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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2010

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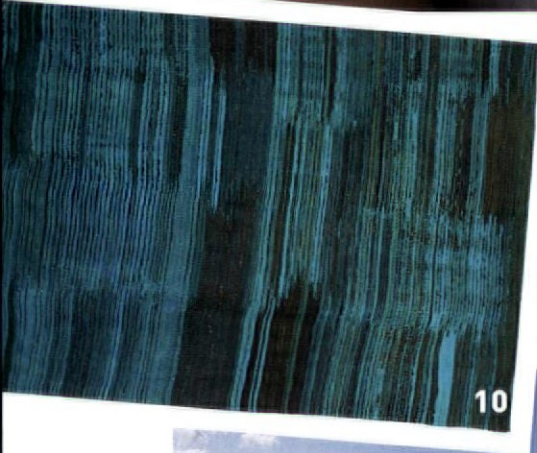
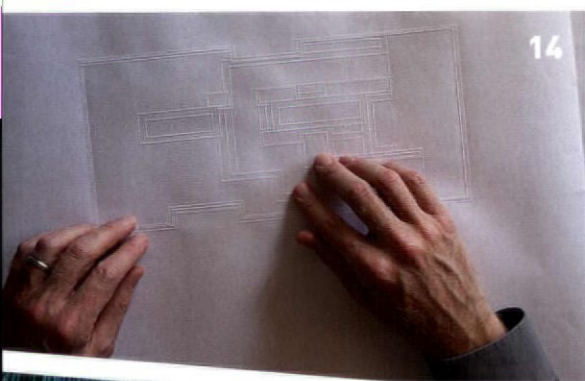
AIA/LA's Restaurant Design Award winners offer delicious décor

BY MICHAEL WEBB

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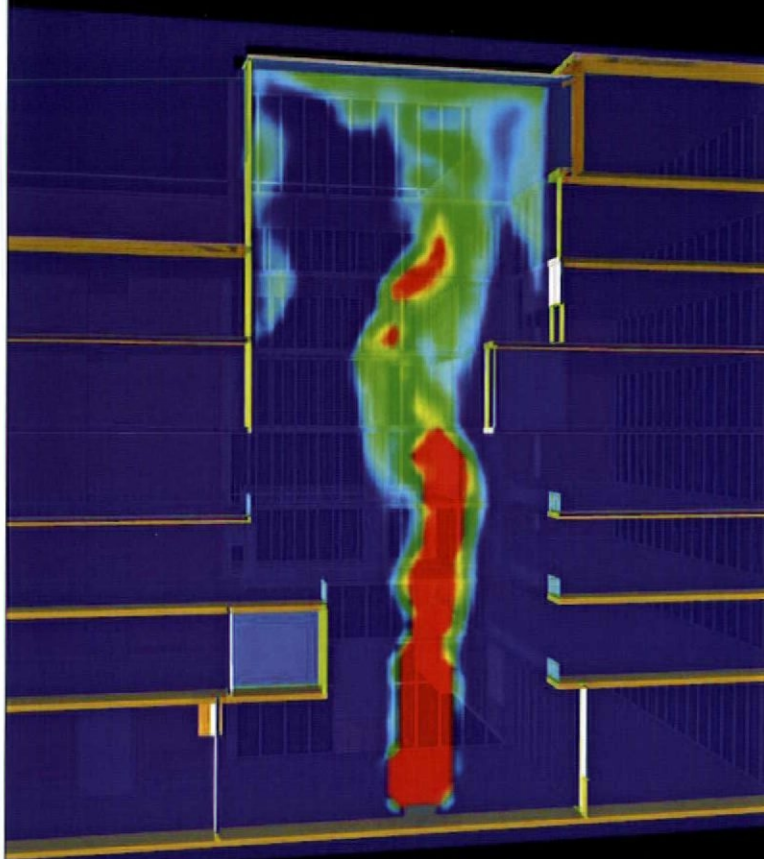
Vibrant plantings come to life next to a quiet columbarium

