

THE MIDWEST

ARCHITECTS

NEWSPAPER

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CHICAGO'S NAVY PIER ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR A HOTEL AND COMPLETES A BIGGER, BETTER FERRIS WHEEL

The first phase of the new Navy Pier redevelopment by James Corner Field Operations is now complete.

COURTESY NAVY PIER

# PIER REVIEW

For the first time in its 100-year history, Chicago's Navy Pier may be the site of a new hotel. As part of Centennial Vision, a multiphase redevelopment of the Pier, the city and Chicago-based hotel management company First Hospitality Group, Inc. announced plans for a 200-room hotel. Heading the **continued on page 7**



The Academy for Global Citizenship in South Side, Chicago, will open out to the neighborhood, providing space for food education and a public market.

STUDIO GANG ARCHITECTS

STUDIO GANG PROPOSES A NET-POSITIVE SCHOOL WITH ITS OWN GOAT

## Build Locally, Think Globally

In the near future, students at the Academy for Global Citizenship will learn firsthand how a net-zero building works, as their campus will collect enough solar power to be completely off the grid. Chances are, though, the thing they will remember most distinctly about their unconventional school will be that it included a working farm, complete with a goat.

The Academy for Global Citizenship (AGC) on the Southwest Side of Chicago is already unlike nearly **continued on page 4**

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENTS HAVE ARRIVED IN CHICAGO

## HOT TOD-DY

Transit is getting some love in Chicago, and not just in terms of de rigueur track and station improvements. An estimated 30 new transit-friendly residential projects have been built, are under construction, or are in planning since Chicago adopted its first transit-oriented development (TOD) ordinance in September 2013.

"The built and substantially built projects are four or five years in the making, so it's hard to attribute them entirely to the ordinance," said Jon Heinert, partner at Wheeler Kearns Architects and project architect for three major TOD buildings. Real estate microclimates also play a role in where and when housing gets built. Just compare Wicker Park and Woodlawn. But, Heinert added, "there has definitely **continued on page 5**

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ANTONIO FURGUELE ENVISIONS A FLOATING STAGE FOR MILWAUKEE'S RIVERS

## Art Floats Milwaukee's Boat

The Milwaukee Arts Barge aims to bring a performance space to far reaching neighborhoods.

COURTESY ANTONIO FURGUELE

The Milwaukee Arts Barge (MAB) is a proposal for a mobile performing arts venue that aims to transform Milwaukee's waterways into activated public spaces.

Conceived by architect Antonio Furguele, a research fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning **continued on page 4**



ARCHITECTS CREATE HEALTHCARE FACILITIES THAT FOSTER INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION. SEE PAGE 9

COURTESY MEDICAL MEDIA, ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL

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## THE GOOD FIGHT

Chicago has a problem. It is not a new problem, but as of late it has been more apparent. For a city whose motto could just as well be Daniel Burnham's "Make no little plans..." Chicago makes very few large plans. As a result, the city seems unable to realize any plans at all.

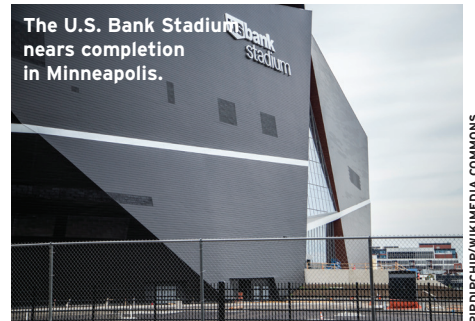
At the time of printing, Chicago is about to lose the George Lucas Museum of Narrative Arts (LMNA) to the West Coast. Aside from the conversation of putting private institutions in our public parks (NB: All of the lakefront museums are private), the entire fiasco has brought up a slew of other issues, ones that should make everyone who cares about the built environment take pause. The first is what initially set the downward spiral of the LMNA into motion: The use of the lakefront. The discussion of this one building has all too clearly highlighted the fact that we don't talk seriously about the lakefront as the resource it actually is:

A resource that was *made* by and for the people of Chicago. For whatever reason, a fundamentalism has arisen that the lakefront should freeze at the shape, function, and character of an artificial line reached a century ago. So often in this argument Burnham is evoked, as if he would somehow be pleased that only a small portion of his plan is complete.

The next problem highlighted by this calamity is the city's apparent willingness to throw away what we have. Chicago has a long history of tearing down the great buildings, buildings that remind us of when it actually was a place that made big ambitious plans. After the loss of Prentice Women's Hospital, one would think that other eccentric icons would be given some sort of respite. It is more than shortsighted to think that McCormick Place and, for that matter, the Thompson Center are not architecturally significant and worth saving. No one would argue against rethinking and refurbishing, but Chicago would not be better without them. Rather, the city would be losing two of its most unique interior gathering spaces.

Both the protection of the shoreline and the short-term economy of the city are important, but architects understand the larger implications of the built environment. "Make no little plans" resonates with Chicagoans because they can see it every day: The city has been defined by big risks and major projects. Now that same level of ambition can be directed at the betterment of the city for all: While protecting those spaces that make Chicago so unique, architects can also envision new spaces that inspire.

Architects can't leave the grand plans to politicians. No one is more qualified or willing to imagine a better city than an architect—but you're going to have to fight for it. **MATTHEW MESSNER**



OVERRUN COSTS AND LEGAL BATTLES CAUSE A CHILLY RECEPTION FOR THE NEARLY FINISHED MINNESOTA VIKINGS STADIUM

## WINDS OF THOR

Death Star. The Bird Killer. Jawa Sandcrawler. The Spank. Skulldome. The Dark Crystal. Black Bullfrog. Banks a Billion.

Since the design for the U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis was unveiled in May 2013, the black zinc, glass, and ETFE-paneled angular structure by HKS Architects has inspired a plethora of derogatory nicknames. Fueling the disparagement has been the sports team itself, which has been engaged since groundbreaking occurred on the 75,000-seat, 1.75-million-square-foot facility, in one public-relations fiasco after another on a level befitting a parody in *The Onion*.

In May 2012, the Minnesota state legislature signed a bill calling for a \$975 million multi-purpose stadium to be built for the Minnesota Vikings football team on the former site of the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome on the east side of downtown Minneapolis. Across the state, citizens groaned: another taxpayer-funded stadium built for millionaires. To date, the cost to state and local taxpayers is close to \$498 million, with the total cost of the stadium slated at \$1.1 billion.

In 2013, after the design was unveiled, Audubon Minnesota called the structure a "death trap" for birds due to its 200,000 square feet of transparent glass. Local bird enthusiast Howard Miller painted a grim picture in the local newspaper, the *Star Tribune*. Miller "raised the specter of dead indigo buntings and ruby-throated hummingbirds 'thwacking' against the glass, falling to the ground and lying lifeless on the sidewalk as purple-clad masses arrived for the games." The Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority, involved in building the stadium, declined to replace the glass with a less-deadly fritted version due to costs and delays.

Meanwhile, the stadium's construction began spurring development in an urban area that had been largely occupied by surface parking lots. Renamed Downtown East or East Town, the area filled with cranes and workers constructing apartment and condo buildings, a park, and Wells Fargo office towers. Proponents of the stadium talked up how the project was contributing a much-needed economic boost to Minneapolis in jobs via new construction, new and existing restaurants and bars, new hotels, and new retail.

Then the "photo bomb" incident occurred: The Minnesota Vikings organization sued Wells Fargo over two signs on its new office towers "that permanently 'photo bomb' the images of the iconic U.S. Bank Stadium," the lawsuit stated. In January of this year, a U.S. district judge allowed the Vikings to proceed with the lawsuit. Then **continued on page 6**



## CORRECTION

In the April story, "A More Social Housing," (MW\_03\_04.20.16) the lead image was incorrectly credited to JGMA. The two buildings at the Lathrop Homes redevelopment should have been credited to bKL. bKL has been involved with the Lathrop Homes project since 2011, and has played a key role in projects, masterplanning, and design. We regret the error.



## ON THE DOTTED LINE

An independent group has delivered a 2,500 signature petition to Friends of the Parks asking the group to drop its lawsuit against the city blocking the construction of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Arts. An earlier petition started by Friends of the Parks to stop the museum has only garnered 1,500 signatures so far. Though the petitions, hosted on change.org, have no legal bearing, both groups have used the platform to advocate for their positions.

## POLITICAL PANTS ON FIRE

Chicago's 41<sup>st</sup> Ward alderman **Anthony Napolitano** and Democratic committee-man **Tim Heneghan** got into a name-calling match at a public hearing in the northwest side neighborhood of Edison Park. Napolitano called Heneghan a liar over an email that went out to residents regarding a possible development that may include affordable housing. The planned 44-unit apartment building would require a zoning change, which under Chicago's new Affordable Housing Ordinance would mean the new construction would need to include at least 10 percent affordable housing. Heneghan accused Napolitano of misleading residents regarding the size of the development, while Napolitano accused Heneghan of attempting to scare residents for political gain.

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COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

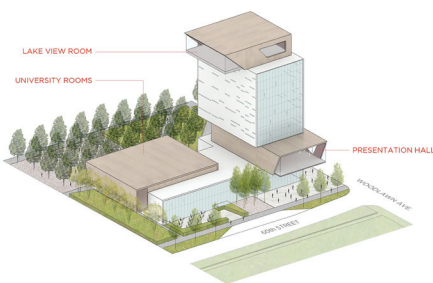
### UNVEILED

#### DAVID M. RUBENSTEIN FORUM

The University of Chicago has announced the approval of the preliminary designs for a new 90,000-square-foot complex designed by New York-based Diller Scofidio + Renfro. The David M. Rubenstein Forum is described by the university as "a place of intellectual, institutional, and educational exchange." The building will contain meeting and presentation spaces, as well as a Lake View Room at the top of a 165-foot tower. With the largest space able to accommodate up to 600 people, the Forum will be able to host large conferences. A 285-seat auditorium will facilitate more formal lectures and presentations, along with film screenings and performances, and more intimate academic symposia will be held in its many smaller meeting spaces.

David M. Rubenstein Forum will add to the university's already impressive list of buildings by notable architects, including Walter Netsch, Ricardo Legorreta, Eero Saarinen, and, more recently, Helmut Jahn and Jeanne Gang. **MM**

**Architect:** Diller Scofidio + Renfro  
**Client:** University of Chicago  
**Location:** University of Chicago Campus, Chicago  
**Completion Date:** 2018



## GREEN LINE ARTS CENTER ADDITION ANNOUNCED

Los Angeles-based firm Johnston Marklee was announced as the designer for a new addition to the Green Line Arts Center in the South Side Chicago neighborhood of Washington Park. The Arts Center is an arts incubator and social space that has been spearheaded by the University of Chicago. Leading the redevelopment is University of Chicago professor and artist Theaster Gates. The project will rehabilitate and add to a 1920s commercial building, maintaining the building's glazed terra-cotta facade.



