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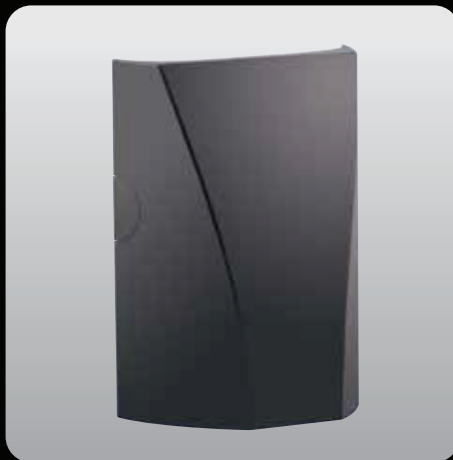
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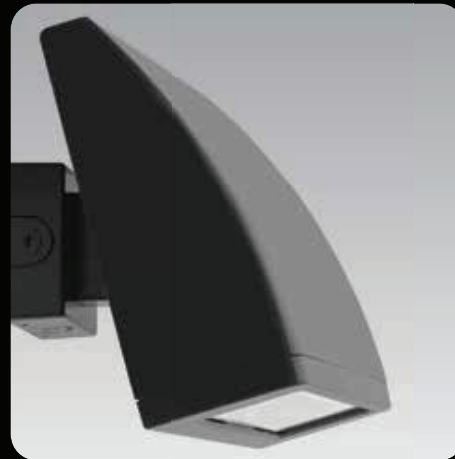
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WHY THE THIN SKIN, FRANK?

By now most of us in the LA architecture world have heard about the troubles surrounding the upcoming MOCA exhibition *A New Sculpturalism: Contemporary Architecture in Southern California*. Just before press time the show had been reinstated, although delayed from June 2 to June 16. This piece of news came after the show had been put on hold for weeks, its future very much in doubt, and after LA’s best-known architect, Frank Gehry, had already pulled out. It’s still unclear what role, if any, the show’s curator, Christopher Mount, and its designer, Annie Chu, will hold. Rumors have been swirling that both have been replaced, although nothing has been confirmed.

Full disclosure: I was one of a group of advisors on the show, although I had no role in its curation or execution.

The combination of problems says so much about the trouble with Los Angeles architecture and the trouble with one particular Los Angeles architect.

For architecture, there’s no reason for a show of this scope, with this many resources, to be in such a precarious position just a few weeks before its opening. No matter what really happened, and who was truly at fault—be it curator Christopher Mount, MOCA director Jeffrey Deitch, others at MOCA, or some combination thereof—for the sake of our architecture community such a show needs to be settled and in good shape at this stage of the game. We need more of these types of shows, not less.

As Neil Denari told me, the doubts about the show raised “questions about the ability to have a public discourse about architecture, which I think LA desperately needs.” Indeed, for architecture to break out of its insulated shell—in which the best architects often get sidelined doing houses and other private work while the jumbo, well-connected firms do the major civic projects—the talent here needs to have an interaction with the community.

The show is part of the Getty’s Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in Los Angeles series, and for all of that initiative’s brilliant scholarship and excitement, this is the only show that showcases what is current in Los Angeles. For a place where the future is so important, that investigation is a much needed complement.

As for that one architect, Frank Gehry told the *LA Times* that he was leaving because “it didn’t seem to be a scholarly, well-organized show.” He added: “I’m subject to misunderstanding about the seriousness of my work. People assume I am just crumpling paper, and so forth. This was feeling a bit that way, a trivialization.”

Gehry of course has the right to pull out of whatever exhibition he wishes, but even if he finds the show unscholarly and unfavorable to him, does that give him the right to jeopardize the work of so many others? The show includes a lineup of more than 150 projects from more than 30 of the city’s firms. Its catalogue totals more than 250 pages. Sure, any endeavor of this scale will miss architects and get things wrong, and this one seems to do both. A debate about its merits is not just allowable, but necessary. That doesn’t seem trivial.

Have star architects reached the point where they can dictate—like star athletes and star actors—everything that’s said about them and revolves around them? You would think someone with a career as illustrious would be a little more resistant to criticism and interpretation. It seems that one man’s insecurity is enough to jeopardize a whole community. It’s a classic act of selfishness that only reconfirms people’s stereotypes about architects.

That being said, this show shouldn’t need Frank Gehry. One entry, even as prestigious as his, shouldn’t be able to jeopardize an entire exhibition. None of us have seen the final result, but we have seen a museum whose commitment to architecture is still in doubt, and an architect with a lack of commitment to the architecture community at large. **SAM LUBELL**

ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURES  
SHARES REVAMPED DESIGN



Globe Trotting

In April, architects Renzo Piano and Zoltan Pali showed off new schematic designs for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences’ new museum. As plans solidify, it is becoming apparent that the complex, combined with LACMA’s ambitious expansion, will rival any location in Los Angeles for cultural importance.

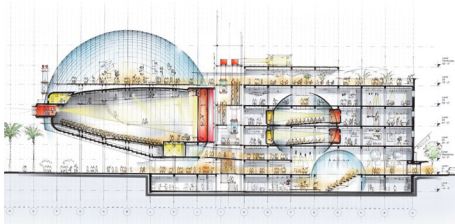
The museum is being built into and behind AC Martin’s Streamline Moderne May Company Building (1939) on Wilshire and Fairfax. The design features a 140-foot-diameter glass and steel globe positioned behind the May, which contains, among other things, the 1,000-seat David Geffen Theater. In the old plan, a portion of the May’s 1940’s addition had wrapped around the globe’s east side, but that piece will now be demolished.

The globe now contains an angular, exposed structural concrete underside—mimicking the theater’s seating rake—supported by columns. By reorienting the theater south (it had faced north), the team was able to free up covered space under the structure, enlarging the adjacent outdoor plaza, said Pali. Above the theater, still inside the globe, will be a large indoor plaza. The globe itself will be supported with what Pali characterized as “thin and lacy” steel cables and piping.

Between the May Company and the Globe, the architects designed what they call the spine, an interstitial space connecting the two buildings, containing mechanical systems. This element, made out of what Pali called “the lightest possible glass and steel,” will look somewhat like scaffolding, conjuring up images of film and theater sets. Bright red steel components will cover mechanical systems, making them part of the architecture. This is a reference not only to Piano’s work at LACMA, but also to his Centre Pompidou in Paris.

The renovated May Company Building will remain largely intact, housing the majority of the complex’s exhibition spaces. The ground floor will contain the lobby, exhibits, and dining space. The second and third floors will contain exhibits, the fourth will contain educational spaces, and the fifth floor will contain events spaces. Smaller new theaters and screening rooms will be built on the ground, second, and third floors. The project’s EIR process has just begun, and construction should begin in 18 months. Completion is scheduled for 2017.

“LACMA will be quite a place,” noted Pali. “I think it can be our cultural core.” **SL**



UNVEILED

WAFFLE TOWER

Eric Owen Moss’s newest creation, Waffle, is a fraternal twin of the Cactus Tower—a 55-foot-high steel frame enclosure that holds a cactus garden 30 feet above ground in Culver City’s Hayden Tract. Waffle, which will measure the same height as Cactus, will be located on the eastern perimeter of Hayden Tract, on the other side of an industrial studio.

While the Cactus Tower is rectilinear, the similarly proportioned Waffle will undulate like precariously stacked papers. The Waffle will hold a first floor conference area, a mezzanine lounge, a third floor with closed meeting rooms, and an open roof deck.

“As one moves vertically, the position changes, the surface starts to curve and it undulates,” explained Moss.

The building will be steel framed, like the Cactus Tower, but with facades composed of a grid of vertical and horizontal louvers with in-fill glass panels. As the tower curves more steeply, the louvers will move closer together. The louvers separate as the curve flattens.

The internal structure will be made up of a series of straight pipes about 18-inches in diameter. The pipes will be segmented again and again, following the curvature of the building’s exterior. “The biggest challenge was how to make the columns,” said Moss. “The shapes are complex and if you miss by a little bit, the closer you get to the ground, the more precarious the dimensioning discussion.” **CARREN JAO**

Architect: Eric Owen Moss Architects  
Client: Samitaur Constructs  
Location: Culver City, CA  
Completion Date: September 2013





PLAN ZUMTHOR

The rumor-mill has been churning non-stop over LACMA director **Michael Govan's** and architect **Peter Zumthor's** plans for the museum. Basically it looks like they are planning to take LACMA apart and start over; an effort that failed when attempted by **Rem Koolhaas** and OMA back in the early 2000s. The full scope of the plans will be unveiled in June, with LACMA's exhibition *The Presence of the Past: Peter Zumthor Reconsiders LACMA*. But for now we've gleaned that under Zumthor's plan, not only would there be a new indoor/outdoor art park, but four of the museum's midcentury structures would be replaced by "curvaceous modern glass structures." That basically includes everything but the **Bruce Goff** pavilion and **Renzo Piano's** new structures. Let's see if the second time's the charm.

LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles is one of the few cities that emerging superstar **Bjarke Ingels** has yet to invade, and he's made it clear that this is a place where he wants to work. Now it looks like Bjarke has his first major shot. Ingels, we hear from an unnamed source, has been added to one of the teams competing to design the major 4<sup>th</sup> and Arizona mixed use project in Santa Monica. They'll replace RTKL on a team that also includes local firms Koning Eizenberg and Rios Clementi Hale. So now this shortlist is the most starchitect-heavy of any in the city, including not just BIG, but OMA with VTBS and OLIN and Robert A.M. Stern with Brooks + Scarpa. Meanwhile Bjarke might be able to tick off another American city to a list that includes New York, Phoenix, Park City, Miami, and... more?

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In Seattle, there is a deep bond between water and land. It is a city defined by the Puget Sound to the west, Lake Washington to the east, Lake Union at the center, and Green Lake to the north.

