1ST ANNUAL
BEST OF DESIGN AWARDS

AN’S FIRST ANNUAL BEST OF DESIGN AWARDS

THE JURY HAS CONVENEED AND JUDGED OVER 200 SUBMISSIONS. TURN TO PAGE 16 AND SEE THEIR SELECTIONS FOR BEST FABRICATION PROJECT, FACADE, INTERIOR, LANDSCAPE, STUDENT BUILT WORK, AND BUILDING(S) OF THE YEAR. IN ADDITION, LEARN ABOUT THE CONSULTANTS, COLLABORATORS, AND SOURCES BEHIND THESE PROJECTS.
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Last month, San Francisco voters turned back 8 Washington, SOM’s 134-unit condominium project along the Embarcadero, ending a seven-year battle. This month politics were again front and center in the city’s planning process, as a group led by former mayor Art Agnos made waves to get the planned Warriors’ arena at Pier 30–32 on the upcoming June Ballot. The arena, argues the group, could be moved to the spot where Candlestick Park will soon be demolished. Finally, the Sierra Club is threatening to fight other projects that will alter the waterfront heights, including 75 Howard, a 31-story condominium, and Seawall Lot 337, a mixed-use development near AT&T Park.

On the surface it seems logical that voters should be able to vote on large projects. The will of the public should decide the fate of the urban realm, right? But when you start to drill down it is not that simple.

The ballot, it turns out, can be used by developers and the wealthy and powerful to stop projects just like any other mechanism. And since voting levels are so depressingly low and issues so complex, the people that usually come out to vote are those in opposition. It is especially a problem in a city where the itch to keep things the way they are often gets in the way of progress.

“Unfortunately the ballot is a tool that is readily available to wealthy homeowners and special interests in California,” said Gabe Metcalf of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association. “They can hire lawyers and pay for signature gathering.” He added that this kind of approach will inevitably slow the city’s new architecture to a crawl. “Every project in the city is treated as discretionary. I think the general direction we need to be moving in is to make the zoning matter so that projects that conform with zoning are welcomed and permitted.”

Speaking even louder on the topic is local architect Anne Fougeron. “It’s completely out of control,” said Fougeron. “You can’t run a city if there’s always a possibility that the decisions your elected officials and planners have made can be curtailed by special interests.” Speaking to blanket opposition, Fougeron said, “What does the Sierra Club know about height legislation and planning? It trivializes what our planners do; people who spend a lot of time studying these issues.”

I don’t recommend approving every major development that goes up; certainly not ones in sensitive areas like the waterfront. But when projects go through years of neighborhood and planning review to meet the specific needs of the community then they should generally be given a better chance to stand. Especially when large shares of their revenues go towards infrastructure and affordable housing funds. Just as California’s statewide referendum process gets corrupted by special interests, so does its local one. The language and information in these initiatives needs to be much more tightly scrutinized, and there needs to be more outreach to the public about the consequences of each measure. Until that changes the ballot measure in California, while seeming like a democratic process, will always be susceptible to the maneuverings of the powerful.

SAM LUBEll

PITFALLS OF DEMOCRACY

Correction

In AN’s special glass issue (14_12.04.2013) two Guardian products were mischaracterized, one in the product section (p. 11) the other in the feature (p. 18). Below are corrected descriptions of those products. We regret the errors.

Guardian SunGuard SuperNeutral 68

Guardian SunGuard SuperNeutral 68 glazing offers improved solar control and abundant natural light. The Valley View project shown here uses SunGuard SN 68 triple glazing, providing a visible light transmission of 52 percent and a solar heat gain coefficient of 0.32. SunGuard SN 68 can also be laminated for noise reduction and hurricane protection. SunGuardGlass.com

Guardian Reveal

Reveal switchable glass from Guardian separates the bathrooms and bedrooms in more than 200 guest rooms in the newly renovated The Langham Chicago. With the flip of a switch, the glass changes from opaque to transparent.
Crooks and Castles sounds like a video game, but it is actually a young men’s clothing emporium that has relocated from Hollywood to an expansive storefront on a gentrifying block of Fairfax in midtown Los Angeles. Architect Adam Wheeler stripped a former thrift store, scaling the patched concrete floor, exposing the ceiling ducts and joists, and retaining one patinated brick wall. Those relics provide a raw backdrop for elegant walnut display cabinets, a cantilevered sales desk, and two Schindler-esque, wood-framed sofas.

Bowl Mending

HNTB upgrades a Berkeley landmark

California Memorial Stadium, largest and best loved of the monumental buildings that dot the UC Berkeley campus, has been transformed. For HNTB and project architect Fernando Vasquez this was a fourfold challenge. The stadium straddles the Hayward Fault, which geologists consider the second most dangerous in the state. As a Beaux-Arts landmark, built in 1923 by campus architect John Galen Howard, the stadium had to be modernized without compromising its integrity. The athletic facilities and offices that were cluttering the base of the stadium had to be relocated. And last, the site needed to be linked, physically and programmatically, with a campus that had expanded greatly over the previous 90 years.

The answer to that question is, plenty. The stadium is nestled into one side of a ravine, emerging as an oval of concrete that was clearly inspired by the Colosseum in Rome. That historic facade was braced with steel, while the stadium was partially gutted and the playing area was lowered 4 1/2 feet to improve sightlines. The bleachers were reconfigured, to meet ADA requirements, improve access, and add premium spots, reducing seating from above 70,000 to 63,000. Piecemeal additions were eliminated to open up sweeping views of the campus and the bay. A two-level training center was constructed below the two-acre plaza that extends from the base of the stadium. Stairs and skylights pull natural light into this multi-purpose facility.

