homes grow and change according to the needs of their owners. Mike Breen's original two-tank wine-vat home configuration eventually made way for three more tanks, all making room for formal and informal living rooms, a guest room, an office, and other spaces. Over three decades, sculptor James Hubbell and his wife Anne would often throw "rock" parties with friends, foraging for suitable construction materials. Adobe brick, granite, and colorful glass pieces eventually made their way into the seven fantastical buildings that make up Ilan-Lael, their live-work compound in San Diego. Using glass, native stone, and reclaimed

redwood bridge timbers, George and Jennifer Brook-Kothlow fashioned a 3,500-square foot three-pavilion timber-frame home filled with clerestories and oversized windows that took in the Santa Lucia Mountains and paths toward Carmel Beach. The houses here are a constant work in progress, open to the next iteration.

The author visited each home and conducted interviews with those involved. For Mickey Muennig's home in Big Sur, the author not only spoke with Muennig, but also with ex-girlfriends Wendy Brooks and Judith McBean, who both lived there at different periods.

*Handmade Houses* is undoubtedly a labor of love, filled with compelling details on the builders, the homes' components, and even the stories behind the salvaged material. Like the homes it features, *Handmade Houses* succeeds in being visually stimulating but also grounding, helping readers rediscover an old, underappreciated way of building.

**CARREN JAO IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

# San Francisco Living: Home Tours

September 15 + 16, 2012  
[www.aiasf.org/hometours](http://www.aiasf.org/hometours)



Photo: 20th Street Residence | SFOSL, Casper Mork Ulnes | Bruce Damonte

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# Face-Off in West Hollywood



COURTESY GRUEN ASSOCIATES

The uneasy alliance of architecture and urbanism is put to the test near the corner of San Vicente Boulevard and Melrose Avenue in West Hollywood. The looming presence of the Pacific Design Center (PDC) has long monopolized attention, still more so with the addition of the nearly completed Red Building, which completes the trio of sleek glass forms that Cesar Pelli first conceived more than 40 years ago. Directly opposite is West Hollywood Park, a civic venture masterplanned by Johnson Favaro, whose new library opened last year. The goal is to enlarge the park to five acres by relocating the adjacent pool and gym to a site behind the library. The Red Building—and the PDC at large—steals the limelight with its bold and expressive architecture. But from an urban perspective, the PDC is as unwelcoming as any corporate complex, and its landscaped plaza sees little public use. Even the satellite gallery of MOCA is sparsely attended. In contrast, the modestly scaled

buildings across the street are intensively used and better respond to the needs of the community.

This juxtaposition of private and public, overwhelming and reticent, is a textbook case of how and how not to embed a development in a community. PDC was conceived as a glamorous and important alternative to the wholesale design showrooms of other cities, which were located in warehouses on the wrong side of the tracks. It was to do for design what the Music Center downtown was to do for the arts: create a detached temple for initiates. The Blue Whale, which opened in 1975, is a hermetically sealed, windowless glass container for showrooms, accessible only to the trade. Within, it feels labyrinthine and claustrophobic, cut off from natural light and fresh air, and from the bustle of the streets. Once a year it comes alive for Westweek; at other times it appears deserted.

The Green Building was added in 1988, by which time the original

program was exhausting its appeal. Herman Miller, Knoll, Vitra, Steelcase, and other contract firms moved to stand-alone showrooms. The Green Building was later converted to offices. The long-delayed Red Building was rethought by Pelli and Gruen Associates. They narrowed the section, incorporated bands of clear glass into the sleek facade, located parking in the lower stories, and placed offices in two elliptical wedges to either side of an elevated courtyard. But the building doesn't help connect the complex to its community. Cars are ushered deep into the complex, never to be seen again. Still, in contrast to its siblings, the Red Building's interiors are infused with light and command sweeping views, and the structure's tapered prow and daring cantilever minimize its bulk and make its fifteen stories a more acceptable neighbor for the two-story houses and shops beyond. It's also a triumph of engineering and glass fabrication.

Across La Cienega Boulevard,

in designing a replacement for the cramped 1960s library that previously occupied the park, Johnson Favaro were challenged to provide greatly expanded facilities on a small footprint and to establish a dialogue with the street and the PDC. "This is an important civic building that will last a long time and we didn't want it to be dwarfed by the gigantic furniture store across the street," said Johnson Favaro principal James Favaro. "There's a cacophony of styles in this community, so we decided that the exterior should be understated and confident. In a noisy room, you can stand out by being quiet."

To achieve that goal, the facade is expressed as a horizontal composition of glass and white stucco ribbons that undulate and peel away. Each of the three levels is clearly expressed, and the wrap-around stretch of glass that lights the third-floor reading room has a projecting frame. A coffee shop and an expansive lobby open onto the sidewalk, an arch leads to the ground-floor city council chamber and the parking structure behind, and steps wind up the north side to the second floor. The contrast with the seamless, scale-less Blue Whale could not be greater.

Inside, too, the building reaches out to its neighbors. Unbroken floorplates at the second and third levels generate a sense of openness and allow for flexible divisions of space. A skylit staircase leads to the open reading room and stacks on the third floor. The ribbon window of the reading room frames a panoramic view of the Hollywood Hills and the PDC, and the wood ceiling, boldly carved with wooden flowers and leaves, evokes nature and the coffered vaults of the great public libraries of Boston and New York. Rarely has a new LA library displayed such erudite

**Above: The Red building (left) completes a glassy but distant triumvirate at the PDC; Below: Johnson Favaro's West Hollywood Library fronts a new civic complex.**

exuberance, despite the tight site and budget.