In choosing a site for its more than 4 million artifacts, the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) did not take this symbolic relationship lightly. The institution selected a decommissioned naval reserve at the southern tip of Lake Union built between 1941 and 1942 under the Works Progress Administration. The move was necessitated by the demolition of the museum's original facility in Montlake, in order to make way for the rebuilding of the floating 520 bridge that connects Seattle to the eastside.

MOHAI hired Seattle-based LMN Architects to transform the reserve into its new home. The firm wove references to water throughout its design. The surrounding South Lake Union Park, for example, is dotted with planter beds shaped like the hulls of ships—part of a landscape designed by Mithun and Hargreaves Associates.

LMN's renovation of the reserve respects the nautical influences of the Art Moderne building, which was designed by Benjamin Marcus Priteca—an architect famous for his West Coast theaters—and William R. Grant. The exterior, which features white pilasters and navy trim, was restored to its original appearance. The majority of the updates target the interior. The architects removed a tile ceiling from the 1980s and added glass and steel stairs and an elevator. Significant infrastructural upgrades were also required, and in order to preserve the expansive space of the main atrium, electrical and mechanical systems were relegated to the roof.

The building sits above the water—resting on wood pilings driven into the bottom of Lake Union. The expansive exhibit hall—a 56-foot-high, 12,000-square-foot atrium—boasts a Douglas fir end grain wood floor, refinished to a warm orange glow. The flooring is original, and provided a durable, strong surface for naval exercises in the one-time drill hall. Perhaps the biggest challenge of the project was working with this floor, which is sloped, possibly due to settling—a 15-inch height difference between the southwest and northwest corners. To create the illusion of level ground, LMN installed the doors and windows parallel to the slope.

The museum's diverse group of historical artifacts includes a 1919 Boeing U.S. mail plane, which hangs suspended in the expansive atrium. MOHAI commissioned the most prominent work specifically for the space—a 60-foot-high Douglas fir and steel sculpture called Wawona by John Grade. It resembles an old-growth tree with the unexpected addition of barnacle-like growths.

Wawona fills the entire height of the atrium and then some—extending through the roof above, gathering a beam of daylight into its hollow core, and reaching to the dark waters of Lake Union below. The wood was reclaimed from an eponymous Puget-based vessel. Its complex curves were modeled and shaped with a digital design and fabrication process. The sculpture easily dwarfs anyone who stands beside it—and is a testament to the maritime history of Seattle, while respecting the indelible cycle of nature with the promise that, with the right choices, what we use can be returned to the earth to be consumed.

ARIEL ROSENSTOCK



> **BESTIA**  
2121 7th Place, Los Angeles  
Tel: 213-514-5724  
Designer: Studio Unltd

NICOLAS OS. MARQUES

The most popular new restaurant in Los Angeles is Bestia, located inside a former industrial warehouse on the southern edge of the city's burgeoning Arts District. Since the original space—a wide open volume with red brick walls and a labyrinthine network of ducts and conduits—is so interesting, it looks like the architects didn't have to do much. But the job was quite intensive, involving a huge amount of custom work and an eclectic palette of materials.

Much of the inspiration for the design, said Studio Unltd designer Greg Bleier, came from old meatpacking plants and slaughterhouses. This explains the corrugated metal canopies that project from the space, which were added to the facade along with a large new roll up garage door and new concrete supports. An assortment of salvaged wood tables, from communal to more intimate, were custom fabricated, while the restaurant's bars are fashioned from copper, white marble, and hand painted tile.

Perhaps the most striking element to impress diners is the lighting scheme. LED's line the perimeter of the cavernous space, custom steel tulip-shaped pendants and bulbous glass amber jugs hover over tables and bars, while chandeliers made from chains and attached with cables and clips, hang from what appear to be meat hooks. **SL**



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**WALL = SCULPTURE\***

## GRIMSHAW AND GRUEN MAP OUT ALTERNATIVES FOR LOS ANGELES' UNION STATION

# OPTION RAIL

Time flies. It's been almost a year since the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO) selected Grimshaw Architects and Gruen Associates to design the master plan for its 47-acre site around Union Station in downtown Los Angeles. In early May, the team revealed the first glimpse of what might happen on the property.

The firms presented four "draft alternatives," which will continue to be refined with community input and narrowed down to a "final preferred plan" by next

spring. None of the plans show any building designs. They are instead a blueprint for future infrastructure and development. All suggest incorporating multiple transit types—including rail, subway, light rail, bus, and high-speed rail—on the site.

The first alternative calls for putting a high-speed rail track above the current rail yard, which is east of Union Station. This plan, pointed out Grimshaw associate principal Nikolas Dando-Haenisch, would allow for all transit operations to be melded into a single facility

raised above the yard.

The second alternative posits running a high-speed rail line and concourse under Alameda Street and installing a widened, below grade passenger concourse on the east-west axis behind Union Station. This plan, noted Dando-Haenisch, would leave the eastern side of the property more open to non-transit development.

The third alternative suggests running high speed rail along Vignes Street, fairly far east of Union Station, installing a terminal just adjacent to Metro's current headquarters, freeing up the west side of the station for development. The fourth has a similar alignment for rail, with a high-speed rail concourse located even further east, on the current site of the city's hulking C. Erwin Piper Technical Center.

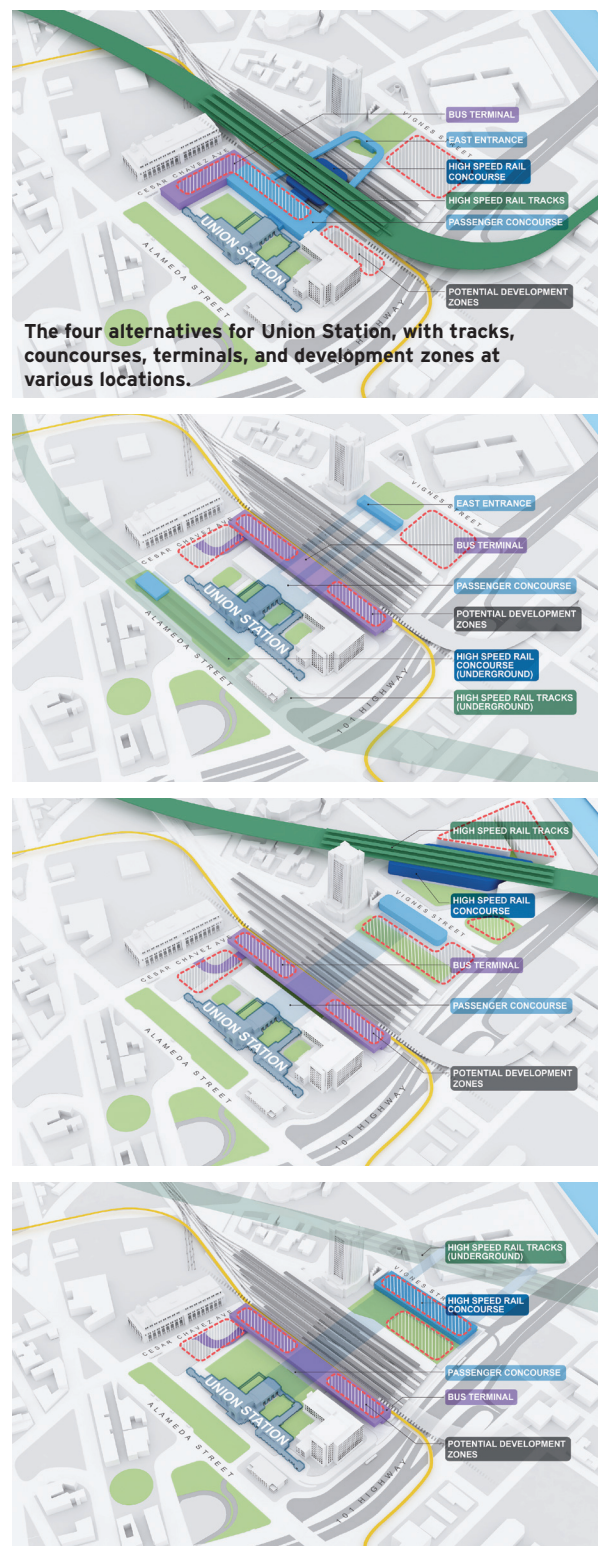
All of the plans, noted the team, are in flux, and will be adapted before the final proposal is made. If high speed rail never comes to Los Angeles—which is still very much a possibility given the project's political and financial hurdles—the plans would not be significantly altered, said Jenna Hornstock, deputy executive officer for countywide planning at Metro.

The goal would remain the creation of a district dedicated to transit, instead of one more focused on Union Station itself. That includes efforts to integrate all transit options, to develop the site with new commercial, entertainment, and retail buildings, to improve pedestrian flow, and to better integrate it into its surrounding neighborhood.

"If high speed rail never comes these schemes need to work on their own and be whole. We need to make the station function better right now, whether the future involves high-speed rail or not," said Hornstock.

Once a final course is settled on next year, Metro will begin the long process of implementing the master plan, which will include leasing sites to various developers and, ultimately, selecting architects and other construction professionals. The process could take decades to complete, said Hornstock.

Everyone agreed on one thing: Union Station needs to become, as Dando-Haenisch put it, "World class. Not an ordinary place, but an extraordinary place." **SL**



COURTESY METRO



## CEQA IS UP FOR REFORM

# DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH

Since California approved the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in 1970, its development and business communities have complained that the law has been more effective as an obstacle to economic development than as an instrument of environmental protection. Now, a new bill, SB 731, is before the legislature, proposing significant changes to the law.

Gary Toebben, president and CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, is among a chorus of business advocates who claim that CEQA has had the unintended consequence of obstructing urban infill projects while making peripheral development, with fewer neighbors to oppose projects, the only viable option for developers. "This law is more important to urban areas like Los Angeles than any other parts of the state," he noted.

In response to growing evidence of CEQA abuse and a sluggish building industry, California State Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg took the helm of the CEQA reform process by proposing Senate Bill 731 in February. The details of the bill have been slow to materialize, although the Senate Environmental Quality Committee approved an early version on May 1.

