

THE WEST ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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HOW THE GREAT STREETS INITIATIVE IS TRANSFORMING MILES OF LOS ANGELES ROADS AND SIDEWALKS INTO VIBRANT COMMUNAL CENTERS

LA-Más transformed storefronts in Pacoima for L.A.'s Great Streets Initiative.

JAVI DE LEÓN / COURTESY LA-MÁS

ALL ROADS LEAD HOME

Fifteen percent of the landmass of Los Angeles is streets and sidewalks. These 7,500 centerline miles of roads constitute the single largest physical element under city control, according to Lilly O'Brien, program manager of the Great Streets initiative—a political organization staffed by trained urban planners housed in Mayor Eric Garcetti's office. Great Streets has been working **continued on page 4**



MICHAEL FOLONIS ARCHITECTS REINTERPRETS SETBACK GUIDELINES IN SANTA MONICA TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

LIFE'S A BEACH

COURTESY MICHAEL W. FOLONIS ARCHITECTS

Housing in Santa Monica is understandably highly prized: The air is clear and cool, the ocean is nearby, and there is ample public transportation, including the new Expo Line connecting Santa Monica to Downtown Los Angeles. The arrival of high-tech employers like Google and Twitter has given the area a new name: Silicon Beach. And so, young professionals seeking employment, enjoyment, and well-designed, efficient apartments are searching L.A.'s coastal areas for affordable, **continued on page 7**



CRIT

STEVE HYMON / COURTESY METRO

METRO'S LATEST BID TO DIVERSIFY L.A. TRANSIT OPTIONS

RIDE SHARE OR RIDERSHIP?

The L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) has finally rebuilt one of L.A.'s original commuter streetcar lines: The Expo line, a 15.2-mile long appendage, will link Downtown Los Angeles to Santa Monica. Completion of the \$2.5 billion route marks an **continued on page 6**

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SkB Architects creates an open, community-oriented cafe space inside the new KEXP headquarters in Seattle.

JEREMY BITTERMAN / COURTESY KEXP

SEATTLE PUBLIC RADIO STATION KEXP'S NEW HEADQUARTERS OPENS NEAR SPACE NEEDLE

Public Amenity

It was a bright spring day in Seattle's lower Queen Anne neighborhood when nonprofit alt-rock radio station KEXP (90.3 FM) opened the doors of its new 25,000-square-foot digs designed by local firm SkB Architects. The new KEXP space—part **continued on page 4**



THE LOS ANGELES PORT GETS \$150 MILLION EXPANSION. SEE PAGE 03

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A STATUS QUO TO BELIEVE IN?

In this issue, we cover a landscape of in-between spaces: divergent urban uses of public realm via Los Angeles's Great Streets initiative, thoughtfully considered multifamily development in Santa Monica, a fresh batch of transit options in L.A., and a blending of private and public space in Seattle. If this seems like a jumbled mess, that's because this collection of stories reflects the increasingly contested nature of West Coast urbanism. When considering the region's pervasive homelessness crisis, increasing unaffordability, and legislative squabbles over development, we see a condition that is rooted at the nexus of two things: where we live and how we get there.

But really, this is old news. The tension between density and mobility has been a driving force in the West's development since the colonial era, when conquistadors established El Camino Real and set up camps one day's horse ride apart.

In today's quest to make the West's cities more livable, sustainable, and equitable, an effort is underway to give various modes of transportation—walking, cycling, light rail, and ridesharing—equal priority, meaning that single-occupant cars are watching their day in the sun fading in the rearview. If one argument is gaining traction, with large transit expansions planned in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle over the coming years, it's a common sense one: that pedestrianized forms of mobility simply make for better cities. Where there is less of a reliance on cars and the space they require, people can live in smaller homes, coexist closer together, talk to one another more often, and have the time to enjoy their neighborhoods.

But only, of course, if they can afford to live in these areas in the first place. Because, simultaneously, the West is enduring a widespread shortage of rental and private homes resulting from decades of gradual downzoning and anti-density legislation that have left the region massively under-built. And whereas Los Angeles was once capable of housing 10 million people under the city's 1960 zoning regulations, today, it can only accommodate about four million inhabitants and has been built out according to what is currently allowed. The reality is that hundreds of thousands of housing units are needed across the region to meet today's needs, and the few talented designers who are stepping in to provide thoughtful, equitable distribution and design of those units are hampered by legislation, restrictive ordinances, or threats of litigation. Changes in zoning created this problem, and changes in zoning can help will solve it.

And when planning departments do not step in or act too slowly, state governments will act on their behalf. California's AB1866, for example, set a new, relatively liberal statewide standard for the implementation of Accessory Dwelling Units, the small, sometimes-detached efficiency suites on otherwise single-family properties that are quietly up-zoning even the wealthiest of neighborhoods. These so-called “in-law” units, already common in working-class areas, help populations grow up and age in place, provide a landing pad for recent immigrants, and allow homeowners to earn rental income through their properties. Though this is a stop-gap solution, it is, at least, a developing front and a site of overall disruption.

Community-oriented designers can also subvert the rules. But too often, community-oriented design is impermanent or doesn't operate at a scale widespread enough to create lasting change. There is an under-addressed middle market that designers and developers have been too hesitant to embrace. The terminus of the new Expo and the adjacent Tongva Park designed by James Corner Field Operations in Santa Monica, however, are powerfully permanent statements. Though Tongva Park opened almost two years ago, the completion of the Expo terminus and its associated intersection make for a metaphoric moment: a pedestrianized street connecting public transit to a pier over the ocean. This design, bookended by the recently selected minimalist Agence Ter and SALT-designed proposal for Pershing Square in Downtown Los Angeles, creates an east-west urban route, while Gehry Partners' ongoing community engagement surrounding its working designs for the Los Angeles River has the potential to create an ecologically significant north-south spine.

In this election season, let's call this slow-burning revolution the Clinton option for urbanism: ignoring calls for barbarism and perfecting the status quo to be, if nothing else, better and available to many more. Right now, that's the best West Coast cities can hope for, and maybe it's not so bad. **ANTONIO PACHECO**



COURTESY LOS ANGELES LIBRARY, HERALD EXAMINER COLLECTION

FORD AMPHITHEATRE RENOVATION TAKES SHAPE

ALMOST SHOW TIME

The John Anson Ford Amphitheatre, a nearly hundred-year-old institution nestled in the scrubby, sandy hills of the Cahuenga Pass north of Hollywood, has already lived a handful of lives over its relatively short existence. And as it approaches its centennial, the amphitheater is undergoing its latest upgrade: A \$65.8 million makeover by Los Angeles-based Levin & Associates Architects and landscape architecture firm Mia Lehrer + Associates due to be completed this September.

Originally designed in 1920 as a wooden amphitheater by arts and crafts architect Bernard Maybeck, the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre, then called the Pilgrimage Theatre, was the original home of author and Pittsburgh Paint heiress Christine Wetherill Stevenson's religiously themed Pilgrimage Play. That structure burned down in a brush fire in 1929 and was replaced in 1931 by a board-formed, poured-in-place concrete hippodrome designed by architect William Lee Woollett, who also designed the Million Dollar Theatre and the Rialto Theatre in Downtown Los Angeles.

The 1,200-seat structure was built to resemble the gates of Jerusalem, with crenelated parapets and corbel arches crudely carved into the crotch of what was then a remote hillside. This configuration left the complex subject to the cascades of rocks and runoff that come down the surrounding slopes during the region's characteristic downpours. The theater, which continued holding performances of Stevenson's play long after her death in 1922, came under the namesake of arts-supporting L.A. county supervisor John Anson Ford in 1976 and thereafter grew into a world-renowned community arts performance space.

The structure has been under the stewardship of Levin & Associates since 2014, undergoing what principal Brenda Levin described as “a near total reconstruction, not really a renovation.” Levin & Associates, responsible for the 1991 rehabilitation of the iconic Bradbury Building as well as the 2015 renovation to **continued on page 5**



ZACHARIAH ONER/COURTESY L.A. DESIGN FESTIVAL

DEBORAH WEINTRAUB AWARDED 2016 ICON AWARD

L.A. ICON

Deborah Weintraub has been awarded the 2016 Julia Morgan ICON Award for her outstanding contributions to the design industry as City of Los Angeles chief deputy city engineer. Weintraub is the highest-ranking architect in L.A. and is currently overseeing design work,

project management, and construction management services for over 400 active projects totaling \$3.5 billion, including Mia Lehrer + Associates' proposal for the new FaB Park in Downtown Los Angeles, the Gehry Partners-led L.A. River restoration plan, Michael Maltzan Architecture's replacement of the Sixth Street Viaduct, and HMC Architects' proposal for the L.A. Convention Center.

AP**CORRECTION**

We mistakenly attributed the article on the new sculptural gateway to Boyle Heights, “Oh, Boyle Rules” (AN 03_04.27.2016), to West editor Antonio Pacheco. In fact, Michael Webb wrote the article. We regret the error.

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EAVESDROP> THE EDITORS

A-LOHA DETROIT?

After announcing two Detroit-based projects in the last month—**Olayami Dabls's** MBAD African Bead Museum and four corner buildings in the Brush Park revitalization district—**Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects (LOHA)** is bringing a bit of the Sunset Strip to Detroit Rock City. But is the 26-year-old L.A. firm setting its sights on even greener pastures and considering a Midwest outpost? Sources indicate that LOHA recently signed a lease in the historic Chrysler House in downtown Detroit. So get ready, Rock City, things are about to get a little sandy.

