

# THE MIDWEST ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

## 02 02.19.2014

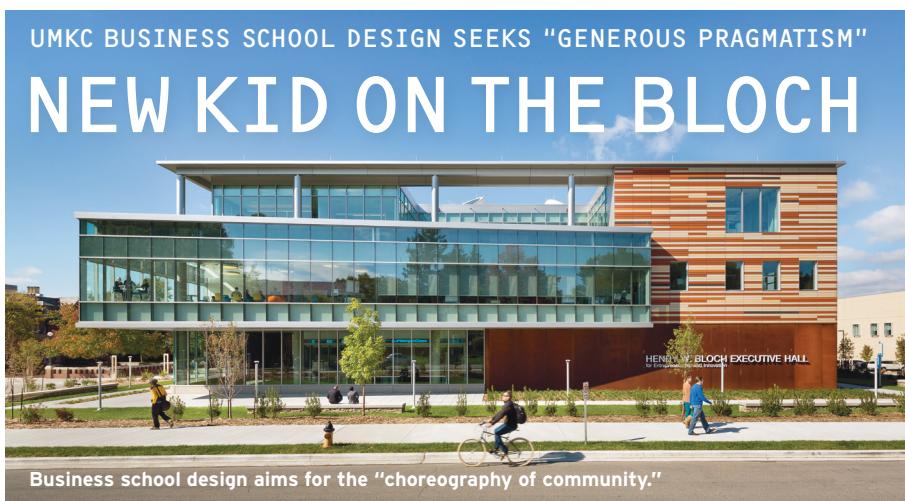
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In 2001, an electrical fire ravaged St. Louis' National Memorial Church of God in Christ, destroying all of the historic structure except for its perimeter walls. Rebuilding the interior from scratch was not possible. Instead, as part of a broader plan to revitalize the Grand Center neighborhood, a local nonprofit hired New York-based Gluckman

Mayner Architects to help local architects John C. Guenther and Powers Bowersox resurrect the ruins. The congregation sold the Spring Avenue property to the nonprofit Grand Center. Since the fire, the church has played host to a series of installations. German artists Rainer Kehres and **continued on page 2**



The Bloch School of Management at the University of Missouri-Kansas City recently doubled its campus footprint with the opening of the highly contextual Henry W. Bloch Executive Hall for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Bloch School Dean Teng-kee Tan will tell you there's no building like it among business schools, positioned not in a specific discipline like marketing, but rather

in the flux of Kansas City's entrepreneurial past and future. "Corporations like American Century Investments, Bushnell, Hallmark, and H&R Block, which produced the school's chief benefactor, are Kansas City's startup legacy," said Dean Tan. It follows that the institution would want to capitalize on these success stories. **continued on page 5**

ABANDONED KANSAS CITY MALL SITE SLATED FOR TECH CAMPUS

## Hitting Reset

Last month, Zane Burke, the CEO of healthcare information technology giant Cerner, announced his company's big bet on Kansas City. Cerner, he said, would build a new complex dubbed the Three Trails Campus made up of 11 office buildings over 4.1 million square feet. The \$4.3 billion project is located on 237 acres at I-435 and Bannister Road on the site of the long stalled Bannister Mall redevelopment site. Cerner has been at the forefront of the medical record digitization movement.

At full build-out in 2024, the campus plan, designed by Kansas City-based firm Gould Evans Architecture, will be the site of 15,000 new jobs and include a 75,000-square-foot daycare center, two data centers, a service **continued on page 4**

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The last high-rise building of Chicago's Cabrini-Green housing projects fell in 2011, leaving only row homes and several dozen acres of vacant land as a testament to both the promise of midcentury public housing

initiatives, and the challenges that ultimately doomed many of them.

Now the Chicago Housing Authority has released draft redevelopment plans for the series of near **continued on page 3**



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## WANT TO IMMIGRATE TO THE U.S.? HOW ABOUT DETROIT?

At the end of January, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder laid out the latest plan to save the city of Detroit: welcome 50,000 new immigrants, tying special U.S. visas to a commitment to live and work in Motor City for five years. The EB-2 visas would go to an initial 5,000 immigrants, expanding to 15,000 by the final year of the five-year plan. These green cards are typically awarded to immigrants with advanced degrees, or "exceptional ability" in the sciences, arts, or business. "Isn't that how we made our country great, through immigrants?" said Snyder. "Detroit is open to the world."

This plan to "jump start" perennially struggling Detroit is worth considering. But it's not without its faults. Detroit's population has fallen to 700,000 residents from 1.8 million in the 1950s—50,000 immigrants would not even be one quarter of the people who have left the city since 2000. Facing population loss unparalleled in the U.S., apart from post-Katrina New Orleans, it would seem that any feasible plan to turn Detroit's fortunes around needs to be big, even unusual. Snyder's plan certainly is, and it has generated a lot of controversy in turn.

Some have called it "Afro-dilution"—a disenfranchisement of the existing population, which is predominantly African-American. In Detroit, where the scars of white flight and past race riots run deep, Snyder's grand proposal may come off as a vote of no-confidence in those who have stuck it out and tried painstakingly to rebuild their home. It will amount to as much if the call for immigrants is meant to resurrect the city's devastated jobs market by itself. We need to know what Snyder and others will do with the tax base they hope to grow with new immigrants, if the plan works.

Some 38 percent of Detroiters live below the poverty line, more than a quarter of a million of them black, and an influx of new entrepreneurs won't address the underlying reasons for that injustice. Those challenges are tied to what keeps away many people who could move to Detroit already, without an EB-2 visa—current and future Detroiters (wherever they arrive from) need to be sure the governor and others are investing in the city, not hoping eager outsiders will solve those problems by themselves.

But as an appeal to the quintessentially American values of social mobility and reinvention, Snyder's vision is attractive. Why shouldn't Detroit try something bold, instead of merely patching over its most recent bruises, emerging hobbled from bankruptcy?

Detroit is not the only Midwestern city looking to turn the tide of long-term job and population loss by looking abroad. If it works there, why not in Youngstown? Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel said last year he had seen "up-close the vital contributions immigrants make to our economy." Every year one half of all new Chicago businesses are started by immigrants, Emanuel wrote in a *Sun-Times* editorial.

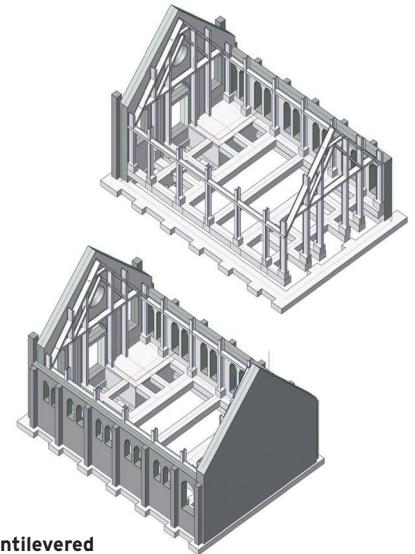
Would it work? Enforcing site-specific visas could prove difficult, but it is not without precedent. Canada does this within provinces. We track employment tied to many visas already, and run loan forgiveness programs tied to public service jobs—the requirement for Detroit could be proof of homeownership, or an annual piece of paperwork. The program as proposed would be unusual, but it can be done without the absurd, dystopian visions of those envisioning giant fences lining city limits.

To some the move is an end-run. Fix problems at home, they say, for Americans already in dire straits. But if Snyder's supporters are right to say the successes of native-born and new Americans reinforce one another, then we need not pit current citizens against immigrants.

Perhaps the whole discussion is an incitement to federal action on immigration. Snyder wants President Barack Obama to grant the EB-2s through executive action, bypassing the doldrums of Congress. The Senate passed an immigration reform bill last year, but the House of Representatives has fumbled repeatedly.

Detroit needs a lot of things. Immigration is one of them—five percent of Detroit's population is foreign-born, which is less than the state average and less than half the national average—whether it is through administrative schemes like Governor Snyder's or legislative reform.

CHRIS BENTLEY



Cantilevered structural steel frame.

GLUCKMAN MAYNER

## BORN AGAIN continued from front page

Sebastian Hungerer stitched together pieces of old lamps donated by neighbors, constructing a scaffolding that served as a roof for the Spring Avenue church. They named the piece "CHORUS."

With a bit of restoration work, Gluckman Mayner Principal Richard Gluckman said the church could become a permanent space for public art and recreation. They plan to touch up some of the stone, and replace the structure's wide flange shoring with something "more detailed and less intrusive," said Gluckman. But the design team is not going to replace the roof or restore any interiors. "It's intended to be a ruin, basically. A restructured ruin," he added. "It's memorializing a moment in time, and providing a public amenity."

Temporary diagonal bracing holds up the walls now, but the plan is to replace that with a cantilevered structural steel frame that could also serve as a trellis for climbing vines and other plants. The design lowers the threshold of the original church windows along the north wall to meet the new ground plane of stone and gravel.

More park and public art gallery than building, the church could become part of the infrastructure of the Grand Center arts and culture district. "It's sort of a tabula rasa for clever art installations," said Gluckman. One such installation is an acoustic work by Ann Hamilton that emits "music that once filled the site" through 36 in-ground speakers.

A historic and predominantly African-American neighborhood in midtown St. Louis, Grand Center is rife with vacant land, but also theaters and a vibrant art scene. The Spring Avenue church project is a soft-spoken addition to the larger cultural district, intended to support chance meetings and creative installations. "It's this unusual combo of landscape architecture, architectural fragment, and artwork," said Gluckman. "In some ways it's more accessible because it's un-programmed space."

Most of the site is an open lawn. Monitored cameras and minimal architectural lighting could provide security for the 24-hour park, but the designers are wary of overloading the space. They have not determined if the church itself will remain open at night. The project won an AIA St. Louis Award of Merit last year. Still seeking funds both public and private, the team hopes to start construction this year.

CB

## LETTER

## RIGHT ON!

I read the article, "A Manifesto from the Architecture Lobby" (Protest ANMW 01\_01.22.2014) and found every single word applicable to my own situation and my own firm. While we architects enjoy the perceived honor of our profession, it undermines the vocation's viability as an occupation versus a good hobby.

I find the advocacy of professional organizations representing architects to be exceedingly timid and ineffective.

Architecture has no fundamental infrastructure for compensation, working conditions, or our own personal schedule. Someone who has to take a blueprint reading course in order to understand construction documents complains that the drawings took more than five business days to finish.

We have, unfortunately, created our own vicious circle. The less we feel that we must charge for our fees, the quicker the client feels that the job should take to

complete. I submit that the initial goal of the Architecture Lobby should be the creation of a standardized schedule of time allotted for various projects and the corresponding payment for such work.

I bid you "Onward" in your pursuits!

