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LAX INTRODUCES IMPROVEMENTS TO UPGRADE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

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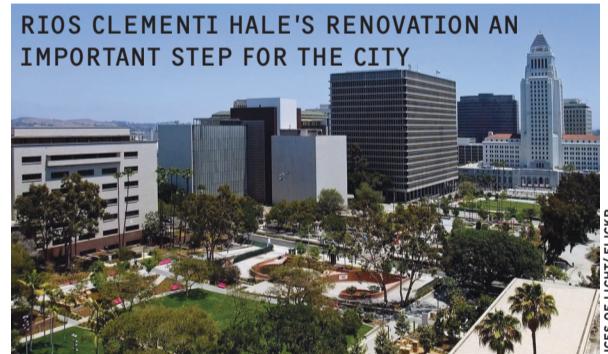
Flying into LAX from most airports can be a jarring experience. You're often transported from a sleek and modern environment to a woefully outdated, bulky,

and inefficient one.

But the airport is making a push to modernize. Already it's renovating its Tom Bradley International Terminal, building a new

central energy plant designed by Arup and finishing up a bold Tom Bradley satellite terminal designed by Fentress Architects. The latest [continued on page 6](#)

RIOS CLEMENTI HALE'S RENOVATION AN IMPORTANT STEP FOR THE CITY



in the last few years, still suffers from this shortage. Its most notable park is Pershing Square, a concrete-dominated postmodern monstrosity that draws more vagrants than tourists or residents. Other small parks in the area suffer similar fates.

But the new Grand Park, whose first phase opened in late July (the second half should be done by the fall), is a huge step in the right direction.

Designed by local architects and landscape architects Rios Clementi Hale Studios, the \$56 million park, funded mostly by the Related Companies (who chipped in \$50 million as a trade-off for being able to develop their largely on-hold Grand [continued on page 9](#)

CRIT> GRAND PARK

Often the differences between a good city and a great one is its defining public park, which becomes a destination, a refuge, and a place that transforms people's conceptions of urban life. Can you imagine New York without Central Park? Paris

without the Tuileries or the Luxembourg Gardens? Contemporary Chicago without Millennium Park?

But when you think of Los Angeles, central urban spaces do not spring to mind. Downtown, which has been undergoing a metamorphosis



COURTESY CMG
OSCAR PARK WILL CONTINUE SF'S GROWTH SOUTH OF MARKET STREET

GOING SOUTH

As San Francisco's business center continues to migrate south of Market Street, a changing urban form is arising: new and proposed office buildings—including the \$1 billion Transbay Terminal—coexist with the many residential towers that have been constructed in the last decade. The biggest challenge now facing urban planners is how to blend these uses and create amenities to enhance the human experience. Oscar Park, designed by CMG Landscape Architecture, attempts to bridge that gap.

The three-block-long park, whose design was released July 12, will extend from Rincon Hill to the Transbay Terminal, filling in unused parcels adjacent to and under the off-ramps of I-80. The goal of the park, according to CMG [continued on page 6](#)

LA OKAYS REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY REPLACEMENT

CRA 2.0

With the shutdown of its Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) early this year, Los Angeles—like all California cities—finds itself without the usual financial tools aimed at revitalizing communities and [continued on page 7](#)



CONTENTS

03 GEHRY SHARE-Y

10 PRODUCT: MOVABLE WALLS

18 ALEXANDER'S JEREMIAD

22 Q&A: JIMINEZ LAI

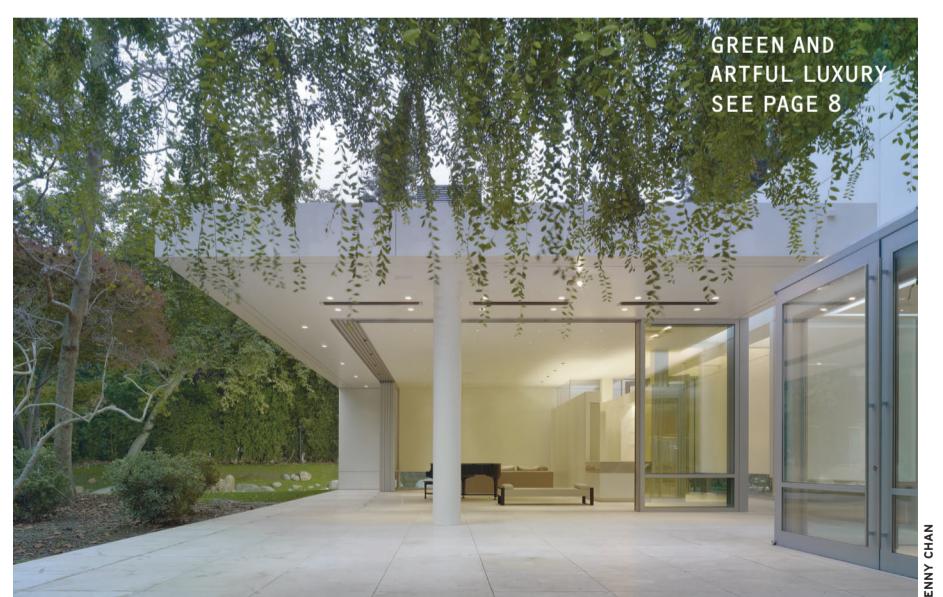
05 EAVESDROP
17 CALENDAR
20 MARKETPLACE



LAWRENCE ANDERSON/ESTO
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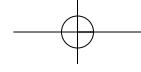
URBAN OASIS

Few LA clients have as keen an appreciation for the added value of good architecture as the Skid Row Housing Trust (SRHT). To provide humane shelter for the city's homeless, the nonprofit trust has commissioned [continued on page 5](#)



GREEN AND ARTFUL LUXURY
SEE PAGE 8

BENNY CHAN



THE WORLD'S SLIMMEST SIGHTLINES.



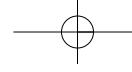
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CIRCULATION ASSISTANT
Ronni Tan
EDITORIAL INTERNS
Stephanie Jones
Michael Lawlor
Yoon Shin
Michael Storm

CONTRIBUTORS

YOSH ASATO / JAMES BRASUELL / NATE BERG /
KENNETH CALDWELL / JENNIFER CATERINO / TIM
CULVAHOUSE / JOANNE FURIO / MARISSA GLUCK /
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GEHRY TECHNOLOGIES' NEW GTEAM GIVES INTERACTIVE FILE ACCESS AT ALL KINDS OF LEVELS**WADING IN**

On July 17, Gehry Technologies released GTeam, their new web-based project management platform. GTeam is not a new variant of Digital Project, the firm's signature 3-D authoring application, but rather a set of tools to manage files, providing web-based access to 3-D models and their datasets and an auditable history of every step in the process of designing, engineering, constructing, and operating buildings. GTeam is a stand-alone platform, which means it can be useful to firms that don't use Digital Project, especially in situations involving multiple authoring environments.

ENGAGE THE WORLD, NOT JUST THE GALLERY

One of my favorite activities in Los Angeles is visiting an architectural installation at SCI-Arc or at Materials & Applications. Some of the our field's most creative, innovative thinking goes into this type of work. And of course there's a long history of architects carrying out inventive and important architectural installations, from Mies van der Rohe to Frank Gehry.

But let's make one thing clear. This isn't architecture.

Installations are a vital part of the architectural process—allowing firms to push form, surface, process, and material to new levels. Well-respected architects here in LA like Ball-Nogues, Oyler Wu, Greg Lynn, and Freeland Buck have produced installations displaying remarkable craft, rigor, sophistication, and originality. But they generally do not perform a function in their own right outside of display. Nobody lives in them and nobody uses them for a regular purpose. In my opinion they are instead architectural art.

Installations should be used to inform architecture, not to take its place. If our most innovative architects get caught in the installation trap—insulated from the painful constraints of the real world (not that making installations doesn't involve pain)—we'll not be making a large enough contribution to the built world.

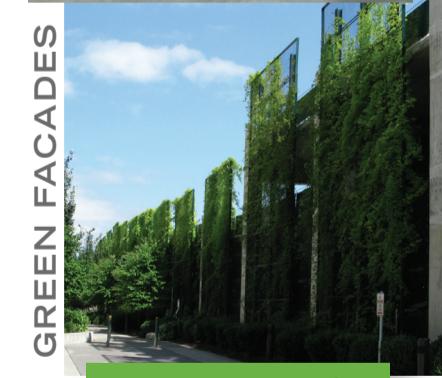
In many cases this is exactly what's happening, especially with the economy limping along in the United States. Significant architects in this city and elsewhere create only installations, not designing buildings at all. The same goes for architects who are only creating digital architecture. This is often striking work (so-called paper architects have long influenced the built world, and many like Rem Koolhaas and Zaha Hadid have become successful in building in it after some time), and it does transform how we think about the possibilities of the built world. But, I repeat, it's not architecture.

Of course it's easy to tell architects to build when there is so little work to be had. And of course the definition of architecture is a loose thing. It should never remain static, incorporating digital technologies, landscapes, and other elements that would never have been part of the field even fifty years ago. But the fundamentals should hold true: they should be built for use, not display. I can't help but thinking that if the same attention to innovation went into our built world as the virtual and gallery worlds this would be a far better to live.

