

# THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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TECH COMPANY NAMES BIG AND HEATHERWICK TO DESIGN NEW CAMPUS

## Google Blockbuster

The design encloses 3.4 million square feet beneath tent-like canopies of an as yet unspecified translucent material.

Now with Facebook's Frank Gehry-designed digs and Apple's Norman Foster-designed doughnut both in the works, Google is tapping two architectural big hitters for its own new Mountain View, California, headquarters: Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) and Heatherwick Studio.

The plan is to redevelop and expand four sites where existing continued on page 8

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SWA GROUP PLANS REDEVELOPMENT OF FORT WAYNE, INDIANA'S DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONTS

The confluence of three rivers could be a hub for public life and commercial activity.

## Go with the Flow

When a small city comes into a lot of money, there are many ways to spend it. The city of Fort Wayne, Indiana, flush with cash and guarantees from a court settlement with its old electric company, chose to put its in the river. Instead of plugging potholes or papering over budget gaps, city managers in 2013 hired Dallas-based SWA Group to help the town of 253,000 reinvent its relationship with the region's defining natural resource.

"They were viewing this as a once in a lifetime opportunity," said Todd Meyer, who spearheaded the continued on page 5



CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY UNVEILS FENTRESS-DESIGNED EXPANSION PLAN

## SEISMIC SHIFT

Cleveland's Museum of Natural History, famous for its annals of ancient Earth, will no longer count its building among its collection of dusty fossils. "Our current facilities frankly are not continued on page 10

Craggy forms reference regional geography. Glass walls open exhibitions to the exterior.

TRAIN STATION RENOVATION KICKS OFF DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

## SACRAMENTO REVIVAL

The Sacramento Valley Station (SAC), serving California's capital, is the busiest Amtrak depot west of Chicago. Built in 1926 as one of the last of the great pre-Depression urban rail depots, SAC, though still functioning, fell into disrepair over the decades. The City of Sacramento has finally embarked continued on page 12



LIGHTING TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS SEE PAGE 21


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PARKS FOR PRESIDENTS?

March was supposed to be the month Chicagoans could stop debating whether or not they would get the Barack Obama Presidential Library and its accompanying prestige, economic development potential, and validation from the local political hero made good. Well, local politics have complicated that (arbitrary) timeline: With Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Obama’s former chief of staff, locked in a runoff election against Cook County Commissioner Jesús “Chuy” García, the president’s foundation will delay its decision “in a bid to avoid politicizing his legacy project,” according to unnamed sources cited by the *Associated Press*.

To local observers, however, the library is already drenched in politics. Compounding the larger “Second City” anxieties of netting the project in the first place (New York City’s Columbia University is vying to host the Obamas, as is the President’s birth state of Hawaii), Mayor Emanuel may have delivered on his promise to “move heaven and earth” in pursuit of the library too literally. Rahm pushed a plan through City Council that would hand over more than 20 acres of Washington Park if the Barack Obama Foundation chooses a bid from the University of Chicago that would host Obama’s library on land including two historic parks that surround its South Side campus. To no one’s surprise, in March the plan sailed through the Chicago Park District board, the members of which are appointed by the mayor.

The University of Chicago is offering sites, including 21 acres of Washington Park or 20 acres of Jackson Park, which together comprise the lakefront South Park System designed in 1871 by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and his partner Calvert Vaux.

The mayor’s eagerness to sacrifice public parkland was not without its critics. Writing for *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, Brad McKee observed: “The opposition to the idea has been fierce but surprisingly isolated among die-hard parks advocates such as the Friends of the Parks group in Chicago and, nationally, the Cultural Landscape Foundation.” They worried, McKee continued, that “If any parkland, let alone Olmsted and Vaux territory, can be seized so easily for rank political reasons, then those of us who consider parks sacrosanct have far bigger worries than just these 20 or so acres.”

Concern on the South Side has taken a slightly different tack. Polls show a milder distaste—if that—for trading 19<sup>th</sup> century oak groves for a piece of 21<sup>st</sup> century history. Critics derided the polls as reinforcing a false choice between cannibalizing parkland for a library or getting no library at all. It’s hard to know if that’s the case. The public knows little of any behind-the-scenes discussions about siting the library, or even regarding the University of Chicago’s actual proposal. Details have come in whispers or not at all, exacerbating Emanuel’s perennial problem with optics (or process); as with the Lucas Museum, Old Prentice Women’s Hospital, and many other issues, controversial plans are railroaded through public procedures with an air of inevitability.

And so the discussion has turned in some circles to, “What can we get in return?” Paula Robinson, president of the Bronzeville Community Development Partnership, disapproves of the parkland proposal, but she said the time to fight it has passed. Instead she would rather see opposition coalesce around a demand for more park space elsewhere. “It’s a different party now,” she said. “Do you want to fight or do you want to win?” Instead of one-to-one replacement of green space, as the city has proposed, why not two to one? Or more? Parkland is not created equal, and historic public spaces are worth more than the tally of their acreage.

Chicago has ample vacant land to host the library without bleeding off green space from historic parks. But if the nation’s first truly urban presidential library still insists Chicago tarnish this gem of landscape architecture, one hopes the city makes a gift of new park space proportionate with the extraordinary circumstances it now claims necessitate this exceptional land transfer. It’s too late for the Obama Foundation to avoid politicizing the president’s library. But the project’s legacy for public space is still unwritten.

CHRIS BENTLEY



VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

OHIO COURTS PARSE NBBJ’S ROLE IN DISEASE OUTBREAK CONNECTED TO HOSPITAL PLUMBING

ON THE HOOK

The prominent architecture firm NBBJ recently found itself tied up in a series of cases regarding an outbreak of Legionnaires’ disease in Dayton, Ohio. Their story underscores some thorny legal issues for architects and building engineers.

In May 2007 Ohio’s Miami Valley Hospital (MVH) and its corporate arm, Premier Health Partners (PHP), hired NBBJ to lead construction of its new 12-story, modular Heart Patient Tower. Four years later Legionnaires’ disease broke out, sickening 11 patients. One later died.

The Legionnaires’ outbreak was traced to the building’s plumbing system. MVH and PHP’s attorneys suggest the outbreak was linked to the plumbing system during construction—court documents allege the hot water system’s temperature was set too low, or that there was stagnant water in the pipes during construction, or the prefabrication process caused parts of the building to be left exposed too long. It is not clear whether modular construction methods or design had anything to do with the Legionnaires’ outbreak. The courts did not determine negligence, but rather ruled on the design and construction contracts.

“It may prove fiendishly difficult to prove how Legionella formed in the plumbing system,” said architect Richard L. Zimmerman, who was not associated with this case but specializes in expert witness testimony related to construction defects and architectural negligence.

Last year the case went to court. MVH’s argument was that NBBJ failed to procure commercial general liability insurance that protected NBBJ and the hospital from “bodily injury caused by a biological agent or bacteria,” i.e. Legionella.

NBBJ appealed the initial Montgomery County Common Pleas Court decision. On January 16, the Ohio Second Court of Appeals judged in favor of MVH. Judge Mary C. Donovan found NBBJ, who declined to comment for this story, in breach of contract for not procuring an insurance policy that complied with the contract.

For Zimmerman, it is evidence of the complexity of an architect’s job, which intersects in sometimes unexpected ways with a design company’s legal liability. “One can reasonably ask: What should an architect be expected to know about Legionella?” he said.

Nonetheless, Zimmerman said, the ruling sends a message to architects: “Architects must continually consider how to best protect themselves, and how to stay out of litigation.”

STEPHANIE AURORA LEWIS

CORRECTIONS

In the story “Town/Gown” (ANMW 11\_12.17.2014), we mistakenly misspelled the last name of UrbanLab’s principal. It is Martin Felsen, not Felson.

In “Shagadelic” (ANMW 02\_2.18.2015) we

misattributed the company for which designer Diego Gronda serves as managing and creative director. It is Rockwell Group Europe, not Rockwell Group.

Our story “Back on Track” (ANCA 01\_01.28.2015) incorrectly stated that

BuroHappold was the structural engineer for ARTIC. Thornton Tomasetti was the Structural Engineer of Record.

We regret the errors.

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**GO WITH THE FLOW** continued from front page project for SWA before moving on. (The firm's president, Kinder Baumgardner, is currently in charge of the project.) In 2010, Following three years of talks, Fort Wayne recieved \$39 million from Indiana Michigan Power Co. In addition to \$36 million being held in a trust fund, the city found itself with a unique chance to complete a comprehensive study of its riverfront.

Settled in 1794 at the confluence of the St. Joseph, St. Marys, and Maumee Rivers, Fort Wayne was the kind of 19<sup>th</sup> century trading post that presaged Indiana's highway-era nickname, "The Crossroads of America." The rivers still generate economic activity and serve as a hub for city life. Events take place in Headwaters Park, which flanks the St. Marys River just north of downtown, but not nearly as

much as they once did.

The city sought public input on the project, soliciting comments through public meetings, mail, and online comments. They even went so far as to set up a storefront downtown, dubbed the "envision center," wherein citizens could have conversations and leave feedback without the air of a governmental transaction.

According to Fort Wayne Planning Director Pam Holocher, citizens seized the opportunity. "The way the community grabbed onto this initiative and was so enthusiastic about it was a surprise to me," she said. More than 4,000 comments poured in, Holocher said, calling for the city to balance nature, recreation, and development in its plan. When SWA unveiled its concepts, more than 400 people braved an early February snowstorm to attend. "In many ways we're

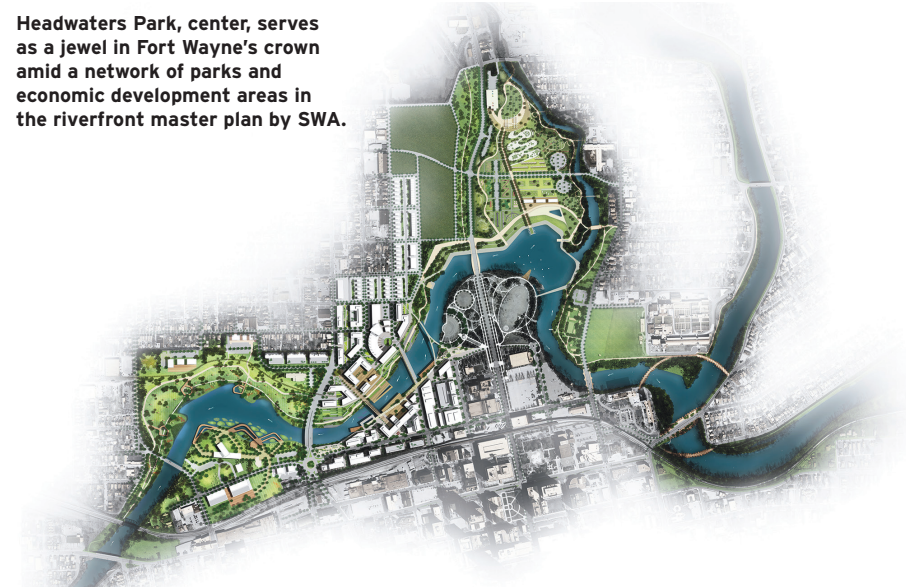
building on what they started, expanding the use of the riverfront," said Meyer. That means building on the success of Headwaters Park, which he calls "the city's living room."

Among the many recommendations the team drafted—Holocher said fulfilling even half the wish list could take decades—SWA proposed investing in a riverfront promenade, with pedestrian bridges snaking across the water and sidling up to Fort Wayne's wrought iron bridges. Renderings show vibrant riparian parks with kayak rentals, piers, beaches, and space for local businesses large and small. The total study area comprised 310 acres, with SWA offering a mix of park space and mixed-use development. Plans also call for a substantial investment in green infrastructure, including a slew of new parks.

"It's not just about making it pretty and fun," said Holocher. "We're paying attention to flooding, water quality, ecology." Currently in the middle of a \$150 million deep tunnel project to manage stormwater and sewage overflows, Fort Wayne suffered a devastating flood in 1982 that Meyer said informed SWA's study. With a multidisciplinary team, however—it included Market Feasibility Advisors, ecological restoration outfit Biohabitats, hydrological engineers Moffatt & Nichol, green infrastructure experts AMEC, and local architecture firm MKM architecture + design—Meyer hopes the plan properly blends the ideas Fort Wayne residents envisioned. "We go all the way from nature to recreation and then into development," he said.

CB

Headwaters Park, center, serves as a jewel in Fort Wayne's crown amid a network of parks and economic development areas in the riverfront master plan by SWA.



SWA GROUP

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## A SEARS BY ANY OTHER NAME

At press time Chicago's skyline-defining Willis Tower had reportedly sold to Blackstone Group, a private equity real estate investor, for the blockbuster price of \$1.3 billion. That's a little less than early reports were speculating, but it's still leaps and bounds above the previous record for a U.S. office tower outside New York City. And the deal includes naming rights. Will it become the Blackstone Tower? Call it what you will—Chicagoans still fondly refer to it as the Sears Tower.

## NO PARKS FOR YOU

Illinois' new Republican **Governor Bruce Rauner** is an old finance buddy of Chicago's Democratic **Mayor Rahm Emanuel**. But the two are due for some awkward wine club outings and vacations to Montana judging by the rhetoric Rahm's slinging towards Springfield. Deep cuts from the austerity-minded, businessman-turned-politician in the governor's mansion have left major Chicago developments in limbo, including The 606, an elevated park located on the Bloomingdale Trail, the renovation of the Uptown Theater, and continued improvements to the Chicago Transit Authority's 'El' trains. The 606's first phase is still on track to open this summer, but future phases are in trouble.