First, the sad news: Hollywood Park, the once-grand host to famous horses like Seabiscuit, officially closed its doors in December, and its demolition has already begun. But in positive news, the long-shuttered Great Western Forum, now corporate-ty known as the Forum Presented by Chase, reopened in January with a major renovation. To celebrate the occasion the venue installed the world’s largest vinyl record on its roof; a replica of the Eagles’ Hotel California made out of 250,000 square feet of printed vinyl. And yes, it actually spins. At 17 mph.

Our friends at one of the largest firms in world, AECOM, have made a move we never anticipated: signing Peter Zellner, known as a maverick architect of galleries and houses, to be their new head of design in Southern California. Obviously they want to start doing things differently.

Don’t forget to answer the RFP for the UC Santa Cruz Institute of the Arts and Sciences, a future museum and innovation hub on one of the most beautiful campuses on the country. Also up in Northern California, Andrew Wolfram has bolted Perkins + Will’s San Francisco office to become a principal at TEF (Tom Ellicott + Freach). Wolfram was project architect for the SF Ferry Building and also worked on the renovation of 140 New Montgomery, Timothy Pflueger’s art deco skyscraper for Pacific Telephone.

INGLEWOOD MAKES WAVES

First the sad news: Hollywood Park, the once-grand host to famous horses like Seabiscuit, officially closed its doors in December, and its demolition has already begun. But in positive news, the long-shuttered Great Western Forum, now corporate-ty known as the Forum Presented by Chase, reopened in January with a major renovation. To celebrate the occasion the venue installed the world’s largest vinyl record on its roof; a replica of the Eagles’ Hotel California made out of 250,000 square feet of printed vinyl. And yes, it actually spins. At 17 mph.

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SEND RACING FORMS AND COLITAS TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM

...and ODYSSEY

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SEND RACING FORMS AND COLITAS TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM
West Hollywood is preparing to get a lot greener. While still mired in lengthy delays related to Plummer Park further east, last month the city unveiled the finalist schemes for the second phase of West Hollywood Park, located next to the Johnson Fava-designed public library and public spaces, just west of San Vicente Boulevard.

Three shortlisted teams—Frederick Fisher and Partners with CMG, Rios Clementi Hale, and Langdon Wilson—unveiled conceptual master plan renderings. The ideas are still considered conceptual because they could be scaled down due to practical concerns, explained city officials.

“These are just ideas,” said Fisher, who led the project team. “When the project begins all this stuff goes away and we start with a blank piece of paper,” reiterated Frederick Fisher during his presentation. But Jeffrey Huffer, the city’s Strategic Initiatives Manager, expressed a different opinion. “In all I would expect to see the style and type of buildings would remain very similar to what they’ve presented,” he said.

The $80 million project will remove several existing buildings from the site—including the Edward Fickett-designed Library (whose demolition had caused some concern in preservation circles, but has since been removed by preservationists recently), said city spokesperson Lisa Belaniti), and the current auditorium, swimming pool, park office, and support buildings, to make room for an expanded core of grass and trees. The park will now contain over five acres of uninterrupted open space. New buildings will be highlighted by a new 70,000-square-foot recreation and community center with a rooftop pool, park support facilities, and children’s playground areas. All of the proposals focused on the new recreation center and rooftop pool, and tried to encourage interaction between the new building and its adjacent park.

The Fisher team’s proposal includes a large grass-topped podium and a stair connecting the park to the recreation center. “The building itself is an extension of the park,” said Fisher. Its fractured landscape, set with meandering pathways, is divided into varied zones, including a reading garden, a sloped garden walk, garden “rooms,” and the “great lawn,” a large open grassy space. LPA’s proposal also fuses rec center with landscape, with vertical green screens, a large hybrid roof, and a grand stair leading down from the pool to the park. Its rooftop pool is “resort style, killer view and a view terrace. A two-story building contains a large rock-climbing wall. Its “public park,” programmed for larger events and athletics, is set along much higher angles, overlaid with a sinuous “neighborhood park” set for passive activities.

“We feel the two parks in one gives West Hollywood the best of both worlds,” said LPA’s Rick Sholl. The team’s garden creates an “outdoor living room,” made up of greenhouse and recreation. A “rainbow garden walk” and amphitheater link the upper level of the park with the lower level.

Shuffler said that the winning scheme will be revealed at the next city council meeting in late January. Construction is tentatively scheduled to be complete sometime in 2017.

**CIVIC STUDIES**

As Downtown Los Angeles’ comeback continues at a rapid pace you can add another category to the area’s new residences, offices, hotels, shops, and restaurants: projects from the dead. In recent months a flurry of all types of development once considered lost in the last economic downturn have come back online, albeit often with very different teams and looks.

“We felt very strongly that the demand would come right back once the recession started to ease,” said Carol Schatz, president and CEO at the Downtown Center Business Improvement District (DCBID). Unlike the previous recession, she added, “everyone knew something was going on downtown. It didn’t erode the confidence people had in downtown as a new market.”

The timing couldn’t be better. According to DCBID’s 2013 Development Market Report, Downtown LA is now seeing construction of 5,000 residential units and 1,474 hotel units, while over 70 new retail businesses opened in 2013 and millions of square feet of office space were leased. Another important factor in the projects’ return: the city’s multiple approvals ordinance, which, among other things, helped extend the length of development entitlements to keep them alive.

The most high profile return is Related Company’s and Frank Gehry’s Grand Avenue Project in Bunker Hill, whose new scheme—now centered around a staggered, u-shaped plaza—was approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on January 14 and by the Grand Avenue Authority on January 15. That $750 million, mixed-use project was left for dead after close to a dozen extensions, but received a shot in the arm when potential partners—particularly Hotel operator SLS—expressed interest, according to Related’s Bill Witte. The scale of the project is significantly reduced from the original one. “It’s a better and more appropriate plan this time around,” said Witte.