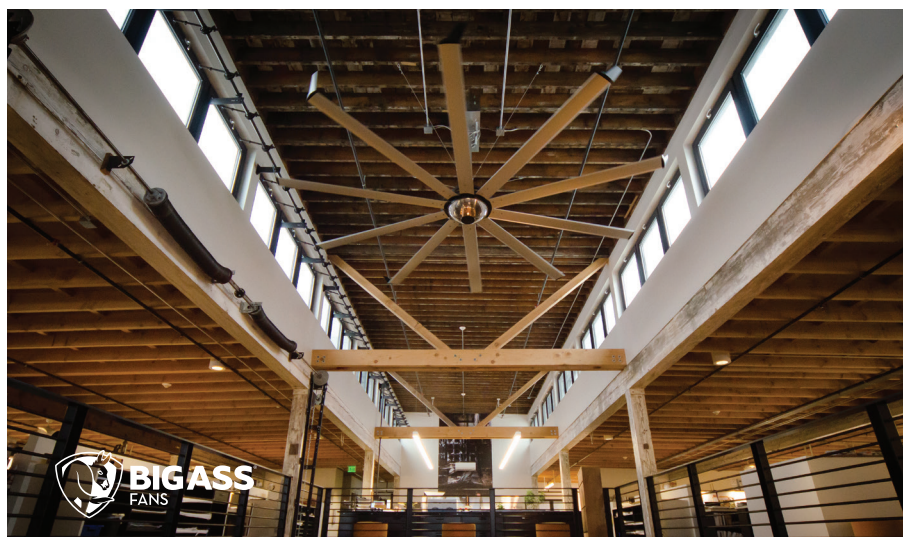
COURTESY AESOP

#### > AESOP CHICAGO

1653 North Damen Avenue  
Chicago, IL  
Tel: 872-802-4626  
Architect: Norman Kelley

Chicago and New York-based Norman Kelley recently finished Chicago's first Aesop store. The high-end Australian skin care company frequently hires young architecture firms to design their stores, and Norman Kelley's iteration takes its cues from the surrounding historic Bucktown neighborhood. Consisting of ten thousand reclaimed Chicago common bricks, the floor and walls are clad in intricately woven herringbone and pinwheel brick bond patterns. In order to hold the weight of the all-brick interior, the floor of the structure was reinforced from the basement. An unused chimney was removed to create a completely open floorplan. In the center of the space, a black-stained white oak counter and a demonstration island are the only furniture in the space, keeping the focus on the black steel-clad shelves, embedded in the brick walls, holding Aesop's famed soaps and lotions.

Norman Kelley has also recently finished a second Aesop store in Tribeca, New York. **MM**



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Studio Gang's design of the Academy for Global Citizenship is intended to link indoor and outdoor spaces visually and physically.

**BUILD LOCALLY, THINK GLOBALLY** continued from front page any other K-8 school around. Once it moves out of its now-cramped makeshift space into a brand-new, Studio Gang-designed campus, it will be truly one of a kind.

The charter school, as the name would suggest, was conceived with a focus on global stewardship and was in dire need of a space that better reflected its pedagogy and ambitions. With this charge, Chicago- and New York-based Studio Gang set out to produce a campus that would be a productive space for students, faculty, and the surrounding community. Conceived as a series of flexible "neighborhoods" with indoor and outdoor learning environments, the project is designed without typical

circulation space. Rather, students will walk through "Wonder Paths" that wind fluidly through indoors and outdoors. Along these paths students will encounter laboratories, presentation spaces, learning stations, and play areas. A central courtyard will connect all of these diverse programs.

The main structure's design takes cues from industrial building typologies to maximize natural light and solar collection. A sawtooth roofline is set at the optimal angle for solar power, while allowing copious amounts of north light into the learning spaces. Yet the passive and active solar aspects of the project are only part of the school's sustainability goals.

Perhaps the most notable of the school's amenities is a three-acre urban farm. Along



COURTESY STUDIO GANG ARCHITECTS

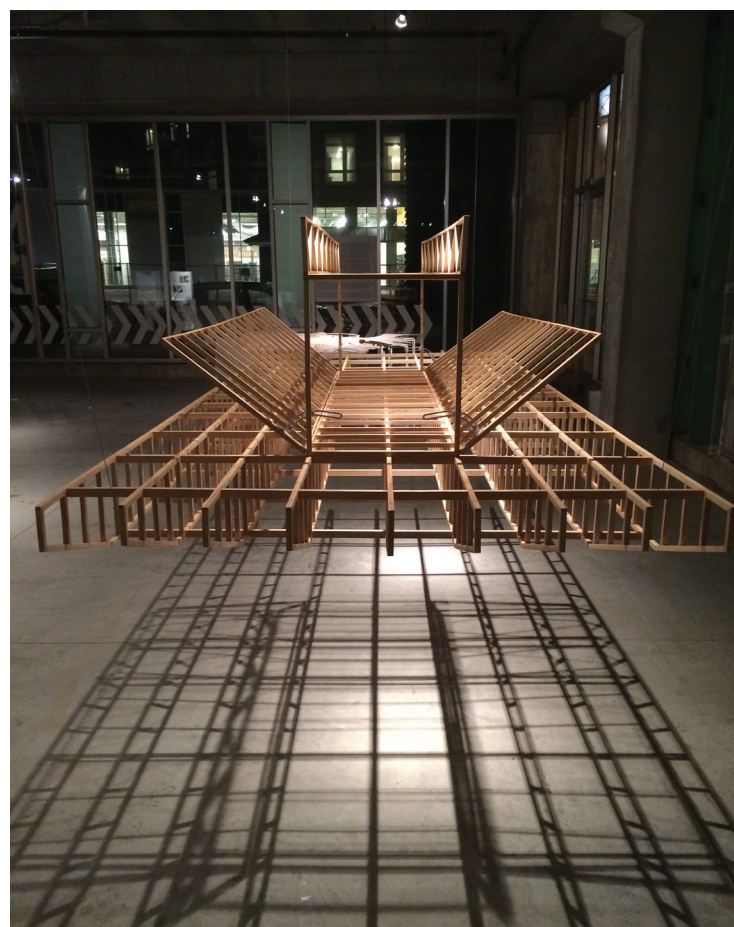
with producing its own power, the school will also produce a portion of its own food. Students will help grow breakfast and lunch for their classmates. The school believes the understanding of agriculture is an important part both of being a global citizen and of creating one's relationship to food. Anchoring the farm is a greenhouse-barn where classes and presentations can be held for students and the community.

"The whole thing is really all about growing a power- and food-conscious community and designing a replicable system that can be used by other schools in the future," firm founder Jeanne Gang said.

Working with Studio Gang on the project are Chicago-based landscape architects *site design group, ltd.* and New York-based

environmental consultants Atelier Ten. The school will be completely one of a kind when finished, but the design is specifically done in such a way that it can be repeated around the world. To do so, prefabricated systems and readily accessible materials are being specified.

While Studio Gang is garnering international attention for soaring skyscrapers, it continues to work on smaller-scale projects for socially minded clients. The Academy for Global Citizenship adds to the firm's list of educational and community projects that includes the award-winning Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership, the SOS Children's Villages Lavezzorio Community Center, and the Columbia College Chicago Media Production Center. **MM**



COURTESY ANTONIO FURIGUELE

**ART FLOATS MILWAUKEE'S BOAT** continued from front page (SARUP), the project is currently sparking dialogue with community partners

and local residents to raise enthusiasm, support, and sponsorship to launch the boat. MAB operates through a working

**Moveable walls will be able to fold and unfold in order to transform the art barge into different stage and gallery configurations.**

relationship with SARUP, where Furgieue is collaborating with architecture students to develop the project. Together, the team is mapping Milwaukee's waterway infrastructure to demonstrate how the rivers that crisscross the city also constitute and reinforce racial, social, and economic boundaries. The MAB team envisions that floating a cultural space along the very boundaries of urban segregation might create new opportunities for civic participation and social exchange.

The MAB team is interviewing Milwaukee's vibrant arts organizations to better inform the design of its boat. If the performing arts are usually experienced within a fixed institutional framework, then MAB hopes to provide an alternative platform that might empower artists to create new kinds of itinerant performances and to provide a vehicle (literally) for emerging talent. What if the stage proscenium could rotate? What does it mean for a performance to be staged in the middle of Lake Michigan? What if a play could be presented in multiple locations during a single production, coupling scene changes with changing

scenery? MAB wants to leverage the opportunity for dancers, theater directors, filmmakers, and musical artists to choose real-time and dynamic locational backdrops to heighten their storytelling practices and performative impacts. The MAB team speculates that the mobile format will be instrumental to advancing performance as an art form, creating new audiences and challenging existing audiences in new ways.

In addition to artistic performances, the MAB team is also studying opportunities for other kinds of cultural, educational, and civic programming. For instance, MAB envisions water scientists and advocacy groups using the barge as an outdoor classroom during non-performance hours to facilitate water-quality testing and outreach events.

While MAB hopes that local residents will take pride in a "born in Milwaukee" project that engages Milwaukee's specific geopolitical makeup, it also aspires for the barge to "champion a larger exchange" with travel to other Midwestern legacy cities such as Detroit, Cleveland, and Buffalo, Furgieue said. To that end, the MAB team is calibrating the physical requirements of the barge to accommodate regional travel. Furgieue said that a 70-by-28-foot

vessel provides the "sweet spot" for the barge to be nimble enough to navigate Milwaukee's winding rivers but seaworthy enough to traverse the Great Lakes.

What will the arts barge look like? While its aesthetics currently remain schematic, the MAB team envisions a reflective container in which the mirrored exterior walls fold open to create a 40-foot-wide proscenium on either side of the barge. A curved screen at one end encloses a green room and backstage space. When the walls fold back into the closed position, their mirrored surfaces reflect the constantly changing urban surroundings, projecting the city as an image on mobile display.

To share its developing vision with the community, the MAB team recently showcased research and models at the Mobile Design Box, a pop-up gallery space initiated by SARUP. The MAB exhibit, which is part of an ongoing series open through June 30 entitled "Mobility Matters," includes cartographic constructs, architectural models, and photographic research, among other speculative installations. Pending current grant and sponsorship pursuits and fundraising goals, MAB aims to be in the water by summer 2017. **JOSEPH ALTSHULER**





The near northwest side of Chicago has become popular with residents who rely primarily on public transportation, paving the way for a 100 percent reduction in the parking minimum.