Bruce Reznik, executive director of the Planning and Conservation League, a state-wide environmental lobbying organization, is cautious to predict how the bill might eventually take form. But he did describe its language requiring lead agencies to prepare administrative records together with administrative proceedings as a win-win because it would "cut delays and give the public more information." Reznik is also encouraged by the bill's language that would increase the monitoring of mitigation measures (such as grading or runoff) and the allotment of \$30 million annually to the Strategic Growth Council in support of smart growth planning efforts.

Far more common, however, are issues like local versus state control. For example, in its current form SB 731 would allow adjustments to thresholds of significance for noise, transportation, and parking for residential, mixed use, and commercial uses within a half-mile of transit stops. Toebben called CEQA's current methods for measuring these thresholds too subjective, and a source of unnecessary litigation. Reznik agreed, but insisted on the need for discretion at the local level. Similar concerns about local control have killed bills like last year's AB 904, which would have reduced parking requirements near transit stops. Even SB 375, California's famous smart growth legislation designed to curb sprawl, took several passes through the legislature to appease local governments concerned about ceding power to the state.

The state's unions are also split on the issue of CEQA reform. On the one hand, easing the development approval process means increased construction. On the other hand, unions have in the past used the threat of CEQA legislation to leverage project labor agreements.

The only thing that's clear is that SB 710 still has a long way to go to gain approval.

JAMES BRASUELL

NO. 3 IN A SERIES

## The Value of Collaboration Architecture. Innovation. Emotion.

When well-known manufacturers collaborate with product designers and architects, it is usually with an eye on a specific product that they would like developed or re-engineered. When two well-known manufacturers, each with their own strong brand identity collaborate, the relationship and the resulting products are of an entirely different nature.

LAUFEN has the best of both worlds; they have worked with boutique product design firms and larger, well-known manufacturers. Recently LAUFEN announced what can be called a trifecta collaboration because it combines the talents of a boutique product design firm and the ingenuity and strong brand identity of a larger manufacturer, as well as their own strong brand. Called Kartell by Laufen, the collection was unveiled for the general public at Salone Internazionale del Mobile di Milano in April. The artistic direction for the project has been entrusted to architects Ludovica + Roberto Palomba, the renowned designers and trend-setters for bathroom ware.

### The Kartell by Laufen Collection

With design and quality as its watchwords, the Kartell by Laufen bathroom reveals itself as integrated architecture; an interconnected ecosystem where washbasins, sanitaryware, faucets, shower bases, bathtubs, lights and accessories coexist beautifully. The rigid geometry of the ceramic items is tempered by the multicolored lightness of the plastic elements. The palette of colors has been



reinvented; leaving aside primary colors, it reflects the tones of the earth, the oranges of sand, steel blue, warm whites tending towards yellow and cold ones turning into blue that emerge.

"Kartell by Laufen is a project based on a common understanding of the two companies about the value of emotions. Emotions and dedication define the

novel idea of this bathroom and guided the project throughout the entire development. The same sense of mindfulness to the materials and the same understanding of research and development have made the two companies perfect partners – or, one could say, soul mates."

Alberto Magrans, Senior Managing Director LAUFEN

### Technological Innovation

Developed over three years, the innovation of the Kartell by Laufen collection lies in the beauty of Kartell's plastic materials and LAUFEN's revolutionary new ceramic material, SaphirKeramik. SaphirKeramik allows performance characteristics that were unthinkable until now. A radius of curvature of the corners up to 1-2 millimeters (until now the maximum reached was 7-8 millimeters) for washbasins thin as blades, of an extreme lightness, not only visual but actual – SaphirKeramik is a material weighing half that of normal ceramics.



### Sustainability and Ethics

A shared vision of the collaborators is that the process and the product must be sustainable. A cradle-to-the-grave approach is one that considers the total production impact, respect for the environment, the recycle-ability of materials, the need not to waste either energy or water and to limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions during transport. The result: the imperishable ceramics of LAUFEN and the indestructible plastic of Kartell.

### The Companies

LAUFEN and Kartell share a great deal: an industrial approach to production, dedication to continued research and technological innovation, an international market, world-wide distribution and a genuine passion for design. On one side of the design equation you have Kartell, the Italian family company that has marked the history of design and revolutionized the use of plastic materials for over 60 years. On the other, LAUFEN – Swiss, rigorous and reliable. For 120 years, LAUFEN has deepened its commitment to developing the bathroom as a living space and they continue to innovate the production of ceramic sanitaryware. Serving as the link between these two players are the designers Ludovica + Roberto Palomba, themselves leaders in designing for the bathroom and with whom LAUFEN has collaborated previously on the award-winning Palomba Collections.



Kartell by Laufen will be available Fall 2013.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 29, 2013

EXPLORATORIUM OPENS INSIDE FORMER  
SF PORT FACILITY

## Science on the Bay



The Exploratorium, an interactive science museum founded in 1969 by physicist Frank Oppenheimer, exemplifies the dual role of San Francisco as a magnet for tourists and a hub of fresh thinking. It recently outgrew its first home in the Palace of Fine Arts and relocated to Pier 15, just north of the city's Ferry Building. Its new premises are three times larger than before, and they are a model of conservation, adaptive re-use, and sustainability. San Francisco architecture firm EHDD—which worked with the Exploratorium on an earlier, unrealized expansion project—spent six years on a seismic upgrade and restoration of the historic pier

building's concrete shell, creating new display areas inside and on the surrounding apron.

Pier 15 was built in 1931, when San Francisco was still a busy port, and faded signs remind visitors of its wartime role as an embarkation point for U.S. troops shipping out to the Pacific. Port facilities are now concentrated in Oakland, and San Francisco is reclaiming its waterfront for commercial and recreational purposes.

EHDD's first move was to drive massive piles to stabilize the base of the pier. That allowed the firm to keep the existing superstructure and girders, poured concrete slabs, and steel sash windows. EHDD

The original Pier 15 building was built in 1931; Left: A new addition by EHDD.



aesthetic of the pier. Boundaries between public and museum space as well as between inside and outside are blurred. As visitors walk to the end of the pier they leave the city behind and engage the marine environment of the bay.

Oppenheimer was a brilliant teacher who, denied the opportunity to conduct advanced research during the hysteria of the McCarthy years, determined to enlarge public understanding of science with creative exhibits. The ecology of the bay and what it says about climate change have become an integral part of the institution's program. Within the pier, EHDD inserted mezzanine galleries and plywood enclosures that can accommodate room-sized installations, as well as classrooms, administrative areas, and a workshop, where exhibits are repaired in full public view. A central walkway leads visitors to the far end, where a steel wall, laser-cut with magnified images of plankton, conceals a link to the Fisher Bay Observatory. This two-story steel-framed block contains a first-floor restaurant, and an upstairs events-exhibit space with a soffit of LED-backlit fabric panels. Windows have fritted lines at the top and bottom to reduce heat gain while framing panoramic views of the water and Telegraph Hill.

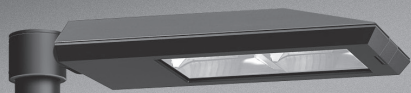
MICHAEL WEBB

worked with restoration experts Page & Turnbull and the State Preservation Board to conserve the original fabric. Artisans made unobtrusive repairs to damaged walls. The single-glazed clerestories and roll-up steel doors were retained, and the steel-framed concrete panels were left exposed. "We wanted to freeze the building in time, while making subtle changes to give it a new role," said Marc L'Italien, EHDD's principal in charge.

Though the exterior looks much as it did in its prime, its performance is radically improved. To achieve a LEED Gold rating, the building uses bay water for radiant heating and cooling. The expansive

roof is covered with a 1.3-megawatt array of solar panels—enough to power more than a thousand homes. Ducts pull in fresh air, and 16 percent of rainfall is stored in cisterns atop the piles. Triple-element glass is used in the new portal and the building at the end of the pier, as well as the openings where the original doors have been rolled up to pull in light and views.

Landscape architect Gary Strang collaborated with EHDD to turn 1.5 acres of outdoor space into a public promenade, and another half acre into outdoor display space. Bridges, guardrails, benches, and light standards have a timeless simplicity that complements the industrial



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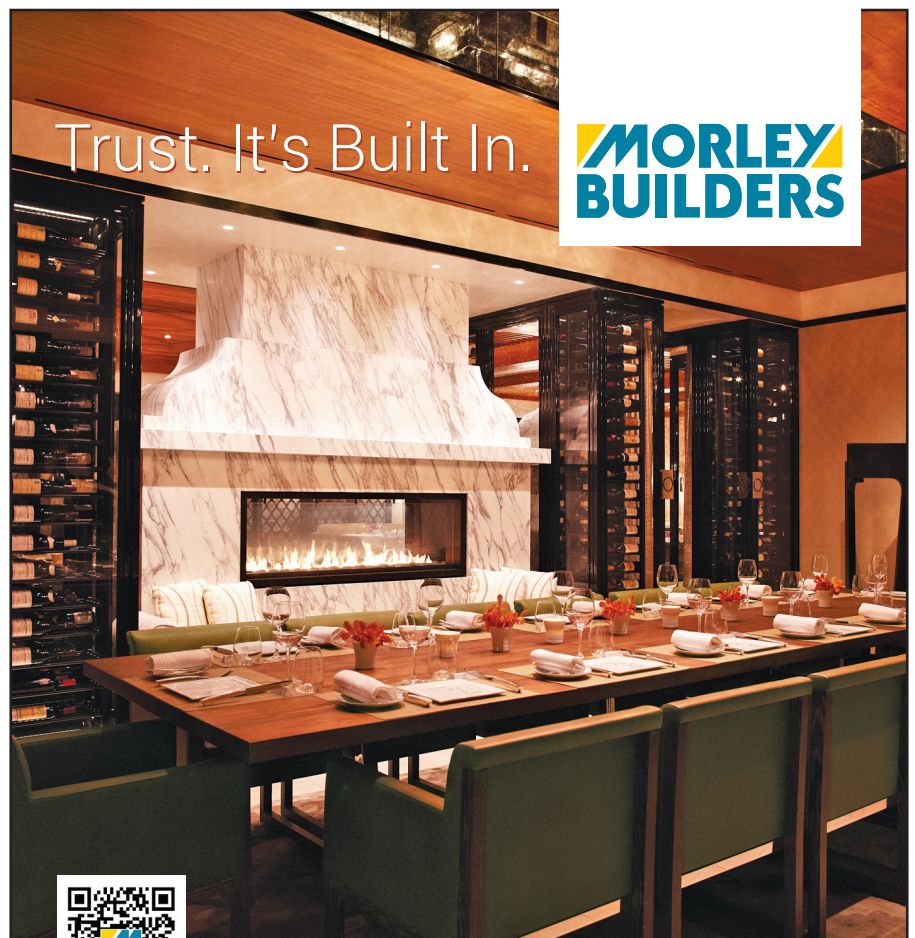
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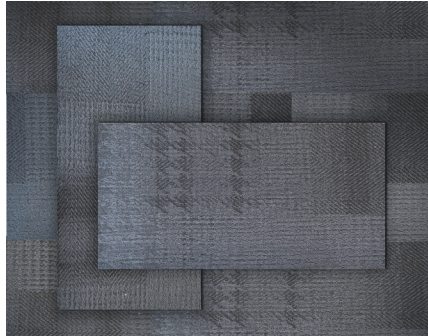
THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 29, 2013