BY JENNIFER QUAIL



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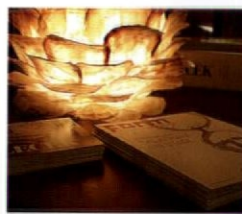
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FORM EVENTS

FORM Celebrates the World at the Palecek showroom

In honor of FORM's July/August International issue, Palecek hosted a party at its showroom in downtown's L.A. Mart Design Center, which co-sponsored the event with AQUAOVO OVOPUR water filters. USC professor and documentary filmmaker Mina Chow presented exclusive images from her recent trip to Shanghai for the Expo 2010 and led, along with her crew, a lively discussion on the national pavilions. Palecek set up an Asian-inspired buffet among the company's handcrafted sustainable furnishings, and beverages were supplied by co-sponsors PAMA pomegranate liqueur, Hpnotiq and Honest Tea.



FORM PIONEERING DESIGN ISSUE EVENT

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Thursday, November 18, 6:30-9 PM at Seven Grand
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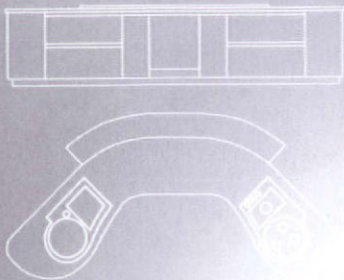


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– Oscar Niemeyer, architect

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EDITOR'S NOTE

As the year rolls to a close, we begin to enter a festive season of celebration and thanks. During this time, we see colorful decorations, we smell the aroma of turkey and apple pie, we speak and hear laughter and song, and we feel our closeness. This stimulation of the senses augments our experiences and helps embed them into our memories. And the engagement of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch can be applied to design, as well.

In this issue, we explore how design can create a multi-layered experience that engages all the senses. Our feature, "The Garden of Earthly Delights" (p. 36), explores Susan Narduli's journey to awaken them. She incorporated the smoothness of stone, the sound of gravel, and the scent of herbs to engage the visitor so they are present in their environment. Sight and smell also play an integral role in augmenting the flavors of cuisine, so the way a restaurant is designed can affect the taste of the food. In our annual celebration of the AIA/LA Restaurant Awards, writer Michael Webb reveals the juicy morsels that help complement the senses. But what happens when one sense is lacking? Architect Chris Downey went blind after having a tumor removed, but undaunted he continued to practice taking a deficit and turning it into an asset (p. 14). On a separate note, I would like to send my personal thanks to the design community for supporting me as the editor of FORM over the last two years. With this issue, I will be passing the reigns to our new editor-in-chief, Caren Kurlander. Let's toast to a new editor, a new year and new beginnings. Cheers!



Eric Roth

Alex Pross



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Floor Show

New rugs offer visual interest in a tactile palette

Angela Adams, *Birds of Paradise*

Portland, Maine, rug designer Angela Adams often looks to nature for inspiration in her patterns. *Birds of Paradise*, one of the newest designs in her hand-woven line of New Zealand-wool rugs, pays tribute to the "beautiful, colorful birds that create elaborate nests and dance floors to woo their love interests," Adams says. The flatweave carpet starts at \$349 for a 3'x5' and goes to \$1,950 for a 9'x12'.

more information: 800.255.9454 or www.angelaadams.com



The Rug Company, *Mixed Metals 24K* by David Rockwell

For its latest collection, The Rug Company has teamed with New York architect David Rockwell of the Rockwell Group. In creating his line, the architect referenced his theatrical set designs, vintage kaleidoscopes and abstract geometric shapes. *Mixed Metals 24K* is hand-knotted of Tibetan wool and silk into overlapping squares of varying pile heights for a rich, tactile feel underfoot. The carpet, priced at \$9,450 for a 9'x6', can be custom-made in any size or color.

more information: 800.644.3963 or www.therugcompany.info

Mansour Modern, *Ibiza*

Mansour Modern, the contemporary arm of the venerable antique rug purveyor Mansour, is making a colorful introduction with its new Haute Bohemian collection. In startling hot pinks and vibrant aquas, the rugs, a nod to Talitha Getty in 1960s Morocco, represent a striking departure from the more subdued palettes of past collections. *Ibiza*, available in color combinations of aqua or ruby and priced at \$5,800 for a 6'x9', is made with vintage fibers and yarns.