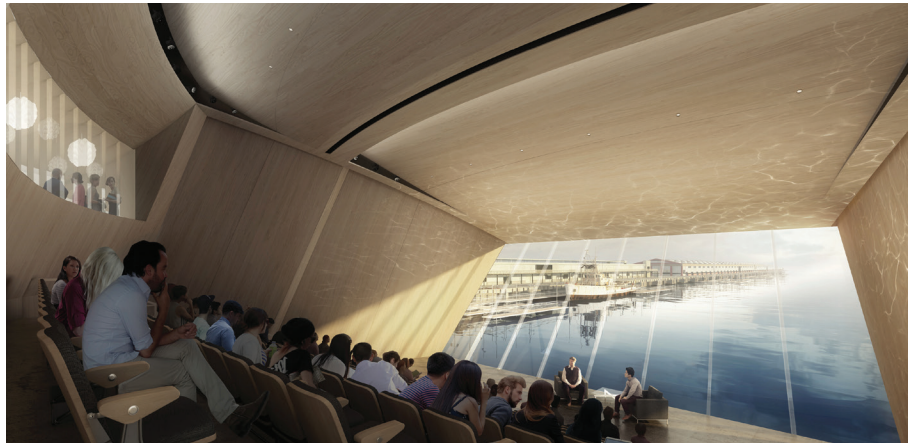
NOMADS NO MORE

For those feeling the Bern with nowhere to go, have you ever considered the Nevada desert?

Well, you should, because Burning Man Festival recently purchased the 3,800-acre Fly Ranch, a not-too-shabby swath of desert in Nevada's far western Washoe County. The nonprofit art group announced the news via blog post: "As a year-round site, Fly Ranch has the potential to expand Burning Man Project's activities and existing programs, as well as amplify Burning Man's cultural impact into the wider world beyond Black Rock City."

Pack your bags and bring your face paint because the desert is about to get pretty cool, man.

SEND WELCOME MATS AND WINTER HATS TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM



UNVEILED

PORT OF LOS ANGELES REDEVELOPMENT

Gensler's Los Angeles office has revealed plans for a \$150 million expansion to the Port of Los Angeles by marine science and business innovation group AltaSea. Revealed plans detail a 280,000-square-foot facility encompassing a new waterfront promenade, aquaculture research center, and science hub that combines the existing dockside warehouses with a new visitor's center and signal-house.

Three formerly industrial warehouse shells with exposed composite steel beams and original overhead trusses will house dedicated research and business development facilities for aquaculture and underwater robotics endeavors. The project's development will be divided into phases beginning

with the redevelopment of Warehouses 58 through 60, which will add 180,000 square feet of combined research and business hubs to the site. This phase also incorporates an education pavilion and wharf plaza. The second and third phases entail renovating Warehouse 57—which will contain 60,000 square feet of laboratory and classroom space—and the construction of the site's two new structures.

Those new constructions, Berth 56 and a tower dubbed "the Viewing Structure," are located between the arms of the two docks housing the science warehouse spaces. Berth 56 is a landscape-oriented community center with educational and exhibition spaces, as well as amenities like viewing platforms and a theater. The five-story viewing tower is located at the foot of a Berth 56's roof terrace, which has been sculpted to blend

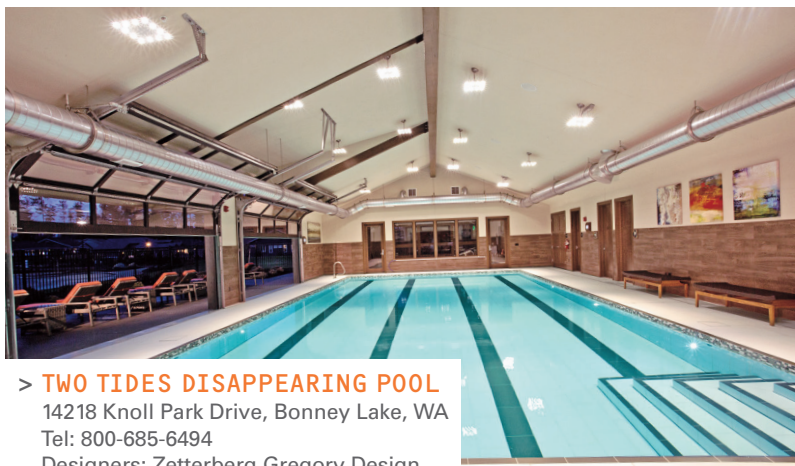
with a street-level plaza. Gensler expects to begin construction on the first phase of the project in 2016 with the community center set to open in 2023. **AP**

Architect: Gensler
Client: AltaSea
Location: Los Angeles, CA
Completion Date: 2023



COURTESY GENSLER

OPEN> POOL



> TWO TIDES DISAPPEARING POOL

14218 Knoll Park Drive, Bonney Lake, WA
Tel: 800-685-6494
Designers: Zetterberg Gregory Design and Zetterberg Custom Homes

COURTESY SHEA HOMES/SEVEN SUMMITS LODGE AT TRILogy TEHALEH

Perhaps the most famous disappearing pool is the one in the Beverly Hills High School gym, or maybe it is the one used in the Cirque du Soleil show O, at the Bellagio Resort and Casino in Las Vegas. Either way, both will have some serious competition in the new disappearing pool tucked inside an otherwise conventional recreational center in Bonney Lake, Washington, 39 miles outside of Seattle. Belgium-based Hydrofloors built the pool for the Seven Summits Lodge clubhouse at Trilogy at Tehaleh, a Baby Boomer residential housing development by homebuilding giant Shea Homes. While the clubhouse and lodge designed and built by Zetterberg Gregory Design and Zetterberg Custom Homes comes in the classic, Pacific Northwest vernacular of exposed wood and timber framing, the pool brings high-tech flexibility to the residential community.

In fewer than 10 minutes, the 49- by 29-foot lap pool converts into a flat floor for meetings, dances, and other events. When lowered, the movable floor "opens" the pool, which can hold close to 44,000 gallons of water. When the floor is raised completely, it hides the pool. The pool floor, which costs around \$300 to \$500 per square foot, sits on a metal grid supported by Styrofoam blocks and relies on a hydraulic ram and cable system to move up and down. **ARIEL ROSENSTOCK**



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Left: LA-Más's culturally and economically revitalizing "living room" furniture installation on Reseda Boulevard. As Lilly O'Brien of the Great Streets Initiative said, "these are designed to be places that could both support a communal space and a local economy." Above right: For one day, nonprofit organization Street Beats transformed the intersection of Crenshaw and Florence into a giant musical crosswalk with DJ booths at each of the intersection's corners. Below right: Children play on a road closed to traffic as part of Kounkuey Design Initiative's pilot "Play Streets" program.



COURTESY STREET BEATS



COURTESY KOUNKUEY DESIGN INITIATIVE



STACEY RIGLEY / COURTESY LA-MÁS

ALL ROADS LEAD HOME

continued from front page with city councilmembers, city departments like the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), and nonprofit design organizations to make better use of existing city resources and infrastructure while simultaneously creating

urban corridors that reflect—and hopefully economically engage—the people who live there. The initiative ties into a national and even global push to pedestrianize underutilized swaths of the urban fabric. In design terms, the 15 streets the project has undertaken so far largely demonstrate this blend of infrastructural

alignment and local identity through sidewalk installations and pop-up play spaces.

For one day, nonprofit organization Street Beats transformed the intersection of Crenshaw and Florence into a musical instrument by using bump-outs to install DJs at each corner and fashioning scramble cross-

walks to look like a giant urban keyboard. Pedestrians could engage in light-pole-mounted-speaker beat battles using iPads.

Meanwhile, on Reseda Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley, LA-Más attempted to transform the car-oriented environment of the sidewalk into a living room by designing the installed furniture in a late-midcentury modernist style and combining it with a painted flagstone paving pattern. "Our installations weren't supposed to blend into the fabric; they were supposed to live in the in-between of the sidewalk, between what's legal and illegal, between what's private and public," architect Elizabeth Timme, the co-executive director and cofounder at LA-Más said. According to Timme, her boundary-blurring work made it clear that the street was a pedestrian space, not a vehicular space, while also creating a far more accessible and welcoming area.

Kounkuey Design Initiative has been working on a pilot "Play Streets" program for the initiative that closes off thoroughfares in South L.A. to vehicles and then introduces varying amounts of infrastructure to see "how play gets activated," cofounder and executive director Chelina Odbert said. She's discovering that regardless of the amount of equipment introduced into the environment, "people will play no matter what; closing down the street does the trick tangentially." After securing the participation of LADOT and the Great Streets initiative, Odbert enlisted the help of "play experts" (i.e. kids) to develop the initial design concept into a workable reality, introducing everything from Hula-Hoops to temporary slides on reclaimed asphalt.

The pilot program will run for one year, and depending on its results, may effect more permanent, citywide changes.

This potential for broader urban change is in keeping with the scope of Mayor Garcetti's original plan. As he told *AN* via email, "I launched the Great Streets initiative to energize public spaces, provide economic revitalization, increase public safety, enhance local culture, and support great neighborhoods. We are changing the culture around how we use our streets by partnering with urban designers on community-level improvements that appear hyperlocal but reverberate around our city." The ongoing initiative will continue to develop and apply its findings to streets throughout Los Angeles. **JULIA INGALLS**



JEREMY BITTERMAN / COURTESY KEXP

PUBLIC AMENITY continued from front page of Seattle Center, a 74-acre park, arts, and entertainment area that includes the Space Needle—was packed for its soft opening. There was a hushed tone as English singer-songwriter-guitarist Robyn Hitchcock performed. He ended his set with the cheeky ode to Seattle,

"Viva! Sea-Tac"—the first song KEXP played when staff moved into its new office in December 2015 after the phase one completion.