Yes, real world constraints are maddening. Zoning and building codes are often frustrating. The economy is still meager at best. Clients are often capricious and taste-challenged. But this shouldn't be a reason to back away from it. In fact real world challenges, when properly addressed, often make work get better.

Yes, installations should be actively promoted as a way to improve real world architecture. We at the newspaper will always be huge fans, especially when such work focuses on architectural innovation over mere form. It is one of the most valuable ways for architects to improve the profession; the lack of constraint lets architects experiment even in tough economic times like these. They just shouldn't take architecture's place. If they do, then somebody's going to continue to form the built environment. It just won't be our most innovative architects. **SAM LUBELL**

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When it comes to file sharing in GTeam, imagine DropBox souped up with the security and navigation you have wished for. That means role-based access, synchronization, and an auditable history of design versions along with comments and markup. There are also thumbnail images of picture and 3-D files, so you can find your way around in those very large file menus that can accumulate in a complex project.

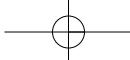
Its 3-D model navigator is also impressive: with any web browser on any device, an authorized viewer can fly around the whole model, select subsystems or sections, and extract specific information about which it is possible to approve, bid, or make comments. The GTeam back-end will accept files authored in anything from Digital Project, Revit, ArchiCAD, Rhino, and Sketchup, along with standard formats like IGES, STEP, and IFC. Not only will it display the models together in the browser, GTeam can

export back to those formats and OBJ, Collada, or STL for CNC fabrication or presentation models, renderings, and animation.

The tracker component looks and works a little bit like Facebook on performance enhancers. You can browse forward and back through past versions of particular files, see the changes posted by particular team members, file types, and so on.

Gehry Technologies has gone to a great deal of trouble to make the tools simple to use for nontechnical team members, but also wildly versatile and powerful. GTeam is cloud based, so there are no in-house software skills or hardware to maintain. Licensing is by subscription. Pricing won't be official for a while yet, but a pre-release will be available for free from now until October.

Friendly advice: think through the potential value of key GTeam features to your current workflow as a thought experiment before downloading the trial. You might get hooked. **CARL SKELTON**



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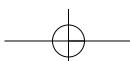
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2012

EAVESDROP > THE EDITORS

LYNN PROJECT SINKS

Bummer. SFMOMA, soon closing for several months for its Snøhetta-designed expansion, was hoping to keep things interesting by hiring **Greg Lynn** to design a floating exhibition in the San Francisco Bay. The project, coordinated with sail maker North Sails, would have included 200 sculptural chairs (made out of carbon fiber—the same material used in America's Cup boats' sails) under a large canopy on a large barge, providing clear views of the America's Cup, which will soon be held in San Francisco. According to North Sails, Lynn may now produce some of the chairs for Vitra instead.

GENSLER'S GROWING PAINS

We're big fans of **Gensler**'s new downtown LA offices, which open up to a central atrium, keeping employees visually and physically connected. But the firm's growth has forced it to partially abandon that model, moving extra employees to the decidedly-less-airy upper floors of their building, City National Plaza. Even in the most democratic offices, you can't escape hierarchy!

POLITICAL OVERREACH?

Despite the recent opening of LA County's Grand Park, county Supervisor Gloria Molina generally seems to have it in for contemporary design. Add to her list of architect victims **Lehrer Architects**, whose striking San Angelo Community Center north of Los Angeles was set to move forward, receiving community reviews and preliminary local sign off. In stepped Molina, who apparently didn't like the modern look of the project. She killed it immediately. Now that's power.

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Planned Plaza Vermont project

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BOONE SPEED

A block away from the Rem Koolhaas-designed Seattle Public Library, the new restaurant at the W Seattle Hotel, Trace, designed by Portland-based Skylab Architecture, combines Pacific Northwest iconography with flexible programming.

Reconnecting three existing zones—lobby, bar, and dining—was a priority, explained Jeff Kovel, principal at Skylab. The result is a dramatic 30-foot-tall and 160-foot-long space that melds eclectic music, aviation, wharf, and forest elements, all inspired by the local surroundings. The lobby, lined in colorful album-cover wallpaper, contains a four-story circular fireplace lined with stainless-steel panels. The 100-seat dining room features a lenticular printed mural that shifts between the image of a jellyfish and jet, depending on where patrons are sitting.

Many elements serve double duty: the dining room can host a dance party, equipped with a pull-out stage and dance floor; the lobby is both a lounge and a library; and the bar converts into an espresso stand in the morning. Kovel is most excited about the modular, digitally fabricated barrels that serve as both lighting and support columns: "The result is a beautiful sculptural light wall with abstract references to wharf pilings, timber frame structures, and native carved totems," he noted. **ARIEL ROSENSTOCK**

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The same mandate to do the most for the least guided LOHA's designs for three sites

MICHAEL WEBB

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2012

GOING SOUTH continued from front page
principal Scott Cataffa, is "to create a rich, active design that is heavily programmed."

That programming will include a dog park, playground, picnic areas, retail venues, basketball courts, bike paths, event spaces, and restrooms, to name a few. Due to the elevation changes across the site, the park tumbles down Rincon Hill in a patchwork of sloping pads, stairs, and paths. One of the most intriguing elements is the slide that begins at the top of Guy Place and ends on Essex: a sort of urban human bobsled run. Plans call for many activities, but because the street grid breaks the lengthy park into natural zones, they all fit neatly into the scheme.

Oscar Park, although conceived by the city and designed by CMG, has been developed with community input. A citizen's advisory committee, made up of local residents, businesses, and other constituents, is working with CMG, and the project has been through a number of public comment sessions.

In the wake of California's recent pullback of redevelopment funds, San Francisco managed to preserve funding for the park. Construction will not likely begin until 2017, as most of the area is in use for construction staging of the Transbay Terminal.

When completed the public space should tie together disparate parts of a former industrial district into a more integrated living and working neighborhood. **GEORGE CALYS**



COURTESY AECOM

FLYING HIGHER continued from front page update: a major enhancement of its main roadway spaces, known as its Central Terminal Area, by AECOM.

The goal of the work, said AECOM architectural design director Carlos Madrid, is to modernize the airport's tired look and provide a sense of visual unity.

The exterior of the airport's upper roadway will now be articulated with an illuminated, eight-foot-tall glass and steel ribbon that will define the roadway's edge. The ribbon's LED lights will change color in coordination with the LEDs embedded into the huge lighted pylons that dominate the airport's entry. Madrid calls them a "horizontal

adaptation" of the pylons, which were installed in 2000.

The thoroughfare's length will be marked with new sculptural, Y-shaped light poles every 60 feet. The poles, built with steel frames and fiberglass shells, will light the airport's arrival and departure roads and add a touch of sleekness and sophistication.

At the center of LAX's horseshoe-shaped automobile pathway, Tom Bradley's dated tinted glass and metal space frame canopy will be replaced with a series of white, aerodynamic metallic canopies, reminiscent of airplane wings. The extra-light canopies will be perforated, allowing in natural light during the day, and glowing at night thanks

to embedded LEDs.

AECOM also had hoped to reskin LAX's domestic terminals and parking garages and install new landscaping and street furniture, but those plans are on hold until funds become available. Calling the airport's current condition a serious strain on business, leaders in the city have been pushing hard for further improvements.

The first phase of the project, which will be focused in front of the Tom Bradley terminal, is set for completion next spring. Its final phase, bringing the improvements airport wide, will be done by 2014. A final budget has not been released, according to AECOM. **SL**

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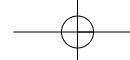
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CRA 2.0 continued from front page generating new revenue. However, LA won't take it lying down.

The city is now in the process of building a new agency that would fulfill the same goals—without the accompanying allegations of inefficiency and corruption that plagued its almost 70-year-old predecessor.

The dissolution of the CRA, said Miguel Santana, city administrative officer, "provided the city an opportunity to look at redevelopment and economic development entirely differently. We saw it as a chance to figure out how we can be more effective in bringing about economic development."

At the end of June, LA City Council gave conceptual approval to start work on a new entity that comprises an Economic Development Department and an accompanying economic development nonprofit. The setup was modeled after agencies in other major cities.

In Chicago, for example, the Department of Housing and Economic Development oversees land-use plans and policies that spur business and job creation while the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Affairs has "business consultants" that help local business owners with permits or licensing issues. The mayor of Chicago serves as chairman for World Business Chicago, a nonprofit corporation that oversees city economic development.

San Diego has the Economic Development Division and the Mayor's Office of Economic Growth; New York has the New York City Department of Small Business Services, which teams with the New York City Economic Development Corporation; Austin has the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office, which contracts with various nonprofits and uses tax-increment financing, bonds, and tax incentives.

In Los Angeles, said Santana, "The nonprofit corporation is really about strategic planning, development, identifying partners, funding, goal setting and targets. The economic department is really about the implementation of those ideas."

The city hopes that contracting with a nonprofit will afford more flexibility and creativity, because the entity will not have to go through the government bureaucracy. Of course, Santana is quick to confirm, the mayor and the City Council will still be the ultimate decision makers.