COURTESY WHEELER KEARNS ARCHITECTS

may help a bit. And taken together, all these new luxury rentals may take pressure off of existing stock.

Developers are queuing up parking-free or parking-reduced projects in gentrifying neighborhoods with sizable vacant parcels. Logan Square is the bull's-eye, but neighborhoods five miles of the Milwaukee Avenue corridor, from downtown north through Logan Square along the Blue Line, are feeling the effects.

By one count, there are eight significantly sized TOD projects—all rental—completed or under construction with some 1,100 apartments in total. More than 330 apartments are spread across three under-construction buildings near the Blue Line's California station, adding high-rises to the neighborhood mix.

Buono and Wheeler Kearns migrated northwest from their pioneering 1611 West Division to anchor this new blitz. Their Twin Towers, a stone's throw from the Metra, are 11 and 12 stories with 216 apartments and 56 parking spaces. One block south on Milwaukee Avenue, a topped-out, six-story, 120-unit rental, simply called "L" for the elevated tracks at its door, has given primacy to bike parking. The tally? Bikes: 200. Cars: 60.

Despite sporadic local grumblings, TOD buildings are better neighbors in terms of design.

"Pre-TOD, larger buildings springing up in places like the South Loop and River North had a lack of engagement with the street," said Heinert. "New parking-lite designs do a better job relating to the street and are more representative of classic Chicago."

Looks like those old urban forms really do hold the answers. **IAN SPULA**

**HOT TOD-DY** continued from front page been an uptick."

The new rules make it easier for developers to revisit their proposals and apply for more units and less parking on the same plot—a potentially big profit booster.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel championed a revised TOD ordinance in September 2015 with provisions twice as potent. Developers may now apply for a 100 percent reduction in the parking minimum (up from 50 percent) within a quarter mile of a mass-transit station (up from 600 feet) or within a half mile of avenues with "pedestrian designation."

Completed in 2014, Wheeler Kearns's 1611 West Division was a TOD trailblazer, foreshadowing the citywide code change. The East Village Association (EVA), in a departure

from kneejerk NIMBYism, encouraged developer Rob Buono to work with the city to free the project from its mandatory parking minimum (at the time requiring a one-to-one ratio of parking spaces to residential units). Buono and the EVA won a protracted battle with opposing neighbors and the 99-unit rental was built without a single parking space.

The controversy surrounding this building has since been diluted by a legion of imitators. 1611 West Division demonstrated an appetite among younger renters for smaller units in denser, more urbane buildings—hives of activity.

Public perception is somewhat different.

"The parking reduction is a nonissue," said Heinert, "but the public is more resistant now to increased density. Developers are

building with more bulk and height [in the neighborhoods]."

Density is further incentivized by a graduated floor area ratio (FAR) bonus for TOD developments large enough to trigger the city's Affordable Requirements Ordinance, which includes a certain percentage of affordable units (developers can choose to build the units on-site or pay into a fund to off-site them).

On the question of affordability, the "luxury" makeup of most new TOD projects has alarmed some neighbors and community activists. Developers routinely opt out of the on-site affordable housing, and many aldermen fail to push the issue. But projects like the recently announced 100 percent affordable 88-unit building in Logan Square

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The Prescient office mixes clean lines and custom details with warm reclaimed materials.



STEVE HOLL/COURTESY PERKINS+WILL

Prescient's new office in the Prudential 1 Tower in Chicago is exactly what you might expect from a high-tech global security firm's office, and a bit of what you might not. Designed by Chicago-based Perkins+Will, the space is specifically designed to facilitate both human and technological collaborations.

Transparency may not be the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about a security firm, yet Prescient's office is predominantly an open space: The main area of the office is filled with staggered standing desks, and there are glass-

encased break-out areas around the periphery. Framed windows that once made up the former exterior facade of the building are now used as dividers and are specially coated to act as transparent dry-erase boards for impromptu conversations and meetings. Along with the open lunchroom and break areas, the entire space is specifically designed to encourage free interaction between all of the employees.

"We use elegant technology coupled with human analysis to identify and manage threats for our clients," Prescient CEO David Walsh

explained. "Our vision for the office was to be able to stand anywhere and take measure of the energy of an adaptable, team-oriented company in a space that fosters collaboration and transparency."

Along with the spatial considerations of the office, material details play an important role in Perkins+Will's design. At the entrance, a continuous line of fluorescent light fixtures guides visitors to the reception area. The linear lighting and corresponding linear detailing throughout the space is a nod to the movement

of digital information. In addition to the extensive use of glass, steel and walnut make up much of the designed surfaces and furniture. Perkins+Will worked closely with small Chicago-based furniture maker Modified Originals on using an extensive amount of reclaimed wood for the custom furniture. Other custom components were designed by Perkins+Will and built by MTH Industries and Imperial Woodworking. The design called for exposing the ceiling and brick of the original 1955 modernist office tower to contrast with the clean lines of

the new dark finishes. The result is a high-tech, loft-like space with expansive views of Millennium Park.

"The clients wanted to have a sleek modern office that communicated strength and stability, but still had a feeling of warmth and comfort," Perkins+Will associate principal Eric J. Mersmann said. "This balance was achieved with the use of the hot-rolled steel panels and concrete floors combined with the liberal use of reclaimed wood paneling, reclaimed wood on the furniture, and pops of bright color in the casual furniture."

Not all of the office is bright and open, though. Dedicated to Prescient Traveler, one the company's main offerings, a hushed, dimly blue-lit amphitheater is dominated by a full-wall digital display of the world. Here, employees monitor international security issues 24 hours a day.

From the more serious Prescient Traveler space to the more casual and comfortable meeting areas, every part of the design is an aspect of Prescient's new brand. The company specifically moved from the more suburban McLean, Virginia, outside of Washington, D.C., to this highly visible space in downtown Chicago to complete its new image. Not only does the space bring the company in closer contact to a bustling commercial center, its newly designed office also plays a role in attracting the best young tech workers, who often expect to be able to live in an urban area. With their new office, those young tech workers can watch over clients while also enjoying one of the most envied views in the city. **MM**

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Prescient has high-tech work spaces, like the Prescient Traveler department (shown) as well as more informal meeting and break areas (right).



An epic glass wall allows views and light into the new stadium.

TONY WEBSTER/FICKR

**WINDS OF THOR** continued from page 2  
the Vikings applied to have Chicago Avenue, which runs for three blocks in front of the

stadium, renamed "Vikings Way" due to the team's aversion to a street address that evokes a division rival. Minneapolis City Hall would not budge on the street name, and the Vikings eventually withdrew the application.

There was also the dispute over \$16 million in cost overruns that had to be settled with Mortenson Construction (and there's yet to be a final tally) and a leak in the snow gutters at the top of the building requiring nearly \$4 million in repairs. Lastly, the Vikings announced a "distinct monument": A Viking ship-themed sculpture with an LED screen

for a sail on the plaza outside the stadium (by RipBang Studios, a California-based division of the Minneapolis design firm Nelson), as well as *The Horn* sculpture (by the Minneapolis-based Alliance) inside—both drew criticism from the local arts community.

What's done is done. In August, the Vikings kick off the first game in the new stadium. The structure is more than twice as big as the Metrodome. The first row of seats is a mere 41 feet away from the sideline, and the field seats get fans even closer at 25 feet. The wi-fi network is capable of accommodating

upward of 30,000 fans as well as vendors and staff. While fully enclosed, the stadium's vast expanses of roof, wall, and clerestory glass provide a feeling of openness.

Whether viewed on foot, car, or from a seat on the Blue Line of the light-rail train, it's easy to see how the building meshes with surrounding streets amid the fast-changing, rebranded Downtown East neighborhood. To what extent the stadium is a game changer for the City of Minneapolis, and the economic and cultural life of the area, however, remains to be seen. **CAMILLE LEFEVRE**





**PIER REVIEW** continued from front page preliminary design is Chicago-based KOO. Led by Jackie Koo, the office is also responsible for the Wit Hotel in the North Loop and the Inn at Lincoln Park. The new privately funded hotel is expected to cost roughly \$90 million. According to a press release, financing has already been secured, and construction is expected to begin in 2017.

The preliminary design of the hotel includes five levels of hotel rooms looking out over the south side of the Pier. Located near the Pier's east end, each room

would include a balcony and bay window.

The announcement coincides with events surrounding the Pier's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The most visible of these events is the opening of the new 196-foot-tall Centennial Ferris Wheel. The new wheel replaces a smaller version, which has been moved to Branson, Missouri. Like the last wheel, the new ride will have light shows coordinated with the Pier's regular weekly and holiday fireworks shows. At a cost of \$26.5 million, the Centennial Ferris Wheel is 50 feet taller, and can hold

Improvements aim to attract visiting tourists as well as local residents to the 100-year-old Navy Pier.

150 more passengers than its predecessor. Erecting the 525-ton wheel presented unique problems, which included a limit on crane size due to the parking garage below and the weight limits of the Pier. Chicago's inclement weather also played a role, as wind speeds and temperatures on the Pier are often much more extreme than in the city.

Along with the Centennial Wheel, the Polk Bros Park and a reconfiguration of the general park and entry roadways have been completed. These projects were all part of Phase I of the Pier's redevelopment. Also nearing full completion is the Wave Wall designed by New York-based James Corner Field Operations as part of its master plan for the entire Pier. New renderings have also been released for additions to the existing Shakespeare Theater on the Pier. These additions, designed by Chicago-based Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture, are expected to be complete by fall 2017.

Navy Pier is considered one of the largest tourist attractions in the Midwest, with over nine million visitors a year. The Pier was conceived as part of Daniel Burnham's Chicago Plan. In its 100-year history it has been, among other things, a municipal pier, a naval training area, a school of architecture (now the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois at Chicago), and has seen varying levels of popularity and disrepair. The now-packed 50-acre pier and this new redevelopment are playing a large role in the mayor's goal of bringing 55 million annual tourists to Chicago by 2020. **MM**



The Koo-designed hotel will be the first hotel located directly on Navy Pier.

