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VOLUME 8, ISSUE 5 MAY 28, 2014. THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER
(ISSN 1552-8081) IS PUBLISHED 20 TIMES A YEAR (SEMI-MONTHLY EXCEPT THE
FOLLOWING: ONCE IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY AND NONE IN AUGUST) BY THE
ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER, LLC, 21 MURRAY ST., 5TH FL., NEW YORK, NY 10007.
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READING BETWEEN THE GUIDELINES

Recently, LA’s planning department added new design guidelines to its small lot subdivision ordinance, a measure that allows owners to divide larger lots—once reserved for apartments and larger condos—into smaller parcels. The guidelines outline well-intentioned goals to improve the quality of this important type of housing stock, revolving around issues like site organization, building design and materials, urban form, setbacks, parking, landscaping, and access.

Intelligent requirements include adding permeable paving; designing for pedestrian access; locating parking to the rear of dwellings; and demarcating clear entryways. But the problems lie, as is often the case, with the more subjective requirements, like “enhancing the public realm,” creating “high-quality” environments, and making housing “compatible with the existing neighborhood context.”

These are not bad ideas. Of course they’re good goals. The question is who determines the standards of quality, compatibility, and other very subjective guidelines? As of now the rules leave decisions in the hands of a very small group of people in the planning department’s urban design studio. They’re an architecture-fluent group that I’m a supporter of. But while compromise is often the death of architecture, we’ve also learned that absolute power corrupts, particularly in planning.

For example, a design-savvy developer in LA, who had hired a top tier architect to design a small lot development, told me he was recently informed by an employee in the department that his design was subpar. They told him that he preferred architecture that looked like The Grove, the nostalgic retail development in the city’s Miracle Mile area. Hence the issue: why should urban design and architecture decisions be made on the basis of taste?

Design guidelines can be effective tools, but micro-managing them can lead to a limitation of creativity and a bending of design to the tastes of a few. That can become a bigger problem for architecture when those few are planners, or other officials, or neighbors, not architects. The same goes for Los Angeles’s citywide design guidelines, which I support as an important tool for improving the urban realm and preventing mediocrity. But they too must not become a method for bending style in one direction or the other. The most powerful guidelines outline specific baselines for good design, and don’t wade into subjective aesthetic issues. And if they do wade into subjectivity, decisions should be made by several people, not by any one or two players.

One of the things that makes Los Angeles special is its overflowing wealth of design talent and creativity. Sure we need to establish a baseline to make sure they’re complying with the basic standards of livability and urbanity. To not do that could mean a repeat of the many urbanistic mistakes that have marred the landscape here. But to dictate how architects should design, and to leave decisions about those designs in the hands of too few, is a recipe for limitation and mediocrity. **SAM LUBELL**

JORGE GRACIA STARTING NEW
ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM IN TIJUANA



Gracia previously designed Tijuana’s Culinary Art School.

ESCUELA LIBRE DE ARQUITECTURA

SCHOOL IN SESSION

While there are already a handful of architecture schools in Tijuana, renowned local architect Jorge Gracia was not happy with any of them. They did not, he believed, focus enough on theory or construction, they did not lend students enough of a global perspective, and they did not adequately prepare them for practice. So he did what any maverick architect would do: he decided to start his own.

If all goes according to plan, Gracia’s program, called the Escuela Libre de Arquitectura, would start this September. The school, which would begin with twenty students and eventually reach about 250, applied for accreditation in late February. It will get a response from the federal government at the end of May.

“We want students to see Tijuana as a lab for architecture,” said Gracia, who has built several inventive homes in the city and is well-known for his Hotel Endemico in Valle de Guadalupe, a wine region nearby. He has already begun teaching a one-month post-graduate course called Taller Arquitectura Practica inside a local gallery he designed.

The school would consist of a year of classroom learning, a year of apprenticing with international architects and builders, and a year of sharing and intensive local investigations. He hopes studios will be intimately linked to the city’s urban ills, laying out solutions for a city he badly wants to improve. “I want things to happen,” said Gracia. “When we build public buildings here nothing good comes of it. Teaching several generations of architects is the only way you can really make a difference.”

The school would be located adjacent to Gracia’s studio, on a once-seedy stretch of Avenue Revolucion, the city’s main thoroughfare. Gracia hopes to build a new building next door soon, similar to the raw steel structure he designed for the Culinary Arts School, another local academy.

He does not deny the idea that this could be Tijuana’s version of SCI-Arc. “I was thinking that was my ambition.” And in a place like Tijuana, where new galleries and facilities seem to open every day, it is very possible. “Tijuana grows very, very fast,” he said. **SL**

MGM TO DEMOLISH FOSTER'S LAS VEGAS CITYCENTER TOWER

FAULTY TOWER

After a lengthy legal battle, MGM has finally received approval to proceed with demolition of Foster + Partners’ Harmon Hotel, part of its \$9 billion mega development, CityCenter. The complex, which includes buildings by Daniel Libeskind, Helmut Jahn, and Rafael Viñoly, and others, opened in 2009. But that same year the 27-story Harmon, originally intended to be 49-stories, was deemed structurally unsound due to deficient steel reinforcement in the cast-in-place concrete structure. The building has been used as a giant billboard since then.

Demolition was held up as a result of court disputes between MGM, the building’s contractor, Perini Building Company, and Foster + Partners, over construction and design defects. In a statement, Perini alleged, among other things, that the structural problems were caused by design flaws, and that MGM wanted to tear down the building to “avoid adding the Harmon as additional glut to its other vacant properties in CityCenter.” Foster and MGM would not comment on the matter, although MGM is still seeking payment from Perini for the



MICHAEL SCHROETER

problems.

After the district court judge’s ruling the demolition can go ahead regardless of the unresolved legal battles. “Although Perini’s experts and CityCenter’s experts disagree as to the reasons why the Harmon is at risk for a partial or total collapse in an earthquake, it is undisputed now that the experts for both CityCenter and Perini agree that the Harmon poses a significant life-safety hazard,” attorneys for CityCenter wrote in a court filing, published by the *Las Vegas Review Journal*.

According to *Architectural Record*, the tower will be taken apart piece by piece over the next year due to its close proximity to the other buildings in the intentionally dense CityCenter complex.

SL

TWO WAS A CROWD

SPF:a has been removed from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences new museum. SPF:a principal **Zoltan Pali** had been teamed with **Renzo Piano** on the project since 2012. The design for what is now called the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures includes a renovation of AC Martin's Streamline Moderne May Company Building (1939) on Wilshire and Fairfax and a new 140-foot-diameter glass and steel globe sited behind the existing building, which will contain, among other things, a 1,000-seat theater.

Pali and Piano had been working together on the project since 2012. As of now the Academy has refused to comment on the matter, and Pali has not returned requests.

"It is a full collaboration in every aspect. We work together very well. I love working with Renzo," Pali told *AN* after first receiving the commission in 2012.

GEHRY GOSSIP AND KOSHALEK CLATTER

We've known for some time now that ex MOCA director **Richard Koshalek** has returned to Los Angeles from D.C., where he recently stepped down as director of the Hirschorn Museum. Now we know one of his exploits: We hear that he is consulting **Frank Gehry** on the organization of his vast archives. Maybe this means there will someday be a Gehry museum? Certainly the architect is not getting any younger, so we may hear more soon.

MOSS MADNESS

Speaking of directors stepping down, it appears the unspoken rumor that we've been forbidden to share for so long is now all-but official. **Eric Owen Moss** is indeed stepping down as the head of SCI-Arc, and a committee is in session to choose his replacement. This being SCI-Arc, everyone has an opinion about who should step in; but we won't share anything else until we find a ripe, unsubstantiated piece of gossip telling us who it might be.

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WITH PLANS AT RISK, LA EXPLORES NEW CONVENTION CENTER OPTIONS



POPULOUS/AEG

Challenging Convention

Unless an NFL team comes to Los Angeles by this October, developer AEG and architect Populous' ambitious scheme to expand the Los Angeles Convention Center (LACC) will be dead. In its place the city is already making plans to hold a design competition for an architect to design a plan B, a more modest upgrade of the facility.

AEG's \$275 million proposal, built on the site of the Convention Center's West Hall and bridging over Pico Boulevard, depends on funding from the company's potential downtown stadium, Farmers Field, which is looking more unlikely as its October 18 deadline draws near. The city's Ad Hoc Committee on Downtown Stadium and Convention Center Renovation has been discussing alternatives since last year.

"The City must be prepared with other options to immediately effectuate LACC improvements that do not rely on the development of a stadium on the site," wrote Gerry Miller, the city's chief legislative analyst, in a 2013 report to the members of LA's Economic Development Committee.

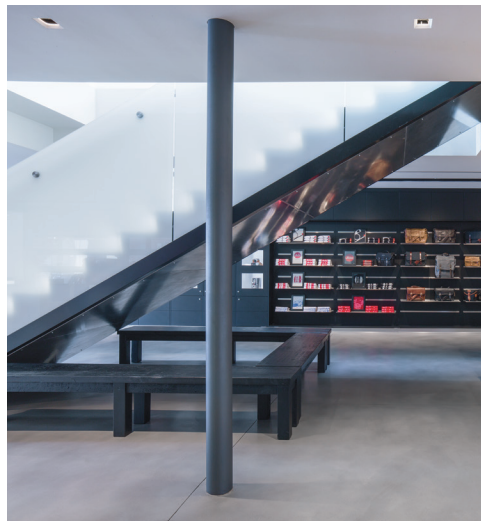
Vicki Curry, spokesperson for LA Mayor Eric Garcetti, told *AN* that in case the

stadium plan dies, the city's Bureau of Engineering is now considering a three-firm design competition to select a new architect by this October. But its Task Order Solicitation—involving a general request for qualifications—has not yet been released, so the plans are still not official.

Populous' plan came under fire in 2012 from a group of architects and city employees convened by then-mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. The "Vision Team," as they were called, demanded a general design overhaul, and were particularly critical of the long, dark spaces created by bridging the building over Pico Boulevard. The plan was nonetheless approved by City Council in September 2012.

The city has solicited advice to improve the existing convention center from both the Urban Land Institute and consulting company Convention, Sports, and Leisure. Suggestions included introducing more natural light, integrating more retail and food services, adding more informal gathering spaces and outdoor spaces, and installing more exhibit space.

SL



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COURTESY IA INTERIOR ARCHITECTS

No camera in the world has more cachet than Leica, which is about to celebrate its 100th anniversary. But even that brand faced a challenge drawing people into its new store on car-saturated Beverly Boulevard in West Hollywood. "People just speed right by that location," emphasized Kirk Stewart, project director at IA Interior Architects, who designed the project.

The primary solution: a central stair made up of glowing LED-fitted risers and raw black metal treads coupled with a polished, 770 pound, stainless steel camera sculpture at its base designed by Chinese artist Yibai Liao.

Around that dramatic but straightforward starting point the firm installed a retail space on the first floor and a gallery space, library, presentation room, and outdoor lounge on the second. The key again was simplicity. They removed interior walls on both floors for unity, fitted the rooms with elegant millwork shelves and desks, laid down a cool concrete floor, and installed gallery-appropriate lighting.