CHARLES ROIG  
ROIG ASSOCIATES  
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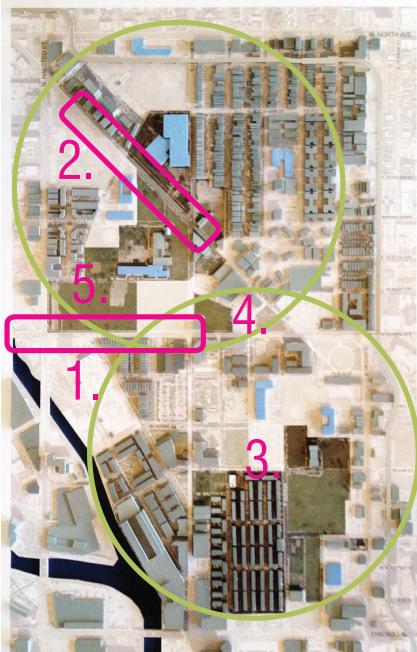
I'LL SHOW YOU MINE IF YOU SHOW ME YOURS

Eavesdrop attended the opening of **William J. O'Brien's** mid-career solo show at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago. 2014 is shaping up to be a strong one for Chicago-based artists, with this show clearly thrusting O'Brien into the upper echelon. On its heels, Chicago will have a disproportionate—in a good way—presence in this year's Whitney Biennial. The Biennial will be the last in the **Marcel Breuer** building before the museum relocates downtown to new digs by **Renzo Piano**. Y'all, all this spotlight on our local talent means that if you haven't already collected work from these folks, you're S.O.O.L. Eavesdrop seriously regrets not scooping up a work on paper from O'Brien years ago when we could've maybe—stress maybe—afforded it. Eaves loves to read the accession and loaner info listed on the museum labels and, given their impeccable design aesthetic, it was no surprise to see the names of **Dirk Denison** and his partner, **David Salkin**, listed as the owners of several of the pieces included in the MCA show. Dirk, if you read this, please invite us over to peep your art collection and we'll bring something nice to sip on!

BIG OL' WATER-LOGGED BUCKET OF FORECLOSURE

Social media was abuzz recently over the reports by eavesdrop, the *WSJ*, and other major papers about the biggest recession scab over Chicago: the failed Spire designed by **Santiago Calatrava**. That Irish pie in the sky developer apparently found someone to bail the project out of its foreclosure. Everyone was all, "It's back on!" Dear readers, until they start pumping the water out of the big hole in the ground, Eavesdrop is betting against this one.

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1. Mixed-use/retail on Division. 2. Mixed-use on Clybourn. 3. Low- and mid-rise residential. 4. Connectivity. 5. Supportive services.

North Larrabee Street, as well as additions to two existing parks in the southeast section of the redevelopment area. Some of that increase would come from a reduction of Stanton Park, for a net addition of 4.96 acres of Chicago Park District space.

CHA's plan for the remaining land aims for "a sustainable mixed income / mixed use community," but details will not surface until after a request for proposals from developers is issued on April 1.

The Cabrini-Green redevelopment plan comes amid controversy surrounding the agency's sluggish progress on delivering 25,000 apartments as part of its tear down and rebuild plan—a goal it set in 2000. The deadline was 2010, now extended to 2015.

Housing advocates have slammed CHA for sitting on as much as \$661 million in taxpayer money—an amount CHA says is actually \$315 million, not counting future receivables—while affordable housing waiting lists grow. CHA says the housing market crash disrupted plans to spend the federal money, which has been accumulating at a greater rate than the agency has been spending it for years. Officials have said they plan to build 586 units this year.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel's administration released its first five-year plan for housing, the city's fifth since 1994, in January. Dubbed "Bouncing Back," its proposals include unloading some of the 8,000 vacant residential parcels that the city owns, and accelerating the micro-market recovery program aimed at stabilizing neighborhoods hit hard by the foreclosure crisis. Titles of previous five-year plans specifically address "affordable" housing—a word missing for the first time from this plan's title. But CHA maintains in the draft plan that private development provides the bulk of Chicago's affordable housing.

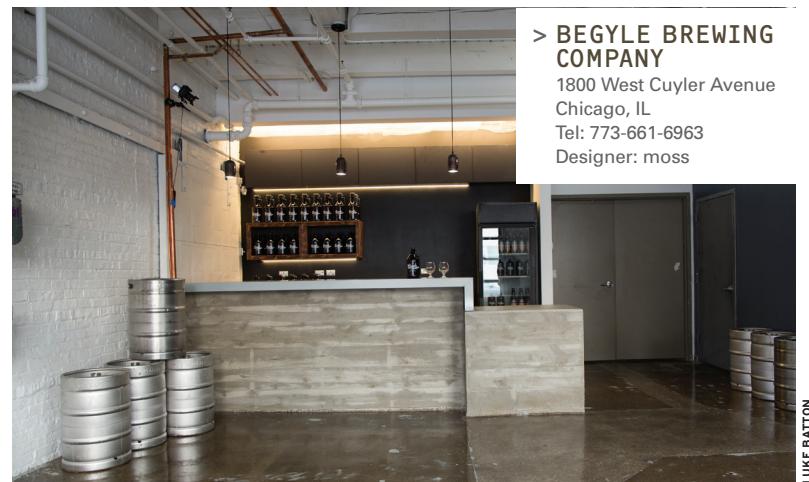
In 2013, CHA launched a new strategic initiative, Plan Forward: Communities That Work, which reaffirmed its commitment to redevelop or replace 25,000 subsidized housing units by 2015. Cabrini Green could be part of that push, but CHA representatives said it is too early to tell how much of the area's new development will serve low-income residents. **CB**

**CABRINI GREENER?** continued from front page North Side parcels, which total over 65 acres, calling for mixed-use, mixed-income development, about five acres of new parks, and a new 'L' Brown Line stop at Division and Orleans Streets. The plan targets LEED certification for neighborhood development.

Since a working group of architects, planners, and city officials began studies for the Near North Redevelopment Initiative in the 1990s, buildings have begun to fill in the sites. Last year, Target opened a 150,000-square-foot store on the corner of North Larrabee and West Division streets. Not far away is Helmut Jahn's Near North SRO and a slew of mid- to high-rise condos and rentals that have tapped into the lucrative real estate markets of surrounding neighborhoods like Old Town and River North.

The National Park Service deemed the remaining Frances Cabrini Row Homes eligible for listing on its National Register of Historic Properties in 1994. Of the 583 housing units within the site, 146 have been rehabilitated, while the rest are vacant. The redevelopment plan recommends the demolition of 18 existing row homes to make way for an extension of the nearby street grid, but preserves about 30 percent of the historic properties.

It also calls for a new 4.42-acre park at the corner of West Blackhawk Avenue and



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Designer: moss

Located in the Ravenswood Industrial Corridor, Begyle Brewing's "Community Supported Brewery" membership program has a farm share's local focus. Members head to the beer co-op to fill growlers with Begyle's micro-brewed suds on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis.

"Our goal was to create an inviting space that would encourage people stopping in to pick up a beer share to linger and taste, and return with friends," said Della Hansmann of Chicago-based architecture studio moss. That meant imparting a clean design without airbrushing the worn-in charm of the new 600-square-foot tasting room. The designers epoxied the existing concrete floor to keep its pattern of stains and spills under a cleanable surface, and repainted exposed plumbing pipes. Not everything in the 5,000-square-foot brewery was preserved. An unsightly garage door was swapped out for a new glass overhead door that lets in natural light and engages the street.

The Kickstarter-funded brewers—Matt Ritchey, Kevin Cary, and Brendan Blume—plan to run a zero-waste facility, and are looking for non-landfill uses for all of their beer's byproducts. The tasting room design features shelves (sized to hold Begyle's custom growlers) made from scrap wood found on site. Pendant lights made from old helium tank caps hang over the bar. Even the design itself is community-supported, in a sense—over time, splashes of beer should oxidize the zinc-topped bar, adding more patina to the existing scars of the building's long industrial history. **CB**

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**HITTING RESET** continued from front page center, and 370,000 square feet of retail. The Kansas City Council approved \$1.63 billion in tax incentives for the project. Flanked by Missouri Governor Jay Nixon and Kansas City Mayor Sly James at a January 17 press conference, Zane said, "The project will serve as the hub of innovation to improve the healthcare and wellness of the communities we serve."

The final assembly of the land needed for the project, estimated at \$44 million, occurred in December 2013. The first of 14 phases has already begun at the site with final demolition now completed and grading to commence this Spring. The first phase of the project will include 578,000 square feet of office space in two new buildings and the service center. The first phase will create 2,260 new jobs. "To say this project is a big deal is an understatement," said Missouri Governor Jay Nixon. "This project is transformative and a defining moment for this region and the state."

The old Bannister Mall site has a storied past of starts and stops and has been a community eyesore for nearly a decade until it finally closed in 2007. Once the proposed site of Major League Soccer Champions Sporting Kansas City (then the Kansas City Wizards), whose owners include Cerner executives, the project is a homecoming of

sorts. Just south of the project is Cerner's 235,000-square-foot Innovation Campus. "This project has already made a significant impact in our community, and it signals the rejuvenation of retail services in South Kansas City," said 6<sup>th</sup> District Kansas City Councilman John Sharp, who represents the area and lives near the site.

Hickman Mills School District has already received \$6 million to upgrade science and technology learning, and the neighborhoods adjacent to the site have received \$2 million for various neighborhood beautification and cleanup projects as part of the development agreement.

The project is one of several large projects announced in South Kansas City in the last few months. Another large property owner just west of I-435 from the Cerner project has announced a new health sciences and research office park, entitled Oxford on the Blue, and the federal government announced plans this winter for the full cleanup and remediation of the soon-to-close Bannister Federal Complex.

"This is the beginning of a great turnaround story in South Kansas City," said Sharp.

While Gould Evans designed the master plan, no architect has yet been selected for the first phase of construction, which is expected to be completed in 2016.

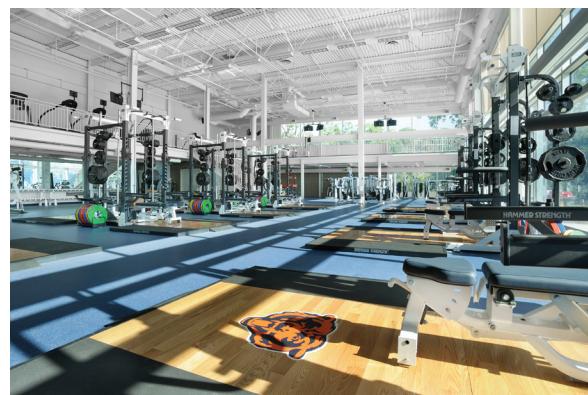
**GUNNAR HAND**

NEW TRAINING FACILITY FOR THE CHICAGO BEARS BUILDS ON HISTORY

## DA BEARS



Team updates its training facility to fit a changing NFL.



The Midway, which is replete with Bears memorabilia. The architects hired Chicago Scenic Studios to help design three 8-foot-tall computer displays with access to the team's archives, which date back to the franchise's founding in 1920.

The space is not open to the public, unless they are invited by The Bears administration. Preves said some participants who have joined the team in a recent push to expand volunteerism have visited since the project's completion earlier this year. Corporate partners like Nike take advantage of the new event room for meetings, as well as a skybox that overlooks the practice area. The archives also help the team woo prospective players.