COURTESY KOO ASSOCIATES



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



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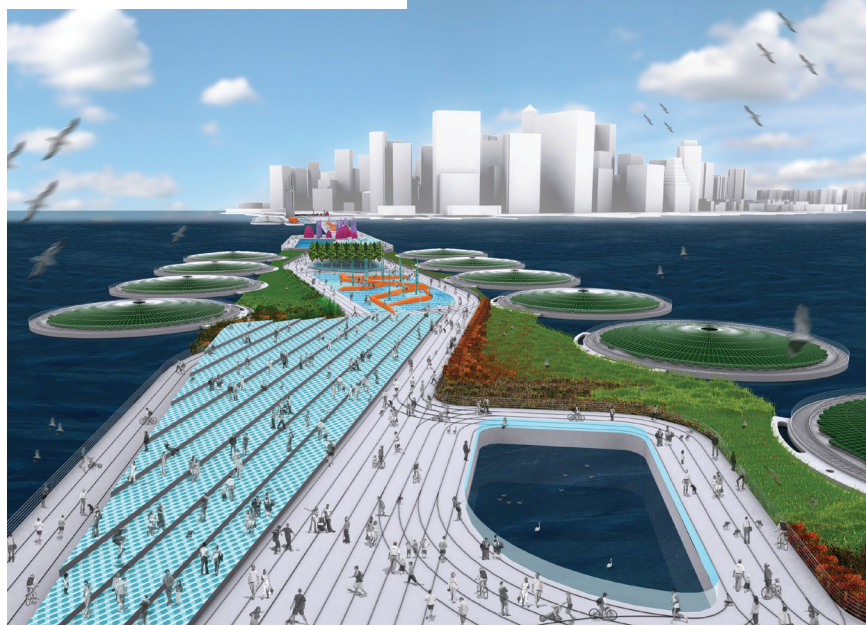
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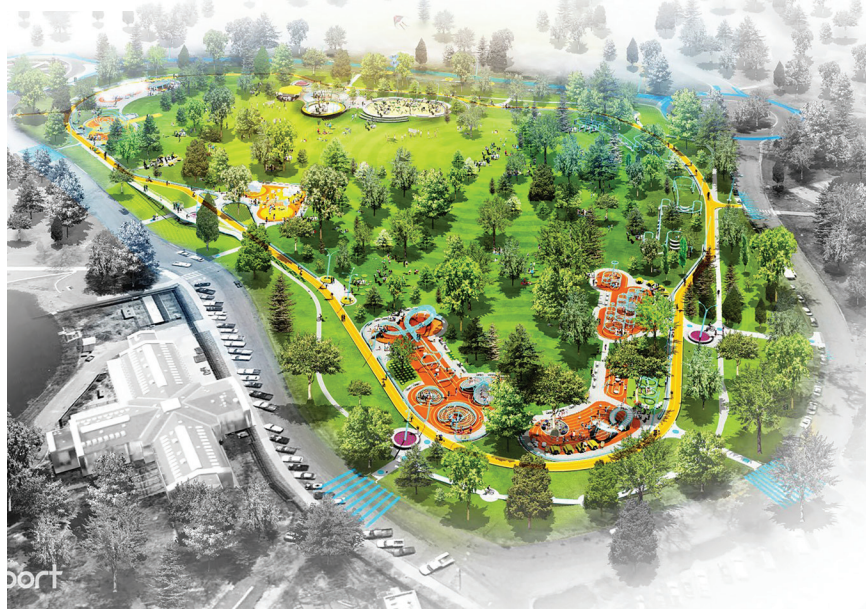




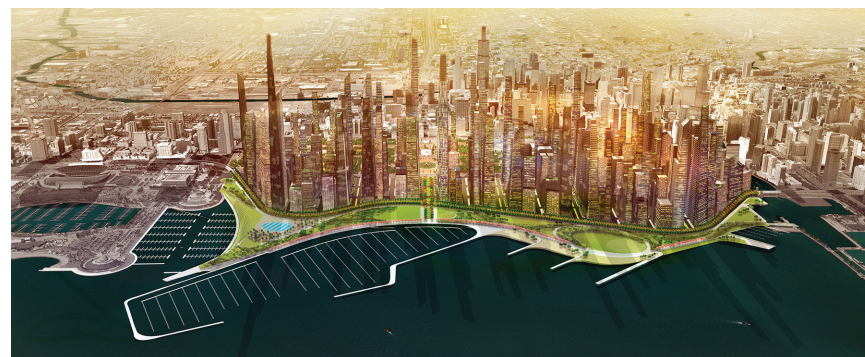
CARBON T.A.P. (TUNNEL ALGAE PARK)



CITY LOOP



THE BIG SHIFT



GOOSE ISLAND 2025



It is sometimes difficult for people who encounter PORT Urbanism's work to know whether the projects are hypothetical or practical urban proposals. Despite this confusion, PORT would tell you that all of its work is practical, if not sometimes fantastic.

With small offices in Chicago and Philadelphia, PORT Urbanism fits into a niche of designers that are not typical urban planners and not strictly architects. As its name would suggest, it works at the urban scale, engaging with city governments and large-scale developers to envision near and far futures for public spaces.

AN visited the firm's Chicago office, which seats four in a small space on the ninth floor of the Burnham and Root–designed Monadnock Building. The office walls are plastered, floor to ceiling, in bright renderings, small models, site photos, and marker-laden site maps. Partner Andrew Moddrell and two employees make up the Chicago office, while the Philadelphia office is comprised of partner Christopher Marcinkoski and one other employee. Moddrell and Marcinkoski started PORT in 2012. With the support of academic positions at the University of Illinois Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania, they were able to practice on their own terms.

#### CARBON T.A.P. (TUNNEL ALGAE PARK) NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Winner of the WPA 2.0 competition, the Carbon T.A.P. envisions a carbon-harvesting algae park attached to the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel. The speculative project proposes to use carbon dioxide released by cars passing through the tunnel to feed algae that can be used to produce oxygen, biofuels, bioplastics, nutraceuticals, and agricultural feeds. Linked to the algae production is a large-scale public space in the form of a swinging bridge. Part of the rationale behind the project is that with the introduction of an innovative industrial infrastructural typology—carbon-reducing algae farms—a new civic infrastructural typology can be realized.

#### THE BIG SHIFT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The Big Shift was originally conceived as an entry to the Art Institute of Chicago's show *Chicagoisms*. It was developed further for the 2015 Chicago Architecture Biennial. The Big Shift proposes to move Chicago's Lakeshore Drive east and add hundreds of new acres of land in order to expand the city's downtown and produce hundreds of new acres of park along the lake. Making no small reference to Chicago's history of reconfiguring its lakeshore, which was mostly fabricated after the 1871 fire, the Big Shift aims to produce trillions of dollars of new real estate. Despite its large upfront infrastructural costs, the plan highlights the advantages of a lakeside park that is three times the size of the current park and of 30 new city blocks of tax-paying, job-producing real estate.

Despite PORT's small size, it is no stranger to large and complex projects. After being chosen from a request for proposal for a Denver park design with Denver-based Independent Architecture, a NIMBY battle ensued. The project was eventually moved and redesigned for a new park in a neighborhood with a community that appreciated the project. PORT is now moving forward through design development with an improved plan.

Presented at the Chicago Architecture Biennial, the Big Shift envisioned adding a new coastline and additional land east of Millennium and Grant Parks in downtown Chicago. While dismissed by many as too far-fetched, the project struck a chord with critics and the public. "If we had proposed putting an island in Lake Michigan, then nobody would have cared," Moddrell said. "But when we ground it in the precision of an infrastructural hierarchy and proposed repositioning of Lake Shore Drive, extending boulevards, and turning Grant Park into a Central Park, and pitch it with a straight face, it is not just architects screwing around for other architects." Moddrell stands by the idea, however grandiose, as a serious, though speculative proposal. **MM**

#### CITY LOOP DENVER, COLORADO

City Loop is a \$5 million public park planned for the City of Denver. Comprised of a continuous ribbon of program and activity space, the Loop is designed to encourage healthy lifestyles and active play. A series of tubes, colorful paths, and diverse activity pods stretch over the half-mile loop, providing for every age group and taste. Along with physical health, the park aims to promote social and cultural well-being as a civic and community space. The full team working on the project is PORT, Denver-based Indie Architecture, Indianapolis-based Latitude 39, Boulder, Colorado–based engineers Studio NYL, Denver-based metal fabricators JunoWorks, athletics consultant Loren Landow, and Tulsa, Oklahoma–based contractors Site Masters Inc.

#### GOOSE ISLAND 2025 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

In an ongoing collaboration with Chicago developers R2, PORT's Goose Island 2025 addresses the large industrial Goose Island on the near North Side of Chicago. A planned manufacturing district, Goose Island is now in the middle of a quickly developing part of the city. The island itself, though, has seen little development due to its designation as a planned manufacturing district and the city's lack of an overall vision. R2 and PORT's plan looks at the possibilities of the island as it continues as a place of industry, as well as anticipates a future in which some of its land may become available for other programs.



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

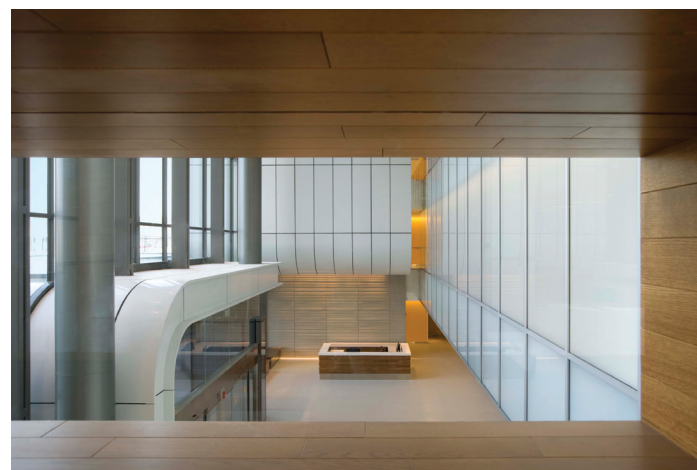




BJORG MAGNEA



BJORG MAGNEA



THOMAS MAYER

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,"

