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Guest Editor: HOK

Collaboration

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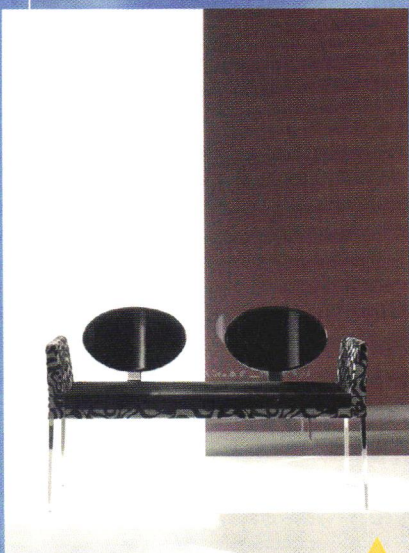
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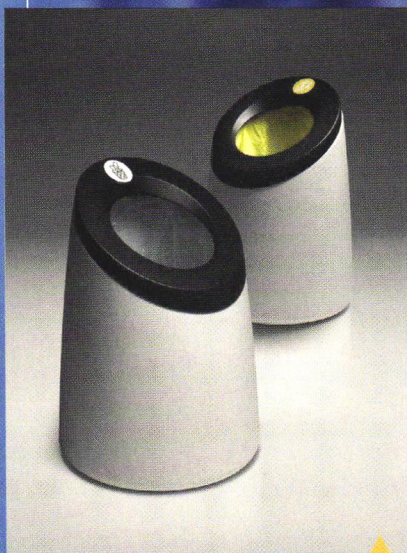
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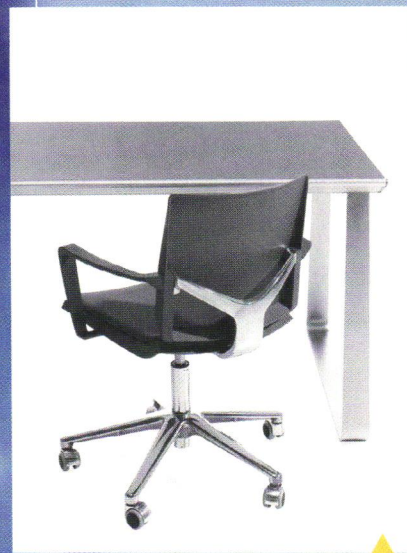
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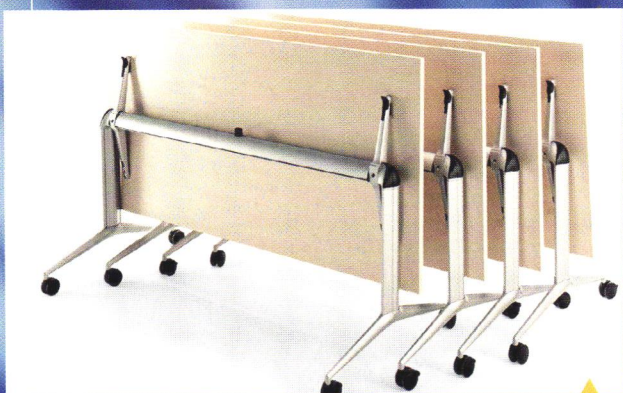
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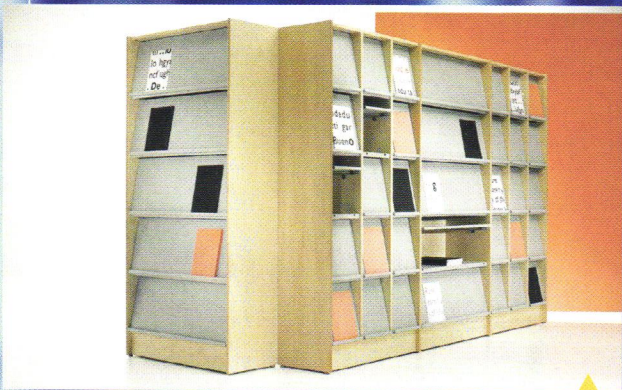
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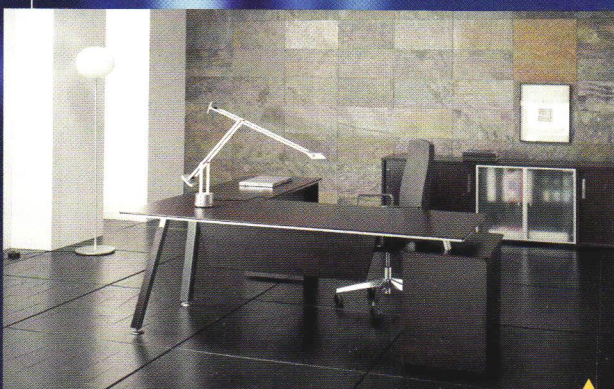
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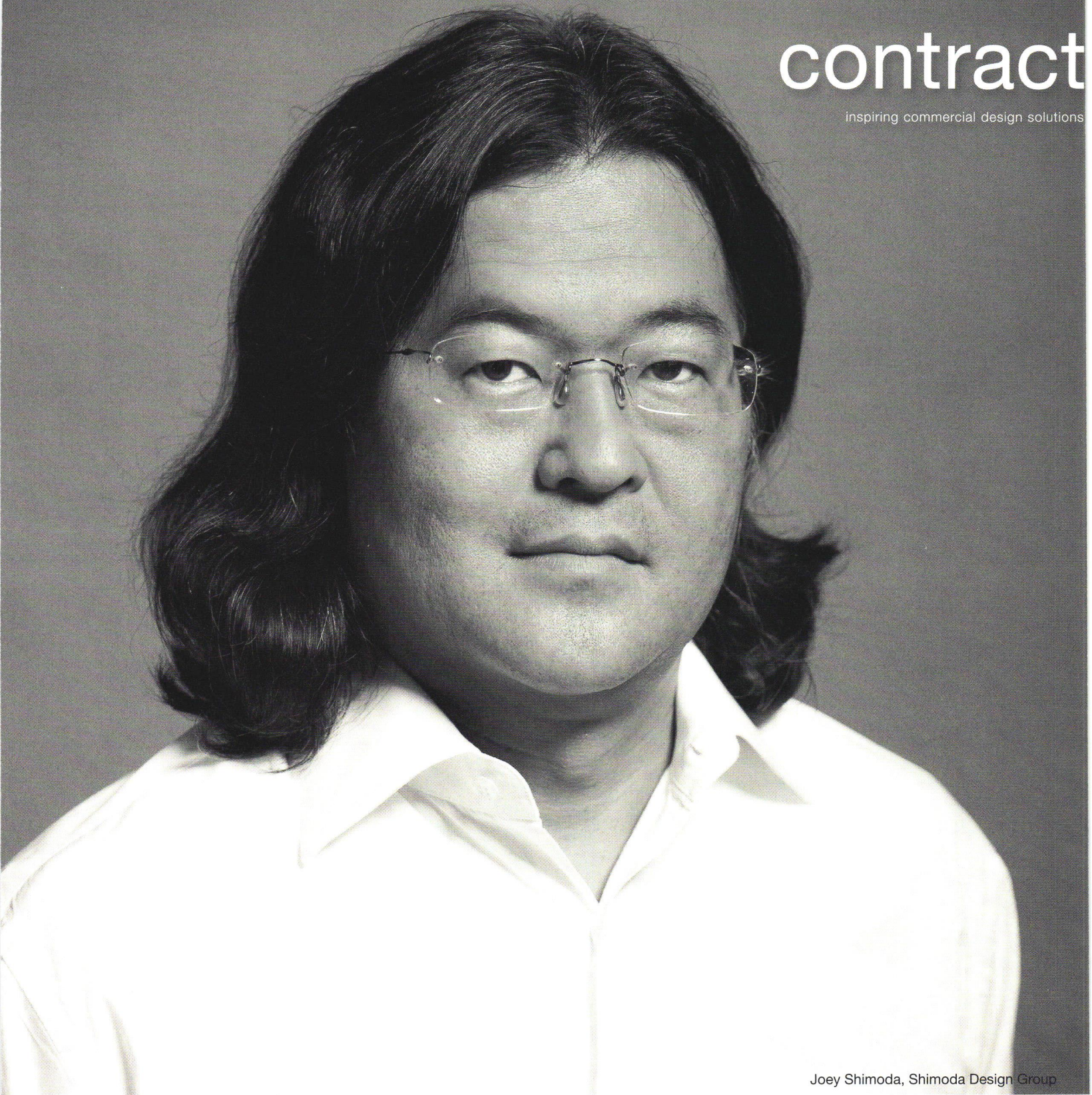
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Joey Shimoda, Shimoda Design Group

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Please join me at the Breakfast when we will honor the Interiors Awards winners, the Designer of the Year and the Legend Award recipient. I hope to see you there as the design community begins a series of special anniversary celebrations for one of our industry's most beloved and important publications.



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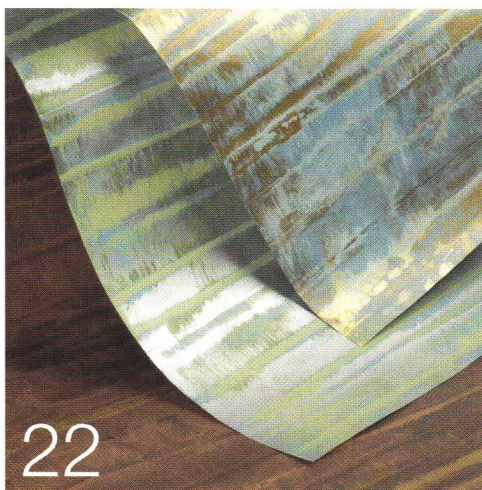
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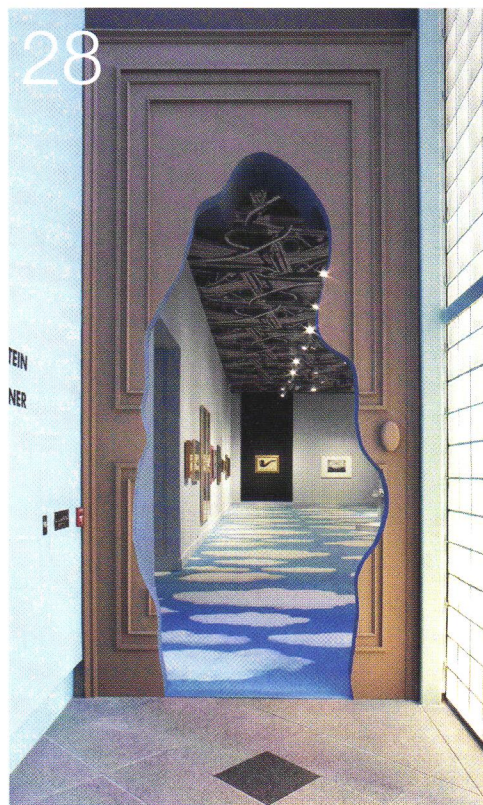
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cover: Cirque du Soleil's "Quidam." Photography by Al Seib. Costumes by Dominique Lemieux. Page 36.



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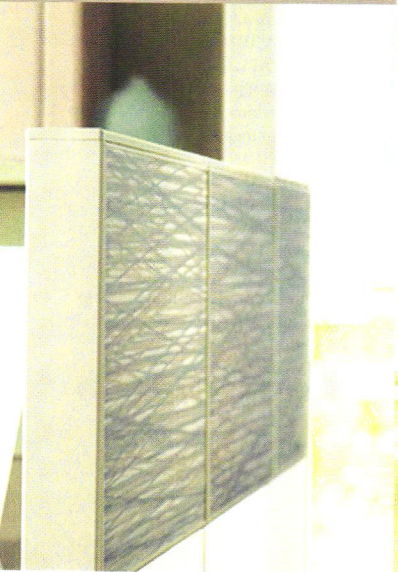
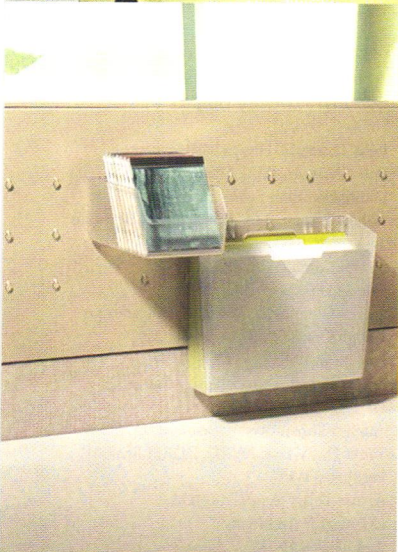
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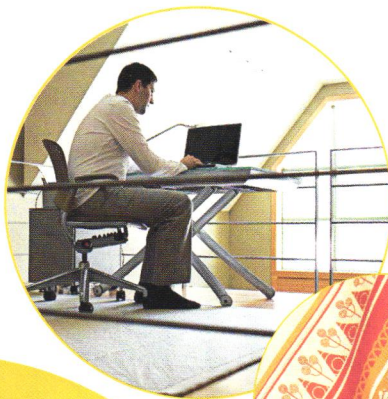
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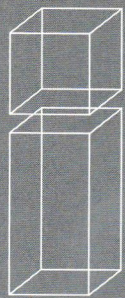
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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2009



Jennifer Thiele Busch
Editor in Chief

group hug

Despite the lip service that many of us pay to collaboration, sometimes it really does work. When I invited HOK to guest edit our July issue, I did not invite one particular person at the firm, as I have done in the past (with Gary Wheeler, formerly of Gensler, in July 2007 and Rand Elliott of Elliott + Associates Architects in July 2008). Instead, I invited a group of HOK's design leaders, spread across the Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Washington, D.C., offices. And quite honestly, when they chose the topic of "collaboration" early on for their issue's theme, I didn't quite grasp the fact that this was exactly what it would take to deliver a thought-provoking end product for *Contract's* readers. I now realize that the process of creating the July issue was one living, breathing, collaborative experiment from beginning to end—among the HOK team members and between HOK and *Contract's* editorial staff. The pages that follow are testament to this admirable process.



Another successful collaboration.

In addition to representing a successful (and smooth!) collaboration, the July issue of *Contract* and its associated online component (see www.contracmagazine.com) are chock full of examples of how high-profile organizations from Cirque du Soleil and Facebook to The Smithsonian Institution and the mayor's office of the city of New York rely on collaboration as a strategy for innovation and growth, and how the collaborative process enriches such disciplines as public art, real estate development, landscape design, and medical education, among others. In an increasingly complex business, social, and political environment, the benefits of collaboration cross all industries and market sectors, and there is much the A&D community can learn from the experiences of other practices and professions. Indeed, it is given that one of the most important elements of commercial interior design and architecture moving forward will be a more multidisciplinary approach to design solutions.