## AIRPLANE LANDS IN DOWNTOWN LA

Last month LA **Mayor Eric Garcetti** attended a screening of his favorite movie, *Airplane!*, at the historic Million Dollar Theater in downtown Los Angeles. The event included a Q&A with Garcetti and the film's directors, **Jim Abrahams** and **David and Jerry Zucker**. Garcetti, always a student of urban design, talked about how different the city is becoming from the 1980 film rendition in terms of density, transit, diversity, prestige, and overall "urban-ness." He also couldn't stop bashing the film's home base, LAX, promising that it would finally be renovated beyond its 1980's appearance, and that a train would finally get there by the end of the decade. Of course, nobody could figure out which zone was for loading and unloading.

## STADIUM STAGGER

The Los Angeles stadium carousel continues to spin, and it seems to be moving faster than ever. When last we checked in the frontrunner was Gensler's downtown stadium, which had bested a previous plan for the City of Industry. Now that plan is dead and the leaders in the race are Inglewood, with an HKS-designed stadium for the Rams, and Carson, with a MANICA-designed bowl for the Raiders and Chargers. Of course these ideas could all just be leverage for the respective teams to force sweeter deals at home. After all, almost half the teams in the NFL have proposed stadiums in LA at this point.

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## OPEN> RESTAURANT

### ORENCHI BEYOND

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orenchi-beyond.com  
Designer: Craig Steely Architecture

Just as tech companies are emigrating from Silicon Valley to San Francisco, so too are restaurants. One such example is Orenchi Beyond, the first San Francisco outpost of beloved establishment Orenchi Ramen, which has locations in Santa Clara and Los Altos.

Craig Steely Architecture designed the eatery, taking inspiration from the classic ramen shops of Japan, where food and ambience are more about street culture and dignified informality than frills. The existing facade was demolished and a new one was constructed 12

feet within the footprint, creating an interstitial space between the sidewalk and interior, which is occupied by a 4,000-pound basalt rock. Behind the big black boulder is a latticed geometric Sakura wood storefront. Openings in the wall allow diners to order from outside if they so choose, and its triangular components and red-glazed sections create intriguing shadows and wall projections.

The interior is arranged around an open kitchen. Architectural details combine cool rawness with traditional craft. Local artisan Kenji Hasegawa made the handles and brackets out of elm branches. The stool seating riffs on sake barrels and a tattoo artist painted the wood tables with depictions of Japanese myths and Yakuza movie references.

SL

## REIMAGINED PACKING HOUSE CENTERS ANAHEIM'S NEW "FOODIE DISTRICT"



## Nosh Urbanism

Few cities have a more fraught relationship with authenticity than Anaheim, California. And yet, under the shadow of The Matterhorn and blocks from Downtown Disney, one of America's great suburban cities is rediscovering its downtown.

Built in 1919, the Sunkist Packing House processed and distributed Orange County's namesake crop. The citrus industry gave way to tract housing decades ago. The city's small but lively downtown suffered an even more ignominious fate. In the mid-1970s, the city razed roughly 100 supposedly blighted acres, following a wave of largely misguided urban renewal projects that swept the nation at the time.

"The neighborhood became unglued," said John Woodhead, community development director for the city. "A lot of significant historical resources were lost." But the Packing House was spared.

Dormant for decades, the Packing House, now full of food stalls and cafés, reopened last year as the centerpiece of a new "foodie district," a multi-block area that also includes a repurposed Packard dealership and Farmers Park, designed by Ken Smith. Nearby is the Center Street Promenade retail area and over 1,000 units of new multifamily housing. Woodhead said that the city is finally atoning for its "former sins."

Renovated by Newport Beach-based Thirtieth Street Architects and developed by LAB Holding, a local retail developer, the Packing House is marketed as a destination for artisanal food enthusiasts in the spirit of Seattle's Pike Place, San Francisco's Ferry Building, and Los Angeles' Grand Central Market.

The project exemplifies California's complex relationship with historical styles. Its facade is

pure Mission Revival, with stucco walls and a pair of stubby towers. The 42,000-square-foot interior is industrial. The two levels of former packing floors were linked by conveyor belts and illuminated by factory-style clerestory windows.

Thirtieth Street Architects' James Wilson oversaw the renovation. He cut through the ground level to create an atrium reaching down to the basement. A broad stairway now connects the two, with balconies overlooking the sub-floors. Stalls and restaurants are located along the perimeters of both levels.

"The basic premise was not to go higher than the bottom cord of the trusses of the interior," said Wilson. "That way, all the natural light would still flow and it would keep the character of the clerestory lights."

Wilson said it was crucial to install food service infrastructure from the onset rather than require tenants to fit out their spaces on their own. Every stall includes power and gas hookups, fire prevention technologies, and waste disposal.

"The vision was what they called plug-and-play," said Wilson.

What was once dedicated to a single commodity crop now houses over a dozen purveyors, offering everything from poutine to soul food to hot pot. This culinary variety, coupled with the building's architectural authenticity (it is under consideration for designation on the National Register of Historic Places) is luring downtown residents and even tourists.

"On their third day (at Disneyland), they're going to want something different," said John O'Brien, vice president of development at Brookfield Residential, which developed much of downtown Anaheim's multifamily housing. "They're going to come to the Packing House for some beer and some awesome culture."

JOSH STEPHENS



COURTESY ANAHEIM PACKING DISTRICT





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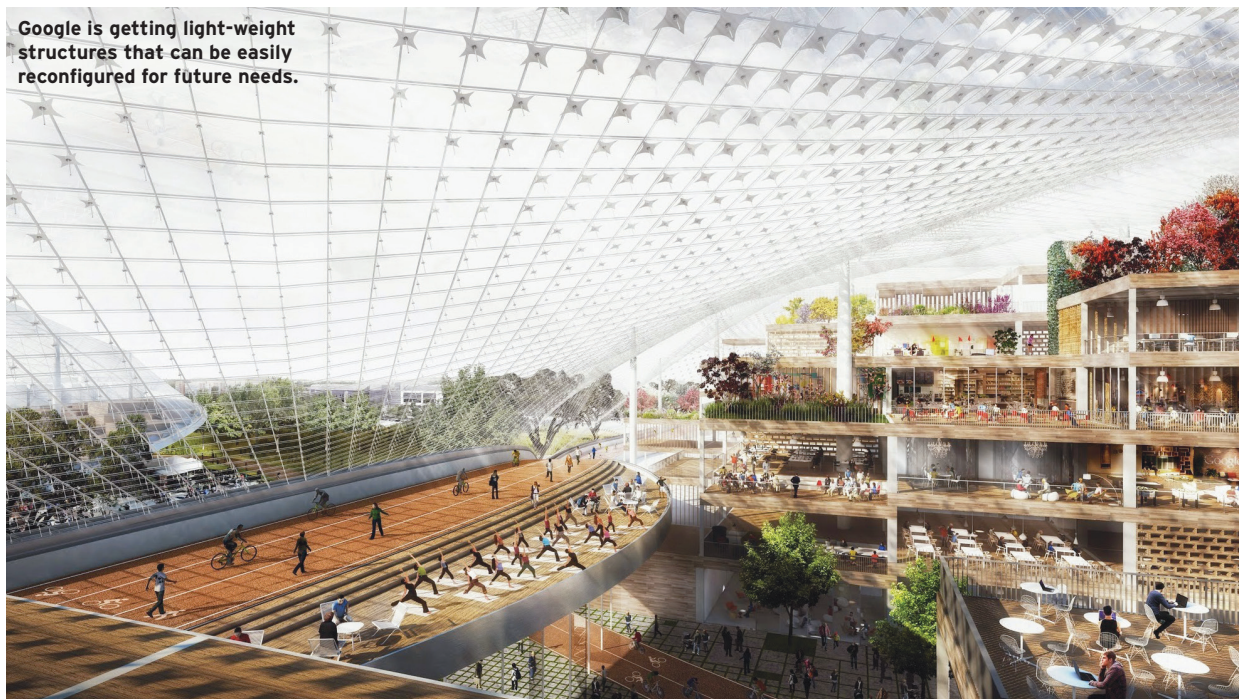
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**Google is getting light-weight structures that can be easily reconfigured for future needs.**



**STUDIO AND HEATHERWICK STUDIO**

**GOOGLE BLOCKBUSTER**

continued from front page  
offices are currently located,  
explained David Radcliffe,  
Google's real estate VP on  
the company's blog. "It's  
the first time we'll design  
and build offices from  
scratch and we hope these  
plans by Bjarke Ingels at  
BIG and Thomas Heatherwick  
at Heatherwick Studio  
will lead to a better way

of working."

The renderings depict four structures draped in glass canopies and scaled as entire city blocks. The campus design also features landscaping, cafes, plazas, and bike paths, which “aim to blur the distinction between our buildings and nature.” There would even be a walking path that cuts through a building “letting outsiders inside

the Google hive," reported the *Silicon Valley Business Journal*. Joining BIG and Heatherwick on this massive project is San Francisco-based CMG Landscape Architecture, which is also working with Gehry on the Facebook campus.

"Today we're submitting a plan to redevelop four sites—places where we already have offices but hope to

significantly increase our square footage—to the Mountain View City Council,” wrote Radcliffe, on the company’s blog.

"The idea is simple. Instead of constructing immovable concrete buildings, we'll create lightweight block-like structures which can be moved around easily as we invest in new product areas," added Radcliffe.

The project totals 3.4 million square feet. Google reportedly wants to have the first of the four sites, known as “The Landing,” completed by 2020. But before construction can start, the city must approve Google’s plans.

"Together with Heatherwick Studio and Google we have set out to imagine the work environments of future

Googlers to be as adaptable, flexible, and intelligent as the rest of Google's wide spanning portfolio," said Bjarke Ingels in a statement. "Rather than an insular corporate headquarters, Google North Bayshore will be a vibrant new neighborhood of Mountain View."

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**SEISMIC SHIFT** continued from front page inspiring,” said the museum’s executive director and CEO, Evalyn Gates. A \$150 million renovation and expansion project led by Denver-based Fentress Architects seeks to change that.

The plan, which will break ground this spring on a \$20 million first phase, will transform the museum’s

physical presence and improve public access to a world-renowned collection of artifacts that includes the remains of the early hominid dubbed “Lucy.”

“It’s a totally new vision,” said Curtis Fentress, a founding principal of Fentress Architects. The project totals more than 200,000 square feet, 132,000 of which is new space.

That includes a 78 percent increase in interior exhibit galleries, allowing the museum to show off more of its vast collection.

Gates recalled sharing an elevator with a young girl visiting the museum. They bumped into a paleontologist on staff, who invited the girl to explore some of the museum’s collection. A few

hours later, Gates said, she left declaring that she wanted to be a paleontologist when she grows up. “Do not underestimate the lasting impact of an early visit to the museum,” said Gates, who is also a physicist. “We want to break down the wall between research scientists and the public.”

Fentress took that notion rather literally. Two towering glass walls open up the museum’s facade, one welcoming guests into the main lobby, the other displaying life-size dinosaurs. Within the museum a series of “science studios” will let visitors interact with educators and scientists more directly than the traditional exhibition format allows.

Fronting onto Wade Oval Drive, the expansion cradles the existing Shafran Planetarium, added in 2002. Shafran’s sliced cylindrical form plays off Fentress’ craggy

entryways, whose sharp angles, the architects said, are meant to evoke natural landforms. The lobby is surfaced with local stone and natural materials, the exact specifications of which are currently being discussed during design development.

As part of the vibrant University Circle neighborhood, the museum is the latest in a series of Cleveland institutions to announce major architectural overhauls. The Cleveland Museum of Art, The Cleveland Institute of Art, and the new Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland (MOCA) designed by Farshid Moussavi have helped buoy a rebound of Uptown, the arts district around University Circle, surrounding Case Western Reserve University.

The design team also includes BuroHappold, AECOM, and Osborn Engineering, with Thinc Design and Reich+Petch in charge of exhibits. One of the exhibits includes an elevated walkway for rescued animals encircling the relocated Perkins Wildlife Center. Enveloped by a landscape replete with native plants, the center will be part of the expansion’s first phase, along with a 300-space parking garage off East Boulevard.

Gates said the museum hopes to keep most if not all of its exhibits open throughout the building process. Construction of all phases is expected to wrap up in time for the museum’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. **CB**

The expansion incorporates Westlake Reed Leskosky’s cylindrical-Shafran Planetarium, built in 2002.



FENTRESS ARCHITECTS



Although currently on hold, at seven stories the project would be the tallest timber building in the U.S.

MICHAEL GREEN ARCHITECTURE AND HINES BACK ENGINEERED LUMBER IN MINNEAPOLIS

## BIG WOOD

Minneapolis’ Warehouse District may soon be home to a milestone in wood construction. Designed by Michael Green Architecture, real estate firm Hines Interests’ proposed T3 office tower (T3 stands for timber, technology, and transit) would be the tallest mass timber building in the

United States.

The seven-story, 263,000-square-foot office block includes a concrete and steel foundation and first floor, plus an additional six floors constructed from engineered wood—primarily glulam and cross-laminated timber. The exterior is clad in corrugated weathering steel punctuated

by large windows. On the interior, exposed mass timber beams recall heavy timber construction.

“This will have the ambience of the old warehouses with timber beams that everyone wants, but solves all the problems of energy efficiency and light,” Hines director Bob Pfefferle told the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.

Engineered wood is an appropriate structural choice for tall buildings for several reasons, said Perkins+Will’s Rebecca Holt, primary author of the *Survey of International*

*Tall Wood Buildings*. First, she said, it delivers double benefits in terms of carbon emissions. “Not only does it have a lighter carbon footprint, but it also sequesters carbon,” explained Holt. “It is a very environmentally responsible material.” Mass timber supports an efficient building envelope, and lends itself to prefabrication. Engineered wood is also lightweight. Finally, said Holt, “the quality of space cannot be ignored. For a lot of survey participants, that was one of the main reasons for choosing it.”