**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.

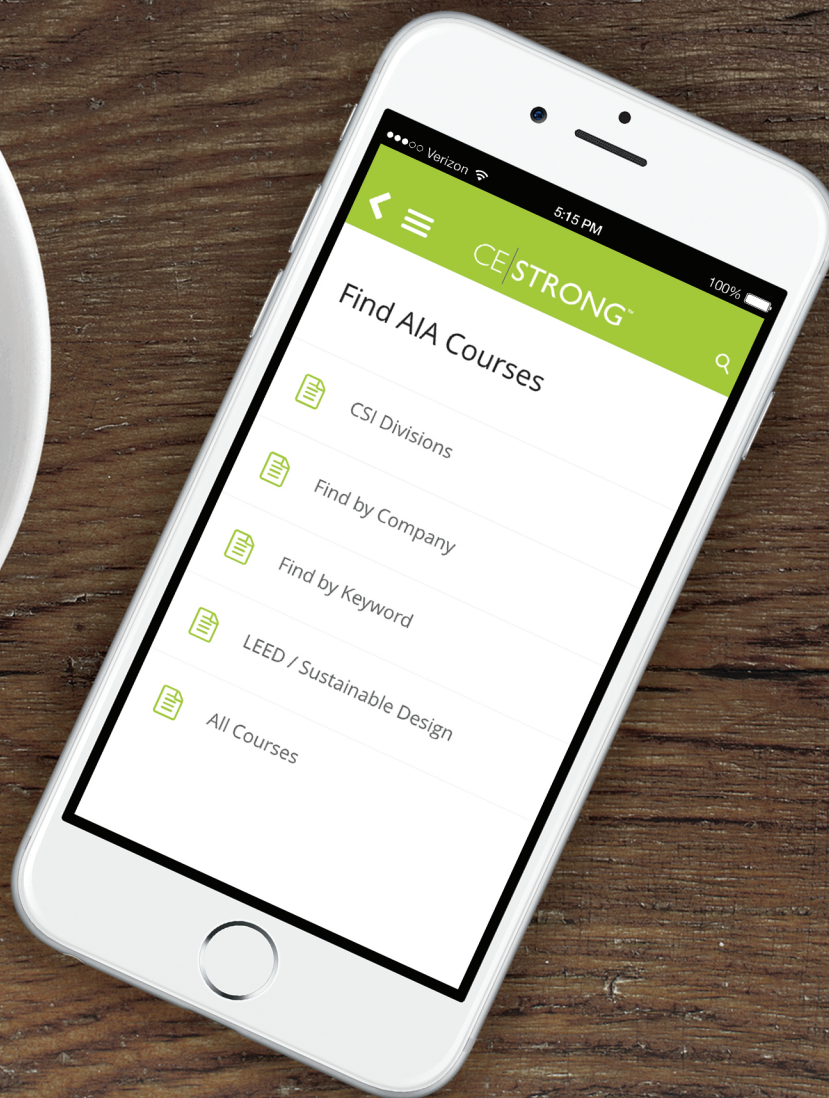


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# operable walls

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Like magic, rooms are transformed with the push of a button or the slide of a hand. We delve into the best new offerings for moveable walls, suitable for interior and exterior settings, plus the hardware that assists in making these statement doors last.

By  
Becca Blasdel

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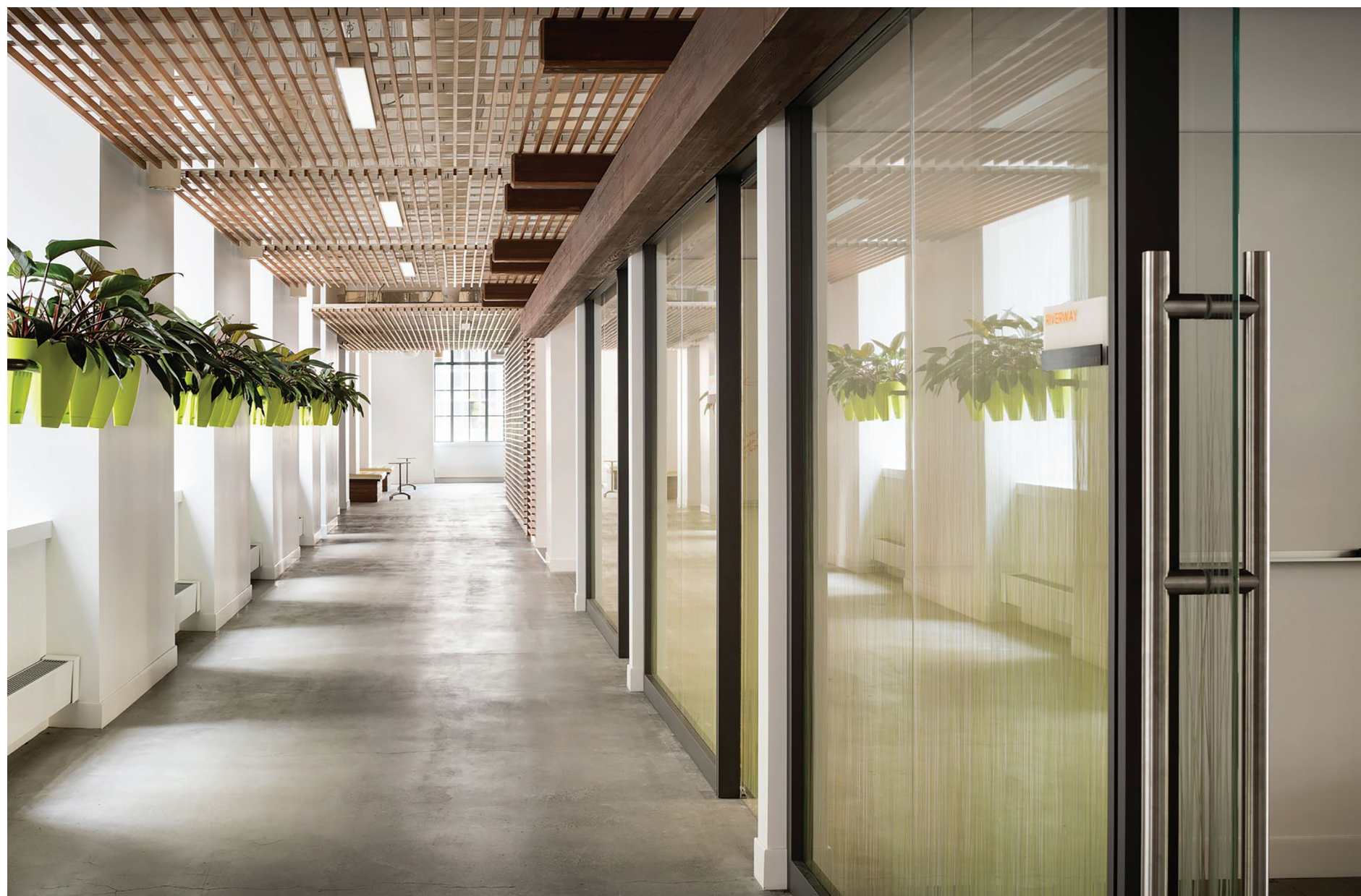


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PROFILE

# 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



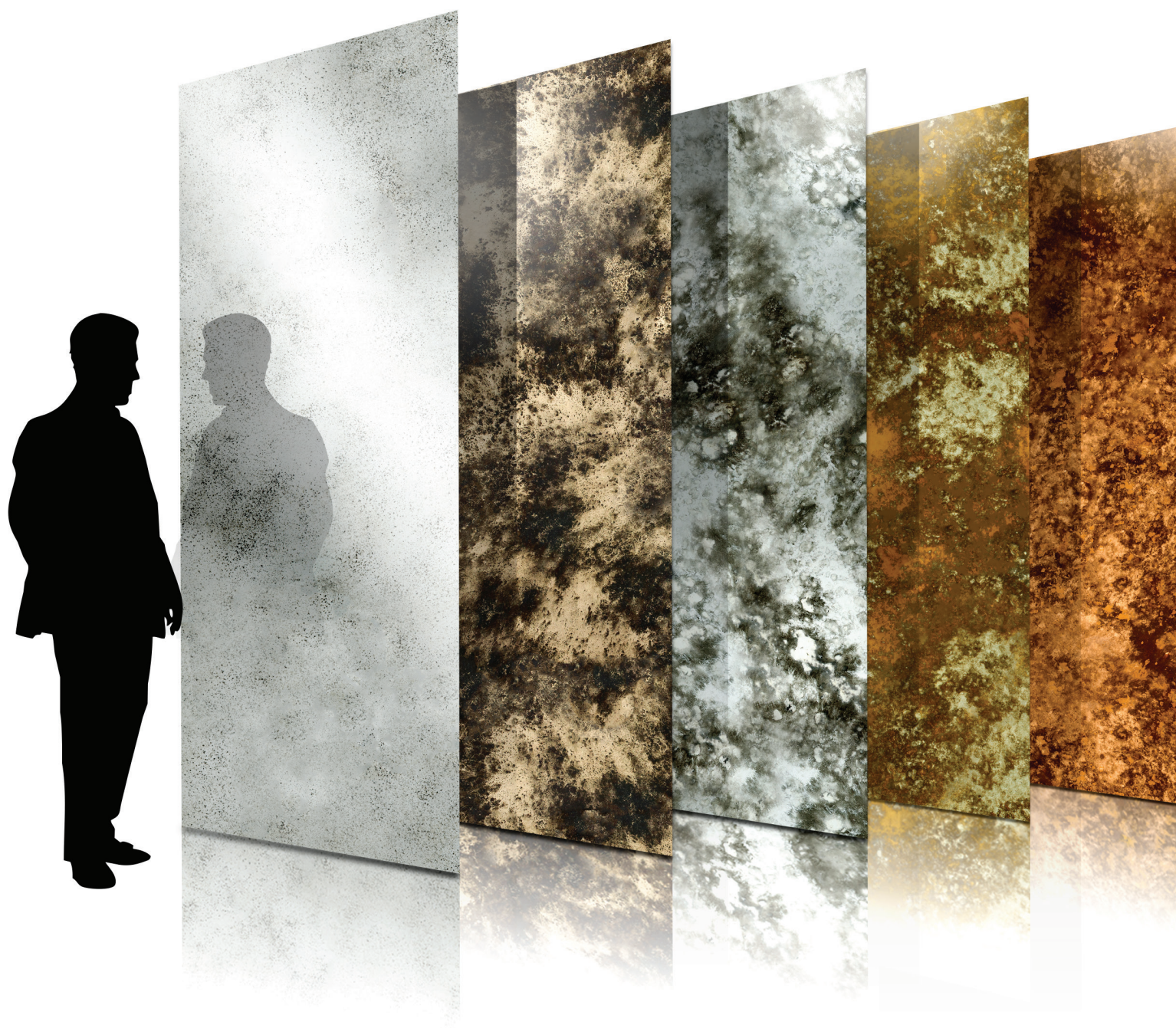
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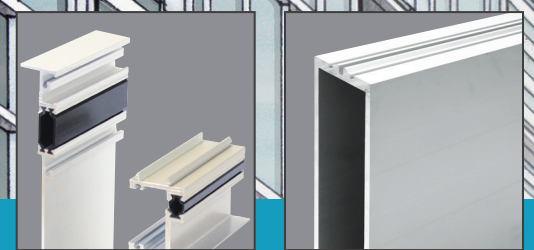
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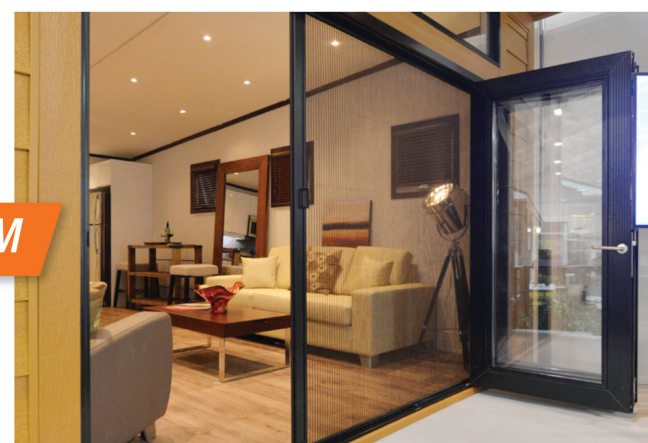
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[plygem.com](http://plygem.com)

**7 SLIDING DOOR  
AUTOMATIC CONTROL  
MARVIN WINDOWS AND DOORS**

Marvin has fully automated its collection of doors, including biparting pocket and stacked, as well as unidirectional pocket and stacked options, allowing for extremely large sizes. The Sliding Door Automatic Control runs on a 100-volt motor system and has a battery-powered wireless motion sensor for safety.