Apparently collaboration is a deeply ingrained quality in HOK's culture, and after working with Rick Focke, Tom Polucci, Leigh Stringer, Clay Pendergrast, Sabine Bartzke, and an army of supporting cast members to produce this issue, I'm quite convinced that it's true. There is no one person who can take the credit here. Our Collaboration issue really is the result of many minds working together and refining each others' thoughts and ideas over a period of months. If anything, HOK's internal discipline and commitment to the process is the real star. Many thanks for having us along for the journey. ☐

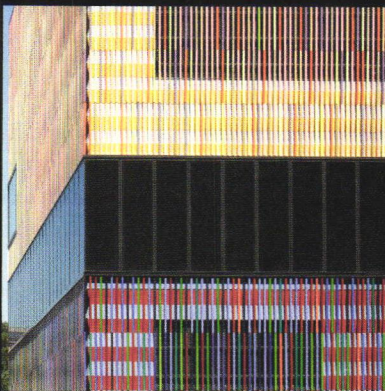
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Tom Polucci, Sabine Bartzke, Leigh Stringer, Rick Focke, Clay Pendergrast

collaborate 'til it hurts

By HOK design team: Sabine Bartzke, senior principal, corporate accounts, New York; Rick Focke, senior principal, director of interior design, New York; Clay Pendergrast, senior vice president, director of interior design, Los Angeles; Tom Polucci, group vice president, director of interior design, Chicago; Leigh Stringer, vice president, advanced strategies, Washington, D.C.

How many times have you read a feel-good story in a magazine in which you learn how collaboration was the key to the team's remarkable success? The project images are gorgeous, and maybe there's even a slick quote about "two heads being better than one," "the difficulty of herding cats," or the "wisdom of crowds."

Collaboration sounds like a magic elixir that goes down smoothly and just tastes great. Inevitably, the reader is left with a mental image of the gleeful project team celebrating its success by holding hands around a campfire and singing "Kumbaya."

Then you toss the magazine down onto the coffee table and wonder, "OK, what was the real story?"

We'll admit to drinking our share of the HOK-flavored collaborative Kool-Aid. We're proud that collaboration is part of our DNA. In this issue you'll learn about the KAUST project, which required a staggering level of collaboration among 300 people in 10 of our offices and thousands of other team members worldwide. The experience left us slightly battered but more enthusiastic than ever about the amazing possibilities that come with true collaboration.

You'll also read about collaboration in performance art as part of a story on Cirque du Soleil. Here is a creative organization in which the people are so dependent on one another that a breakdown in collaboration actually can be life-threatening.

When it comes to collaboration, there's nearly always a story behind the story—one that's much more captivating but considerably less glamorous. You can bet your Aeron nobody will give up that dirt in the pages of a design magazine. There will be no mention of the uneasy partnerships, heated post-midnight emails and voice messages, contentious meetings, or wounded feelings. You'll never be privy to the tears and team members shed along the way.

The truth is that collaboration is often bloody. There will be casualties. Yet when we're battling alongside fellow team members for a higher purpose—to create the best solution for our client—the pain and heartache become worthwhile (read the book *Team of Rivals* by Doris Kearns Goodwin). Out of that creative tension come the sparks that ignite innovation.

One danger with any highly collaborative effort is that, because everyone's ideas are incorporated, there will be no cohesiveness or unity. Another

risk is that the design becomes so watered down that ideas are compromised, and the result is worse than failure—it's mediocre.

The good news is that the process nearly always reveals a road map to the answer. The challenge for the alchemist-designer is to absorb everything that's expressed and to turn all the chaos into gold by taking charge, filtering the best ideas, and creating an exceptional environment that both suits and elevates the client.

We offer a heartfelt thanks to the wonderful people at *Contract* for inviting us to collaborate on this issue. And we look forward to collaborating with you all soon. Consider yourselves warned. ☐

HOK would like to give special thanks to the following individuals who provided invaluable help in supporting the guest editors' efforts: Harry Lassiter, John Gilmore, Mike Plotnick, Rachel Peine, Claire Whitehill, Fernando Cordero (group editorial shot photographer and cartoons drawings), Alexander Robb (cartoon drawings), and Sharon Paculor.



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building on hope

Creatives living with HIV find meaningful employment and a supportive outlet for their talents at New York's Alpha Workshops

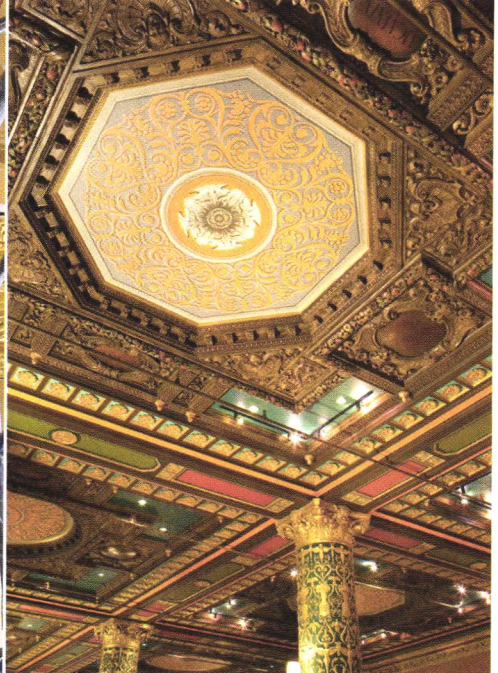
By Kenneth Wampler

An Alpha Workshops artisan paints a negoro nuri Parsons table (above). A collaboration with architect David Mann of MR Architects resulted in a 16-ft.-diameter tree root sculpture, installed on the ceiling of the children's department at Takashimaya in New York (below left, photo courtesy of Alpha Workshops, and below right, photo by Andrew French).

Alpha Workshops is not unlike other not-for-profit enterprises that merge creativity with commerce; the mantra "the relationship is everything" is an underlying principle. Our organization brings together two very disparate worlds—supportive employment and high-end interior design—under one roof to train and employ people living with HIV/AIDS for a career in decorative arts. It is also a wonderful resource for interior designers who need custom painting, gilding, and finishing, or a one-of-a-kind project

Our daily mission involves collaborating with many partners: Mornings we meet prospective trainees trying to rebuild their lives following a terrible diagnosis. Then, we might visit one of the showrooms that distributes our products, or meet with designers and their clients, who are eager to hire Alpha's studio artisans to work on a particular project. Afternoons could bring a representative from corporate America who has made working with Alpha part of their company's profile through philanthropy or product licensure. Social workers, who play an individual role in the safety net that catches New Yorkers in need, also come to Alpha. In short, collaboration plays a role in every facet of Alpha's work, products, and mission. It all begins and ends with people and the relationship between or among the diverse players, who are the foundation of our 14-year-old organization. Creative people living with HIV, public and private funders, the design community and their clients, and our staff and board of directors, all collaborate to bring Alpha Workshops forward to fulfill its mission—a mission that has four important components:





Two artisans apply gold leaf to the historic molding of the ballroom in the Prince George Hotel in New York City during a renovation by designer Jamie Drake (above left, photo courtesy of Alpha Workshops). The ceiling of the Prince George ballroom contains a painted canvas medallion (above right, photo courtesy of Benjamin Moore/ Tim Proctor Photography). Gilded carved leaves representing "totems to life" were created for Lifetime TV (below left, photo courtesy of Alpha Workshops, and below right, photo by Andy Washnik - CORPRICOM).



- 1) to draw on the powerful healing potential of useful work and creative self-expression;
- 2) to provide training and employment in a flexible, compassionate workplace where the special needs of its employees can be met;
- 3) to compete in the marketplace successfully at the highest level of craftsmanship and artistry;
- 4) to provide a new model of economic development for people living with HIV/AIDS or other disabilities.

Our relationship building with manufacturers is a two-way street. Both parties need to enjoy the partnership feeling they gain through the association. For example, New York-based fabric house POLLACK worked with Alpha on two licensed

fabric collections. Mark Pollack and his staff selected and interpreted fresh designs created by our artisans. Alpha received not only increased income through royalties but also increased credibility and visibility within the industry. Through his collaboration with Koroseal, Pollack introduced us to that company, resulting in an Alpha Workshops collection, as well a grant from Koroseal's parent company, RJF International.

Alpha's partnerships with corporations such as Benjamin Moore and Lifetime Television require us to keep their corporate identities foremost in our minds. Our alliance with Benjamin Moore evolved from our use of its paints to produce our award-winning, hand-painted wallpapers. Following that, we were hired to do decorative painting and instruction in a Benjamin Moore DVD for

contractors, to paint its new line of decorative finishes at its corporate headquarters, and to assist with promotional events. The challenge Lifetime faced with its new technical facility in Manhattan was to bring a sense of creativity, life, and nature to a technology-oriented space. Working in concert with Lifetime executives and architects, we conceived of three art projects. One involved carving and gilding three enormous leaves, each more than 8 ft. tall, that are "totems to life." That initial collaboration was successful, and we are now planning a second project with Lifetime and HOK.


Each time we work with an individual designer or design firm, we're collaborating with the joint aim to satisfy the end user. Our relationship with designer Jamie Drake, for example, enabled us to take part in the restoration of Gracie Mansion and



Horizon, part of the Texture collection of wallpapers, is folded by hand and then painted with Benjamin Moore products (above, photo by Maryanne Solensky). Artisans painted a floor at Gracie Mansion, the official residence of the Mayor of New York City, for designer Jamie Drake (above right) and a large wall mural at the offices of WebMD in the Chelsea area of New York City (below). Artists create a sculptural installation for the lobby of 200 West End Avenue at the Alpha Workshops studio. The piece was made of wood finished with metal leaf and paint from a design by Celerie Kemble (top right). (All photos courtesy of Alpha Workshops.)

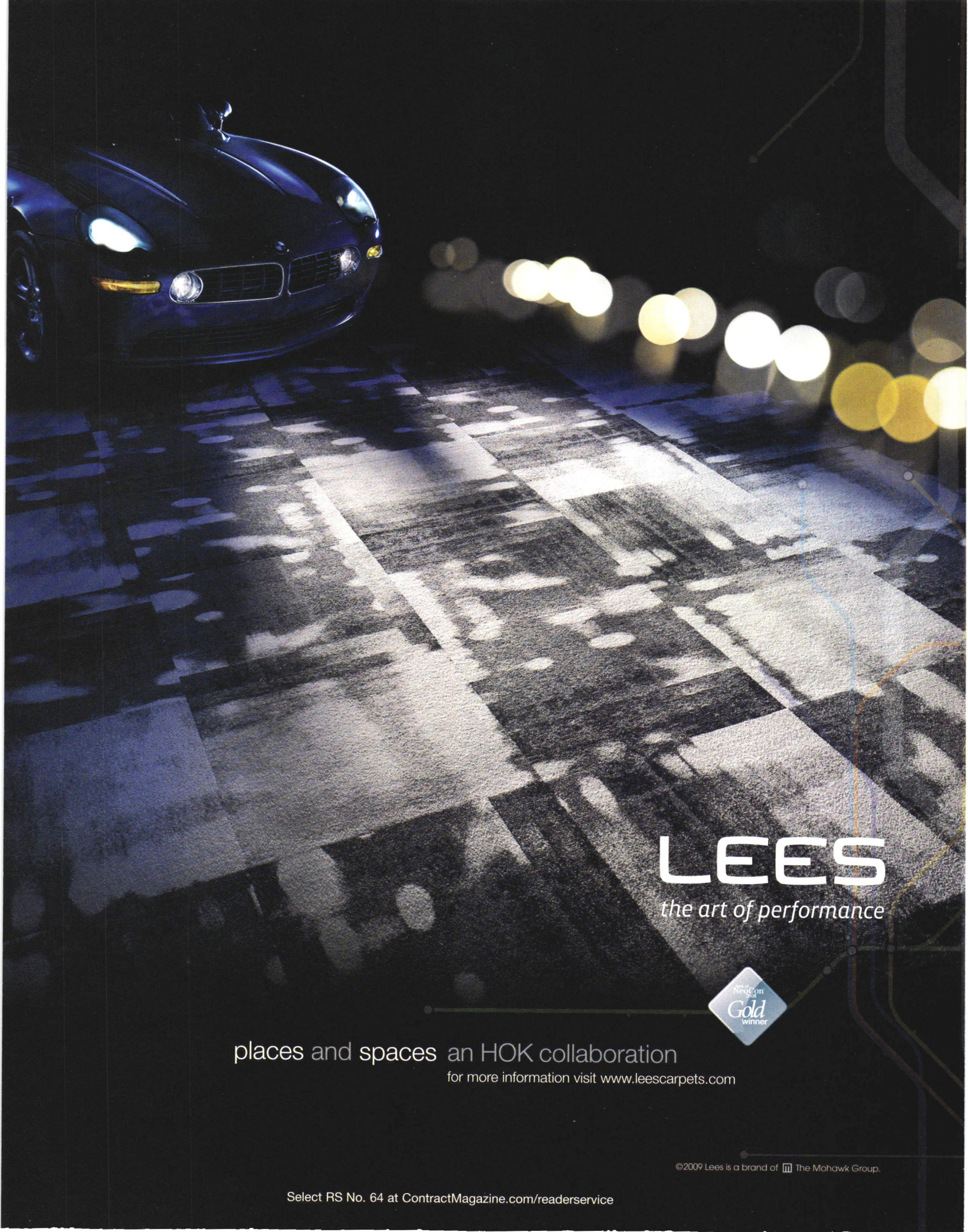


the Prince George Hotel, and to work on over a dozen homes, including that of New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and several Kips Bay show-houses. A chance encounter with David Mann/MR Architecture led us to a collaboration resulting in the creation of a fantastical 16-ft.-diameter tree root sculpture from the ceiling of the children's department at Takashimaya. Serendipity led designer Celerie Kemble to be inspired by that same sculpture and to work with Alpha on a sculptural installation for a residential lobby. All collaborations, all with talented designers, result in imaginative work and delighted clients.

The list of critical collaborations is manifold: our board of directors, VESID/NYS Department of Education, private funding partners, supportive housing providers. What they all have in common is a willingness to work together for a greater good—to help creative people who are living with HIV find the spirit that otherwise would lie dormant and to help it to wake up, stretch, and say, 'I'm ready to go; I'm ready to move my life forward.' 

Kenneth Wampler founded The Alpha Workshops in 1995 and has since been the executive director.

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the collaborative workplace

Respected executives share ideas that work

By Leigh Stringer and Claire Whitehill

Robyn Kaiser, Director of Global Business Strategy, Global Real Estate and Procurement Services, American Express;
Jim Rottman, Vice President Human Resources, American Express;
Peggy Stritch, Manager, Workplace Research & Design, Cisco;
Martha Hirst, Commissioner of the City of New York Department of Citywide Administrative Services

There have been dramatic economic shifts over the last several decades that have profoundly changed the way we work. We have moved from an economy that was centered on factory production to one based on information and knowledge work. Many believe the next shift, post-knowledge work, will be built around an economy of creativity and new ideas. Driven by transformative technology, global access, and the need to survive the current economic situation as well as to maximize transparency, those with creative minds and the ability to synthesize and collaborate with others effectively will be the ones who succeed.

To showcase the best thinking around collaboration, HOK interviewed four experts on the topic: Robyn Kaiser and Jim Rottman from American Express, Peggy Stritch from Cisco, and Martha Hirst from the city of New York. Each works for complex organizations of 50,000 to 300,000 employees and are responsible for providing real estate, technology, and workplace policies for their organizations.