Despite the advantages associated with mass timber, T3 is moving ahead at a glacial pace. Hines initially anticipated breaking ground in June 2015, but pulled back marketing for the project shortly after unveiling it in November. (The developer declined to provide an interview for this article.)

The issue may be one of perception. “An obvious hurdle for timber construction is how people perceive it—from users to code officials, potential buyers, and the construction industry,” said Holt. “We know how to do what we know how to do well.



CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS / COURTESY MGA

Changing is a little scary.”

In February, at a meeting before the local heritage board, Hines’ Pfefferle indicated that the developer was still in talks with prospective occupants.

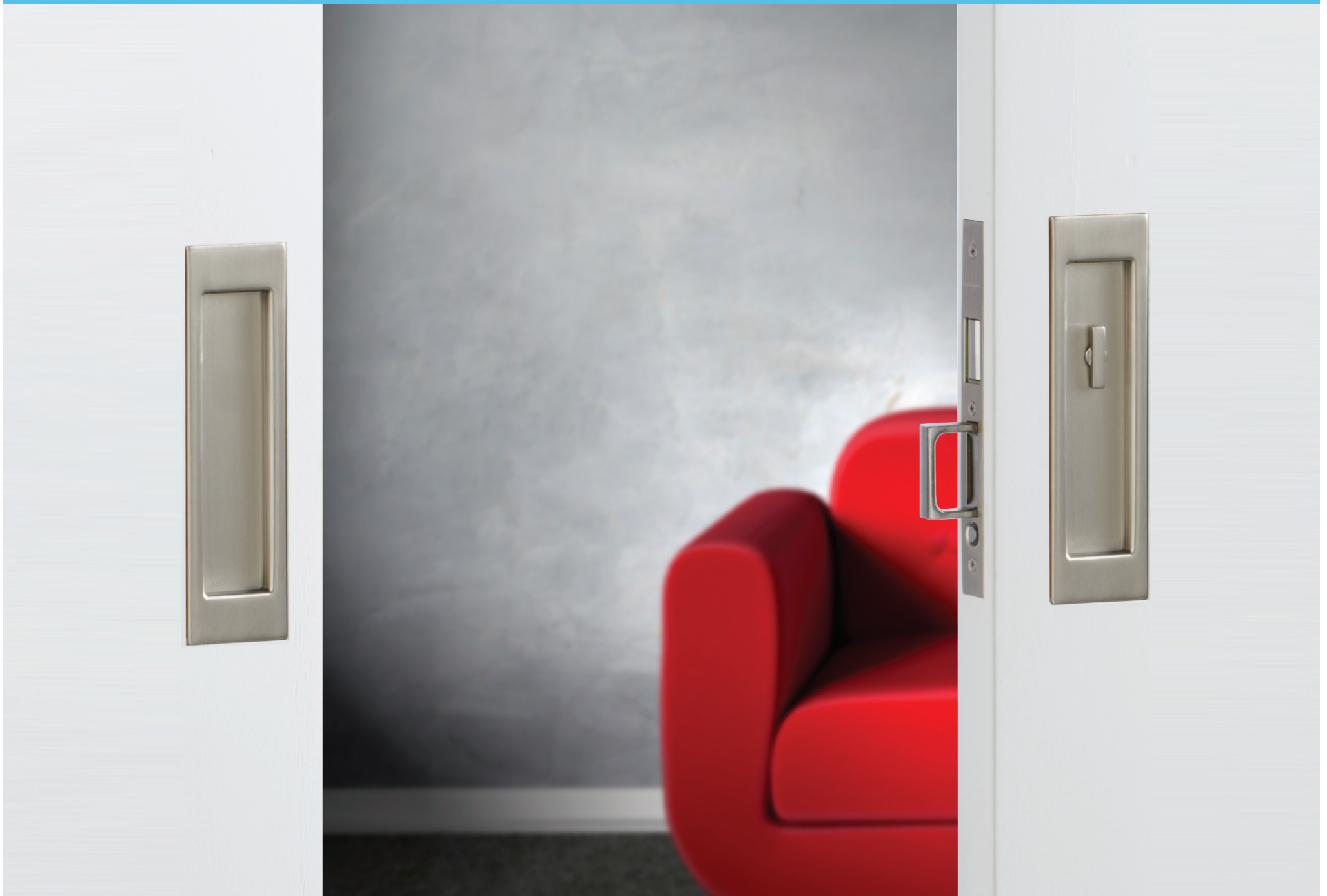
Whatever the holdup, Minneapolis—and the American AEC industry in

general—has a lot to gain if T3 gets built. “It looks like it’s going to be a beautiful project,” said Holt. “Of course, any great example that’s solid, that performs well—we need that. People need to touch and feel it in order to see its potential.”

**ANNA BERGREN MILLER**



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Mixed-use development (left) and Koons sculpture (center) next to the Kings arena; Sacramento Valley Station (bottom).



RCH, SACRAMENTO KINGS, SAC

**SACRAMENTO REVIVAL** continued from front page on an effort to renovate and restore it, making it one of the centerpieces of a large downtown redevelopment that includes a new stadium, a mixed-use complex, and more.

Though the station is listed on national and state registers of historic places, it almost did not survive the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As reported in the *Sacramento Bee*, preservation group Save Our Rail Depot fought off efforts to demolish the structure and move the depot by a few hundred feet. Ownership of the station passed from Union Pacific Railroad to the city in 2006.

SAC was designed in a Mediterranean Revival style, with a terra cotta roof, extensive brickwork, and a long, low facade that gives it the look of an oversized Venetian palace. San

Francisco architects Bliss and Faville did the original design. Murals and tile work cover the barrel-vaulted ceiling of the waiting room.

The \$31 million restoration, led by Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Architects, is part of a larger three-phase effort to transform the station and its surroundings into the Sacramento Intermodal Transportation Facility (SITF). Structural upgrades, such as a new roof, and stabilization were completed last year. Phase two, underway now, will clean the decorative elements, from the floor tiles to the chandeliers, create new office and retail spaces, and update electrical and ventilation systems. Soot and other residue will be scrubbed off a neglected mural depicting the groundbreaking of the Transcontinental Railroad. Local preservation firm Page &

Turnbull is overseeing the preservation of the station's historic elements.

City officials expect SITF to accommodate up to two million annual passengers—between Amtrak, commuter rail, bus, and light rail passengers—when the restoration is complete. City officials envision it as a center for car-sharing as well. But that activity may be short-lived. A new station is planned nearby to accommodate the state's high-speed rail network. And Amtrak platforms were already shifted 1,000 feet north of their previous location, making SAC more of a figurehead for Amtrak passengers.

The restoration may thus signal the repurposing of the 68,000-square-foot station for uses other than transportation. As with the recent renovation of Denver's Union Station, portions of SAC may be reserved for restaurants and bars that will appeal to travelers and non-travelers alike. Additions of bike parking and an outdoor patio are planned as well.

The job is also rooted in the future. For the better part of a decade, Sacramento has been planning for, and squabbling over, the

development of an arena for the Sacramento Kings NBA team and an accompanying entertainment district. That project, which won approval last year—after the Kings threatened to leave the city entirely—is being built on former railroad property adjacent to SAC. The Kings recently announced that they, in partnership with the city, are purchasing a sculpture by pop art juggernaut Jeff Koons to adorn the entry plaza to the new arena. The city and team raised \$3 million to purchase the piece, a multicolored enormity roughly in the shape of a bear from Koons' *Coloring Book* series. The team says that it will be the first Koons piece purchased by a city for public display.

Further redevelopment plans for the area are in the works. The Sacramento Entertainment and Sports Complex will be accompanied by a 16-story mixed-use hotel, retail, and residential complex designed by Los Angeles-based Rios Clementi Hale Architects. AECOM is the lead architect for the arena, which is scheduled to open October 2016.

As use of transit and long-term projects like California High Speed Rail proceed, SAC and SITF are on track to have a productive future for decades to come. **JOSH STEPHENS**



PEI COBB FREED

## UNVEILED

### 601 J STREET

With construction on a new AECOM-designed arena underway, downtown Sacramento is poised for a comeback. The latest entrant in the race to recapture the city's business district is a glassy tower developed by Vanir Development Company (which will locate its headquarters there), designed by Pei Cobb Freed & Partners (PCF). The building will consist mostly of offices with two restaurants and a café on the ground floor. Characterized by a bold geometric facade, the building nevertheless remains sensitive to

the surrounding urban fabric. "The balance between iconic forms that give skyline presence, and how the building transforms as it comes to the ground to respond to the context, is fundamental to the design," explained PCF's Michael Bischoff.

The tower's north and south facades form parallelograms, canted to respond to traffic flows along the adjacent streets. Because those streets run in opposite directions, the parallelograms lean against one another. The resulting tension is resolved by diagonal folds along the east and west facades.

Engaged with the base of the 26-story building is a metal-panel-clad parking podium, set back in deference to an old bank building to the east. The southwest corner of the tower pays homage to another historic neighbor, the Scientology building across J Street, with a street-level plaza. "Creating a public open space in response to the Scientology building was an important gesture, showing that our building was not trying to diminish it," said Bischoff.

Of course, no design for Sacramento would be complete without a reference to the new Kings arena, just to the south of Vanir's site. In the plan, the angled face defining the southwest corner of the tower points toward the center of the arena. "Our goal was to be both deferential to historic buildings and architecturally responsive to the development of the new arena," said Bischoff.

Work on the tower is expected to begin in 2016, with completion by 2018.

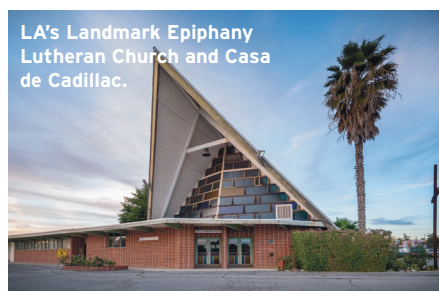
**ABM**

**Architect:** Pei Cobb Freed & Partners

**Client:** Vanir Development Company

**Location:** Sacramento

**Completion Date:** 2018



## LA AND GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE LAUNCH HISTORIC RESOURCES WEB PORTAL

### CYBER MONUMENTS

Contrary to the clichés of transient critics, there is more to Los Angeles than a suburban conceit of tacky homes, McMansions, mini malls, and dingbat developments. As the increasing cadre of local architectural and history aficionados will attest, the Southern California metropolis has a rich repository of residential, institutional, commercial, and cultural landmarks.

Appreciating them for the distinct sense of place and time they lend Los Angeles has been a problem due to their scattered locations. The city's multicultural, divergent neighborhoods, many awkwardly transitioning from first to second growth, can be a disorienting maze to the most determined urban historian, adventurous preservationist, or star-struck tourist.

Now at long last the search has been subsumed in cyberspace by an online information and management system, thanks to a \$5 million, decade-long effort of the City of Los Angeles and the Getty Conservation



GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE

Institute.

Heralded "HistoricPlacesLA," the system is the first such tool created to inventory, map, and describe the city's significant cultural resources. It is powered by an open source, geospatially based information platform developed by the Getty Institute and the World Monuments Fund.

Accessible to anyone, the system was unveiled recently at the Los Angeles City Hall, a historic landmark, as the largest and most ambitious historic resources survey in the nation, going beyond limited national, state, and local listings to include distinctly LA curiosities.

There are the obvious landmarks, such as Union Station, the Central Library, Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House, and the Watts Towers, among thousands of others. But also included are the former, non-descript homes of celebrities Ray Charles, Ella Fitzgerald, Shirley Temple, and Amelia Earhart, as well as the home that served as the setting of the popular 1970s television series *The Brady Bunch*.

And the discoveries keep being unveiled, thanks in part to a battalion of graduate student foot soldiers going the old-fashioned way, door-to-door, clipboard in hand. Some things never change.

**SAM HALL KAPLAN**



# WONDERFULLY PLAYFUL

With the spring covered hose, the Planar 8 Flex Faucet from Franke is designed to let you feel free and have fun in the kitchen. Whether it's washing up pans, filling up a pot for pasta, or just standing back and admiring, this faucet is the perfect balance of performance and design.

Make it wonderful at [Franke.com](http://Franke.com)



MAKE IT WONDERFUL







## SELECTIVE SPOTLIGHTS

BALANCING SAFETY, AESTHETICS, AND PERFORMANCE, NEW EXTERIOR LUMINAIRES ALSO ADDRESS ISSUES OF LIGHT POLLUTION AND TRESPASS. BY LESLIE CLAGETT

1 SWELL  
PABLO DESIGNS

Made of spun aluminum, this system straddles the line between indoor and outdoor lighting. Its modular design allows a string of lamps to connect to a single power source.

pablodesigns.com

2 AVANZA  
SELUX

This fixture combines efficient LEDs, free-form reflectors, and technology that enable optimal brightness transitions. Available in two sizes.

selux.us

3 KICK  
ARCHITECTURAL  
AREA LIGHTING

A fully shielded optical system eliminates glare and uplight; LEDs are hidden when the upward-angled luminaire is viewed from behind. Available in two sizes.

aal.net

4 GECKO  
ERCO

Offering powerful digital light with excellent glare control in a compact, minimalist design, the system features exceptional levels of luminous flux from a virtually invisible, fully shielded light source.

erco.com

5 SIGNAL,  
35 COLLECTION  
LANDSCAPE FORMS

Cast aluminum luminaires hold multiple arrays of LEDs in tri-board formations, each with its own acrylic lens for economy of replacement and repair. Designed by frog design.

landscapeforms.com

6 EBOLLARD 7786LED  
BEGA

Durable enough to double as urban furniture, this die-cast aluminum fixture provides glare-free, symmetrical illumination. With LED lamping, it is available in 3000K and 4000K.