**1 LAGUNITAS  
COALESSE**

To meet the needs of the nomadic workforce, Coalesse tapped Milan-based Toan Nguyen to design the Lagunitas line. Made to accommodate a solitary task session, a working lunch, or a brief touchdown to check emails, the collection features more than 50 combinations of seating, tables, and privacy screens perfect for laidback productivity.

coalesse.com



**2 REFINED COLLECTION  
MANNINGTON COMMERCIAL**

New York City-based architecture firm Corgan Associates has reimagined houndstooth patterns and boucle textures in the Refined Collection of carpets. Classic patterns are layered in unexpected combinations for a fresh look, while variations in gradation lend a polished feel. Available in both modular and broadloom weaves, the collection features between 10 percent and 40 percent recycled content.

manningtoncommercial.com



**3 METALLIC YARNS  
ROBERT ALLEN CONTRACT**

A partnership between Robert Allen Contract and DwellStudio resulted in the Metallic Yarns line of the Modern Couture textile collection. Plaids, stripes, checks, and ikats are rendered in a broad color palette with metallic flecks and accents. Sunbrella Contract fibers make the collection perfect for a range of indoor and outdoor applications, from upholstered walls to wrapped panels.

robertallendesign.com



**5 HERMAN MILLER  
EAMES MOLDED WOOD SIDE CHAIR**

Technology has finally caught up to the vision of Charles and Ray Eames. Three dimensional veneer processes have made it possible to fabricate the design duo's iconic Molded Chair, previously only available in steel and molded plastic, in a single, curved wooden shell. Santos palisander, white ash, and walnut looks are available on a wire, dowel, or four-legged base.

hermanmiller.com

**6 LINEAL CORPORATE  
ANDREU WORLD AMERICA**

The Lineal Corporate line of seating for public and office spaces presents function and elegance in proportional dimensions. Originally available only with a cantilevered chrome base, the collection's 2013 update offers a star base, with or without wheels, that facilitates a swivel return system on a central adjustable base.

andreuworldamerica.com



**4 ENGAGING  
KI**

The challenge of crafting flexible and individual work zones in an open concept office is met nimbly by Engaging, a freestanding screen with writable surfaces. A lightweight aluminum frame on swivel castors or glides facilitates easy repositioning by its users while providing strength to support up to a 50-inch display monitor.

ki.com



**7 FLOAT  
DECCA CONTRACT**

David Ritch and Mark Saffell of 5d Studio designed Float to embody the principles of modern sculpture, while handling the functional demands of the workplace. The line incorporates a light and airy casegood system with a full-height workwall balanced by lower level cabinets and a peninsula desk that rests on a thin stainless steel base.

deccacontract.com



**8 GESTURE  
STEELCASE**

Informed by a global workplace study of 2,000 people in a wide range of postures, the Gesture chair facilitates ease of movement between multiple technology devices. A synchronized motion system for the back provides consistent support as the user transitions from the desktop computer to mobile device and a flexible seat accommodates multiple positions.

steelcase.com

# WORK THIS WAY

A PREVIEW OF NEOCON DEBUTS. BY EMILY HOOPER



## THE RESIDENCES AT W HOLLYWOOD AMENITY DECK LOS ANGELES, CA RIOS CLEMENTI HALE STUDIOS



JEFF SIMONS

While the W only opened in Hollywood back in 2010, the hotel has already replaced the original rooftop pool deck for its condos with a new space designed by Rios Clementi Hale Studios. The old deck, designed by Daly Genik Architects, was beautiful but severe. Rios Clementi Hale opted for a more casual approach, which they call an “outdoor living room.”

The inspiration, said designer Mike Sweeney, is LA’s mix of beach and city, which plays out with a combination of hard elements like concrete and metal, and soft elements like wood and colorful foliage. Visitors walk up a small flight of stairs, surrounded by a dense growth of green and purple native and low water plants, to the pool, as if they were passing through the dunes at the shore. The pool deck is organized around a series of meandering pathways and informal spaces that allow for many activities to go on at once. Sweeney said the arrangement makes “it feel like you’re in a garden in the midst of all these rooftops.”

The scene from the roof is dominated by Hollywood’s jumble of towers, billboards, streetscapes, and hills. The architects placed a double-layered water jet cut aluminum sunshade for the barbecue on the east edge of the space as a nod to the omnipresent signage. More shade is provided by fabric cabanas and the abundant plantings. Custom, irregularly-shaped polished concrete fire tables, imbedded with Micah, add a splash of mysterious darkness and nod to the neighborhood’s legendary Walk of Fame. The matte flooring around the pool is light grey concrete.

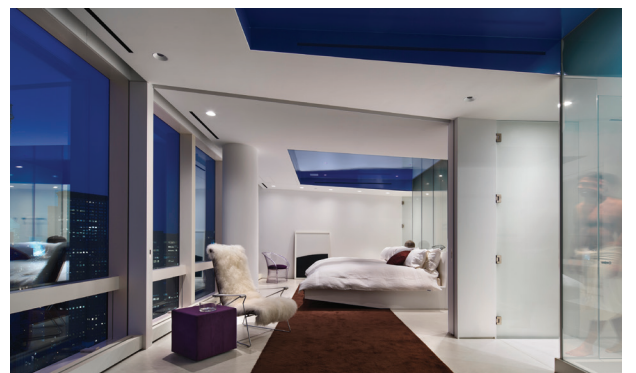
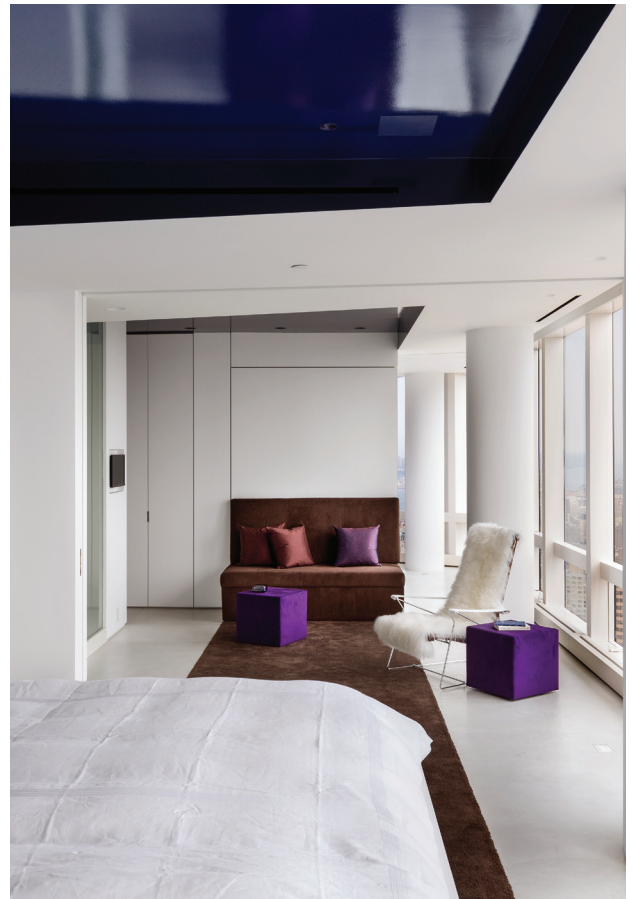
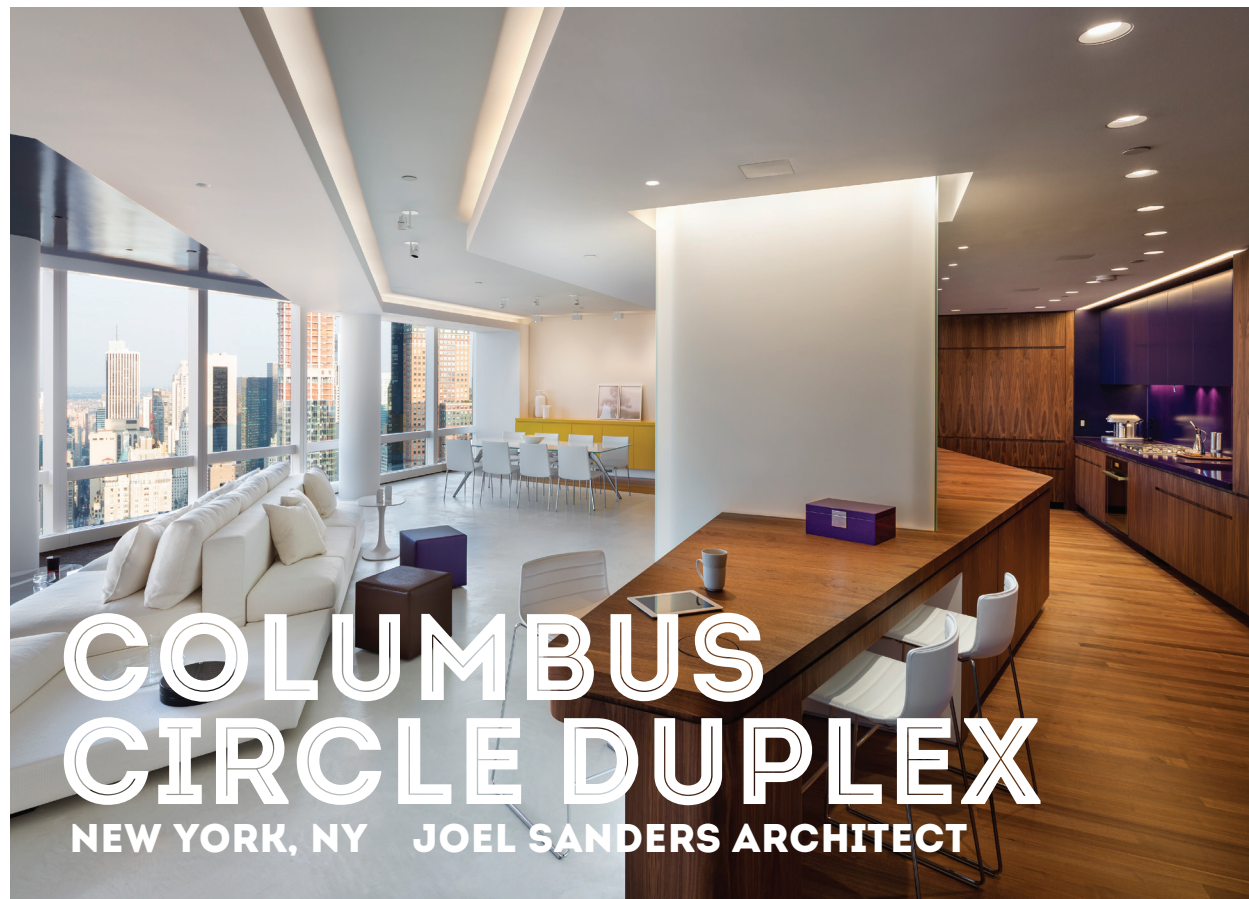
The central organizing element of the project is a curving spine that bisects the roof, traced to the south by a giant curving Ipe wood daybed, that, Sweeney notes, matches the large scale of the surrounding city. The slatted Ipe fence behind the bed provides a sense of shape and enclosure, but doesn’t block any views. The daybed as well as the other ipe furniture on the deck was custom built on site. This warm and soft material, tempering the hardness of the city and the rooftop, also clads a self-serve bar area and a gym to the west. **SAM LUBELL**