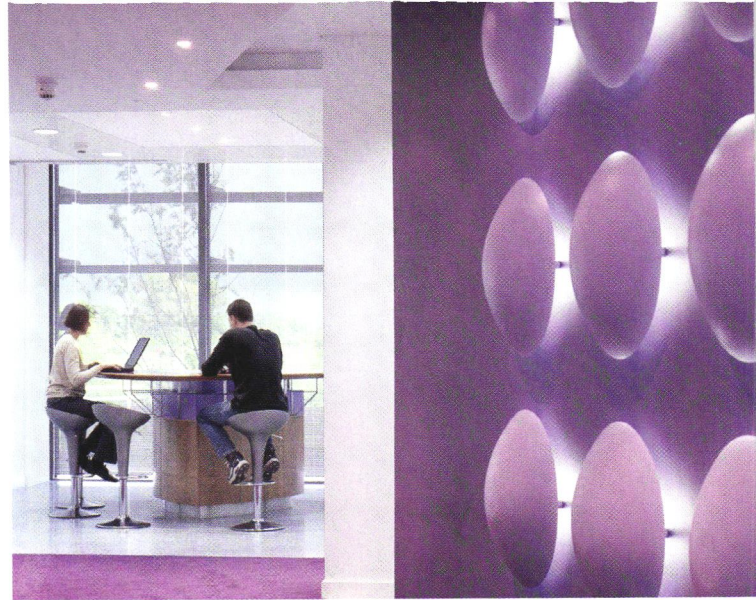
Drivers for Increased Collaboration

Three of the major drivers for increased collaboration, according to our experts, are transparency, globalization, and technology.

Transparency. Hirst noted that with the ever-present scrutiny on government, collaboration is critical to promoting and ensuring transparency across city agencies and the public. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, known for cutting through bureaucracy and reaching across lines to make things happen, has had a measurable impact on increasing col-

Game Theory:

the mathematical theory of games that studies the ways in which strategic interactions among rational players produce outcomes with respect to the preferences of those players.



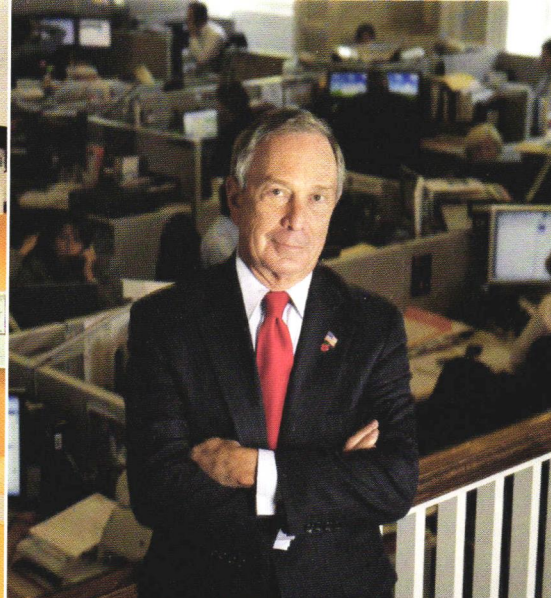
laboration in city government. Increasingly, the city of New York is reaching across bureaucratic boundaries and seeking private-sector partners to coordinate the delivery of government services. This collaborative spirit was exemplified in the development of PlaNYC, a city-wide sustainability initiative involving almost every city agency as well as a number of private parties aiming to green New York City's infrastructure over the next 21 years.

Globalization. Globalization has not only increased the amount of time dedicated to collaboration during a typical eight-hour day, but it also has stretched out the day altogether. Employees at Cisco report that they spend an average of 63 percent of their time collaborating in a variety of ways, and they are doing it both at the office and virtually from other locations, meeting with colleagues and clients across the globe. Roughly 38 percent of Cisco's population is outside of the United States, and this percentage is expected to increase, meaning the trend of collaborating during off-hours and meeting virtually is only expected to continue.

Technology. In 2008, Cisco's use of Telepresence (its own video conferencing tool) increased threefold, use of WebEx for meetings increased 15-fold between January and August, and use of "YouTube" as a knowledge management and training tool increased more than tenfold. Stritch credits this to global expansion, the need for speed, and travel restrictions.

American Express is using many of these same technologies both internally and with customers. The company developed Web sites dedicated to community building, creating open forums for learning about products and business travel ideas. Cisco and American Express executives use blogs to share informal thoughts and start conversations about topics at a global level. Cisco has even created an internal online network, similar to Facebook.

New York City has taken advantage of technology, data collection, and knowledge management to strengthen connections between citizens and government. Mayor Bloomberg launched the City's 311 Citizen Service Center, the largest in the nation, to encourage residents to call in with problems or request services. The requests—more than 15 million a year—are then tracked through the government to ensure services are delivered. In 2008, 311 began handling service referrals for public assistance or other government benefits, making the process more convenient for those in need. The city's Web site (www.nyc.gov) displays "dashboards" of statistics to disclose the government's performance on key service indicators, ranging from pot-holes filled to foster care placements. New York also has launched outreach



Cisco Systems' U.K. Headquarters (opposite, photo by Peter Cook) and the American Express offices in New Zealand (above left, photo courtesy of American Express) are designed to accommodate collaborative work styles. In 2002, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg repurposed New York City's Board of Estimate hearing room at City Hall as a "bullpen" for the city's top officials (above right, photo courtesy of New York City Hall).

Web sites to foster collaboration with citizens, such as the new NYC Service initiative, which allows New Yorkers to find volunteer opportunities.

The Impact on the Workplace

The changing nature of collaboration affects the workplace on many fronts. Consider these trends:

More space is dedicated to collaborative or shared space. Both Cisco and American Express report increases in the percentage of space dedicated to collaborative or shared space (conference rooms, break areas, cafes, team rooms, etc.) and relative decreases in the percentage of individually assigned offices or workstations. Cisco's "legacy" workplaces had dedicated only 20 percent of the total portfolio to collaboration, and this number is now 50 percent. American Express' office environments are also shifting towards 50 percent shared space from its current 40 percent. The impact of increased shared space does not necessitate an increase in building size. Often, shared space increases are accompanied by decreases in individual office size or adoption of alternative work strategies (such as telework).

This increase in shared, collaborative space—in addition to strategies such as lowering workstation panel heights to encourage communication between employees—leads to an increase in...surprise...collaboration! At American Express, this has happened not only between leaders and employees, but also across departments, a competitive advantage for the company.

In New York City, Hirst's agency has adopted planning guidelines for the office renovations it supervises to maximize the use of office space leased by the city. The new guidelines encourage clusters of small workstations with lower panels and a variety of shared meeting rooms.

Collaboration happens any and everywhere. The physical setting for collaboration is no longer just a traditional conference room. Hirst does some of her best work while walking between buildings with others in Lower Manhattan's "Government Center" neighborhood of municipal, state, and Federal office buildings and courthouses. One of the most popular meeting spaces is in New York's Department of Education headquarters, located in a repurposed 19th-century courthouse, where a large, open seating area with movable tables and a large fireplace now serves as a shared space for simultaneous small-group meetings.

To support diverse collaboration needs, Cisco has expanded the types of spaces provided in the workplace, creating dens, huddle rooms, e-cafes, project areas, and recreation areas distributed throughout its San Jose campus.

But it's not just about providing a mix of spaces—integrating virtual and physical collaboration tools has become crucial for effective collaboration. Kaiser and Rottman regularly send each other instant messages asking, "R U there?" that may turn into a phone call, WebEx, or a face-to-face meeting. American Express spends resources to supply the right collaborative spaces and the technology, but also to integrate these tools to ensure their effective use.

Office space is more open. Mayor Bloomberg dramatically changed the culture of his office by replacing separate offices with low-rise workstations and recreating the open atmosphere of a trading floor. The city now has copied this same concept in a number of other buildings, including the headquarters for its education and transportation agencies. While some occupants comment on increased noise in an open setting, communication and collaboration have increased and have effectively broken down barriers across agencies.

Collaboration Has Rewards

Work has become more collaborative, but it is not only the workplace that is changing as a result. Surprisingly, in the private sector, so is employee compensation. Cisco established a reward system for encouraging leaders to collaborate and share their experiences and ideas across multiple groups and departments in order to increase speed to market. Cisco's newly-formed "boards and councils" not only create ideas faster, but also are tests for Cisco communication technology. According to Peggy Strich, "This change in collaboration protocol has helped Cisco shift from a command-and-control culture to one sensitive to change management, negotiation, listening, and facilitation."

Organizations everywhere see the benefit to sharing ideas quickly to arrive at creative solutions to complex problems. Rottman claims, "Using a sports analogy, we should track and compensate the number of assists in our organization as much as we track and support those carrying the ball forward." In New York City government, the drive to spur creativity has resulted in enhanced services to the public, ensuring that public dollars are spent as wisely as possible.

How collaborative is your organization? Do you use it as a competitive advantage? Are the spaces, tools, and protocols you use to connect with your friends and family more sophisticated and conducive to collaboration than those you use to connect with your colleagues? Whether your answer is yes or no, it may be time to invest in a more transparent, more global, more technology savvy workplace. **C**

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all for fun

Successful museums dwell at the intersection of design, education, and entertainment

By Michael Webb



“Take your pleasures seriously,” insisted Charles Eames, and that motto inspires designers and curators at museums across America. They want to engage new audiences without compromising core principles, and they’ve achieved this goal by making learning a fun experience. Masterpieces of art and scientific discoveries are presented in fresh, exciting ways, and a special effort is being made to attract families with small children. Dysfunctional schools and the schlockmeisters of the entertainment industry have much to learn from the creative ways in which museums fuse knowledge and play.

The transformation of museums from hushed sanctuaries to vibrant gathering places is part of a paradigm shift that shows up in the casual ways we dress and entertain ourselves. Museums, originally conceived to provide instruction and moral uplift, can no longer afford to be stuffy repositories that demand acceptance on their own rarified terms. Reaching out is the only way to stay relevant and solvent.

The California Academy of Sciences, founded as a scholarly research institution in Gold Rush San Francisco, has reinvented itself. Prompted by the damage that the 1989 earthquake caused to its old buildings, it held a competition and selected Renzo Piano to put everything under one soaring green roof. “Life and its sustainability” is the theme that links its aquarium, planetarium, and natural history museum, and the airy transparency of the building weaves together the displays with vistas of nature. “To design good exhibits you have to be a good poet and a good scientist,” says Piano, and that combination is evident in the ways that visitors learn about the vulnerability of the earth by exploring a living coral reef, a rainforest full of endangered species, and by voyaging far into space in search of another world that might support the biodiversity of our

At the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, artists have been enlisted as designers: Jorge Pardo for the reinstallation of LACMA Art of the Ancient Americas Galleries (right, photo © 2008 Museum Associates/LACMA) and John Baldessari for the exhibition "Magritte and Contemporary Art: The Treachery of Images" (opposite, photo © 2008 Museum Associates/LACMA). Predock Frane Architects designed the Getty Museum's Family Room (below, left and right, photos by Elon Schoenholz ©2004 J. Paul Getty Trust).

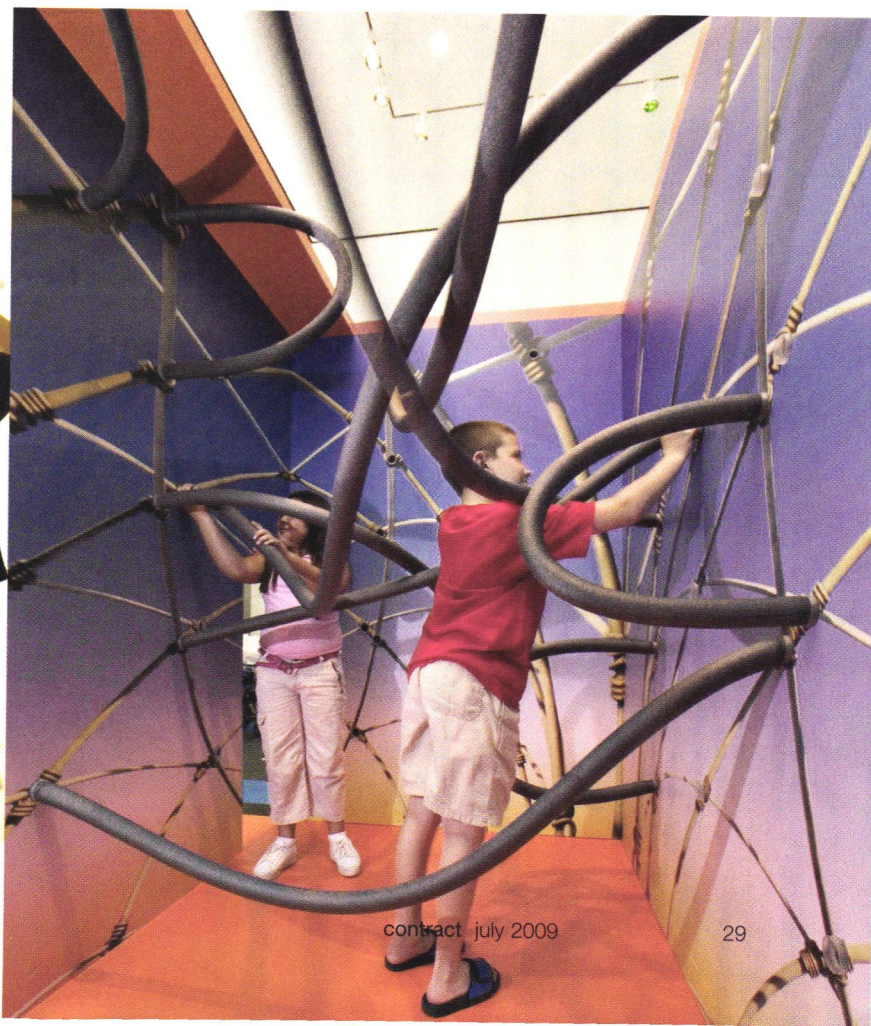


own. A typical visit lasts four hours, long after the initial "wow" has worn off, and live scientists explaining their mission prove almost as compelling an attraction as the wildlife.

For art museums, the challenge is to enrich the understanding and enjoyment of unique and valuable objects that must be carefully protected. From its earliest years as a stand-alone institution in the mid-1960s, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) has invited artists and architects to collaborate with its curators and in-

house designers in developing provocative installations. Frank Gehry displayed Russian avant garde paintings on sheets of raw plywood and exposed studs, materials he was using in his own practice in the mid '70s. Later, he employed another favorite—chain-link fencing—to dramatize the alienation of artists who fled Hitler's Germany and struggled to create in exile. "There's no such thing as a neutral environment—not even a white box," insists Gehry, and his visceral installations root art and its makers in time and place.