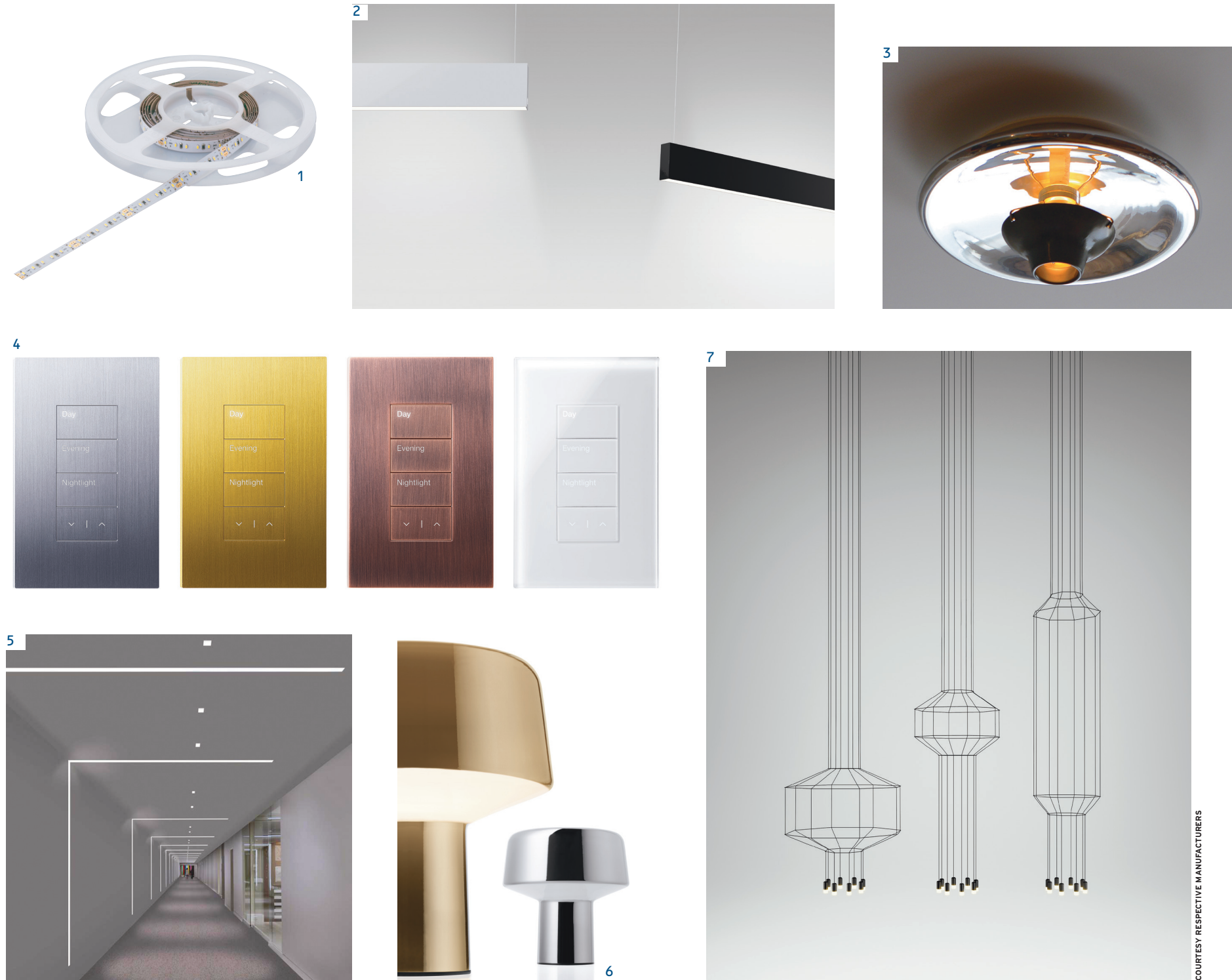
bega-us.com

7 FLAGPOLE BEACON  
FLAG COMPANY

With its downward-focused LEDs, this pole-top fixture illuminates flags—not adjoining property or night sky. A revolving truck allows light to track banners as they blow in the wind. Dark Skies compliant.

flagpolebeacon.com





## BRIGHTER IDEAS

ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY AND FABRICATION ALLOW DESIGN FOR BOTH DECORATIVE AND ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING TO GO BEYOND THE CONVENTIONAL.

### 1 LOOX LED 3015 HÄFELE

With 120 LEDs per meter, these flexible 24V strip lights generate a smooth, continuous illumination. Dimmable, the self-adhesive fixture can be ordered in warm white, cool white, and daylight white.

hafele.com

### 2 ENDLESS FLOS ARCHITECTURAL

These LED fixtures can be recessed, surface-mounted, or suspended, and are offered with a glare-free option. Endless is available in three widths and four lengths, and is eminently customizable in size and format; it can even be configured to wrap around corners.

flosusa.com

### 3 VESUVIUS ILEX

In this elegant, unusual ceiling fixture, a polished spun-aluminum shade surrounds a hammered metal baffle. The inside of the baffle is brushed brass, which imparts a warm glow both upwards and downwards. Designed by Kevin Walz.

llexlight.com

### 4 PALLADIOM OS KEYPAD LUTRON

Backlit control buttons sit flush with the faceplate of this minimalist design, which is available in glass, metal, or plastic in more than twenty finishes. The button layout and labeling is customizable, making it suitable for commercial and hospitality use.

lutron.com

### 5 VERGE PURE LIGHTING

Slim aluminum channels house a row of LEDs; when plastered into a wall or corner and illuminated, a floating-plane effect is achieved. Runs up to 40 feet and can feed off a single Class 2, 96-watt power supply.

purelighting.com

### 6 GLASS DROP FOSCARINI

This transformative table lamp has a chromed aluminum, mirror-like exterior that seems to vanish when the bulb is switched on; as light filters through the hand-crafted glass, the finish changes to a luminous gold.

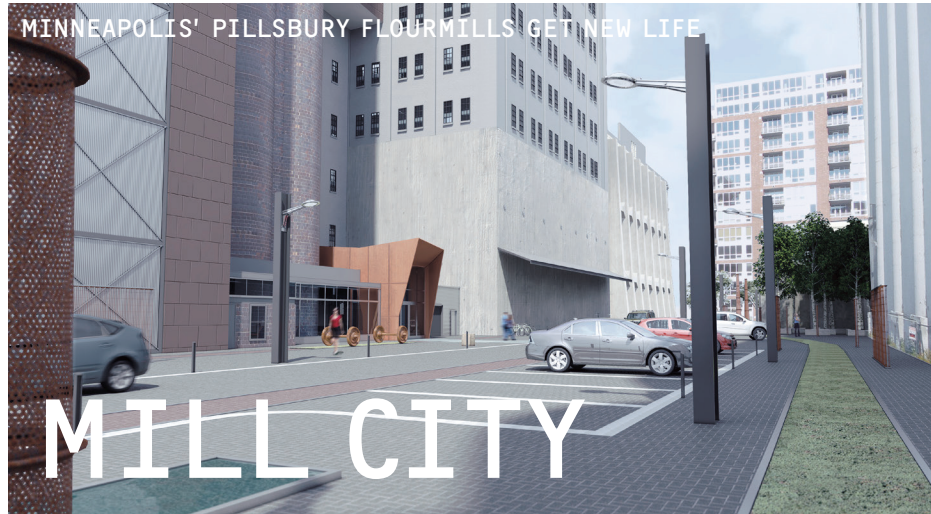
foscarini.com

### 7 WIREFLOW VIBIA

The electrical wires of this updated, abstracted chandelier can be adjusted to trace geometries in two and three dimensions, allowing a great variety of sizes and forms to be created. Designed by Arik Levy.

vibia.com





MINNEAPOLIS' PILLSBURY FLOURMILLS GET NEW LIFE

# MILL CITY

In 1881, Charles Alfred Pillsbury fulfilled his ambition to build the largest and most advanced flourmill in the world. Designed by architect LeRoy S. Buffington, the building sits next to historic Saint Anthony Falls along the Mississippi River on the northeast side of downtown Minneapolis. Known as the Pillsbury A-Mill, it diverted water from the river to operate two direct-drive waterwheels that powered the mill's operations. In 1966 the mill was added to the National Register of Historic Places and is now a National Historic Landmark.

Since it closed in 2003, local developers have proposed new uses for the massive limestone mill, as well as the adjacent "Warehouse 2" and a 1910 grain elevator known as the "red-clay-tile building." In December, they finally found one. When completed, the new A-Mill complex will

once again become a hub of innovation and industry—only this time it will be one driven by artists.

The first phase of the new A-Mill Artist Lofts opened in Warehouse 2—a four-story, brick veneer, wood-frame building. Spearheaded by Dominion, the project's renovation and adaptive reuse was done by Minneapolis-based BKV Group. The other structures open for occupancy in July.

Created for artists who meet certain income guidelines, the LEED-certified complex includes 251 live/work units in addition to galleries, a performance and rehearsal space, and studios for dancers, visual and multimedia artists, photographers, and ceramicists.

BKV began with laser scans of the buildings, to determine where structures and floors did not line up and where components were missing, said project architect John Stark. In



The historic riverside A-Mill is the latest in a series of post-industrial rehabs.

COURTESY BKV GROUP

addition to shoring up and tuckpointing exterior masonry, structural repairs included new steel support columns—particularly in the A-Mill, where a new first floor was needed to stabilize the building. Floor leveling and joist repairs were also completed in the buildings.

Also in the A-Mill, the architects retained ceiling rings from the cylindrical flour bins that reached from floors two to six "for character," said Stark. In Warehouse 2, new wood was stained to match the existing wood framing. Concrete floors were poured and units soundproofed.

Historic tax credits helped fund the project, which also meant the renovation was overseen by the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service. The red-clay-tile building posed particular challenges. The first eight floors are a windowless crawl

space and were left as such, while a fitness room and social spaces were created below. On floors 8-12, the architects designed living units around existing openings "since we couldn't create any new windows," said Stark.

The complex will also have a roof deck with fire pits, landscaping, and expansive views of the Mississippi River and downtown Minneapolis. The iconic Pillsbury sign is being redone in LED lights to be more energy efficient. Also in the works is a hydroelectric heating and cooling system that would use water from the river, an existing tunnel, turbine pits, and tailraces beneath the complex to generate power.

That initiative, Stark said, "would make the complex largely self-sustaining." It would also bring the mill's history back to the future.

CAMILLE LEFEVRE

Carnegie Hall's Resnick Education Wing, Weill Music Room



California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Salon Doré



Photos left: © Jeff Goldberg/Esto, right: © John F. Martin



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# DARKER, SAFER

**The old canard that more night lighting means safer streets has led to the over-illumination of our cities, washing out the night sky and creating health, environmental, and aesthetic problems. John Gendall investigates new research that is leading many designers to raise the call for less light.**



In 1909, just 30 years after Thomas Edison made electric light commercially viable, the Italian writer Filippo Tommaso Marinetti came up with an audacious idea: “let’s murder the moonlight!,” he declared in a manifesto titled by that phrase. Just a little over a century later, his idea, once the stuff of early modernist fantasy, seems truer than he may have expected. The moon’s visibility persists (sorry, Marinetti), but stars are a different story. Unless you’re reading this on a camping trip in a remote part of Montana, go outside at night, look up, and, depending on cloud cover, you’ll very likely see a monochrome canopy of muted light grey to almost-but-not-quite-black, dotted, depending on the size of your city, with a dim handful of stars.

Moving architecture and design to keep the night sky darkened might come off as quaint—something for poets to contemplate—but, as researchers study the effects of

nighttime lighting, their findings point to critical public health and safety consequences, along with a bevy of ecological concerns. “It’s a problem with many layers to it, including the aesthetic and poetic problem resulting from the loss of stars,” said Linnaea Tillett, the principal of Tillett Lighting Design, a New York City-based firm. “But it’s not just a matter of poetry. There are very real ecological consequences.”

Those very real consequences also include some serious medical conditions—cancer, obesity, diabetes, and depression—linked to light exposure (by way of melatonin, the hormone that light modulates). That is just one layer. Astronomers can’t see stars through the haze of light, migratory patterns have changed, and the cost—environmental and economic—of keeping the night turned on continues to rise.

Over the last 15 years, as glass technologies have improved, the design community has done much



to tackle the issue of daytime light exposure. As skylines around the U.S. become ever more clad in glass, the architects and developers producing these curtain walls, and the critics who write about the buildings they enclose, tend to sing the same chorus: *interior spaces bathed in natural light*. When this sunny thought is not enough on its own, out come studies pointing to higher worker productivity, better achievements on test scores, and happier, more focused brain chemistry. While no one would dispute the merits of exposure to natural light, it seems a good time to ask: what about the natural dark?

"Sleeping in the dark is every bit as important as experiencing light during the day," cautioned Travis Longcore, an associate professor of research at the University of Southern California, and the author of *Ecological Consequences of Artificial Night Lighting*. "We shouldn't want the outside at night to look like the day."

"We are constrained by our evolutionary history," he explained. "We are used to bright days and dark nights, but now we get dim days and dim nights." Drawing a parallel between the emerging research about night lighting and the path of medical science in confronting smoking and sun tanning, he said, "one will, in 30 years, look back and think the same thing."

To avoid a tobacco industry-scale problem, designers are taking a new approach to night lighting. For many projects, this change begins with a basic question: Is light even needed? "Whenever you call for a light, ask if it's truly needed," said Longcore. At the Menil Collection, in Houston, where Tillett is overseeing the lighting for a campus designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), she considered each light source. "Wherever we could, we limited light," she said. "There are no light fixtures we haven't justified."

This does not mean that museum visitors spend their evenings fumbling around in the dark. Physiologists now understand that human sense perception is far more finely tuned to contrast between light and dark than to what had seemed to be the prevailing approach to light: more of it. The trick is to illuminate change—steps, doors, paths—rather than entire landscapes. So, at Menil, Tillett called for path lighting that would render the space easily navigable without blanketing it with light. "We preserved the campus atmosphere, using a play of light and shadow, to enhance wayfinding," she explained.