more information: 310.652.1121 or www.mansourmodern.com

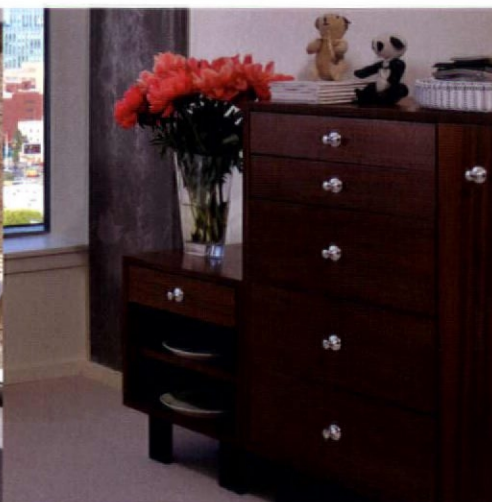
Kyle Bunting, *Mirage* by Jiun Ho

San Francisco furniture and interior designer Jiun Ho is debuting a line of textured rugs with the Austin, Texas, company Kyle Bunting. Ho's four designs—featuring overlapping diamonds, Moroccan-inspired stars and interlocking Y-shapes in soft hair-on-hide—take advantage of Bunting's precise methods for creating intricate patterns out of cowhide. *Mirage* can be ordered, through David Sutherland in Los Angeles, in any size and any combination of more than sixty hand-dyed colors, starting at \$98 per square foot.

more information: 512.264.1148 or www.kylebunting.com

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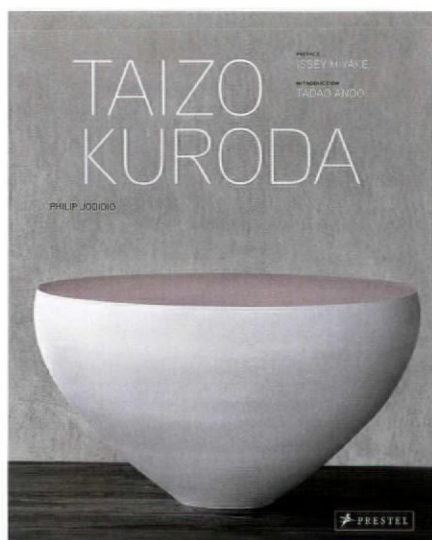
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BOOK REVIEWS

a5 Los Angeles:

Architecture, Interiors, Lifestyle

Edited by Casey C.M. Mathewson
and Ann Videriksen

Foreword by Frances Anderton,
ORO Editions, \$60;
www.oroeditions.com

This useful portfolio of recent projects by 22 talented L.A. firms was edited by Casey Mathewson, a Californian who now works in Berlin, in association with Ann Videriksen, and is enriched by Frances Anderton's perceptive introduction. The choices range from veterans such as Barton Myers and Ray Kappe to newcomers that include wHY Architecture, Minarc and XTEN Architects. It's flawed by the omission of such major firms as Morphosis, Michael Maltzan and Daly Genik, and by the inclusion of projects as far removed from southern California as Dubai, Morocco and Argentina. A bigger failing is the editors' bias towards orthogonal forms, scanting more exuberant and daring approaches to design—much as John Entenza manifested in his selection of architects for the Case Study House program. The Helios House gas station of Johnston Marklee and Office dA featured on the dust jacket is an atypical selection.

Taizo Kuroda

By Philip Jodidio, Prestel, \$65;
www.prestel.com

Issey Miyake and Tadao Ando contribute brief notes of appreciation to this dazzling study of a Japanese potter whose work is timeless but deeply rooted in tradition. For the past three decades, Kuroda has sat at his wheel in a remote studio, shaping unglazed white porcelain vessels, each a masterpiece of ceramic artistry. Only in Japan, perhaps, could an artist be so focused on a single theme and the subtle variations it can yield. The book is as elegant as the work it contains, and Kuroda tries to elucidate the mysteries of minimal pieces that contain a world of meaning.