## ROOMS WORTH A VIEW

FOUR PROJECTS OFFER CONTEMPORARY TAKES ON OFFICES, HOSPITALITY, AND RESIDENTIAL SPACES







Located in the Time Warner Center, this duplex apartment has sweeping views of the city and Central Park to the Northeast. The original layout chopped up the view, so architect Joel Sanders sought to “liberate the curtain wall” with a series of smart interventions, changes in section and materials, and changeable walls and furniture, which create distinct spaces within an open plan.

Sanders has long played with peekaboo bathrooms

and voyeuristic views in designs for hotels and bachelor pads. “For a long time it was about exploring new models of domesticity, often for alternative lifestyles,” Sanders said. This client, however, is a nuclear family, a husband and wife and two children who split their time between New York and the Netherlands. “It’s a sign of the times that these ideas have become more mainstream,” he said.

On the apartment’s first

floor, Sanders created two distinctive seating areas, built around a custom double-sided sofa. One faces out toward the park, on a plush brown carpet, which is meant to link the interior to the park, while a painted midnight purple ceiling evokes the sky (the client insisted on a color scheme that included purple and bright yellow, which appear as accents throughout the apartment). The other side faces back into the apartment as well as a small

media area. The space furthest from the view is a work/kitchen/storage area wrapped in warm wood, divided by a translucent service core that features a desk peninsula with built-in data and electric. The dining area, which also faces the view, has a polished white concrete floor. This trio of materials—carpet, wood, and concrete—is used throughout the apartment to define areas of comfort, areas of dining and bathing, or areas of work and storage. An angled cove

with inset lighting cuts through the ceiling plane, reinforcing the different zones within the open plan.

The wood used in the kitchen area wraps up the stairs to the second level where it runs across the floor and frames a discreet desk area. The master suite subdivides into three bedrooms with sliding walls. One sleeping area is a murphy bed hidden behind a built-in sofa. In the bathrooms, switchable glass walls

blink from translucent to transparent in a flash, offering views out to the park or total privacy with the flip of a switch.

For a contemporary family with international addresses, the flexible design allows for moments of togetherness and solitude, views out to the city beyond and reflective moments within the serenity of the apartment—just how many want to live today.

**ALAN G. BRAKE**



# TARGET RECREATION CENTER

MINNEAPOLIS, MN  
JULIE SNOW ARCHITECTS



It might raise some suspicions to hear a mega-chain like Target requesting a “non-corporate” space for a new recreational center at its headquarters. But according to Minneapolis-based architect Julie Snow, who the company hired to work with its own design team, Target’s Plaza Commons—housed in an existing two-story building at Nicollet Mall and South 10<sup>th</sup> Street—is the result of intense collaboration and zero big box bureaucracy. Snow said Target’s CEO “insisted on the sit test” for every piece of furniture. But before the design team got to work on the downtown Minneapolis building, the space spoke for itself.

“We were awed,” Snow said. “It was like walking into some historic ruin.” The interior design philosophy was between preservation and reinvention. Snow said the goal was to retain the raw character of the existing space, which was originally designed as a shoe store and formerly housed local institution Let It Be Records. The interior’s enormous concrete columns are robust enough to support a building four times as tall.

Wherever there were floor gaps, the designers covered them with steel plates, “We could have filled them with concrete,” Snow said, “but we wanted that patchwork to be evident.” The terrazzo floor is among

the few material elements that appears finished. That’s not to say the rugged space is entirely roughhewn. The liberal use of Hickory wood in the second-floor loft brings a level of warmth and comfort to the 22-foot-high central area. The mezzanine is geared for physical relaxation, Snow said, playing host to table sports and video games.

As an alternative work area and lounge, the center needed to be welcoming. To that end the design team opened a back wall onto an urban courtyard that features a basketball court and fire pit. An operable hangar door shuts the opening during colder months, but natural light meets most of the building’s needs year-round.

The red elevator frame bespeaks the building’s corporate brand, but the furniture throughout is eclectic. Dutch design firm Droog provided a horse-shaped floor lamp, along with a black plastic table lamp shaped like a pig. Large MOOI light fixtures bring a touch of sleek modernism to the industrial feel, rounding out a commons whose charm is in the singular touch of its interior design and the building’s concrete bones.

The architect of record, Ryan A+E, Inc. provided design-build services, with additional structural engineering from Ericksen Roed & Associates. **CHRIS BENTLEY**







# BUDDHIST RETREAT

GROVER, UT IMBUE DESIGN



Salt Lake City firm Imbue Design recently completed a desert retreat for a Buddhist practitioner near a little Utah ranch town called Grover. The company has a unique workflow. All three of the design partners meet with the client and propose a different scheme based on their individual interpretation of what is wanted. In this case, the client chose the most experimental design put forth. “She was interested in exploring architecture and exploring what a house is,” said firm principal Matt Swindel.

The minimalist structure emphasizes outdoor space and views of the high alpine desert and the mountains. The site is 7,000 feet above sea level, surrounded by juniper trees. Visitors approach along the top of a hill and enter the house from above, through a 93-square-foot ipe wood roof deck. A staircase from the deck descends into the building.

The walls of the house are made of gabion cages filled

with volcanic rock from the building site and the surrounding area, which absorb heat during the day and release it at night. The deck prevents summer heat from reaching the envelope of the building, and creates a double roof that acts as a natural convection system, as air flows under the wooden surface and pulls hot air away from the structure. In addition to the passive energy conservation features, there’s a whole-house fan for summer use. A fire orb and radiant heating system keep the house warm in the winter.

The 1,350-square-foot house has two bedrooms and an office. The architects kept the cost to \$225 per square foot by using inexpensive local labor and reclaimed materials. They kept the windows affordable by using standard sizes rather than paying extra for custom work. For example, the wall-to-wall windows in the living room were made from standard sliding glass doors.





The house is sparsely furnished with design classics and contemporary pieces that keep the focus on the architecture and the views outside.

The exterior space, including the deck and several covered patios, made up half the cost of construction. So far, the deck has been worth the money. The owner has hosted group meditations there, as well as a local orchestra from the nearby town of Torrey.