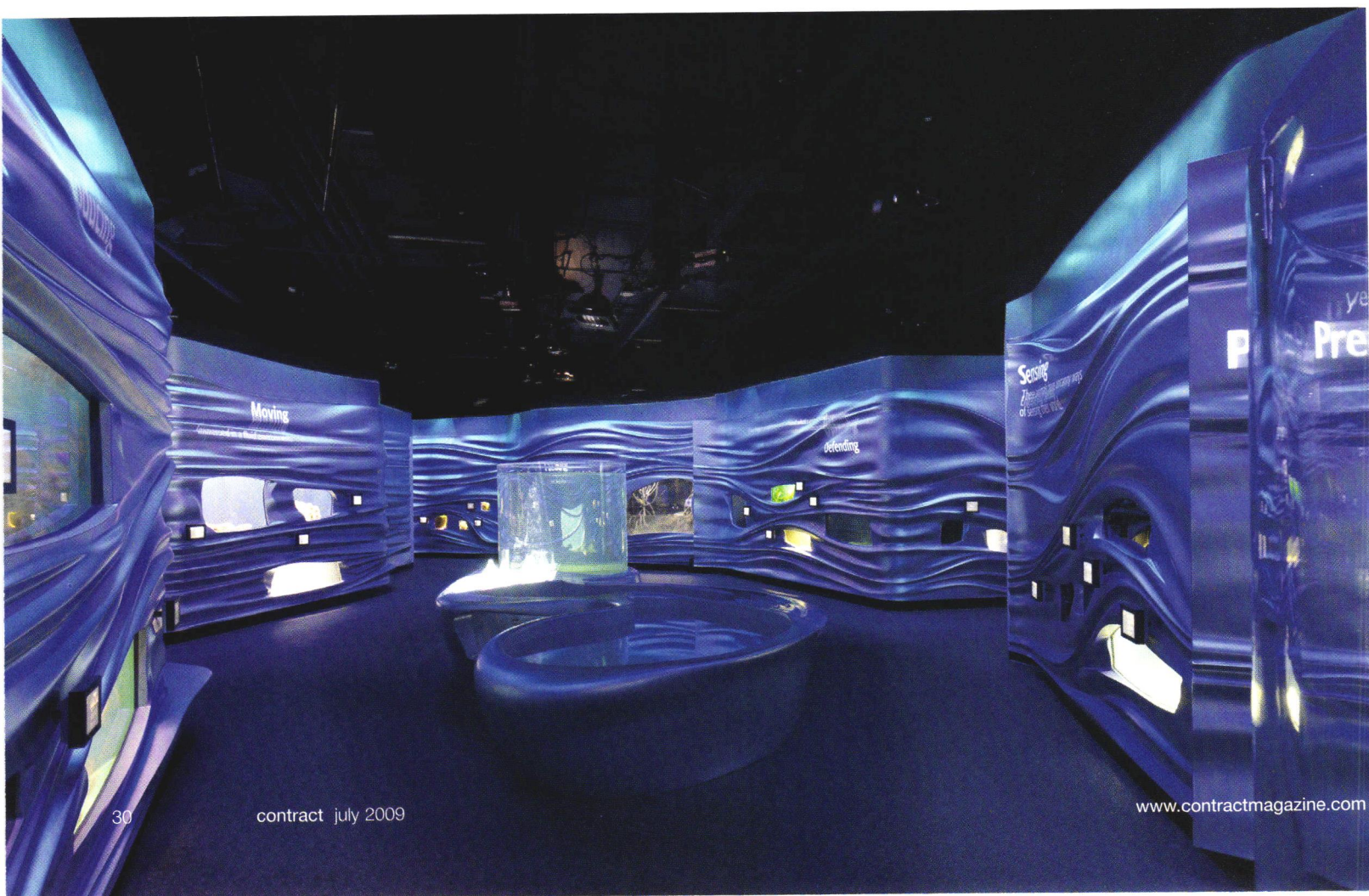
Michael Govan, who moved from New York's Dia Arts Foundation to direct LACMA three years ago, has long collaborated with artists. For a show on the Belgian surrealist Rene Magritte and his progeny, he invited John Baldessari to turn the world upside down as the surrealists loved to do. Magritte's trademark blue sky with puffy clouds was translated into a carpet, and the ceiling was covered with a photo-blowup of Los Angeles freeway interchanges. The attendants, male and female, were costumed in dark suits with bowler hats. Purists screeched, but the exhibition gener-





ated a buzz and a fresh appreciation of an artist whose work has been staled by too many reproductions. Cuba-born artist Jorge Pardo reinstalled the galleries of pre-Columbian ceramics and sculpture, employing vibrant green backdrops, and framing the vitrines with stacked planes of MDF, laser-cut to create biomorphic forms. These organic shapes and colors evoke the jungles of Mexico and Guatemala where many of the objects were found, and provide a sympathetic setting for work that was created for use, not display.

Over at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, which once doubled as the repository for art, Latin American curator Karen Wise wanted to put all 700 historic pieces on public view. The goal in creating Visible Vault was to share the richness of a collection, much of which was previously accessible only to scholars, and to highlight key pieces while the old galleries were closed for a seismic retrofit. Working in a long narrow space on a very limited schedule and budget, Hodgetts + Fung Design and Architecture created a sparking jewel-case. Steel-framed vitrines with projecting bays line both walls, and a curved ceiling vault is pulled down on one side so that the room doesn't feel like a tunnel. Tiny spots illuminate the detail and texture on 39 exemplary objects, while the supporting cast is lined up in the shadows behind. Floor-level displays appeal to the youngest visitors, and every object can be summoned from a data bank via three touch screens located at the ends of the gallery. That allows school groups—often from the countries featured here—to study the artifacts of ancient civilizations, as well as providing the aesthetic drama of objects emerging out of darkness.





Hodgetts + Fung designed Visible Vault at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (above, photo by Craig Hodgetts). The Tropical Rainforest (opposite top) and World of Water (opposite bottom) are two of the permanent installations in Renzo Piano's California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco (photos by Tim Griffith).

"We offer our visitors the real thing and teach them about it, which makes them feel smart," says Wise, who also serves as vice president for public programs. That gives her an interest in the museum's signature collection of dinosaur bones. Visitors can peer through glass at paleontologists cleaning and assembling 65-million-year-old bones and do the same thing themselves, hands-on, with casts. When the Dinosaur Mysteries gallery opens in 2011, they will be able to assemble an entire skeleton, and already they can encounter a baby T-Rex running through the corridors, its human feet barely visible under the costume.

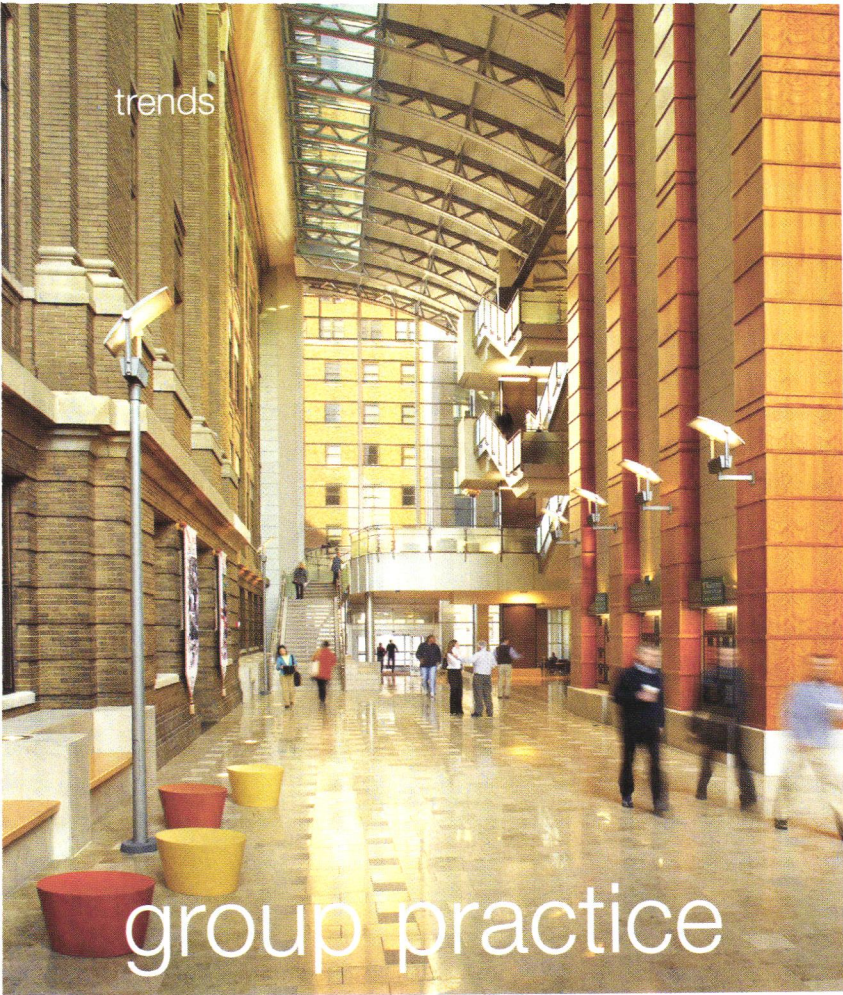
Kids are captivated by this outtake from "Jurassic Park," and they are well served by specialized institutions. A steel-framed cube clad in fluttering translucent acrylic panels links two historic buildings that house the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. Designed by Koning-Eizenberg Architecture in collaboration with sculptor Ned Kahn, it serves as an environmental artwork animated by the wind, a functional bridge, and a signature for the institution. It also expresses the museum's mission to take chances. "It works because there's choice and discovery," says Julie Eizenberg. "Taking my own kids through museums taught me that education needs to be participatory. They remember much more of what they discover for themselves." Museum director Jane Werner is constantly amazed by what works and what doesn't. "We do a lot of prototyping and study videos of how they are used," she explains. "Arranging pieces of colored plexiglass on a light

table stirred little interest; inserting plexi rods on a vertical surface and watching them change color proved much more popular."

The Getty Museum is a stone fortress atop a hill in Los Angeles, but its staff does a good job of breaking down barriers. Predock-Frane Architects won a competition to design the Family Room, recreating a key work from each of six collections and encouraging young visitors to explore them. Kids can bounce on an 18th-century French bed, view a David Hockney photo collage through lenses set at different heights, and attach foam tubes in different configurations as variations on a Martin Puryear sculpture. "We didn't want a pre-school playroom," says Rebecca Edwards, the Getty specialist in family audiences, "but a visceral engagement with art works. We tested all the materials the architects proposed to be sure they would withstand hard use, and the room generated a very enthusiastic response."

Up the hill at the Skirball Cultural Institute, Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects drew on universal flood myths to create a room-sized wooden ark. Youngsters romp with animal puppets constructed from salvaged materials while absorbing lessons about survival, tolerance, and cooperation. It's a model of how forward-looking museums can enlighten a generation starved of intelligent stimulation and serious pleasures. ■

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group practice

Washington University's School of Medicine prepares tomorrow's physicians for the realities of practice with an emphasis on collaborative learning

By Jennifer Busch

"Taking care of patients requires good teamwork," says Dr. Alison Whelan, M.D., FACP, associate dean of medical student education and a professor of medicine at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. She explains that the old model of one doctor taking care of complex illnesses no longer applies. "There is more and more interaction among different disciplines, and more complex teams can offer various opinions to inform the problem." Today the healthcare providers for a single patient might include a team of doctors, nurses, pharmacologists, respiratory therapists, and more.

"As the practice of medicine has changed," she continues, "what is the best way to repeat that experience to physicians-in-training? How should we approach medical education differently?" The questions are not exactly new; in fact, in 2004, HOK designed Farrell Learning and Teaching Center, a new medical school facility for Washington University (Wash. U.), around these very principles of integrated medical education. In the five years that have ensued, Whelan and her colleagues have been able to observe these concepts in action.

A more integrative approach to medical education, according to Whelan, has been heavily influenced by the growing association in medical practice between research and healthcare delivery. Translational medicine, the term by which this concept is known, describes the intersection of science with clinical application, and focuses on maximizing interactions between the medical and research com-

munities with the hope that breakthroughs in medical science and better treatments can occur via interactivity between clinicians and researchers. The model has also found its way into medical schools. "We are educating physicians but we always expect that a certain number of them will become leaders in biomedical research," says Whelan. Thus the Wash. U. School of Medicine program creates multidisciplinary work groups that include students destined for research and those destined for practice.

And as new theories emerge from mainstream research on teaching and learning behaviors, Wash. U. also has responded with a heavier emphasis on interactive teaching. Despite the fact that a good amount of teaching still happens in the classroom, "active learning, problem-solving, and discussion are more powerful ways to do the high learning," insists Whelan. As a result, the teaching program has shifted away from large lecture groups (though these are still used, particularly in the early years of medical school) toward smaller discussion groups, collaborative learning, and informal social interaction. "The best patient outcomes involve active listening and actively sharing the information you have," says Whelan, noting that these skills are best learned in small group environments.

Wash. U. School of Medicine's teaching goals eventually intersected with its facilities requirements, and HOK was called in to design a new building around a more collaborative and interactive model of medical education. "We spent a lot of time thinking about the design of this facility," says Whelan. "There are a number of spaces that are purposefully designed to support the way students are learning today. The bottom line is that you need to have the infrastructure for a model that makes collaboration possible."

Technology has had a significant impact, and since all Wash. U. School of Medicine curricula is posted online, learning has essentially become a 24-hour, anytime/anywhere exercise. A lot of collaboration happens through the virtual sharing of notes and review sheets, admits Whelan, but the building also encourages face-to-face interaction, from the formal to the informal. The library is primarily a quiet space for individual study, but its use means students are together in a public place, not sitting at home in isolation hitting the books. Small rooms used for group study support a moderate amount of interaction, and mock operating room, intensive care unit, and emergency room for upper class students and residents simulate the teamwork that will be necessary to master clinical practice.

"We also devoted a large amount of floor space and dollars to social space, which is incredibly important to the culture of the school," says Whelan. "We created spaces to enhance chance interaction. It was a huge aspect of what we needed for this building. It breaks down barriers." A second floor lounge frequented by upper-class students for downtime is also used for receptions, while third and fourth floor lounges serve the social needs of first and second year students. "I like the idea of a graduated sense of privacy, and the balance of lecture halls and small group space is really appropriate," says Whelan.

At a time when healthcare and its associated costs are at the center of our political and ethical discussions, it's clear that Washington University—and other institutions like it—have a responsibility to respond to new models of medical practice. The focus on building a collaborative and social attitude among future physicians may be the first step in fixing what many believe to be a broken and inefficient system, which is nevertheless bursting with talent and potential. ■

Atrium of the Farrell Learning and Teaching Center, Washington University School of Medicine (above; photo by Sam Fentress).



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caring collaborator

As AmeriCares' medical director, Dr. Frank Bia combines medicine and the power of partnership to bring emergency aid to thousands of people worldwide.

By Holly Richmond
Photography courtesy of AmeriCares

Wikinomics:

is based on four ideas: Openness, Peering, Sharing, and Acting Globally. This mass collaboration relies on free individual agents to come together and cooperate to improve a given operation or solve a problem.