The city is searching for a consultant to help them develop a more fleshed-out proposal for City Council approval in January 2013. That consultant should be announced within the month. According to Santana, the city is also hammering out a set of objectives that the new entity would fulfill.

Gerry Miller, the city's chief legislative analyst, said that the city will soon "have a full report and a lot more substance in order to recommend how to proceed." The city wants its plan to be running by July 2013. In the meantime, Santana said, "This year is going to be about putting it together, identifying goals and objectives, laying out the framework and finding a way of funding it."

CARREN JAO



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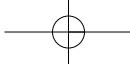


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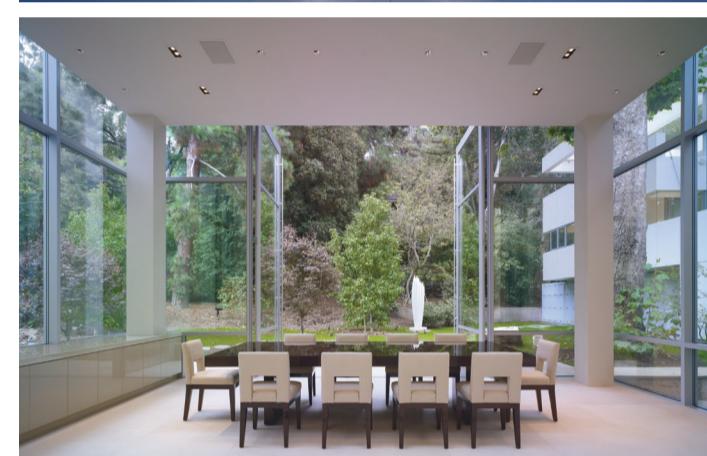
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Sculpture: Gyre, Thomas H. Sayre, N.C. Museum of Art



Clockwise from top left: The living room pavilion opens up completely to the backyard; the house contains a working sculpture studio; the dining room's huge windows pivot out; a glass wall opens onto the central courtyard; the great room becomes glassier at its top.



BENNY CHAN

Santa Monica Canyon, a tranquil neighborhood embedded into the hills just inland from the Pacific Coast, is blessed with thick woods, gurgling creeks, and cooling ocean breezes. It's truly one of the great refuges from LA's urban frenzy. So it makes no sense that many of the million-dollar houses there seem to turn their back on it.

Michael Lehrer's Canyon Residence doesn't. Yes, it's still a 13,000-square-foot mansion—this is no rustic bungalow. But despite its gem-like finishes and ample spaces, you often forget that. In much of the residence, the distinction between inside and outside doesn't exist. Many of its walls disappear and the scene outside engulfs every room.

The home, clad in pristine white plaster, is organized along two main spines, which are marked by transparent glazed catwalks that provide full site lines down their length. Along those spines the house is arranged as a series of cube-shaped pavilions in the landscape, making their way around four large trees. Lehrer solved a geometric puzzle in their staggered layout, exposing as much surface area as possible. (He calls the spatial rigor "deep order.") And within that organization, layered clerestories, skylights, bridges, and window walls provide more peeks of light and scenery.

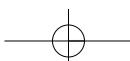
After you walk into the house you come upon the pavilions that are the most open to the landscape—a sloping amalgamation containing modern sculptures, ancient trees, a brook, emerald-

green grass, thick brush, and a working produce and flower garden. The living room's walls disappear completely on two sides, creating an outdoor room; the breakfast room's walls slide away on alternating sides to allow cross breezes; and the dining room's walls are made of pivoting glass doors that open up in theatrical fashion to the yard.

The next pavilion is basically the living center. Its centerpiece is the "great room," a 40-foot-wide space containing both the open kitchen and a family room. It's where most of the action happens, and you can see into most corners of the house from here, thanks to its large openings, which often start above existing timber and plaster-clad walls.

The final pavilion, clad in translucent glass and focused around an industrial courtyard, is the owner's sculpture studio. His interest in materials, and stone in particular, extends to the house. He's picked out onyx and other gem-like stones that adorn, among other things, the bathroom and bedroom furniture and fixtures. The whole place feels like a sculpture.

Also bucking its size and luxury, the house is net zero, thanks to roofs covered with photovoltaic panels, no air-conditioning, hydronic heating, cross ventilation, and little need for lights during the day. While this is a luxurious house, Lehrer calls it his laboratory for ideas. "You have no excuses with an opportunity like this," he said. **SL**





CRIT> GRAND PARK continued from front page development) begins to mend the deep scars created by the city's auto-centered, modernist planning dogma and changes one's perception of the park's neighborhood, and to some extent, of the city at large.

What was once an off-putting, sterile, unfinished, and overlooked space called the Los Angeles Civic Center Mall is now inviting, vibrant, and, yes, transformative. While it's not perfect, it's an example of how for once the city's public realm has aspired to greatness, not just good enoughness. It's also a perfect example of how LA's attitude toward urbanity has transformed in recent years, however the city kicks and screams.

The long park slopes downhill along a 12-acre, four-block stretch between the Music Center to the east and City Hall to the west, lined on both sides by austere modernist municipal buildings like the Hall of Records and the County Courts building. Along its length are a series of lawns, plazas, and terraces, including the Fountain Plaza, containing the renovated Arthur J. Will Memorial Fountain and the Performance Lawn, designed for shows and events. In coming months it will also include the Community Terrace, which



will contain among other things a new subway station, and the Event Lawn, for larger events at the base of City Hall. These sections of the park are layered with a huge variety of plants and trees, crisscrossed by long, curving walkways and edged by linear paths.

It seems like a simple formula, but it's not. In fact, it's an amazing balancing act.

For one, Rios Clementi Hale has deftly combined grand gestures with intimate respites. The magnificent vista of City Hall, which can be seen from pretty much anywhere in the park, is the true "wow" moment, which the firm enhanced by moving and trimming trees to frame the view. Planting (or replanting) 150 trees and adding bounties of drought-tolerant plants arranged in a multitude of configurations created more subtle, informal zones.

The firm also kept the parts of the old park that worked and scrapped the ones that didn't. They removed the tops of the huge curved parking ramps that once blocked the park's physical and visual connections to Grand Avenue. Now one can walk straight into the park, enjoy the wonderful, dancing fountain (which has been thoroughly rehabilitated with the help of Fluidity Design),

and gaze at City Hall beyond. The Music Center, the DWP Building, City Hall and the flanking municipal buildings are all in clear dialogue. We get the best of modernism: its inspiring gestures, not its arrogant mistakes.

Some of the red granite walls that once disturbed the park's unity have been removed, although a few remain, raised above the park's plane like standoffish older relatives. A few cast-in-place concrete benches also remain, but these are not obtrusive. They add a nice retro touch, their heaviness offset by sinuous magenta metal street furniture designed in-house by Rios Clementi Hale and manufactured by Janus et Cie.

That new furniture, much of which can be picked up and moved around the park, lends a touch of lighthearted fun, which has long been lacking in this somber part of town. Much of the design was inspired by the city's incredible diversity. Not only are metallic entry columns, created by design firm Sussman/Prejza, etched with welcomes in countless languages, but the plants hail from regions around the world, including Africa, Asia, and South America.

The park's architecture is quite contemporary but not distracting. The lime-green, canopied coffee shop to the south, with its standing-seam metallic facade, somehow fits right in. The park's staff building to the north is covered with white perforated metal. It feels new, but, somehow, like it's always been a part of the landscape.

This careful balancing act is of course not without its flaws. The park could use more shade, including umbrellas on its plazas, although that situation will improve as plants mature. There is still too much concrete,

which hardens the feel and reflects too much harsh light. The parking ramps along Hill Street, whose removal was deemed too expensive, block the park's connection to that street. And considering its location in one of the deepest parts of Downtown, the park still needs many more amenities, which the county promises are coming. Perhaps along with food carts the park will also get some more impressive public art? Did city leaders get a look at Millennium Park's *Cloud Gate* by Anish Kapoor?

Related deserves credit for maintaining control over construction, which they accomplished by keeping the land during the project's development (they handed it over to the Grand Avenue Authority, a county and city joint venture, upon completion). And the Music Center, which will now program the park, seems determined to provide events from fairs to symphonies to farmers markets that will keep it busy and in people's minds.

The park is already making an impact. The civic center and the city already seem more connected and alive. The Grand, which has so long stayed on hold (with the exception of a new residential tower next to the new Broad Museum) already feels like more of a possibility, which of course Related claims was its plan all along.

Is this Central Park? Of course not. But the very fact that it invites such comparisons without howls of laughter is a triumph. This is a good example of what LA's staggering amount of design talent can accomplish when given a fair chance to shine in the public realm. LA is still a big, stubborn, maddening giant. But sometimes we look around and see that things are getting better. **SL**

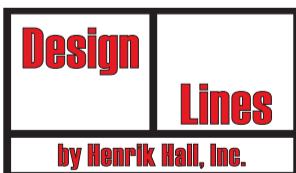
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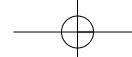
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2012



MOVING ON

Movable walls and demountable systems offer highly adaptive low-impact solutions. **By Perrin Drumm**

1 AIRCLAD INFLATE

Easy to transport and quick to install, AirClad inflates into a cross-braced wood, metal, or fiberglass structure with minimal ground fixings and low environmental impact. The semipermanent units can be fitted with glass walls, windows, and various lighting configurations.