[marvin.com](http://marvin.com)

**8 MOVABLE WALL SYSTEM  
PANORAMAH**

Panoramah offers a wide range of custom sliding window systems that guarantee excellent thermal and acoustic performance. The ball-bearing movement system enables glass panels to move effortlessly. Unlike traditional systems, the glass supports itself—the aluminum frame is there to merely tighten the window.

[panoramah.com](http://panoramah.com)

**9 SITELINE  
JELD-WEN**

The newest mid-tier addition to Jeld-Wen's line of wood and clad-wood window and door styles, Sitaline provides improved thermal performance and meets 2016 Energy Star 6.0 requirements at a budget-friendly price. All of the products in this line come standard with a lifetime warranty and AuraLast wood, which does not rot and is manufactured with Jeld-Wen's proprietary water-based wood-protection process.

[jeld-wen.com](http://jeld-wen.com)

**10 ZERO WINDOW  
REVEAL WINDOWS & DOORS**

The Zero Window is the only one on the market with zero interior wood sightlines. It is available in casement, awning, and fixed configurations with custom sizes and myriad types of wood or aluminum-clad wood in a variety of paint and stain options. It also features a pop-up handle that is completely hidden until the window is opened.

[revealwd.com](http://revealwd.com)



WRAP-AROUND HINGE  
SCHWEISS DOORS

Schweiss's new design with grease zerks on every hinge allows users to easily grease hinges from the underside of the doorframe without having to remove the top rubber weather seal. Unique evenly distributed double-push tubes provide extra support.

bifold.com



CUSHION STOP  
ASSA ABLOY/PEMKO

A new cushion stop for stainless-steel sliding-track hardware systems grabs the door, preventing any reverberation or bounce back into the opening. It also prevents racking of the system and extends the life of the track hardware. The use of a heavy-duty magnet holds the door open or closed to prevent creeping.

pemko.com



LA JOLLA  
BALDWIN

With a new push-button privacy feature to enhance egress functionality, the La Jolla handle set features a contemporary design offered in nine handcrafted finishes, including the new polished nickel.

baldwinhardware.com



FLUSH AND CUP PULLS  
OMNIA

These minimalist solid brass pulls are ideal for use on pocket doors: They are available in a variety of finishes that suit an array of styles.

omniaindustries.com



HARDWARE

# Hardworking Hardware

These decorative accents communicate design aesthetic while covering the technical aspects that keep doors moving seamlessly.



SYSTEM3 PIVOT HINGE  
FRITSJURGENS

This Dutch system solves the difficult problem of having to design around a closer box sunk in the floor or ceiling with standard pivot doors. System3 has everything mortised directly into the door, with nothing in the ceiling or floor. The system provides maintenance-free pivots for doors up to 20 feet wide or 20 feet tall and up to 1,100 pounds.

fritsjurgens.com



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KROWNLAB

A safer, quieter, and more affordable interpretation of classic barn-door hardware, Axel is a modern take on the classic with industrial aspects like quarter-inch-thick carbon steel tracks and three-inch custom-engineered bearings and visible fasteners. It is available in raw steel that will patina with use, as well as black steel that will retain its matte finish.

krownlab.com



HAWA TELESCOPIC  
HÄFELE

This system enables fluid, simultaneous sliding of two to three doors weighing up to 176 pounds or four doors weighing up to 88 pounds in both commercial and residential applications. High-quality trolleys allow for easy movement with one hand, and toothed belts provide strong maintenance-free operation.

hafele.com



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TURNER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

WALL SYSTEM: PK-30 SLIDING/  
STACKING POCKET WALL

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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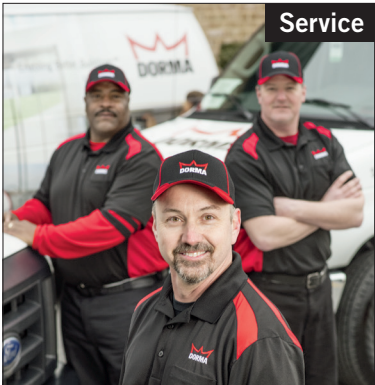
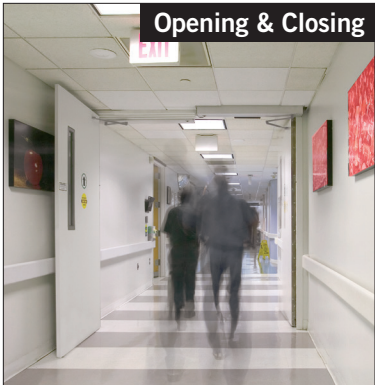


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JUNE

THURSDAY 16  
EVENTS

**AIA Iowa Summer Social**  
5:00 p.m.  
Jasper Winery  
2400 George Flagg Pkwy.  
Des Moines, IA  
aiaiaowa.org

**Obama Presidential  
Center Competition  
Awards Ceremony**  
5:30 p.m.  
BuiltWorlds  
1260 West Madison St.  
builtworlds.com

**Richardson,  
Sullivan & Wright  
Presented by  
Pella Crafted Luxury**  
5:30 p.m.  
Pella Crafted Luxury  
222 West Merchandise  
Mart Plaza  
sah.org

SATURDAY 18  
EVENTS

**Gary Indiana's  
Annual Art Festival**  
Through June 19  
11:00 a.m.  
Gateway Park  
399 West 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Gary, IN  
changingliveschangingpat-  
terns.org

TUESDAY 21  
LECTURES

**Jacques Sandberg:  
Current Projects:  
Lathrop Homes  
Redevelopment**  
6:00 p.m.  
Chicago Architecture  
Foundation Lecture Hall  
224 South Michigan Ave.  
architecture.org

**Arathi Gowda  
Paris Tales: COP21 Impacts**  
5:30 p.m.  
AIA Chicago  
35 East Wacker Dr.  
aiachicago.org

**SYMPOSIUM  
Casimir Kujawa,  
Mason Pritchett,  
and Patrick Johnson:  
Wide Range: Photographer's  
Balcony and Other Points  
of View**  
5:30 p.m.  
Chicago Design Museum  
108 North State St.  
chidm.com

THURSDAY 23  
WORKSHOP

**Procrastinator's Ball:  
An Overview of  
Hancher Auditorium**  
8:30 a.m.  
Hancher Auditorium  
University of Iowa  
iowa City, IA  
aiaiaowa.org

FRIDAY 24  
WORKSHOP

**Architectural Rendering  
Workshop with Bruce Bondy**  
1:30 p.m.  
Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin  
6004 State Highway 23  
Spring Green, WI  
aiaw.org

EVENT

**AIA Southwest Wisconsin  
Summer Gathering  
and Mixer**  
6:00 p.m.  
Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin  
6004 State Hwy 23  
Spring Green, WI  
aiaw.org

TUESDAY 28  
LECTURE

**Projects by Chicago  
Architects: Designing the  
National WW1 Memorial**  
**Joe Weishaar and  
Sabin Howard**  
5:30 p.m.  
The Cliff Dwellers  
200 South Michigan Ave.  
cliff-chicago.org

THURSDAY 30  
LECTURE

**Esra Akcan  
Absence and Transverse:  
Translations across  
Time, Space, and Medium  
in Istanbul**  
6:00 p.m.  
Madlener House  
4 West Burton Pl.  
grahamfoundation.org

EVENTS

**AIA Wichita Design  
Garden Party**  
12:00 p.m.  
Sedgwick County Zoo  
5555 West Zoo Blvd.  
Wichita, KS  
aiaks.org

**Design Is...**  
6:00 p.m.  
HGA Atrium at the Historic  
Ford Center  
430 5<sup>th</sup> St. North  
Minneapolis, MN  
aia-mn.org

JULY

SATURDAY 9  
EXHIBITION OPENING

**Various Designers  
DOUBLE TIME**  
Volume Gallery  
845 West Washington Blvd.  
wvvolumes.com

WEDNESDAY 13  
CONFERENCE

**AIA SpeakUp**  
Through July 15  
Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill  
400 New Jersey Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C.  
aia.org

THURSDAY 14  
EVENT

**PechaKucha Night  
Pittsburgh vol. 24**  
6:00 p.m.  
Bricolage Production Company  
937 Liberty Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA  
aiapgh.org



MARSHALL BROWN

**CHIMERA: THE WORK OF MARSHALL BROWN  
AT WESTERN EXHIBITIONS**

WESTERN EXHIBITIONS  
845 West Washington Boulevard, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Through June 25

Now on show at Chicago's Western Exhibitions space, *Chimera* is a presentation of the architectural photomontages by Chicago-based architect Marshall Brown. Using a technique Brown refers to as "stealth collage," images of buildings are cut and pasted into diverse, incompatible alignments. The specific pieces on display were created in 2014 as a set of 100 14- by 17-inch compositions. *Chimera* is the second solo show for Marshall Brown at Western Exhibitions.

Marshall Brown is a practicing architect and an associate professor at the Illinois Institute of Technology College of Architecture. His practice, Marshall Brown Projects, has work currently on exhibit as part of the United States Pavilion at the 15<sup>th</sup> Venice Architecture Biennale.