Light pours through a double-height eastern-facing window in the new weight room. "Players tend to lift and work out in the morning," said Preves. A glassy staircase connecting the multiple levels of the Midway also conveys light. "We're trying to bring as much light and transparency from up above to down below." Almost every room received updated technology—namely video teleconferencing equipment, and internet connectivity improvements for use by sports journalists, staff, and NFL representatives.

**CB**

The business of football goes far beyond the gridiron, as the Chicago Bears learned when they hired Richard Preves & Associates to expand Halas Hall, its Lake Forest training facility. "The NFL has changed over the years. It's much more marketing-driven, much more branding-driven than before," said firm president Richard Preves.

The expansion added

32,000 square feet to the 100,000-square-foot structure and remodeled more than 40,000 square feet of the interior. Much of that is new office space, in response to the growing demand for marketing, branding, and community outreach positions that have become the norm in professional football. The centerpiece of the expansion is a three-story lobby dubbed



LEFT: JAMES EWING, MIDDLE AND RIGHT: MIKE SINCLAIR

**NEW KID ON THE BLOCH** continued from front page

Four years ago, at the behest of Dean Tan, co-designers BNIM and MRY Architects and Planners set a course for a new management school building steeped in the pedagogy of “learning-by-doing.” A guiding light for the project was Dean Tan’s pronouncement that “innovation is never a straight line.” The building’s circle-within-a-box construction, adjustable interiors, unexpected sightlines, and great transparency give credence to the crooked line. So does the site plan: The Bloch Executive Hall is strung along a North-South axis with the off-centered old Bloch School building and a meandering approach

up Marion H. Bloch Park’s “path of innovation.”

The Bloch Executive Hall tries to meet spontaneous and interactive programmatic demands by erasing rigid interiors and promoting “choreography of community,” as architect Buzz Yudell of MCY posits. BNIM’s Steve McDowell, the project lead, takes a similar turn of phrase in discussing the structure’s “generous pragmatism—that what a building does matters as much as how it looks.” That balance is evident in the facility’s graceful footing, “light and celebratory” interiors with a sensible amount of technological add-ons, and its amplification of community.

The 68,000-square-foot facility

has the requisite classrooms and offices, but some possess moveable floors that can add or subtract tiers based on teaching needs. Several “labs” (innovation, finance, prototyping, etc.) stand in for conventional learning spaces. Bloch’s 202-seat auditorium is also no black box—its surfaces and exposures invite “glorious warm yellow reflective light off of the nearby student union,” according to McDowell. “We didn’t cover up anything that could be beautiful,” he said.

The Bloch Executive Hall also features a seldom seen hybrid precast envelope that fuses terra cotta to concrete, boosting thermal mass and cost-effectiveness under a relatively tight capital budget of

\$32 million. The aesthetic payoff is exposed concrete in the interior and delicate red and yellow paneling in the curtain wall—a coloring strategy that distills the community’s predominant building types over the last century, especially important since the west side of campus has never read as institutional.

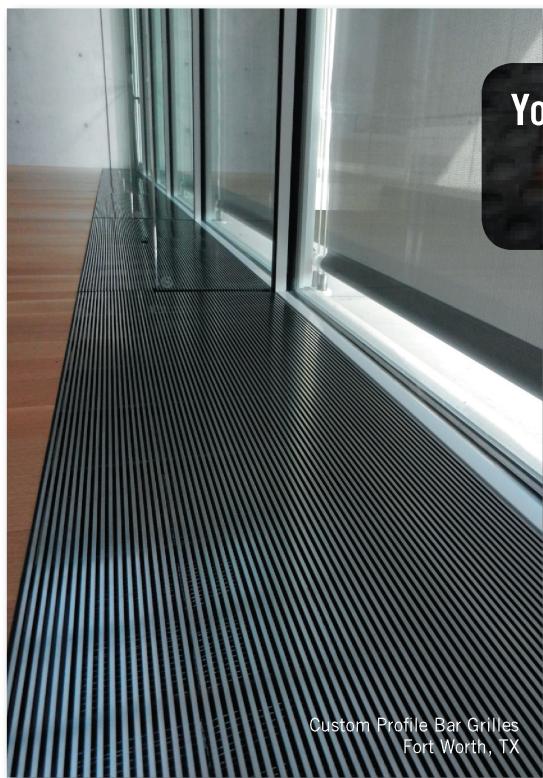
A favorite design element of both architects is the three-story atrium that cuts an uneven path to the roof, resulting in floor overhangs, misshapen balconies, and a ton of interplay. The atrium’s three conical skylights ensure a progression from crisp morning beams to diffuse evening saturation.

“The overlay of levels creates a dynamic creative environment

**The University of Missouri-Kansas City’s school of management recently doubled its campus footprint.**

and a sense of discovery through syncopated geometry and lighting,” notes Yudell. “It never feels the same at different points in the day or times of year.”

Dean Tan credits the new Henry W. Bloch Executive Hall in part for the school’s No.1 global ranking in innovation management research, per the Journal of Product Innovation Management. There is no doubt the architecture has the ability to spur new traditions in academic design. As Yudell put it, newness is usually “more evolutionary than revolutionary.” **IAN SPULA**



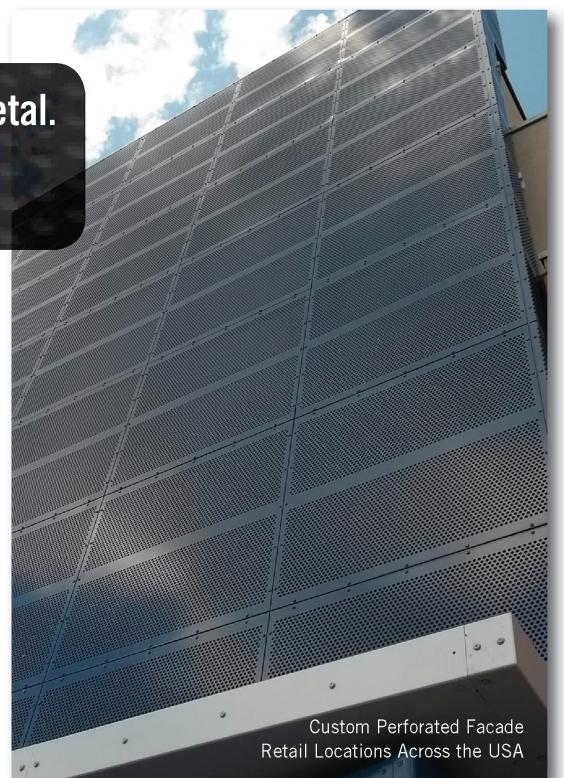
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER FEBRUARY 19, 2014

DESIGNER: CUNINGHAM GROUP ARCHITECTURE



A healthcare technology giant in Wisconsin draws on its pastoral setting, redefining the term "server farm."

Cunningham Group Architecture drew inspiration from Wisconsin's agrarian roots to design a new facility at healthcare software developer Epic Systems' headquarters south of Madison. "It got to be quite literal," said principal John Cunningham.

"The Farm," which is the third installment at Epic's sprawling 950-acre campus, is replete with barn, machine shed, and stable themed buildings that house nearly 1,000 offices. The 319,000-square-

foot facility bridges the region's centuries-old agricultural traditions and its burgeoning technology sector. "I like the contrast between the natural agrarian world and the high-tech world," said Cunningham. "We thought we would design a farm building, one that would be fun to be in. We'd do high-tech stuff in a barn."

Amalgamating two industries separated by more than a century of progress presented a familiar challenge: designing a workspace

that is both functional and fun. The design team began with a number of guiding principals. The buildings stand three stories tall and each feature fewer than 300 offices. The smaller scale accommodates both form and function: the structures do not dwarf the rural landscape, and employees spend less time in transit. "You're trying to make an efficient workspace on one hand, and you're trying to fit it into a form that it fits into really well into in some cases—and in other cases

you end up with sort of quirky forms under a barn roof that make for very interesting-looking offices," said Cunningham.

The team embraced the slanted walls and windows that resulted from the pitched roof, but functionality required compromise in other areas. The Farm's barn and shed buildings, for example, feature more windows than their agrarian antecedents, to flooding the workspace with natural light.

The barn is partitioned into a

creamery, a farmhouse, and traditional barn space. The project includes whimsical agrarian accents: electric blue model cows and a pig flying from the hayloft contrast porch swings and milk jugs placed throughout. Offices in the farmhouse are modeled after rural 19<sup>th</sup>-century décor. A replica chain-driven hay elevator flanks a staircase made from reclaimed barn wood that has been screen printed to look like hay. A covered bridge mingled with model sheep and outdoor seating pavilions connects the barn and machine shed. "All of the campuses are connected either by tunnel or skyway; mostly by tunnel because we like it to be as unobtrusive as possible," said Cunningham.

A dissected tractor and portraits of Wisconsin farms cover the walls of the machine shed. Color themes match those of farm implement manufacturers. Offices in the stable are modeled after horse pens. Nameplates are winner's ribbons pinned to each door. A stair railing is modeled after starting blocks at a horse race track.

Reverse engineering was used to conceptualize the themed accents.

The team asked itself what would be in a normal barn or stable, said Cunningham, and then wrapped those details around the core components of the workspace. Sustainable design elements like daylighting, photovoltaics, and geothermal heating and cooling promote operational efficiencies and functionality. Noise-deafening materials used on the ceilings, floors, and walls foster employee productivity. Offices are also partitioned to prevent distractions. "It's eerily quiet, almost. People are working in their individual offices and speak in whispers. It's not because they have to, but because a normal voice in the hallway sounds like a yell," said Cunningham. "It's active, but it's quiet."

The vastness of the campus presented another challenge. Underground parking cuts the facility's footprint in half and allows increased employee access. The contrast between the themed campuses—one preexisting campus is outer space themed and the other is African themed—wakes the senses. "The abrupt change is something we like. We don't try to soften that," said Cunningham.