2 ALUR DIVIDING WALL MODULAR ARCHITECTURAL INTERIORS

These easy-to-assemble frames with integrated power, voice, and data cabling are also loadbearing, capable of supporting hang-on components on both sides of 100 percent post-consumer PET walls. ALUR features superior noise reduction, scoring the highest industry rating of 52 STC.

maispace.com

3 CRISTALBUBBLE CASABUBBLE

Inflatable units are ready right out of the box—no building permit required. The bubbles keep their shape with a stream of filtered air that regulates temperature and humidity. A low-energy, silent blower can even be run off solar panels.

casabubble.com

4 ENCLOSE HAWORTH

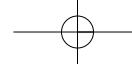
Enclose features the lowest base detail in the market: it's just one inch off the floor, providing the maximum transparency and the ability to run in infinite spans. The system includes several panel options with enhancements from Haworth's Workware product line.

haworth.com

5 TESSELLATED WALLS SEEYOND

Using parametric technology, these non-loadbearing walls can be customized into a variety of forms in two new substrates (solid resin and metal composite) in addition to 100 percent recyclable cellular resin. Winner of a NeoCon 2012 Silver, Architectural Products.

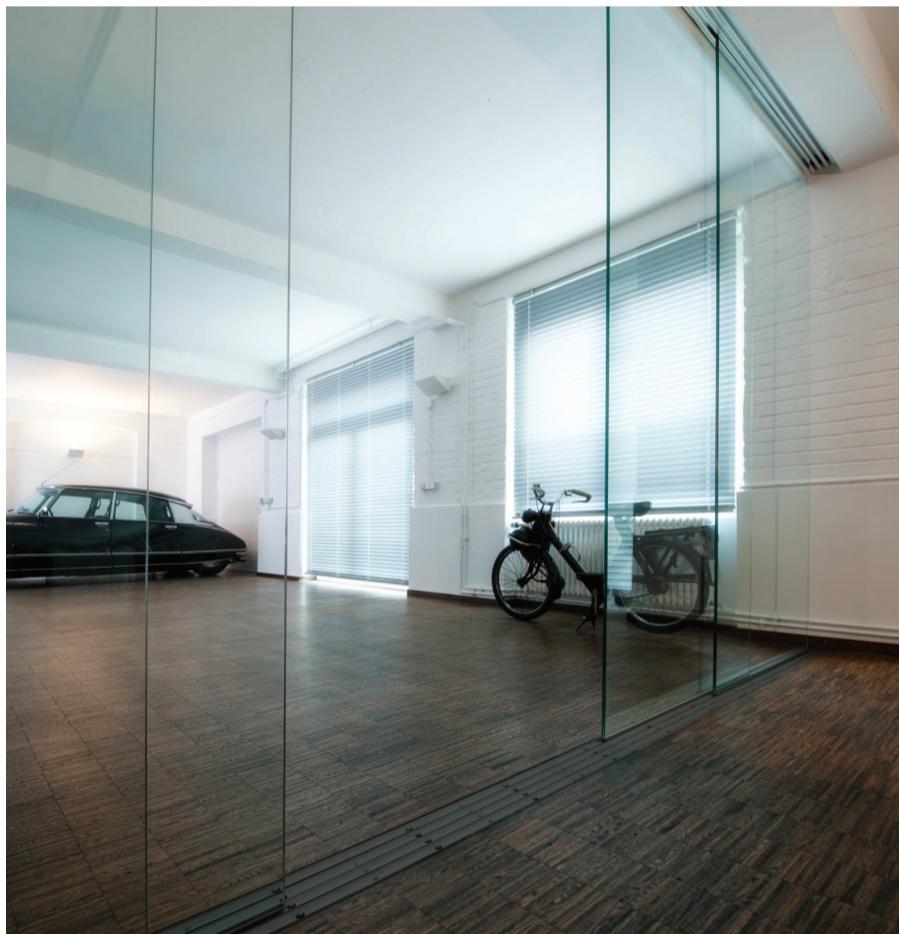
seyond.com



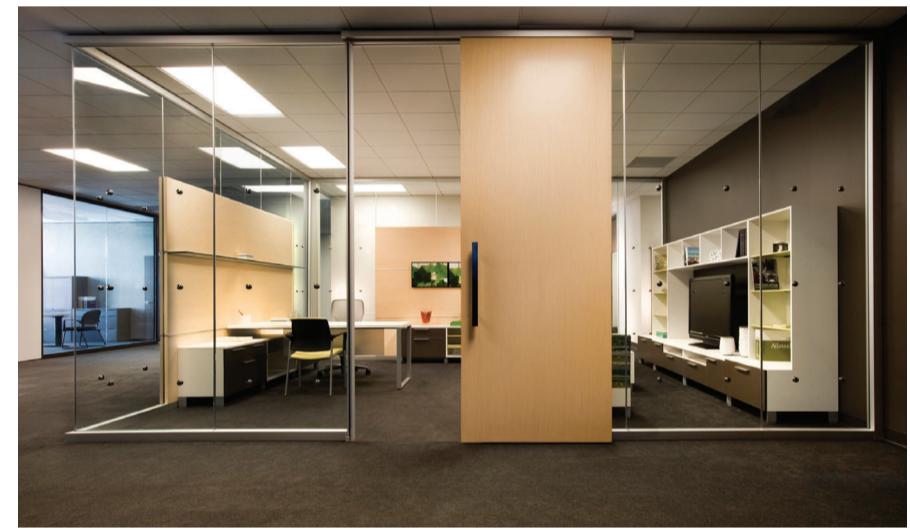
PRODUCT
11



6



8



7



9

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS

6 LIGHTLINE
KI

This pre-assembled glass wall system with unlimited butt-glazing, a thinner rectilinear profile, and no vertical posts allows for seamless spaces. It can be integrated with KI's Genius wall to accommodate solid panels. Winner of a NeoCon 2012 Silver, Movable Walls. ki.com

7 DIRTT WALLS WITH
DUPONT CORIAN
DIRTT

This new collaboration offers completely customizable, durable, easy-to-clean, and versatile walls, an ideal choice for healthcare that can also be retrofitted to support hanging plants with DIRTt's Breathe Living Walls. It's supported by the ICE interactive 3-D software platform, making ordering a snap. dirtt.net

8 ASTEC B. 1000
INDEX-D

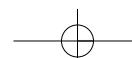
This seemingly invisible roller fitting runs on a shallow floor-integrated track. These flush-fitted tracks are installed in the ceiling to hold the panel, but the weight is taken by the floor, eliminating the need for complex support installations. index-d.com

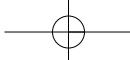
9 BEYOND
ALLSTEEL

Frameless glass walls install twice as fast with a unique built-in scissor lift mechanism that levels the glass within the floor. Exceptionally soundproof and customizable, Beyond can be fitted with Allsteel's Breathe plant units. Winner of a NeoCon 2012 Gold, Architectural Products. allsteeloffice.com

10 SILENT WALL BOX
VITRA

Silent Wall Box provides privacy with a modular, flexible, and portable solution that's easy to integrate into Vitra's Silent Wall system. The Boxes boast excellent acoustics and can be connected to a power supply and fitted with lighting. vitra.com





THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2012



JASPER SANIDAD

GOLDRUSH

As tech drives the Bay Area recovery, it also produces the best offices around. By Sam Lubell



Facebook. Twitter. Hipstamatic. Farmville. Yelp.

You probably know these names because they appear as colorful apps on your iPhone. But while they've become iconic in the virtual world, the companies that created them are also developing major presences in the real one. They, like so many others, have recently opened impressive new tech offices that are transforming the Bay Area.

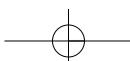
Spurred by the mobile computing revolution (the iBubble?), tech is hot. In fact it's so hot that it's singlehandedly driving the real estate recovery not just in Silicon Valley but also in San Francisco. And it's producing some of the most innovative

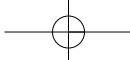
offices in the country: open, activity-based, and collaborative spaces with a start-up's flair for edgy design and a clear directive to draw talent and attention with sophistication and amenities. And it's working: these offices have gotten so much notice that they're becoming a model for office design across the business spectrum.

"Everybody is trying to specialize in tech now," said Studio O+A principal Primo Orpilla, whose firm is the most prolific of the tech designers, having built offices for Yelp, AOL, Facebook, Microsoft, Square, Ticketfly, Reputation.com, and others. He calls their work "spatial branding," creating

memorable environments that combine a spare aesthetic with slick, beautiful graphics that conjure the essence of each company. They focus more on communal, not individual areas. From breakout spaces to meeting pods to bocce ball courts, the culture of the group has trumped the individual.