Rafael Moneo: Remarks on 21 Works

By Rafael Moneo, Monacelli Press, \$75;
www.monacellipress.com

Few important architects express themselves as lucidly as Rafael Moneo, who combines a deep feeling for place with the rigor of a Jesuit education. There's a wealth of insight in these reflections on the creation of public and institutional buildings, mostly in Spain but also in Massachusetts, Texas and here in L.A. The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels falls far short of his vision, dragged down by a cardinal who is a disgrace to his office, but

the photographs by Michael Moran cast a warm glow over this flawed achievement as they do over the jewels he created elsewhere.

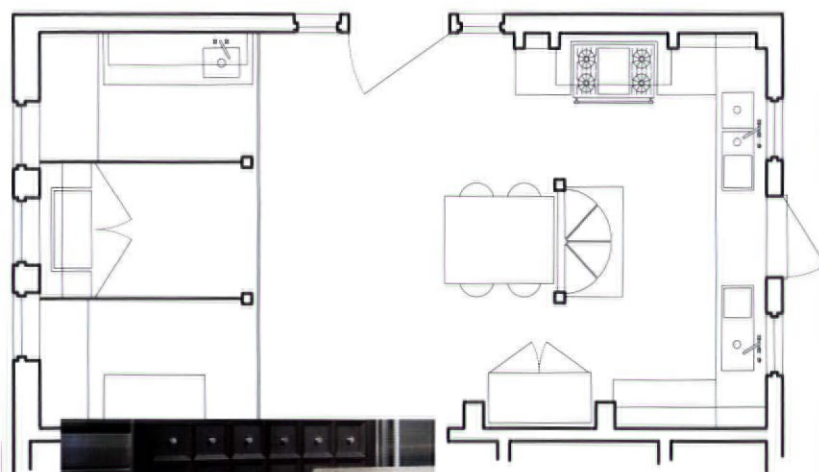
SPOTLIGHT

Greening Downtown L.A.

Los Angeles has one-fourth the green open space of New York City, and most residents live far from a public park. Good reason to applaud Rios Clementi Hale Studios' design for the 12-acre L.A. Civic Park that broke ground in July. It's the only piece of the Grand Avenue Plan that was not killed (or put on indefinite hold) by the recession, and it promises to breathe life into the sterile corridor of the Civic Center. In contrast to Pershing Square, which was over-designed and is underutilized, this traffic-free oasis has a more natural feel and should be thronged with employees from the bureaucratic barracks that enclose it. Like New York's Bryant Park it is an ideal location for cafes and outdoor programming to complement passive usage. Still more exciting is the recently announced master plan for a 125-acre park on the site of the Piggyback Yard on the eastern edge of downtown: a collaborative venture to regenerate the L.A. River.

—Michael Webb





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"I think of things more experientially now. I'm very mindful of designing with a full set of sensory design intentions."



Sight Unseen

Architect Chris Downey, AIA, founder of Architecture for the Blind, discusses designing and experiencing buildings without seeing them

How did you lose your sight?

I lost it in March of 2008 during surgery to remove a brain tumor that had been located at the optic nerve. I had been practicing architecture for twenty years prior to that. I knew I wanted to continue; it was really just a question of how.

How did you do it?

One of the things suggested through my rehabilitation services, was that I get an embossing printer. It prints embossed drawings on sixteen-inch-wide rolls, and it's

basically like Braille. We create a PDF of drawings that the staff is working on, and I take that PDF and print it through the embossing printer. The line-work becomes a raised series of dots. It also conveys line weights so you get a good bit of information, which I can feel through my fingertips.