To get to this level of specificity, designers are rethinking the fixtures themselves, equipping them to control the direction of light to eliminate trespass beyond property lines or municipal borders. Acorn lamps, for example, were perfectly suitable for a kerosene wick in a 19<sup>th</sup>



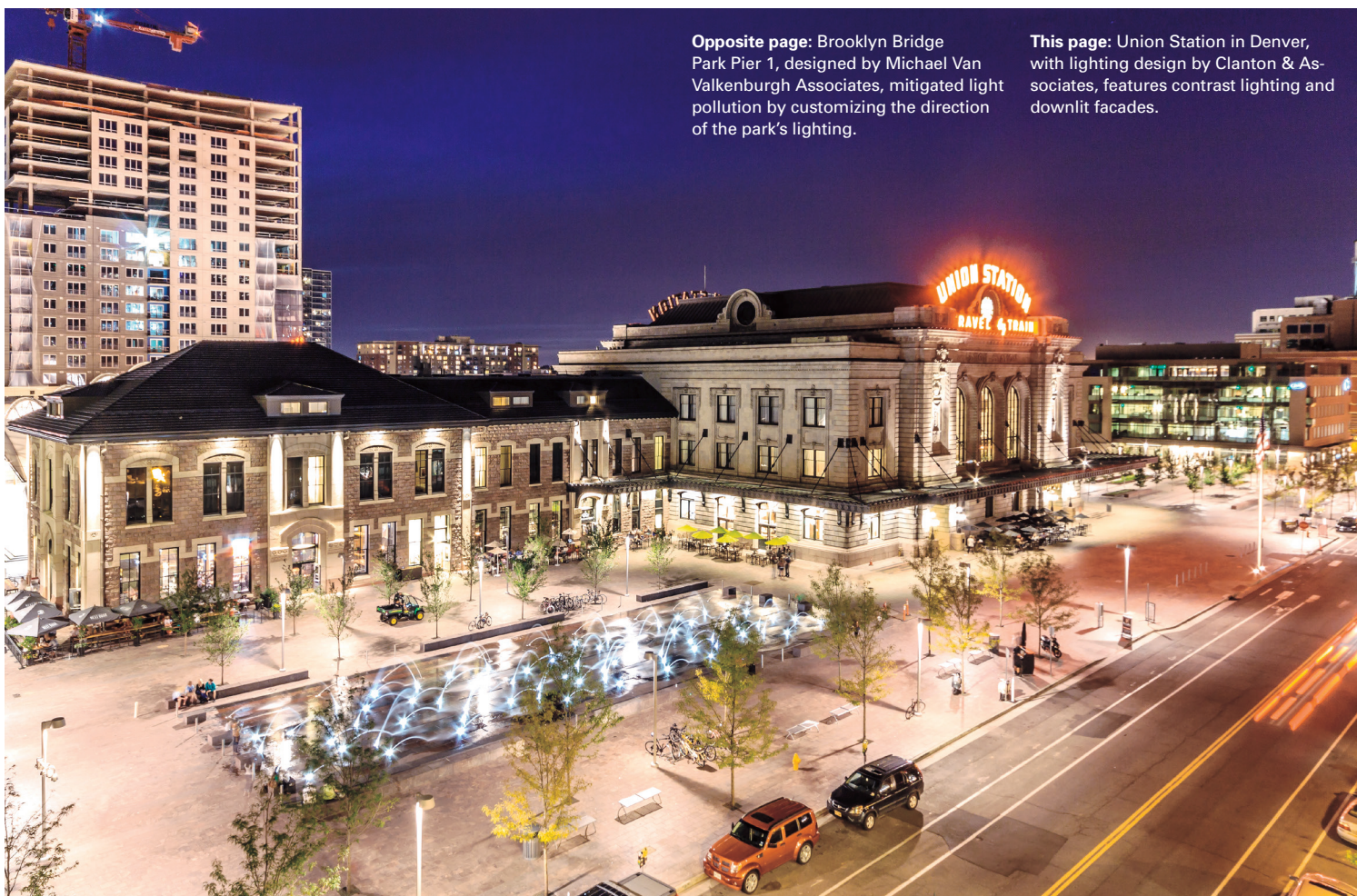
century city, but using them with incandescent bulbs now is a stubborn grasp for historicism to the point of irresponsibility. "Oftentimes parks are lit by acorn lights, derived from gas lamps, so the result is a bunch of glary balls of light along a path,

but everything else is pitch dark," said Matthew Urbanski, a principal of MVVA. With its design for Brooklyn Bridge Park, MVVA carefully tailored the directionality of light to cut down on light pollution and to enhance the experience of the park.



Tucked beneath Brooklyn Heights, any uplighting in the new park would disturb the neighbors above. "By putting light in the right place—high, distributed, and pointed down—we were able to adequately light a place without causing light

pollution," said Urbanski. "When you're on the promenade [in Brooklyn Heights, above], you can look down and be unwittingly staring at a light bulb." For visitors to the park, the firm appreciated the value of looking out onto the water from

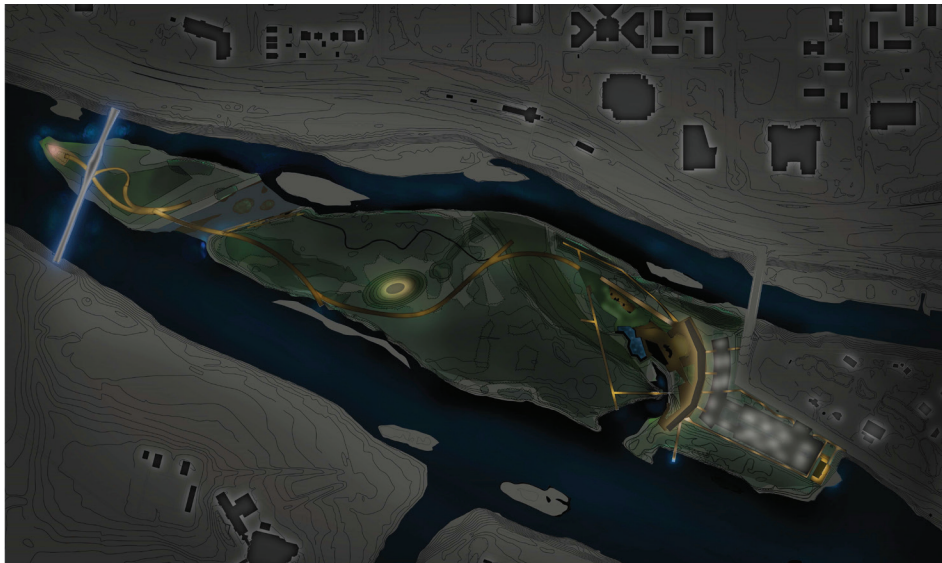


**Opposite page:** Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 1, designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, mitigated light pollution by customizing the direction of the park's lighting.

**This page:** Union Station in Denver, with lighting design by Clanton & Associates, features contrast lighting and downlit facades.

RYAN DRAVITZ





the shore, so it avoided perimeter lighting that would have interrupted that view, opting, instead, to light from behind with shielded, side-baffled lighting.

One of the canards that has kept outdoor spaces overly illuminated has been the knee-jerk tendency to equate more light with less crime. For decades, cities and property owners held outdoor lights as tonic to illicit or criminal behavior. A 1921 editorial in *Grand Rapid News* said it plainly: "Good lighting of streets lessens, and almost eliminates crime." Reasoning the city could cut its police budget by shifting public funds to outdoor lighting, it went on to say, "It is easy to prove that the best paying investment the city can make is one in electric lights."

That argument, it turns out, is less easy to prove than the writer allowed. As Longcore asserted, "there is no universally applicable conclusion that comes out of criminology research that shows that more light means less crime." Overlighting, in fact, can be worse

than dimly lit spaces for several reasons, beginning with the risk of glare. As Longcore put it, "If you have bright lights, the shadows become much darker."

So, in what might seem a counterintuitive twist, improving visibility at night seems to start with turning the lights down. Nancy Clanton, a Boulder, Colorado-based lighting designer and an author of the International Dark-Sky Association's technical guidelines, has researched this effect in several American cities. "We have studied areas and have gone from full light levels down to 50 percent, then down to 25 percent, and we ask the public to tell the difference, and no one can perceive any change," she said. "Vision is logarithmic, so in lighting, our linear metric is completely wrong," she continued, backing up the fact that lighting can be cut to a quarter of current levels without anyone noticing.

In her lighting design for Union Station, in Denver, Clanton applied her research findings, keeping light levels low, emphasizing contrast,

and downlighting facades (she has found, people feel safer when they can see a horizontal surface more than they would with a generally illuminated ground plane).

Research is also suggesting the light spectrum as something that needs to be carefully considered for nighttime lighting. On this, astronomers, physicians, and ecologists agree: blue light is bad. "The more we introduce blue light in the night-time environment, the more we send out the signal that it's daytime," said Longcore. This applies not only to human physiology—melatonin is suppressed by blue light—but also to ecology and astronomy. "Blue light harms the environment and it's the worst kind of light for sky glow," said Clanton. She recommends lights at the low end of the spectrum. "The moon is 4,000 Kelvins, and we really shouldn't need more than that."

Try telling that to Marinetti. To the patriarch of Futurism, when the moon gave out its 4,000 Kelvins, he "ran to nearby waterfalls; gigantic wheels were hoisted, and turbines

transformed the velocity of the waters into electromagnetic spasms that climbed up wires suspended on high poles, until they reached luminous, humming globes. So it was that three hundred electric moons, with rays of blinding chalky whiteness, canceled the old green queen of love affairs."

There is much to be said for that old green queen. There is the melatonin, yes, and real public safety implications, true, but there is also the issue of getting a nightly reminder of our place in the universe. The night sky has long been the muse of architects and designers, evidenced by cities across the world and over the millennia that have been laid out in response to constellations. Rather than drawing from the past by screwing light bulbs into acorn lamps, it seems that celestial awareness would be a better lesson, designing spaces that don't wash out the fact that we are, as Marinetti puts it, "all of us enwrapped in the immense madness of the Milky Way."

**JOHN GENDALL IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

Tillett Lighting Design took minimal approaches to fixture usage at St. Patrick's Island in Calgary, Canada, designed by W Architecture and Landscape Architecture and Civitas (top left), and at The Menil Collection in Houston, which is being master planned by MVVA (top right and bottom).





## TRANSBAY CENTER

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA  
PELLI CLARKE PELLI ARCHITECTS  
AUERBACH GLASOW FRENCH

# MOVING LIGHTS

COMMUNICATION, CONNECTION TO NATURE, WAYFINDING: THREE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN THE U.S. AND CANADA USE LIGHTING FOR EFFECT.

Pelli Clarke Pelli's \$1.89 billion Transbay Center in San Francisco, set to open in 2017, promises to catalyze the redevelopment of its downtown neighborhood, centralize the Bay Area's vast transportation network, and serve more than 100,000 rail, subway, and bus passengers a day.

San Francisco-based Auerbach Glasow French (AGF) designed the lighting scheme for the four-block-long project. The goal was to accentuate the architecture and make the glassy structure glow from within. "The building wants to feel like it's filled with light," said AGF principal Larry French. Achieving this effect came with its challenges. One, the project is aiming to be one of the most energy efficient transit structures in the country, so daylighting had to be a large component of the design. Two, towers surround the site, casting long shadows. In answer, the design team developed an

inventive method to pull in as much natural light as possible while using the most efficient fixtures available.

The centerpiece of the 1.5 million-square-foot, five-level project is the Light Column, a massive steel structure that pierces the building's multi-story Great Hall. The column is uplit and downlit by powerful fluorescent spotlights mounted on its frame. Similar lighting is attached to the building's exterior columns and beams. Thus far LEDs are not powerful enough to fill the hall's vast volume, said French, but that may change as technology advances, so the fluorescents may be switched for LEDs before construction starts. "Trying to keep the technology current is very difficult because of the very long lead times," said French. The team began working on Transbay eight years ago, and the first construction documents were completed four years ago.

Most of the building's vertical

surfaces are washed with LED fixtures, emphasizing their planes and bouncing light out of the building. LEDs also line the railings of the escalators and stairs, and are present in gaps between areas with lower ceilings, such as in the bus deck below the rooftop park. French chose moderation over excess when it came to distributing the fixtures. "We tried not to have too much going on. A building can get busy very quickly," he said.

During the day, the artificial light supplements the natural illumination enabled by the design. Glass curtain walls on all four sides of the building are covered with perforated metal "awnings" that allow dappled light to filter inside in geometric patterns.

Natural light flows in from above through three elliptical skylights, with ceramic fritting to limit heat and maximize privacy. The two smaller skylights measure about 65 feet by 40 feet, while the

largest, hovering over the Light Column, measures 85 feet by 65 feet. Daylight also enters through a translucent and multi-layered 150-foot-long glass floor, which is part of the center's 5.4-acre rooftop park. The Great Hall has its own glass floor that admits light into the center's lower levels. It is a similar system to the rooftop, but measures about 40 feet in diameter.

Sunlight is balanced during the day with strategically placed fixtures, which were calibrated through extensive lighting studies. "You don't want to bring in too much natural light and have dark contrast areas," explained Heather Kim, a senior associate at Pelli Clarke Pelli.

The combination of natural and artificial light is punctuated by "Parallel Luminous Fields," a light sculpture designed by James Carpenter for Shaw Alley, a covered pedestrian passage leading to the center's main entrance. The piece

A massive steel structure known as the Light Column pierces the Transbay Center's Great Hall, bringing daylight deep into the four-level space. Powerful spotlights up and downlight the column, balancing the natural illumination during the day and keeping it aglow at night.

consists of 54 illuminated pairs of cast acrylic resin glass pavers set into the wave pattern of the ceiling and illuminated benches set into the pre-cast concrete floor. These two planes of light will create a sense of movement leading people into the center.