Studio O+A is just the tip of the iceberg. From young avant-garde firms to architectural giants, it seems that all Bay Area designers are getting in the game, following the parade of real estate agents paving the way with creative office dollar signs in their eyes. Like Studio O+A, their work is more sophisticated than the gimmicks





Opposite page: Sarah Willmer's SoMa offices for Atlassian center around a bank of six glass conference rooms (top). A row of bleachers (bottom) is the central meeting area and auditorium.

Above: IwamotoScott's SoMa offices for Obscura Digital combine raw surfaces with high-tech fabrication.

Below: Min | Day's offices for Pocket Gems in the city's Financial District combine raw exposed ceilings and columns with bright colors. Before Pocket Gems took over the space had cubicles and drop ceilings.

and generic office buildings that once dominated Silicon Valley culture.

As of last year, San Francisco architect Sarah Willmer was known for designing pristine houses in the Bay Area. But now she's completed one of the best tech spaces around, the new South of Market (SoMa) offices for Atlassian, an Australian-based software developer that is working with many of the world's largest companies. The studio is located inside a warehouse originally built as a printing press. The project includes exposed ducts, gigantic steel trusses and concrete offset with lots of glass and steel.

Employees work in open banks of desks, including the executives, and the most grand spaces are reserved for public interaction. Not only is there a gigantic bleacher-like auditorium space in the center, but there are over ten conference rooms as well as smaller group spaces and meeting spaces, from foam booths to glass cubes. Along one wall there is a bank of six conference rooms that can be seen from the center of the

space (the center one cantilevers dramatically), almost as if you're watching engineers perform on Hollywood Squares.

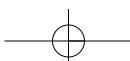
All this reveals the lengths to which tech companies will go to lure talent. They're hiring the best architects, not just those who specialize in tech.

Willmer saw an opportunity to do more with tech, where clients are innovative by nature and there is, after all, lots of work. Another newcomer to tech is digital fabrication specialist IwamotoScott Architecture, which has completed dramatic offices for immersive and interactive media company Obscura Digital and are finishing another for Heavybit. Just take a look at Obscura's tilting conference room walls, its polygal office enclosures, and its overlapping, fabricated steel-fin installation and you know this is not the normal office. Lundberg Design, known for slick restaurants and commercial spaces, recently completed new offices for Twitter and is working on more for the tech giant. Min | Day completed (pardon the pun) a jewel-like space for mobile gamemaker

Pocket Gems. Envelope A+D has completed an office that looks like a cool San Francisco restaurant for Synthetic, which makes, among other mobile apps, Hipstamatic.

Yes, design is coming to a world that was once dominated by fluff and, well, engineers' style. In San Francisco and even in Silicon Valley, architects are removing drop ceilings and corner offices and exploring large span structures, concrete, and steel. IwamotoScott's Craig Scott calls it the vintage coffee-shop look, perhaps a sentimental throwback to industrial, not digital times. Atlassian associate Annelise Reynolds calls it "stripping away all the fluff," maybe a trend started by simplicity-obsessed Apple? Gensler's Randy Howder adds that still-developing startups have a natural affinity for spaces that aren't completely finished.

While many tech offices are interior build-outs, firms—particularly the big guys—are working design into ground-up work and large-scale retrofits as well. You can't mention tech architecture without including



THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2012



Apple's spaceship-like Cupertino offices by Foster + Partners, which will wrap around several acres of central green space. Google's "Googleplex," made up of more than 50 buildings (many retrofits) in Mountainview, continues to grow, although it's unclear who will design their major expansion that was once being laid out by Ingenhoven Architects. Gensler retrofitted 1.1 million square feet of former Sun Microsystems space in Menlo Park for Facebook, including a central thoroughfare outside, and is doing a brand-new Silicon Valley headquarters for HP. WRNS and Clive Wilkinson Architects, who won a recent competition, are designing a radical headquarters for Intuit, with box-shaped elements protruding from its envelope, gigantic common areas, and a huge green roof. Even a spec office in San Jose by WRNS looks like it could hold a fashion brand, not tech companies.

Still among all this grown-up (or at least 20-something) sophistication there are remnants of the ping-pong and foosball culture that first gained attention and notoriety during the dot-com boom. These people know how to take breaks and have fun. Studio O+A's 395 Page Mill incubator offices in Palo Alto are inset with a huge half-pipe-shaped seating area and bocce ball courts; Nichols Booth's San Francisco offices for Zynga (makers of, among other apps, Words with Friends and Farmville) include game rooms, athletic courts, smoothie bars, and eating spaces themed on the word "Play." Huntsman Architectural Group's new offices for YouTube are equipped with a giant central slide. All these amenities don't just draw talent, they keep the talent at work.

In San Francisco, the epicenter of tech space is the warehouse-rich South of Market, which is home to the both established companies and start-ups; a hip area that makes the law and financial firms in the towers downtown seem irrelevant. But with once-suburban tech companies expanding to desirable urban markets to find and keep talent, they're looking wherever they can for new space. Several, including Twitter and Salesforce.com, have opened spaces in Mid-Market, an area that has until recently been a sketchy place for those down on their luck. Others are traveling even farther afield in this city that is perennially short on available real estate. In Silicon Valley, the epicenter, Palo Alto, is basically all bought

up, so firms are moving into all corners of the Bay. Facebook's move from Palo Alto to Menlo Park is a good example.

If firms can't build for specific companies, they'll buy warehouses and build spaces for a bunch of them. A number of these incubators are popular in both San Francisco and Silicon Valley, from 395 Page Mill in Palo Alto to the Hub, filled with 125 workstations in the San Francisco Chronicle Building in San Francisco. In Silicon Valley true start-ups also buy into "tech spec" suites, which are no-frills workspaces without adornment.

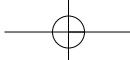
The building boom shows little sign of stopping. At Pocket Gems, the office grew from 35 people to 135 in one year. After completing their first space last year, Min | Day was immediately commissioned to build the next one. At Twitter, Lundberg was asked to build two more floors right after his first project opened. And Facebook moved into its new Menlo Park headquarters just three years after it had moved into space designed by Studio O+A in Palo Alto.

Which begs the question, will it all last? It all sounds familiar, but unlike the last tech wave, this one, said Sascha Wagner, principal at Huntsman Architectural Group (the firm is working with, among others Google, YouTube, Autodesk, and Dolby and start-ups like Weebly, Twitch TV, and 99 Designs), seems to be accompanied with less hysteria. Offices are growing fast, but they're still being more conservative about how much square footage they buy. And firms like his are less likely to jump at just any tech work.

John Kilroy, president of Kilroy Realty, which owns the most tech property in the city, is confident that "while it will go up and down, it's very clear that this is where mind-driven, entrepreneurial companies will remain concentrated."

Once-dilapidated neighborhoods in San Francisco are turning into cool high-tech hubs, and bland office parks in Silicon Valley are becoming bastions of urbanity. And offices here, from finance companies to medical firms, are beginning to look more like tech offices, with open layouts and more communal spaces. Perhaps it's only a matter of time before your own office starts knocking down walls and installing a ping-pong table. Yes, the rules of the iPhone are ruling your life, including how and where you work.

SAM LUBELL IS AN'S WEST COAST EDITOR.



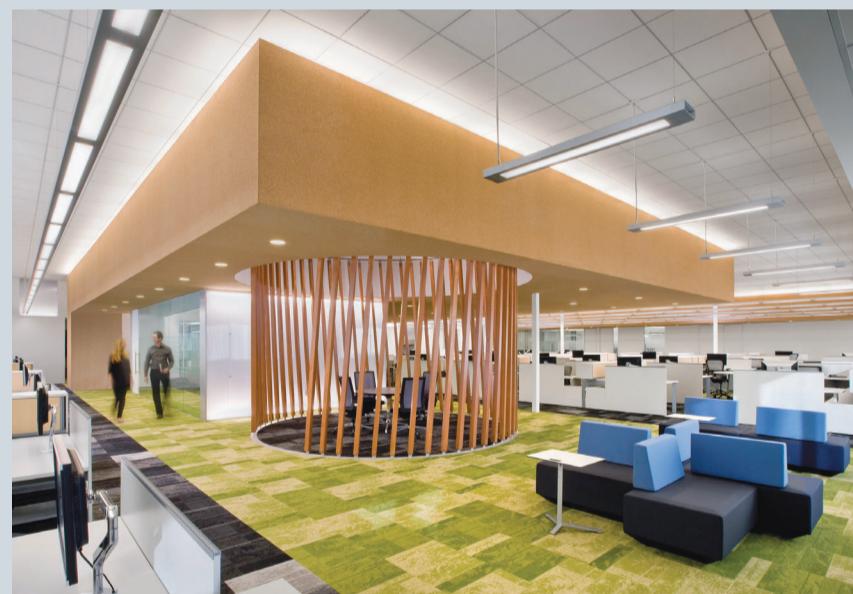
Clockwise from top: Some of Silicon Valley's new stars include Foster + Partners' new Apple headquarters; Valerio

DeWalt Train's offices for Sun Power; O+A's 395 Page Mill incubator; Gensler's new HQ for Facebook inside Sun

Microsystems' old home; and a colorful retrofit inside the Googleplex.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: CITY OF MOUNTAINVIEW, VDTA, JASPER SANIDAD, FACEBOOK, GOOGLE