"We wanted to build it like Leica would build a camera: Simple, elegant, good craftsmanship. No gimmicks," said Stewart. "So far so good. There's always a group of people there that don't look like paparazzi, but they do have cameras." **SL**

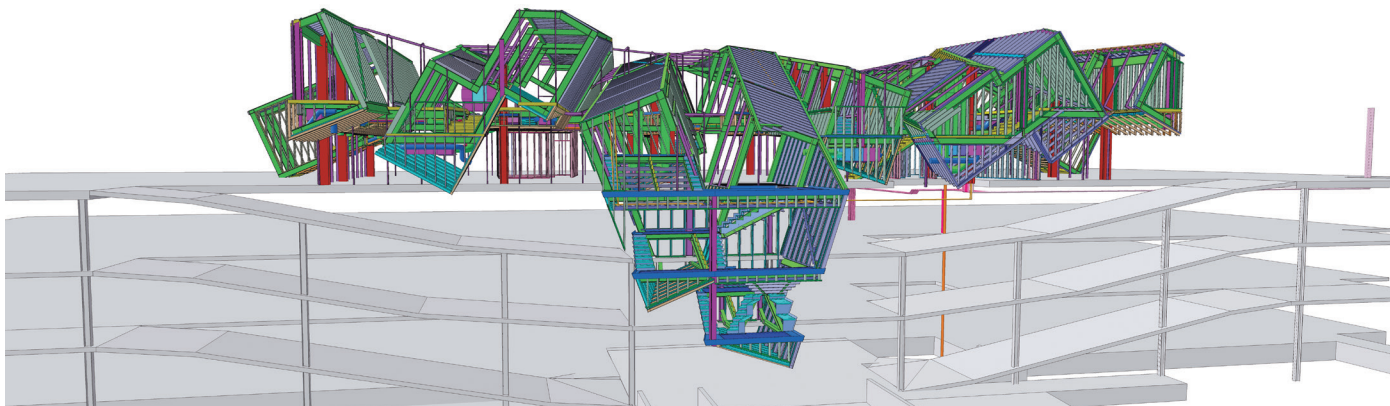
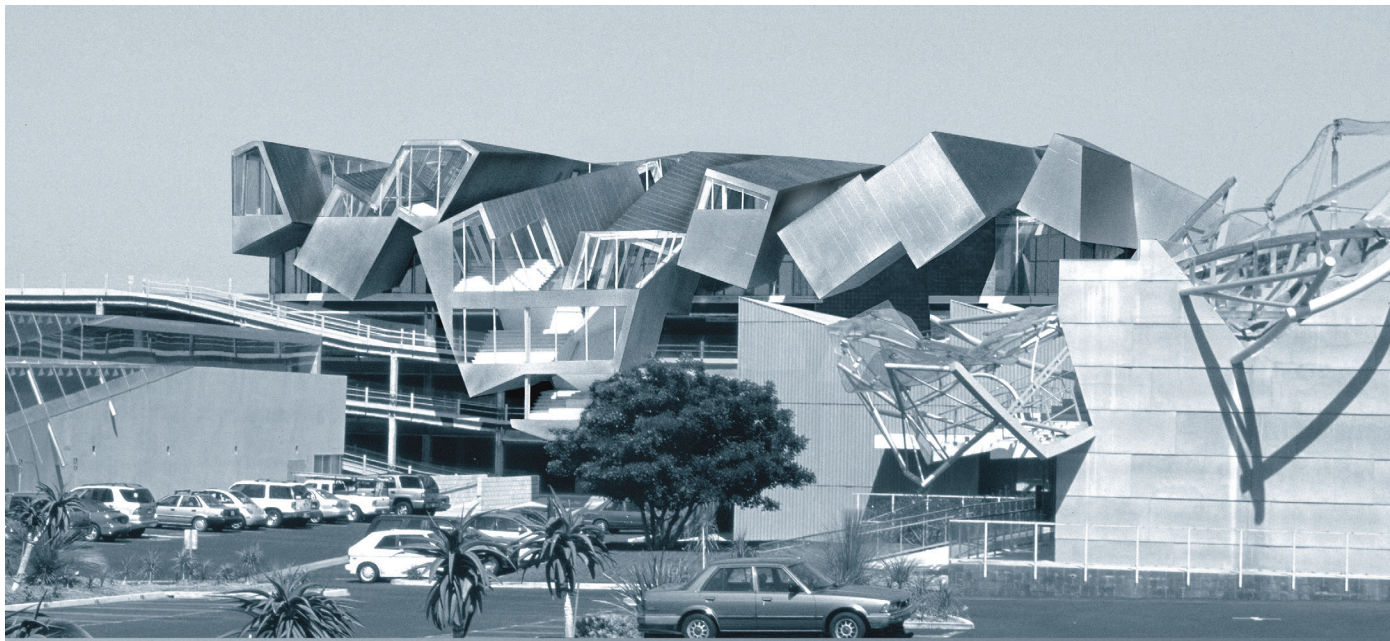
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Over the years, Eric Owen Moss and his clients Frederick and Laurie Samitaur Smith have amassed a collection of buildings at Culver City's Hayden Tract that each seem impossible to build. But they have taken that concept to the extreme with their latest, Pterodactyl, which, for a while anyway, literally was impossible.

Located adjacent to Moss's Stealth Building, near the northern border of the development, the project was first initiated in 2000. But its highly three dimensional plans were so complex that the team could not get a contractor to give them a reasonable bid. Finally the building got the green light in 2012, and is set for completion this fall. "This is the hardest building we've ever done," said Raul Garcia, project architect at the firm. The building will be the headquarters for media tech company Omelet.

The first version of the steel framed building, sited on top of an existing parking garage, was drawn in 3D Autocad. For the current iteration, architects at Moss's office had to start from scratch, transferring the original ideas into Gehry Technologies's BIM-enabled Digital Project. "The project couldn't be done without this new technology," explained project director Dolan Daggett.

When you look at the 3D

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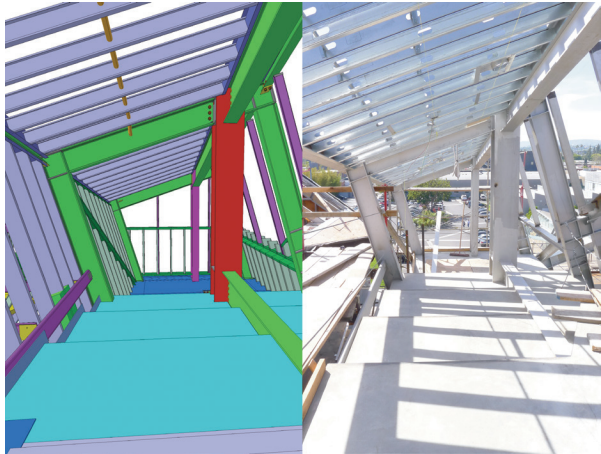
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models you get a little seasick from all the movement. The front of the building seems to be sliding off of its frame, a fear that many of us get when we look at hillside construction in this city. But in reality the structure is divided into clear components, all working together to hold it together.

First is the primary structure, the east-west steel beams connected to the columns of the parking garage under the building. Second are the frames, north-south facing off-kilter parts that will be partially exposed when the building is done. Third is the secondary steel, which “connects the

dots” between the frames, as Daggett put it. Fourth are the steel tube mullions, largely attached to the secondary steel, holding the copious laminated glass in place via aluminum extrusions. Teams are also putting in place a metal panel cladding system, clipped to the building’s sheathing. “It looks arbitrary, but it’s fully organized and very rigorous,” said Daggett.

The building’s first floor consists of a giant, open planned office space, while the second floor contains private offices, team offices, and breakout areas. The western flank contains a 14-foot cantilever, suspended

off of long steel beams imbedded into the westernmost column line of the garage.

Inside, the building’s idiosyncrasies are many. A suspended stair bends down as it descends; frames jut through offices; skylights take on jagged profiles; work pods step down, cantilevering from the rest of the building; walls contort. “The intent is to create a variety of spatial qualities,” said Daggett. “Different sizes and shapes that can be occupied with a lot of variety so the tenant can custom tailor their operation.”

The partial exposure of the structure inside and out makes construction more challenging for the building crews, since they cannot cover it with walls and other barriers. “The difference of complexity is off the charts,” explained Daggett. “The measurements better be pretty close, because you can’t hide anything. One can try to understand how the building was made, as opposed to the entire system being imbedded in a wall.”

SL



HUNTINGTON RESTORES JAPANESE HOUSE

TREASURE OF THE ORIENT

In 1911, Henry Huntington was building his estate in San Marino, and acquired a traditional Japanese house that local craftsmen had built for a Pasadena antiques dealer a few years before. It was part of the railroad magnate’s strategy to lure his genteel English fiancée to the cultural wasteland of Southern California, and a century later the Huntington Library, which Henry Huntington founded in 1916, has lovingly restored its treasure. To supervise this challenging assignment, the board picked architect Kelly Sutherlin McLeod, who had just finished restoring

inspired Gamble House.

A Japanese consultant was shocked by the inauthenticity of the two-story house, but McLeod sees that as a virtue. “It’s a hybrid, created by immigrant carpenters adapting traditional patterns to American tastes,” she explained. “There’s a mix of tongue-and-groove boards and imported decorative details—like the lion dogs we reassembled from fragments.” The original roof had been clumsily replaced and it leaked, so a new one was created from shingles that were dampened and put in a microwave to achieve compound curves (much as the Eameses used their Kazam! machine to mold



KSM ARCHITECTURE

plywood). The new roof has graceful lines and incorporates sprinklers and a fire-resistant membrane.

Dark paint was stripped from the fir boards and these were waxed. Two panels of the original lime plaster were saved, and the rest was removed and replaced after the structural frame had been reinforced to meet the seismic code. As an uninhabited historic monument, code compliance is voluntary, but it seemed prudent to protect visitors. Having completed the exterior, McLeod is eager to apply her skills to the interior, which was inexpertly “improved” by a women’s group in the 1950s. In the meantime, she is completing her restoration of Neutra’s 1953 Hafley Residence in Long Beach. **MICHAEL WEBB**

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HIGH ROLLER, WORLD'S TALLEST FERRIS WHEEL, OPENS TO THE PUBLIC

Topping Out in Vegas

When planning the LINQ, the new outdoor entertainment complex adjacent to the Las Vegas Strip, Caesars Entertainment worried that they might have trouble pulling visitors off the beaten path.

"They knew they had the

people, they just needed the draw," explained Arup's Jason Krolicki. So Caesars commissioned an impossible-to-miss anchor: the High Roller, a 550-foot-tall observation (Ferris) wheel. The wheel, which opened March 31, is the world's tallest,

a full 107 feet higher than the London Eye and seven feet above the Singapore Flyer. But while its height is impressive, what really makes the High Roller stand out is its thin structure and minimal footprint.

"Throughout the process

our goal was how to minimize the structure, slim things down so it became as pure of a circle as possible," said The Hettema Group's John Kasperowicz, the project's design architect. Above all, the architects wanted to maximize views from the wheel. They designed the cabins as near-spheres rather than as pill- or can-shaped cylinders (as on the London Eye and Singapore Flyer, respectively). To further reduce the structure, the engineers at Arup—who also worked on both the London and Singapore wheels—designed a single, extra-large hub and spindle system that rotates on two of the largest roller bearings ever manufactured. They also figured out how to attach the structure's 112 steel cables to a single tubular rim, rather than relying on a busy truss-work system. "The rim really does disappear because the cabins are so large," said Krolicki. "Standing in one location you can see in all directions."