In the super-hot Arts District, AMP Lofts were designed by Koning Eizenberg (2008) is now 605 Santa Fe, with architecture by Shimoda Design. The project—which would look in the area’s industrial setting, with a concrete podium and corrugated metal clad units—including 240 apartment units and 20,000 square feet of retail and commercial space designed around 25,000 square feet of park space. “We’re very bullish on Los Angeles,” explained Ryan Granito, Senior Project Manager for the developer, Belouver Associates. The site’s entitlements were already in place, and only need to be adjusted.

On the other side of town another raised ghost is Metropolis, a mega-scale mixed-use project in South Park that has seen more iterations than any other in the area, including plans by Michael Graves in the 1990s, and another by developer IDS in 2011. The $1 billion hotel, residential, office project is being led by Shanghai-based Greenland Group and by Gensler. The project will start with a 19-story hotel and a 38-story apartment building. Applications were filed in December.

Park Fifth, a 76-story condo tower designed by KPF in 2008, is now 605 Santa Fe, with architecture by Shimoda Design. The project—which would look in the area’s industrial setting, with a concrete podium and corrugated metal clad units—including 240 apartment units and 20,000 square feet of retail and commercial space designed around 25,000 square feet of park space. “We’re very bullish on Los Angeles,” explained Ryan Granito, Senior Project Manager for the developer, Belouver Associates. The site’s entitlements were already in place, and only need to be adjusted.

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Finally comes the redevelopment of the Herald Examiner development on Broadway, centering around the old building’s grand stair to reflect the park, but it’s about the park at the end of the day,” said Langdon Wilson Project Architect Rick Sholl. The team’s garden creates an “outdoor living room,” made up of greenhouse and recreation. A “rainbow garden walk” and amphitheater link the upper level of the park with the lower level.

Shuffler said that the winning scheme will be revealed at the next city council meeting in late January. Construction is tentatively scheduled to be complete sometime in 2017.
BELOWED GOLD

The AIA has posthumously awarded the Gold Medal—the profession’s highest honor—to California architect Julia Morgan, more than 50 years after her death. Morgan is the first woman to win the prize, which has been handed out for more than a century.

Morgan, who died in 1957, practiced for nearly 50 years, and designed more than 700 buildings (a pace of more than 18 structures a year) of widely varying types, including houses, churches, hotels, commercial buildings, and museums. The most famous was William Randolph Hearst’s Hearst Castle, in San Simeon, California (1947), a rambling hillside estate built in the style of Renaissance Spain, with 165 rooms and 127 acres of gardens overlooking the Pacific. Morgan designed elegant and often poetic structures across California, making her mark as one of the state’s most important and talented practitioners.

“Julia Morgan gave the world an abundance of that most valuable gift creative genius can bestow—beauty,” wrote Mark Wilson in his book, Julia Morgan, Architect of Beauty.

Born in 1872, Morgan grew up in Oakland, and studied engineering at the University of California at Berkeley. Thanks in part to a recommendation from one of her professors, Bernard Maybeck, she became the first woman to study architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1904, she became the first woman licensed to practice architecture in California. Her Beaux-Arts education and relentless drive gave her the ability to design in a vast variety of styles, including Tudor, Georgian, Romanesque Revival, Spanish Colonial, and Moorish.

“She was an architect of remarkable breadth, depth, and consistency of exceptional work,” said California Senator Danne Feinstein in her recommendation letter for Morgan’s nomination. Also involved with the nomination was renowned Chicago architect Jeanne Gang, who helped gather an extensive dossier on Morgan’s behalf.

“Julia Morgan was a true superstar,” said Gang. “Many people know her as the architect of Hearst Castle, but there is so much more to Julia Morgan, and it is my hope that the Gold Medal opens the door to further scholarship.”

Morgan’s most remarkable buildings are breathtaking both for their impact and their variety. They include the Herald Examiner Building (1915) in Los Angeles, an eclectic structure on Broadway combining Mission Revival and Romanesque forms with exceptional Moorish detailing; the Asilomar YWCA (1913) in Pacific Grove, California, a rustic but elegant collection of Arts and Crafts buildings that is now home to the Monterey Design Conference; and unusual work like her fairy tale-style collection of houses in Shasta County, California, known as Wyntoon (1924–1940).

Morgan’s career paved the way for female architects around the country. But until now, the AIA has never given Gold Medal quality women who were overlooked.

Morgan’s body of work and pioneering legacy make her deserving, even a half century after her death. In his book, Wilson refutes criticism from some later architects, particularly of the early modernists who rose during her career, calling her work derivative and unoriginal. “Her legacy speaks clearly to anyone who takes the time to appreciate it: in the subtle beauty of her carefully crafted stairways; in the warm and intimate quality of her thoroughly livable interiors; in the pleasing refinement of every detail on her exteriors; and in the graceful strength of the structural elements of her largest buildings.”

“While it might be unconventional to have a posthumous mentor, Julia Morgan will always be mine,” added noted LA architect Brenda Levin.

In a bit tersweet twist, the AIA awarded its other major honor—its Firm of the Year Award—to New Orleans architects Eskew + Dumez + Ripple in the same week that one of its founders, Allen Eskew, passed away. The New Orleans–based firm is known for using a rigorous Modernist aesthetic combined with a vernacular sensitivity to reinvent its home city and other urban locations. The firm’s projects are a mainstay at local and national awards, ranging from the renovation of the New Orleans Superdome to the Louisiana State History Museum in New Orleans, to Reinventing the Crescent, an exhaustive plan to redevelop much of the city’s battered waterfront. The cause of Eskew’s death was undetermined at press time. “Allen was tremendously proud of this nomination. We are grateful that we can reflect on what we have been able to accomplish,” noted Eskew’s business partner, Steven Dumez. Both Eskew + Dumez + Ripple and Morgan will be honored at the 2014 AIA National Convention in Chicago.
Nothing signals the rebirth of downtown Los Angeles more than the new Ace Hotel, which recently opened on Broadway. Built inside C. Howard Crane’s Spanish Gothic 1927 United Artists Theater and adjacent office building (originally used by Texaco), the project is a lost treasure that’s finally been recovered. And the same can now be said for Broadway. It has always been a mystery to me why this once-great, now be said for Broadway. It has always been recovered. And the same can be said for Broadway. It has always been recovered. And the same can be said for Broadway. It has always been recovered. And the same can be said for Broadway. It has always been recovered. And the same can be said for Broadway. It has always been recovered.