This varied combination of light sources is meant to aid with wayfinding and make users feel as comfortable as possible. But it doesn't hurt that it adds a little "magic," as French put it. "It's exciting. The building is really going to be quite striking," he said.

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

COURTESY TRANSBAY JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY







## PIONEER VILLAGE STATION

TORONTO, CANADA  
ALSOP ARCHITECTS, SGA/IBI GROUP,  
REALITIES UNITED



The station's centerpiece is an art installation called LightSpell designed with Berlin-based Realities United. It comprises 40 LED chandeliers in a row of 16 segments that display uncensored messages typed by riders on a public keyboard.



COURTESY SGA/IBI GROUP/ ALSOP ARCHITECTS

When The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) opens six new stations along its Toronto York-Spadina Subway Extension, subway riders in Canada's biggest city will not only be connected to an extra 5.3 miles of track. Thanks to an installation that doubles as platform lighting and a work of art, riders at the Pioneer Village Station will also gain a glimpse into the personalities of their fellow train riders.

Working from 3D models developed by station designers Alsop Architects and SGA/IBI Group Architects, Berlin-based Realities United created a station-specific art installation that allows visitors to broadcast a written message on an LED scroll displayed above the train platform. Dubbed LightSpell, the piece is composed of 40 LED chandeliers, organized into a row of 16 segments capable of displaying letters, numbers,

and special characters.

According to the artists' project description, "LightSpell is an experiment in public interaction and will entail various aspects of the theme of the freedom of the individual versus the interest of the larger group." The intent is to anonymously display what riders type into the station's five message kiosks, without filtering or oversight from TTC. That is still up for discussion, said Realities United's Jan Edler, but he hopes "to come to a fruitful agreement with the stakeholders."

"It is a democratic installation: Any wording—however rude, stupid, offensive—will inevitably also be the light source serving the demands of the community of other waiting people," continues the project description. "We do believe that the interest to use the system in a stupid way will diminish

once the students notice that there is NO censorship and hope that it will rather be used creatively," Edler told *AN* by email.

The station sits at the intersection of Steeles Avenue and Northwest Gate on the edge of York University's campus. Lighting is an integral part of the station's design. "It's a true hybrid between an art installation and function," said Bruce Han, an architect with IBI Group.

While the illuminated messages of LightSpell comprise the bulk of the lighting along the subterranean platform, a conical opening in the roof at the platform's center conveys natural light from above. Elsewhere in the station, the design team worked to include natural light wherever possible. Large triangular windows rise from ground level in the station entrance, filling the circular space with daylight. Metal poles topped with

fluorescent fixtures lead visitors into the station, whose jelly bean-shaped volume connotes playfulness, said Han.

When completed in fall 2016, the Spadina extension will be the first TTC rail line to span the city limits of Toronto. Pioneer Village Station includes a 1,900-space parking lot as an accommodation to suburban commuters in the adjacent city of Vaughan.

"We wanted to create a new public focal point that would encourage future development as well," said Han. A swooping, cantilevered canopy shelters a regional bus terminal for York Regional Transit. Together with the train station entrance, the transit hub's entrances serve as sculptural focal points, bisecting the parking lot.

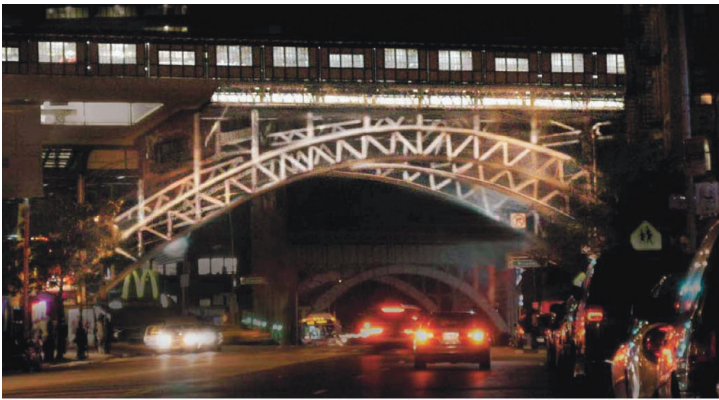
Taking inspiration from rock-climbing walls, the architects

wrapped the weathering steel-clad building with triangular planes and knobby shapes. Inside, above the escalator and stairs leading down to the platform, IBI added a light installation of its own: a cylindrical volume of perforated steel that transmits the glow of tubular LEDs inside through a peppering of small holes at its base.

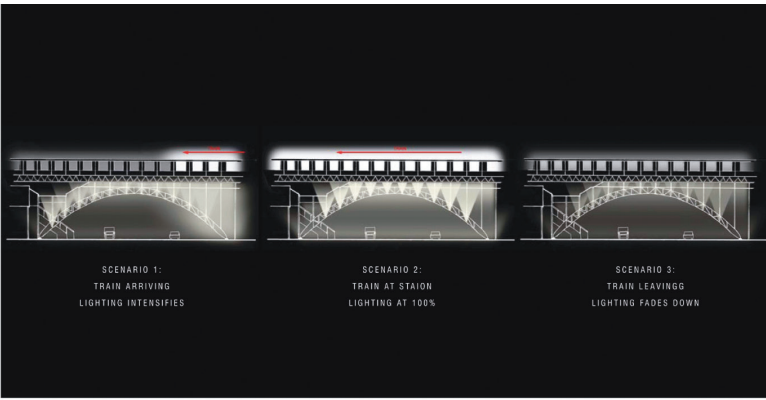
Pioneer Village Station is not the only station along the York-Spadina extension that has been designed with an integrated art installation. TTC hired artists to enliven all six new terminals along the route, using funds from the "one percent" program it bakes into public construction costs. Whatever opinions subway riders have about the program or the new station's design surely will not go unheard—just keep an eye on the LightSpell scroll once it is up and running.

**CHRIS BENTLEY IS AN'S MIDWEST EDITOR**

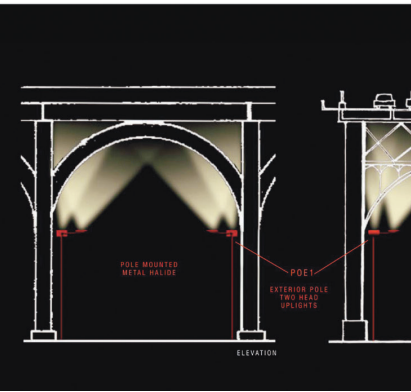
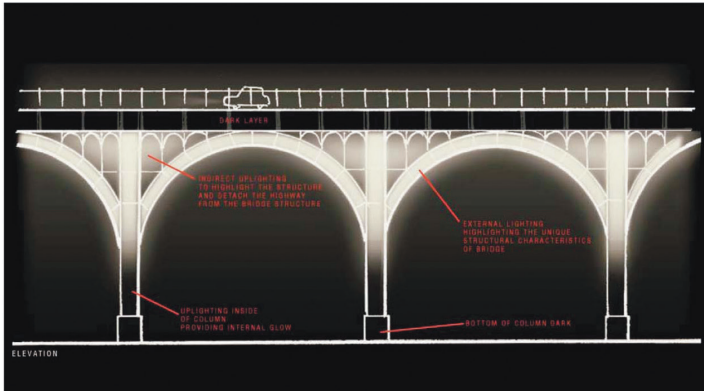
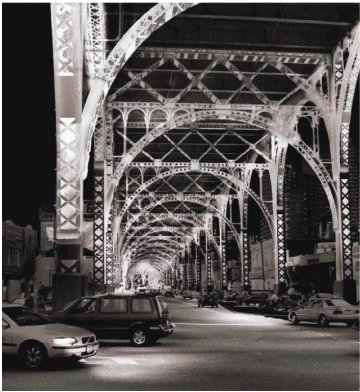




MTA VIADUCT LIGHTING CONCEPT



**Left:** These renderings depict the concept proposal to light the IRT crossing (**top**) and the 12th Avenue Viaduct (**bottom**). **Below:** The design team mocked up the lighting scheme on the IRT station to test its effectiveness and to make sure glare did not interfere with the operation of the subway or cause light pollution that might bother the neighbors. The blue light combines well with the yellow street light and is a saturated color that works well with LED technology. Mathews Nielsen's design includes pavers and plantings to make the corridor a more pleasant place to be.



L'OBSERVATOIRE INTERNATIONAL

West 125<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan between Broadway and the Hudson River has long been a no-man's land of broken sidewalks and shuttered storefronts, a scar of urban blight in a neighborhood full of them. But it won't be for much longer. In 2004, the New York City Economic Development Corporation hired New York City-based landscape architecture firm Mathews Nielsen to redesign the corridor as part of its West Harlem

Master Plan. The \$14.5 million street enhancement project was developed to improve access to the revitalized West Harlem Piers Park, which runs along the Hudson River between St. Claire Place and West 135<sup>th</sup> Street, while at the same time preparing the ground for the future development of Columbia University's Manhattanville campus expansion. In March 2014, a decade after the design was commissioned, construction got started. By the end

of 2016, this one-time blasted heath should be ready for the safe passage of college students and condo-dwelling urban professionals. Mathews Nielsen's design works within the guidelines of New York's Complete Streets initiative to make the thoroughfare accommodating to people on-foot, cycling, and driving. Signaled crossings and pedestrian refuges aim to make the corridor safer for all, while trees and other plantings soften the

urban environment's hard edge. At the west end of 125<sup>th</sup> Street there is an intermodal plaza with a bus turnaround and a link to a ferry landing in the Hudson. As it has done in many of its urban revitalization projects, Mathews Nielsen used existing infrastructure in the area to add flavor to its design. Old rails still imbedded in the pavement from the Third Avenue Rail System, for example, are being preserved as

historic markers of sorts. More significantly, the design is making use of two steel arch structures that flank the site—one supporting the elevated tracks of the IRT subway on Broadway and the other the raised section of Riverside Drive known as the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Viaduct. "There are these two incredible bookends of the 1 Train structure and the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Viaduct," said Signe Nielsen of Mathews Nielsen. "We thought about those as a way to create a sequence as one moves toward the water."

To accentuate this sequence at night, these structures are being illuminated with lighting schemes designed by New York City-based L'Observatoire International. The lighting approach was different for each structure due to their distinct formal qualities as well as the peculiarities of the agencies that maintain them. The MTA, for example, would not allow the design team to attach light fixtures to the IRT structure, so the fixtures are being mounted on U-shaped poles that thread through the subway platform's arch. NYCDOT, which maintains the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Viaduct, had no issues with the attachment of light fixtures. Here the designers are nestling the fixtures in the hips of the arches, where they uplight the cathedral-like spans.

While both structures are lit with white light, here again there is a variation. The designers chose warm, 3000K white light for the MTA bridge, which is painted beige, produced by four 315W metal halide fixtures with narrow four-degree beam spreads to cut down on glare and light pollution. The subway crossing also features blue light that comes on when a train is approaching the station, produced by eight 28W LED fixtures with six-degree beam spreads.

The team chose cooler 4000K white light for the viaduct, which is painted gray, produced by eight 150W metal halide fixtures. Under the current project scope, the lighting scheme will only be applied where the viaduct crosses 125<sup>th</sup> Street, but it is modular and could be rolled out along the entire length of the bridge, a proposal that the design team has put forth to the local business improvement district, in case it feels like funding it.

**AARON SEWARD IS AN'S MANAGING EDITOR.**



**125<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
CORRIDOR**  
NEW YORK CITY  
MATHEWS NIELSEN  
L'OBSERVATOIRE INTERNATIONAL



COURTESY MATHEWS NIELSEN



MARCH

FRIDAY 27  
LECTURES

**Cannon Design for Excellence in Architecture and Engineering: Bernard Tschumi**  
6:00 p.m.  
Washington University St. Louis  
Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts  
1 Brookings Dr.  
St. Louis  
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

**Taubman College Wallenberg Lecture: Daniel Libeskind**  
6:00 p.m.  
Michigan Union  
Rogel Ballroom  
530 South State St.  
Ann Arbor, MI  
umma.museum

SATURDAY 28  
EVENT

**Kinetic Architecture in a Coastal Climate**  
4:00 p.m.  
212 Larsson, Manhattan Beach, Los Angeles  
aialb-sb.org

MONDAY 30  
LECTURE

**Towards a Hybrid Metropolis: Dean Wiel Arets**  
3:30 p.m.  
IIT College of Architecture  
Chicago  
3360 South State St.  
Chicago  
arch.iit.edu

TUESDAY 31  
EVENT

**Where Do We Go From Here? Presentations on Transit + Design**  
5:00 p.m.  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

APRIL

FRIDAY 3  
LECTURE

**Spring Lecture Series: Bureau Bas Smets**  
5:30 p.m.  
Austin E. Knowlton School of Architecture  
275 West Woodruff Ave.  
Columbus, OH  
knowlton.osu.edu

SATURDAY 4  
EVENT

**Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration and Reconstruction—What's the Difference?**  
1:00 p.m.  
The Alameda Museum  
2324 Alameda Ave.  
Alameda, CA  
aiaf.org

TUESDAY 7  
LECTURE

**Minsuk Sho at the Art Institute of Chicago**  
6:30 p.m.  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
Fullerton Auditorium  
111 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
artic.edu

WEDNESDAY 8  
EVENT

**Making Projects Happen: The Evolution of Alternative Delivery**  
9:00 a.m.  
Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development,  
DePaul University  
1 East Jackson Blvd., Chicago  
las.depaul.edu

LECTURE

**Land Arch Colloquium: Land Conservation in Sonoma County**  
1:00 p.m.  
UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design  
315A Wurster Hall  
San Francisco  
ced.berkeley.edu