The form of the wheel was further influenced by conditions on the ground. "During construction it looked like we had this giant

dirt lot," said Krolicki. "But when you look at the property lines it's fairly constrained." With the monorail on one side and a storm culvert running through the site, there were really only three places to land the legs. The two pairs of support legs cant inward to land within the property line, while the structure's single brace leg reaches across the culvert and an existing road. At night, when the wheel is illuminated by 2,000 LEDs, the structure becomes nearly invisible, the cabins rotating around a vast circle that seems to float in the desert sky.

The High Roller, its designers emphasize, is not just an object. It is an experience. Designed

to attract younger visitors, the wheel's nightclub atmosphere begins in the welcome lobby, where riders are treated to a multimedia display before moving to a second floor lounge. On the third floor, just before the loading platform, is a 280-degree theater showing Vegas-themed music videos. Yet even the midst of all this excitement, the awesomeness of the High Roller itself is hard to deny, said The Hettema Group's Phil Hettema. "Every time I go out there and see these 8-meter spheres kind of dropping out of the sky, it's a really impressive and unforgettable moment."

ANNA BERGREN MILLER



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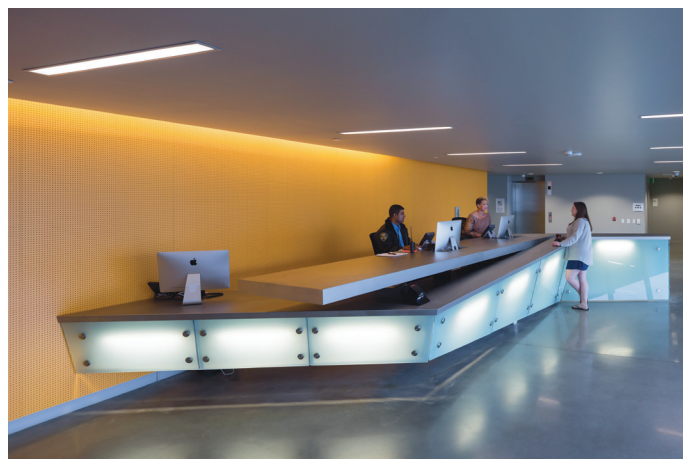


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(Clockwise from top left): Curving academic buildings are framed by orthogonal residential ones; bridges above a courtyard; entry lobby; metallic plates cladding interior structures seem to move like waves.

IWAN BAAN



Construction cranes are filling Hollywood these days as if it were the second coming of Dubai. But most of the new architecture here is a depressing sign of the times—significantly less remarkable than that of that hyper-hyped, hyper-speed, desert metropolis.

One obvious exception is Morphosis' new Los Angeles headquarters for Boston-based Emerson College, which opened on the south side of Sunset Boulevard last month. Unlike the bland structures around it, it emerges from the block as if a square building had been chopped in half with a meat cleaver and metallic worms were spilling out. So yes, it is remarkable.

Emerson has long had a west coast presence, hosting classes and internships related to the media world. The program used to be based in scattered, banal facilities around Burbank.

The new ten-story facility is a campus and not just a building, and that is what is best about it. It combines residential, administrative, academic, open space, and film

and TV production uses into one square block; creating a rich variety of program, human interaction, and visual stimulation. Lots of outdoor spaces connect the building to LA's great weather, and Morphosis' trademark roughness gives it a very urban feel, which makes sense in Hollywood. But at times that edge goes too far, and the building feels oppressive.

While it looks complex from the street, the campus arrangement is straightforward. Two rectilinear towers on the east and west sides of the block contain mostly residences. Inside, the void between these blocks is a series of curving structures containing classrooms and administrative spaces, interspersed with large public plazas and stairways. In all, the complex contains about 30,000 square feet of classrooms and offices, 70,000 square feet of student and faculty housing, and 6,400 square feet of ground floor restaurant space.

Walking through the campus can feel a little maze-like at first (for

instance finding the entry can take some time), but you get the hang of it. The flanking buildings are clad to the east and west with bands of extruded aluminum sunshades that automatically move according to light and temperature conditions. The dorms inside—suites ranging from three to six beds—are a bit spartan, but that is fine for these artsy students, who are not looking to stay at the Ritz. And as you move higher the views from these spaces are remarkable—at least until something bigger goes up nearby.

But the central buildings and their public spaces are Emerson's active heart, surrounded and framed by the structure's hard outer shell. It all resembles a giant stage showcasing Morphosis' architecture and planning.

Floors two and five contain open-air plazas and floors three through five are connected by a large concrete stair, for congregating and for film and video shoots. These spaces vary widely in their effectiveness. The sixth floor plaza, with its two large Sycamore trees,

clustered tables, and sweeping views, is by far the most usable. The second floor space feels claustrophobic, with heavy walls rising around it like a prison. It lends fewer chances to congregate, and those that do exist feel less intuitive. The grand stair also feels too hard and bare, but the uniqueness of its design—how many schools would allow an open stair used as a stage set to be built over their buildings?—make up for that.

The undulating structures in this core are clad with either smooth, standing seam aluminum panels or textured, silvery, folded aluminum plates. The smooth panels create a shimmering topography while the folded ones create a mesmerizing sense of movement, light play, and dimensionality. It is also photogenic. I dare you to look up at them and not take at least one picture.

The metallic structures vigorously reach and twist their way to the street, and their connection to Sunset Boulevard provides a constant reminder for the kids of where they will likely end up

after they graduate. Luckily, glass technology has progressed to the point where the noise of Sunset Boulevard does not seep into these rooms. And from the street they create a Sci-Fi composition (evocative of futuristic Hollywood blockbusters?) that captures the eye and has already drawn more attention than Emerson even anticipated (tours are overbooked).

A steel bridge above the courtyards—intended for emergency helicopter landings—can hold lighting and rigging, making the open space underneath an effective filming or outdoor screening location. In fact, the whole building, which is wired throughout with rigging and with “media hydrants” for A/V and electrical feeds, looks and feels like a set or a sound stage, a smart and novel use that Emerson demanded from the beginning. It infuses the space with LA's creative energy, making it the “machine for living” (or in this case filming) that architects have long salivated over.

While the heavy surfaces and high walls at times feel ominous, the interplay of structures, the movement throughout the building, and the campus' utility as a theatrical backdrop makes for a one-of-a-kind experience for students and visitors, complementing constant connections to Hollywood and to the outdoors.

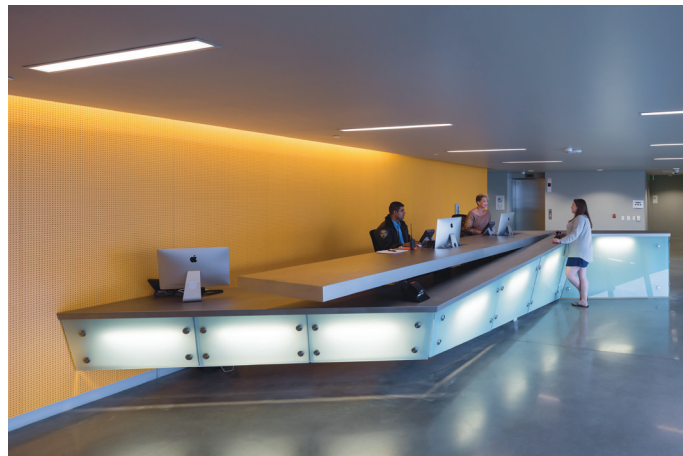
Despite their buildings' stunning shapes, and their effective sense for drama, Morphosis has proven time and again that it is not just a form maker. While the line between cool and cold is occasionally crossed, the gap between this building and anything built within twenty years of it in Hollywood is not even close. **SL**

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 28, 2014



IWAN BAAH, ROLAND HALBE

(Clockwise from top left): Curving academic buildings are framed by orthogonal residential ones; bridges above a courtyard; entry lobby; metallic plates cladding interior structures seem to move like waves.



Construction cranes are filling Hollywood these days as if it were the second coming of Dubai. But most of the new architecture here is a depressing sign of the times—significantly less remarkable than that of that hyper-hyped, hyper-speed, desert metropolis.

One obvious exception is Morphosis' new Los Angeles headquarters for Boston-based Emerson College, which opened on the south side of Sunset Boulevard last month. Unlike the bland structures around it, it emerges from the block as if a square building had been chopped in half with a meat cleaver and metallic worms were spilling out. So yes, it is remarkable.

Emerson has long had a west coast presence, hosting classes and internships related to the media world. The program used to be based in scattered, banal facilities around Burbank.

The new ten-story facility is a campus and not just a building, and that is what is best about it. It combines residential, administrative, academic, open space, and film

and TV production uses into one square block; creating a rich variety of program, human interaction, and visual stimulation. Lots of outdoor spaces connect the building to LA's great weather, and Morphosis' trademark roughness gives it a very urban feel, which makes sense in Hollywood. But at times that edge goes too far, and the building feels oppressive.

While it looks complex from the street, the campus arrangement is straightforward. Two rectilinear towers on the east and west sides of the block contain mostly residences. Inside, the void between these blocks is a series of curving structures containing classrooms and administrative spaces, interspersed with large public plazas and stairways. In all, the complex contains about 30,000 square feet of classrooms and offices, 70,000 square feet of student and faculty housing, and 6,400 square feet of ground floor restaurant space.

Walking through the campus can feel a little maze-like at first (for

instance finding the entry can take some time), but you get the hang of it. The flanking buildings are clad to the east and west with bands of extruded aluminum sunshades that automatically move according to light and temperature conditions. The dorms inside—suites ranging from three to six beds—are a bit spartan, but that is fine for these artsy students, who are not looking to stay at the Ritz. And as you move higher the views from these spaces are remarkable—at least until something bigger goes up nearby.

But the central buildings and their public spaces are Emerson's active heart, surrounded and framed by the structure's hard outer shell. It all resembles a giant stage showcasing Morphosis' architecture and planning.

Floors two and five contain open-air plazas and floors three through five are connected by a large concrete stair, for congregating and for film and video shoots. These spaces vary widely in their effectiveness. The sixth floor plaza, with its two large Sycamore trees,

clustered tables, and sweeping views, is by far the most usable. The second floor space feels claustrophobic, with heavy walls rising around it like a prison. It lends fewer chances to congregate, and those that do exist feel less intuitive. The grand stair also feels too hard and bare, but the uniqueness of its design—how many schools would allow an open stair used as a stage set to be built over their buildings?—make up for that.

The undulating structures in this core are clad with either smooth, standing seam aluminum panels or textured, silvery, folded aluminum plates. The smooth panels create a shimmering topography while the folded ones create a mesmerizing sense of movement, light play, and dimensionality. It is also photogenic. I dare you to look up at them and not take at least one picture.

The metallic structures vigorously reach and twist their way to the street, and their connection to Sunset Boulevard provides a constant reminder for the kids of where they will likely end up

after they graduate. Luckily, glass technology has progressed to the point where the noise of Sunset Boulevard does not seep into these rooms. And from the street they create a Sci-Fi composition (evocative of futuristic Hollywood blockbusters?) that captures the eye and has already drawn more attention than Emerson even anticipated (tours are overbooked).

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Trust. It's Built In.