The house was completed last fall, and the designers are gearing up for the second phase of the project—a separate 500-square-foot structure that will be used as a Buddhist retreat. The retreat will be designed to satisfy the most basic human needs as simply as possible, with a two-burner stove, a toilet and shower, minimal storage space, a wood stove, and a mattress. Like the house, the retreat will face east, an important orientation for Buddhist practice. **VIRGINIA C. MCGUIRE**





# facades<sup>+</sup>

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MAY

THURSDAY 30  
LECTURES

**Earth Plaster: Historical Overview and Current Uses**  
12:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St.  
San Francisco  
aiaSF.org

**Urban Ambition: Assessing the Evolution of L.A**  
10:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.  
The Getty Center  
Museum Lecture Hall  
1200 Getty Center Dr.  
Los Angeles  
getty.edu

JUNE

SATURDAY 1  
EXHIBITION OPENING

**Earthwave**  
Arts District, Bloom Square  
Rose Street and  
East Third St.  
Los Angeles  
sciarc.edu

SUNDAY 2  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
“A New Sculpturalism”:  
Contemporary Architecture from Southern California  
The Museum of Contemporary Art  
250 South Grand Ave.  
Los Angeles  
moca.org

LECTURE  
**Saving Italy: The Monuments, Men, Nazis, and War**  
3:00 p.m.  
The Getty Center  
Harold M. Williams Auditorium  
The Getty Center  
Museum Lecture Hall  
1200 Getty Center Dr.  
Los Angeles  
getty.edu

FRIDAY 7  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
**unEarthed/Solo Exhibition by Rob Reger**  
5:00 p.m.  
111 Minna Gallery  
111 Minna St., San Francisco  
111minnagallery.com

SATURDAY 8  
FILM  
**Double Indemnity (1944)**  
1:30 p.m.  
The Autry in Griffith Park  
4700 Western Heritage Way  
Los Angeles  
theautry.org

EXHIBITION OPENING  
**Cyclepedia: Iconic Bicycle Design**  
Portland Art Museum  
1219 SW Park Ave.  
Portland, OR  
portlandartmuseum.org

SUNDAY 9  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
**The Presence of the Past: Peter Zumthor Reconsiders LACMA**  
5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles  
lacma.org

TUESDAY 11  
EVENT  
**RUMBLE 2013**  
UCLA Architecture & Urban Design  
1317 Perloff Hall, Los Angeles  
aud.ucla.edu

WEDNESDAY 12  
CONFERENCE  
**Green Builder 2013**  
6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.  
South San Francisco Conference Center  
255 South Airport Blvd.  
San Francisco  
aiaSF.org

THURSDAY 13  
EVENT  
**Strategies for Entering New Markets and Diversifying Your Practice**  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St., San Francisco  
aiaSF.org

FRIDAY 14  
LECTURE  
**Modern Architecture in L.A: A Confederacy of Heretics Symposium**  
3:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.  
SCI-Arch Campus  
960 East Third St.  
Los Angeles  
sciarc.edu

WORKSHOP  
**The Architect as Small-Scale Developer**  
8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.  
3780 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles  
sciarc.edu

WEDNESDAY 19  
WITH THE KIDS  
**Art Rocks**  
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Monterey Museum of Art  
559 Pacific St.  
Monterey, CA  
montereyart.org

**Build a 3-d Robot**  
1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.  
Monterey Museum of Art  
559 Pacific St., Monterey, CA  
montereyart.org

MONDAY 24  
LECTURE  
**Scale, Energy, and Travel Architecture; Recent Work of Luis Vidal Architects**  
5:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.  
AIA San Francisco  
130 Sutter St., San Francisco  
aiaSF.org

TUESDAY 25  
LECTURE  
**Faces From the Boulevard with Portrait Photographer Katherine Sheehan**  
6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.  
Architecture and Design Museum  
6032 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles  
aplusd.org

WEDNESDAY 26  
WITH THE KIDS  
**Outdoor Landscape Painting at La Mirada**  
1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.  
Monterey Museum of Art  
559 Pacific St., Monterey, CA  
montereyart.org



JASON SCHMIDT/COURTESY HAMMER MUSEUM

A QUINCY JONES: BUILDING FOR BETTER LIVING  
The Hammer Museum  
10899 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles  
Through September 8

Archibald Quincy Jones (1913–1979) was a Los Angeles–based architect known both for the glamorous homes he designed for actors like Gary Cooper, as well as his dedication to the redevelopment of middle-class housing using effective, innovative, and sustainable building methods during the 1950s and 60s. His 5,000 built projects were centered on the premise of “better living” and “greenbelt planning.” He experimented with materials like plywood, steel, and masonry block construction and intentionally built in locations where his buildings would have access to natural light, air, ventilation, and views. This exhibition is presented as a part of *Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A.* The documentation on view—including original architectural drawings taken from the architect’s personal and professional archive, a case study house model, and vintage photographs—highlights a variety of Jones’s projects, including community developments, churches, libraries, restaurants, residential homes, work spaces, and schools.

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

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- ☐ Designer
- ☐ Draftperson
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- ☐ Technical Staff
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- ☐ Other

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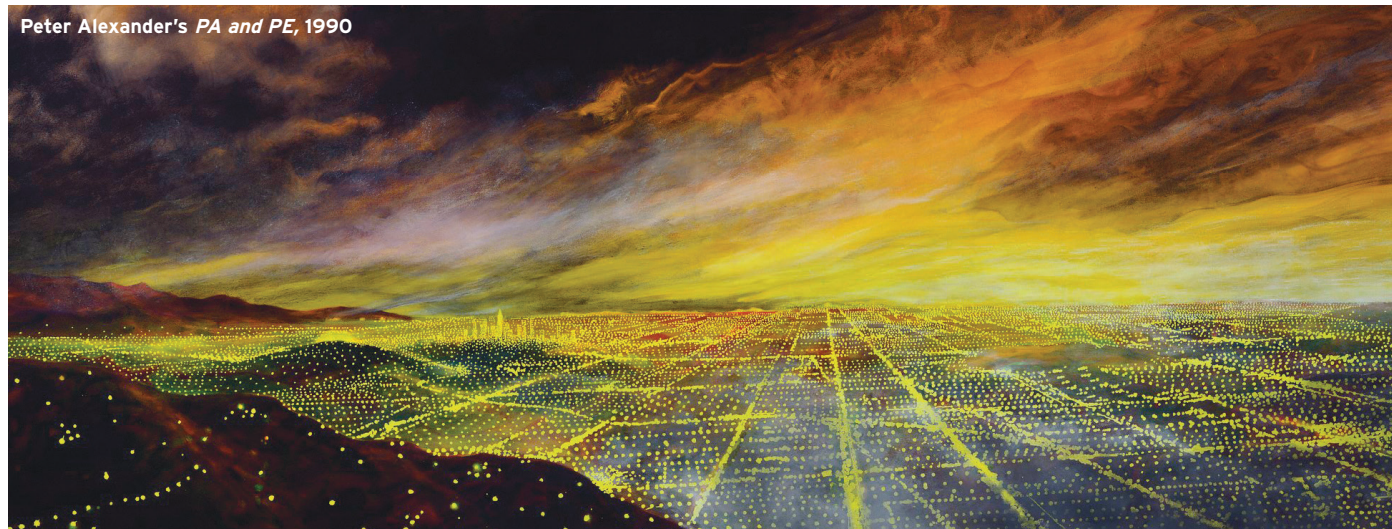
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- ☐ \$1 to 5 million
- ☐ +\$5 million

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- ☐ 1–9
- ☐ 10–19
- ☐ 20–49
- ☐ 50–99
- ☐ 100–249
- ☐ 250–499



THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 29, 2013


Peter Alexander's *PA and PE*, 1990

PETER ALEXANDER/COURTESY OF PACIFIC ENTERPRISES

## WIDE ANGLE LENS

**Overdrive: LA Constructs the Future 1940–1990**  
 Getty Center  
 Through July 21

New research on LA architecture and urbanism has been piling up for more than thirty years, but it is only with *Overdrive: LA Constructs the Future 1940–1990* at the Getty that we get an opportunity to see much of it spread out before us in one place.

For a city often critiqued through the blur

of glib myth, this panoramic view should change the way we perceive its architecture and urbanism. Curators Wim de Wit, Christopher Alexander, and Rani Singh lay the long-overdue groundwork for a more accurate and more useful architectural manifesto about LA, with new vistas on

unheralded architects, overlooked building types, and unsuspected planning history.

The wall of the final gallery drives this point home. Where the Case Study houses (undeniably brilliant but only a fraction of the city) have been in the spotlight of other exhibits, this wall broadens the focus to show a panorama of housing innovations. Side by side with the familiar Case Study houses are high density multi-family housing (from low rise Baldwin Hills Village to low rise and high rise Park LaBrea) and the revolutionary mass-produced tract housing given Modern expression by Palmer and Krisel, Edward H. Fickett, Jones and Emmons, and others. These tracts, not the Case Study houses, made the dream of Modern middle

class housing a widespread reality.

In the same spirit of reassessment, *Overdrive* gives a more balanced view of the region's commercial and car culture architecture alongside residential architecture. In Southern California's broadly democratic urban society, coffee shops, offices, car dealerships, and shopping centers were all part of an everyday modernism. But "everyday" does not mean poorly designed or insignificant. When LA architects ranging from John Lautner, Armet and Davis, and Edward Killingsworth, to Smith and Williams, Ray Kappe, and Victor Gruen applied their talents to such buildings, they fulfilled one of the earliest hopes of Modernism: to bring design based on the convenience, ease, and delight of modern technology to the average person. As presented in *Overdrive*, this turns out to be one of Southern California's greatest contributions to Modernism.

The exhibit cannily shows how architects creatively interpreted the new conditions of Southern California's multi-centered suburban metropolis, and then how those concepts continued to evolve. For example, *Overdrive* includes pleasing and functional movie theaters by S. Charles Lee, and then their reverberation through the city and culture in Richard Neutra and Philip Johnson's drive-in churches in Orange County.

Is LA ready to accept a new narrative about its history and its significance—one that's not based solely on a few exquisite glassy houses? Can we embrace everything from the appealing Googie coffee shops of Armet and **continued on page 19**



Howard Sloan House, 1940



MIT Solar House 1, 1939

MIT PRESS, HEDRICH-BLESSING

with architect George Fred Keck's House of Tomorrow (1933), Frank Lloyd Wright's Solar Hemicycle (1943), and MIT's Solar Housing Experiments (beginning in the 1939), and follows through to the contemporary Solar Decathlon, a national competition encouraging students to design innovative solar houses. All of Denzer's examples highlight the primary nature of solar design—from passive solar energy to solar storage—in the inception of the homes.