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AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2012

AUGUST

WEDNESDAY 15

LECTURE

Heather Fargo
California's Strategic Growth Council
 6:00 p.m.
 AIA East Bay
 1405 Clay St.
 Oakland, CA
 cnu-norcal.org

SYMPOSIA

The Role of Religious and Cultural Institutions in Underserved Communities
Rita Shimmin, Craig Johnson and Steve Good
 12:30 p.m.
 SPUR Urban Center
 654 Mission St.
 San Francisco
 spur.org

Black Rock City, NV: The Ephemeral Architecture of Burning Man
Philippe Glade, Peter Dodge, Janika McFeely and Harley K. Dubois
 6:00 p.m.
 AIA San Francisco
 130 Sutter St.
 San Francisco
 aiasf.org

THURSDAY 16

LECTURES

Matthew Coolidge and Victoria Sambanaris
Picturing Landscape
 7:30 p.m.
 Harold M. Williams Auditorium, Getty Center
 1200 Getty Dr.
 Los Angeles
 getty.edu

These Walls Can Speak: Telling the Stories of Queer Places
Gerard Koskovich, Alan Martinez, Gerry Takano and Shayne Watson
 5:30 p.m.
 GLBT History Museum
 4127 18th St., San Francisco
 aiasf.org

EVENT

Tour: Public Utilities Commission Headquarters
 2:00 p.m.
 PUC Headquarters
 525 Golden Gate Ave.
 San Francisco
 aiasf.org

FRIDAY 17

EXHIBITION OPENING

Design with the Other 90%: Cities
 11:00 a.m.
 Museum of Contemporary Craft
 724 NW Davis St.
 Portland, OR
 museumofcontemporarycraft.org

FILM

Where the Green Ants Dream
 (Werner Herzog, 1984),
 100 min.
 7:30 p.m.
 Pleschkeff Auditorium
 Seattle Art Museum
 1300 First Ave.
 Seattle, WA
 seattleartmuseum.org

SATURDAY 18 WITH THE KIDS

Building Downtown with Harley Ellis Devereaux
 10:00 a.m.
 Architecture and Design Museum Los Angeles
 6032 Wilshire Blvd.
 Los Angeles
 aplusd.org

EVENTS

Conjunctive Points: Samitaur, Moss and Culver City Presentation, Panel Discussion & Walking Tour
 10:00 a.m.
 Society of Architectural Historians/Southern California Chapter
 8557 Higuera St.
 Culver City, CA
 sahsc.org

Griffith Observatory

Tour and Picnic by Pfeiffer Partners
 11:00 a.m.
 details forthcoming
 aialb-sb.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Summer Graduation Show
 Art Center College of Design
 1700 Lida St.
 Pasadena, CA
 artcenter.edu

WEDNESDAY 22 SYMPOSIUM

Fresh Air: SF's Climate Action Strategies
Meredith Kurpius, Richard Walter, Tony Held, and Adam Stern
 12:30 p.m.
 SPUR Urban Center
 654 Mission St.
 San Francisco
 spur.org

SATURDAY 25 WITH THE KIDS

Park Puzzle with Mia Lehrer + Associates
 10:00 a.m.
 Mia Lehrer + Associates
 3780 Wilshire Blvd.
 Los Angeles
 aplusd.org

SUNDAY 26 LECTURE

Will South
Why Eden? California and the Arcadian Image
 2:00 p.m.
 Portland Art Museum
 1219 SW Park Ave.
 Portland, OR
 portlandartmuseum.org

TUESDAY 28 SYMPOSIUM

Pecha Kucha: e/motion
 6:00 p.m.
 SPUR Urban Center
 654 Mission St.
 San Francisco
 spur.org

THURSDAY 30 LECTURE

Alexa Bush
2012 Piero North Patri Fellow Presentation: Visioning the Southeast Waterfront
 6:00 p.m.
 Pier 1
 The Embarcadero
 San Francisco
 spur.org

SEPTEMBER

SATURDAY 1 EXHIBITION OPENING

Field Conditions
 SFMoMA
 151 Third St.
 San Francisco
 sfmoma.org

WEDNESDAY 5 LECTURE

Donald Jackson
The Saint John's Bible: A Contemporary Illuminated Manuscript
 7:00 p.m.
 Harold M. Williams Auditorium
 Getty Center
 1200 Getty Dr.
 Los Angeles
 getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING

2012 CCA Faculty Exhibition
 Tecoah Bruce Gallery
 Oliver Art Center
 5212 Broadway
 Oakland, CA
 cca.edu

THURSDAY 6 EVENT

Time-Based Art Festival
 Through Sep 16
 Various locations
 Portland, OR
 pica.org/tba

FRIDAY 7 LECTURE

Robert M. Arens
Ground Zero Sum Game: The World Trade Center Redevelopment Eleven Years Later

9:30 a.m.
 Wiltern Center
 3780 Wilshire Blvd.
 Los Angeles
 ailosangeles.org

FILM

Metropolis
 (Fritz Lang, 1927), 153 min.
 7:00 p.m.
 The San Diego Museum of Art
 1450 El Prado
 Balboa Park, San Diego, CA

EVENT

SCI-Arc Graduate Thesis Weekend
 SCI-Arc campus
 960 East 3rd St.
 Los Angeles
 sciarc.edu

SATURDAY 8 EXHIBITION OPENING

Lucy Raven
 Hammer Museum
 10899 Wilshire Blvd.
 Los Angeles
 hammer.ucla.edu

MONDAY 10 EVENT

Pro Walk/Pro Bike 2012: Pro Place
 Long Beach, CA
 pps.org

TUESDAY 11 SYMPOSIUM

AIA|LA & DCP: Together to Build Better Communities
 12:00 p.m.
 City Hall, Room 721
 200 North Spring St.
 Los Angeles
 ailosangeles.org

WEDNESDAY 12 EVENT

The 5W's Project Launch & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
 1:30 p.m.
 SF Chronicle Building
 925 Mission St.
 San Francisco
 theintersection.org

THURSDAY 13 LECTURE

Barbara Swift, Cary Moon, Lisa Picard
Art & the Environment Panel
 7:00 p.m.
 PACCAR Pavilion
 Olympic Sculpture Park
 2901 Western Ave.
 Seattle, WA
 seattleartmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Digital Connections
 5:00 p.m.
 Seattle Art Museum
 1300 First Ave.
 Seattle, WA
 seattleartmuseum.org

FRIDAY 14 EXHIBITION OPENING

15th Annual Seattle Architecture Foundation Model Exhibit
 6:00 p.m.
 Offices of Suyama Peterson Deguchi
 2324 Second Ave.
 Seattle, WA
 seattlearchitecture.com

SATURDAY 15 EXHIBITION OPENING

Six Lines of Flight: Shifting Geographies in Contemporary Art
 SFMOMA
 151 Third St., San Francisco
 sfmoma.org

EVENT

King's Hill National Register Historic District—Walking Tour
 10:00 a.m.
 Washington Park
 Portland, OR
 visitahc.org

WEDNESDAY 19 LECTURE

Stefan Behnisch
Development of Ideas in Collaboration: The methodical approach of a workshop
 6:00 p.m.
 USC School of Architecture
 Watt Hall
 Los Angeles
 arch.usc.edu

SAM WATTERS

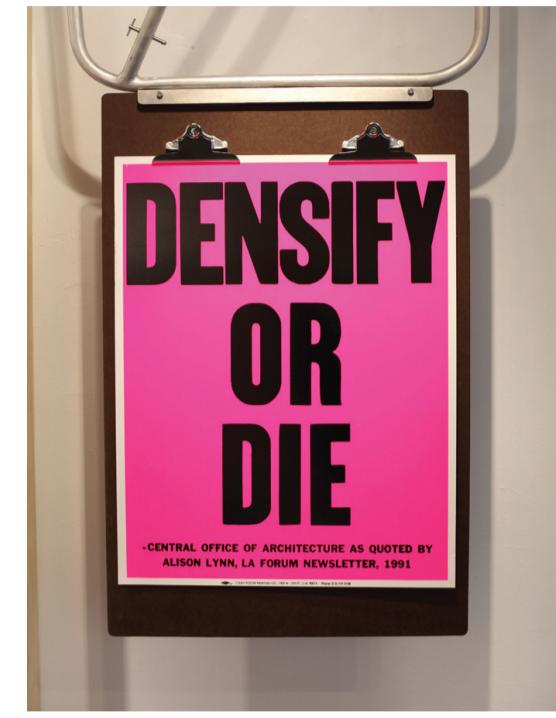
Gardens for a Beautiful America
 7:00 p.m.
 Bing Theater

LACMA

5905 Wilshire Blvd.
 Los Angeles
 lacma.org

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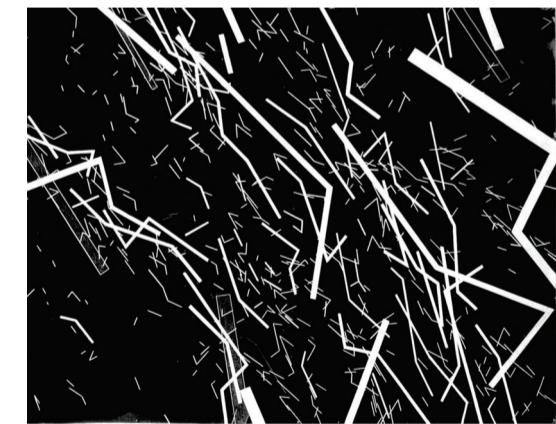


COURTESY THE AUTRY

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

WUHO Gallery
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The Los Angeles Forum for Architecture and Urban Design celebrates 25 years of contributions to architectural discourse with a retrospective that revisits the institution's archives (including this lecture poster by the Central Office of Architecture from 1991). Since 1987, the Forum has provided a critical perspective on the culture of architecture and urban design in Los Angeles through speculative inquiry that expands the realm of discourse on the city. The Forum has impacted not only the design community in Los Angeles but also the discipline at large, providing a platform for emerging voices, investigating contemporary design issues through exhibitions, and pushing architectural and urban conventions with publications and competitions. A dozen "conversations" composed of quotes and essays are drawn from Forum newsletters and publications. Supplementing the retrospective, a catalog, lecture series, symposiums, and articles will further unpack the Forum's archives.