Clockwise: USC Heritage Hall Recapitalization, ACE Hotel/United Artists Theater Building, City of Santa Monica Parking Structure #6, 2802 Pico Housing, UCLA Edie and Lew Wasserman Building at Jules Stein Eye Institute.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 28, 2014



WISCOMBE AND GILMORE PLAN MUSEUM IN LA'S HISTORIC DISTRICT

UNDERGROUND CULTURE

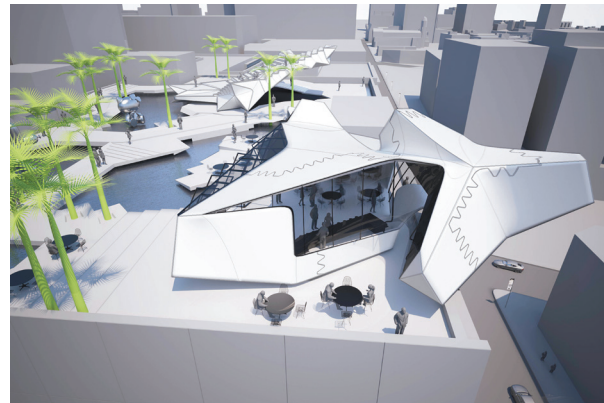
Downtown Los Angeles's Historic Core is about to get its first major museum, if that's what you want to call it. Local developer Tom Gilmore and architect Tom Wiscombe are teaming up on the complex project, which they are calling the Old Bank District Museum. It will be dedicated to contemporary Los Angeles art and located in the

sub-basements, basements, ground floors, mezzanines, and roofs of three interconnected buildings along Main and Fourth streets.

"We're going beyond the frontier of street level," said Tom Wiscombe, principal at Tom Wiscombe Architecture and a professor at SCI-Arc. Gilmore, founder of Gilmore Associates, who has been

a major player in the resurrection of the Bank District, calls the project "insanely organic."

Designs are in the preliminary conceptual stages, but as of now visitors enter through the Fourth Street frontage of the Hellman Building and then proceed on a circuitous route through the Hellman, the Farmers and



The new museum will include a rooftop sculpture garden and cafe.

The museum's collection, said Gilmore, will tilt toward the deviant, up-and-coming variety, an antidote to established museums and philanthropy in the city. It is still very much a work in progress. Gilmore said that he and his partner, Jerri Perrone, will fund the initial phases of construction and that the formation of the museum's board has yet to commence. He hopes to begin demolition inside the buildings next month, start construction documents by next year, and complete the project by 2017.

Gilmore added that he now has a small window of time to get such an ambitious project approved; a time when the mayor, the local councilman (Jose Huizar), and other political players see the value of architecture. It also comes at a tipping point, when the area is at risk of gentrification. "I want to lock in the context," said Gilmore, "not let it be destroyed in favor of commerce." **SL**

Merchants Bank, and the Bank House Garage. Treasures along the way include inter-connected basements containing more than half a dozen old bank vaults; large openings cut through walls and floors to give visual and pedestrian access from one space to the next (and to create what Wiscombe calls "three dimensional public space" in the cramped basements); and preserved treasures like old pneumatic tubes, submarine doors, and old mechanical equipment.

"It will be an underground museum in every sense of the word," explained Gilmore, who added that the institution's unusual architecture and art will evolve as the endeavor

progresses. "There's something beautiful about all the messiness," he said.

At the highest portion of the project, Wiscombe is planning a rooftop sculpture garden above the Bank House Garage, including, among other things, a restaurant made of folded composite that cantilevers over Main Street; a large composite amphitheater facing the downtown skyline; and multi-level walkways. Composites are being explored, said Wiscombe, because of their lightness, resilience, and malleability. The roof's first sculpture, *Earthwave*, a SCI-Arc-produced steel piece inspired by a Lebbeus Woods painting, was placed on the roof earlier this year.

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CREATIVE VISIONS

Anchored by ICFF, WantedDesign, and Collective, design week in New York—which has assumed the Twitter-friendly, compound logo/name NYCxDesign—continues to impress with a heady mix of contemporary furnishings. By Leslie Clagett

1 **SWISH DESK**
BLU DOT

A split-level sliding top and drawer stretch the storage capacity of this neo-modern, white-ash desk. Legs in white or grey.

bludot.com

2 **GINGER**
MARSET

Topped by a shallow, cup-like shade of oak or wenge veneer, the fixture uses a LED light source; also available in floor and table models. Designed by Joan Gaspar.

marsetusa.com

3 **SPOKES**
FOSCARINI

Concealed at the top and bottom of the fixture, LED lamps cast light upwards and downwards, casting shadows from the metal, cage-like shade. Designed by Vicente Garcia Jimenez and Cinzia Cumini.

foscarini.com

4 **TOKYO CHAIR**
BENSEN

With aesthetic lineage extending to Danish and Japanese design, the slightly torqued armrests of this solid wood chair are key to its contemporary presence. In black ash, walnut, white ash, and white oak, with a leather seat. Designed by Niels Bendtsen.

bensen.ca

5 **ANALOG TABLE**
FRITZ HANSEN

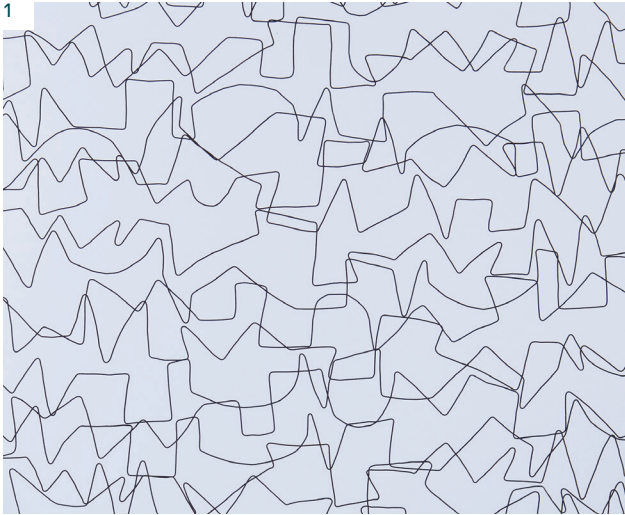
Merging square, circle, and oval into an inviting, unique form, the legs of this table are angled to allow more comfortable seating. In five colors and finishes, it is suitable for home or office use. Designed by Jaime Hayon.

fritzhanzen.com

6 **SELF UP**
RIMADESIO

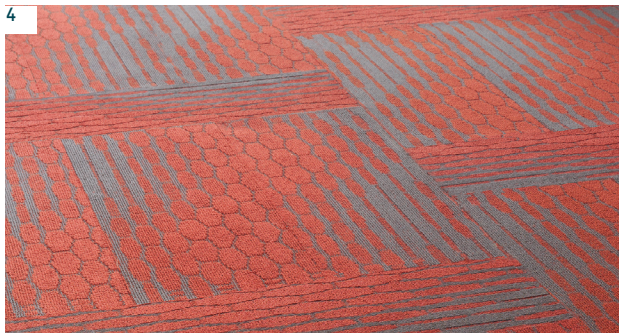
Classic dressers, nightstands, and sideboards are revitalized in lacquered glass and aluminum frames and feet. Available in 62 colors. Designed by Giuseppe Bavuso.

dominteriors.com
rimadesio.com



ORGANIZED LABOR

Whether for landing-stations or the boardroom, new products at NeoCon 2014 bring comfort and style to the evolving, contemporary workplace.
By Leslie Clagett



1 DANCE
3FORM

Bent wire courses across the interlayer of this resin panel, part of the new Full Circle collection. Handcrafted by artisans in Senegal.

3-form.com

2 OVERLAY,
NEXUS COLLECTION
KNOLL TEXTILES

Despite its textured appearance, this pattern is a flat print. The design was developed using hand-modified, randomizing software. In eight colorways; 54-inch repeat. Designed by Kari Pei.

knoll.com

3 SOTO II TOOLS
STEELCASE

A collection of multi-functional organizers leverages the limited desktop space of the modern office. Includes monitor bridge, shelves, and USB hub.

steelcase.com

4 BREAKING FORM
MOHAWK GROUP

Tessellated geometric patterns that can be configured in numerous ways are offered in a durable nylon 12-inch-by-36-inch plank format. Designed by Mac Stopa, Massive Design.

mohawkgroup.com

5 M4 EXECUTIVE CHAIR
SOKOA

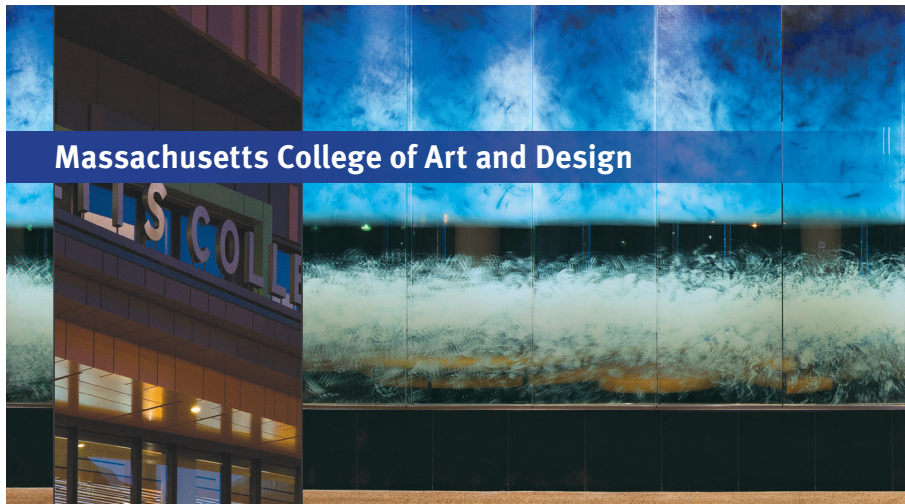
Back, seat, and headrest are 100-percent mesh, providing a responsive, custom seating experience. Also offered in manager, operator, and conference models. Designed in collaboration with Martin Ballendat.

sokoa.com

6 IN FORM AV VIDEO
CONFERENCING SUITE
INNOVANT

This portable, self-contained set-up affords efficient installation of video conferencing facilities, particularly in open-plan locations. Power cables run inside the legs of the tables.

innovant.com



Massachusetts College of Art and Design

SentryGlas® Expressions™ Case Study Summary:

Artist Nicole Chesney was commissioned to furnish art for the main lobby of this award winning twenty-one story Boston dormitory designed by B.K. Boley (ADD, Inc.). Ms. Chesney, a Mass Art alum, utilized DuPont™ SentryGlas® Expressions™ interlayers to feature her art and solve the design requirements for safety, durability, and maintenance in the high traffic area of the main lobby. The artwork, titled *Kairos*, is a stunning 11 foot high by 85 foot long laminated glass mural. Read the full case study on our website to learn how Standard Bent Glass Corp. and SentryGlas® Expressions™ made this project possible.

► expressionsglass.com



Photos: Peter Vanderwarker



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NCARB ANNOUNCES EXAM OVERHAULS

TESTING TESTING

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) has announced a complete overhaul of its Architect Registration Examination (ARE). ARE 5.0 will debut in late 2016, according to Michael Armstrong, NCARB Chief Executive Officer.

The exam, which will remain in electronic format as it has since 1997, will contain six divisions instead of the current seven. They are Practice Management, Project Management, Programming & Analysis, Project Planning & Design, Project Development & Documentation, and Construction & Evaluation.