SkB designed the new KEXP headquarters in a structure originally built as an exhibition hall for the 1962 World's Fair with tech and studio designer Walters-Storyk Design

Group. It includes on-air studios, DJ booths, production rooms, staff offices, and more—KEXP expects to continue to host over 500 in-studio performances each year, which the public can now view live from an adjacent room that can hold up to 75 people. The new KEXP also houses a 4,500-square-foot public community space with a coffee shop and showroom.

"We wanted to bring the outside in," said Shannon Gaffney, SkB cofounder and co-lead designer on the project. Circulation was a challenge and required striking the right balance between openness and decompression, public and private. Gaffney explained, "It was like a puzzle."

KEXP builds on the growing trend of public-private collaboration—where privately owned space (or privately-publicly owned space, as with KEXP's new home) is open to and used by the public. In St. Louis, for instance, the independent

community radio station KDHX operates out of the Larry J. Weir Center for Independent Media, with a ground floor venue space that can hold up to 140 people.

The public gathering space is open and light-filled, pulling together exposed silver and white ductwork with turquoise accents, low-key stenciled concrete floors, and roll-up garage doors. It's an effect that transforms the area into an indoor plaza and public extension of the courtyard to the east. Many of its materials were donated, said Gaffney. This includes the dark wood paneling, sourced from Puget Sound, that frames the glass-windowed DJ looking into the space. When not being used for live concerts, the gathering space converts into a lounge.

A key feature of the new HQ is KEXP's 50,000-album music library. The library is non-circulating, but it embraces the public-private concept by being located at the most

extroverted part of the KEXP site, hugging its southeast corner. There is large floor-to-ceiling UV-protective glazing, so albums are protected, but still visible from the street.

Back inside the public gathering space is a cafe, La Marzocco, which SkB designed with creative branding agency States of Matter. It is the Florentine-founded espresso machine manufacturer's first cafe and showroom. Seattle company Mallet, Inc. built the cabinets locally. The colored-glass panels were made in Italy using traditional techniques, said Gaffney. Each month, the cafe features new roasters and a curated coffee menu.

By weaving together public-private elements in the new space, KEXP is able to connect more closely with its listeners while the public can hear (and watch) musicians, meet friends, study, have an espresso, and peek into the daily workings of an indie public radio station. **AR**



COURTESY LEVIN AND ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS AND FORD THEATRES

Left: Rendering of the new landscaped picnic terrace, board-formed concrete-clad concessions building, and perforated aluminum panel sound wall added to the existing theater complex by Levin and Associates Architects. Above: Rendering of the renovated stage, including new lighting, sound equipment, and retaining walls as well as restored hillside plantings by Mia Lehrer + Associates. Below: The theater currently under construction.

ALMOST SHOWTIME continued from page 2 Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House, is tackling its latest legacy project with gusto. Here, the firm aims to divert flood waters from the theater's underground artist support areas, expand the dressing room and staging areas, reconstruct the amphitheater

stage, and construct a new sound-isolating wall designed to keep traffic noise out and music in. Mia Lehrer + Associates is responsible for stabilizing the lush, nearly post-modern backdrop of raw, palm-tree-lined scrub directly behind the stage through the addition of native and Mediterranean flora and a network

of stone-clad retaining walls. The project adds a two-story structure, also of board-formed concrete, but lacks the original structure's neo-Judaic flourishes that will hold lower-level concessions, a kitchen, and an office space. A state-of-the-art stage and lighting system is also being incorporated into the design.

Phase one of the renovation is nearly complete and the theater is due to reopen to the public late this summer. Plans for subsequent phases include a new three-level parking structure, 299-seat indoor theater, box office, museum-gallery, and hiking trail, which are due to be complete by 2020. **AP**



project: The George, Silver Spring, MD
architect: Bonstra | Haresign



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Clockwise from top left: Since drawing massive crowds on opening day (shown), even more eager transit riders have taken to L.A.'s new crosstown Expo Line and ridership numbers are surpassing projections; The Expo train signals the potential future of L.A. commutes; An Expo-adjacent bike path brings multimodal transit options to the line; Elevated stations along the Expo bring forth a new type of elevated object in L.A.'s urban landscape; Minimal and utilitarian station designs by Gruen and Associates and Raw International are helping to normalize light rail transit options for a grid-locked region.



STEVE HYMON/COURTESY METRO

line's many at-grade crossings and stations result in a crude and dangerous construct: Drivers are forced to acknowledge light rail trains and passengers as a legitimate urban presence through their sheer occupation of the street. This condition could benefit from a more aggressive transformation of the intersections and sidewalks leading up to each station: Introducing simple elements like bollards, contrasting paving strategies, and other speed mitigating measures would do much to improve what should be nodes of pedestrian activity.

Stations between Downtown L.A. and the University of Southern California campus are easily approached from the street via handicap ramps and feature no-frills signage. The concourses are, again, simple in their articulation, with a smattering of concrete and aluminum benches. These stations are earnest attempts at creating planted flags in what might one day be a larger, more prototypically pedestrian urban expanse. The empty storefronts along many of the tacky, faux-Italianate perimeter block apartment complexes in the area, while highlighted by the stations' electric bolt silhouette, have yet to benefit from the line's booming ridership. As of now, these stops are desolate, quite a few gentrification waves away from being viable transit-oriented developments. At-grade stops between USC and Culver City are also unsuccessful as stations, with complicated tangles of pedestrians, trains, and drivers.

The elevated stations further west, however, like those at

Culver City, La Cienega, and Bundy, announce themselves from a distance as a new type of elevated object in the Southern California sky. Less majestic than Chicago's industrial-era L stations, the elevated Expo stops gently appropriate the language of freeway vernacular, subverting the typical L.A. overpass by co-locating a landscaped bicycle path and potentially, future stations for the system's new bike share program, along the length of most of the line. These areas are straightforwardly open spaces; the overhead bridges' weights reach the ground via four discrete and compact piers, leaving room for drop off and transfer areas. Large concrete walls designed in great relief, populated with complex, pixelated geometric motifs and lushly planted with drought-tolerant flora line the bike path itself. Instead of dank, unwelcoming troll bridges like those associated with the freeways, Expo's overhead crossings are places for collective movement, an aspect exemplified by their minimal treatment and the location of a variety of specially-commissioned art installations at each stop. Riders ascend via elevators and stairways to reach the platforms that provide molehills from which to gaze out over the city's flatlands. But, because one is walking—and waiting—instead of driving, the effect is potentially one of true introspection.

The western terminus at Santa Monica is also a fundamentally pedestrian urban gesture. The station is built as an elevated plaza that cascades to the north in a broad set of stairs, funneling travelers toward major pedestrian shopping areas and into the intersection of Colorado Boulevard and Ocean Avenue, redesigned as a massive diagonal crossing intersection. Here, the intersection is striped with massive white bands of paint in a strangely fitting plaza and civic space for Los Angeles.

If it is indeed Metro's goal to normalize multi-modal transit in Los Angeles, then the Expo train, with a few tweaks, is a good template for what the rest of the region's rapid transit system might look like in the future. Expo's design and existence is an unexpectedly powerful, if somewhat work-in-progress expression on behalf of transit-mixed streets.

AP



TOP: STEVE HYMON / COURTESY METRO; BOTTOM: CANDICE WAKEFIELD/COURTESY METRO

RIDE SHARE OR RIDERSHIP?
continued from front page important milestone for the region's maturing 25-year-old rapid transit system. The lead architectural and urban design was by Gruen Associates who, with planning and design firm RAW International, crafted the system's transit stops; Parsons Brinckerhoff carried out overall planning; and Skanska spearheaded

construction. The Expo line is the transit agency's latest effort to weave light rail travel into a growing, multimodal web of mobility options available to Angelenos—it is as much a new way to see Los Angeles as it is a train.

While the system's 1990s-era subway stations play fast and loose with decorative schemes—from massive boulders at Beverly and

Vermont to highly polished kitsch at the Hollywood and Vine and Chinatown stops—Expo stations are subdued. Mostly located at-grade and topped by a wavy, half-hexagonal mop of ocean wave-inspired, perforated aluminum panels supported by a sinuous, pale-blue, crisscrossing armature, the stations try hard to be poetically mundane. A product of tight budgets, the



STEVE HYMON / COURTESY METRO



STEVE HYMON / COURTESY METRO



COURTESY MICHAEL W. FOLONIS ARCHITECTS

LIFE'S A BEACH continued from front page convenient housing.

One of the more forward-thinking design responses to this need involves what is typically viewed as a restriction: height setbacks. Michael W. Folonis Architects, who is designing several housing projects that include both market-rate and affordable apartments in the area, has taken an innovative approach to setback requirements in its six-story complex at 1415 Fifth Street. This mid-block development, with 100 feet of street frontage on a 150-foot-deep site, contains 64 units, 13 of which are affordable, and includes a mix of studios, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom units. Santa Monica has adopted the Affordable Housing Production Program (AHPP) requiring that 20 percent of new units serve moderate-income residents.

One of the unique challenges for architects working in the City of Santa Monica is responding to the "step-back" requirements of the planning and zoning department: Typically the building volume is set back just 10 feet on the ground floor and then steps back further on each of the upper floors, like a giant staircase. At 1415 Fifth Street, this required a setback of 84,600 cubic feet to be removed from the development envelope.

In an inventive alternative solution, Folonis proposed a deeper setback on the ground plane, creating a large open space for outdoor dining and interaction with the community. In addition, Folonis created a

major three-story open portal that allows natural light and ventilation to flow into a central courtyard that is open to the sky. This achieved 88,563 cubic feet of open space, more than required by the planning and zoning department. The design maintains the cornice line, while the portal provides residents with an outdoor amenity that Folonis describes as "a cultural, social gathering place" that connects residents to city street life.