**AARON MARTIN**

#### RESOURCES:

##### Stone

Vetter Stone  
vetterstone.com

##### Architectural metal panels

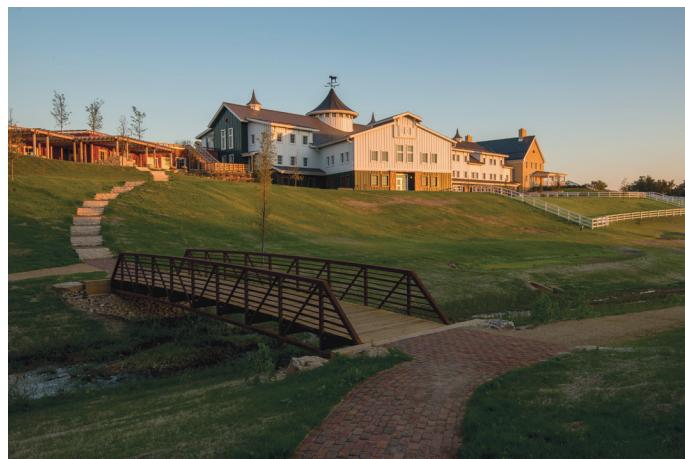
Interstate Roofing  
interstate-roofing.com

##### Concrete

JH Findorff & Son, Inc.  
findorff.com

##### Millwork

Wisconsin Built  
wisconsin-built.com





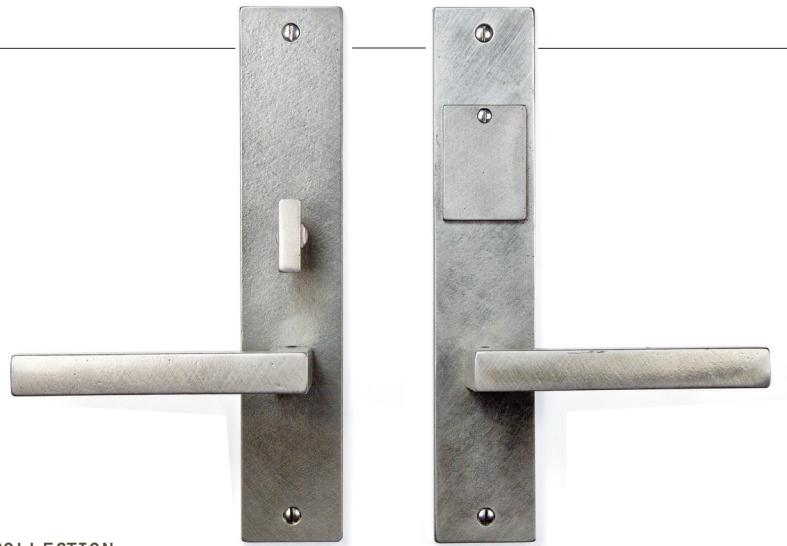
RAILINGS HARDWARE  
CARVART

A unique system of concealed fasteners for various applications—from top mounted to countersunk point fittings—is designed to support CARVART's glass offerings. Rigid and durable stainless steel, bronze, and aluminum elements can be customized with satin or brushed finishes, powder coatings, or oil rubs. [carvart.com](http://carvart.com)



IN120 WI-FI LOCK  
ASSA ABLOY

Corbin Russwin and SARGENT brands' wireless electronic lock can interface with existing IT systems and a range of access control systems. Customizable from a kit of parts, the lock includes features to facilitate operation regardless of network status, and privacy and lockdown modes for both cylindrical and mortise lock designs. [assaabloy.com](http://assaabloy.com)



NOVUS COLLECTION  
SUN VALLEY BRONZE

Sun Valley Bronze's Novus Collection of mortise-lock entry sets features a slim, 2-inch faceplate with no visible hub, a square key cover, and the company's modern Elle lever. Its white bronze construction boasts 93 percent pre-consumer recycled copper, manganese, nickel, and zinc elements for a nickel hue. [sunvalleybronze.com](http://sunvalleybronze.com)



FUTURA 3110  
GKD METAL FABRICS

This stainless steel metal mesh is ideal for interior and exterior applications, such as balustrades, screens, and space dividers. Woven for flexibility in one direction, the product weighs just less than 2 pounds-per-square-foot and is 0.37 inches thick. Its 65 percent open area makes it ideal for sun shading applications. [gkdmetailfabrics.com](http://gkdmetailfabrics.com)



CONCEPTA 25/30/50  
HAWA

A uniquely engineered pivot-slide hardware system facilitates bi-folding glass and wood pocket doors as wide as 9 feet. Guiding tracks produce gaps of 20 mm from floor to door, and 40 mm from door to ceiling. Doors are flush with the wall when closed. An aluminum fascia conceals hinges when open doors are tucked into the cabinet. [hawa.ch](http://hawa.ch)

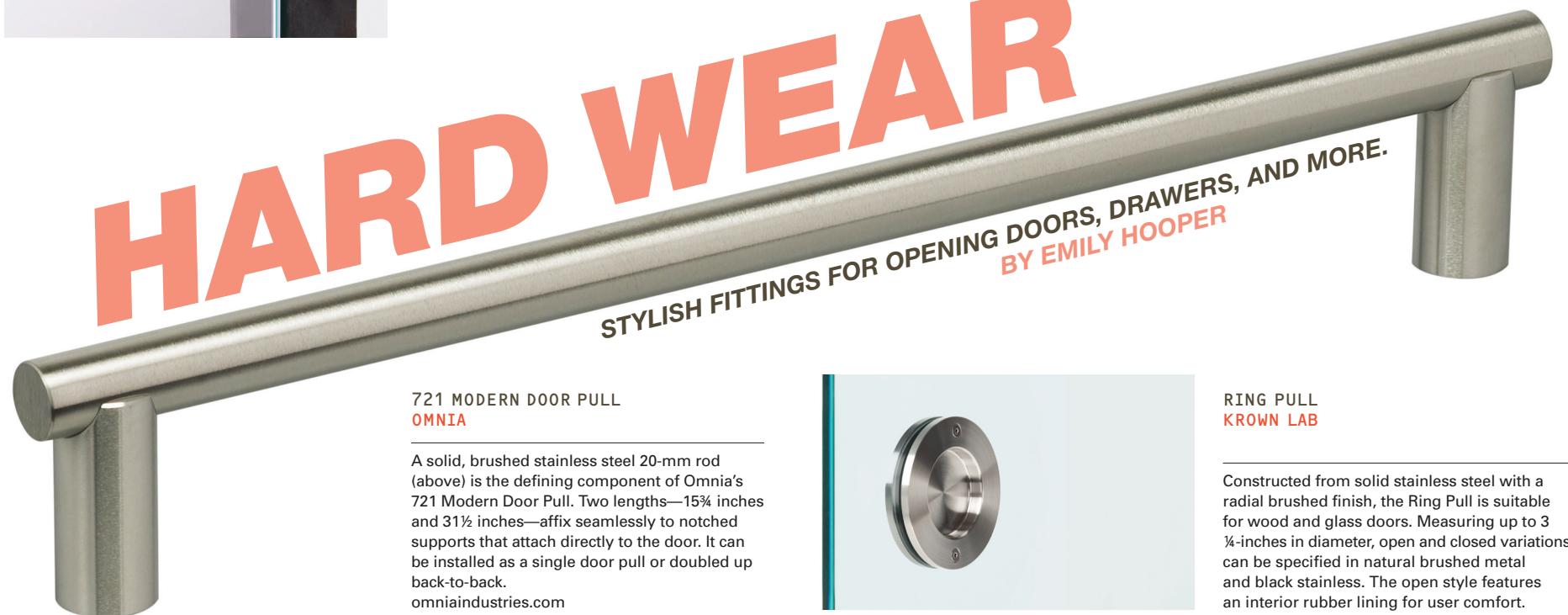


TENSOR HINGE  
DORMA

Tensor features a self closing, double acting hinge that is suitable for a variety of door designs and sizes up to 143 pounds. When doors open to 90 degrees, Tensor's inlay is engineered to protect the technical core and function as a mechanical stop. [dorma.com](http://dorma.com)

# HARD WEAR

STYLISH FITTINGS FOR OPENING DOORS, DRAWERS, AND MORE.  
BY EMILY HOOPER



721 MODERN DOOR PULL  
OMNIA

A solid, brushed stainless steel 20-mm rod (above) is the defining component of Omnia's 721 Modern Door Pull. Two lengths—15¾ inches and 31½ inches—affix seamlessly to notched supports that attach directly to the door. It can be installed as a single door pull or doubled up back-to-back. [omniaindustries.com](http://omniaindustries.com)



RING PULL  
KROWN LAB

Constructed from solid stainless steel with a radial brushed finish, the Ring Pull is suitable for wood and glass doors. Measuring up to 3 ¼-inches in diameter, open and closed variations can be specified in natural brushed metal and black stainless. The open style features an interior rubber lining for user comfort. [krownlab.com](http://krownlab.com)

## THREE CASE STUDIES OF TRANSFORMATIVE RETROFITS



LAKE|FLATO

### RETROFIT FOR RESILIENCY SUNSET COFFEE BUILDING HOUSTON, TX

Built in 1910, the Sunset Coffee Building is one of the only remaining industrial structures on Buffalo Bayou in downtown Houston. Sited near Allen's Landing, at the corner of Commerce and Fannin streets, the one-time coffee roasting warehouse has a colorful history that includes a brief stint in the late 1960s as artist David Adickes' psychedelic rock venue Love Street

Light Circus and Feel Good Machine. Because of this link with the past, the Buffalo Bayou Partnership (BBP) and Houston First (HF) decided to do something almost unheard of in Space City—they decided to preserve and restore the old brick building by turning it into a recreation and cultural center.

"Keeping the historic elements of building and scale is a really great

thing in a city like Houston," said Joseph Benjamin, project manager with Lake|Flato, which designed the project with BNIM. "In San Antonio it's a given, but in Houston that's a challenge. There could have been lots of pressure to develop it into a larger, denser site."

The adaptive reuse project presented several challenges to the architects. BBP applied for historic preservation grants from the National Park Service, requiring the design team to restore and/or replicate the character of the building. The three-story, 12,000-square-foot warehouse's poured-in-

place reinforced concrete structure was in good shape, but the brick veneer wall had crumbled beyond repair. The architects conducted an exhaustive search to find a contemporary brick that matched the color and spotting of the original masonry. The wooden casement windows also had to be restored, where possible, and replaced with newly fabricated windows that matched the originals where necessary.

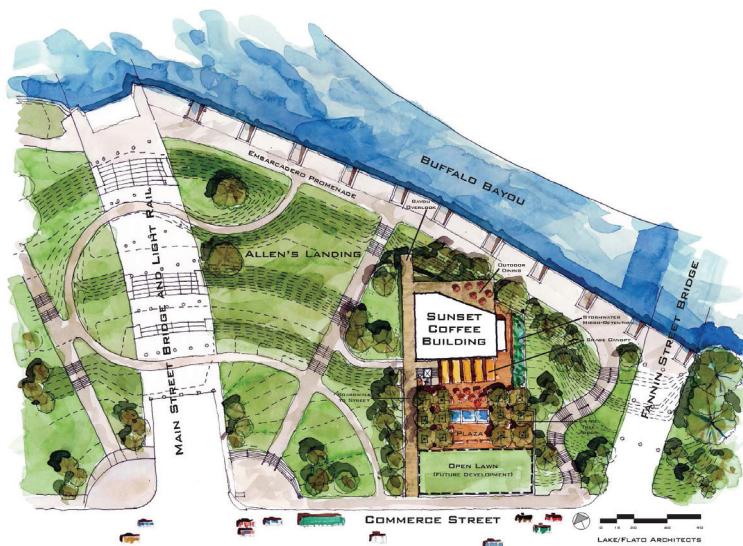
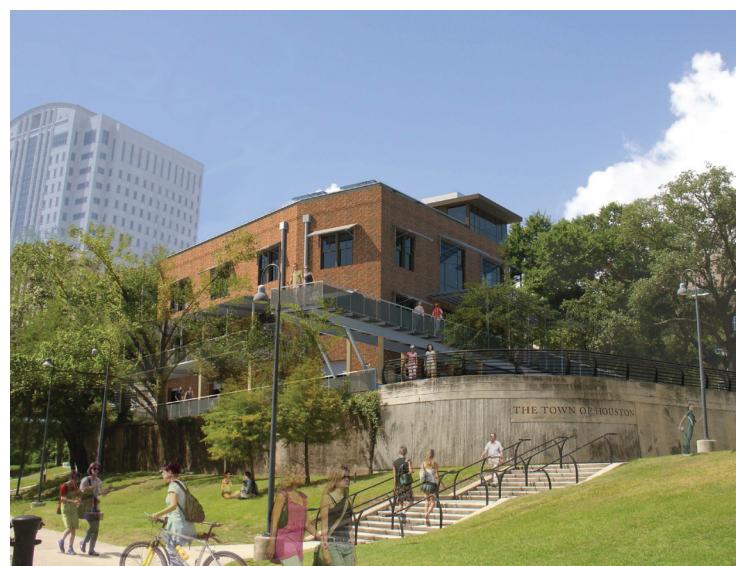
Another challenge was that the site is 12 feet below street level, solidly within the bayou's flood plane. The first floor could expect to

contend with regular inundations. Consequently, the architects located a canoe, kayak, and bicycle rental station on this level, securing it with permeable gates and garage doors capable of allowing floodwaters to flow into and out of the interior without causing much damage. An elevated rainwater collection tank posted beside the building will serve as a symbol of BBP's commitment to improving the bayou's water quality.