The hotel is the kind of place you want to keep coming back to, full of satisfying and strange layers, history, and youthful artistic energy. Its design team was led by local fixtures Commune, who made the wise choice of not only combining careful restoration (preserved facade details and marquee and original floors, walls, and ceilings) with a touch of contemporary (fiberboard walls, steel and glass insertions), but spreading the wealth to some of the best young artistic talent in the city. In the first floor restaurant, called LA Chapter, the Haas Brothers’ have sketched cute, hilarious doodles all over the walls, while in the small lobby Jetson has installed a colorful, geometric patchwork of stained glass. Along a wall of the gift shop a wonderfully coarse mural by Tanya Aguiñiga looks like it is made of goat hair and asbestos. In the upstairs rooftop lounge Alma Allen has created tables out of what seems to be petrified wood while Michael Schmidt has hung vintage steel chain links and original theater lights from next door.

Let’s be honest, boutique hotels never have big enough rooms (with the exceptions of their rock star suites) and the Ace is no exception. But the design inside them again utilizes the hotel’s mix of old, new, and artsy (especially the art, by film world art director Mike Mills) with a sophisticated selection of furniture, colors, and a unique layout, along with exposed original concrete and fiberboard. Plus each room has a record player. And it doesn’t hurt that these spaces take advantage of the beautiful Spanish gothic architecture of the building, including their sinuous windows. The building’s curvy, wonderfully intricate detailing keeps your eyes arrested, be it on the facade or in the elevator banks or in rooftop details.

While you are up in the rooftop bar—which is going to be perpetually crowded, because it is not very big—make sure also to take a look at the restored “Jesus Saves” sign, edging the west side of the building. It installed there by the previous owner, the Evangelical minister Dr. Gene Scott, who deserves a lot of credit for keeping the whole building in good shape. But while the hotel is an accomplishment, the true highlight is its Spanish Gothic (or more appropriately, High Gothic) theater, which used to be the highly popular United Artist, and was later kept up as a prayer hall by Scott (it will now be used for concerts and events). I have been to practical Heaven: a movie palace on Broadway, and this one is in the top echelon. I would argue that it is the most opulent, strange, flamboyant, and magical space in downtown. The layers of ornament—organ screens and a proscenium arch look like set pieces from “Fraggle Rock”; a lantern space above the proscenium arch look like set pieces from “Fraggle Rock”; a lantern space above the proscenium arch look like set pieces from “Fraggle Rock”; a lantern space above the proscenium arch look like set pieces from “Fraggle Rock”; a lantern space above the proscenium arch look like set pieces from “Fraggle Rock”; a lantern space above the proscenium arch look like set pieces from “Fraggle Rock”.

Indeed, just coming here makes you think about the downtown treasure hunt is for real. As I walk down its length and wonder at the fantastically strange and beautiful facades of the Orpheum Theater, the Eastern Building, the Los Angeles Theater, the Bradbury Building, and so much more, I cannot wait to see what happens next on this street, which has always had the potential to transform downtown and finally—finally—seems to be actually doing that.

A dentist, Dr. Sara Creighton, and her former patient, Lowell Caulder, have set out to create the first mobile dental office in San Francisco—delivering convenient (and hopefully less scary) care to people at work. They have named the office Studio Dental and teamed with LA firm Montalba Architects. This is the second time Creighton has worked with the firm, which previously designed her Washington Square Park Dental offices in San Francisco. They anticipate opening the new office shortly.

The team’s goal has been to design a more inspiring space while still being able to fit the necessities of a dental practice—a waiting room, two operating rooms, and a sterilization room. Working with only 230 square feet inside a 26-foot-long trailer, many elements serve double-duty.

For example, layered wall panels—CNC-milled solid surfacing over acoustical foam—provide acoustical dampening between rooms and also provide opportunities to embed mirrors, visually expanding the tiny interior volume, explained Montalba Architects principal and founder David Montalba. Double-sided program elements, like the stacked instrument panel between the two patient rooms, further maximize the work area.

Eleven-foot ceilings in the operatories hold skylights that provide diffused natural light and also store TV monitors. The waiting room features a tablet for check-in, a magazine rack, bench seating, and an area for sterilizing equipment hidden behind the millwork paneling.

The design team stuck to a paired-down materials palette, weaving together perforated panels, wood millwork, and white surfaces. “By keeping the interior enclosed and pushing this vertical orientation, the patient experience is directed toward a more calming, natural light-infused environment,” said Montalba.
4th International Holcim Awards for sustainable construction projects. Prize money totals USD 2 million.

Renowned technical universities lead the independent juries in five regions of the world. They evaluate projects at an advanced stage of design against the “target issues” for sustainable construction and allocate additional prizes for visionary ideas of young professionals and students. Find out more about the competitions at www.holcimawards.org

The Holcim Awards is an initiative of the Swiss based Holcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction. It is supported by Holcim and its Group companies and affiliates in around 70 countries, including the United States. Holcim Ltd is one of the world’s leading suppliers of cement and aggregates.

“The Holcim Awards appeal to students, to professionals, to everybody who has an interest in sustainable construction and design. All can stand together and talk as equals in the arena.”