With the tagline, "A passion to help. The ability to deliver," AmeriCares prides itself on modeling the global strength of collaboration and partnership. As a nonprofit international disaster relief and humanitarian organization, its mission is to deliver medicine and medical supplies to people in crisis around the world. Since its founding in 1982, AmeriCares has distributed more than \$8 billion in humanitarian aid to 137 countries.

While the extent of the partnering and collaboration that facilitates such services is far-reaching and includes thousands of U.S. and international physicians, administrators, and coordinators, one man, Dr. Frank Bia, AmeriCares' medical director, is charged with the task of overseeing the planning, assessment, resourcing, and clinical operations of the organization's Global Programs Operations. In essence, Bia's job is to ensure that the correct supplies get to the appropriate locations, and once there, that they are rapidly distributed and put to use. His, and AmeriCares', ultimate goal is to save thousands of lives that hang in the balance of devastating natural and man-made disasters. "I think if you are going to make a contribution and make a difference, it's better to look from the outside," states Bia. "I'm a kid from the Bronx, and it's a privilege that I got to become a physician. There is a social contract that must be fulfilled, and I've always seen this contract through a worldwide lens."

As an expert in infectious disease and international health, Bia spent much of his career—more than 30 years—at Yale University School of Medicine where he served as a professor of both medicine in infectious diseases and laboratory medicine in clinical microbiology, as well as the co-director of the university's International Health Program. Prior to his tenure at Yale, he received degrees from Cornell Medical College, the Harvard School

Dr. Frank Bia visits with children on a trip to Cambodia (opposite). AmeriCares emergency airlift delivers more than 15 tons of medicine and medical supplies (right) to Myanmar after Cyclone Nargis. AmeriCares provided primary health clinics with medicine and supplies to treat survivors of this disaster (below).



of Public Health, and the University of Pennsylvania, and he honed his skills in remote regions including Haiti, China, Columbia, Iran, and Thailand. Bia explains that it has always been important to him to translate his knowledge into real-world experience, particularly on a global level. He laughs as he recalls, "A professor once said to me, 'I need to remind you that this is a medical school, not a travel agency.' But I see medicine and travel as fundamentally intertwined."

Bia joined AmeriCares as medical director on January 1, 2008, and since that time has been challenged by numerous disasters and crises. One of the biggest was Cyclone Nargis, which battered Myanmar, killing an estimated 138,000 people and leaving 2.5 million survivors in need of medical aid, food, water, and shelter. The AmeriCares team in Myanmar navigated the complicated situation of securing permissions to land the supply aircraft in Yangon, and maintain custody of the cargo. With prior experience delivering to isolated countries, including North Korea and Sudan, the team established relationships with high-level officials in sev-

eral government ministries. They succeeded in securing landing permits, then, persistently and delicately negotiated supply distribution to partner organizations providing healthcare in the region.

"Though these types of situations are extremely sensitive, navigating the political landscape is not as difficult as you might think because we do not have a political agenda," says Bia. He goes on to explain that AmeriCares' mission is only to support and serve through the effective distribution of medical aid, and that they "fly below the radar," which is where many governments want them in order to avoid press attention. "My job is to get the right supplies to the right places, not to have a political point of view, which helps us not to be seen as a target. I firmly believe the umbrella under which we are working affects how safe we are and the difference we can make to the people who desperately need it."

However, he does concede to substantial risk in the bigger picture of humanitarian aid services and the collaboration that occurs therein. AmeriCares, fundamentally, is the go-between for goods and services,

and therefore their staffs' role as facilitators is much less treacherous than the providers on the ground. Bia explains, "For example, we put products on the shelves in the clinics in Darfur, but the people working for our partner organizations like Doctors Without Borders and Save the Children, who provide hands-on aid, are much more at risk."

AmeriCares' success is dependent on mindful collaboration with pharmaceutical manufacturers, financial donors, government ministries, international and local NGOs, and healthcare providers in every region of the world. As the organization's medical director, Bia serves as a visionary and forward-thinking facilitator of global medical care. He envisions his future as a lifelong continuation of learning and sharing with younger generations of physicians and humanitarians. "Medicine isn't all about medicine," he states. "We need to look at anthropology and sociology and other disciplines, and incorporate our global knowledge into a working model of care, not a Western model of care."

At the age of 63, Bia is still wholeheartedly dedicated to traveling the world to fulfill his social contract and ensure AmeriCares' mission of delivering medicine and medical supplies. Over his extensive career he has learned to speak Spanish, Italian, Haitian, Creole, Greek, and very limited Farsi. "All I can say when I greet my friends in Iran is, 'Take a deep breath!'"

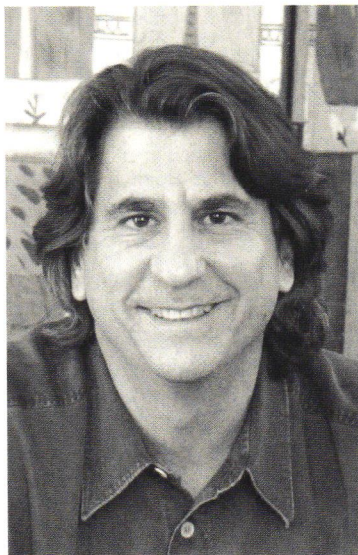
It is this youthful spirit and vivacious perspective that keeps Bia inspired, as well as inspiring to those around him. "I work with good people who want to do good things," he concludes. "It's not magic. I believe it is actually as simple as 'What goes around, comes around.'" **C**



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life is a circus



Contract and HOK invited designer David Rockwell to interview Lyn Heward, creative director and consultant at Cirque du Soleil, about collaboration in performance art and the importance of taking risks

Design Thinking:

is a creative process driving innovation based around the "building up" of ideas unlike linear analytical thinking. The seven stages are: define, research, ideate, prototype, choose, implement, learn.

Contract: Lyn, you talk about how you search for talent and about how you go around the world and find people who are talented, but they also really have to want to be part of a team.

Heward: That's one of the big keys for Cirque. You can take the most talented, most gifted people in the world, but unless they want to be a member of a team, they're not going to last long in the company. We have an expression, which is a little bit of kitsch, but we say that the show is the star. When you go to a Cirque de Soleil show, you don't see anybody's name associated with the title of the show. At the bottom of the page or the program, you might see the name of the director of the show or the person who wrote the show, but you don't see the name of an individual artist. And that's because Cirque chooses a collaborative team approach to creating, and that applies not just to the artists on the stage, but also it applies to the team of creators that we put together each and every time we build a show.

Rockwell: So the whole notion of collaboration is, in some ways, about setting the context in which people are comfortable collaborating, and creating the context in which people can improve and do their best work. It seems that the key part of collaboration is setting that kind of mission and spirit in which people are willing to take risks. What are the key components of creating that trust among the collaborators so that can happen?

Heward: First of all, I believe in strong visionary leadership. We go out and target whom we want to have as a writer/director at Cirque. The director is also the writer of the show. That's the person who conceives the show. And that new director is extremely important. There's a meeting of the minds going on there. There's a building of confidence. There's an understanding of how each person works and likes to work.

The second thing is offering the director of the show team workers, people with whom he or she may never have worked before, but would like to work with, as a set designer, costumer designer, composer, lighting designer, sound designer, prop designer, etc., and giving them a little bit of a comfort zone—maybe they'll choose one or two people that they've worked with before—and then challenging them with a few other people who have other diverse experiences. They might come from different parts of the world. One may come from the world of live entertainment, and another comes from the world of cinema.

Rockwell: So clear leadership obviously is important—visionary leadership, a team that is inspired by each other, with some unexpected elements that you add. And we like to think of that, in our work, as the radical free agent that will add to a more stable condition.



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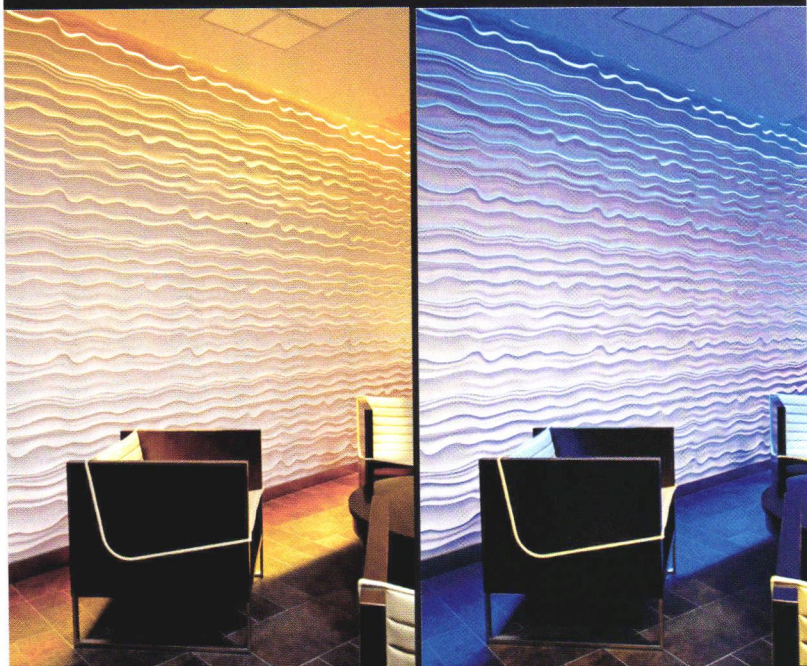
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essay

The thing that has always interested me about collaboration—and we just got out of a totally new collaboration on the Academy Awards—is that a Cirque show represents the very best that each artist is able to give. Having spent time in Montreal and seeing what you do, I think every one of the artists somehow ends up feeling comfortable risking.

Heward: I think two things happen. First—and it's something you know a lot about—is environment. And I'm not talking about the theater environment or the big-top environment, but the working environment in which we invite people to come and play. What is the structure of our working environment, the physical structure of it? Is it a playground? I know that's a funny-sounding word in this context.

Rockwell: Well, that's a wonderful-sounding word to me.

Heward: OK. Is it a playground? Is it a stimulating environment visually? Is it a stimulating environment through all of our senses? Is there a core team of people who know that environment inside out and can make it a magical place in which to create? So on one side, you have the actual physical structure of the building, like our creation studio in Montreal, but you also have the support teams in place that allow the creators and the designers of the show and the artists in that show to dream and live experiences, and support strongly the realization of those dreams.

Rockwell: You also embrace change. Your shows change over time. How do you continue to make it fresh?

Heward: We encourage the artists who are working in the show to grow. What does that mean? We offer them workshops. We learn—we actually listen to our audiences. Our artistic directors sit in the house night after night. They listen to the comments that people are making. They'll challenge the artists, as well. We encourage the artists to do some work on the outside. So in Vegas, it's not unusual to find that our band members are also playing in clubs on their two nights off a week. That's stretching it a little, but it is important.

Rockwell: Do you get together regularly with the team and talk about how the show is going?

Heward: Yes. It's part of the various creators' responsibility to the show itself. And people forget that in any given night, no two shows are exactly the same. There are unpredictable things, or predictable things, like an artist who's out sick, or something happens with the stage machinery and the artists have to save the show. We are kept on our toes because of the ongoing risk that doing a show requires of us—not just from an acrobatic or performance standpoint, but we're also facing the challenges of some highly technological shows that force us to adapt.

Rockwell: The economy is depressed; there's concern about taking risks. I'm just so struck by how everything is invented new for a Cirque show. The amount of invention you guys do is inspiring to readers. How do you continue to make that a vital part of Cirque's future?

Heward: For us, risk-taking is mitigated by a very open-ended research and development attitude within the company. It's funny—we never use the word "failure" at Cirque. Research and development, or risk-taking, is an ongoing process. It doesn't stop at the end of the creation of a show; it will continue on through the show. It's a continuum that doesn't stop at one show. It's a long-term evolutionary process. But it's also what mitigates risk-taking. It allows us to take risk over a longer period of time.

Rockwell: And what are you most excited about in the immediate future for Cirque?

Heward: I think it's an attempt at diversifying itself and taking entertainment to a broader scale. We've been endeavoring to do this since 1999 or 2000, with this notion of a complex Cirque, which is going into other fields—you know, restaurants and that kind of stuff. I think we're at the

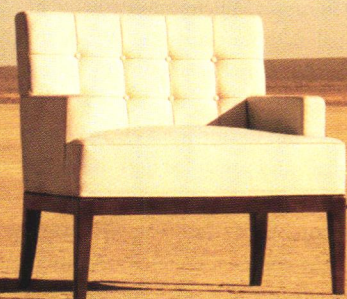
verge right now. It's just been announced that Cirque will work on an ongoing, ever-changing, parade performance-type environment for Quebec City. We did something similar for three or four months last summer, where our show wasn't static; it actually moved through the streets of the city, and many, many people got to see it over the course of the year. I like the fact that Cirque is looking beyond the borders of the traditional theater or a big top.

Then there's the whole risk-taking thing, which we've talked about here—that it's an ongoing process, that we encourage individual risk-taking. David, you mentioned the Academy Awards. We got to do them in 2002, and we asked the 31 artists we brought with us each to take individual risks onstage so that Cirque could take its big corporate risk, which was putting it in front of a billion spectators. But the bottom line is, risk-taking is the sum total of risk taken by the individuals on the team.

Rockwell: Lyn, what I'm going to say as a closing comment is, one day, I want to grow up and run away and join the circus. ☐

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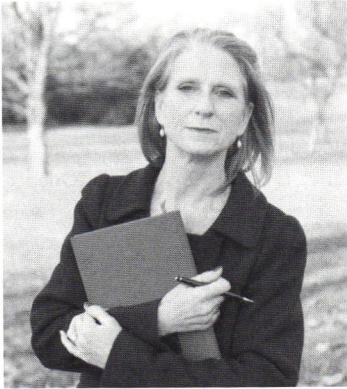


Photo by Charles Hopkinson

cohesive spaces in public places

Is collaboration overrated? Absolutely not, says renowned landscape architect Kathryn Gustafson

By John Gilmore, Senior Writer, HOK



"A Monarch-sized butterfly just flew past me," says Kathryn Gustafson, momentarily interrupting our phone interview to share her delight.

"In your office?"

"No, I'm outside," she says. "Why would I sit inside to talk on such a beautiful day?"

It turns out that when she's not traveling to work on another high-profile landscape commission in North America, Europe, or Asia, one of the world's most acclaimed designers of public spaces recharges by working in a completely private space—her home studio on Vashon Island, a short ferry ride from Seattle.

As she talks, Gustafson is looking at *Salix Alba* (Silver Willow) trees blowing in the wind. Just beyond the terrace cascading down the hill is Covos Passage, part of Seattle's Puget Sound. In the distance she can still see a bit of June snow atop the majestic Olympic Mountains.