LEBBEUS WOODS

FIELD CONDITIONS

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
 151 Third Street, San Francisco, CA
 September 1–January 6

Blurring the distinction between conceptual art and theoretical architecture, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art investigates the conception and experience of space by using the notion of "field" as a reference. Curator Joseph Becker describes the pieces in the exhibition as "spatial experiments," united by the use of architectural devices to describe a spatial condition. The term "field conditions" derives from the 1996 essay by architect Stan Allen in which he describes a shift from traditional architectural form toward an understanding of systems and networks, a "field" being described by the interconnections of discrete points that constitute the whole. Many works in the exhibition deploy a process of serializing and accumulating, describing spatial qualities through deformation (such as Conflict Space 3 (2006) by Lebbeus Woods, above).

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER AUGUST 15, 2012



COURTESY CES

A PATTERN OF ABUSE

The Battle for the Life and Beauty of the Earth: A Struggle between Two World Systems
Christopher Alexander, Maggie Moore Alexander, Hans Joachim Neis
Oxford University Press, \$45.00

What to do about Christopher Alexander?

A beautiful storyteller, a beautiful writer, and a beautiful thinker, as anyone who has dipped into *A Pattern Language*, his fabled grammar of everyday life and how to design with it, can attest. Alexander, a mathematician and architect, has a powerful, empirical sympathy for people, their dreams, and their

desires, at home and in the world.

Unless you're an architect.

Things are falling apart—all the goodness in man's creation—and have been since 1900 and the dawn of modernity, Alexander states in his new book, *The Battle for the Life and Beauty of the Earth*, written with his wife, Maggie Moore Alexander, and Hans Joachim

Neis. And architects are largely responsible. They are killing the planet.

Strange words for an architect. But Alexander, a resolute and now embattled outsider to his own professional community, has always believed himself of a different order, bound by oath to improve life by design and not to stylize it superficially, a healer as well as a doctor.

As a builder, Alexander and his Center for Environmental Structure's (CES) work shares what he calls a "timeless way" with the vernacular and the traditional. Building is an act of craft—physical, emotional, and spiritual—that embodies the inherent order of space and the well-being of those who inhabit it. Design, he writes in *Battle*, is ultimately a language of the soul, not a product of the pencil, or CAD.

It's hard to argue that environments are increasingly sterile, as Alexander writes, and rarely nourishing, rarely places for "happiness, excitement, romance, content, love." But *A Pattern Language*'s delicately observed, deftly reasoned, poetically presented alternative to the sleek cynicisms of modern architecture has turned to the offense, attacking with the aggressive take-no-prisoners posture of *Battle*. It is no longer enough to take the high road, the book's fight-mongering stance suggests. You have to bulldoze the low road too. If you get pushed, as one of the protagonists of the book literally is, you push back.

Battle's subtitle, "A Struggle between Two World-Systems," squares off the story. It is a recounting of Alexander's work on Eishin Gakuen in Japan, just outside of Tokyo, a combined high school and college campus, nine city blocks in size for an estimated 2,000

students. When he and CES were approached in 1981, it was the largest project they had been asked to consider. The high school was completed in 1985, the college (minus several buildings) by 1989.

World system "A" is Alexander's. The clients—in this case, teachers and students—form a chorus of virtues, conducted by the architects, that will be incorporated into the design: lakes with ducks on them, shadowy arcades, secret gardens. The buildings will be crafted with a responsive sensitivity to success: if a design is not working, change it. Change it again. "Spirit," in all its fluidity, is the foundation of the work. (This brings to mind the question of whether everyone in a concert audience is hearing the same piece of music, or some satisfying version of their own. How to agree on the ineffable?)

System "B" is the fodder of real estate pages, shelter magazines, home improvement television, and renovation divorces. You hire a bunch of guys-who-know-what-they're-doing, from architects to general contractors to plasterers and painters, give them the drawings and a wad of money to get them started, and watch the whole thing uncoil like a nest of snakes. The final punch-list: Olympics-grade finger-pointing.

But, hey. That's how it's done. It sort of gets you there.

Alexander argues a red-faced "no." And though CES's David against the construction industry's Goliath—plus the general public's acceptance of architects as stars with showmen's skills and not much else—seems suicidal, suicide in Japan is a point of honor, not defeat. Alexander **continued on page 19**



Elias Martin, *View of Hanover Square* (1769).

endeavors as the controversial and recently approved Chelsea Barracks masterplan by Dixon Jones, Squire and Partners with Kim Wilkie in the wake of the Prince Charles-led suspension of Lord Rogers's plan for some of the most valuable square footage in play on the planet. The historic London square weaves throughout this new blueprint in ways transparent and accessible even to those merely passing through. Regardless of the exact final Barracks form, this detail in the continuity of place making will most certainly emerge unscathed.

And whatever the permanent impact of the much-ballyhooed sustainable build-out of the imminent Olympics, especially across East London, crowned by Anish Kapoor's sponsor-addled *ArchelorMittal Orbit*, the author provides a rigorous analysis of the advent and continuing metamorphosis and reinterpretation of the city's long-established classical instinct to bring nature to the city. In fact, the long-standing impulse to bring naturalistic relief (whether density-erupting gardens or community-defining green precincts) to bear on the more formal drive toward real estate development is a fascinating metaphor for the tug of public and private forces that continually shape the city as well as inform everything from architectural solutions to resident expectations and willingness to pay.

What the book offers above all is a rare analysis of just such planning dynamics expressed through aesthetics and built results. Seventeenth-century royal prerogative and landed aristocratic development schemes presumed a top-down preference for rural (and evermore elusive) vistas, which led to then-fashionable sculpture-adorned French and Italianate plazas, and, **continued on page 19**

Promising Plots

The London Square: Gardens in the Midst of Town
Todd Longstaffe-Gowan
Yale University Press, \$65.00

With all the world focused on London and its Olympic Summer Games, the Queen's Jubilee, and the Libor scandal, not to mention Piano's

Shard clocking in as Europe's tallest, the publication of *The London Square: Gardens in the Midst of Town* offers a worthy historical antidote to all the hoopla, taking overdue stock of this city's greatest contribution to planning: the urban square. Written by the prominent and demonstrably passionate landscape architect, Todd Longstaffe-Gowan, this spirited narrative is burdened only by the bulky format that inevitably results from a rich array of illustrations, including little-known archival schematics, etchings, and photography,

both vintage and contemporary. It chronicles an enduring prototype at the ready for future applications, while, simultaneously, it succeeds at revealing some of the overlooked origins of contemporary green design theory and practice.

The squares, crescents, and circuses explored here grace the lives of residents and visitors alike, as do their proven civic and economic benefits, long after the 2012 spotlight fades. The book anticipates a refocusing of attention in post-hoopla London on such



COURTESY YUF/AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Left: *View of Queen Square, Holborn (1812)* by an unknown artist.

occasionally into the salubrious iniquities allowed by squares, especially once they have been converted to the verdant naturalistic English style. Think Central Park's Rambles section in contrast to Le Nôtre's parterres with their relative dearth of secret sanctuary. Whether by errant resident servants, who shared the household key, or various other opportunists looking for some sort of quick, shrub-shrouded thrill, the point might have been made stronger in this context with a greater measure of levity, or irony.

Perhaps planning advocates, preservationists, and assorted civic-minded fellow travelers have most to gain from Longstaffe-Gowan's rigorous discovery. They are most likely to sort the trees from the author's forest in terms of applicable contemporary lessons. Regardless, the read is well worth it or any who care about architecture in the public realm.

PAUL GUNTHER IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE & ART IN NEW YORK.

PROMISING PLOTS continued from page 20 in turn, the manor house gardens, where geometric rigidity gave way to serpentine paths through a chimera of wilderness with perpetual flower beds as transitional foreground. Likewise it is a story of hygiene, fire prevention, and exclusivity, yielding through a combination of civic good will, tax-sanctioned economic possibilities, and even wartime Victory gardening, to a breaking down of barriers to make the visible inhabitable.