This new structure, according to Armstrong, will more accurately reflect the phases of architectural practice. ARE 5.0 will incorporate graphics throughout via new case studies,

which will mimic typical architectural design scenarios. The incorporation of case studies will allow more in-depth analysis of architectural scenarios. The exam will utilize completely new graphic tools, which will replace the old CAD-based vignette tool.

The revised structure is being developed with input from architects and educators from across the country as well as NCARB staff and consultants. Also under review is the current six-month waiting period for retaking failed divisions of the exam. The 2016 roll out will occur after beta testing of the software and exam is complete.

Armstrong also announced a major streamlining of NCARB's Intern Development Program (IDP). The current version of IDP contains duplicative and underutilized elements and has been considered by many interns as unnecessarily complex. Revisions to the IDP are under development by NCARB staff as well as representatives from the AIA, ACSA, AIAS, interns, and current practitioners. A 12-architect panel is currently reviewing the IDP and will submit it for public comments in June 2014. **GEORGE CALYS**



COURTESY THA

UNVEILED

BLACK BUTTE RANCH LODGE RENOVATION

When Black Butte Ranch Lodge first opened a little over 40 years ago near Sisters, Oregon, it served as a home for locals and a destination for travelers heading to the city's namesake, the Three Sisters—three volcanic peaks over 10,000 feet tall. Originally a cattle and horse ranch in the 1880s and then a summer escape for a San Francisco family, the 1,800-acre Black Butte Ranch exchanged hands several times before being sold to Brooks Resources in 1970.

Now over four decades have passed and the Lodge is set to go undergo an \$11.5 million renovation. Oregon-based firm THA Architecture is set to design a new 15,000-square-foot pool complex—which

includes a swimming pool, a pool house, a recreation center, and updated native plant landscaping by Walker Macy Landscape Architects. Located at the center of the ranch, the new design takes some inspiration from barns with long rooflines, providing sweeping open vistas of Mount Washington and the Cascades beyond. The plan also calls for special light fixtures to minimize light pollution, radiant heating in the pool house, a bistro powered by a geothermal heat pump, bike parking spaces, daylight harvesting, and other sustainable features. Completion is estimated for 2015.

ARIEL ROSENSTOCK

Architect: THA
Client: Brooks Resources
Location: Sisters, Oregon
Completion Date: 2015



MORLEY BUILDERS

SANTA MONICA OPENS ANOTHER STUNNING GARAGE

ARTFUL PARKING

When city officials contacted Behnisch Architekten Los Angeles about designing a replacement for Santa Monica Parking Structure #6, founding partner Christof Jantzen was not sure he wanted the job. “I was thinking to myself, ‘Do I really want to do a parking garage?’” recalled Jantzen, now principal of Studio Jantzen. But then he reframed the project as an exercise in placemaking. “What’s missing from many

city projects is a careful consideration of public space between buildings,” he said at an event celebrating the garage’s opening. “The approach we took is as much about public space and urban city building as it is about architecture.” The 744-space parking structure features a dynamic facade of multi-colored aluminum sails. A red stair, reminiscent of the Centre Pompidou, zigzags across and through it.

“The stair automatically gives us a sense of where we are, where we’re going,” said Jantzen, who noted that it has also become a destination for joggers. In addition to parking for cars, the garage includes indoor bicycle parking, 7,000 square feet of retail space, 3,000 square feet of farmer’s market storage, and 800 square feet of space for downtown Santa Monica. Thirty electric vehicle charging stations are already in place, plus infrastructure for dozens more. The garage’s facade was the product of a sustained collaboration among Behnisch Architekten/Studio Jantzen, International Parking Design, contractor Morley Builders, and several consultants, including an

aerospace engineer who helped assess the impact of wind resistance on the sails. The perforated sails, which are folded at different angles to direct light into the structure, were fabricated of an atypical aluminum alloy that resists corrosion. Installation was initially a challenge, said project manager Krystal Chang, but by the end of construction crews were installing approximately 20 panels per day. Santa Monica Parking Structure #6 has “an enlightened approach to the pedestrian,” said city architect Miriam Mulder, observing that this is “ironic in this edifice to cars.” Besides making room for a large plaza out front, the garage is accessible to pedestrians from both the street and alley sides. A protected passageway invites walkers to cut through the space, and separate signage clearly marks pedestrian exits. A red-painted walkway, which Jantzen calls a “red carpet,” directs users from the parking bays at the back of the structure to the feature stair at the front. The garage was built as part of a citywide push to increase parking through the construction of architect-designed structures. Other projects include several garage renovations by Brooks+Scarpa Architects, and Moore Ruble Yudell Architects & Planners’ Santa Monica Civic Center lot, the first LEED-certified parking garage in the nation. The city hopes the new structures, in addition to making things easier for drivers, will contribute to the revitalization of downtown Santa Monica. “The parking structure itself doesn’t solve all the city’s problems,” said Mulder. But as a new kind of public space, it’s a good place to start. **ABM**



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CLEANING UP

AT THE SALONE DEL BAGNO IN MILAN, DESIGNS THAT STEPPED BEYOND THE NORM WERE FOUND ACROSS ALL CATEGORIES OF BATHROOM PRODUCT: FITTINGS, FIXTURES, AND CABINETS. MUCH ATTENTION WAS PAID TO MATERIALS AND FINISHES, THOUGH IT SEEMED TO BE AN OFF YEAR FOR TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS. BY LESLIE CLAGETT

1 GONG
KREOO

Available in four marbles, this 32-inch-by-13-inch basin can be installed as a countertop vessel or on a compatible pedestal. Designed by Enzo Berti.

kreoo.com

2 MEM IN CYPRUM FINISH
DORNBRACHT

This new rose-gold-colored finish is a nuanced interpretation of polished copper; available on select fitting collections for bath and kitchen. MEM was designed by Sieger Design.

dornbracht.com

3 ESPERANTO
REXA

This component-based system provides flexible design alternatives that can be adapted to baths of different sizes and configurations. Designed by Monica Graffeo.

rexadesign.it

4 MONOLITH
GEBERIT

A compromise between bulky floor-mounted commodes and in-wall installations, this toilet features a shallow tank that is sheathed in white or black glass.

geberitnorthamerica.com

5 AXOR STARCK V
AXOR

Fabricated of glass, this bathroom mixer puts hydrodynamics on display, with a swirling vortex created whenever the tap is turned on. Designed by Philippe Starck.

hansgrohe.com

6 ILBAGNOALESSI ONE
LAUFEN

Offered in 35-inch and 47-inch versions, the curves of this console basin complement the strong lines of the walnut vanity cabinet. Designed by Stefano Giovannoni.

laufen.com

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FOUR NEW
ARCHITECTURAL
INTERIORS FROM THE
EAST AND WEST COASTS

FROM
THE
INSIDE
OUT





72 AND SUNNY

PLAYA VISTA, CALIFORNIA | LEAN ARCH

The sprawling former offices of the visionary and eccentric businessman Howard Hughes in Playa Vista have undergone an extensive renovation, and are now a major playground for creative offices and academic institutions like Youtube, Earthbound Media, and UCLA's new Ideas Campus. But only one company got to be in the Hercules Campus' Building One, home to Hughes' administrative building and his own office: advertising and media company 72 and Sunny.

They hired LA studio Lean Arch to create a new space that "creates a feeling of awe," inside the space according to Lean's principal

James Myers. The firm kept most of the two-story space simple, open, and timeless, inserting a few key focal points.

Primary among these are a first floor work pod and second floor executive office, each partially exposed to passersby through timber louvers or slats. Beyond that are a large central floating stair, supported on steel Y-braces and propped on a multi-level wood base for congregating; an adjacent lush green wall and open kitchen; and a large cement board-clad board room on the second floor with angular walls and fish scale-like siding. Meyer likens it to a

"starship transporter." Its conference table is designed to look like a giant surfboard (all of the office's conference rooms are named after surf breaks).

Around this, employees' office spaces are arranged in four large quadrants of open seating. Most have easy access to natural light, and, nearby, to large openings onto the lovely tree-lined courtyards, which were brought back to life after years of neglect. The company wanted a clean, uncluttered look, so wires and mechanical systems do not protrude beneath the line of the building's original steel trusses. The

flashiest ornamentation comes from the offices' many presentation walls, filled with ideas and sketches.

Meanwhile, at the end of a second floor hallway Hughes' original offices—known as Mahogany Row—have had their elegant wood detailing preserved, albeit with new floating ceilings, floors, and dry wall surrounding it. It is fun to see brainstorming sessions taking place inside Hughes' own office nearby. Indeed, his spirit of adventure lives on here. And it will continue, as Lean Arch's renovation of Building Two is supposed to be complete by July, doubling 72 and Sunny's space. **SAM LUBELL**





RESOURCES:

COUNTERTOPS: Vermont Quarries, vermontquarries.com |
FLOORING: Hardwood Realty, floorings.com; Stone Source, stonesource.com | LIGHTING: Restoration Hardware, restorationhardware.com | SEATING: Carl Hansen & Son, carlhansen.com





WEST SIDE TOWNHOUSE

NEW YORK | O'NEILL ROSE ARCHITECTS

Located behind a landmarked Victorian facade on the Upper West Side, this modern home is a careful study in line and proportion, which subtly transitions from an abstracted traditional language to sleek contemporary as you move from the parlor to the penthouse. Designed by Brooklyn-based O'Neill Rose Architects, this townhouse was completely reconstructed from several apartments into a large five-floor house, with a garden rental apartment below.

The architects looked at historic townhouses for inspiration for details and materials, including herringbone floors, and handsome marble mantels for the working fireplaces. They worked closely with the builders and craftsmen to make sure every detail was well made and respectful of the house's proportions.

The hand plastered ceiling and the underside of the staircase exemplify this bespoke approach. "I worked with [the contractors] for three or four weeks drawing the line of the staircase on the wall, they would build it up, and then we'd make adjustments," said firm principal Devin O'Neill. "It was satisfying to work at that level and make it just right." The result is a sinuous staircase that winds through the space like a piece of sculpture.

Above the parlor floor, the design language

The lower floors of this renovated townhouse are more traditional, while the upper floors are more contemporary, culminating in a sleek penthouse family room.

is slightly more abstract. The focal point of that level is a roomy open kitchen, which extends out to a spacious terrace. Large ceramic tiles made to look like limestone extend out onto the terrace. "The terrace and the kitchen are meant to be a continuous living space," said O'Neill. Custom white cabinets and textured cream-colored ceramic backsplashes from Heath Ceramics create an inviting but serene environment, which encourages views out through the expansive windows. Midcentury furnishings from Carl Hansen are mixed with contemporary pieces for a spare but fresh look.

The following two floors are private family quarters, with a master suite on the third level, and four kids rooms on the fourth. Tucked behind the mansard roof is a sleek penthouse family room with a monumental, 14-foot-wide-by-7½-foot-wide glass wall from Rochester Glass that opens onto another small terrace. "We really wanted to open the house out, to connect with views of the city," said O'Neill. **ALAN G. BRAKE**





FALL HOUSE

BIG SUR, CALIFORNIA |
FOUGERON ARCHITECTURE



Perched 250 feet above the Pacific Ocean, Fall House, designed by Fougerson Architecture, could easily have been overwhelmed by its dramatic setting. Yet the house's interior, in particular, counterposes a sense of security against the wildness of the site. The casual modernity of the design, which emphasizes warmth, comfort, and simplicity, stands in contrast to both its natural surroundings and the log-cabin architecture of the region. "On the inside, too, these clients specifically didn't want a sort of ramshackle Big Sur house," said principal Anne Fougerson. "They wanted something that was comfortable and easy to use."