The City of West Hollywood shares the credit for commissioning so ambitious a plan and seeking to complete the second phase, comprising a new gym and pool, then demolishing the old and enlarging the park for a community that has too little green space. Of course the library and the upcoming park are inherently public buildings. But even a private development like the PDC can work harder to engage with the street, with public amenities, larger entrances, and welcoming landscaping that have become commonplace since the PDC was first envisioned.

Elsewhere the city is working to do just that, with plans to improve the public rights of way on the sections of Melrose, Beverly, and Robertson they've christened the Avenues of Art and Design, in a similar fashion to the upgraded stretch of Santa Monica Boulevard. To the east of Fairfax, efforts continue to revitalize a depressed area, as private developers are encouraged to hire talented architects for new apartment and mixed-use blocks. At least West Hollywood's more recent initiatives combine to make this 25-year-old city a beacon of good design and humane urbanism. When completed, the park and its amenities should be a model of such urbanism—in contrast to the PDC, which, despite a huge and well-intentioned investment, has failed to engage the public.

**LA-BASED CRITIC MICHAEL WEBB WRITES FREQUENTLY FOR AN.**

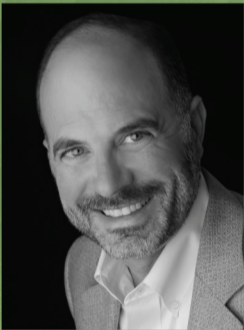


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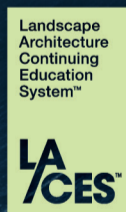


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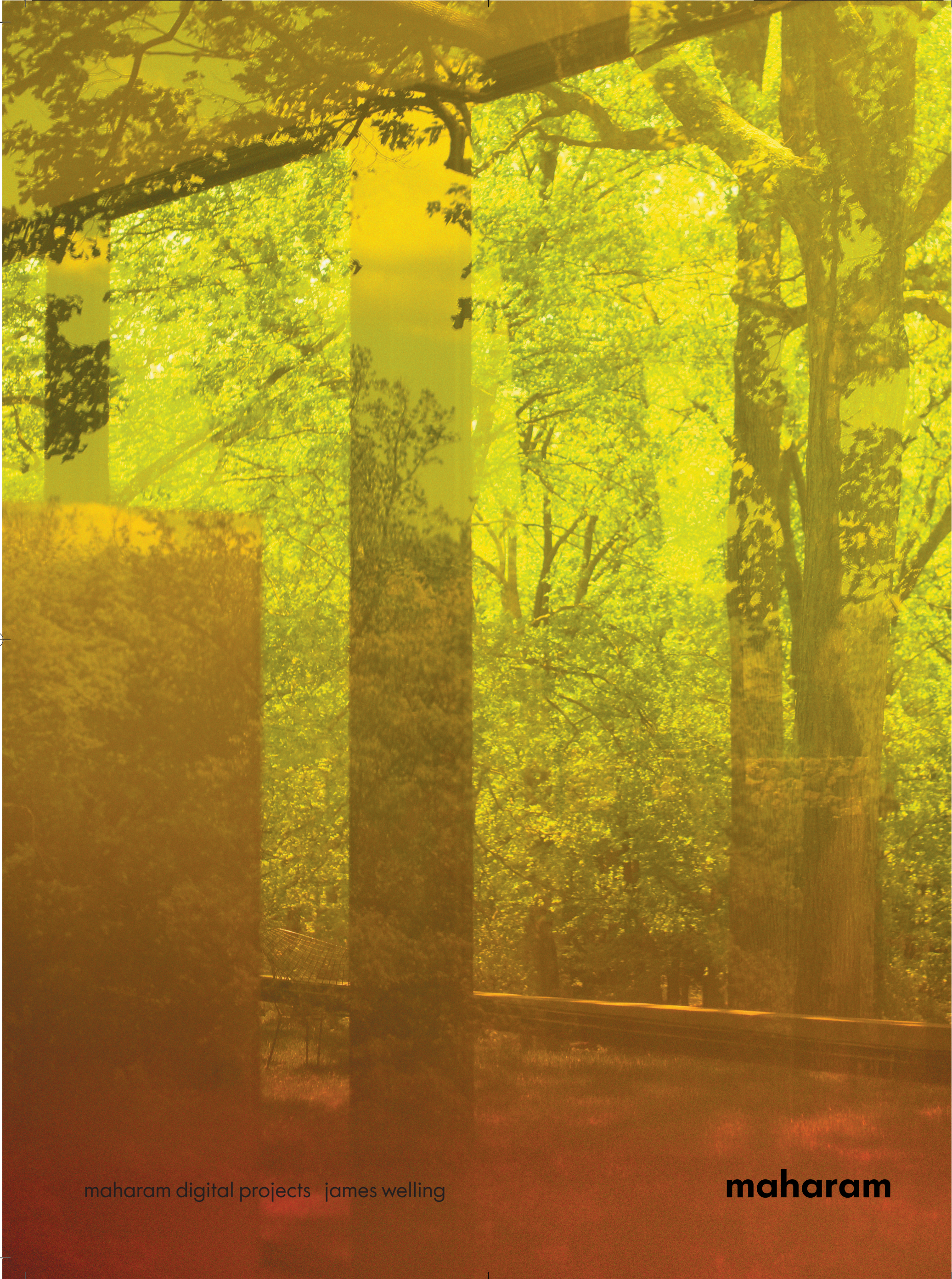


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