Travis Page, City of Santa Monica senior planner, said, "It's unusual for an amazing idea like this to come forward" from the planning and zoning requirements. The city is looking at modifying the requirements to encourage future creative solutions.

The exterior facade facing southwest employs dramatic perforated aluminum sunshades that were generated directly from solar studies to allow sunlight to enter in the winter and also provide shade in the summer. This "passive solar design" is an integral part of Folonis's design approach that he has been practicing since 1983.

1415 Fifth Street also provides bike storage for 150 bicycles, and the complex is just two blocks from the new Metro Light Rail station, which encourages the use of public transportation. All units benefit from natural ventilation, reducing the use of mechanical ventilation.

The project is expected to break ground later this year and to be complete in 2017.

MICHAEL FRANKLIN ROSS



COURTESY MICHAEL W. FOLONIS ARCHITECTS



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TOBIN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



UNIVERSITY OF IOWA VOXMAN MUSIC BUILDING



VANCOUVER CONVENTION CENTRE WEST



SOUND TRANSIT U LINK UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON STATION



Awarded the 2016 AIA National Architecture Firm Award in December 2015, LMN Architects is having a moment. Perhaps most well known for its large urban projects—convention centers, performing arts centers and urban infrastructure—the Seattle firm has worked out of its downtown Seattle office in the 1959 international style Norton Building for the past 30 years. Founded in 1979, LMN is a one-studio firm with close to 150 employees. Its 40,000-square-foot office spans two-and-a-half floors.

“We believe the best way to comprehensively understand a space is to build physical models,” said LMN partner John Chau. “Models don’t lie. Revit lies. That’s why we like this building. It allows us to have spaces to do that.” The LMN office is mainly an open plan with downtown views, column-free studio spaces, model building areas, and conference rooms. A lower floor hosts LMN’s in-house digital fabrication shop. There’s

a dual gantry CNC mill that LMN built about a year ago that features two cutting machines on a single cutting bed.

LMN discussed the challenges of building in the future: With less available land, sites will get smaller, necessitating building more efficiently and vertically to accommodate denser layers—more people, more infrastructure, and more ecology in the same space. “We no longer are just simply architects,” said Chau. “The need for all of us to collaborate more, communicate more, is even more critical—it’s important to know what the city council is thinking about, what its leads are. And it’s going back to being very informed citizens—we have the gift, ability, and the responsibility to help solve a lot of issues that arise.”

AR

TOBIN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS SAN ANTONIO, TX

The performing arts center opened late 2014—an effort to reinvigorate the 1926 San Antonio Municipal Auditorium designed by architect Atlee Ayres that had become outdated. “We built a new auditorium, but rotated the geometry to create a new outdoor space and new entry to the San Antonio River Walk,” said Reddington. LMN kept the historic facade and added a new structure, clad in a textured metal veil. The shroud encloses the auditorium and filters the light in different colors and angles. The interior lobby hosts custom tiles that curve in plan and section—each row shifts, creating a negative volume.

Inside the main concert hall, a perforated wood fascia backlit with LEDs allows for an array of colorful effects. The hall can hold up to 1,738 seats and 2,100 people with a flat floor setup. The performance hall also contains the first gala floor system in the U.S. The seats sit on motorized platforms that can fold over, creating a flat floor that can be used for other types of events like rock concerts. Inside the performing arts center is a 295-seat studio theater and the outdoor plaza facing the San Antonio River can hold up to 600 seats.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA VOXMAN MUSIC BUILDING IOWA CITY, IA

Opening October 2016, the new 180,000-square-foot music school for the University of Iowa will replace the previous one sited along the Iowa River that flooded in 2008. LMN moved the new building 50 feet up the hill, orienting it with the center of the college town. The mostly glass exterior building will hold a 700-seat concert hall, a recital hall with 200 seats, and rooms for pipe organs, classes, rehearsal areas, and faculty.

“We wanted to create a building that was an extension of the public experience of the street, so that people could wander in, go to a performance at the music school, or students could come in and visit a professor,” said Reddington.

The building’s small footprint necessitated going vertical, stacking up to five stories of isolated music rooms. LMN developed a theatroatoustics system, a high-performance ceiling system that optimizes acoustics while hiding some of the structural elements such as speakers, microphones, fire sprinklers, and stage lights. “[The theatroatoustics system] was actually a money saving move,” said Van Dyck. “They’re all put together in one gesture. It kind of becomes transcendent beyond any one of those individual pieces,” said Reddington.

VANCOUVER CONVENTION CENTRE WEST VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA

After a series of false starts and shifting sites, LMN knew its design for the west addition to the Vancouver Convention Centre would finally happen if Vancouver won the 2010 Olympic Winter Games bid. The project was included in the bid as the media center. When the architects saw the front page of the *Vancouver Sun* with the winning news, they knew they would get the green light. “That’s how we knew it was real.”

The 1.2-million-square-foot convention center addition was completed in 2009. It occupies 22 acres—14 acres on land, eight acres over the water—of what was once a brownfield site. The convention center boasts a six-acre green roof with 240,000 bees producing honey for the convention center restaurant. The interiors feature local British Columbia wood.

The project also supports the maritime harbor ecosystem. “It’s linked into the landscape, habitat, and shore system,” said Reddington. “There’s a marine habitat that goes around the edge of the building and underneath.” LMN used the concrete loading dock as the infrastructure to support a reef, said Van Dyck.

SOUND TRANSIT U LINK UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON STATION SEATTLE, WA

LMN designed the University of Washington light rail station and surrounding open space that opened in March 2016. The boarding platform can accommodate up to 1,600 people. “We had to link in all of this stuff—a bridge, a bicycle pathway, a head house, escalators, stairs, and then the station block underground that is 500 feet long,” said Reddington.

Perhaps the most challenging, but rewarding, part of the project was designing the smoke chamber. “For fire requirements you have to create a big smoke chamber,” said Reddington. “If there is a fire somewhere, it helps isolate the fire so people can get out and not have smoke running all the way through the entire station.” LMN worked with Seattle artist Leo Saul Berk, who created “Subterranean,” an installation made with nearly 9,000 square feet of custom deep blue metal backlit panels that wrap the smoke chamber. The panels tell the story of the site’s geology.

“By integrating a lot of things into a single system, you have the capacity of one system to solve many problems—like a smoke enclosure that is now the main sculptural expression of a subway station,” said LMN partner Stephen Van Dyck.

HEALTHCARE DESIGN IS BIGGER, BRIGHTER, AND MORE COLLABORATIVE THAN EVER BEFORE. BY SAM LUBELL

TOGETHERNESS



JEREMY BITTERMAN

The Collaborative Life Sciences Building & Skourtes Tower by CO Architects and SERA Architects brings together Oregon Health & Science University, Oregon State University, and Portland State University in one complex. Shared interior spaces are meant to foster interaction among the 30,000 medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, chemistry, and biology students, as well as the teachers and administrators, who will use the space daily.

The core of future work life consists of three words: nerds working together.

Perhaps nowhere is this on better display than in healthcare design, where complexes the size of cities are

springing up to foster collaboration among disciplines—clinical care, lab research, academia, and more—that once avoided one another as if they had a, well, disease.

“We bring all these practitioners

together, they share the spaces, they mingle, and they learn together,” said Scott Kelsey, principal at L.A.-based CO Architects. “You’re breaking down the traditional boundaries of these buildings

as silos.” Not only do employees learn from one another, but they share resources and research, and more often than not, they wind up working in all these facilities at one time or another.



JEREMY BITTERMAN



MEDICAL MEDIA, ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL

Top: The central atrium of the LEED Platinum \$295 million Skourtes tower is sunlit and crisscrossed with steel bridges connecting different areas. Seating options throughout provide opportunities for social interaction. **Top Right:** In downtown Toronto, the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute is connected to the St. Michael's Hospital

via a dramatic 100-foot-long glass and steel bridge by Diamond Schmitt Architects. **Right:** Ennead Architects crafted a warm, humanistic space filled with natural light in the Weill Cornell Belfer Research Building to counteract the discomfort people normally feel in medical buildings.

CO recently completed the Collaborative Life Sciences Building & Skourtes Tower, a 650,000-square-foot campus in Portland, Oregon, that contains clinical facilities, teaching labs, classrooms, lecture halls, medical research labs, administrative spaces, and ground-floor retail for Oregon Health & Science University, Oregon State University, and Portland State University.

A shimmering aluminum panel skin unifies the complex's interconnected volumes, but each volume takes on its own character. The five-story south wing is a geometric spaceship, hovering over a glass base. Its connecting glass atrium is clad with light-brown panels and topped with a large canopy—supported by thin tree columns—that shades its large, glass curtain walls. The 12-story Skourtes Tower is a tall silvery bar that accents the building on the Portland skyline.

"We were trying to find that balance between individual expression and combining them with a common language," said Kelsey.

Much like how the individual formal components are linked, the emphasis inside has moved

from the sequestered researcher model to one of collaboration, where people bump into each other instead of working like solo mad scientists. The ultimate expression of this is the central atrium, a wide-open space filled with connecting steel bridges (their diagonal pathways mimic the diagonal pathways of collegiate quads). Terracing and soft seating connect the two flanking buildings and provide additional places for informal meeting and learning.