Fall House's exterior and interior are seamlessly integrated, particularly in terms of materials. Aiming for a continuous floor plane, the architects selected a French limestone that is hard enough for both outdoor and indoor use. The stained mahogany ceilings and wall panels similarly create a dialogue with the building's copper facade. The mahogany "wraps the building in the same fashion" as the copper and "gives a real warmth," said Fougerson. The windows are also framed in mahogany, both a practical and aesthetic choice.

Furnishing the house, said Fougerson, "was about finding fairly plush but classic pieces that [the clients] wouldn't get sick of." Most of the pieces, including the sectional in the open plan living/dining/kitchen area, are from

In contrast to the typical ramshackle Big Sur house, Fougerson turned out a modern, easy-to-use living space.

B&B Italia. The bookshelves in the den, which Fougerson calls "the hearth and home of the house," were custom-designed by the firm for their former office. "You can tell it's not brand new, which is sort of great. I love the idea of repurposing it."

Fougerson Architecture custom-designed the kitchen cabinets in white and dark wood. "We like the contrast," said Fougerson. "The whiteness provides that sort of minimalist modernity. At the same time, the wood grounds it a little bit more. An all-white kitchen would have been garish." The fixtures are primarily sand-blasted chrome, with Corian surfaces in the bathrooms. Downlights by Delta Lights and track lighting by Halo are integrated into the ceilings.

Fougerson Architecture's interior design strategy reaches its peak in the den, the literal and metaphorical center of Fall House. The only room enclosed entirely in glass, the den could feel exposed. Instead, the warm wood window frames, cushioned chairs, and gas fireplace create a pocket of intimacy. It, like the rest of the house, is a refuge, a safe place both within and apart from its spectacular site.

ANNA BERGEN MILLER

RESOURCES:

FURNISHINGS: B&B Italia, beitalia.com | HARDWARE: Valli & Valli, vallievalli.com |
LIGHTING: B-K Lighting, bklighting.com; Delta Light, deltalight.com |
LIGHTING CONTROLS: Lutron, lutron.com | SOLID SURFACING: Corian, dupont.com



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MAY

WEDNESDAY 28
LECTURES

AV: Andrea Fraser with Joe Day
7:00 p.m.
MAK Center
Schindler House
835 North Kings Rd.
West Hollywood, CA
makcenter.org

In Pursuit of Excellence: Lean Design

5:30 p.m.
AIA East Bay
1405 Clay St.
Oakland, CA
aiaeb.org

EVENTS

Architects Without Borders
6:00 p.m.
AIA Portland
403 Northwest 11th Ave.
Portland, OR
portlandaia.org

EPC Brownbag Session: Project Management

12:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St.
Suite 600
San Francisco
aiaef.org

SYMPOSIUM

Small Firms Roundtable
12:00 p.m.
AIA Portland
403 Northwest 11th Ave.
Portland, OR
portlandaia.org

SATURDAY 31
EVENT

We are Friends
3:00 p.m.
MOCA Grand Avenue
250 South Grand Ave.
Los Angeles
moca.org

JUNE

SUNDAY 1
EXHIBITIONS CLOSING

AV: New Works by Andrea Fraser, Vanessa Place
MAK Center
Schindler House
835 North Kings Rd.
West Hollywood, CA
makcenter.org

Hammer Projects: Nathaniel Mellors

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

LECTURE

Doug Aitken and Philippe Vergne at Art Catalogues
4:00 p.m.
LACMA
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
lacma.org

WEDNESDAY 5
LECTURE

Architecture of Knowledge
6:00 p.m.
AIA SF
Hattery
414 Brannan St.
San Francisco
aiaef.org

SATURDAY 7
WITH THE KIDS

Korean Textile Workshop
2:00 p.m.
LACMA
Boone Children's Gallery
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
lacma.org

SUNDAY 8
EXHIBITION CLOSING

Jacob Hashimoto's Gas Giant
MOCA Pacific Design Center
8687 Melrose Ave.
West Hollywood, CA
moca.org

TOUR

How Do Architects Live Tour: The Phineas Kappe House
11:00 a.m.
AIA LA
Sherman Oaks, CA
aialosangeles.org

WEDNESDAY 11
LECTURE

COTE Greenbag Lecture
12:00 p.m.
AIA CFA Education Space
403 Northwest 11th Ave.
Portland, OR
aiaportland.org

TUESDAY 17
SYMPOSIUM

Sustainability @CityHall w/ Ken Lewis, AIA of AC Martin
12:00 p.m.
AIA LA
City Hall, 10th Floor
200 South Spring St.
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org

WEDNESDAY 18
CONFERENCE

GreenerBuilder 2014
South San Francisco
Conference Center
255 South Airport Blvd.
San Francisco
usgbc-ncc.org

THURSDAY 19
SYMPOSIUM

Site Planning & Design ARE Workshop
6:00 p.m.
AIA Los Angeles
3780 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 800
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org

FRIDAY 20
SYMPOSIUM

Behind Good Restaurant Design: A panel discussion with the 2014 Restaurant Design Awards Jury + Finalists
3:00 p.m.
AIA LA
Los Angeles Convention Center
1201 South Figueroa St.
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org

WEDNESDAY 25
EVENT

AIA|LA Breakfast Reception w/ LEONARD J. AUBE of Annenberg Space for Photography
8:00 a.m.
AIA LA
Annenberg Space for Photography: Skylight Studios
2000 Avenue of the Stars
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org



COURTESY GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

NO FURTHER WEST: THE STORY OF LOS ANGELES UNION STATION

Los Angeles Public Library, Central Library
630 West 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA
Through August 10

Known as the "Last of the Great Railway Stations," L.A. Union Station receives due recognition with the exhibition entitled *No Further West: The Story of Los Angeles Union Station*. Organized by the Getty Research Institute, the exhibition will span from the station's construction in 1939, when its construction became an incidental platform for racial issues of the era, to today, when it serves 60,000 commuter passengers daily. Photographs, architectural drawings, and other archival items will all relay the story of the station's journey from a basic transportation hub to an important centerpiece of Southern California architecture. The Los Angeles Public Library—an iconic cultural centerpiece itself—hosts the exhibition until August 10.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 28, 2014

WELCOME CONTRIBUTION

Designing Home: Jews and MidCentury Modernism
 Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco
 Through October 6

The Contemporary Jewish Museum of San Francisco enters the post-war fray with the exhibition *Designing Home: Jews and MidCentury Modernism*. Based on the high attendance of the preview night on April 23, the subject continues to arouse an ever-growing audience. Open until October 6, the show displays over 150 pieces, encompassing furniture, architectural photographs, graphic arts, textiles, objects, movies, magazine, books covers, and product design. Familiar protagonists (Richard Neutra, Rudolph Schindler, George Nelson, Saul Bass, Anni Albers, Herbert Bayer) join under-the-radar designers (Marguerite Wildehain, Lili Blumenau, Judith Brown, Muriel Coleman, Eugene Deutch, Marli Ehrmann) to present a compelling narrative of 20th century modernity, craftsmanship, and

taste, all fused into art.

Within the heritage industry, the Mid-Century Age has a rather stable footing, with its own dedicated magazines, literary classics, trade shows, furniture stores, tourism, symposia, academic careers, and professional expertise. Designers once known in the restricted circles of modernist believers are now household names among the general public. What distinguishes this show from comparable venues, however, is the focus on the Jewish contribution in the formation of this aesthetic universe. New York-based curator Donald Albrecht, a trend-setter in his own right, and associate curator Lily Siegel have carefully chosen canonical artifacts revealing the degree of personal commitments that Jews made to a vision of modernity integral to the built

environment. While no notion of Jewish space is advanced in either the objects on display or the catalog, their radical involvement helped to rethink virtually every single artifact in the human-made world.

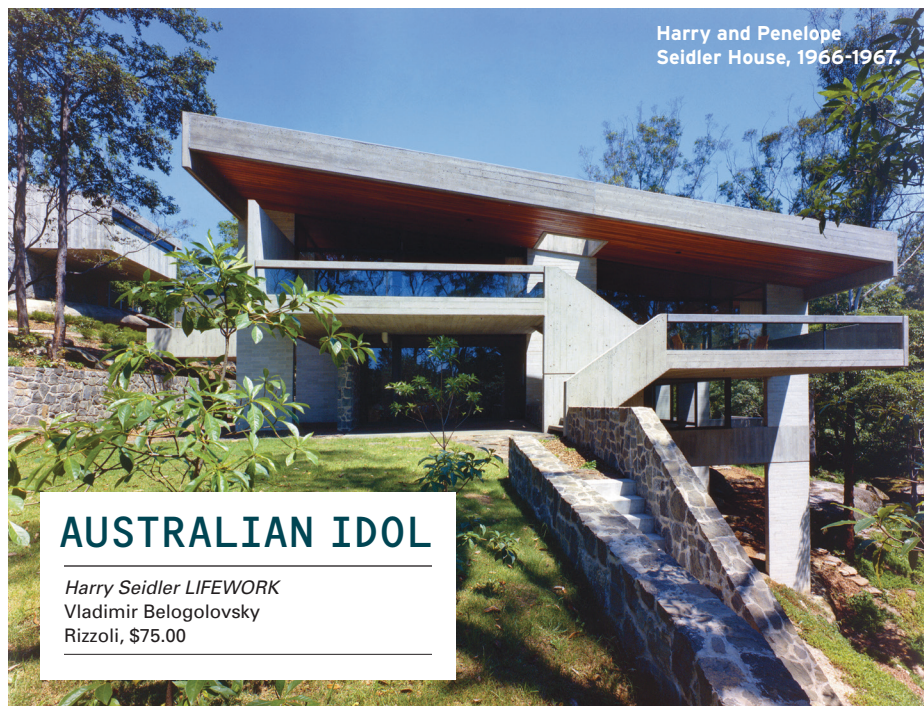
The subtext of the show is the migration of Jewish artists from Germany—the cradle of the Modern Movement, where the Bauhaus experienced its rise and fall—in the 1930s largely to the East Coast.

Local elites were somewhat prepared to receive their message in the wake of numerous exhibits on modern art and architecture. Unsurprisingly, the epicenter of this story on **continued on page 31**

Eichler model home advertisement, 1960.



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Harry and Penelope Seidler House, 1966-1967.

AUSTRALIAN IDOL

Harry Seidler *LIFEWORK*
 Vladimir Belogolovsky
 Rizzoli, \$75.00

MAX DUPAIN

Ours is a strange profession. On one hand we fancy ourselves to be on the forefront of technology, using cutting edge 3D modeling to design and BIM to build. On the other we romantically cling to the feudal method of prolonged apprenticeships where wisdom is personally disseminated from master to disciple in the laborious process of initiating the next generation into the architectural guild. It begins in school with the studio system where the desk crit is sacred and reigns supreme. And that is how I met Harry Seidler.