This beguiling point of view succeeds at revealing the origins of much of the

American planning impulse and public governance policy in force today. The gated community, the BID, universal access, and permissible activity all emerge from the record presented by Longstaffe-Gowan, who unmasks the seesaw of intentions both venal and benevolent that add up to the volume's dynamic thematic paradigm. A discerning reader will draw comfort from the fact that such a formative mishmash can still result in a beautifully refreshing and even joyous model for contemporary urban dwellers.

The author does swerve



COURTESY CES

Horseshoe arch trusses in the Central Building of the Eishin Gakuen.

A PATTERN OF ABUSE continued from page 20 had a remarkable client, Hisae Hosoi, the managing director of the school, who understood the stakes, the lyricism of CES's and Eishin's ambition, and as the Japanese phrase it, the nobility of failure, if it came to that.

Alexander's 30-year battle with all the players—he's still grappling with it in this book—Involves brinksmanship, threats, betrayal, conspiracy, bribery (yes, a suitcase of money), a severe beating by thugs that hospitalized Hosoi, a gentlemanly goon nicknamed "The Prince," a disquieting shoving match, and the Yakuza. Not your usual symposium panel.

At the heart of the battle was Alexander's

gradual insistence on building what he designed, in order to ensure its integrity, an issue that has subsequently strengthened into a popular architectural movement: the renaissance of design-build. Alexander's rationale, which looks brightly bald unless you're a fan, was that he had to control every aspect of the project in order to let it breathe and blossom, freed from the control of contractors and their profit motivation. System "A," until it began to crumble under the weight of compromise, double-crossing, and doubt, employed a fixed budget (overruns would be corrected with cost cutting) and an elected, salaried manager who was accountable to both architects and clients.

More went right than wrong. And despite moments of bruising defeat, Alexander is clearly proud of Eishin as it stands. He sums up that pride towards the end of *Battle* by quoting a student who was interviewed in 1991 for a film on the school for Japanese television. "All my life I have lived behind bars," he said. "When I came to this school, it was the first time in my life, that I felt free."

Is the book worth reading? Yes, for being a fresh and further iteration of one of the most original minds of our time. Alexander, again, does what he does so well: in the process of adult argument, weave biology, theology, art appreciation, and geometry, plus cultural call outs from Jung to Fellini, into his tale.

It's just the excited darkness of the tale, from its wooden-sword title on, that seems a little boyish.

WILLIAM L. HAMILTON IS A NEW YORK-BASED JOURNALIST WHO WRITES REGULARLY ON DESIGN FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



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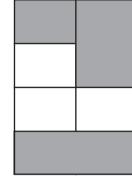
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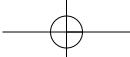
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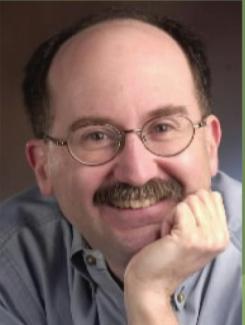
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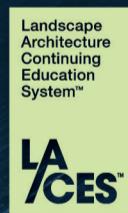


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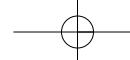
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While living and working at London's Architecture Foundation—inside his latest gallery installation *Three Little Worlds*, a modular stage comprised of three inhabitable and interactive graphic strips—Chicago designer Jimenez Lai talked with AN contributor Jonathan Louie about his interest in graphic novels, living in his latest creations, and client-less architectural projects. Lai is an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago and principal of the firm Bureau Spectacular. His manifesto, *Citizens of No Place*, was recently published by Princeton Architectural Press. Earlier this year Lai was named a winner of the Architectural League Prize for Young Architects.

AN: Earlier in your career you developed a following for your graphic representation of the architectural process; but your interest seems to have moved toward other architectural endeavors—such as your oversized "Super-furniture." How does the architectural narrative still play itself out in your design and process?

JL: The similarity between cartoon making and architecture is that both practices imagine other worlds, and both disciplines demand astute graphic articulation to resonate with their audience. With cartoons, authors literally needed to indulge in their own fictional worlds in order to tell stories that are unlike existing reality. In some ways, this is a

very liberating thought for architects—the stories we write should resist the acceptance of the normal, typical, generic or absolute, because we are the physical writers of the city fabric that represents the culture of our times.

My interest in Superfurniture is scale-related. Many of the predecessors who I admire built installations before they were able to gain enough steam to build buildings. This is a path I've been interested in, the relationship between drawing and building as a young person. Some of the architectural effects that installations produce are simply unscalable, and probably should not be scaled at all—human perception doesn't always work in every size. Worse yet, some installations forfeit architecture altogether and merely produce physicalized illustrator diagrams about some sort of global economy or community activism without any desire to nurture a sense of architectural effect. My relationship with the installation scale and human engagement had to be one-to-one in order for the part-to-whole relationship to develop. This is why I think installations should be projects not quite big enough to be buildings, but far too big to be furniture—it is what it looks like, not to be scaled.

In *Three Little Worlds*, there seem to be two narratives unfolding. The first—through Kickstarter—communicating design intent to an audience, and the second the narrative of living in your Super-

furniture. Can you talk more about performance, and how it has influenced your work?

The internet has helped me voice my intent in advance. I feel deeply fortunate to have been at my age during this era of the internet. So yes—the first life of this project lived its course through a different representational avenue. I have been extensively documenting my time in this installation through videos. In some ways, the delivery of the performative aspect will also require the internet.

The past week living here has been a journey inward (*Three Little Worlds* was on display at The Architectural Foundation between July 24 to August 12). While I feel extremely fortunate—I am now living in London by the Thames in an installation I designed and drawing murals all day—it displaced me from my comfort zone and I am gaining a perspective on what the next chapters of my life could be. Perhaps this isn't entirely a performance. I wanted to take myself out of context to learn more about domesticity.

Do you consider installations to be architecture?

It depends if the intention of the installation is meant to be a scaled model, or a one-to-one architectural effect. In almost all cases, the installations that I enjoy are studies of parts, with the whole being architecture. Which is to say, these installations do not attempt to be at any other scale but the scale we live in, and therefore I think of them as being partially architecture.



COURTESY BUREAU SPECTACULAR

More so than your previous pieces, *Three Little Worlds* seems to encapsulate a total lifestyle.

If Super-furnitures' organize themselves around the home, how do you determine what are and are not necessary additions?

In retrospect, *Three Little Worlds* could have done more to facilitate total lifestyle. In terms of sensibility, the color, texture and proportion of the frames really produces a distinct atmosphere from the normal world. So in that sense, the project does create a satisfying lifestyle. The frame-to-boundary relationship, on the other hand, was functionally miscalculated. Because I am currently immersed in a thought regarding graphic vs. painterly, and because I choose the graphic argument, *Three Little Worlds* deliberately withheld traces of how things were built. As a result, it even overlooked the white, poche spaces for other possible uses. In another version of a project like this, this will definitely be something I would pay closer attention to.

What is the graphic in architecture?

I am interested in two particular aspects of graphics—sensibility and convention. I believe both to be communicative techniques, but sensibility evokes effects, whereas convention articulates thoughts. Through articulation, I think about the exact meanings that line weights and line types can convey. We are able to communicate cut, directionality, orientation, projection, plane, above/below, surface condition, transparency, layers, and texture—all simply within the conventions of architectural notation that readers mutually agree upon. I think the same about drawings—careful control of lines can produce suggestive messages for the audience to read or misread.

With sensibility, on the other hand, the message may not be as exact. Perhaps the most simplistic dichotomy would be sharp versus soft, as the two sensibilities can evoke different reactions. Furthermore, within soft, there are many, many types of soft curves. I think of the specificity of curve-

Above and left: Jimenez Lai and his installation *Three Little Worlds*.

types to be similar to timbres in music, as it establishes the mood of a composition.

As a young architect, you've built a career around being clientless or having a larger audience as your client. What are the benefits and detriments in the development of your work and design agenda?

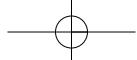
The benefit of having this career so far is that I have managed to build a portfolio with very little compromises, and was able to really meditate on the architectural effects and issues that I am interested in. This route has allowed me to nurture my thoughts.

The detriment is that I have almost zero money whatsoever. I spend every last cent of my university salary building this practice. The odd grant money or sales of art just does not cover the cost of the office.

Can you give an example of your project process?

As "clientless" as these projects have been, there still were a lot of constraints. With *Three Little Worlds*, the unattainability of funds vastly dialed back the ambition of the original thought. I began by proposing a comic book that a person can walk into, exploring the relationship between framing, windows, and voyeurism. We went through Kickstarter to fund the project, but it just still was not enough in the end. This process required us to take on the tasks of being designers, fundraisers, and publishers. And for *White Elephant* (a 2011 installation at Louisville, Kentucky's LoT exhibition space) we were even partially the fabricators in-house. This life of multi-tasking is extremely exhausting, and I am very much looking forward to having a client.

But, perhaps this process has also molded me to be a more creative and versatile problem-solver. This may influence the way I design when actual constraints emerge.



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