A dramatic symbol of this emphasis on connection and collaboration is also seen in another project: The nearly 100-foot-long helical glass-and-steel bridge that Toronto-based Diamond Schmitt Architects built for St. Michael's Hospital in downtown Toronto. The bridge connects the hospital's clinical facilities to the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, a bright open space surrounding a multistory atrium. This public laneway, as it's also called, connects Li Ka Shing's research and education wings and is filled with dramatic wishbone stairs, stacked lounges, an auditorium, and other public gathering zones. "It's really about public access



JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO



BJORG MAGNEA

and use by the whole hospital," said Diamond Schmitt principal Matthew Smith of this effort to get people from varying departments into the same space.

The architects are now completing the third piece of this puzzle: A 17-story patient-care tower that will give the less approachable clinical side of the complex a glassy new atrium entry, add open spaces throughout, and, via flanking glass walkways, help improve and simplify circulation.

"We like to think of it as a three-legged stool," said Smith, who noted that the interaction has been increased not just among different disciplines, but also within the

disciplines themselves.

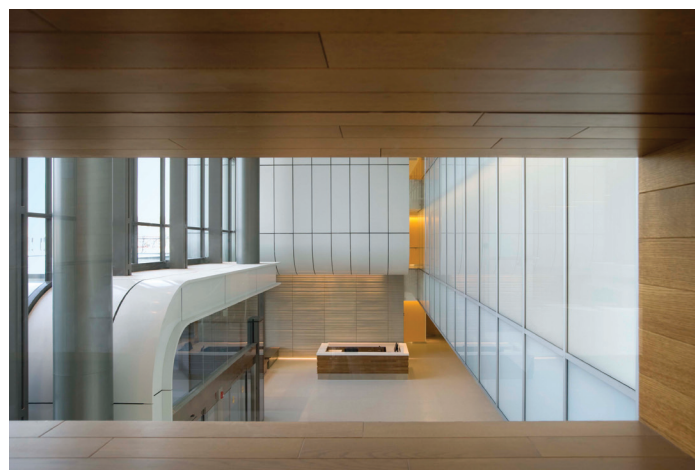
"A lot of these researchers didn't know what's going on in the lab next door. They didn't talk to each other. They didn't bump into each other," said Ennead Architects' principal Todd Schliemann, who is also working on collaborative healthcare spaces. The new model, he noted, is built around "productive collisions." Researchers are talking more to one another. Professors mingle with professors. Other major factors are convenience and proximity, since many doctors are also researchers, and vice versa. They no longer have to travel through the city to fulfill these varied roles. And clinical

practitioners can improve their treatments by bringing samples to a nearby lab, while lab researchers can test their discoveries in a clinical environment.

This convenience is typified by Ennead's new 480,000-square-foot Belfer Research Building in Manhattan, which adds crucial research and medical education pieces to the architects' earlier Weill Greenberg Center, a clinical facility that was completed in 2007. These resources used to be spread throughout the city. Like Weill Greenberg, Belfer contains open, elegant spaces around an atrium filled with wood, stone, and natural light. "It's about removing fear from your healthcare experience,"



BJORG MAGNEA



THOMAS MAYER

Left: At the University at Buffalo, Yazdani Studio—part of CannonDesign—merged the university campus, the Kaleida Health, and the Jacobs Institute into one building: The Gates Vascular Institute. Each department is marked by undulating resin "ribbons" that are meant to evoke blood vessels.

Top: The 10-story cube in downtown Buffalo, New York, is wrapped with fritted glass on two sides with baffles that shade the east and west to mitigate heat gain. **Above:** Warm wood and bright open areas are intended to create a modern, inviting atmosphere.

said Schliemann. "Everything is in pursuit of making people feel welcome." Researchers and students are brought together with common corridors, shared collaborative spaces, conference rooms, lounge spaces, and break rooms.

Here the connecting space between the facilities is a landscaped garden centered by a bubbling fountain that creates an internalized campus green. Schliemann calls it an "urban quadrangle" that "sews together" the varied parts. New conference rooms, lounge and study spaces, and a cafe connect directly to the garden, and large glass walls beckon people inside the new building.

On the flip side, an entire campus can be contained in a single building. The Gates Vascular Institute by Yazdani Studio of CannonDesign merges the University at Buffalo, Kaleida Health, and the Jacobs Institute (containing spaces for translational research, education, business, and clinical care) under one roof. The 10-story complex is

unified by a cavernous, diversely clad lobby, fronted by a glass curtain wall. Each component is delineated from the outside by a high-gloss resin ribbon that snakes its way through and around the edifice.

"We really thought about this wrapper being the thing that ties everything together," said Yazdani senior designer Craig Booth.

"Tying things together" has another benefit besides new relationships and collaborations. "Research is booming. There's money in it," explained Schliemann. New discoveries, he said, have advanced at an exponential rate, and these layouts have proven effective in enhancing the process. Challenges continue to emerge, like how to keep buildings variegated to minimize their scale to fit with their surrounding neighborhoods. But as long as this upward trend continues, we're likely to see more and more combined complexes and more and more productive collisions in the coming years.

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operable walls

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By
Becca Blasdel

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AQUENT CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

BOSTON, MA



ARCHITECT: HUNTSMAN ARCHITECTURAL GROUP
ENGINEER: COSENTINI ASSOCIATES
CONSTRUCTION: ELAINE CONSTRUCTION
WALL SYSTEM: ALLSTEEL BEYOND FRAMELESS



COURTESY TRENT BELL PHOTOGRAPHY



Opposite and this page top: In one of Aquent's conference rooms, a switchgrass film covers the Allsteel Beyond Frameless glass walls.

Opposite, below: Allsteel's wood panelled operable walls offer extra privacy when needed in larger, open spaces.

Aquent, a marketing, creative, and digital staffing agency based in Boston, wanted to create an office space with character. Compared to its previous office, which featured exposed brick and timber, the new space was a 30,000-square-foot white box that needed to be molded into a warm atmosphere that could foster collaboration. Using free-address seating, neighborhoods were created around a central atrium for different uses, such as social environments or concentrated work areas.

Allsteel's Beyond Frameless glass wall system was chosen for its versatility, with diverse finishes to help identify the different neighborhoods, as well as maintain the open layout without losing privacy for phone calls and meetings. Principal at Huntsman Architectural Group, Sandra Tripp, specified Allsteel because "it met the client's needs and was super accommodating in terms of [its] fast track schedule." The "back porch area" of the office features glass walls covered in a film that looks like switchgrass and allows light to flood the office—fulfilling the client's request for the space to feel like a natural environment.