Under any other circumstances, our paths would likely never have crossed. He is of a different era and lived at the opposite end of the planet. Since Australia was so far removed physically from the East Coast, pretty much everybody in our neck of the woods at our level was totally unfamiliar with his work even though he had actually just won the Royal Australia Institute of Architects Gold Medal prior to getting

on the plane. Harry Seidler was returning to a Harvard where the pure Modernism he preached was falling out of favor and the school was transitioning into what would become Post Modernism. Harry's experience there as a student was so transformative in his life that it occupied a hallowed place; he really wanted to recreate the aura of the Harvard he remembered. He reached out to the students. And so we became the audience for his insights and memories.

In the architectural fraternity, there are barely six degrees of separation, allowing you to claim relationships that are at least one or two steps removed. You couldn't actually work for Aalto, but you could know someone who had. And there was Harry who could talk about drafting Baker House, his time in Breuer's office and of collaborating with Nervi as his structural engineer. Well, no longer were we lowly little students. We began to see ourselves as part of this grand architectural tradition.

No good deed goes unpunished. Needless to say, just out of school, when there were no architectural jobs to be readily had, it seemed like an excellent time to make a grand tour. So, off I went to Sydney. Not only did Harry spend a week with me and take me to visit most of his buildings, but I got to sleep in the guest room in the house at Killara. It was probably the first time in my life I saw world-class art that wasn't in a museum and began to appreciate that the pictures on the wall could create a dialog with the architecture that surrounded them. It was breathtaking and eye opening at the same time.

He was born in 1923 into an upper middle class Jewish family in Vienna. With the rise of the Nazis in the 1930s he and his older brother were sent to boarding school in England. When the war broke out a couple of years later, the two teenagers were interred as enemy aliens first in England and then in Canada with the result that Harry didn't see the rest of his family again till the war was over. The Canadians had a program that would pay for free education if you were under 21. It got Harry out of the internment camp in 1941 and into the University of Manitoba, but didn't help his brother. He studied engineering, which gave him a strong technical background.

Harry discovered the Bauhaus and decided to go to Harvard where Gropius and Breuer had landed. His timing was off and he missed the admission process, but ended up being specially accepted on a full scholarship to the Master Program by Gropius as one of the most "talented students of his class." And what a class it was. All through his life he would begin his slide show with a picture of his fellow classmates. There was Gropius, Franzen, I.M. Pei, circulating among the dozen students. Star pupils are often hired by their teachers; when Breuer decided to open an architectural office in New York his first employee was his former teaching assistant, Harry Seidler fresh off a year at Black Mountain College where he had completed his education with Albers.

Meanwhile his mother and the rest of his family had emigrated to Australia. She hadn't seen him in years and began writing him letters begging him

to come and visit. He really didn't want to leave because he had a fabulous job. So, the letters became progressively more enticing until she invited him to build her a house in Sydney. Even then, he played hard to get, but agreed to do so if she would agree that he could stop off in Brazil for a short apprenticeship in the office of Oscar Neimeyer. She agreed. He got to Australia in 1948; the initial plan was to only stay till the house was completed.

The house he built for her bears more than a striking resemblance to the ones that he was working on for Breuer, especially the never built Marion Thompson house. The Rose Seidler House effectively brought modern architecture to Australia. Everything about it was innovative from the plan to the materials to the furniture; much of it had to be imported. Nothing like it had ever been seen in Sydney before; instantly it became an icon. Not only was it widely published in architectural journals, but it became the backdrop for photo shoots for clothing, cars, or anything modern. It led to a series of houses.

Here are all the ingredients for his future career: a world-class education, a network of international connections, a deep understanding of structure, the integration of art and architecture, and very supportive clients. It is no wonder that in short order he became Australia's most famous architect. He didn't disappoint. He was all of 26, in fact, when Breuer invited him to set up an office in Los Angeles three years later. He was much too busy.

After the houses, his next major building was Australia Square, which, when it was completed in 1967, became the tallest lightweight concrete building in the world. Nervi was its structural engineer and the pair went on to collaborate on many projects. In the end, Seidler built over 180 buildings, mainly in Australia but also in Vienna and Hong Kong before he died in 2006. Over the course of his 60-year career at least a dozen monographs on his work were written by Chris Abel, Philip Drew, Kenneth Frampton, and Peter Blake, among others. What makes this one different is that it tells a bigger and different story.

Vladimir Beglogolovsky, **continued on page 31**

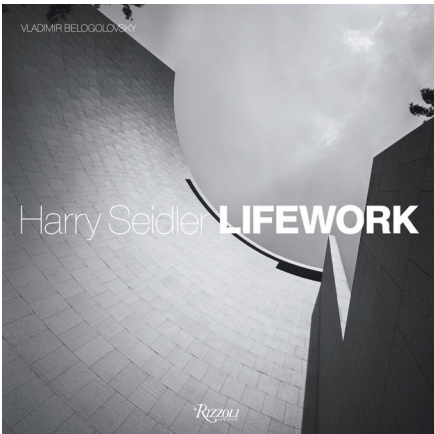


COURTESY COLLECTION OF ELAINE LUSTIG

WELCOME CONTRIBUTION
continued from page 30
American soil is New York, where so many settled and found outlets and audience for their ideas both in the industry and in Ivy League teaching institutions. Yet Chicago and California also became playgrounds for some key players. While this canonical account has been amply told, it is hardly the whole story. Architects of Jewish origins had made indelible marks already in the American consciousness. The story of Detroit to a large extent is unimaginable outside the enormous role that the towering Albert Kahn, a German Jew who migrated to America in the late 1800s,

had in crafting a new delivery process for the A/E/C world and the remarkable images of Ford's manufacturing plants. Furthermore, both Rudolph Schindler and Raymond Neutra came to the United States under the irresistible spell of Frank Lloyd Wright, rather than political persecution as their later colleagues experienced. In the display, the pinnacle of the Jewish intersection is the Kaufman House in Palm Springs, CA. The client (Edgar Kaufman), the architect (Richard Neutra), and the photographer (Julius Shulman) all share Jewish roots. Statistically speaking, the patronage of Jews was essential in advancing the

cause of modern architecture and design in North America. In fact, a significant number of Jewish Intellectuals, academics, and industrialists—including Josef Von Sternberg and Samuel Freeman—were enlightened clients who gave opportunities to the likes of Richard Neutra and Frank Lloyd Wright to make lasting statements in architecture for the benefits of civilization. Curiously, venerable architects such as Eric Mendelsohn, Louis Kahn, Victor Gruen, and Serge Chermayeff, together with lesser-known figures such Joseph Allen Stein, are notably absent from the exhibit. Even in the realm of architectural photography protagonists such as Ezra Stoller and Marvin Rand are nowhere to be found. And yet, the point of the exhibit has less to do with being exhaustive and more to do with establishing a clear understanding about the participation of Jews in giving form to the zeitgeist of the 20th century. In this respect, the exhibit is already an instant classic. **PIERLUIGI SERRAINO IS A ROME-BASED AUTHOR AND ARCHITECT.**



AUSTRALIAN IDOL continued from page 30
who wrote the book and curated the accompanying travelling exhibition, was introduced to Harry Seidler's work after Harry died. So his perspective is strictly historical and curatorial. Because he came in after the fact, he approached it from outside. His story is a little different than the man I thought I knew. The insights and the way things are framed add a level of richness to Harry's work that I hadn't appreciated. He rightfully reached out to some of the people Harry knew and worked with to capture the flavor of his life and some of the people who impacted it. So there are pieces by Norman Foster, by Oscar Niemeyer, by Kenneth Frampton. There are also interviews with some of the artists who collaborated with Harry, such as Norman Carlberg, Lin Utzon, and Frank Stella, and some of the people who played a major role in his life, such as his wife Penelope. They are absolutely wonderful because you can listen to her reminisce about

her marriage, the commissions, and some of the development of the buildings. The book was designed by Massimo Vignelli, which is fitting as they were friends and collaborators. Its layout is very elegant and simple. The photos are absolutely gorgeous. In a pre-Photoshop world, nothing is out of place. Every picture beautifully composed; the skies are blue, buildings are white, and the sculptures are in primary colors. The earlier black and white images are stunning too. Harry loved photography and took many pictures when he traveled with his Leica, and he traveled widely. Taschen even published a book of them in 2003, *The Grand Tour*, which Vignelli also designed. When architects want to find out about buildings, they generally turn to the web rather than sifting through a "coffee table" book about someone's work. Book sales have plummeted accordingly. The architectural monograph has become a rite of passage for the architect with pretensions, conferring gravitas and a level of significance on the work, whether deserving or otherwise. It is touted as a marketing vehicle as much as a critical one with the consequence that architects tend to take matters into their own hands, and often self-publish them to control the message. The accompanying writing veers between the hopelessly dense or virtually nonexistent and the resultant books become quite one-dimensional. One tends to forget how powerful a good monograph about a strong body of work can actually be and how it can tell an amazing story about an incredible person who played a significant role in the development of Modern Architecture that transcends its time and place. **ABBY SUCKLE IS THE PRINCIPAL OF ABBY SUCKLE ARCHITECTS.**

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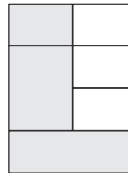
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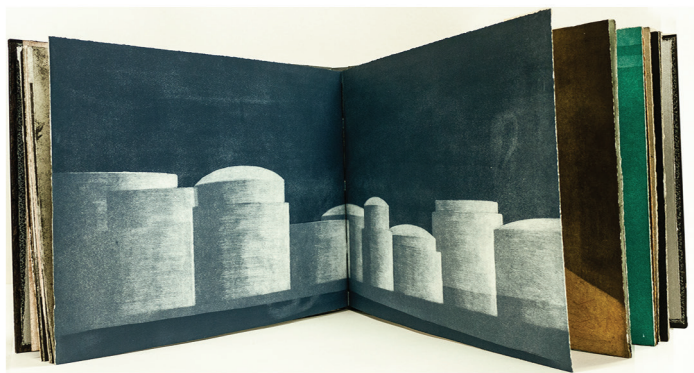
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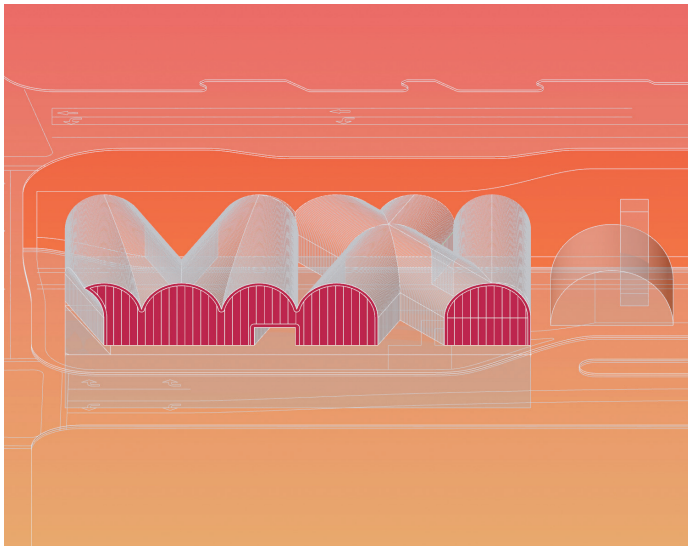
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Top, left: Design study, El Segundo Executive Office and Sports Training Facility; Below, left: Solana Beach Mixed Use Transit Oriented Development; Right: Peter Zellner.