The architects located BBP's offices on the second level. The office floor is linked to the street with a bridge that connects to an elevated veranda, which wraps around to the bayou side of the building. On the third floor is an exhibition space and on the roof a terrace, both of which can be rented out for events. The design team left the interiors open and the structure exposed, creating a flexible, loft-like environment.

While this restored bit of history will offer Houstonians with a connection to the city's ever more obscured past, perhaps the project's greatest function for downtown will be the improved access it creates to the revitalized Allen's Landing and the Buffalo Bayou Greenway.

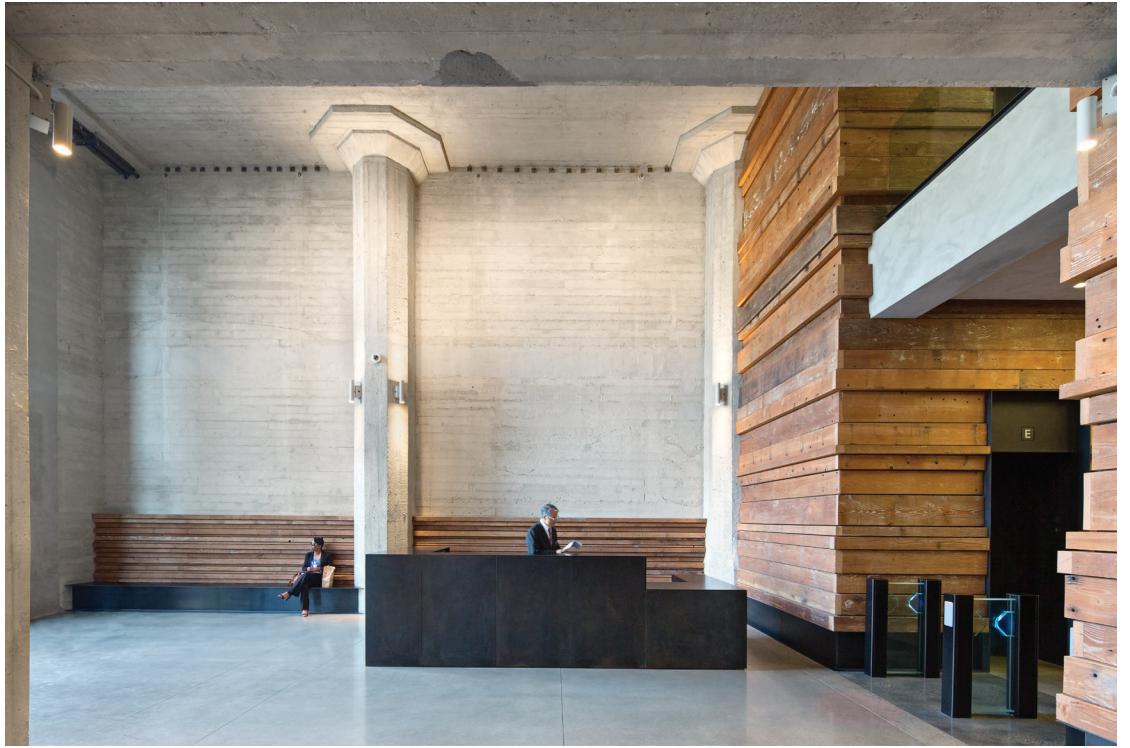
**AARON SEWARD IS AN'S MANAGING AND SOUTHWEST EDITOR.**



RETROFIT OFFICE  
MARKET SQUARE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA



**This page:** With Twitter as an anchor tenant, 1355 Market was restored with an eye toward preserving the building's art-deco detailing where possible, and stripping back to the concrete structure where appropriate. **Facing page:** The restored structure will give BBP flexible work and event space while connecting Houstonians to their city's past and its contemporary waterfront amenities.



At the heart of San Francisco's Market Street renaissance is a pair of buildings between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> streets, former furniture warehouses reborn as creative office space. "I thought, if you really want to do something and leave a mark, the old furniture mart was a great opportunity," said architect Olle Lundberg. "[When it closed] it created this incredible dead zone on Market. Having nothing in there created an inherent problem. Who would move in there to have enough of an impact to make it work?"

The answer is Twitter, which recently moved its global headquarters to 1355 Market. The Twitter offices, designed by Lundberg Design and IA Interior Architects, breathed new life into a downtown Art Deco landmark. An outstanding example of adaptive reuse, the complex, known as Market Square, is the result of collaboration between real estate investor Shorenstein and multiple design firms.

Market Square comprises two buildings, 1355 Market and 1 TENth (formerly 875 Stevenson), and The Commons, a park built over Stevenson Alley. The centerpiece of the project is 1355 Market, constructed in 1937. Massive floor plates and low ceilings characterize the 800,000-square-foot building's interior, while its 11-story elevation is clad with terracotta and features a Mayan motif.

With support from historic building specialists Page & Turnbull, RMW Architecture & Interiors renovated 1355 Market's exterior and public floors. The facade was left largely unchanged, with only the windows and ground-floor storefronts replaced. The interior was a different story. The lobby of 1355 Market Street had been renovated in the 1980s, its Art-Deco fixtures replaced and walls covered

with glass mirrors. The designers removed the mirrors and used historic photographs to recreate period lighting fixtures. They also repainted the lobby's decorative plaster ceiling.

The building's other defining feature is a series of two-story concrete columns that had been obscured by the furniture showrooms' walls. The RMW cleared these out to create Stevenson Hall. The columns were "a driving force

for the interior architecture," said Terry Kwik, a principal at RMW. "All of the architecture was really designed to emphasize that portion of the building."

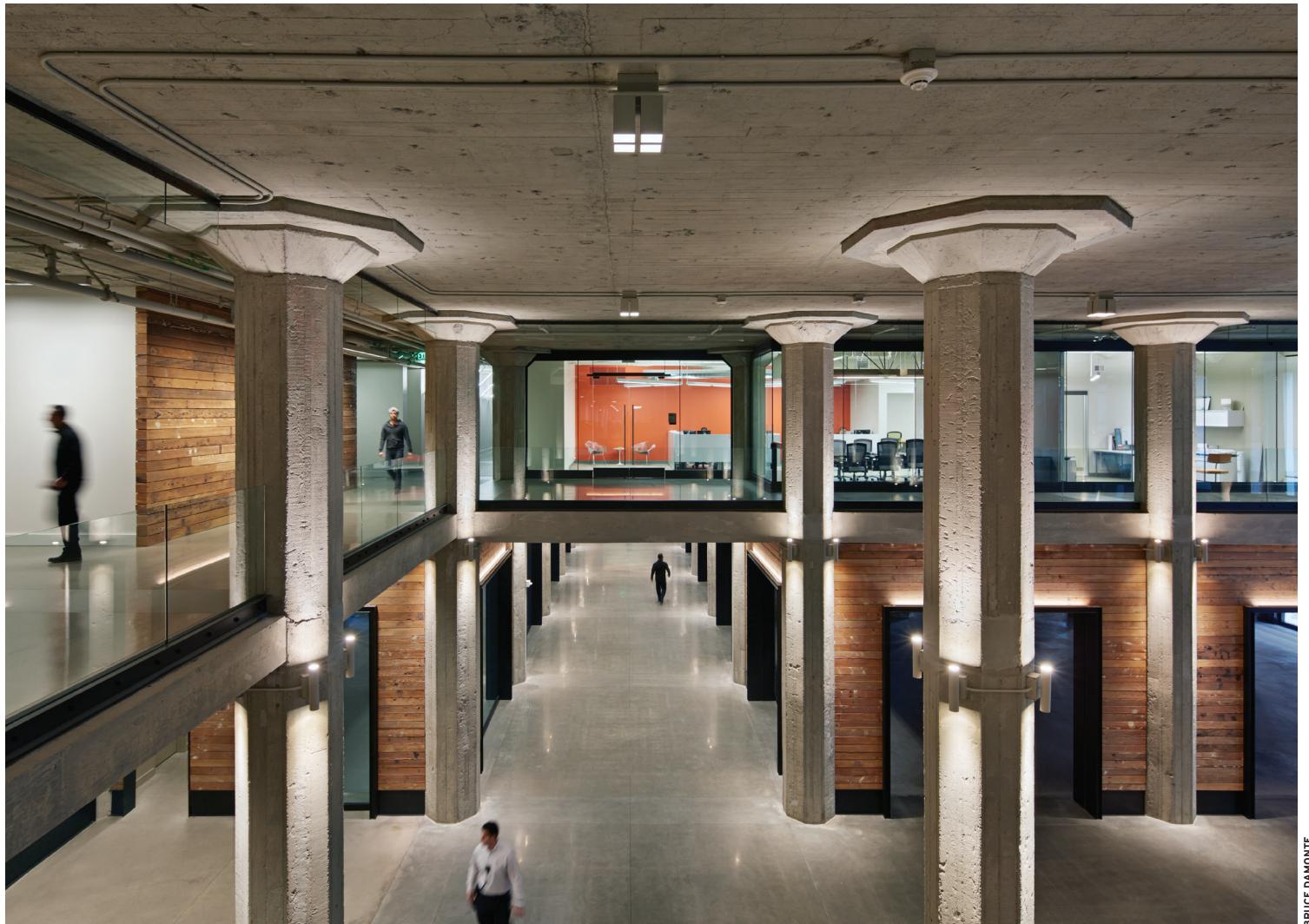
The designers added a second lobby, accented with Douglas Fir beams reclaimed from a 1941 addition to the building. Around the new elevators, RMW created a concrete core, which, with the addition of shear walls, satisfied California's rigorous seismic retrofit

requirements. The firm also installed all new MEP infrastructure and doubled the number of bathroom fixtures on each floor. These upgrades helped earn Market Square LEED Gold certification.