Reed Kroloff, Director, Cranbrook Academy of Art, USA.

www.holcimawards.org
As the newest addition to the BuzziSwitch line, strips of the company’s felt are artfully compiled to absorb sound and improve acoustics in easily installable panels. The linear design is realized by repurposing strips of felt that would normally be designated as scrap. A variety of combinations in over 25 colorways are available.

buzzispace.com

Designed for timeless appeal, the Eon Collection blends opacity and translucency on a glass tile. Each 6-inch tile features both a glossy and matte finish divided at the same angle for various installation configurations and ease of customization. Four neutral colorways fluctuate depending upon the viewer’s vantage.

bellavitatile.com

Activities from reclaimed aircraft materials, these floor and wall panels feature 100 percent recycled content. Each 1/8-inch panel features one beveled and one rectified edge for butted or grouted joint installation, and comes in 6- by 12-inch, 3- by 6-inch, or 3- by 12-inch formats.

coveringsetc.com

Designed by Japanese artist Tokujin Yoshioka, the Phenomenon collection features natural textures for walls and floors. Air, pictured, is a multidimensional mosaic of 1-inch unglazed porcelain tiles on a square foot of mesh backing. It comes in four neutral colorways with coordinating trim.

mutina.it

A new series of large format perforated acoustic panels provide a more monolithic solution for sound absorptive surfacing. Four lines offer varying visuals: Quattro 41 features square apertures; Line 6 is defined by linear fissures; and Sixto 63 and Sixto 65 boast hexagonal perforations. Each BIG pattern can be translated for CertainTeed’s compatible grid system and ceiling tiles for smooth transitions.

certainteed.com

Born from the Net-Works conservation project with the Zoological Society of London, Net Effect takes its design inspiration from the rescue and repurposing of discarded nylon fishing nets in the Pacific Ocean. Refined by domestic nylon supplier Aquafil, the new fibers are woven into three designs from David Oakley that evoke wave breaks along the shoreline. Two shades of blue and six neutrals are available on a 20-inch tile or a 10- by 40-inch plank.

interface.com

A SURFACING MATERIAL HAS TO OFFER MORE THAN STRONG AESTHETICS TO SUIT TODAY’S INTERIORS: IT MUST ALSO SUPPORT OCCUPANCY HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. WHETHER MADE FROM REPURPOSED POST CONSUMER MATERIALS OR DESIGNED TO DAMPEN NOISE, THE FOLLOWING PRODUCTS SUPPORT A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FROM THE FACTORY FLOOR TO THE FINISHED PROJECT. BY EMILY HOOPER
BEAUTY DOES NOT HAVE A RECIPE. IT HAS A PLACE.

There’s a place where beauty comes naturally to life. The beauty of spending time together, of relationships, of life. This place is the kitchen, the room where creativity and convivial pleasures come together and forge genuine experience. This is just how kitchens created in Italy are. They are places that bring all the beauty of a great country. All the joy of Italian style.

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www.italiachevive.it
Menlo Park has become a magnet for Silicon Valley startups and the investors who fund them. A venture capitalist who wanted to locate his headquarters in the midst of the action invited homebuilder Living Homes to create a prefabricated office in a residential neighborhood. The site had no staging area for conventional construction, and the client needed to win the approval of homeowners to secure a conditional use permit. Prefabrication promised to be a cleaner, more efficient way of working. Ray Kappe, who has collaborated with Living Homes from the time Steve Glenn founded that company, did some conceptual sketches, but the client commissioned a final design from Paul Murdoch Architects. Murdoch has won attention for educational buildings, libraries, and, most recently, the memorial for United Flight 93 in Pennsylvania, the fourth plane to be hijacked on 9/11. Murdoch was project architect on the client’s house in northern California. Over the years, they stayed in touch, and Murdoch tweaked and renovated his house. From the street, it might easily be taken for a house: a two-story glass facade screened by a cedar grille. Projecting canopies and large trees shade expansive windows and the rear yard and roof are covered with plantings. A ramp leads down to automated parking for fifty cars, and the steel-framed modular structure rises from this concrete podium. To reduce the weight of the frame and stay within the height limit, the structure is supported at the perimeter and the core. The rectilinear block is composed of 12-foot modules, ten on the first floor and eight on the second. The project demonstrates the virtues and limitations of prefabrication. In Menlo Park, it was a site-dictated expedient that may have saved six months (construction extended over two and a half years) but provided few cost savings. The language is similar to that of Living Homes, but the structure had to be adapted to the capabilities of the supplier. Murdoch employed one company to fabricate stripped-down steel modules, and a framing contractor to do the joists and infill. The client asked for seamless architecture with refined detailing rather than a bare bones building in which the modular construction was clearly expressed.

The office is an elegant addition to the neighborhood, in its layered facades, woodsiness, and abundance of greenery. It opens up to the garden, and has qualified for a Silver LEED rating for its active and passive energy conservation strategies. The 12,500 square feet of offices are naturally ventilated, and partitions can easily be reconfigured to provide more or less room for the client’s startup enterprise. Its residential scale makes it feel like a home away from home, which is comforting for people who may spend more time there than they do in their own nests. Bare concrete floors and walls of glass reflect sound, but much of this is absorbed through the perforated metal ceiling by vertical fir baffles (which align with the Cedar trellis outside) and a thick layer of insulation.

As Murdoch observed, “There’s inherent tension between the high-stakes, risk-taking venture and the desire for a casual, collaborative environment, as there is between the partners in their private offices and the younger employees who reject the idea of hierarchy.” He tried to resolve this issue in his use of bold purple glass in the lobbies, which signals an adventurous spirit, and a consistent use of wood veneer, white board, LED lighting, and transparency throughout the building. The offices are welcoming and refined, flexible and precise, and they have fulfilled the client’s high expectations.