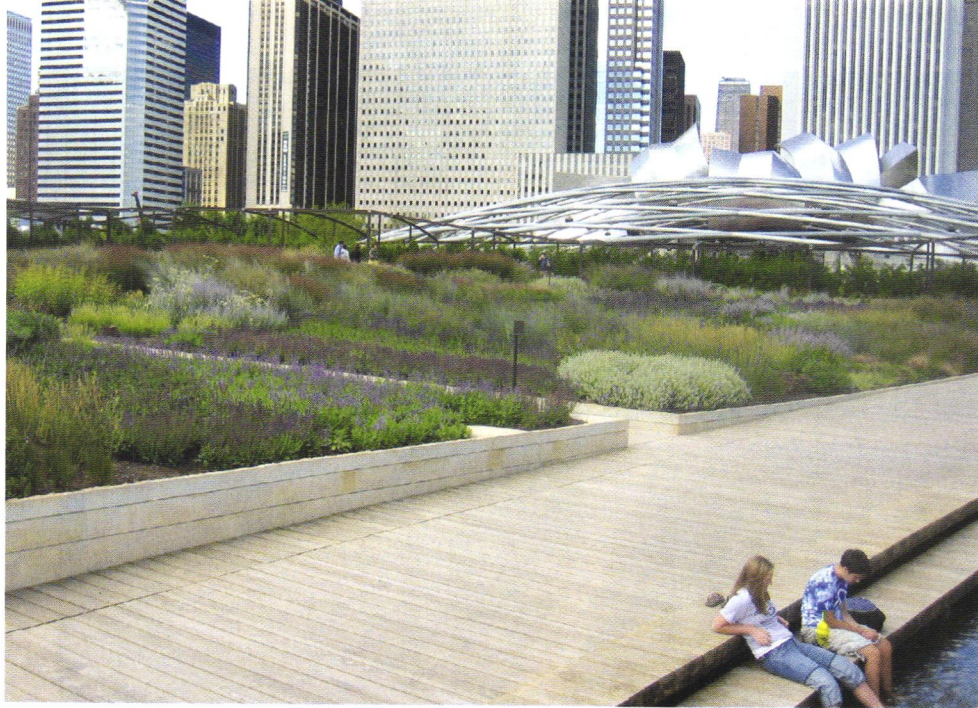
It is from this magnificent outdoor room with a view that Gustafson, a Washington native, leads two prominent landscape architecture practices: Gustafson Guthrie Nichol in Seattle and Gustafson Porter in London.

Gustafson has designed some of our society's most spectacular outdoor community spaces. Her works include projects at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Lurie Garden in Chicago's Millennium Park, the interior of the Great Glass House at National Botanic Garden of Wales in Llanarthne, and the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain in London.

The types of spaces she designs add meaning to our built environment by triggering different physical, psychological, and social feelings that combine to create a powerful cultural experience. "If a space is truly communal," explains Gustafson, "you can take possession of it and gain another space that becomes part of your life. You are no longer cornered between your own four walls or picket fence gardens. The space where you feel comfortable in life is

Scenario Planning:

a strategic planning method that some organizations use to make flexible long-term plans. The original method was generating simulation games combining known facts about the future with plausible trends.



For the design of the Lurie Garden in Chicago's Millennium Park (left; photo by Juan Rois), Kathryn Gustafson collaborated with Piet Oudolf, a Dutch expert in garden perennials, and Robert Israel, a renowned lighting and set designer. Gustafson (opposite top) worked with Norman Foster on the design of the Kogod Courtyard at the Smithsonian's Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture in Washington, D.C. (opposite bottom; photo courtesy of Nigel Young, Foster and Partners).

expanded on a huge scale. And the fact that there are so many people experiencing an outdoor space on so many different levels intensifies the impact."

The best landscape architects create environments that evoke the current time and culture while respecting the existing context. "A design should bring the exterior architecture and interior design into harmony with the site," Gustafson says. She believes the landscape architect should always lead the strategic planning of these communal spaces. "It's our job to create a set of design principles for all the different types of spaces a community needs."

Yet Gustafson also savors collaboration with architects — provided they understand that landscape architects bring much more than plant selection to a project. When she does run into difficulties, it often is with people who don't have experience working with landscape architects. To prevent this from happening, Gustafson isn't afraid to turn down a commission. "I prefer to walk away than to have my design walked on," she says. "If your name is going to be on the project, you have to carry the design."

Gustafson, who has worked with many of the brightest stars in the architectural constellation—including Renzo Piano, James Polshek, and Norman Foster—says the most talented architects also tend to be the best collaborators. "It seems like the more famous they get, the more excited they are by thought," she says. "They have been around the block a few times and understand that other types of designers bring something different to the project."

As she was designing the Lurie Garden at the southern end of Chicago's Millennium Park, which needed to interact with Frank Gehry's Jay Pritzker Pavilion and BP Bridge and several other elements, Gustafson remembers looking across the street to the south and realizing that Piano was designing the Modern Wing addition to the Art Institute of Chicago. "I knew we needed to get together and talk about the two sides of the street we were working on," she remembers. "His office designed the two parking entrance pavilions in the Garden. They, in turn, invited us to design the interior courtyard for the addition and to do the planting design along Monroe Street."

Collaboration with community groups is a critical part of the design process for public spaces. Though the time commitment can be daunting, designers need to build consensus if the public is going to take possession of and care for a space. "It's a very important process that if conducted correctly can make the design even better, and if conducted badly can destroy a design," says Gustafson.

Gustafson's design of Westergasfabriek Park in Amsterdam required a year-long public consensus-building process in which the design team collaborated with more than 500 public representatives, including residents from several surrounding neighborhoods, local artists, environmental groups, and public officials. "The design did get changed, and it was better," she says. "But it took a long time."

A designated, external person should lead this public engagement process for all but the smallest

projects, she says. "You can't be the good cop and the bad cop at the same time. You just have to be the designer."

In the end, a truly great collaborative project will look and feel unified. "It should have strong moves and not feel like a watered-down design," says Gustafson. Preserving the integrity of the design through a highly collaborative process ultimately is the role of the lead architect and landscape designer, she adds. "You have to have the courage to go a certain direction and you have to be able to describe your reasoning. If you can't convince your team, then you don't have the right solution."

Lots of designers toss around the idea of collaboration. At this point has it become a worn-out cliché or convenient buzzword?

"Absolutely not," responds Gustafson. "Collaboration is the best thing on the planet if you do it correctly. When you have the right team and everyone is bringing something different to the table, we all learn from each other. It's like a big concept party. If you don't want to collaborate, then you might as well stay home and play in your backyard."

As gorgeous as her own backyard is, we're all fortunate that Gustafson is willing to venture out and play. ☐



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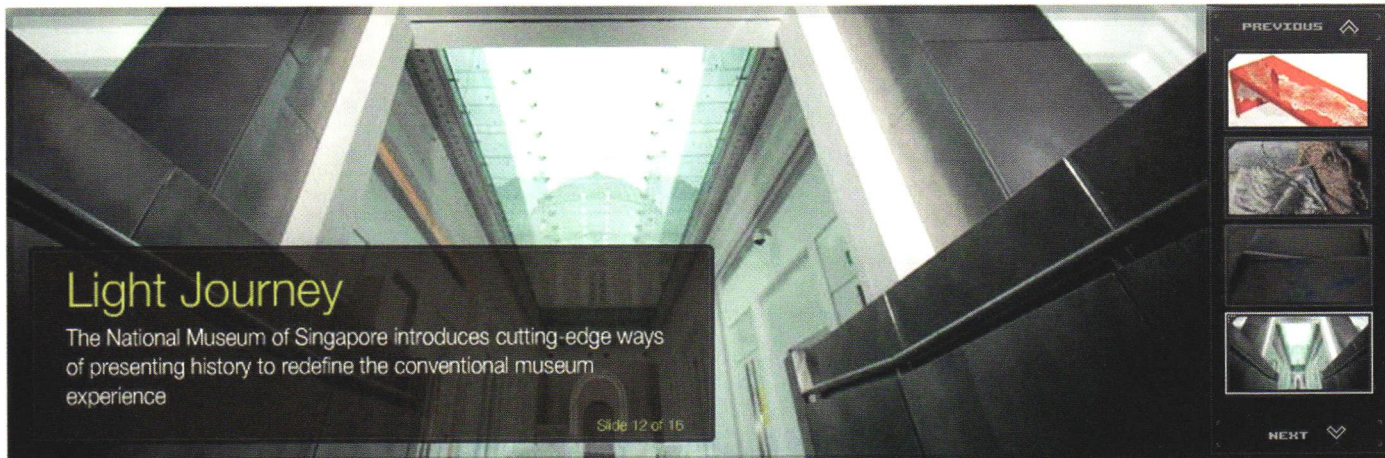
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castles in the sand

HOK engages 430 employees across nine offices worldwide to turn a 3,200-acre desert site in Saudi Arabia into the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology

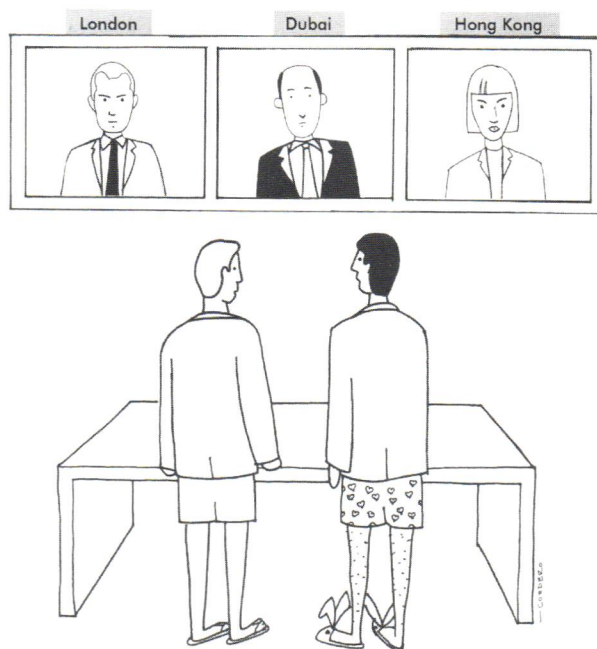
By Fred A. Bernstein
Renderings courtesy of HOK

The HOK design team was faced with an historically unprecedented 2.5-year schedule for design and construction of a world-class, 6 million-sq.-ft. campus (above), making this one of the world's most ambitious development projects. Entry courtyards to the KAUST laboratories (opposite) are shaded and passively cooled as part of the pedestrian spine, with cafes, water features, and seating for scientists and students.





Daylight and energy models were used extensively in the design process to achieve a balance between natural daylight and solar heat gain. The Engineering Sciences Hall (above) will contain modular laboratories and classroom spaces. The Administration Building (left) will be the point of reception and welcome for guests to the campus.



"It's like we are all in the same room... almost."

Bill Odell is an expert in collaboration. The director of HOK's Science and Technology Group, he specializes in designing laboratories that give researchers a chance to share ideas, often informally. In a YouTube video, Odell describes "the lab of the future" as a place not primarily for scientific apparatus, but for human interaction. And Odell practices what he preaches. At HOK, he says, the culture is so collaborative that it takes some new employees by surprise. "Most people become very comfortable with it, and realize how much more we can do together," he says, "but some people just can't deal with it and leave."

It's possible that no project at HOK has ever required as much collaboration as the campus of the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (known as KAUST), which is rising along the Red Sea 50 miles north of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Flying over the site earlier this year, "it looked like someone kicked an anthill," in the words of Monte Wilson, a senior vice president in HOK's Planning Group. Thousands of construction workers were readying the campus for the arrival, in early September, of 65 professors and several hundred graduate students, according to Jeff Weintraub, a Washington, D.C.-based spokesman for KAUST.

That group is just the tip of the sand dune: KAUST is designed to accommodate thousands of researchers from around the world. Promises of academic freedom is one attraction. Another is brand-new facilities. The Saudi king—who committed more than \$10 billion to the project—is determined to provide the best of everything, both on the campus proper and in the new community, incorporating extensive cultural and recreational facilities, rising around it.

HOK was involved at several levels. Its Advance Strategies group helped the client, Aramco Services Company of North America, a subsidiary of the Saudi Aramco Oil Company, develop the program for both KAUST and its myriad

components. HOK's Planning Group master planned the 6 million-sq.-ft. campus and surrounding village (on a 3,200-acre desert site). HOK's architecture group designed most of KAUST's buildings, including 3,400 houses and apartments. And other HOK practices involved were interiors, lighting, graphics, lab design, structural engineering, and mechanical engineering.

At its peak, the project involved some 430 HOK employees in nine firm offices. "HOK was already a collaborative firm," says Wilson. "But this took it to a completely different level." Or, as Odell says, "We evolved beyond the notion of competition."

Incredibly, the project began less than three years ago, when the client sent a request for proposals focused on master planning to three dozen firms around the world. The first HOK employees to read the RFP knew that a massive amount of cooperation was required. "Once they got a sense of how big and complicated it was, they reached out to other offices," says Wilson. "I was way busy on other things and really had no business saying yes," he adds. "But I did."

The firm was chosen in October 2006—just a week after submitting its proposal—and had five months to complete its master plan. "Opening September 2009," says Wilson. "That's been the mantra since the very first meeting."

Collaboration has been the other mantra. At that first meeting, Wilson recalls, the client talked about HOK's global reach. How could it make sure it was getting the best thinking from all two dozen of the company's offices? Wilson suggested a 24-hour, around-the-world charette, a kind of "racing the sun" event for developing the master plan. "After creating an internal brief," he recalls, "we started the clock in London, and it



moved around the planet—each office had a two-hour window. At the end of the 24 hours, the firm had a wall full of ideas, ranging from land use strategies to sustainability concepts, many of which made it into the final design.”

The client liked the results of the first around-the-world charrette so much that, when it expanded HOK’s role beyond master planning, it requested a second one for architecture. “The goal is to get the client the best expertise, wherever it is in the firm,” says Wilson. “You can’t have the guru on healthcare in every office.”

It helps that at HOK charrettes that cut across disciplines and experience levels are “part of the culture,” according to Odell. “You’ll have the twentysomething who just joined the firm, and the oldest member of the team, and they’re drawing side-by-side. It’s very liberating.”