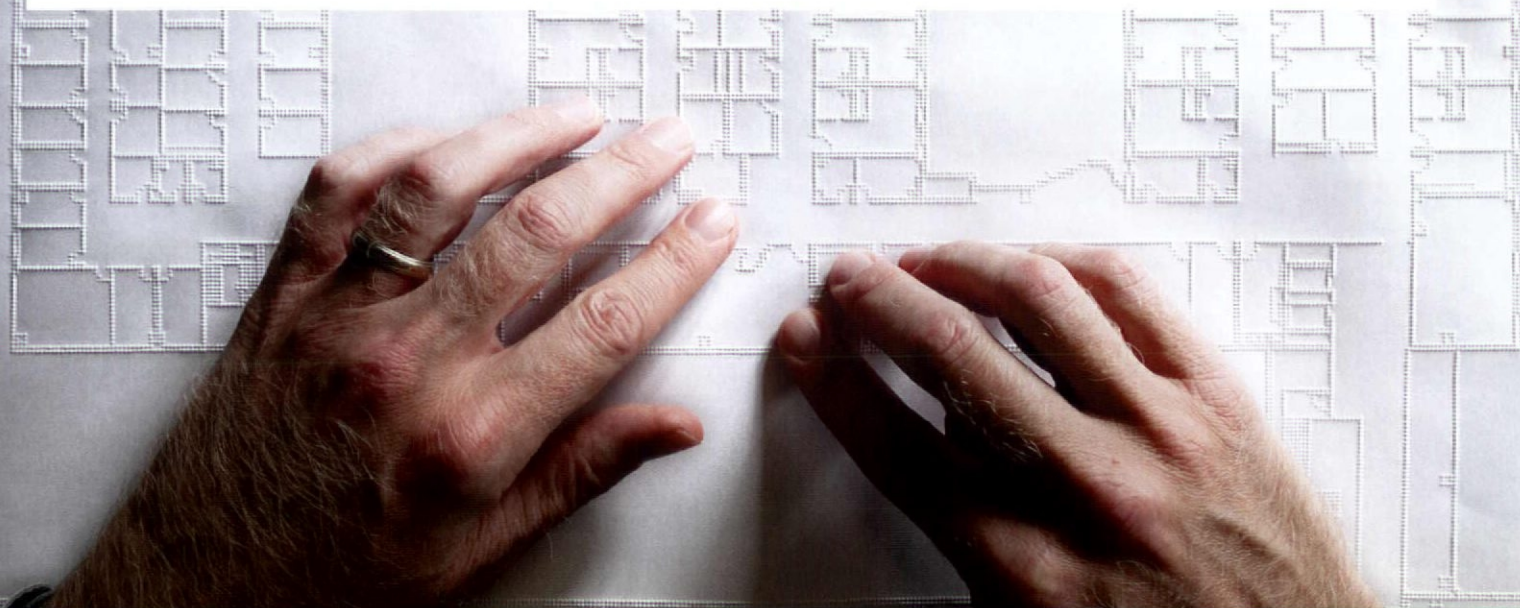
What other technologies or techniques have you found helpful?

The one real shortcoming I've found is the inability to create drawings myself in the computer. So I use Wikki Stix, little waxed

sticks, which are really a toy for kids, and draw with those. It's a common thing for architects to unroll tracing paper on top of a drawing and then sketch on top of it. I just use these wax sticks and draw directly on top of the embossed drawings. It gives me a way to interface actively with the design.

How has the way you experience architecture changed?

Eighty percent of your sensory input is visual, and after that you have hearing and touch relative to the built environment. To





OPPOSITE: Architect Chris Downey uses his fingertips to read plans from an embossing printer, which translates information from a PDF to a series of raised dots in varying weights. ABOVE: Downey, working as a consultant to SmithGroup and The Design Partnership, LLP, brings a unique combination of personal experience and architectural expertise to the design of the new VA Rehabilitation Center for the VA Health Care System Palo Alto, CA, Campus.

experience a building without sight, you become far more conscious of acoustical and tactile information.

How do the acoustics help you understand the space?

It's interesting when you can hear the space around you. In a big echo-y space you get a sense of how large it is. One time I felt the inverse of that was at the Kimball Art Museum. You don't want to have a lot of noise disturbing you as you study the art, and they did a superb job of controlling the acoustics. I thought it would be clear to me if I was in one of the large vaults or under one of the lower ceiling areas, but there was absolutely no difference. The sound was completely flat. At one point, I stepped outdoors into one of the vaulted spaces, where they didn't have the acoustic treatment, and with one tap of the cane I could hear the entire length of the vault.