Refreshingly, Denzer does not shy away from reporting engineering mistakes and setbacks along the way. *Solar House* is a refreshing and honest account, warts and all. Take, for example, the unique solar heat storage and cooling house Dover Sun House, a collaborative effort by engineer Maria Telkes and architect Eleanor Raymond in Dover, Massachusetts, in 1948. Viewed a success when it was built, and praised by such publications as *Architectural Record* and *Newsweek*, the Dover Sun House was retrofitted with a conventional furnace just five short years after it was completed. But as Denzer points out, failures are part of the research problem, and solar innovation is not a passing trend—it is part of a continuous narrative in engineering and design.

But the book is not always even in its treatment of solar history. If *The Solar House* has a fault, it's that it too heavily places chronological weight in the **continued on page 19**

## SUN STRUCTURES

**The Solar House: Pioneering Sustainable Design**  
 By Anthony Denzer  
 Rizzoli, \$55

Solar House. How do those two words spark your imagination? Do you picture an idealist hippie's 1970s dome retrofitted with a solar collector and cobbled together with clunky, handmade pipes and pumps? Or maybe a later version with sleek, refined black-and-silver solar arrays with perfectly manufactured parts and pieces? These two popular images of domestic solar applications are

at the root of Anthony Denzer's glossy, amply illustrated *The Solar House: Pioneering Sustainable Design*. Denzer wants you to expand your preconceptions, to broaden your knowledge of what exactly a solar house is and how it came to be a part of the American domestic landscape.

Denzer, an architectural engineering professor at the University of Wyoming, is also the author of

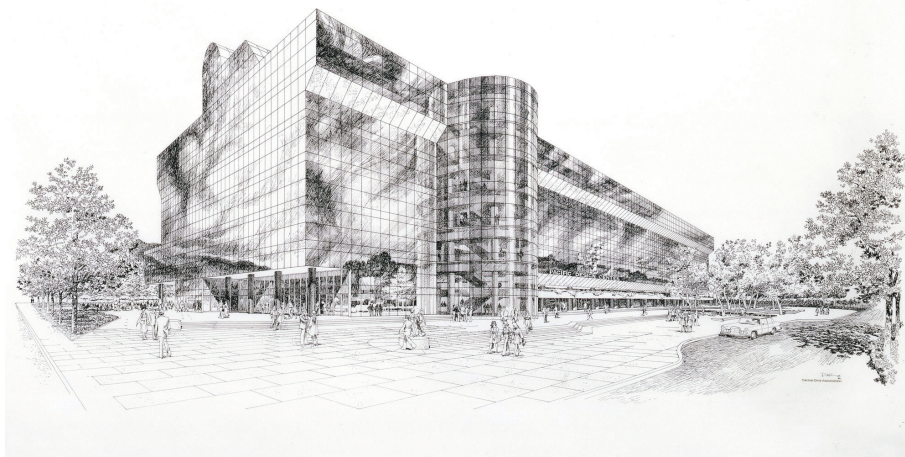
Gregory Ain: *The Modern Home as Social Commentary*, in which he discusses the socialist ideas underpinning Ain's architecture. But Denzer's latest effort, *The Solar House*, represents a major shift in historical writing. No longer are architectural historians confined to reviewing the big names or buildings of a previously established canon. Denzer is part of an emerging movement looking to more broadly and deeply describe a profound and interwoven material history of architecture, a history with main and secondary architects, as well as off-the-map buildings. And never is this history more important than when looking at the environmental issues in architecture.

So just what is a solar house?

From the beginning, Denzer defines his research to encompass a "building that uses solar energy for space heating that is deliberate and creative." This definition excludes the earlier notions of solar as a system of maintaining health. *The Solar House's* view of solar as only energy-related begins to weave together engineering and design problems in the domestic space. The book works as both a glossy illustrated anthology and as a rich historical narrative. At the same time, it covers both the motivational ethics of solar homes and the pragmatic engineering necessary to achieve innovation. For evidence, *The Solar House* follows a mostly chronological progression of solar design, starting



Carlos Diniz's rendering of Pacific Design Center by Cesar Pelli for Gruen Associates.



EDWARD CELLA ART & ARCHITECTURE

**WIDE ANGLE LENS** continued from page 18 Davis to Morphosis' Kate Mantilini restaurant, from the Music Center to Disneyland? *Overdrive* makes a strong case for each of these as part of a closely-knit fabric, not as isolated artifacts.

It's refreshing to see the large corporate architecture offices recognized as part of our architectural history, alongside the smaller atelier or avant-garde architects who have usually been the focus of LA's international reputation. With designs and planning honed on California's aerospace and high tech campuses, these firms are also examples of LA's aesthetic diversity.

From the sculpted volume and tight glass skin of Cesar Pelli and Gruen Associates' Pacific Design Center to the geometrically warped arcades of Edward Durell Stone's Perpetual Savings tower, these firms indicate a wide range of aesthetic taste and experiment.

The work of these large firms is still controversial (evidenced in the proposed destruction of William Pereira's LACMA campus), but *Overdrive* drives home the fact that these once-shunned buildings are part of the culture of inclusiveness, experiment, and quality design that is seen across the spectrum of LA architecture as the chal-

lenges of each decade are faced.

While *Overdrive* admirably includes many architects and buildings that have not been part of the official canon, it has not achieved a fully balanced view. Probably the most glaring example is the slight presence of Charles Moore, whose intellectual leadership opened a path for the profession out of the doldrums of establishment Modernism. He had a global reach, but was rooted in LA. Moore figures in the 1970s and 1980s, decades that launched a new chapter in the city's architectural history with Frank Gehry, Cesar Pelli, and the younger generation of the so-called Los Angeles School. These decades are problematic for the exhibit, because their themes and ideas are still at work today.

Southern California design, we learn, is marvelously interconnected, without the clear, comfortable distinctions we've assumed exist between high art and popular design. That point is underscored by the inclusion of Victor Gruen's innovative concept for Millirons department store (1947) next to Frank Gehry's Edgemar shopping center (1984)—especially when we learn that Gehry worked with Gruen at the beginning of his career.

What is clear in *Overdrive* is the story of a remarkable creative flowering throughout the second half of the twentieth century in Southern California. Now we can see that it was broader, more diverse, and more inclusive than we generally thought.

**ALAN HESS IS THE ARCHITECTURE CRITIC OF THE SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS.**

House of Tomorrow, Century of Progress Exhibition, Chicago, 1933



HEDRICH-BLESSING

**SUN STRUCTURES** continued from page 18 mid-century period, with examples from the 1970s to the present appearing far less detailed and nuanced than those covered in earlier chapters.

Earth Day 2013 helped us all to recall the 1970 landmark celebration and reminded us of the significance of the environmental movement. *The Solar House* is not simply a gesture to those roots; it is a wake-up call to remind us that those roots go deeper and further back, past the visions of the 1960s.

Hopefully this book will be one of many future investigations that approach the problems of environmentally focused design with serious historical research, attention to innovation, and analysis of the profound impact that environmental history and architectural history both deserve.

**JESSICA VARNER IS THE FOUNDER OF THE RESEARCH STUDIO SMALLERLARGE AND A CURRENT YALE UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE MED CANDIDATE.**

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# Windshield PERSPECTIVE

## TO SEE WHAT IS IN FRONT OF ONE'S NOSE NEEDS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE - George Orwell

A drive through the streets of Los Angeles is a drive into the world of design inspiration.

*Windshield Perspective* looks at the short yet dense stretch of Beverly Boulevard from Normandie to Virgil. The car's windshield is both a lens and a shield—a screen which acts much like a magnifying glass to clarify the view and as a scrim to obscure the sights. A drive along Beverly is like hundreds, if not thousands, of daily journeys through the city's landscape. The boulevard, in its apparent bleakness, is easily dismissed as nowhere. But a choreographed drive, created within the Museum, reveals the very essence of the city: messy, disorderly, impromptu, vital, and loved.

*Windshield Perspective* is part of Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A., celebrating Southern California's lasting impact on modern architecture from April – July 2013.

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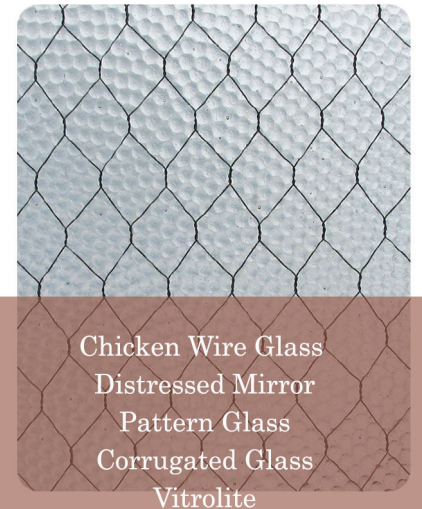


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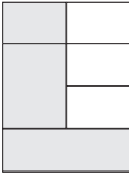


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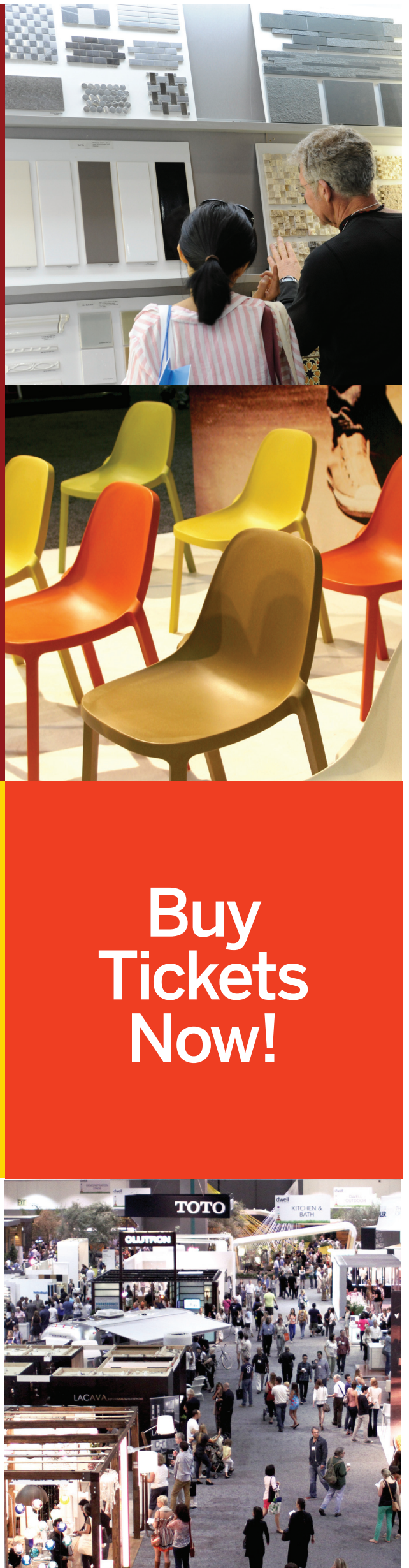
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CHRIS WILEY

**The following is an excerpt of an interview with Peter Eisenman conducted by writer and architect Iman Ansari. It was originally published in *Hamshahri Architecture* in Iran.**

**Iman Ansari: Between the object and the idea of the object, your approach favors the latter. The physical house is merely a medium through which the conception of the virtual or conceptual house becomes possible. In that sense, the real building exists only in your drawings.**

**Peter Eisenman:** “Real architecture” only exists in drawings. The “real building” exists outside the drawing. The difference here is that “architecture” and “building” are not the same.