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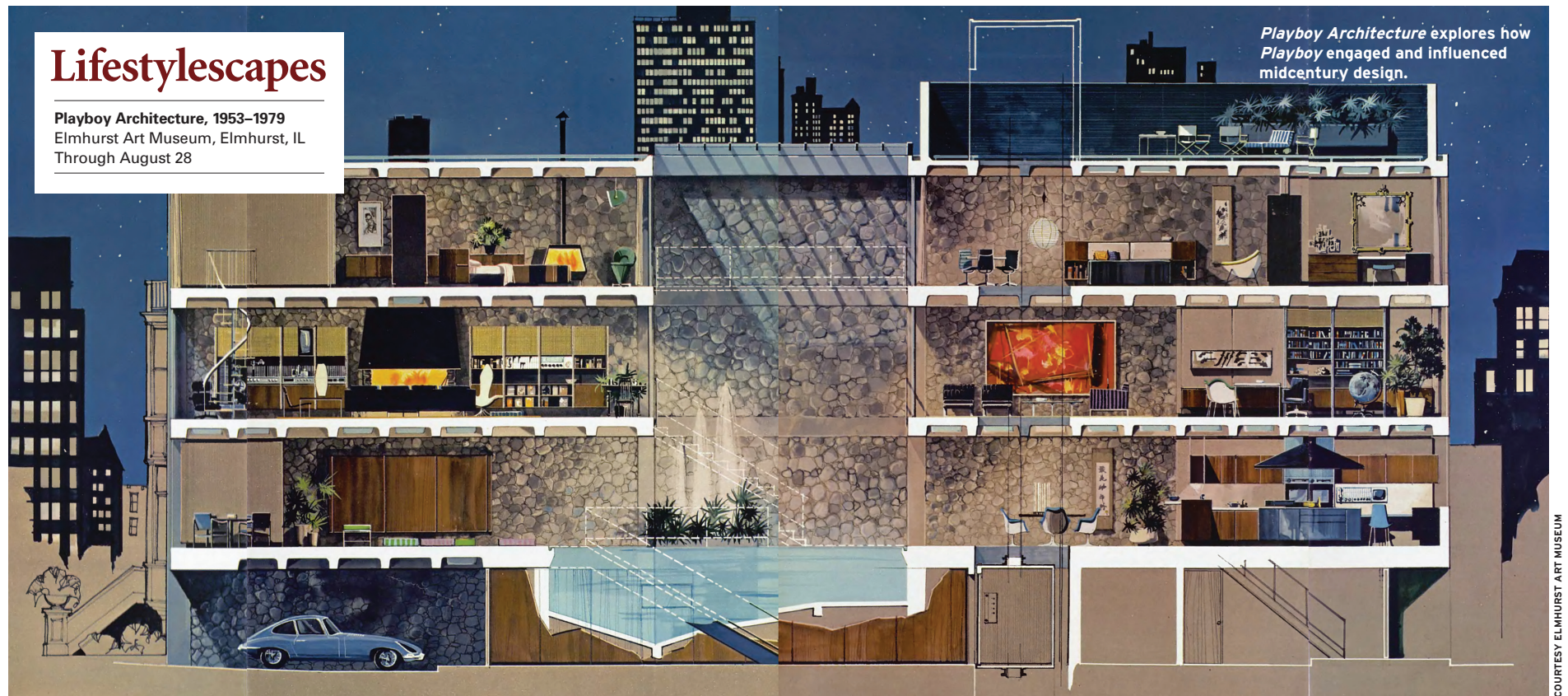


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One thing is certain about Beatriz Colomina and Pep Aviles's *Playboy Architecture, 1953-1979*: It is an evidentiary display proving that architecture and media are complicit partners in shaping society's view of itself. Born out of research within the Ph.D. program in Media and Modernity at Princeton University's School of Architecture, *Playboy Architecture* is an exhaustive index of the ways magazines, architecture, design, furniture, fashion, and sex influence Western society. From the pages of *Playboy*, one could dream of a glossy packaged life. However, the role of the architect in this context has never been clearer: a precise purveyor of taste, a consummate expert on lifestyles, and a key to liberation—sexual and/or otherwise.

On display through August 28 at the Elmhurst Art Museum in Elmhurst, Illinois, 18 miles west of downtown Chicago, *Playboy Architecture* is situated within Mies van der Rohe's McCormick House, a centerpiece of

the museum and one of three built Mies houses in the United States. Perhaps there can be no better space to display and curate a show like *Playboy Architecture*, simply due to the fact that this house was meant to be mass produced—a cog in a suburban machine that Mies was never able to create, in part because modernism and its sultry packaging were just not tasteful to the inhabitants of Elmhurst.

The show is divided into four parts: Playboy Pads, Vehicles + Mobility, the Bedroom, and Playboy Architecture. Shifting scales from beds to interiors and from airplanes to houses, the curators locate different punctuations of a complex "lifestylescape," where design and architecture provide not only the backdrop to where you live, but also a proposition on how to live. The first room in the exhibition when you enter is the Playboy Pads, situated within the old living room of the McCormick House. Sitting on a circular pedestal are some iconic chairs, like Mies's Barcelona, coupled

with blown-up pages of *Playboy* showing drawings of different interiors. The most compelling pad shown is the one-inch-by-one-foot-long sectional model of the proposed Playboy House in the Gold Coast of Chicago, which is three stories and divided in the center by a pool with a water-to-glass-ceiling atrium, allowing for views through adjacent windows all the way up—a truly panoptic voyeurism.

The next room shows Vehicles + Mobility: Hugh Hefner was famous for living and traveling in style. A vertically displayed plan-section model of an airplane gives an incredible glimpse into the almost Corbusian floor plan of walls within, replete with the creature comforts of high modernism, extending lifestyle during commutes to other far away pads.

In the adjacent room, lies a bed. The Bedroom—or, more specifically, a circular bed—is hidden behind a velvet curtain with peepholes, dimly lit and perhaps the most compelling piece of design in the entire exhibition.

This bed was not only meant for the purposes of sleeping and sex, but also was an office and a conference center with shelves and phones, but no chairs. The bed extended past its typical uses and became an ambiguous small architecture in and of itself, suggesting that the real place of modernity in society was to help it reinvent itself, one bed at a time.

Finally, viewers enter *Playboy Architecture*, situated inside the old kid's playroom of the McCormick House, albeit non-ironically. This section gives users a glimpse into built residential and visionary housing projects. Matti Suuronen's portable metabolist Futuro House, John Lautner's Elrod House, and Ant Farm's House of the Century are all shown as "evidence of an ever expanding blurring between modern design and pleasure," according to Colomina.

The physical and conceptual thread that ties all the rooms together is the original magazines themselves, complete with white gloves to handle

them carefully. The back and forth between the curated magazine and the modernist McCormick House provides a ripe environment to imagine oneself within the image of modernism. *Playboy* has always been equated with male sexual pleasure, but Colomina's curation suggests a much deeper understanding of the relationship between sexuality, architecture, and design, not from a purely objectified space, where this exhibition might be misunderstood to be, but from a transcendent redefinition of oneself fittingly tied into the construction of lifestyle. This inversion is a critical product of the exhibition curation that directly challenges our historical understanding of *Playboy*, and uses the revolutionary edge of modernist architecture to suggest that creating future images of visionary, free spaces for anybody is what architects have, can, and should continue to do.

**ANDREW SANTA LUCIA IS AN ARCHITECT, EDUCATOR AND CRITIC LIVING AND TEACHING IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.**







Left: The Philadelphia Convention Center hosted the 2016 AIA National Convention. Below: The AIA changed its rules in 2013 to allow a duo to receive the award, this year Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi became the first pair to win it.

## No More Weird Architecture in Philadelphia

A Retroactive Manifesto for the 2016 AIA National Convention  
Philadelphia Convention Center  
Philadelphia, PA  
May 19–21, 2016

The main exhibit hall at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia is three city blocks long. This is a universal space, unencumbered by columns and enriched by connection points and affordances that offer access to electricity,

light, water, and ventilation. This space could hold and sustain almost anything. Today, as part of the AIA National Convention, it is filled with the elements of building, decontextualized and layered on top of one another in a delirious

profusion of texture and meaning. Here, a mock-up of an elevator booth; there, a maze constructed entirely of doors. Signs over the booths invite us to do things like “Re-Think Wood,” and “Build our Community,” and remind us that “Glass

is Everything.” A company making doorknobs and handles announces that it is “The Global Leader in Door Opening Solutions.” This breathless valorization of the normal is infectious. Things and even people here seem on the verge of tipping

over into some kind of technological singularity of the everyday. Even ordinary conversations occur with an extra layer of mediation. Each interaction with the staff at a booth is punctuated with an unusual question, “Do you mind if I scan your badge?” Attendees are all wearing custom lanyards with QR codes, which the booth staff photographs using smartphone apps, quantifying and upgrading any simple question about building components into an elevated transactional informational layer. This halo around space, people, and things is also visible on the official convention app, where continuous back channel discussions and jokes flow in real time, pulling attendees from the gridded space of the convention hall back into its virtual counterpart.

Two architects in particular haunt this universal space: Denise Scott Brown and Rem Koolhaas. The exhibit hall’s collection brings to mind the Venice Biennale exhibition that Koolhaas curated in 2014. His *Elements of Architecture* show included a suspended acoustic tile ceiling installed under an ornate frescoed dome, and a collection of toilets from throughout history labeled with detailed annotations.

Similarly, the signs at the convention’s exhibits recall the gallery work and research of Scott Brown and her husband-partner Robert Venturi. For the 1976 show *Signs of Life: Symbols in the American City*, at the Smithsonian, the pair gave voices to the ordinary pieces of the domestic landscape: “Historical Elegance” was bestowed on the ironwork of a row house front door, “Regency Style” demarcated a suburban living room armchair. In her 1972 book, *Learning From Las Vegas*, Scott Brown, Venturi, and a third collaborator, Steven Izenour, drew a warehouse-shed building with a large billboard optimistically declaring, “I am a Monument.”

And there is the drawing, on a T-shirt available in the gift shop off the main hall. And here is Scott Brown herself, onstage with AIA president Russell Davidson and executive director Robert

Ivy. They are awarding the AIA Gold Medal to her and Venturi. This is the first time that this award has gone to collaborative partnership, they announce, and they have voted to change the medal’s rules, just to make this possible. This is extraordinary, and long overdue, but it is also extraordinarily normal. Architects have been working together in partnerships for centuries. To adapt Scott Brown’s own language, this moment—that has the audience of thousands on its feet and overcome with emotion—is heroic and original, but it’s also ordinary, and the failure of the AIA to recognize this normal everyday mode up until now is certainly a bit ugly.

Architecture, like Main Street, is almost all right. After Scott Brown, we hear from Koolhaas, onstage with Mohsen Mostafavi, the dean of Harvard’s GSD. Although the two interlocutors never mention Philadelphia, the title of Mostafavi and Koolhaas’s talk is “Delirious Philadelphia.” Billed by Ivy as “a real kick in the pants,” the talk turns out to be quite an ordinary, low-key conversation. Reminiscing about *Learning From Las Vegas*, Koolhaas said, “I remember very clearly when I first saw a copy of that book. It was extraordinary, I bought it right away.” Koolhaas has just finished signing hundreds of copies of his own 1978 book *Delirious New York, A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* for sale in the bookstore alongside the “I am a Monument” shirts.