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BEST OF DESIGN AWARDS

BUILDING OF THE YEAR: TIE

VOL WALKER HALL & THE STEVEN L. ANDERSON DESIGN CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS, FAYETTEVILLE, AR
MARLON BLACKWELL ARCHITECT

"IT’S BEAUTIFUL. AND A GREAT PLACE FOR ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS TO LEARN BY EXAMPLE.” –WILLIAM MENKING

JURY: KATE ORFF, SCAPE; THOMAS HANRAHAN, PRATT INSTITUTE/HANRAHAN MEYERS ARCHITECTS; WES ROZEN, SITU STUDIO; MIC PATTERSON, ENGLOS; DAN WOOD, WORKAC; AND WILLIAM MENKING, AK.

THIS PROJECT INVOLVED THE RESTORATION OF HISTORIC VOL WALKER HALL AND THE ADDITION OF A NEW DESIGN CENTER TO PROVIDE A SINGLE FACILITY FOR THE UNIVERSITY’S ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, AND INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAMS. THE ADDITION IMPROVES ACCESSIBILITY AND TWIN STAIRWELLS LOCATED AT THE JUNCTURE OF THE HISTORIC BUILDING DELIVER DAYLIGHT AND ACTIVITY TO THE CENTER OF THE COMPLEX.
BUILDING OF THE YEAR: TIE
BROADWAY HOUSING
SANTA MONICA, CA
KEVIN DALY ARCHITECTS

“THIS IS A VERY WORTHY PROJECT. IT’S AFFORDABLE HOUSING, BUT IT ALSO PROVIDES WONDERFUL SOCIAL SPACES FOR THE RESIDENTS.” —THOMAS HANRAHAN

THIS PROJECT PROVIDES 33 UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO LOW-INCOME FAMILIES ON THE WESTSIDE OF LOS ANGELES. THE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN—INCLUDING A GREEN ROOF, CUSTOM WINDOW SHADES, A VEGETATED SCREEN WALL, AND A 15,000-GALLON STORMWATER CISTERNS—CLUSTERS REPEATABLE HOUSING BLOCKS AROUND A CENTRAL COURTYARD WITH AN EXISTING SHADE TREE.
BUILDING OF THE YEAR: TIE
CAMPBELL SPORTS CENTER, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, NY
STEVEN HOLL ARCHITECTS

“COLUMBIA REALLY LET LOOSE WITH THIS PROJECT.” —DAN WOOD

“It’S DISTINCTIVE, BUT ALSO DRAWS ON ITS GRITTY CONTEXT.”
—MIC PATTERSON

“IT MAKES A TOPOGRAPHY OUT OF A FLAT SPACE TO CREATE PLACES FOR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS.”
-KATE ORFF

“THE MATERIALITY OF THE INTERVENTIONS SETS UP A GOOD CONVERSATION WITH THE EXISTING BUILDING.”
-THOMAS HANRAHAN

HEAVYBIT IS A NEW, CURATED COMMUNITY FOR CLOUD DEVELOPERS. THE DESIGN INSERTS A SERIES OF ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTIONS WITHIN AN EXISTING THREE-STORY WAREHOUSE. THE INTERVENTIONS DEFINE SPACE, ACCOMMODATE THE PROGRAM, AND WORK MATERIALLY WITH THE CLIENT’S CONCEPT OF HEAVY PHYSICALITY COUPLED WITH THE EPHEMERALITY OF THE CLOUD.
BEST OF: LANDSCAPE
HUNTER’S POINT SOUTH WATERFRONT PARK
LONG ISLAND CITY, NY
THOMAS BALSLEY ASSOCIATES / WEISS/MANFREDI

“If we’re going to call it landscape of the year it has to be somewhat aspirational. I think this project has great civic aspirations, especially for a neighborhood park.”
—KATE ORFF

This public park is the first phase of a larger master plan that encompasses the transformation of 30 acres of post-industrial waterfront on the East River in Queens. The design plays on the site’s industrial heritage and spectacular views of Manhattan to establish a resilient, multi-layered recreational and cultural destination.
THIS PROJECT, WHICH IS SEEKING A LEED PLATINUM RATING, SOUGHT TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN PART THROUGH A HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENVELOPE. THE BUILDING’S THREE DISTINCT ARCHITECTURAL VOLUMES HAD DIFFERENT INSULATION TARGETS. THE OFFICE-CLASSROOM AND LIBRARY CLADDING SYSTEMS ACHIEVED A U-FACTOR OF 0.24 BTU/FT²*H*F°, AND THE ATRIUM SYSTEM ACHIEVED 0.32 BTU/FT²*H*F°.
BEST OF: STUDENT BUILT WORK
OPEN HOUSE
YORK, AL
MATTHEW MAZZOTTA

“IT’S A PLATFORM WHERE DIFFERENT THINGS CAN HAPPEN. THE ICONOGRAPHY IS GREAT.” –WES ROZEN

THIS PROJECT TRANSFORMED ONE OF YORK’S MOST BLIGHTED PROPERTIES INTO A NEW PUBLIC SPACE. UTILIZING RECLAIMED MATERIALS FROM THE SITE AND USED RAILROAD TIES, THE ARTIST CREATED A HOUSE THAT UNFOLDS WITH THE HELP OF A WINCH AND FOUR PEOPLE INTO ROWS OF STADIUM SEATING FOR OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES AND FILM SCREENINGS.