At 1 TENth, the design team found less worth saving. Built in the 1980s as a furniture showroom, the concrete building's small windows made it unsuitable for office space. RMW re-skinned the building in glass. "Literally every bay was cut

out," said Kwik. "It's a whole new building now. Before you would only look out 3-by-3 windows. Now you have floor to ceiling glass, it's totally transparent." The team made few infrastructure upgrades, and instead focused on the building's connection to 1355 Market.

**ANNA BERGREN MILLER IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**



BRUCE DAMONTE



RETROFIT CURTAIN WALL  
FIRST CANADIAN PLACE  
TORONTO, ONTARIO



At 978 feet, Toronto's First Canadian Place is the tallest occupied building in Canada. While that claim to fame has endured since its construction in 1975, the tower's white Carrara marble cladding has not fared so well. The exterior of the building had not undergone any significant changes beyond general maintenance, said Dan Shannon of Moed de Armas & Shannon Architects (MdeAS).

"Over time, the marble had deteriorated to the point that one piece of stone had fallen from the building," said Shannon. "The anchoring, the stone itself, was in a place where it could no longer be maintained, and a change had to be made." But with tenants like BMO Harris, Manulife Financial, and other major Canadian corporations, primary building owner Brookfield was left with little time to renovate. MdeAS and B+H Architects, who worked as the architect of record, had to replace 45,000 pieces of marble in one year—a job Shannon said would easily take two years under typical circumstances.

To accomplish the job the team commissioned a custom suspended rig with three tiers for simultaneous work. The rig was climate controlled, but not airtight. "This was an occupied building," said Shannon. "You can imagine trying to change that at 800 feet up during the Canadian winter."

The design goal, he said, was to come up with a new curtain wall assembly that would bolster the building's integrity while maintaining the stately appearance of the original design by Edward Durell Stone's office and Bregman + Hamann Architects.

MdeAS had worked on Stone buildings before, notably New York's General Motors Building. As with that project, the architects were drawn to Stone's affinity for recurring geometric patterns. On First Canadian Place, they added a ceramic frit to the custom seven-by-ten-foot Viracon glass panels,

The architects replaced the building's marble panels with fritted spandrel glass, preserving the tower's look while improving its performance.

evoking the texture of the original marble with a series of triangles.

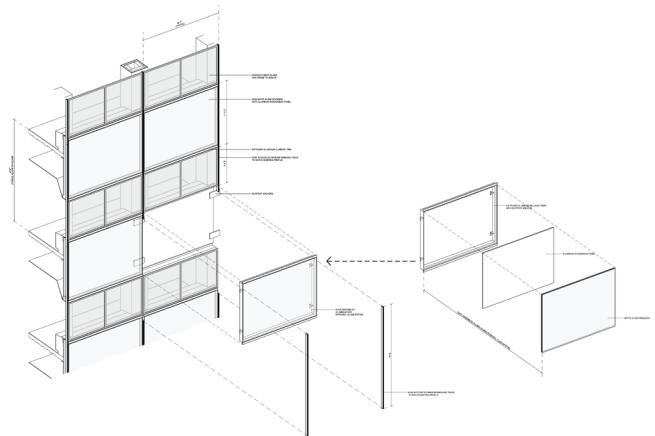
Each of the new opaque spandrel glass panels replace eight marble tiles, extending beyond the corners of the building on all sides. "Rather than just having the white glass fold back into these corners that were important to the original design, we used the contrasting glass color to make spandrel glass, accentuating the corners," said Shannon.

The subtle sheen and restored brightness of the curtain wall contrast strikingly with those shadowy corners. New solar-reflecting window treatments and repaired air leaks update the

insulated glass units that remain from the original assembly. In all, the unitized spandrel panel glass system nests three panes of ¼-inch low-iron glass in an extruded aluminum frame, with three types of PVB interlayers between.

In place of the 45,000 marble panels now sit 5,370 glass panels, reducing the amount of cladding sealant needed by 39.8 miles. The removed marble is being crushed into roof ballast and sand for other projects, and a portion is going to local art programs.

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



FEBRUARY

WEDNESDAY 19

FILMS

**Academy Award Nominated Animated Short Films**

7:00 p.m.  
Detroit Institute of the Arts  
5200 Woodward Ave.  
Detroit  
dia.org

**IN NO GREAT HURRY: 13 LESSONS IN LIFE WITH SAUL LEITER**

6:30 p.m.  
Gene Siskel Film Center  
164 North State St.  
Chicago  
siskelfilmcenter.org

LECTURES

**Age of Impressionism**

12:00 p.m.  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
artic.edu

**Explain it Like I Am Five**

2:00 p.m.  
The School of Architecture  
University of Illinois Chicago  
845 West Harrison St.  
Chicago  
arch.uic.edu

**Neil Denari/ Neil M Denari Architects**

5:30 p.m.  
Ohio State University  
Knowlton School  
of Architecture  
275 West Woodruff Ave.  
Columbus, OH  
knowlton.osu.edu

**Seng Kuan**

5:00 p.m.  
Sam Fox School of  
Design & Visual Arts  
Washington University  
Saligman Family Atrium  
1 Brookings Dr.  
St. Louis  
arch.wustl.edu

THURSDAY 20

LECTURES

**Lectures in Photography: Todd Hido**

6:00 p.m.  
Museum of Contemporary  
Photography  
600 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
mocp.org

**What is Good Design**

7:00 p.m.  
Indianapolis Museum of Art  
DeBoost Lecture Hall  
4000 Michigan Rd.  
Indianapolis, IN  
imamuseum.org

FRIDAY 21

LECTURE

**Detroit School Series: Kimberley Kinder**

4:15 p.m.  
Taubman College of  
Architecture and  
Urban Planning  
University of Michigan  
2000 Bonisteel Blvd.  
Ann Arbor, MI  
caup.umich.edu

WITH THE KIDS

**Playdate with Stripes**

10:00 a.m.  
Milwaukee Art Museum  
Windover Hall  
700 North Museum Dr.  
Milwaukee, WI  
mam.org

SATURDAY 22

LECTURES

**Bungalow 101:**

**The Unique History of Your Chicago Bungalow**

2:30 p.m.  
Chicago Center for Green  
Technology  
1740 West Webster Ave.  
Chicago  
chicagogreentech.org

**Pamela Bannos:**

**The History of the MCA**

3:00 p.m.  
Museum of Contemporary  
Art Chicago  
220 East Chicago Ave.  
Chicago  
mcachicago.org

SUNDAY 23

EXHIBITIONS CLOSING

**Adel Abidin:**

**Symphony I**

Des Moines Art Center  
4700 Grand Ave.  
Des Moines, IA  
desmoinesartcenter.org

**Dreams and Echoes:**

**Drawings and Sculpture**

**in the David and Celia Hilliard Collection**

Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
artic.edu

MONDAY 24

EVENT

**The Internet Underground:**

**Reception, Discussion**

**and Book Signing**

5:30 p.m.  
Museum of Contemporary  
Photography  
600 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
mocp.org

LECTURE

**Anova Lecture for Landscape Architecture: Chris Reed**

6:00 p.m.  
Sam Fox School of  
Design & Visual Arts  
Washington University  
Steinberg Atrium  
1 Brookings Dr.  
St. Louis  
arch.wustl.edu

TUESDAY 25

LECTURE

**Exhibition Overview of "Christopher Williams—The Production Line of Happiness"**

12:00 p.m.  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
artic.edu

THURSDAY 27

LECTURE

**Kick Off Kansas City Design Week—George Lois**

The Nelson-Atkins  
Museum of Art  
4525 Oak St.  
Kansas City  
nelson-atkins.org

FRIDAY 28

EXHIBITION CLOSING

**XEFIROTARCH:**

**Three Recent Projects**

7:00 p.m.  
Ohio State University  
Knowlton School  
of Architecture  
Ohio State University  
275 West Woodruff Ave.  
Columbus, OH  
knowlton.osu.edu

SYMPOSIUM

**Building on a Strong**

**Foundation:**

**3rd Annual Preservation**

**South Conference**

2:00 p.m.  
College of Design  
University of Kentucky  
209 Pence Hall  
Lexington, KY  
uky.edu/design

MARCH

SATURDAY 1

LECTURE

**Landscaping Residential**

**City Parkways**

10:00 a.m.  
Chicago Center for Green  
Technology  
445 North Sacramento Blvd.  
Chicago  
chicagogreentech.org

TUESDAY 4

LECTURE

**Insights: Lance Wyman,**

**New York**

7:00 p.m.  
Walker Art Center  
1750 Hennepin Ave.  
Minneapolis  
walkerart.org

SATURDAY 8

LECTURE

**Lighting Effect on Human**

**Health, Performance, and**

**Sustainability**

10:00 a.m.  
Chicago Center for Green  
Technology  
445 North Sacramento Blvd.  
Chicago  
chicagogreentech.org

SUNDAY 9

LECTURE

**American Home Landscapes:**

**A Talk by Denise Adams**

2:00 p.m.  
Indianapolis Museum of Art  
The Toby  
4000 Michigan Rd.  
Indianapolis, IN  
imamuseum.org

TUESDAY 11

LECTURE

**Living Walls: Thriving**

**Through the Fad**

6:00 p.m.  
Chicago Center for Green  
Technology  
445 North Sacramento Blvd.  
Chicago  
chicagogreentech.org

WEDNESDAY 12

EXHIBITION OPENING

**Research Through Making**

7:30 p.m.  
Taubman College  
of Architecture  
and Urban Planning  
University of Michigan  
2000 Bonisteel Blvd.  
Ann Arbor, MI  
caup.umich.edu

THURSDAY 13

LECTURE

**Glessner Travelogue 1889:**

**Florida and Cuba**

7:00 p.m.  
Glessner House Museum  
coach house  
1800 South Prairie Ave.  
Chicago  
glessnerhouse.org

WEDNESDAY 17

LECTURE

**Emmanuel Petit**

5:30 p.m.  
The School of Architecture  
University of Illinois Chicago  
845 West Harrison St.  
Chicago  
arch.uic.edu

TUESDAY 18

LECTURES

**Gallery Talk:**

**Exhibiting artist**

**Thomas Sauvin and**

**exhibition curator and MoCP**

**Director Natasha Egan**

12:30 p.m.  
Glessner House Museum  
coach house  
1800 South Prairie Ave.  
Chicago  
glessnerhouse.org

**Rapid-fire Case**

**Studies from the 2013**

**GreenBuilt Home Tour**

6:00 p.m.  
Chicago Center for Green  
Technology  
445 North Sacramento Blvd.  
Chicago  
chicagogreentech.org

**Pocket Guide to Hell**

6:00 p.m.  
Museum of Contemporary  
Art Chicago  
220 East Chicago Ave.  
Chicago  
mcachicago.org

**MDRN Spring Event:**

**Municipal Design Review**

**in Metropolitan Chicago**

5:30 p.m.  
Chaddick Institute of  
Metropolitan Development  
DePaul University  
1 East Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago  
las.depaul.edu

WEDNESDAY 19

LECTURES

**Todd Gannon/**

**Southern California Institute**

**of Architecture**

5:30 p.m.  
Ohio State University  
Knowlton School  
of Architecture  
Ohio State University  
275 West Woodruff Ave.  
Columbus, OH  
knowlton.osu.edu

**Detroit School Series:**

**Hunter Morrison**

12:00 p.m.  
Taubman College of  
Architecture and  
Urban Planning  
University of Michigan  
Architecture  
2000 Bonisteel Blvd.  
Ann Arbor, MI  
caup.umich.edu



COURTESY GRAHAM FOUNDATION

CHROMATIC PATTERNS

Graham Foundation  
4 West Burton Place, Chicago, IL  
Through April 5

Judy Ledgerwood's *Chromatic Patterns* is a site-specific work that transforms the lower galleries of the Graham Foundation's historic Madlener House in Chicago. The house was designed by Richard E. Schmidt and Hugh M. G. Garden and built in 1901–02. Judy Ledgerwood is a Chicago-based painter and educator. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Award, an Artadia Award, a Tiffany Award in the Visual Arts, a National Endowment for the Arts Award, and an Illinois Art Council Award. This exhibition surrounds the visitor in vibrant colors with a vibrant floral motif that almost mimics the house's prairie style ornamentation. This installation examines the effect of paint on architecture, specifically the wall covering's ability to produce new effects and feelings about a space. In this work, Ledgerwood uses ornamentation to change visitors' perception of the ornamentation in the Madlener House's lower galleries, highlighting the divergent ways that pattern, color, ornamentation, and surface have been coded, gendered, repressed, and embraced in art and architecture.