That book chronicled the assimilation of the disruptive effect that several new technologies had on architecture in Manhattan: the steel frame, the elevator, the electric light, and the air conditioner. This renormalization had taken place in the universal space of the 1811 street grid, allowing for the accommodation of difference in a way not unlike the neutral space of the convention center’s exhibit hall and its diverse booths.

**FRED SCHARMEN IS A DESIGNER AND RESEARCHER IN BALTIMORE. HE ALSO TEACHES ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN AT MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY.**



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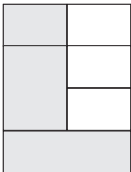
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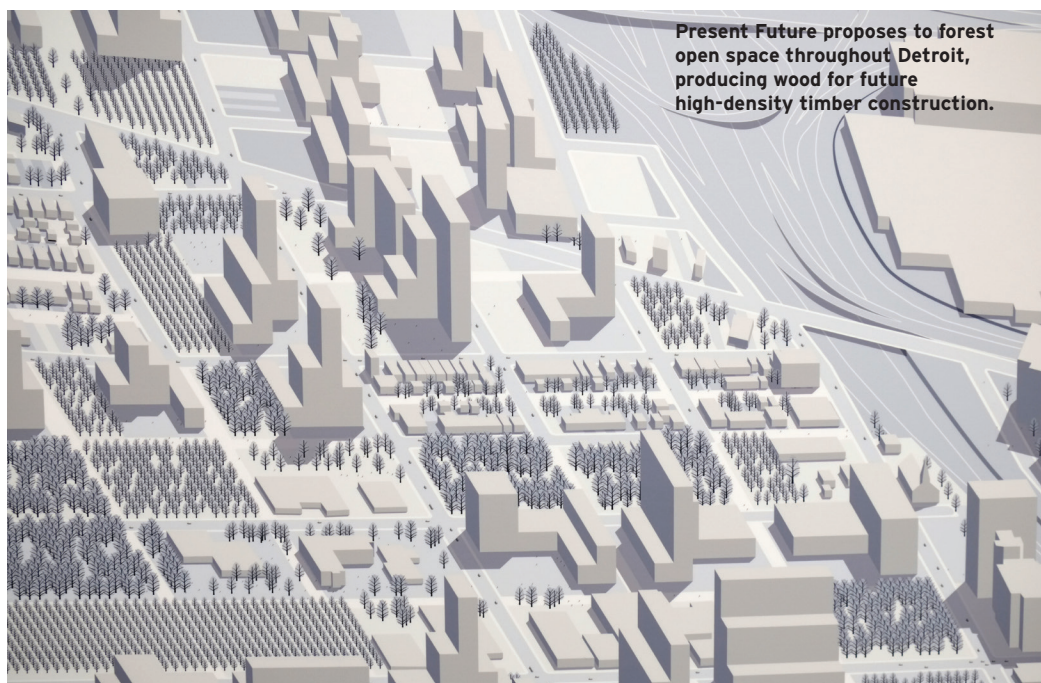
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 15, 2016



Present Future proposes to forest open space throughout Detroit, producing wood for future high-density timber construction.



Stan Allen's Detroit Rock City: An Urban Geology would transform the abandoned Packard Plant into a center for urban agriculture.

The Dequindre Civic Academy by Marshall Brown Projects imagines many diverse programs in a single building



MATTHEW MESSNER/ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER

There is often a barrier to entry when it comes to talking about Detroit. No matter how empathetically one approaches the subject, there is the distinct possibility of being accused of insensitivity. Detroit has been through, and continues to go through, some of the most difficult urban issues in the country. And, naturally, many Detroiters are downright tired of outsiders coming in and proposing "solutions" to the city's ills. So when it was announced that the United States Pavilion for the 15<sup>th</sup> Venice Architecture Biennale would focus on the city, it was not surprising that some would take issue.

The United States Pavilion is explicitly about Detroit. The pavilion is organized by the University of Michigan Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning and curated by Mónica Ponce de León, former dean at Michigan and current dean at Princeton University, and Cynthia Davidson, editor of the journal *Log*. Titled the *Architectural*

*Imagination*, the two curators charged 12 design firms to speculate on four sites throughout Detroit—the former Packard Automotive Plant, the U.S. Post Office on Fort Street, and city-owned sites in Mexicantown and the Dequindre Cut. The firms range from lesser-known talent to well-known names like Stan Allen and Greg Lynn. All firms were given free rein to imagine what program and form should go on their sites. They met with city and community representatives to discuss their projects and gain a better understanding of the sites. Overall, the exhibition is fairly typical of what one might expect to see in a show about architecture, with large models and drawings filling the pavilion.

Before the exhibition opened, well before any of the designs were revealed, criticism was leveled against the show. Most notably this critique came from a group called Detroit Resists. Remaining anonymous, Detroit Resists released a statement linking architecture, and the

institutions that generally support building, to some of the systemic issues that plague Detroit—mass water shutoffs, evictions, gentrification, and spatial racism. The group accused the organizers, and indirectly the participating firms, of political indifference.

And Detroit Resists was far from alone in its skepticism, if not in its fervor. The conversation of Detroit and its relationship to contemporary design and architecture is a popular one. The U.S. Pavilion is not the first, and will not be the last, to speculate on Detroit. The general criticism of any design proposals produced for the city is that the egoism of the designers and their lack of connection to the city mean that they could not possibly contribute to the betterment of the people of Detroit.

One could not have a conversation about the possible designs without also having a conversation about whether it was even appropriate to talk about architecture and Detroit together. Just weeks before the

Biennale opening, New York's New Museum hosted a week-long workshop titled *Ideas City in Detroit*. The workshop brought together Detroiters, other Americans, and international designers and architects to discuss and think about the city. Similarly, the U.S. Pavilion participants engaged the community in conversations throughout the design process. A great deal of the conversation in that week, and in the concluding public forum, revolved around the role of outsiders in the reimagining of Detroit. *Ideas City* made very few proposals for the city, though. Instead it reserved most of its actions to discussion and listening. By most accounts—from Detroiters and others—the event was productive.

Yet the skepticism of the U.S. Pavilion is not what is at issue. Rather, it is the preemptive cynicism and dismissive posture that came with that skepticism. To say that architecture, from within or from without Detroit, is inherently a negative for the city, is to negate any possibility of it being anything else. Having a serious conversation about architectural ideas means admitting that Detroit is not a war-torn wasteland, because it isn't, and engaging with architects means accepting Detroiters as urbanites as much as any other city dwellers.

Now that the pavilion is open, we are able to look at the projects and judge whether they are doing the harm of which they have been accused. Proposals range from complex abstractions

of information gathered from the community to complex postindustrial tech complexes. Others take on community gathering spaces, and yet others reimagine infrastructural amenities, such as urban farm space and material reclamation. Now is the time to carefully read the projects and decide whether they live down to the allegations of cultural insensitivity that were laid against them.

Detroit, like all cities, is inseparably linked with architecture, old and new. No matter how badly, or well, things are going, architecture is part of the city-making conversation. It will never heal the ills of any city. It is not a solution or a means to specific ends. Yet to dismiss the possibility of architecture is to close the conversation on the built environment. And though it is naive to think that architecture won't be used for nefarious purposes, it is cynical to think that it has to be used as such. Where exactly it fits into improving the postindustrial city, or the racially segregated city, is still unclear. But there are people working on it.

*The U.S. Pavilion, The Architectural Imagination, will be open from May 28 through November 27 at the 15<sup>th</sup> Venice Architecture Biennale in Venice, Italy.*  
[thearchitecturalimagination.org](http://thearchitecturalimagination.org)

*More information on Detroit Resists can be found at*  
[detroitresists.org](http://detroitresists.org)

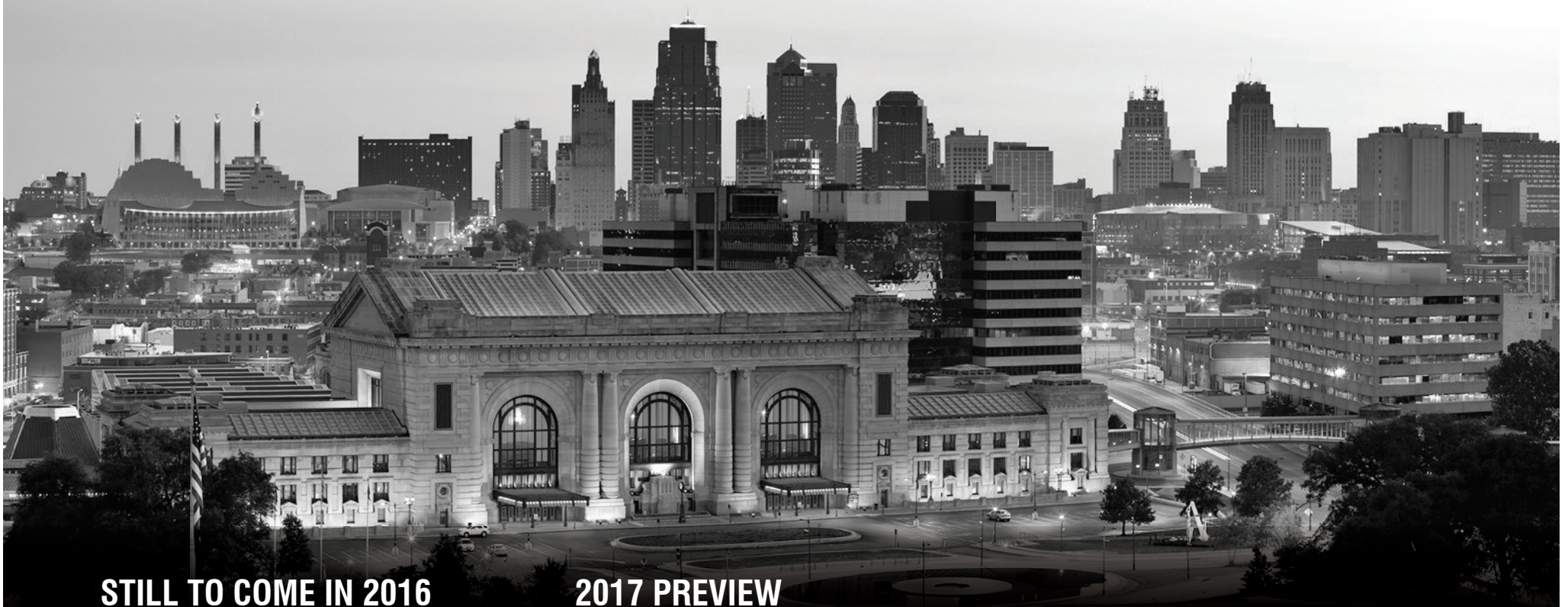


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