**Did you ever wish your houses were not built?**

No. If there is a debate in architecture today, the lasting debate is between architecture as a conceptual, cultural, and intellectual enterprise, and architecture as a phenomenological enterprise—that is, the experience of the subject in architecture, the experience of materiality, of light, of color, of space, etc. I have always been on the side opposed to phenomenology. I’m not interested in Peter Zumthor’s work or people who spend their time worrying about the details or the grain of wood on one side or the color of the material on the surface. I couldn’t care less. That having been said, it is still necessary to build. But the whole notion of the idea of “cardboard architecture” meant that the materiality of the work was important as an “anti-material” statement. Probably the most important work I did in the conceptualist realm was the cardboard architecture houses. Pictures of House II, for instance, were taken without sunlight so you have no shadows, and no reveals or things like this, and in fact one of the pictures we took of House II was in a French magazine that said it was a “model of House II.” I have achieved what I wanted to achieve, which was to lessen the difference between the built form and the model. I was always trying to say “built model” as the conceptual reality of architecture. When you see these houses and you visit them you realize that they are didactic and important exercises—each one has a different thematic—but they were concerned not with meaning in the social sense of the word or the cultural sense, but in the “architectural meaning.” I never thought I would want to build anything but houses because I thought they gave

sufficient room to experiment with non-functionalities, since there is no one type of functional organization for a house, but there are architectural organizations. But that later proved to be problematic. The second thing was that I didn’t believe it was necessary to ever visit my houses. In other words, there were houses that for the first six months or year they were open I didn’t even go to see them because I thought it wasn’t that important; the important thing was laid in the drawing. The Canadian Centre for Architecture has 2,000 drawings for House II. I would draw and draw because I never knew what I was looking for. I knew the general parameters, but I had no formula for setting up how to achieve it. Each house has an idea behind it.

**Do you think because these houses existed cognitively they lost their true meaning the moment they were physically realized—the moment the “real architecture” turned into the “real building”?**

Manfredo Tafuri once said to me: “Peter, if you don’t build no one will take your ideas seriously. You have to build because ideas that are not built are simply ideas that are not built.” Architecture involves seeing whether those ideas can withstand the attack of building, of people, of time, of function. Tafuri said history will not be interested in your work if you haven’t built anything. I think that’s absolutely correct. If I had built nothing, you and I wouldn’t be talking now.

**What would the building mean in that context? Do you believe the built house or the “real building” stands for the “built-model” of the “real architecture” that exists only conceptually?**

Sometimes it does and sometimes it’s beyond, and sometimes it’s less. When you see the Aronoff Center in Cincinnati, the spatial experience is extraordinary. The didactic drawing itself is another thing. But they are two different things. I had to build Cincinnati, I had to build Wexner, I had to build Santiago, which is my latest project. You have to see it because you cannot draw it. You cannot cognitively understand what is going on. One has to see it and experience it in a way that is very different conceptually in terms of what I was after. There are three phases in the work. One is the purely conceptual artifacts, which, as you suggested, may not have necessarily had to have been built. The second is the ground projects, which are at a different scale and many of them had to be built. And finally you have Santiago, which is a hybrid project because it is neither a ground nor a figure.

**In your Cannaregio project, we witness a new order that initiated the Cities of Artificial Excavation, and characterizes your work after that: The movement from structure to site or text, or better, from structuralization of the object, to the textualization of the site. Or from linguistic operations to textual operations—because texts are quite correct about the site but they are no longer syntactic and grammatical, they are other. And if you say the early houses are analogically grammatical exercises to linguistic exercises, these are no longer analogical to language.**

I have lost the faith that language could be somehow an analogous model for architecture. I thought I had to find what I was doing within architecture rather than without architecture. The reading that I’m doing, the work that I’m doing, has more to do with the text of architecture. And that didn’t happen accidentally. The first architectural biennale was Europa-America. Even though Paolo Portoghesi would like to think the Strada Novissima in 1980 was the first biennale, Vittorio Gregotti’s Europa-America in 1976 was the first architectural biennale. I met Vittorio some years earlier and he had appointed me as the head of the American section of the first architectural biennale in Italy. At the same time I was supposed to finish up the working drawings for House X. The client dug a hole waiting to begin the project. I spent the summer in Italy and didn’t pay attention to the drawings. I came back and the working drawings were not done, and the client was furious; he fired me and refused to pay my bills. I was depressed, and I realized that my intellectual side, or cultural side, and my entrepreneurial side had gotten way out of whack. So I went into psychoanalysis and began to learn about the difference between living in your head and living in your body, with the reality of the earth, the ground. When Tafuri wrote “The Meditations of Icarus” in Houses of Cards, he meant that Peter Eisenman was Icarus, and to be Icarus meant that you wanted to fly and to look into the sun, as Icarus did. And to look into the sun meant that you were totally out of touch with the reality of the earth and the ground. Icarus, of course, gets too close to the sun, his wings of wax melt and he falls to earth. Icarus was the son of Daedalus, who made a labyrinth that was guarded by a Minotaur. It was an interesting mythology, which had to do with the ground, digging into the ground and making marks on the ground. I realized that what was wrong with my architecture was that it wasn’t from the ground, from inside the unconscious, beneath the surface. So the first evidence of this occurs in Cannaregio in 1978, where for the first time I did a project totally in the ground. And it’s not only in the ground, it’s also urban. But it’s also not real. It’s conceptual; and uses Corbusier’s unbuilt hospital project as an initial context. In 1980, I’m invited to Berlin to do the Checkpoint Charlie project, which includes the garden of walls. You can’t walk on the ground of Berlin even though it is a project inscribed in the ground. Then I did the Wexner Center. A number of these projects fall within the concept of artificial excavations. The ground afforded me a critical dialogue with the then-current (1978–1980) theory of Figure-Ground Architecture: the black and white drawings of Collin Rowe and the contextualists, work done for Roma Interotta using the Nolli map of Rome. What I was doing was the reverse. I was attacking the historicizing obviousness of “figure-ground” and trying to make what I call a “figure-figure urbanism.” And that of course had to do with my interest in Piranesi, and his Campo Marzio.

**Do you think that the role of drawing is diminishing in contemporary architectural practice?**

I cannot read a book on a Kindle. I have to own a book, and I have to write in the book. When I read I take notes, I go back over it. You can see my books are full of notes in

different pens and colors and times because when I read a book today that I may have read ten years ago, I read it differently because I’m different. I have to take notes over time in books, so I own books. That’s number one. To me, drawing and reading are the same thing. I can’t read on the computer. Anytime someone draws something in the computer, I want it printed so I can draw over it either with tracing paper on it or without it. You cannot make a plan in the computer by connecting dots. You have to think about a diagram or what it is you are doing. You have to think in drawing. So to me, all of my work, even the last competition that we won in Turkey, is drawn by hand first, then we give it to the computer guys and then they model it and then we get it back. To me, drawing is not making pretty things or making representations. It’s not representing anything. It is the incarnation of the thing. I’m not trying to represent something. I’m trying to make it real. And the only way it can be real is through my drawings. Architects and architecture students today have lost the capacity to think through drawing. They can only think through a computer. I watch people in this office sitting and looking at these things on their screen as they roll them around in space, and I think to myself, what the hell are they doing? It’s nuts. It’s totally wacko. You know, what does a section look like? What does a plan look like? They don’t seem interested in that. Then drawing comes as an after thought. Once you model the object in 3D, then you can cut plans and sections off it. But I start with the cuts. I build from the cuts.

**Is it fair to say that you have moved away from the structuralist principles that defined your early work? When exactly does the individual subject of architecture and the subjective experience of space come into play in your projects?**

The work up to Cannaregio was structuralist, and then became post-structuralist. Cannaregio was a hinge from the past to the present. The first project I did after Cannaregio was Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin. That project dug into my own unconscious, producing a work that we don’t know whether it’s for the left or the right. In fact the mayor of Berlin said, “Look, I can’t build this because everybody is going to hate this project. The right wing is going to hate it; the left wing is going to hate it.” But it certainly had to do with the individual, and his or her being in the space. No question that when you walk on a wall that is 3.3 meters high it is the only space you can walk on, you are now walking on a new datum in Berlin, which is the datum of the Berlin wall. So the wall doesn’t even exist anymore, it is now part of the fabric of this project. And then when you go into the watchtowers and you walk up and you cannot see anything because there is no viewing out. And then you see the ruins below. All of this is about the experience of moving up and down and across of the human subject. So there is no question that the human subject enters the project, and you cannot understand the project unless you can conceptualize what it would be like to be the human subject. Even though it’s not built, you can conceptualize what it would be like. It would be quite an extraordinary experience. That’s why architecture, finally, has to involve the subject in an architectural manner.



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