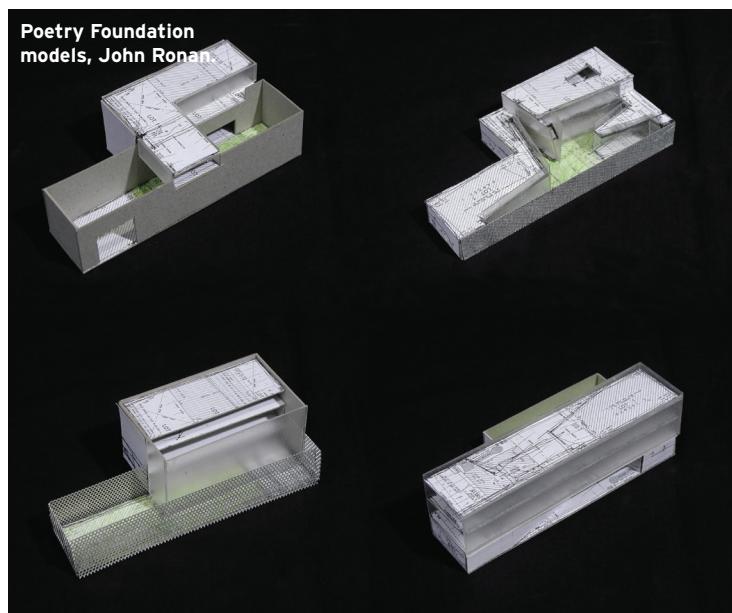


MURAI OSAMU/COURTESY TOKYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

ON THE THRESHOLDS OF SPACE-MAKING

Sam Fox School, Washington University  
One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, Missouri  
Through April 20

The work of Shinohara Kazuo (1925–2006), one of Japan's most influential architects of the postwar generation, is surveyed in *On the Thresholds of Space-Making*. Shinohara gained popularity as an architect with his series of sublime purist houses designed over a thirty-year period that went through the 1980s. Shinohara scrutinized and reframed fundamental architectural conventions, such as public/private, body/space, and openness/enclosure. This exhibition contains original drawings and sketches that have rarely been seen outside of Japan. These drawings are enhanced by photographs of finished works and scaled models of imagined architecture. A featured work is Shinohara's House in White (1964–66), in which he rearranges a familiar design palette—a square plan, a pointed roof, white walls, and a symbolic pillar—to give the main room almost oceanic spaciousness. His work has a poetic quality that combines simplicity and surprise. Also showcased in the exhibition is the enduring legacy of Shinohara's work through projects by younger Japanese architects whom he influenced, including Toyo Ito (b. 1941); Ryue Nishizawa (b. 1966) of the firm SANAA; and Jun'ya Ishigami (b. 1974).



Poetry Foundation models, John Ronan

COURTESY OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

the narrative begins with schematic concept diagrams in pen and pencil. Fast scribbles are quickly scratched on top of existing site surveys. Next, these layered plans pop into 3D. A dozen tiny massing models test out distinct approaches for the L-shaped site on its bustling River North street corner. Gardens are preeminent. As the show continues to unfold, the trial and error process applies to experiments in form, programmatic relationships, and skin. The prototypes of the Poetry Foundation's defining street-front screen look wildly different from one another. Gold painted cardboard feels pleasantly whimsical.

The show banks on the trending appeal of the analog. Ronan is old school. Glorifying the heritage process behind an acclaimed contemporary building feels equal parts hipster and grey-haired modernist. The models and sketches are quick, but highly articulate: This is the suave pseudo-mess of an architect's architect.

By comparison, the few digital prints fail to engage visitors. Without tangible texture or gesture, they lack a spirit. Their inclusion in the exhibit instills a message that technology displaces, rather than broadens, our sensory capabilities. The gallery text reads that Ronan works back and forth between the physical and the digital, but it is not convincing that digital practices have creative value for Ronan.

At times, it does not feel like experimentation so much as nostalgia.

The strength of this showcase, however, is in the mystique of the ideas that were scrapped. What else could our new landmark have looked like? Which iconic screen facade would you have picked? The buildings that never existed are the exhibit's most poetic moments. Here, we are able to put ourselves behind Ronan's desk and make a choice.

Ronan's process appears effortless—even just flicked out of his wrist—but it is legitimized by precise design detailing, has already earned the architect comparisons to modernist heroes. Beyond creative development, however, this show certainly perpetuates the modernist identity of the architect as solitary genius. In its mission statement, John Ronan Architects identifies its studio culture as "interdisciplinary and collaborative." Yet, Ronan alone is repeatedly referred to as the singular creator. It is unclear whether the omission of collaboration was purely a curatorial discretion, or whether it is an accurate reflection of Ronan's studio. The bright national spotlight on Ronan is feeding the culture of the starchitect. Perhaps his brand relies on it.

Nevertheless, this exhibit demonstrates that the old ways still work. The Poetry Foundation building is well loved as a graceful meditative gem amid downtown glitz. Hopefully, museum visitors unfamiliar with the building will be moved to go experience it first hand. Because of the exclusion

of photos, renders, and scaled human figures from the exhibit, the building which ultimately resulted from the creative process on display may be a challenge for many visitors to visualize. Unfortunately, the space constraints in the gallery seem to necessitate conventional, high security displays, which lend a formality to the work. Handmade models lose some of their approachable humility when displayed within a jewel box. Abstract sketches and cardboard are a stretch from real space. The interior design, in particular, is hardly represented. Even material expression, so impactful in the real experience of the building, feels distant from the work on view.

But the exhibit, curated by Karen Kice, may not be attempting to translate the full arc of the design journey from point A to B. The show instead offers fleeting snapshots of intuitive, loose exploratory moments. It is probably too small of an exhibit to warrant its own trip to the Art Institute, but its position adjacent to the sprawling Christopher Williams retrospective benefits *Iterations* with a healthy cross-current of visitors. For those with the capability to imagine real space from folded paper provocations, it is a brief, intimate communion with one of Chicago's most admired contemporary architects.

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## CREATIVE PROCESS

**Iterations: John Ronan's Poetry Foundation**  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL  
Through May 4

Chicago architecture lovers already thoroughly embrace John Ronan's Poetry Foundation building. So what more is there to see? The small exhibit *Iterations: John Ronan's Poetry Foundation*, secluded in a hushed downstairs gallery, features delicate

models and expressive sketches produced early in the architect's design process.

Ronan experiments with space through intuitive, handcrafted techniques before refining his designs by digital means. Installed chronologically,

## A ROOM FOR BOOKS

**The Library: A World History**  
By James W. P. Campbell, Photographs by Will Pryce  
University of Chicago Press, \$75.00

The present debate about the future adaptation of the great Beaux-Arts landmark of the New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street lends editorial currency to the advent of *The Library: A World History*. Its author conjoins the function of storage with the act of reading as solved by architects and their clients, and, finally, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the librarians themselves as that profession emerged as the science we know today.

A radical reworking of the Carrère and Hastings masterpiece, with proposed removal of its reliable system of concealed yet adjacent stacks, along with most the books themselves to an offsite repository, flies in the existential face of just such a form-making alliance. It separates the printed word itself as the formal centerpiece of the library's architectural assignment with its safe conveyance of content to reader. That is Mr. Campbell's guiding editorial imperative, explored throughout world history with print linked to structure. The relevance was made further in the midst of the controversy by Barry Bergdoll's tenderly rigorous look at Henri

Labrouste and his functional proto-modern articulation of contemporary engineering.

Paradoxically, Campbell came to the project as architect and historian to point out that astonishingly there really has never been such a survey. And what is without doubt an exceptionally lively and passionate consideration comes to spectacular life in the remarkable illustrations, which provide a nearly gasp-out-loud voyage through some of the finest and certainly most optimistic design works of mankind. While mostly full-page interiors, they propel the well paced narrative meandering succinctly as it does between history and theory in complementary doses. They also make clear how from the advent of writing with the cuneiform tablets of the Fertile Crescent 5,500 years ago to the brand new twig-shrouded Liyuan Library outside Beijing by Li Xiaodong, the library form itself has evolved from what was essentially a room for books (albeit often very large, and, in Rococo Austria, astonishingly ornamented with storage cabinets yielding to shelves) to a building type: Wall to

stall to hall, to combine Campbell's expert progression. Demand and supply drove it: moveable type, paper, and mechanization in concert with the need for more broadly accessible education and the tools to make that happen. Architecture has kept pace as Campbell reveals with such evident glee. Regardless of types however, it is apparent how the storage of books and the act of reading them has continually spawned such prides of civic place especially once monastic, royal, or only elite resources gave ever-increasing way to a tax-paying public. The little known 1251 wooden Tripitaka Koreana monastery library in South Korea's Haeinsa Temple is alone worth the read. There's hope after all!

Campbell welcomes his reader with a graceful discussion of such iconography and social meaning of the library: "Libraries indicate to the wider world the scholarly ambitions of individuals or organizations and, in the case of public libraries they can also be a charitable gesture. In the simplest cases the mere existence of the library may represent."

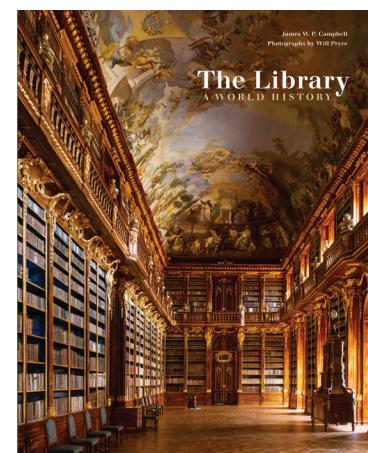
While he goes on to describe how so often (as with all architecture of integrity despite style) there can also be a more explicit message of, for example, wealth or polemics, he makes reassuringly clear that he will not lose sight of the design task. He adds, "It is important to safeguard against over-interpretation and

the imposition of over-elaborate or anachronistic reasons for elements that may have been shaped simply by practical considerations or the desire to copy a well-worn formula or established device."