BEST OF: FABRICATION
2XMT
BUFFALO, NY
NICHOLAS BRUSCIA, CHRISTOPHER ROMANO
WITH PHIL GUSMANO AND DAN VRANA
UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO, SUNY, DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE: RIGIDIZED METALS

“THIS PROJECT SUGGESTS SOMETHING BEYOND JUST SCULPTURE.”
–MIC PATTERSON

“IT LOOKS ROBUST.”
–WES ROZEN

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT WAS TO PRODUCE A SELF-STRUCTURING AND LIGHTWEIGHT ARCHITECTURAL SCREEN BUILT ENTIRELY FROM THIN-GAUGE SHEET METAL. THE FREESTANDING PROTOTYPE TESTS THE PERFORMANCE OF A RIGIDIZED STAINLESS STEEL ASSEMBLY (16, 18, AND 20 GAUGE SHEETS) AGAINST HARSH ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS TO INVESTIGATE THE POTENTIAL OF SUCH A SYSTEM FOR BUILDING ENVELOPE APPLICATIONS.
The Seattle Art Museum will be offering a look—almost unprecedented in its breadth for this side of the Atlantic—at the later work of Spanish artist Joan Miró’s. The work on view has been culled entirely from Madrid’s Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía’s extensive Miró collection. Miró: The Experience of Seeing will feature more than fifty paintings, drawings, and sculptures created between 1963 and 1983. The work from this period is defined in part by increasingly simplified abstract compositions and sculpture that makes use of found objects.

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ALMOST ANYTHING GOES IN SANTA BARBARA

Almost Anything Goes: Architecture and Inclusivity
Museums of Contemporary Arts Santa Barbara
653 Paso Nuevo, Santa Barbara, CA
Through April 13

It is impossible to underestimate the role that museum and gallery exhibitions have played in the history of modern architecture. Figures like Giuseppe Terragni, Lilly Reich, Bernard Rudofsky and, today, Neil Denari and Diller + Scofidio have all designed for and in the space of the gallery. They often designed exhibitions before they could get a building commission, or during slow economic times, but for all of these figures the gallery was a site where they could theorize or construct models that were fragile even to the gaze (“I don’t know how I’d get my fingers around wood that small,” observed one viewer), full-size construction mockups, fragments of building materials, elaborate presentation models, and the occasional dé rigeur photorealistic computer rendering and highly-saturated architectural photograph. With the recent mania for vaporous computer visualizations, it is refreshing that the bulk of this collection is tactile and process-oriented. After hours in this exhibit there are still new details to discover.

The firm introduces its sensory approach to place making with the exhibit design itself. You enter the show through a funnel of fire-charred cedar wood planks that modulate light, muffle ambient sounds, and immerse you in the scent of burned wood. A darkened anteroom draws you closer to wood—that is the mainstay of their work—that is the mainstay of their practice. The exhibition furniture of sumptuous woods and metal roofs that play off of the vineyard’s weathered steel trellis posts and ruddy groves of valley oaks, and a loose articulation of volumes that connect sightlines between residence and landscape, patio and sky. In these and other projects, tectonic articulation dominates. It is the formal relationship between materials—line to plane, surface, steel to glass, rammed earth to wood—that is the mainstay of their work. Benjamin Ball of Ball-Nogues Studio, a practice that has flourished for mining the particularities of place. The formal relationship of fire-charred cedar wood planks that modulate light, muffle ambient sounds, and immerse you in the scent of burned wood. A darkened anteroom draws you closer to wood—that is the mainstay of their practice. The exhibition furniture of sumptuous woods and metal roofs that play off of the vineyard’s weathered steel trellis posts and ruddy groves of valley oaks, and a loose articulation of volumes that connect sightlines between residence and landscape, patio and sky. In these and other projects, tectonic articulation dominates. It is the formal relationship between materials—line to plane, surface, steel to glass, rammed earth to wood—that is the mainstay of their work.

This argument is often, but not always, a canard for architects who long for physical spaces where they can experiment, communicate with the public, and succeed or fail. The gallery space provides an opportunity for architects to experiment in real time, and space has never been more important than today when digital design can imagine the most hyperbolic forms, use of new materials, and geometries that may or may not be buildable. Benjamin Ball of Ball-Nogues Studio, a practice that has flourished in the design of installations, makes exactly this point about their work for galleries. Their goal, Ball admits, is to be in dialogue with the 75 years of artistic practice, but even more they want to do research about craft and the process of production.

These issues of design intent, production, and even reception are all played out in the exhibition Almost Anything Goes: Architecture and Inclusivity at the Museum of Contemporary Arts Santa Barbara. Conceived and co-curated by Brigitte Kow, a designer with an interest in architecture, and the museum’s director and chief curator Miki Garcia.
ALMOST ANYTHING GOES IN SANTA BARBARA

continued from page 23 It smartly selects a group of young Southern California designers all working in different areas of architectural research and production. Ball-Nogues Studio was a natural inclusion in this survey. They are joined by Amorphis, Atelier Manfredini, Design Bitches, dO|SU Studio Architecture, Digital Physical, and Variate Labs.

The entrance to the exhibit foregrounds an eight-foot-tall sculptural object exo, 2013, created by dO|SU Studio Architecture and its principle Doris Sung. It is a creative study for a multiple layered building facade if it were made of thermo-bimetals, in this case aluminium, a “smart… material that inherently responds to temperature, curving when heated and flattening when cooled.” It aims to challenge our perception of a facade as only a protective coating when it could be, as Sung said, “a responsive and active skin.”

Scattered around the gallery are luscious candy colored table tops created by Atelier Manfredini that foreground architecture’s “communicative value” and look good enough to eat. The architects in this exhibit are young so one wants to encourage all sorts of experimentation strategies, but also to warn them to be aware of the possible cliches of art world production. All of the works in the exhibition do focus on architecture. The sculptural wall pieces by Amorphis could benefit from an updated reading on the critiques of minimalism, but still they suggest a relationship between the viewer and the work of art mediated by personal conditions—a major concern of architects. Another installation that straddles the strategies of art but still makes a convincing case for what architects can bring to the debate are the photographs by Design Bitches that use personal images of the architects standing in for the male heroes of yore. They are quite convincing and hilarious. Design Bitches also has a beautifully crafted series of concrete bags arched across the gallery ceiling like clouds dripping rain that playing with notions of “heavenness and somber lightness.”