A NEW SPIN ON VINYL

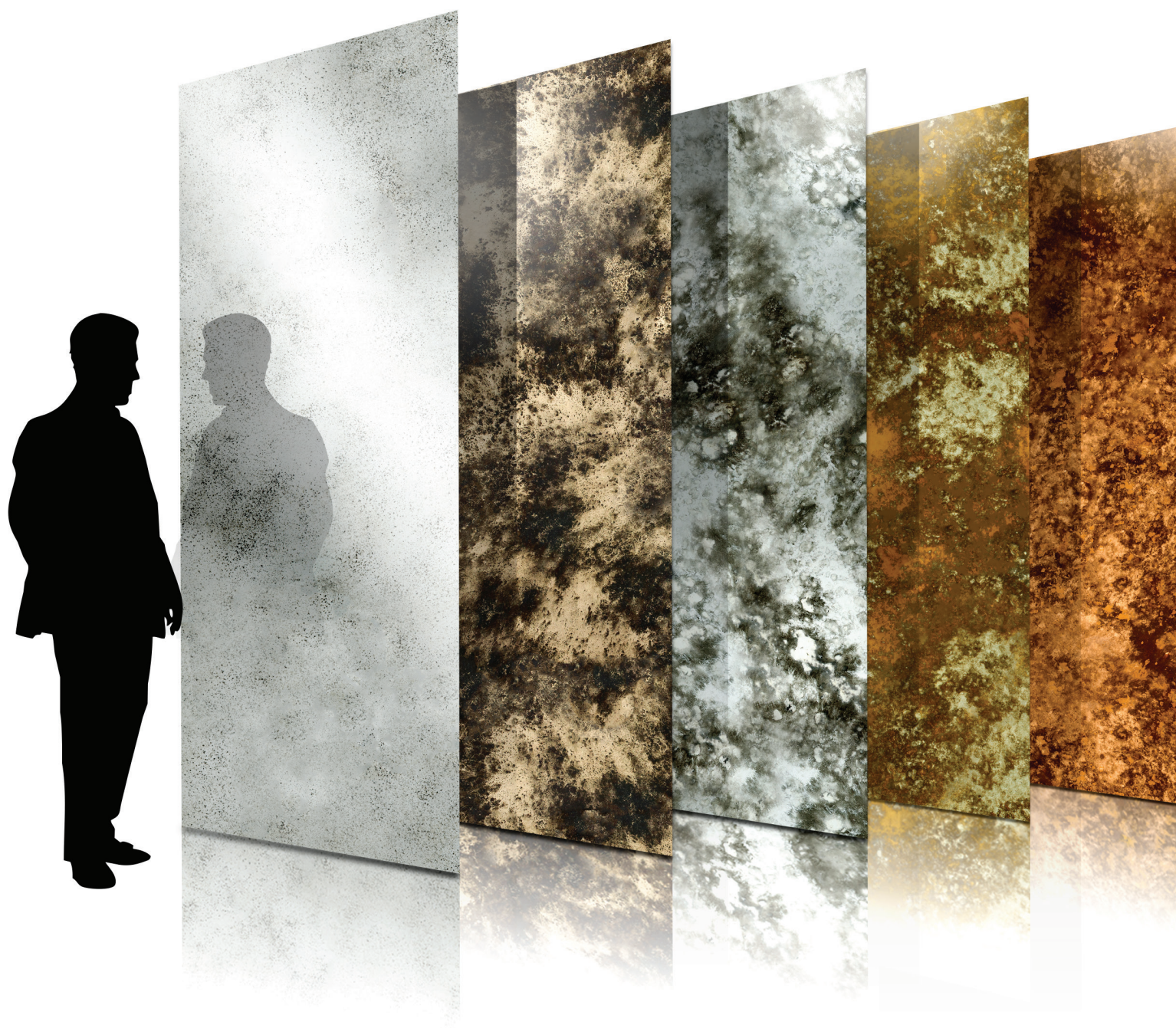


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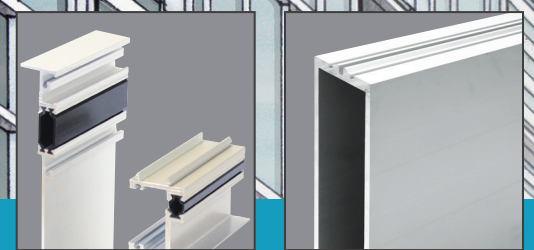
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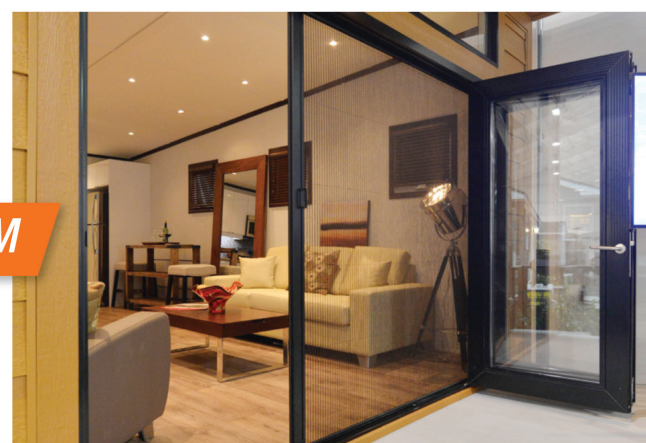
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jeld-wen.com

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revealwd.com

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bifold.com



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pemko.com



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baldwinhardware.com



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omniaindustries.com



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fritsjurgens.com



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krownlab.com



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Design and architecture firm Gensler wanted an office that “embodies function and flexibility through the honest expression of materiality and structure,” according to Harriet Tzou, a marketing specialist at the firm. With existing offices in San Francisco and San Jose, Gensler was attracted to its new East Bay location because of the local community and growing economy.

Gensler’s main multipurpose room is named “Scarlet” after the red oak tree—all of the conference rooms are nicknamed for different species of oak that grow prominently in the region. The room utilizes PK-30’s sliding-stacking pocket movable wall system,

Above: PK-30’s movable wall system transitions the room into an enclosed meeting space.

Below: Gensler’s main multipurpose room has glass doors that can be folded and slid away, allowing it to fulfill many functions.

which can change from being fully closed for meetings (there are about 130 employees at this location) to being opened up into a larger multifunctional space. Its glass doors can be folded and slid into a discreet pocket in the wall to transform the space into a reception area for events, training sessions, or workshops.



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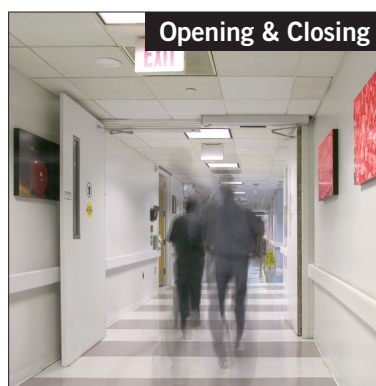


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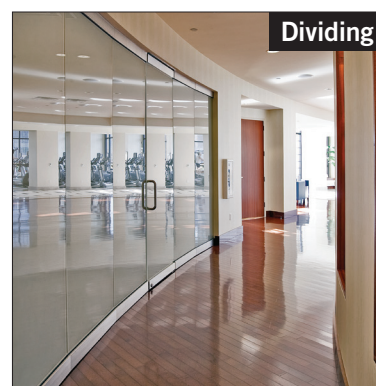
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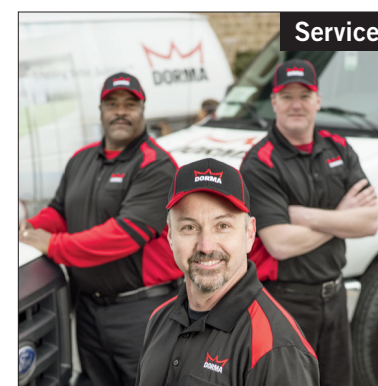
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JUNE

THURSDAY 30
EVENTS

AIA|LA City Leaders Breakfast with Michelle King
8:00 a.m.
AC Martin
444 South Flower St.
aialosangeles.org

Zero Net Water for Multifamily Buildings
12:30 p.m.
SPUR Urban Center
654 Mission St.
San Francisco
spur.org

JULY

FRIDAY 1
EXHIBITION OPENING
M. Casey Rehm: Control
SCI-Arc Gallery
960 East 3rd St.
sciarc.edu

EVENT
Walking Tour of the Pearl District
10:00 a.m.
The Center for Architecture
403 Northwest 11th Ave.
Portland
cfapdx.org

TUESDAY 5
FILM
The Ocean After Nature
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
701 Mission St., San Francisco
ybca.org

THURSDAY 7
EXHIBITION OPENING
BOOM: Changing Seattle
Center for Architecture & Design
1010 Western Ave.
Seattle
cfadseattle.org

SUNDAY 10
EXHIBITION OPENING
Fast Forward: The Architecture of William F. Cody
Architecture and Design Museum
900 East 4th St.
aplusd.org

MONDAY 11
LECTURE
Thomas Robinson
COTE: Forest to Flame: Two Mass Timber Buildings in Portland, Oregon
AIA Portland
403 NW 11th Ave., Portland
aiaportland.org

WEDNESDAY 13
EVENT
Pioneers to Postmodern Downtown
6:00 p.m.
701 SE Grand Ave., Portland
visitahc.org

THURSDAY 14
LECTURE
Classic Modernity: A Few Lessons from Paris
6:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St.
San Francisco
aiaf.org

EVENTS
Curator Tour: Yasuhiro Ishimoto
4:30 p.m.
The Huntington
1151 Oxford Rd.
San Marino, CA
huntington.org

AIA|LA Emerging Professional Series:
Mentorship Mixer
6:00 p.m.
Ehrlich Yanai Rhee Chaney Architects
10865 Washington Blvd.
Culver City, CA
aialosangeles.org

SATURDAY 16
EXHIBITION OPENING
TMR a|s HUB: Páramo
The Mistake Room
1811 East 20th St.
tmr.la

SUNDAY 17
EVENT
Sunday with the Architect Tour: Split-Light House
11:00 a.m. & 12:00 p.m.
AIA Los Angeles
3780 Wilshire Blvd.
aialosangeles.org

THURSDAY 21
EVENT
8th Annual AEC Make the Connection
5:00 p.m.
Autodesk Gallery
One Market St.
San Francisco
aiaf.org

FRIDAY 22
FILM
Desert Maverick
7:30 p.m.
Architecture and Design Museum
900 East 4th St.
aplusd.org

EVENTS
Diamonds & Gold Tour: The Art Deco Skyscraper Northwest Style
10:00 a.m.
Dilettante Mocha Café
1310 Fouth Ave.
Seattle
seattlearchitecture.org

The Tenth Annual USC BIM Conference
8:00 a.m.
USC, School of Architecture
Taper Hall 101, 202
arch.usc.edu

SATURDAY 23
EXHIBITION OPENING
Oakland, I want you to know...
Oakland Museum of CA
1000 Oak St.
Oakland, CA
museumca.org

EVENT
The Amazing Race V
10:00 a.m.
SPUR Urban Center
654 Mission St.
San Francisco
spur.org



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART, ATLANTA, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

BARBARA KASTEN: STAGES
The Museum of Contemporary Art Pacific Design Center
8687 Melrose Avenue
Through August 14

The touring exhibition *Barbara Kasten: Stages* will arrive at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles this summer, following presentations at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia and the Graham Foundation in Chicago. The exhibition collects works from four decades in the artist's career, from the 1970s to present.

Barbara Kasten: Stages is the first major survey of the artist's work, incorporating her sculptures and photography with documentation of her artistic process. According to curator Alex Klein, "stages" refers both to the stages of the artist's career and her own process of staging sculptures in space.

The exhibition includes many of Kasten's most well-known photographs from the *Architectural Sites* series, in which she abstracted works of postmodern architecture, like Frank Gehry's Loyola Law School using an elaborate staging of light, sculpture, and mirrors and then printed them using the dye-destruction method Cibachrome for better depth of color and clarity. *Stages* will also include Kasten's work with cyanotypes, which use the same technique used to make blueprints, and her early work with furniture sculptures.

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The latest installment of Jorge Otero-Pailos's ongoing series *The Ethics of Dust* uses layers of latex to preserve the soot and grime found inside the chimney of the United States Mint in San Francisco.

GRIME TIME

Slow Dialogues: Space, Time, and Scale
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
San Francisco
Through July 31, 2016

In slow motion, lightweight forms descend from above to greet visitors to the opening of *Slow Dialogues: Time, Space, and Scale* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) in San Francisco.

Black-clad dancers grasp and tangle with the pliable and dynamic forms, opening them up, spreading them across the floor, nimbly interacting, transforming, and reforming the woven bamboo structures. These pieces featured in the group exhibit, *Traveling*

Geometry (2008–16), are the work of Dutch designer Maria Blaisse. Blaisse's current work carves out the space between architecture, sculpture, and performance, a unique amalgamation of simple materials, complex forms, and a sensitive awareness of balance and flow. As part of the larger exhibition's themes, Blaisse's work investigates the movement of both the forms within the larger space of YBCA and its specific location in the upstairs exhibition by curator

Carolyn Strauss, who organized this group show under the auspices of her Slow Research Lab, a Netherlands-based, multi-disciplinary research and curatorial platform.