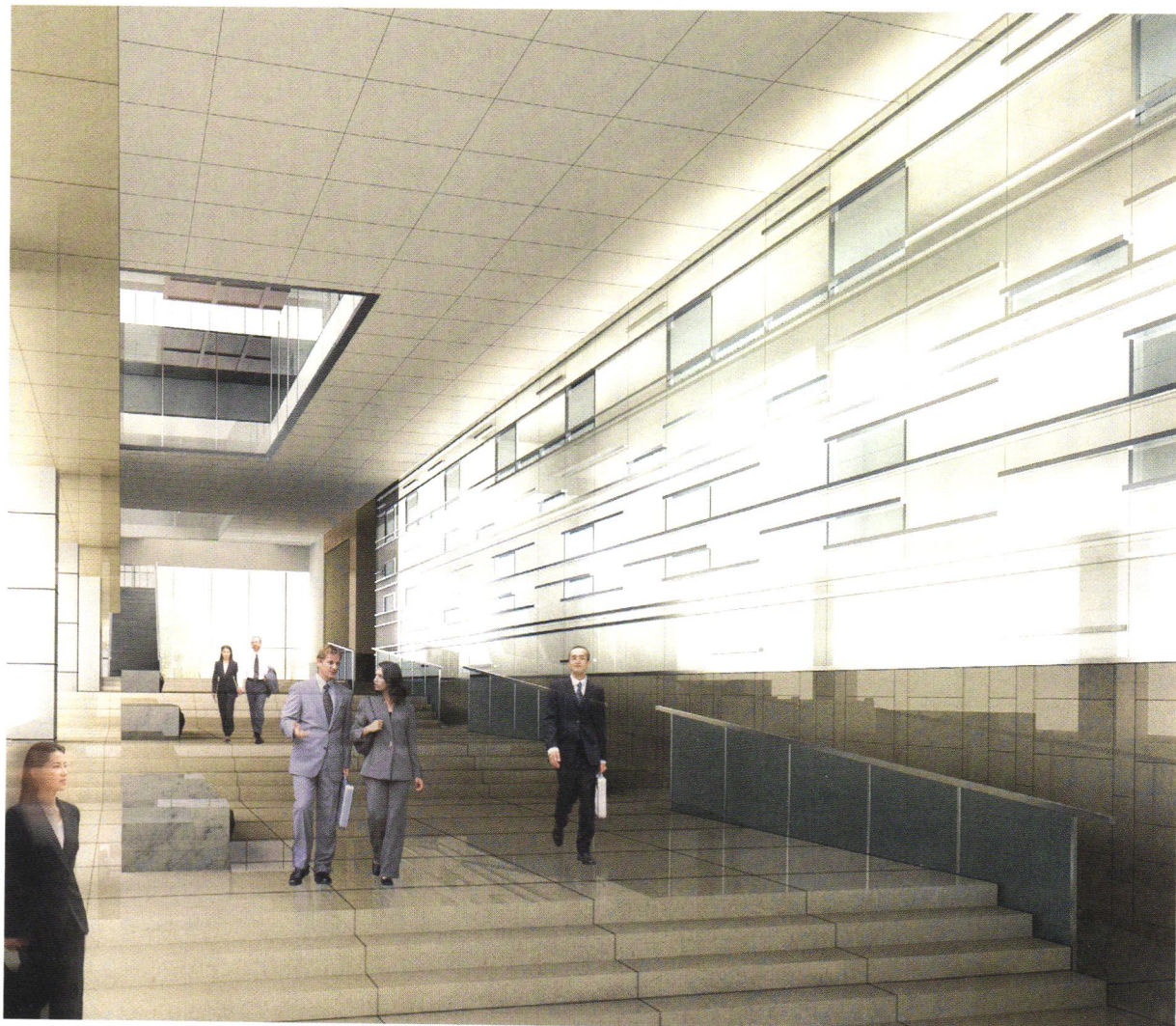
To coordinate the input of hundreds of employees on three continents, the firm relied on the latest communications technology. One program, a “virtual flip chart” system, called Thunder, from Steelcase, allows people in different offices to work on the same drawing simultaneously, “as if they were standing over the same piece of yellow trace,” says Odell.

The firm has also made a major investment in a video conferencing system, called TelePresence, from Cisco. “You’re sitting at a slightly curved table, and you’re looking at the people on the screen, who are at a similar table, and it looks like you’re sitting right across from them,” Odell recounts. By combining Telepresence and Thunder Technology, “we can electronically roll out the trace paper and sketch together,” he says.

Thunder has proven especially useful during the construction phase. HOK is required to respond to requests for information, which—by definition—come from thousands of miles away. Previous generations of architects would have responded to the RFIs in writing.

Now, “When there’s an issue, we’ll pull the right people together in our Thunder room,” says Odell. The client sends photos, or videos, or sometimes a live camera feed. In one recent instance, he says, “there was a guy out in the field, moving the camera around, saying, ‘Look, when they poured this beam they didn’t leave room for the drain pipe.’ We were able to discuss it in real time, sketch ideas together, and settle on a solution then and there.” ☐

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The campus is on track to achieve LEED Gold certification and launch the formation of the Green Building Council in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Its facilities, including administrative office spaces (opposite) and a state-of-the-art library, will incorporate the latest technologies to connect KAUST with research institutions around the world. In addition to designing laboratory, academic, and learning spaces, HOK also designed a conference center (above), museum (right), and auditorium for KAUST, as the campus will host academic leaders, industry leaders, and Heads of State from around the world.



face to face

Getting a status update on a colleague is simply a glance away in the new Palo Alto, Calif., headquarters of Facebook, designed by Studio o+a

By Katie Weeks

Photography by Cesar Rubio and Jasper Sanidad

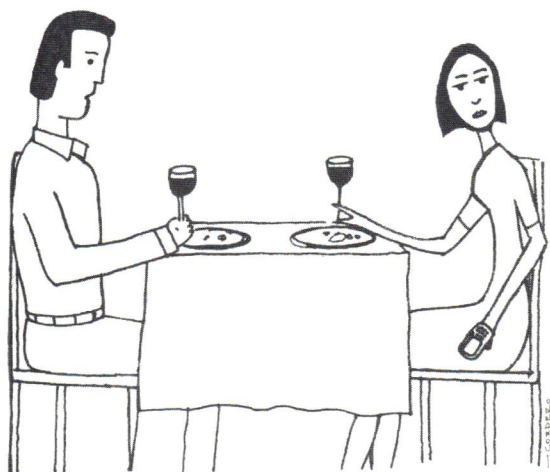


Talk about pressure to walk the walk: Many clients may speak of wanting a collaborative office, but for social networking giant Facebook, no other space would do.

Since its inception in 2004, the online platform, which aims to help people communicate with friends, family, and coworkers, has exploded both in users (with more than 100 million individual users now logging on at least once per day) and in staff (numbering more than 850 worldwide and growing). While employees certainly are continuously connected through Facebook's online platform, physically, this explosive growth was hampering in-person interaction. By late 2008, the company's home base was spread across 10 buildings throughout downtown Palo Alto, Calif. "As we got bigger and bigger, it made it more difficult to collaborate and be as productive as we wanted to be," says John Lieu, project manager, design and construction at Facebook. "Centralizing the company was a key element to making us more productive."

Choosing a 1960s building in Palo Alto's Stanford Research Park, Facebook tasked San Francisco-based Studio o+a with bringing this ever-expanding team together under one roof. Time was of the essence as the quicker they could get into the space, the quicker they could get back to work. "From the beginning, we knew this wasn't going to be our final space so we didn't want to over-invest. We're a company that's still growing, and we feel like we still have a lot more to get done so we don't want to really settle into a space and feel like we've made it," says Aaron Sittig, design strategy lead at Facebook. With this in mind, "functionality was paramount. They didn't want anything too finished or too gimmicky," says Denise Cherry, senior designer at Studio o+a. "There had to be a solid reason and function behind every decision."

In crafting the new headquarters for Facebook, Studio o+a sought to combine comfort with function, with a special emphasis on openness (left). Natural light abounds in the plan (above), which reflects the youthful vibe of Facebook, and the entire space is, of course, wireless.



"I recently read that 35 percent of wireless users prefer the company of their PDA over their spouse. Ridiculous, isn't it, Darling?...Darling?"

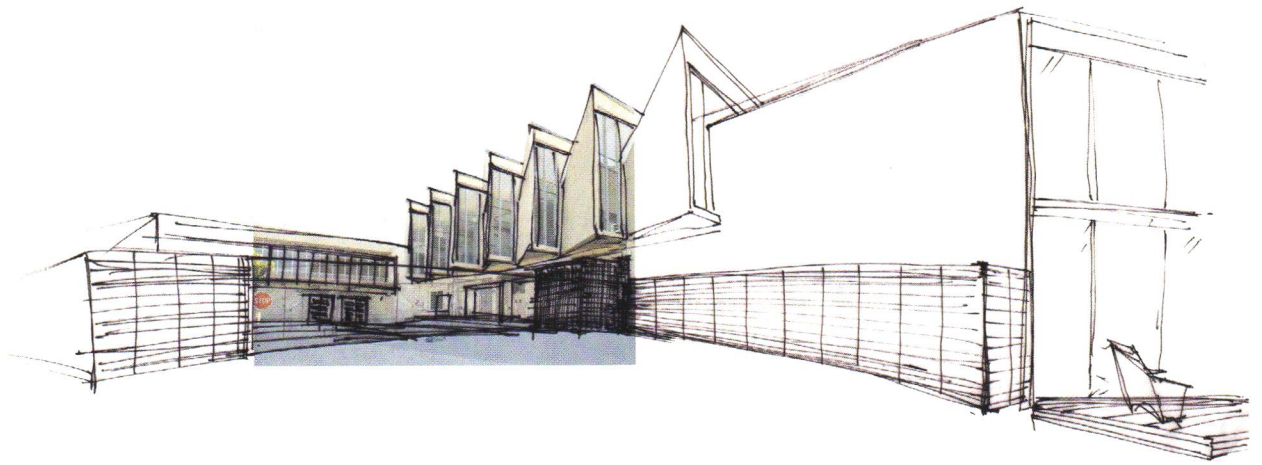
Studio o+a embraced the industrial aesthetic of the building, which previously housed offices and manufacturing facilities for computer giant Hewlett-Packard, and modified and updated only what was necessary. High-walled cubicle systems on the second floors were dismantled. A large crane, once used to move laboratory equipment, was repurposed into a table that can be moved and pivoted as needed. Cabinetry from the labs were refinished and reused in kitchenettes, where they are complemented by black countertops reminiscent of the old laboratories. In fact, the building's lab spaces, including lead-lined rooms, Bunsen burners and testing facilities, proved an interesting nod to Facebook's position as a social laboratory.

On each of Facebook's two floors, the plan is deliberately open—in fact, there are no private offices, and the only enclosed spaces are the conference rooms where visibility was also encouraged. Each employee, regardless of department or title, works from a 30-in. by 60-in. desk, allowing teams to move and change as needed, and fostering conversation and collaboration across divisions. "It's a driven, motivated culture that's very bottom-up. We try to make everyone feel like they can make a difference in the success of the company, and we take good ideas from everywhere. The way that manifests in our space is in this floor plan where everyone is working in the same fashion, and there is no barrier between someone who showed up a few weeks ago and someone who has been at the company a long time," Sittig explains.



Casual meetings spaces (above and below) abound to better support spontaneous interaction and interdepartmental collaboration in the bottom-up company, which seeks innovative ideas from any and all employees. With no private offices here, each employee works from a 30-in. by 60-in. desk, and the only enclosed spaces are conference rooms (opposite). Working around the quirks of the original building (an old Hewlett-Packard facility), the team embraced the industrial elements like a large crane. Once used to move laboratory equipment, it now holds a movable conference table (right).





In this vein, a wide range of Facebook employees were involved in the design process. Not only did Studio o+a work with three groups—a facilities team, an advisory group comprising department representatives of all levels, and creative leads including Sittig and Everett Katigbak—but all Facebook employees were kept updated via company blogs and polls. “We would constantly get critiques. It was like going to school every week,” notes Primo Orpilla, principal at Studio o+a. Adds Cherry, “The philosophy was that the process should be transparent with no secrets and everyone having a say.”

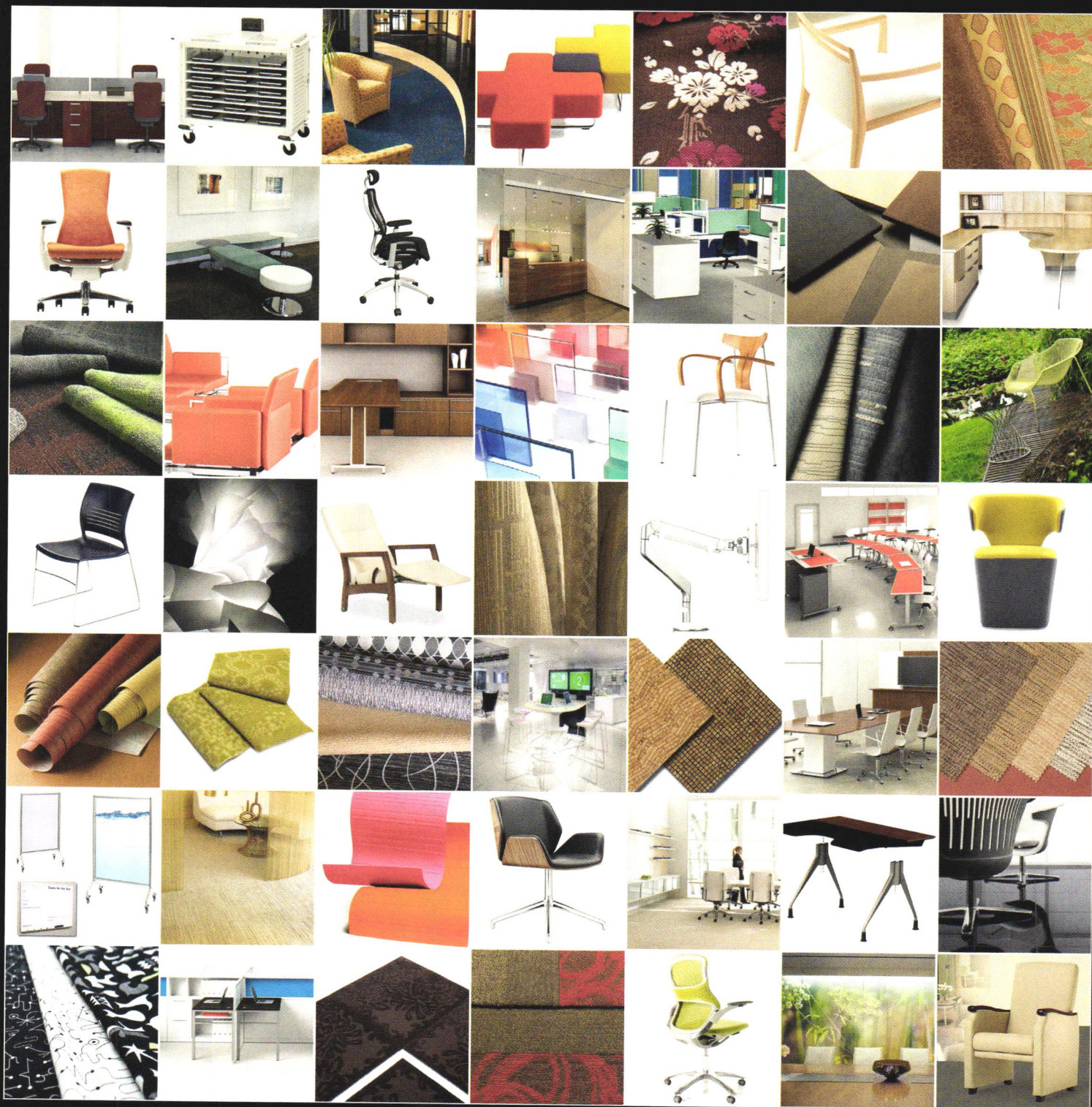
It should come as no surprise, then, that the final design is somewhat like that of a Facebook profile. “The space and the site almost parallel each other in that walking into the building there’s a neutral backdrop with a couple of hits of colors,” explains Orpilla. “It was very deliberate that we didn’t design the entire space. We left it somewhat undone so that each group can put its personal touch on the area. For example, where we may have used supergraphics, we left the wall blank so they can fill it with whatever they want.” Adds Cherry, “Employees are encouraged to write on the walls. The idea is that the building will constantly evolve as people come in.” Just like a Facebook status update, it seems, commenting is encouraged—in fact, they wouldn’t have it any other way. ☐

For a list of who, what, where, please visit this story online in the “design” section of the Web site at www.contractmagazine.com or see the source page on the digital edition of the magazine at www.contractmagazine.com/digitalmag.