The old installation pros Ball-Nogues produced the most convincing object and creative design strategy with their Mickey Mouse ear–like paper lamp. It was created by shooting paper pulp though a pressured sprayer into molds of flexible inflatable fabric. These paper lamps are one-off prototypes in the gallery, but suggest a way of creating objects of mass production. Ball-Nogues Studio is now working on its first building in San Antonio, Texas. Santa Barbara is a seductive landscape of historic mission architecture. One does not expect to find avant garde design here. So the curators are to be congratulated for making this exhibit happen in their enticing shopping mall gallery. It displays again the amazing depth and creativity of young architects in the Southern California region.

WILLIAM MINKING IS A+D EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

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Steve Stankiewicz  Industrial Williamsburg #10  etching  18½ x 33¼ inches
A Manifesto from the Architecture Lobby

The myth that architects have it all—professionalism, creative freedom, autonomy, civic power, cultural cachet—lasts until your first day of work. It is not that you immediately get the full picture; surely the bad compensation and crummy hours and the lack of power over design decisions are temporary, the dues you pay. But later, when you have your own firm or become a partner and the deferral can’t be deferred any longer, you don’t earn reasonable compensation, you work crummy hours, and you lack power over design decisions. Along the way you may have adjusted your thinking about the myth while still maintaining its mystical aura. “Architecture,” you can say, “isn’t a career; it’s a calling!” Which is to say, the lack of money and appreciation is justified by sacrifice. But eventually it becomes impossible to feel good about the profession: architecture graduates with $100,000 in debt begging for internships that pay little more than minimum wage, honored to be working 15 hour days, seven days a week as a sign of their being needed; principals of firms working almost exclusively for wealthy private interest, trying to prove that their meager fees aren’t paying for hubristic aesthetic experiments; young architects hoping to move beyond bathroom renovations to possible suburban additions.

We can retrace how all of this happened—how the profession over the years limited risk and liability and, with it, reward and responsibility; how in turn, the profession, as keepers of design, became known only for design. All of the intelligence that is brought to bare on achieving good design—zoning analysis, demographic scrutiny, material wisdom, procurement expertise, spatial adaptability, organizational expertise, manufacturing acumen, sustainability education, heat, lighting, and acoustic analysis, cost analysis, etc. etc.—disappears from the ledger when we are paid by (the size of) the piece. The myth that architects have it all—professionalism, creative freedom, autonomy, civic power, cultural cachet—lasts until your first day of work. It is not that you immediately get the full picture; surely the bad compensation and crummy hours and the lack of power over design decisions are temporary, the dues you pay. But later, when you have your own firm or become a partner and the deferral can’t be deferred any longer, you don’t earn reasonable compensation, you work crummy hours, and you lack power over design decisions. Along the way you may have adjusted your thinking about the myth while still maintaining its mystical aura. “Architecture,” you can say, “isn’t a career; it’s a calling!” Which is to say, the lack of money and appreciation is justified by sacrifice. But eventually it becomes impossible to feel good about the profession: architecture graduates with $100,000 in debt begging for internships that pay little more than minimum wage, honored to be working 15 hour days, seven days a week as a sign of their being needed; principals of firms working almost exclusively for wealthy private interest, trying to prove that their meager fees aren’t paying for hubristic aesthetic experiments; young architects hoping to move beyond bathroom renovations to possible suburban additions.

The Architecture Lobby is an organization of architectural workers advocating for the value of architecture in the general public and for architectural work within the discipline. From the bottom up, we resist the acceptance of low wages based on the assumption that architectural firms themselves make little profit. From the top down, we reject thinking that accepts marginal profits for our expertise. We insist on the following conceptual changes:

1. In order to redirect the public’s perception of what architects do, we need to reconceptualize our value. We need to walk away from contracts that don’t allow us to share in the profit of a building’s success. We need to prove that we know that the building’s success is determined not by its publication photos but by its 40-year-long habitability. We need to redefine the way media showcases us as keepers of sustainable spatial intelligence. Every submission we make to the media needs to privilege its intelligence and long-term commitment to the built environment, not merely aesthetics. Every article in every journal and newspaper discussing only form should warrant a letter of protest. Every commentary that mentions a development, a proposal project, a community plan or a new public space without mentioning the architect, designer, planner, or landscape architect involved should warrant a request for correction/ elaboration.

2. In order to reprogram our own identity, those of us in the discipline of architecture need to admit that we are workers. We are part of a global labor force that has fought for and deserves fair pay, legal benefits, regulated hours, and termination policies. If we do not self-identify as such, we will remain immune to the global, labor-based, social reform movements. We should be ashamed but not surprised that architects building in the Emirates are oblivious to the indentured labor used to build the buildings we design. We should question why the artists asked to show in the Guggenheim in Abu Dhabi have refused to have their work shown in a building built by illegal labor practices when we architects turn our backs. Identifying ourselves as immaterial laborers links us with artists, IT researchers, and product developers—all of who have long since recognized that their creative work is work none the less.

3. In order to retrain our graduates, we need to convince them of their value. Those of us who teach must stop being proud of our students’ all-nighters doing their pedagogical bidding. When they look for work, we need to direct them away from practices that are abusive (if not illegal) even if avant-garde. An Ivy League law school annually publicizes the top 10 family friendly law firms. It is not just shocking that law schools, unlike architecture schools, care about this issue, or that law firms—unlike architecture firms—climb over each others backs to get on the list; but sad that our good students don’t know that they should be the wooed, not the wooers.

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