Megumi Matsubara's *It Is a Garden* (2016), a site-specific piece developed exclusively for this exhibition and the YBCA, slowly and quietly proposes a meditative response to the Yerba Buena Gardens where the center is located. Her collection of photographs of local flora and mirrors reflect both visitors

and the interior space of the building. Matsubara's piece harkens back to Robert Smithson's *Photoworks* and engages the flexible upstairs corridor and main atrium space designed by Fumihiko Maki in a shifting context that involves both the spectator and the architecture in a new and original way of seeing. Through the doubling action of the mirror, the bystander and the surrounding space enter into a larger dialogue that slowly shifts between

dimensions, while the precisely-detailed, macro photographs of local flowers reinforce location, reminding the visitor of the soft, magical garden surrounding the hard walls and geometric architecture of the YBCA.

The final part of the group show is a spectacular latex cast of the old United States Mint created by Jorge Otero-Pailos as part of his ongoing series *The Ethics of Dust*. Layers upon layers of latex are actively gathered by Otero-Pailos's team as they extract the actual dirt and dust that has accumulated over time on the mint—materials that have become a part of the makeup and history of the building. What would normally be thought of as the opponent in the preservation process—the visible and unwanted pollution and grime of the building—becomes a thickened, draped, semi-translucent form echoing the multidimensional themes of the exhibit in phenomenological and poetic harmonies. Visitors pass between these “newly” hung walls of the existing building, walls that have been translated and dispossessed of their physicality.

Somewhere in the middle of painting, installation, and architecture, this series of experimental preservation artifacts is able to capture an unspoken essence, an architectural potential, and an environmental actuality with a deft hand and an elegant spirit of means and materiality. By cleaning the walls in this profoundly contrasting style to how traditional conservation would act to erase the traces of dirt, the passage of time and pollution are able to reveal an intrinsic truth concerning the aging process of buildings, allowing the copy, both interpretation and original, to move to the forefront.

Overall, *Slow Dialogues: Time, Space, and Scale* engages the viewer in contemporary conversations regarding the blurred lines between the disciplines of art and architecture in expressive and inspired moments of tension caught between the poetry of action and inaction, invisible and accumulated experiences, moments of human profundity and nature's ability to mark and trace man's perilous attempt to create meaning. Each protagonist in this exhibit is able to comment upon the universal themes of time, space, and scale in unique and specific ways marked upon by its individual style and ethos. As individuals they work at the boundaries and extremities of these disciplines, somewhat unknown voyagers chasing meaning and conventions to produce novel bodies of creation, integrating and investigating extraordinary themes through familiar yet destabilized versions of the what could be thought of as the original.

GREGORY HURCOMB IS AN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER, ARTIST, PROFESSOR, AND WRITER CURRENTLY LOCATED IN THE BAY AREA.



Otero-Pailos's latex cast creates a substantial, yet translucent form that echoes the multidimensional themes of the overall exhibition.



LEFT: GREGORY HURCOMB; RIGHT: CHARLIE VILLIARD/COURTESY YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS



Temple Buell's Broken Home

House Housing:
An Untimely History of Architecture and Real Estate
MAK Center at the Schindler House
April 9 – May 8, 2016

Billed as part of an ongoing, multiyear, multivenue and multiauthor "19 episode" blockbuster research project conducted by the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture at Columbia University, *House Housing: An Untimely History of Architecture and Real Estate* landed in L.A., a city facing an unprecedented housing shortage and a parallel homelessness crisis, with an unfortunate but predictable thud.

An impenetrable and arcane little book, *The Art of Inequality*, along with a well-organized and intelligent panel discussion, accompanied *House Housing's* Los Angeles's appearance. The panel was

moderated by the *Los Angeles Times's* architecture critic, Christopher Hawthorne, and included a witty, knowledgeable, and acerbic group: L.A. architect Julie Eisenberg, and San Diego-based academics Juliana Maxim and Andrew Wiese. The panel, as it turned out, was better than the show and the book combined because it was focused, relevant, and brief. If there is one broad criticism I might offer here it is this: The never-ending parade of traveling shows, publications, events, social media feeds, and inscrutable websites that now stand in for academic research and dedicated curatorial work has tanked.

And sadly, this effort seems to highlight the entire dilemma. What started in the mid-to-late '90s with the Harvard "Project on the City" and the Architectural Association of London's Design Research Laboratory as an attempt to realign architecture with reality, has now descended into a farce where loosely appropriated data and reality samples are presented as research—and petulant attacks on practitioners as political action. Forced to absorb a series of half-baked guest essays, use-less charts, graphs, meanly redrawn housing unit plans (what a waste of some poor grad student's time), and attacks on well-known octogenarian architects, the audience must somehow surmise that this is meaningful academic work. How dumb do the curators think the audience, professional or otherwise, really is? Is there an even an audience for this sort of work? Do the authors care if no one shows up?

Despite its appropriate setting, *House Housing* perfectly illustrates all that is wrong with these sort of airless engagements with the *realpolitik* of contemporary city-making by architects today. If the aim of the exhibition was to invite "scholars and practitioners to discuss how we might reframe our understanding of the relationships among architecture, housing, and real estate in light of the inequalities they both produce and reflect," the net effect is a misreading of the jujitsu-hold many practitioners

find themselves in as they attempt to negotiate the market forces that have been at work reformatting our cities since at least the dawn of the Reagan-Thatcher era. *House Housing* parades out real-estate and architectural-atrocity exhibits, "from architect-designed houses to prefabricated apartment blocks to suburban gated communities," presented less as a coherent analysis of the tragedy of housing inequality than as some sort of evidence of the intrepid academic's adventures in the "real city" wherein the desire, ambition, and greed of the inevitably evil developer class squash the dreams of the proletariat. Architecture, predictably, plays the role of the villain's guileless and dim-witted sidekick. Architects are caricatured as willing hand-maidens to the construction of socioeconomic injustice. "More than just a building type or a market sector," the editors argue, "housing is a primary architectural act—where architecture is understood as that which makes real estate real." An easy target like Frank Gehry ends up demonized for being part of market-rate development in New York and the author of an oddball suburban house renovation, while Bernard Tschumi, formerly a radical leftist and current dean emeritus at the Columbia GSAPP, gets no censure for the Blue Condominium housing tower on the Lower East Side—average sale price, \$1.5 million. One wonders, here,



ANDREA FRANCO COURTESY MAK CENTER

if the author-editors are even aware of their own biases.

It has to be stated that the entire effort is also very condescending. Once again we are offered that late-20th-century academic cliché, *Institutional Critique*, as an innovative model of cultural production. Instead of a more genuine or provocative proposal for redefining the role of architecture in city-making we are served up, yet again, the now-zombified *Standard Marxist Critique of State Capitalism*. As neoliberalism accelerates the transfer of urban control from a near-dead public sector to the hyper-advanced private sector, the best the authors can suggest is that if "architecture is imagined first and foremost as an investment...thinking and making it otherwise remains a fundamental, unmet challenge for our times." The political ambivalence of this statement reveals that the very academic tools used to draw attention to social inequality and architecture's role in its production fall far short of the potentially radical and ferocious work that will need to be done by architects on their discipline and the professional organizations, academies, museums, and research bodies that support them in order to change the situation. Nothing less than total outrage and focused action will address the social violence of radicalized

The ongoing, multiyear, multivenue, and multiauthor research project, *House Housing*, utilizes multimedia ephemera to showcase the running themes of housing production and commodification in a combined publication and exhibition.

poverty and its caustic effects on the 21st-century city.

What is required now of architecture, especially academic architecture, is not another retreading of the usual antagonisms. *Res ipsa loquitur*. The boring and never-ending Facebook-adjacent arguments around this year's Venice Architecture Biennale are primarily about mindless parametricist fundamentalism versus patronizing do-gooder fundamentalism. Who cares? Only the difficulty of real adversarial engagement, not fantasy critiques launched from the ivory tower at the profession, will further the conversation. Architecture will not advance one step as either a symbol of the one percent or as a tool of the other 99 percent; it must adapt and grow beyond its currently servile relationships with capital and/or community. What is required is nothing less than a wholesale attack on the discipline's stagnating orthodoxies, left and right.

PETER ZELLNER IS THE PRINCIPAL OF LOS ANGELES-BASED ZELLNER NAECKER ARCHITECTS.



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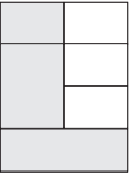
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Pacific Standard Time

West editor Antonio Pacheco sat down with Maristella Casciato, the new senior curator of architectural collections at the Getty Research Institute, to discuss her recent appointment. The position—left vacant for nearly three years after Wim De Witt's departure for Stanford University's Cantor Center for Visual Arts—puts Casciato at the helm of one of the most important research archives in the world.

Casciato, formerly the associate director of research at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, as well as a licensed architect and expert on 20th century European architecture, shared some of her goals for the GRI, including the pressing need to increase digitization efforts, the rising importance of postmodernism, and the value of cross-cultural pollination to the field of architecture.

The Architect's Newspaper: What do you see as your role as senior curator of architectural collections at the Getty Research Institute?

Casciato: For me, this is a research position, meaning that anything I'm engaging with here at GRI is part of a larger research process, including acquisitions.