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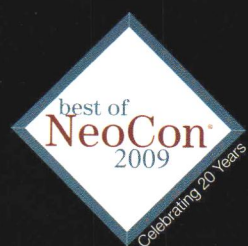


Outside of splashes of color and select pieces of art (above), the palette is intentionally neutral so employees can customize their space as they would like, much like users individually modify their Facebook pages. Graffiti near one of the cafes (left) references Facebook’s old offices, where a local artist came in and painted an entire stairwell.



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design

heart and soul

HOK's design for a new Harlem Hospital patient pavilion in New York aims to preserve and nurture the cultural essence of the community it serves

By Jean Nayar
Renderings courtesy of HOK



Preserving a series of large-scale murals executed in the 1930s was of utmost importance to the Harlem Hospital project. A 5 ft. by 80 ft., multi-panel work called 'Pursuit of Happiness' (of which parts of three panels are shown in this photo) by the artist Vertis Hayes, tells the story of the African diaspora from agrarian life in the African homeland to positions in the professions and the arts in the industrial north of America.

Financed with \$1 billion in capital budget funding, the Health and Hospitals Corporation of New York City has been involved in efforts to upgrade its hospitals for the past 15 years. Among the facilities designated for improvement is the 127-year-old Harlem Hospital Center (HHC), which actually consists of a collection of aging buildings coalesced around 136th Street and Lenox Avenue in Manhattan. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of Dr. John Palmer, Harlem Hospital Center's executive director, along with the project's architects, HOK, and key representatives of the neighborhood, a new six-story, 185,600-sq.-ft., \$200-million Patient Pavilion—slated for completion in 2012—promises to establish the Hospital Center as a major civic presence that enriches the cultural core of its community.

Initial plans for the upgrade began in 1999, and in 2003 the New York office of HOK won the opportunity to produce the master plan for the project. Later, in 2005, the firm, along with Jack Travis of Bronx, N.Y.-based Studio JTA, was awarded the commission to design a new pavilion and renovate portions of its existing structures (a new 300-car parking facility, developed by Desman Associates, will also be part of the overall \$319 million project). Sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the community, Dr. Palmer embraced a collaborative

approach to the project from the start, calling a town hall meeting in 2000 and establishing a steering committee made up of representatives of the community, elected officials, hospital staff members, and representatives of the HHC. "The steering committee has been in place since 2003 and insisted on being a part of the process of selecting the architects, contract manager, and vendors who would work on the project," says Palmer. "They also wanted to be sure there would be a record of minority- and women-owned business quotas being met, and they helped develop a community employment program related to the project through which 1,900 applications for training for employment were made, and 50 people from the community were ultimately employed."

Major functional goals for the project were to house key Harlem Hospital programs in the new building and renovate key nursing and clinical units in the existing 40-year-old, 18-story Martin Luther King pavilion. The new building, which will serve as the central link between the MLK pavilion and the existing four-story, 11-year-old Ron Brown pavilion, was designed to be a patient- and family-friendly facility, accommodating a new emergency department, as well as state-of-the-art treatment facilities, including imaging and surgery units and critical-care beds.



Culturally resonant art and artifacts are integral components of the exterior façade (above) and interior of the lobby (opposite) of Harlem Hospital Center's new patient pavilion.

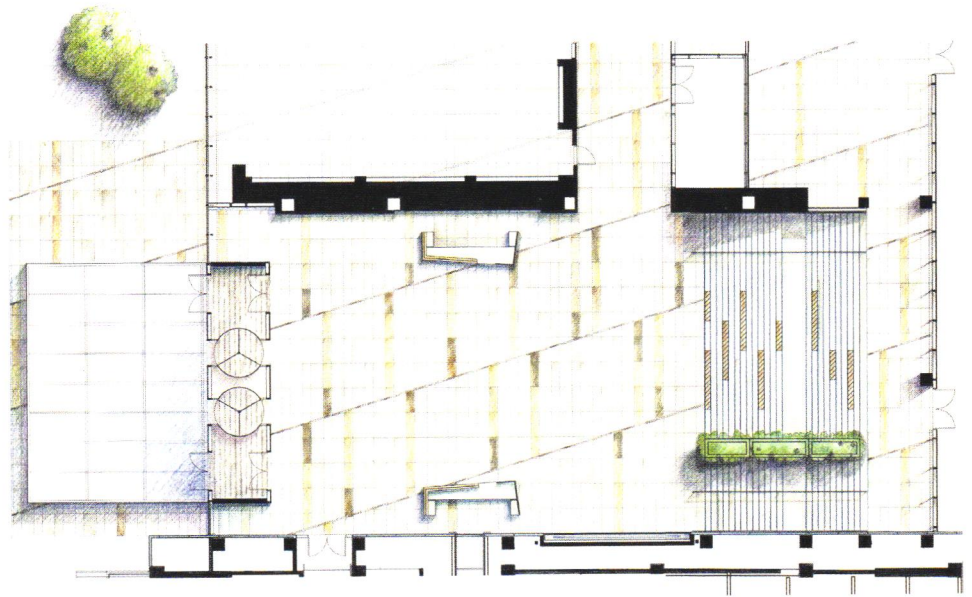
Another key goal of historic and emotional significance to the steering committee was the preservation of portions of existing buildings that were of cultural value to the community. Of particular interest was a series of large-scale murals executed in the 1930s as part of the government's WPA program. "The murals represent one of the first instances where public art in the United States was produced by African American artists," says architect Richard Saravay, HOK's senior principal on the project. "The largest mural, a 5 ft. by 80 ft., multi-panel work called 'Pursuit of Happiness' by the artist Vertis Hayes, tells the story of the African diaspora from agrarian life in the African homeland to positions in the professions and the arts in the industrial north of America. So there is a lot of history and attachment to them in the community." In the course of previous renovations of other Harlem Hospital buildings during the 1950s and '60s, several structures were demolished. "The committee feared that any excuse to tear down the institution's buildings would lead to a loss of identity associated with the institution," says Palmer.

"In response to this concern, the master plan included a requirement to remove, restore, and install the murals in the new building," says architect Chris Korsh, a principal at HOK. "They're now being restored by an art conservator, and they will be relocated in their own museum-quality gallery space just off the lobby of the new pavilion and visible from the street."

The murals also served as a source of inspiration for the interior design and exterior façade of the new pavilion, which was HOK developed in collaboration with Travis, an African American architect and teacher, whose firm specializes in what he calls "cultural design" specifically aimed at resonating with black Americans. "My concept revolved around the idea of 'destinations' and how the lion's share of African American slaves came mostly from three points of departure in Africa—the Gold Coast of Ghana, Angola, and the Isle of Goree—before moving on to various points of destinations in the Americas, often mixing with the Taino and Arawak natives and Spanish-, English-, French-, and Portuguese-speaking people of Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad, other Caribbean islands, and several South and Central American countries, as well as the French- and English-speaking people in North America. The idea was to explore the historical essence of being black, and it started in Africa," says Travis. "It's very difficult to know how 'blackness' affects you positively when so many in our community are dysfunctional and disoriented and become negative forces acting against the best interests of the community. So as an architect the question is: How can you stop this? The directional inferences embodied in this design aim to help people in the community reconnect with their origins."



Cultural references in the atrium (below) include a grid pattern in the floor angled toward Mother Africa (right), a boat-shaped planter holding a replica of a baobab tree, and a pattern inspired by kente cloth on the bridge glazing. The wall in a typical elevator lobby (opposite top) features a backlit artwork that reflects the community's culture. A protective, warm-toned structure houses the Emergency Department registration (opposite bottom) in a low-stress, private environment with separate areas for pediatric and adult patients.





To express these ideas architecturally, materials and motifs in the central atrium of the new pavilion conspire to uplift and reinforce the historic cultural essence of the community. "The design of the main lobby includes a heritage wall made of a material that looks like rough wood and is designed to accommodate art and objects with strong cultural importance to the community," says Saravay. In addition, the terrazzo floors planned for the space are distinguished with bands of terrazzo positioned at a 22-degree angle off the street grid, pointing due East "in the direction of Mother Africa," says Travis. Finish colors and patterns planned for the primary interior atrium space were inspired by African textiles, while sections of the "Pursuit of Happiness" mural will be enlarged and reproduced with a ceramic frit technique to cover a vast portion of the façade of the new building.

"We knew there was no question that HOK would produce an excellent design," says Travis. "But when you talk about putting images of black people on a building that's six stories high, you take it to another level by addressing the cultural dynamics that are as important as design excellence in creating something that resonates with the community." ☐



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David Adjaye, Max Bond, Philip Freelon (left) and Hal Davis of SmithGroup (pictured, left to right) used their respective skills, backgrounds, and expertise to deliver the winning concept for the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. The project's design concept is based on a crown-like sculpture atop a stone base, with a soaring central atrium open to skylights on the interior (renderings opposite courtesy of Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup).

dream team

Philip Freelon, David Adjaye, Max Bond, and Hal Davis of SmithGroup found collaboration key to landing one of the most coveted commissions of the decade—the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture

By Jan Lakin

Skunk Works:

a term used in technical fields to describe a group within an organization given a high degree of autonomy and unhampered by bureaucracy, tasked with working on advanced or secret projects.

While the idea of a national African American heritage museum was first raised almost a century ago, legislation passed in 2003 will finally lead to the development of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture on the Mall in Washington, D.C. In April 2009, the Smithsonian announced that a team of four firms, Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup, was chosen to design the new museum. It's not a stretch to see this group of designers as a veritable dream team: the Freelon Group and Davis Brody Bond are two prominent African American firms with significant cultural projects under their belts; David Adjaye is quickly making his mark as a rising international star; and SmithGroup has experience with complex projects as well as prior Smithsonian commissions.

Yet what makes this team remarkable is not so much who they are, but how they came together and how they were able to collaborate using their respective skills, backgrounds, and expertise to deliver the winning design concept.

The journey for the design team has not been without challenges. Their competition was a formidable roster of five other finalists, including Foster & Partners, Moshe Safdie, and Diller Scofidio + Renfro. There were questions about the team's abili-

ty to collaborate—a key issue for the Smithsonian. How well would the team's lead designer, David Adjaye, a Tanzanian living in the United Kingdom, function with his American counterparts? Would he dominate the team as a star designer? Also, was four firms too many for an effective working relationship? Then, tragically, Max Bond—who with Philip Freelon had been steadfastly tracking the museum project for many years, and who is widely known as “the dean of African American architecture”—died during the competition.

In interviewing the finalists, museum director Lonnie Bunch was concerned about what Bond's loss meant for the Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup team. “Max had been the personification of collaboration,” according to Bunch. “I wanted to know how Max's spirit would be carried on by the others.”

Knowing this was a project of a lifetime and that joining forces would increase their chances of designing the museum, Max Bond and Phil Freelon had already teamed up in 2007 to lead the programming phase for the project, with a gentleman's agreement to jointly pursue the design commission. When the design competition was announced, Bond and Freelon strengthened the team by adding Hal Davis at SmithGroup.

In the United Kingdom, David Adjaye also had been eyeing the design project, and since he had long wanted to work with Bond, he approached him as a potential partner. Bond and Freelon then met Adjaye for lunch in New York to see if they might share design philosophies and a commitment to a collaborative process. It was immediately clear that it was a meeting of minds. Bond likened the planned collaboration of the four firms to a Miles Davis jazz ensemble, with Miles Davis providing the creative vision of the band, and two brilliant soloists, Cannonball Adderley and John Coltrane, along with Paul Chambers on bass in the background, making the music all the more powerful.

The firms began by clarifying roles to serve as a framework for the competition and beyond. "When you have multiple designers on a project, ultimately somebody needs to be able to provide a thumbs up or down," says Peter Cook of Davis Brody Bond. To ensure the design reflects the values and priorities of

the museum and the Smithsonian, they designated Bond as "design guarantor." With his passing, the role moved to Freelon. Adjaye is the lead designer. Cook, who also was deeply involved in the earlier programming phase, is tasked with the functional realization of the program. As managing principal, Hal Davis helps to coordinate the teams and delivers the design documents. All team members have a role in the design at all phases.

With the actual competition running just under two months, all of the principals of the four firms kicked it off with meetings several days during the first few weeks. Each firm returned to their individual offices to further explore ideas before coming back together again. After the first few weeks, each firm dedicated part of its staff to a core team at the SmithGroup location. Then the key players met up for regular bi-weekly meetings both in-person and via conference calls.

While steeped in research, analysis, and much discussion, the concept was settled early on, enabling the team to quickly and productively move forward and to keep explorations on track. "We all felt very passionate about the project and all shared a tremendous appreciation for African American culture," says Freelon. Rather than interpreting a narrative about the African American experience, the team developed the idea of marking a celebratory moment of praise. The resulting design is a crown-like bronze structure atop a stone base with a soaring central space open to skylights on the interior.

"Once we had a strong concept in place, we were able to test it again and again, run it through the ringer, bringing all our different experiences to the table to make that big idea stronger," recalls Cook. Listening and respecting the ideas of teammates was especially important. "When you are all pulling together, not really concerned about whose idea it is or who gets the credit, then you can make a lot of progress," says Freelon. Adjaye valued the team's impact on his own thinking, "Debating takes away the bits that are prejudices and just habit," he says.

One topic of deliberation was the ramp from the Mall. Wanting to place equal value on both the National Mall and the Constitution Avenue entrances, the team worked through many options. "The primary move of the whole project was the idea of arriving in the center of the building. We went through many iterations, and that was a case where the group dynamic was very important for honing the message," says Adjaye. "The final result is stronger than any one of us could have done separately," notes Davis.

A collaborative team was critical for Bunch and the Smithsonian, as well. "We are choosing a design team, not just a design concept," he stated at the press conference to announce the winning team. In the final interviews, therefore, Bunch paid special attention to how well Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup listened and interpreted the brief: "Did they simply parrot material that they heard from me, or did they really assimilate it and make it something different while still showing respect for the initial vision? That's what Max did so well." In fact, Bunch says, "They took these ideas and helped it go in directions that I hadn't even anticipated." Without a doubt, Max Bond is still with the team. ☐



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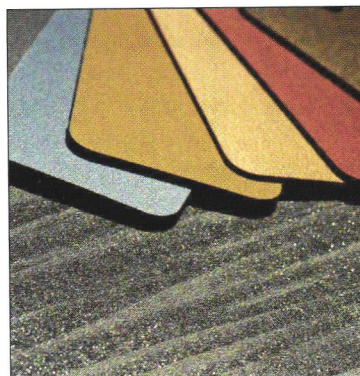
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