THURSDAY 9  
EVENT

**San Francisco's Jewel City**  
12:30 p.m.  
SPUR Urban Center  
654 Mission St., San Francisco  
spur.org

FRIDAY 10  
EVENT

**Fabricate 2015**  
4:00 p.m.  
Lexington Hilton Downtown  
369 West Vine St., Lexington, KY  
fabricate2015.org

SATURDAY 11  
EVENT

**Greater and Greener 2015**  
9:00 a.m.  
Westin St. Francis Union Sq.  
225 Powell St., San Francisco  
aiaf.org

EXHIBITION CLOSING

**Materialization/ Dematerialization**  
Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis  
3570 Washington Blvd.  
St. Louis  
camstl.org

LECTURE

**Natural Disasters, Free Speech, and the Death of Painting**  
10:00 a.m.  
Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis  
3570 Washington Blvd.  
St. Louis  
camstl.org

MONDAY 13  
EVENT

**Mid-Century Modern Structures: Materials and Preservation 2015 Symposium**  
7:00 p.m.  
Washington University St. Louis  
1 Brookings Dr.  
St. Louis  
ncptt.nps.gov

WEDNESDAY 15  
EVENT

**Society of Architectural Historians 68th Annual Symposium**  
11:00 a.m.  
Holiday Inn  
Chicago Mart Plaza  
River North  
350 West Mart Center Dr.  
Chicago  
sah.org



CHRISTOPHER WEST MOUNT GALLERY

WHEN THE FUTURE HAD FINS:  
AMERICAN AUTOMOTIVE DESIGNS  
AND CONCEPTS, 1959-1973

Christopher West Mount Gallery, Pacific Design Center  
8687 Melrose Avenue, West Hollywood, CA  
Through May 20

Once upon a time the American car industry was king. Nothing captures the prestige, aspirations, and mythology of Detroit's heyday quite like the working sketches and drawings used to develop and promote the land boats we used to call automobiles. A new show at Christopher W. Mount Gallery focuses on sketches from designers at the "Big Three"—General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler—from 1959 to 1973, when those companies were as important as Google, Apple, and Facebook. The sleek, colorful cars with their dynamic angles and large hoods capture the sexiness and muscle that is long gone in today's car culture. Visionaries like Ford's John Samsen and GM's Bill Michalak had a mastery and an expressive craftsmanship on paper that is far removed from the digitized and sanitized world of 21st century rendering.

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# DA VINCI FOR OUR DAY

**Provocations: The Architecture and Design of Heatherwick Studio**  
Hammer Museum  
10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA  
Through May 24



Rendering of Heatherwick's Garden Bridge in London.

HEATHERWICK STUDIO

The most exciting design show in years is on view at the Hammer Museum through May 24. *Provocations: The Architecture and Design of Heatherwick Studio* comprises 42 projects, ranging from a chair that resembles a spinning top to a cluster of buildings that promotes social interaction among the students and faculty of a technical university in Singapore. Terence Conran likened Thomas Heatherwick to a Leonardo da Vinci for our age, but a better comparison might be James Dyson, another English inventor who reconceived familiar objects. For Dyson it was the vacuum cleaner, hand-drier, and portable fan; for Heatherwick, the London

bus, the Olympic flame, and the UK Pavilion at the 2010 Shanghai Expo.

The red double-deck London bus is a beloved icon, but the classic Routemaster was repeatedly tweaked to conform to new regulations and became, over 50 years, a chaotic mix of uncoordinated bits. Heatherwick's team took two and a half years to rethink every detail of the bus, using lightweight composites to reduce energy consumption, adding a second staircase to facilitate access to the upper deck, and a band of glass at front and back to improve visibility and security. Lighting, seats, and the patterned upholstery are all of a piece,

and 800 new Routemasters will soon be plying the city streets.

For the London Olympics, copper torches carried into the stadium by each of the 204 participating nations were lit and raised into one great beacon using a mechanism that worked perfectly (for the first time, said Heatherwick). A billion people watched the spectacle on television; at the Hammer you can see how it was done and view one of the patinated copper torches close up. In Shanghai, Heatherwick persuaded British authorities to forgo all the clichés and allow him to do one thing well. Constrained by a budget insufficient to build out the site,

the studio chose to place a cube at the edge of a raised park, with meeting rooms and infrastructure concealed below. A quarter of a million seeds from the Millennium Seed Bank were embedded in the acrylic tips of 66,000 rods that radiated out like the quills of a porcupine, pulling light into the interior, and glowing from within at night.

Brooke Hodge, who is now deputy director of the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum in New York, brings these projects to life in a brilliant installation. She illuminates the creative process in labels that state the problem, and a layering of models, mockups, videos, and stills that explain the solution. The exhibition is much more than the sum of its parts. Dramatic shifts of scale and perspective, and the alternation of kinetic and static exhibits, heighten the impact of each project and avert museum fatigue.

"As a kid I was inspired by inventors who solved problems," said Heatherwick, and he demonstrates that skill in everything he designs. A footbridge over London's Grand Union Canal rolls up to allow boats to pass, and that prototype has seeded a more ambitious project for a double rolling bridge, which is now searching for a river to cross. It is infrastructure as performance art, and sure to enliven any waterway. Another footbridge that should soon span the Thames is conceived as a garden, stitching the two banks together and providing a place to linger and admire the views, like the High Line in Lower Manhattan. Two flared concrete supports rise from the riverbed and are clad in warm-toned nickel-copper, molded to animate the surfaces as viewed from the shore or a boat passing below. The supports conceal planters that will sustain mature trees, and the bridge widens at the center to accommodate the crowds that are sure to flock here.

As its fame grows, the studio should receive a swelling stream of commissions. Already it is building on five continents, and the roster includes Africa's first museum of modern art to be housed in a Cape Town grain silo, a **continued on page 26**

## Arabesque Anew

**New Galleries for Islamic Art**  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Avenue  
Ongoing Exhibition

After three years of closure, the Islamic Art wing at the Art Institute of Chicago has re-launched with dramatically redesigned permanent galleries. Rich earth-toned walls and pointed archways nod to Middle Eastern interior architecture as visitors wander through 3,200 square feet of exhibits crossing continents and millennia.

"The space permits the display of many more objects than before, including oversized material not previously shown at all," explained Daniel Walker, Chair and Christa C. Mayer Thurman Curator of Textiles and Curator of Islamic Art. "One space created by the addition of an arch wall encompasses a display of architectural elements, notably two examples of mosaic tile from 15<sup>th</sup> century Iran and an impressive group of 14<sup>th</sup> century wooden doors and carved beams from Morocco."

On view in the first gallery, the never-before-exhibited architectural artifacts balance mass

with magnetic tactility. By forgoing protective glass in select displays, visitors are welcome to have an intimately close look at ornately carved heavy timbers, flecked with paint. Intricate slate tiles from 18<sup>th</sup> century Mughal India are carved to make the brittle stone appear supple. The materiality sparks curiosity. Gallery-goers seemed to linger longer at these visceral masterworks than anywhere else in the exhibition.

The soaring Moroccan doors and illuminated window grille panel in the front gallery inject momentum down the space as visitors progress into the primary exhibition hall. Chronologically, traditional display cases filled with artifacts serve as snapshots from distinct dynasties, across geographic hubs of Islam, from Spain to Indonesia.

These displays require some stamina. Many of the artifacts currently on view are petite designed objects and fragile works on paper. Some display cases currently identify that the installation is still in progress. The collection is planned to rotate periodically with loaned pieces, so perhaps this segment will evolve more than other areas. Since the artists' precision is the focal point of many of the works, however, it is unfortunate that there is no opportunity to sit and investigate any of the fine details. The display hall invites more transient glances than mindful study.

Square Tiles, Late 19th century Morocco.



KRISTEN MOREAU

A glowing central display helps to reinvigorate the main hall with a sense of playfulness. At the center of the room, a floor-to-ceiling wall wrap reproduces cerulean botanical Turkish tiles as though hundreds of tiles were installed along the wall. It is an impactful demonstration of the prominence of pattern in Islamic Art. Two of the authentic ceramic tiles from the 1560s are on view nearby, explaining that they once covered the brilliant mosques and palace walls of the

Ottoman sultans. The cheery graphic pattern of the faux tile wall is Instagram heaven. It's a rare moment of new media engagement in an otherwise conservative exhibition.

The final gallery room, despite superb artwork, feels like a bit of a missed chance for elevated discourse at the Art Institute. Showcasing several 20<sup>th</sup> century works, the gallery seeks to show the influences of Islamic visual culture on later generations of **continued on page 26**



Heatherwick's New Bus for London



IWAN BAAH

**DA VINCI FOR OUR DAY** continued from page 25 mixed-use project in Shanghai, and Pier 55 on New York's West Side. "I have a romantic attachment to small projects," said Heatherwick, "but even our larger projects are made up of many smaller elements. Without that, they would lack soul." He cites Pacific Place in Hong Kong where the toilet stalls are enclosed by curved wooden doors. His team spent six months devising a hinge.

In a digital age, it's a tonic to encounter work that is hand-made and flaunts its physicality. The exhibition plays up this aspect of Heatherwick Studio, greeting

visitors with a machine they can hand-crank to produce a flier from a large printed roll. For the little kid that lurks in each of us, this has to be more satisfying than a touch screen. The title, *Provocations*, has two levels of significance. Heatherwick is provoked by diverse challenges, and his solutions should provoke us to reconsider the buildings and products that we take for granted. Why do so many fall short, in appearance and performance? That realization should inspire every architect and designer to strive for something better.

**MICHAEL WEBB IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AM.**

**ARABESQUE ANEW** continued from page 25 makers. The small gallery has such an ambitiously wide range of aesthetics, though, that the narrative gets murky.

The highlight of the back room is a bronze sculpture from Parviz Tanavoli's well-known *Heech (Nothing)* series, on loan from New York University. Tanavoli, a groundbreaking Iranian sculptor, was a founding member of Iran's influential Saqqakhaneh artistic movement of the 1960s. Heech is as contemporary and political as the Islamic Art exhibition dares to go.

With the re-opening of these galleries, the Art Institute has a poignant opportunity to become Chicago's critical platform for modern and contemporary Islamic visual culture. There is, indeed, prominent wall text in the main gallery distinguishing the Islamic World as a culture from the active religion of Islam. However, as the exhibition culminates in the final room with a piece from over 40 years ago, it lacks a convincing emotional bridge to today's viewer. This could have been resolved through improved contemporary storytelling and interactive content. The Field Museum's current *Vodou: Sacred Powers of Haiti* exhibit, for example, directly sets out to dispel misconceptions about a cultural practice with an extroverted and frank relatability. Alternatively, this quiet back room could become a space for thoughtful introspection—the Islamic Art wing's parallel to the Ando Gallery, the iconic sanctuary embedded in the Art Institute's Japanese collection.

Undoubtedly, the re-opening of the Islamic Art galleries is a boon to Chicagoans. Architects with a fascination for handcrafted



Moroccan doors in the recently reopened Islamic galleries at the Art Institute of Chicago.

KRISTEN MOREAU

architectural details, unusual materials, or colorful patterns will delight in this world-class resource. As an excellent curatorial complement after exploring Islamic Art, the adjacent gallery has recently installed an outstanding early-to-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century European textile exhibit, *Off the Bolt*, which pattern fans and modern design lovers will decidedly enjoy. As new programming and visiting works maintain dynamism in the Islamic Art wing, the space promises to be increasingly valuable for knowledgeable, cross-cultural conversations in the city.

**KRISTEN MOREAU IS A CHICAGO-BASED WRITER AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER.**



## Motor Mural

Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in Detroit  
Detroit Institute of Arts  
5200 Woodward Avenue  
Through July 12

In the spring of 1932, when Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo arrived in Detroit, the nation was buckling under the worst of the Great Depression. Unemployment climbed to its peak at 25 percent. In the Motor City labor disputes were turning increasingly violent. When as many as 60,000 people marched to protest layoffs and pay cuts at Ford Motor Company, the automaker's security forces fired into the crowd, killing four people and wounding 20.

But in that bleak context, the art the two Mexican artists created in Detroit was transformational—both for the city and for themselves. Rivera's

massive 27-panel *Detroit Industry* frescos along the garden court walls in the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) are iconic, a national historic landmark that Rivera believed to be his finest work. Kahlo—then an unknown artist—suffered a miscarriage shortly after arriving in Detroit, and nearly bled to death before doctors at Henry Ford Hospital helped her recover. When she turned back to the canvas, she created a sharply surreal painting that explored her grief. Her kinetic focus on the personal carried her into the next great chapter of her creative life.

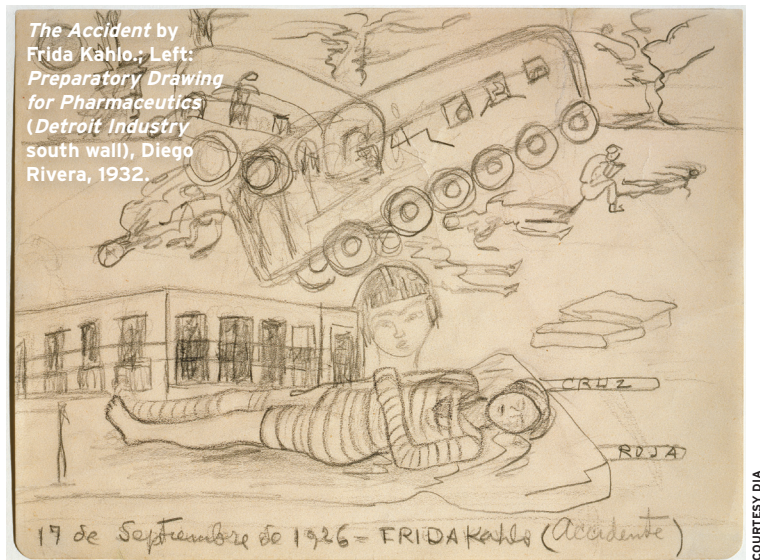
*Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in Detroit*, the first major exhibition to focus on the artistic breakthroughs made by both artists during this pivotal period, opened at the DIA in March. It includes eight majestic charcoal-and-pigment preparatory drawings for the *Detroit Industry* murals by Rivera that have not been seen for nearly 30 years, some of which are 26 feet long. There are also 23 works by Kahlo, who has never before been exhibited at the museum.