It's important to consider what the GRI had in mind as an institution for the position when they hired me. They have been looking for someone who is fully embedded in the architecture world as a licensed architect, who understands architecture, and who can look at buildings as part of a particular discipline. They were also looking for an architectural historian, someone who can look at the possible relationship between architecture and history. Not someone who simply considers history as a tool for architecture, but who uses history as a way to expose architecture to many layers of understanding across time.

Tell us about your acquisition goals for the Getty's collection.

My idea is that we have to look at more than one beautiful drawing, because one beautiful drawing doesn't help us build a solid research center. One drawing, you can hang that on the wall for an exhibition, but who comes here for a single drawing? Scholars come if there is enough documentation to write a paper. So, my idea is to always look at the acquisition with relation to collecting complete records for a project—the papers, working drawings, the final drawings—because

if you hold on to some of these aspects of history, whoever is writing the history in the future will have it easier. You have to provide enough meat and bones to complete your narrative. That's our philosophy.

For example, one possible acquisition is a set of drawings by Eric Mendelsohn of a power station in Berkeley, California. We currently have a collection of Mendelsohn's papers in the special collection. [The GRI's existing collection] are not architectural projects, though, they are documents we received from his daughter—lectures, notes, and so on.

So, the requirement going forward for a new acquisition is first, that the documents relate to an architectural project and second, that project be one in the U.S. that will give us another perspective into Mendelsohn's work. Mendelsohn is someone who has worked in Europe, of course, then he went to Israel, and he came to the U.S. He's someone who has lived his life as an immigrant architect. [The Berkeley power station project] is a project that happened toward the end of his life with a very interesting brief: It's a nuclear lab in Berkeley. It's part of a very important plan in the U.S. that happened in the middle of the Cold War, where the nuclear research was still extremely relevant and several architects were involved in a program.

In another case, I was recently discussing a portfolio of 12 photographs taken as part of a survey by Princeton University students of the National Arts School in Havana, Cuba, with a colleague who questioned why these documents were a priority for our acquisition. My response was that these photographs are an important form of documentation of this incredible architecture. This is a place where architecture needs to be documented. It's not an issue of aesthetics here, it's an issue of recognizing the value of certain buildings in Cuba that represent an immense effort in terms of technique, such as the vaulting, the brickwork, and the forms. Those buildings have represented such an effort in making architecture valuable in Havana that we have to document that phenomenon, period. These buildings might be restored, they might disappear; we need to have this documentation.

Is the exhibition, *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA* starting up again?

Yes, we are also working on a research project for PST on photographs of 19th century Latin America at the end of the

colonization era, as many of those countries were becoming republics. We have photographs from Argentina, Cuba, and Brazil; it's incredible documentation that shows how some Latin American cities became metropolises as they entered the 20th century. It will be an exhibition specifically on late 19th century and early 20th century urban planning that looks at how the new cities developed with leisure becoming a new component of urbanism: the new infrastructure, the new parks, the developments of certain port cities, and so on. São Paulo, for example, was a small city until the coffee boom of the 19th century when it became the modern place we know today. Looking at those transformations will cover a gap between the very incredible Spanish colonial period and the 20th century depicted in the [2015] MoMA show (*Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955–1980*), which covered the modernist city. What happened in between?

So is the broader absorption and appropriation of modernism something that interests you?

Yes, but cultural transfer goes both ways. My earlier research relates to when Europeans were exploring what was considered the "known" Western world and what I've seen is that they received culture too. It's a concept that has been used in other disciplines like sociology, but it is not fully understood within architecture. For younger PhD students, this idea of cultural transfer is a way to enter a multidisciplinary and a multicultural approach. So, for the Latin American exhibition, we are looking at this transfer in both directions because locals interpret it in one way and the foreigners in another, but there are examples where the two transfers come back together and that's one of the things that makes Latin America so interesting.

Also, being in Los Angeles, we are in the best position to look toward the Pacific. Australia, as part of the British Empire, looks to the west, but from here in L.A., we can look east to Australia and Japan, but also the Philippines and Indonesia. If we understand this as an encounter between the west and the Pacific, it could be an interesting way of reconsidering this idea of cultural transfer. And Los Angeles could be the center of this new process.

Modernism is an important part Los Angeles's history, but increasingly, postmodernism is being re-evaluated in terms of its architectural-historical significance. How do you think

that is going to play into what you do here?

Los Angeles, for postmodernists, was the most fruitful ground. The issue is that postmodernism here is not one pediment or column; it's a very ludic architecture and it's very valuable. I've noticed that PhD students are more and more interested in postmodernism and I think we would be very interested in increasing our postmodern collections. I visited the offices of Jon Jerde, who designed Horton Plaza in San Diego, and thought, "This might be very interesting as an acquisition." Victor Gruen was so important in establishing the idea of the mall, but postmodern architects made this mall not a closed box, but an open, civic space. And this is an important shift that we need to think about, so I would really value having some of these experiments in our collection.

LACMA was recently gifted John Lautner's Sheats Goldstein Residence. How does the GRI view having an actual building as a part of its collection, as opposed to collecting only building documentation?

I think there is a big difference in approach between a museum that collects items and a research institute. Here, for example, the Getty Conservation Institute works very closely with the Eames House, but that's because there is an Eames Foundation who is overseeing the restoration. I don't think for GRI it's so important to own these kinds of artifacts, to make sure that, for instance, the Eames House is preserved, conserved, and properly restored—there's an Eames Foundation, they can deal with that. For us, it's more important to understand that the documentation is well preserved (which allows the Eames Foundation to do its job). I'm glad LACMA is taking the house, but for me, it's more important to keep archives, like we do for the Lautner Foundation, and allow scholars to come and work.

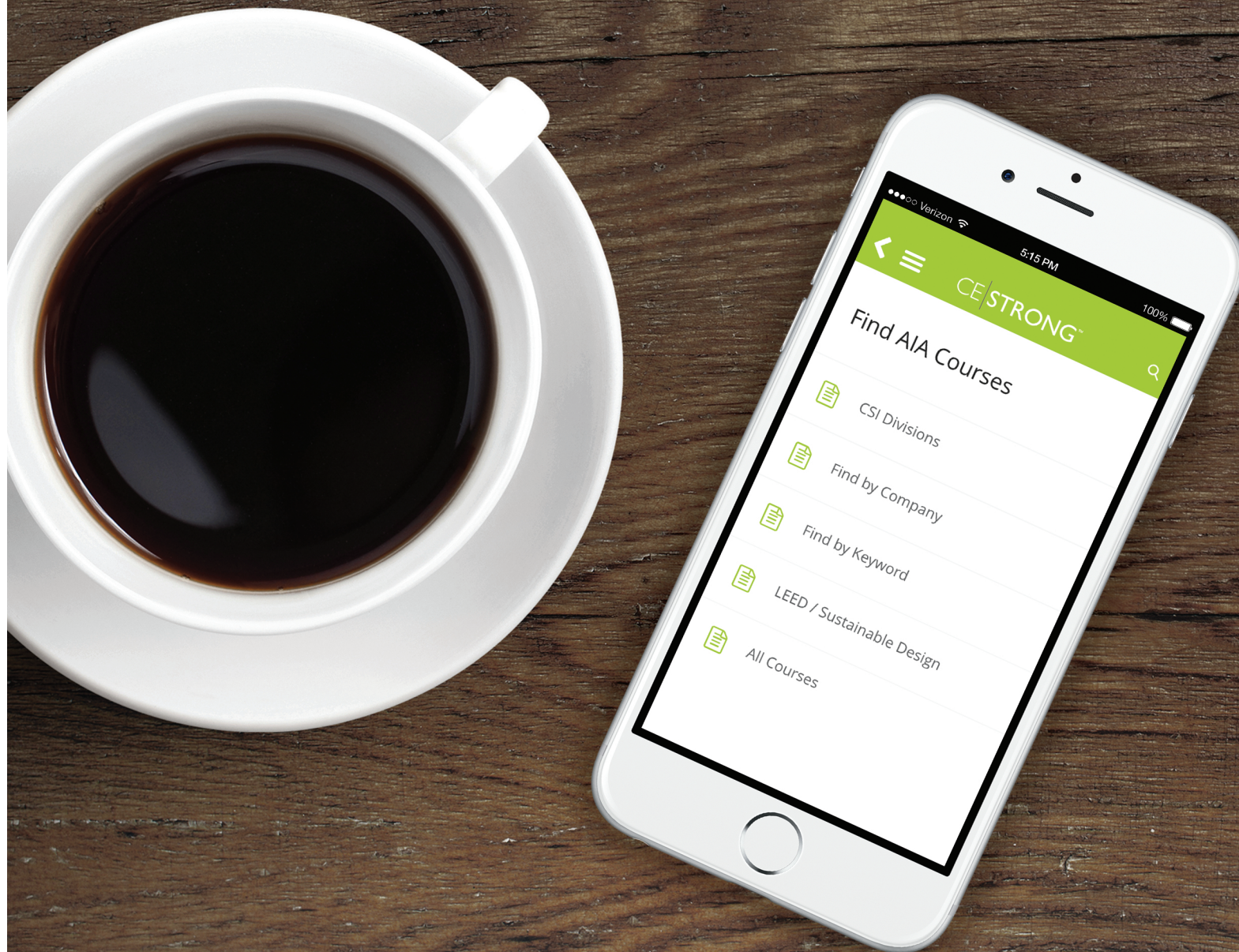
Documents conservation is a big issue with architecture; digitalization, to make architecture available everywhere else, is a big issue. Our digitization project is one of my major priorities. We need to digitize as much as possible so that people, if they cannot come here, can have access to these archives. Foundations can't really do this because they need devices, climate control, and the skill of the conservators who can make sure the drawings can be properly kept, etc. I think this is our major mission.

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