It is this practice-minded sense and, accordingly, application of historic precedent that makes a page-turner of what, at first glance, may seem only another coffee table scale monograph. Don't judge a book by its cover especially if it is about books.

If online access and electronic reading mean an inevitable shift from this building typology as implicitly foretold at the New York Public proposal, then the volume comes along in the nick of time. If any practitioner or lover of architecture still cares about the capacity to remove a book from a shelf then this becomes an essential, if ludicrously overdue, reference.

On the other hand, maybe the brilliant trajectory Campbell animates will continue after all. Proposals of civic visionaries such as the Center for an Urban Future to reinvigorate the broad civic asset of the public library branch system for the first time since Andrew Carnegie gave his "staggering" \$350,695,653 donation for 2,811 public libraries worldwide lends it timely significance. This infrastructure of knowledge is too precious to squander and demands reinvention. A special library bond issue would



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in this case play patron as this history highlights throughout.

The shifting potential of the library buildings and their fundamental program as an ultimate and finally inevitable conversation between the living and the dead provides a fine design challenge ahead. With the whole atomizing idea of knowledge storage, retrieval, and access in a period when Google and its unlimited database (not to mention the prospect of placing the entire contents of Edmund Lind's Beaux-Art Library of Congress confection on a micro-chip...) stands as the flying buttress of discovery, it is fitting that a book about libraries as social lodestones reminds its readers of how much is at stake and what fine standards there are.

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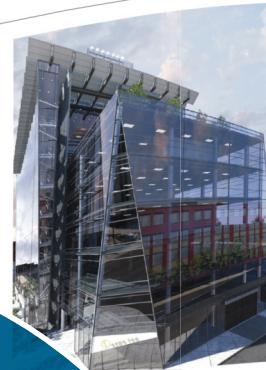


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## Kick the Architectural Competition Habit



*"There is an incredible amount of wasted effort in the profession. A fair amount of it is kind of generated through the procedure of competitions, which is really like a complete drain of intelligence. I don't know any other profession that would, kind of, tolerate this... You are important. We invite your thinking. But we also announce that there is a kind of 80 percent chance that we will throw away your thinking and make sure that it is completely wasted."*

-Rem Koolhaas in *Urbanized*

As our team moved steadily forward to the final round of the Navy Pier redevelopment competition in 2011, I began to question why any architects, landscape architects, or engineers would put up with such an arduous ordeal for the limited promise of somewhat uncertain rewards. These words come with all due respect to my collaborators, colleagues, and the competition organizers. And in the spirit of full disclosure, I also admit that my newly founded practice benefited from the public exposure, and even somewhat financially. The experience left me with lingering concerns about how not just emergent practices, but also the leaders of our profession have become captive to the systematic exploitation of design competitions. This is not a critique of the small-scale ideas competitions that young architects enter with the hope of a small prize or perhaps even a boost to their careers. This is about the high-end contests reserved for prestigious and large-scale projects, which tend to require substantial qualifications just for the privilege of entry.

My concern grew into alarm after viewing presentation videos from last year's competition for 425 Park Avenue with Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, Richard Rogers, and Norman Foster. The schemes they presented were unremarkable by their own lofty standards. OMA's project was particularly disappointing given Koolhaas' status as the preeminent living theorist of the Manhattan skyscraper. Based on three stacked and rotated cubes, their proposal retreated to a simplistic formalism that lacked any of the challenging narrative or internal programmatic complexity we have come to expect from the best of OMA. One could counter that the constraints of the office building type limited the architects' ability to innovate. Perhaps. But if that were the case, then why stage the competition at all? The recent competition for

the Prentice Hospital site in Chicago also produced less than compelling results and should raise similar concerns, even without the imported celebrities.

### The New BIGness

OMA's entry for 425 Park Avenue may be symptomatic of an increasingly common condition. The bluntly stacked and rotated cubes seemed reminiscent of some of the recent production of Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG). Of course, Ingels is an OMA alumnus, and this is not an accusation of plagiarism. But it seems that BIG's success in several U.S. competitions, including the Kimball Art Center (winner), Brooklyn Bridge Pier 6 (winner), Navy Pier (finalist), and St. Petersburg Pier (finalist), seems to be effecting the broader field even when they are not in the game. The simple diagrams, surreal formal effects, and easy imageability of their work has forced some of their more established competitors to enter an arms race of gigantic object-scapes. For example, Michael Maltzan Architects, a practice known for works of wonderful subtlety, actually trumped BIG's looping "Wave" with its own gigantic bowl shaped "Lens" in the St. Petersburg Pier competition. Maltzan's proposal has since then fallen victim to an unsurprising combination of budget cuts and local politics. Coincidentally, BIG's winning proposal for the Kimball in Utah seems to be heading in a similar direction. Monumental victories easily turn into monumental targets after the high of the competition has faded. Hindsight suggests that those of us who competed against BIG at Navy Pier may be fortunate that none of our monumental proposals enticed the jury, which chose James Corner Field Operations' more restrained proposal, the first phase of which is already under construction.

Despite such exceptions, the evidence is building and the case becoming clearer: The competition industry in the U.S. is having equally as bad or worse effects on the conception of architecture than we already know it has on the business of architecture. The old argument that competitions drive architectural innovation is no longer credible. Developers, cultural institutions, and government agencies have mastered the use of design competitions as publicity campaigns. Their claims of searching for the best ideas is just an alibi that unfortunately continues to seduce too many of our best talents. These drawn out exercises also make



MARSHALL BROWN PROJECTS

very little practical sense when it should be easy enough for clients to choose between architects as distinct and established as the group assembled for 425 Park Avenue by picking up a few monographs or even just looking at their websites. The real justifications are simple. Developers and institutions gain fantastic and relatively affordable publicity from the mad traveling circus of design competitions. By helping them attract financing and donors, we encourage the proliferation of these sham exercises where enormous projects are fully rendered without contracts, necessary approvals, or even clear programs. We clearly have an addiction to architectural competitions, but there is always hope for rehabilitation. While too many senior architects are irreversibly hooked on this mode of practice, the next generation has access to better venues for generating ideas and building our reputations, but we may need to learn some new lessons first.

### La Villette...au revoir.

Architecture students in the 1990s were nursed on the twin triumphs of Bernard Tschumi's Parc de La Villette in Paris (1982-83) and Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin (1988-89). They reinvigorated the old myth that design competitions are how both great architects and great projects are made. We turned a corner a decade or two later with the World Trade Center competition of 2002. Once Libeskind's winning design for Ground Zero had been marginalized, one could hardly doubt that the design proposals had never been the real purpose of the WTC competition. But the contest was actually a great publicity machine for the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Governor Pataki, Mayor Bloomberg, and Silverstein Properties. Many of the world's best architects were jonesing to compete, with one conspicuous exception: Frank Gehry declined the invitation and was publicly castigated by Peter Eisenman for criticizing the inadequate compensation offered to the design teams. Mr. Gehry was both admirable and correct in his protest, but trying to explain the financial downside of design competitions to architects is equivalent to explaining the negative effects of heroin to professional users. Eisenman was quoted in a 2007 *New York Times* article as saying, "To me, when I stop getting invited to competitions is when I quit. That's what makes me alive." Not only do many architects not care about the downside of competitions, but we also enjoy chasing the high. The economic arguments will continue to fall on deaf ears, but

competitions are also affecting the core values of the profession in ways that should concern us, even when the time and money wasted do not.

### 200 architects enter, one architect leaves.

Unfortunate episodes like the WTC contest demonstrate how competitions encourage the false but common attitude that one architect's success depends upon another's defeat. Such an ideology of winners and losers is typical of our neoliberal age and especially effective at breeding animosity among would-be colleagues when the stakes are high. To make matters worse, teams for major competitions have become bloated with collaborating architects and their attending consultants in attempts to appear hyper-qualified. Unfortunately, this can then also cause competition within teams, first for control over the design, and then for bigger shares of the work and fees if they happen to win. And finally, senior architects seem to be competing now against very young firms for minor institutional commissions such as temporary museum installations. These competitions are inevitable money losers for firms of even moderate size, yet they still enter the chase with hopes of publicity or possibly a larger and more profitable commission down the road. I declined to enter, but bore witness to such a contest last year in Chicago. This unfortunate kind of generational warfare stifles innovation by making it increasingly difficult for more new voices to enter the field.

### Rewriting the brief.

Heroic myths forgotten, we should recognize that the best competition winners—and also rans—from recent architectural history tend to have been the products of research that was developed over time and in advance of the contests. Before winning Fresh Kills and the High Line, James Corner had already researched, drawn, and written *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape* (1996). Before their famous La Villette entries, Bernard Tschumi had already conjured the *Manhattan Transcripts* (1976-81) and Rem Koolhaas had written *Delirious New York* (1978). Fortunately for all of us, today's emergent practices have a robust network of resources and institutions dedicated to supporting the production and publication of speculative work. These include research universities, galleries, peer-reviewed publications, as well as a growing assortment of fellowships and residencies. Unlike competitions these creative and intellectual programs tend to hold collegiality and mutual support as core principles. Obviously there are more efficient, gratifying, and cost-effective ways of nurturing our practices than participating in competitions. Yet here I emphasize the seemingly less obvious fact that the same holds true for the quality of our work. In the same *New York Times* article Thom Mayne answered, "I'm not sure how you'd replace it," when asked what to do about the architectural competition system. Old addictions die hard, but for the next generation I offer a New Year invitation to join me in rehabilitation. The course of treatment is simple: early, complete, and permanent retirement...from architectural competitions.

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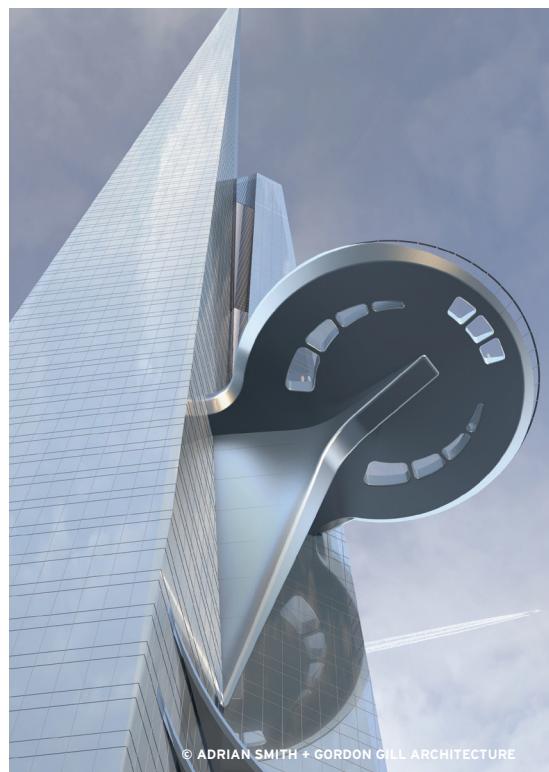
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