The show could not be better timed. It is the first major exhibition by the DIA since the city emerged from bankruptcy—an ordeal that threatened to put the collection of the storied museum on the auction block. Echoes of Rivera and Kahlo's time are heard loud and clear today, bringing unexpected depth to the exhibition. Even as Rivera was invited to paint the *Detroit Industry* murals, there was talk about closing the city-owned museum and selling its art: Depression-era financial pressures were too steep, even after a substantial

budget cut. Though Rivera's sympathies lied with communists, his work in Detroit was financed by industrialist Edsel Ford, son of Henry. This put him in the crux of a political and cultural dispute. But as controversial as he was in Detroit, his work thrived; in New York on the other hand, where he subsequently painted the *Man at the Crossroads* mural in Rockefeller Center, his work was destroyed in 1934.

Rivera and Kahlo's worldwide popularity puts their art in heavy demand, meaning that the DIA exhibition is a rare opportunity to see nearly 70 works collected together. The juxtapositions make plain how they influenced one another at this critical point in their careers. Kahlo's riveting *Henry Ford Hospital* painting and sketch, depicting the loss of their child, are set near a larger-than-life Rivera *cartone* portraying an infant nestled in the bulb of a plant. Both painters also explored their conflicted feelings about technology and the industrial north. Rivera finds a sort of synthesis—albeit a tense one—by depicting the nobility of the working class, the great things accomplished by collective work. Panels in *Detroit Industry* show both the miracle and the cost of science—vaccinations on one hand, chemical warfare on another. Kahlo, meanwhile, paints *Self-Portrait on the Borderline between Mexico and the United States*, where icons of each landscape are diametrically opposed. It is only in her body that the cultures merge, right at the cutting line between the two.

The DIA exhibition is staged narratively: As you move through



COURTESY DIA

galleries, the artists' evolution before, during, and after their time in Detroit plays out. Silent short films are cast along the walls, showing them at work in Detroit. Photographs and screens of news clippings from the era bring dimension to the artwork. ("Famed Mural Painter Here" reads one headline.) And lighthearted pieces, like the *exquisite corpse* drawings that Kahlo made with a friend on a hotel notepad during a trip to New York, bring the full vibrancy of their personalities into the room.

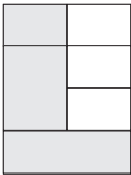
The Rivera/Kahlo exhibition rides on a swell of interest in the artists throughout Detroit. Michigan Opera Theatre stages *Frida* this month. Restaurants in Detroit's Mexicantown have put Kahlo's personal recipes on the menu. But it is the DIA exhibit—

that is, the art that Kahlo and Rivera created themselves—that is the star of the show. The museum is making it available to as many people as possible: This is its first fully bilingual show, and two thousand free tickets were donated to Detroit students. Curators expect the exhibition—the final one under museum director Graham Beal, who, with astonishing grace, steered the DIA through its renovation, hard-fought millage, and the bankruptcy threat—to be one of the most well attended shows in a generation. Deservedly so. This one is worth the hype. The exhibit unleashes both the ferocity and the tenderness of Rivera and Kahlo—and of Detroit, too.

**ANNA CLARK IS A FREELANCE JOURNALIST AND THE EDITOR OF A DETROIT ANTHOLOGY.**



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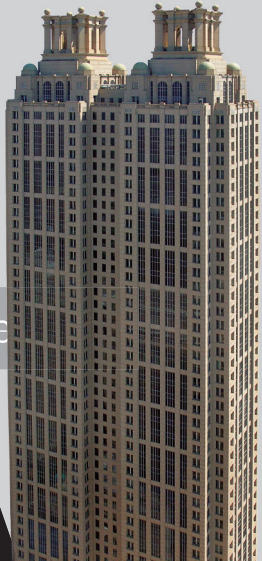
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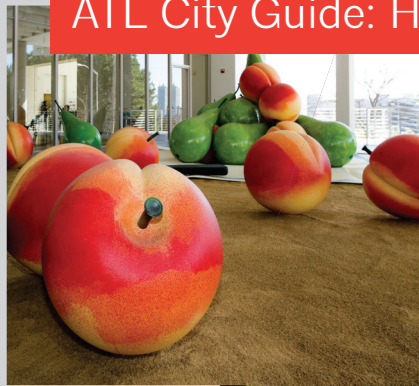


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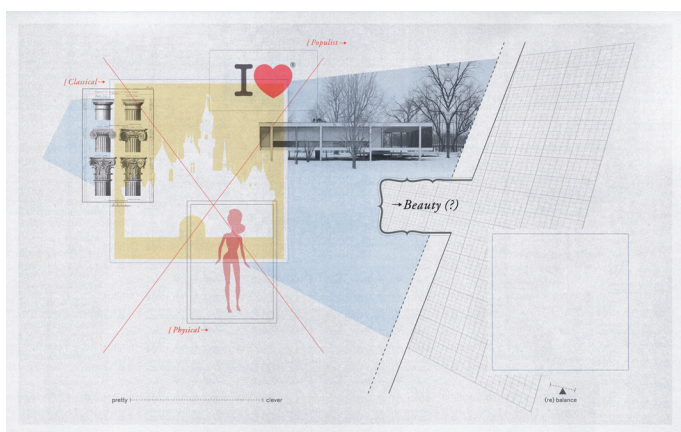
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MARCH 25, 2015



Our heads are spinning between bombastic statements about fantasies of mass-customization and the sadistic warping of unitized systems to adapt to predetermined forms, the wilder the better. Both camps operate without a working understanding of the role of emotional meaning in architecture.

#### WHERE WE WERE. WHERE WE ARE.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the hard sciences triumphant. Yet something went profoundly wrong. Calculus proved to be a defective instrument in solving the intractable problems pertaining to the broader human equation. Urban blight, one of the copious global scars of relentless industrialization, is the most discernible outcome of an engineering logic left unchecked. It is ubiquitous, inevitable, and of overwhelming magnitude. It stands as the deformed child of the unhappy union between mathematical reasoning operating on autopilot and design processes rooted in declarative procedures with no human insight. Obsession with problem solving, on material “honesty,” on the social overpowering the formal, and on the fetishizing of technology for technology’s sake has lead to the general public’s alienation from architecture.

Thinking took over from feeling. The humanities got the short end of the stick. It would be all well and good if individuals were machines, but we know that to be untrue. Still we have yet to bear witness to a change in outlook. It is our contention that emotion links environments to their users and is fundamental to the architectural experience. Its role in architectural discourse is not just desirable, but necessary, as it would greatly expand the capacity of architects to symbolically reach the people they claim to design for. As buildings over time undergo changes in how they embody programmatic requirements, they remain vehicles for the renewal of emotional meaning. While a ubiquitous response, emotion’s specific realization is anything but universal. It differs in every person. The fact that two individuals can experience opposite emotional meaning in the same structure establishes a common ground between them even in the face of this polarity.

Where did the resistance to emotions as a design factor come from? Terminology might have something to do with this discursive impasse. Some words, like beauty, can be so historically charged that their association with what are held as outmoded notions or past memories must be erased in the formative processes of new generations. Today we hear that customers have turned into “guests,” and employees are “dismissed” as opposed to being unceremoniously fired. What semantic transformations have “emotions” undergone in the patois of the highbrow crowd of the

past 40 years? Given the secular nature of 20<sup>th</sup> century culture and beyond, emotions are perilously evocative of faded romanticism, signposts of irrelevant concerns to what today’s gatekeepers of architectural discourse deem to be currency. They dispose of emotions as annoying, sentimental yearnings unsuitable to the blueprint of cultural and societal reformation that the promoters of modern and post-modern architecture have endorsed. Our critics offer an array of alternative idioms to talk effectively about the same notion. A glaring example is the tragic anonymity of Silicon Valley. As visitors, we cannot help wondering what the root cause is for the inverse relationship between unparalleled financial wealth and the deterioration of the urban condition in the same territory. Design platitude is all around us. It is the malaise of our time and exclusively of our own making.

Form-making by itself is an empty exercise, negating the qualitative function of architecture in human existence. Self-expression, on the other hand, is the filtering of circumstances and contingency through the sensibility of an individual, resonating with the socio-physical character of the site. Rationality alone cannot resolve the conflicts between these two seemingly opposite points of view. Hyper-focus on the physical metrics of the human body, e.g. design based on human scale handbooks, or equation-based design, e.g. parametric architecture, are likely shortcuts to a space of collective alienation.

#### A WAY FORWARD

Emotional meaning supplies architects with the capacity to discern the priceless against the dispensable. Bringing it back into the broader dialog is especially useful given how participatory design has taken renewed hold as we go deep into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally, the faceless stakeholders get their seat at the design table sharing the entries until now in the hands of financial and program driven clients. Emotional meaning will add its weight into the balance mix to cater long-term to the community in factual ways.

Emotional Meaning matters now for the following reasons:

It helps to re-establish the general public’s trust and affection toward architects.

It constitutes an opportunity to reengage clients to the value of architecture.

It resets the architect’s outlook to design with people and art as in dissoluble essentials of architecture.

Ever cognizant of the failures of the past—like the use of emotions for the opportunistic to legitimize their designs and populate the environment with the unsightly—a starting list would include the following four offenders, guilty of

crowding the arena of our sedated perception:

The *Nostalgic*: a sentimental longing for a past period, which is romanticized through the artistic artifacts of that era. The fallacy of nostalgia is that when the conditions that produced the artifacts no longer exist and the human condition has progressed from that point in time, this past loses its relevance and can no longer be credibly recreated.

The *Superficial*: the cult of the physique. The superficial is still the focus of normative notions of beauty. Appearance over content is the quintessential antinomy of this ideal. Rather than being a popularity contest, architecture aims at longer-term values.

The *Commercial*: unrestrained consumerism and transient gratification. When the primary purpose of the design of an object is to pander to the base instincts of a group in order to maximize sales, the end result is most often products that are shallow and short-lived.

The *Inauthentic*: something that is not of its time; something that is untrue to the conditions and nature of its time, material, or technology; something that appears to be what it is not.

Emotional meaning alone is not the basis of design; but its absence renders architecture without merit. It is the inscrutable raison d’être that links the act of building to the sublimation of the inner self; a mixture of pleasure, bliss, and rootedness. The physiology of the body starts registering the presence of an artifact designed with intent to go beyond the circumstantial practicalities of the program. It is intelligible in its nuanced aspirations, while providing the bond to hold the personal blocks that form the whole of humanity. Emotional meaning stirs catharsis to the collective and that unfathomable togetherness that resets individuals’ unwavering commitment to kinship. This is territory foreign to rational planning, the quicksand of engineering analysis.

This reflection is presented to jumpstart a conversation within the architecture community. In weaving emotions back into the evaluation criteria, we are advocating for a disciplined practice of design where the metaphysical layer that always existed in architecture, whether in religious or secular centuries, can find an explicit and sustainable resolution into a material arrangement that speaks to the concerns and emotional bandwidth of 21<sup>st</sup> century inhabitants. In pursuing a much tighter fit than ever before between form and emotion, architects can once again exercise their capacity to steer society toward the realization of their current understanding of citizenship, well-being, and healthy participation of community members into the public realm.

**JOHN MARX AND PIERLUIGI SERRAINO ARE AUTHORS AND ARCHITECTS WHO LIVE IN THE BAY AREA.**

## Emotional Meaning: The Intangible of Architecture

### SETTING THE STAGE

Remember the last time you changed your route to stop and visit a particular building? You may have wanted to see it for some time; perhaps it was a curiosity or a tribute to your student days. Imagine you are there, entering the realm of its presence with all the particularities of your own life. That architecture is inevitable, substantive, impactful, consequential, and undeniably timeless. Still, in its beauty, the construction is a mute messenger of the larger order of things that you sense within, but are unable to declare. This artifact is the resonance chamber of all that is uncontainable within you. What you are seeing, occupying, savoring—in a word experiencing—is emotionally meaningful. We hold this to be a primary aspiration in the making of architecture. Emotional meaning aids in reconnecting the inner and outer dimensions of our world.

When avant-garde modernists chose to prize reason over emotion, architecture detached itself from the world it was meant to improve. The cold rationality of performance and concept-based design left out the intangibles that make us human. Estrangement followed.

Design without rigor inexorably turns capricious. On the other hand, design without heart lays out urban cemeteries. When rigor and heart are balanced, they infuse the

city fabric with a sense of place. Bonding and belonging ensue. Emotional meaning in architecture occurs when the elements or the character of a space arouse an emotional response in the user that is meaningful, significant, and enduring.

In an attempt to understand the structural relationship between architecture and people, can emotions be conceived as a cognitive basis for design rather than being hastily dismissed as personal opinions?

It is within reason to say that few members of the public experience an emotional connection to today’s architecture. Design as problem solving often neglected this aspect, producing an ecosystem out of balance and fraught with undesirable consequences. The ascetic restraint of Miesian descent brought, and still brings, chilling austerity to the global urban imagery. Broadly speaking, current design tends to fall into two trends: sanitized glass-boxes rooted in a mid-century modern revival or Wild West formalism with fashionable architecture on stylistic overload. Either way, we are facing a particularly aggressive challenge on the emotional meaning front. Pervasive computing has enabled reckless self-indulgence from those architects married to innovation no matter what, whose formal language has imploded under the pressure of originality at all cost.





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