Earlier this year, Los Angeles educator and architect **Peter Zellner**, founding principal of ZELLNERPLUS, was named principal and studio design lead for AECOM's Los Angeles architecture practice. To many the move was surprising, considering Zellner's longstanding relationship with SCI-Arc and his reputation for edgy design. But for Zellner it represents a chance to work at a larger scale and to take advantage of new resources, among other things. *AN* West editor **Sam Lubell** sat down with Zellner to discuss his new position and the profound changes in the corporate architecture practice in general.

Sam Lubell: You seem to be an unexpected choice at AECOM.

Peter Zellner: It's reflective of a desire to bring in a strong voice for design in the Los Angeles area. But I think it's also mirrored by other recent hires such as Allison Williams in San Francisco (director of design for the firm's U.S. West region) and Ross Wimer (senior vice president for AECOM in the Americas). I'm part of a larger sweep. You'd also find it in other regions like Europe and Asia.

Historically there's been a need to divorce the design piece from the production piece; a division between boutique firms and larger, service-based firms. For instance, you often have boutique designers producing high quality design and that work being supported by an executive architect. The goal would be to get away from that approach.

Our goal is to not just deliver excellent building and engineering services but to also attach that to architecture and design in an integrated and meaningful way.

I believe in parallel there is an ambition now in the development community to align comprehensive construction and management services with great design. There's a real interest in getting architecture up front. Not just as something to decorate the box, but leading the project by being integrated with other drivers, like sustainability, high performance and high quality building engineering, ecology, and landscape. One of AECOM's strengths is the diversity of services we offer in those areas.

You've mentioned that you were drawn by AECOM's many resources.

I think it's kind of mind-blowing. In the work that I've been engaged in so far I've experienced a very different approach from the ways that most architects deliver projects. Typically you bring in consultants in the later stages of developing a design, or you have a sketch that might be schematic and you have consultants responding to your ideas in a vague way. At AECOM you can have in-depth conversations very early, whether it's around cost modeling or building engineering or development financing or construction. It's a very different way of working and it's something that absolutely attracted me to the firm. It's the next model of how

things are going to be delivered through total integration.

For projects of a certain scale it can be incredibly valuable. There are efficiencies that come out of being able to share tools and data. Efficiency and quality are part of the same equation. If it's integrated it touches everything and you're getting optimization around everything that you're working on, whether it's a building or an interior or a landscape or infrastructure.

How has it changed your approach?

I think it changes how an architect can think about a project. I'm able to understand my work within a spectrum of disciplines that touch the environment and as a result I can be more intelligent about a project's design impact. I have more information earlier and different points of view and different skill sets to access so I can continue to ask better questions.

It's a way of refining the process of inquiry. You're not guessing, so it gets you closer and faster to a different and better solution. For instance, I was just with our San Diego group and I found out that we have an urban archaeology group, a botany group, and an ornithology group. In a recent instance some of our team members working on the LAX light ribbon wanted to know whether birds would actually roost in a portion of the project. We were able to get an accurate answer from our experts. I don't know that there's any company that has this range of expertise.

Are you worried about moving to a corporate environment?

I've worked in large organizations and I've taught in large universities. The transition from a boutique to a larger firm isn't a surprise. There are benefits to both sides of the equation, and you can hybridize the cultures. That would be one of my ambitions. I like the idea of bringing the best qualities of a small design practice to a large firm while getting rid of the worst qualities of both: like a lack of resources or applicable knowledge on the small side or reduced nimbleness on the big side.

Do you want to improve the level of design?

Yes. One part of that is driven by the type of work you do as well as finding the right opportunities in order to reinforce and build up a meaningful design culture. The standard for any project should be always produce something of intelligence and quality. From

talking with many senior members at AECOM I know my hire is about enhancing this ambition.

What strengths do you bring?

I've been very fortunate that the few things I've managed to get built have received a fair amount of attention and have been well publicized. I bring a certain sensibility and profile and reputation as a designer and as an academic. But on the other hand, because I've spent the last few years jumping between academic, professional, corporate, and boutique cultures I think the other aspect of my hire is that I have flexibility and interest around linking up different cultures.

I also have a wide set of interests that scale from cities down to furniture and I've had opportunities to be a connector of communities. I'm interested in very broad urban things and I'm very interested in specific design problems. At AECOM I'm being exposed to a lot of things I didn't know much about, like land use economics or how equity works in a very large project. I think I bring a general enthusiasm for any topic around architecture and a willingness to engage individuals across a broad spectrum in terms of looking at what a building can be. It's not just aesthetics and it's not just about a building being a finance vehicle. Maybe that's what makes me a little special, because I'm a pretty broad thinker and I am not opposed to trying to understand a problem from multiple angles.

Will the knee jerk reaction against corporate architecture change?

Maybe the definition needs to change. Once upon a time Mies van der Rohe was a corporate architect. We tend to forget that. He did a lot of work for corporate America. We need to look at what we think avant garde architecture is and what corporate architecture is. We're now in a very strange moment in our culture where we have agreed to these really overvalued definitions that say this type of architect does art and this type of architect does commerce and we can't mix the two.

Why is there so much bad corporate work?

How we look at the problem of being cost effective is wrong. Something gets designed and when it runs contrary to construction economics the design gets value engineered. Getting around issues like cost and sustainability and structural performance or local politics early enough should allow architecture to rise to the occasion, not to become a thing that is sadly overlooked and is a poor byproduct of the usual processes.



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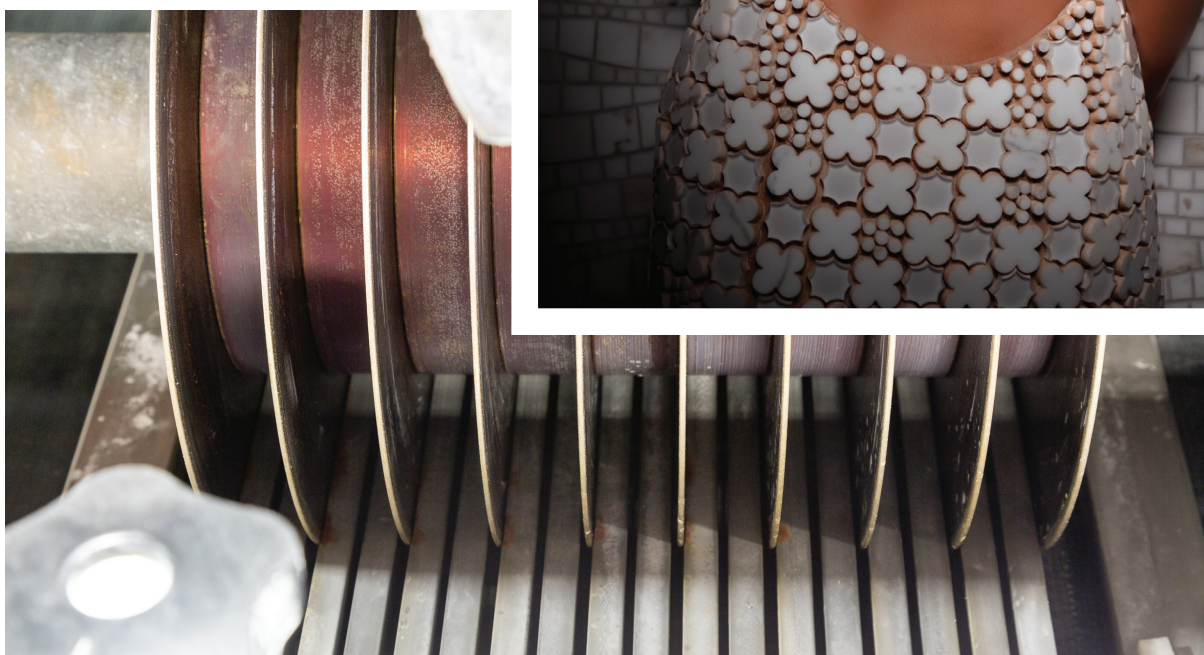
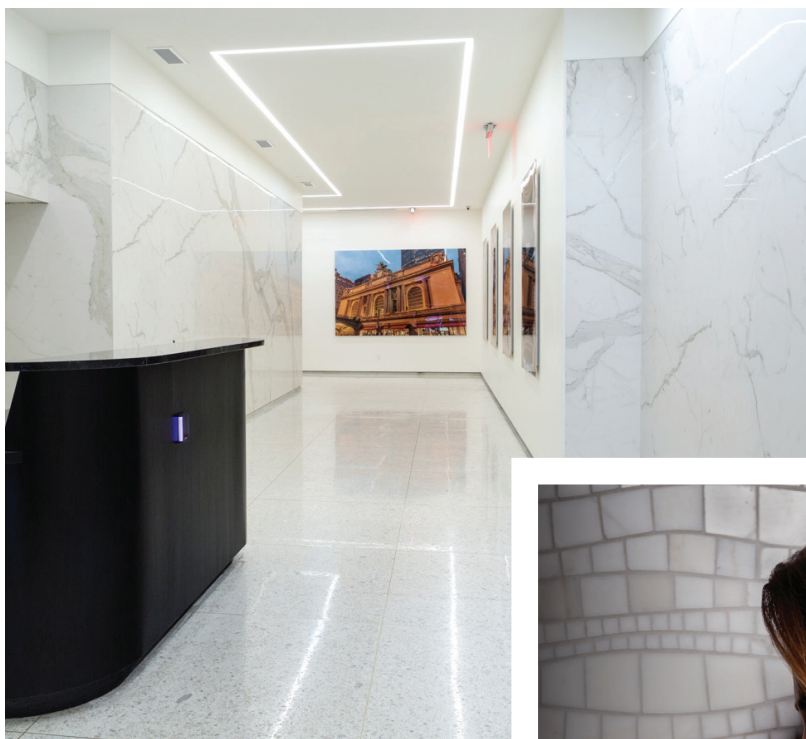
What about ego? It would seem that it has to be subsumed in a corporate firm.

One of the mythologies of the avant garde is that the great artist does everything alone and with unique tools and skills. Today everyone uses the same tools and everyone works in specialized teams. From that perspective there's no difference between the corporation and the avant garde. They run in parallel. Maybe only aesthetics vary. There's a lot that the avant garde can learn from the other side of the equation, for instance how to get things done effectively and vice versa. There's a false dichotomy in our culture between the people who come up with ideas and the people who deliver things. In a hybridized condition one could imagine a sort of corporate avant garde.

Now you have a generation of designers who can come up with great shapes but have no idea how to deliver them. They just get to hang things in galleries. There's an unfortunate unwillingness on some parts of the academic avant garde to engage the world. I'm interested in being engaged in the world. I'm not interested in sitting in the academy complaining about why I can't get work.

What's been the reaction at SCI-Arc?

Many have seen it as a weird move. Some have seen it as gutsy. But a lot my friends there are looking at the world and asking what will it take to be more involved? I don't see my generation's mission to turn everything over. We're in a different time and I don't think things work like that anymore. We're at the end of a time that was about a very reactionary repositioning of architecture in opposition to certain established cultural, economic, and political forms of production. The fact that our group at AECOM was just involved in a multi-stage competition against teams like Morphosis shows that to some degree we're all in the same place. We're all part of a larger system. The question remains how to be effective within it.



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