How did the acoustics effect your experience of the space?

It made it difficult to move through. But Louis Kahn had used wood flooring surrounded by bands of travertine, and the travertine was on the structural grid of the building. That started

to mark the space so I could understand it. It was nothing he'd done as any sort of cue, it was just part of the design. It made me realize that we think of design elements as visual, but they can also have tactile value.

Has losing your sight changed the way you work with materials?

Just as you can set things up in contrast visually, you can set things up in contrast through tactile qualities. And that's something that's become more significant to me. If there's reason to have a color transition from one space to another, then why not a change in the texture of the material?

Has your design approach changed?

I think of things more experientially now. I'm very mindful of designing with a full set of sensory design intentions. Something that I've become more interested in is anticipating where you first touch a building. The door handles at the American Folk Art Museum are very distinct. You grab them and all of a sudden you sense a level of care and craft. I've come to think of them as the handshake of the building. But there are those places—like a door, a handrail, a reception desk, an

overlook in an atrium—where you know people are going to interact directly with the building, and you can use it as part of the design challenge.

Is architecture still about function and aesthetics for you?

There's definitely a functional challenge to getting around a large building. Getting around a home is very simple; it's a very finite space. But within the residential scale there's opportunity for a really rich environment with all sorts of details. I really do think you can have a strong sense of aesthetics without sight.

What are you working on now?

Currently, I'm working as a design consultant to SmithGroup in association with The Design Partnership, LLP, on the VA Rehabilitation Center for the VA Health Care System on the Palo Alto, CA, campus. That project made me realize that there was value in my blindness. Architects are not trained to design buildings for people who can't see them. So in this context, there was a lot of insight I could bring to the team. That pointed a new direction for me.

—Interview by Caren Kurlander

The Fab Five

Exploring the senses through
design, one at a time



W Retreat Koh Samui Spa

Designer: MAPS Design and P49 Deesign

Location: Koh Samui, Thailand

Website: www.whothels.com/kohsamui


With the opening of the new W Retreat Koh Samui, Southeast Asia will get its first Thaimazcal facility—for a treatment combining a Mexican-style steam bath with Thai ingredients—as part of the hotel's signature aWay Spa. The freestanding pavilion was inspired by the limestone cliffs in Southern Thailand, says architect Tan Hock Beng, principal of MAPS Design, the architecture firm behind the hotel. "We envisioned a cavern-like structure that's in harmony with the treatment offered." In keeping with that direction, P49 Deesign, who is handling the hotel's interior design, selected rough-hewn materials that will underscore the cave-like environment. "The interior will be made from a cement render that will be scraped for a raw texture," says the firm's partner Carl Almeida. Boulder-like marble slabs will be used as seating and to cover the steam generator, while recessed LED lights will appear to pierce the ceiling.

"Wood will be used extensively in the spa," continues Almeida, "for a driftwood aesthetic." Tabak-wood floors and teak walls will frame the consulting room, where strands of hanging fabric will create sheer space dividers. Synthetic rattan screens will line the walls of the individual treatment rooms, and a soaring teak ceiling will cover the open-air café. "The climate allows for a seamless demarcation of the exterior and interior," says Beng. "We can experience, feel and touch the tropical environment."


Renderings courtesy of W Retreat Koh Samui



TOUCH



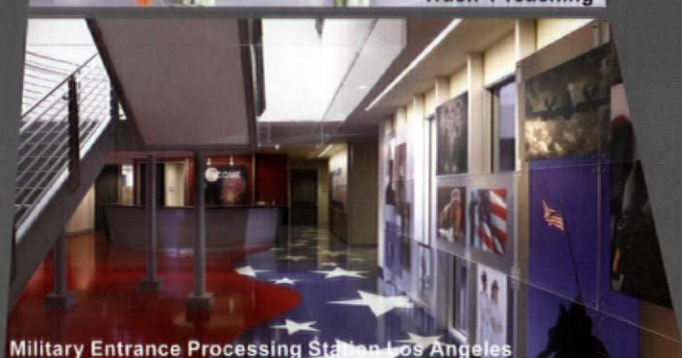
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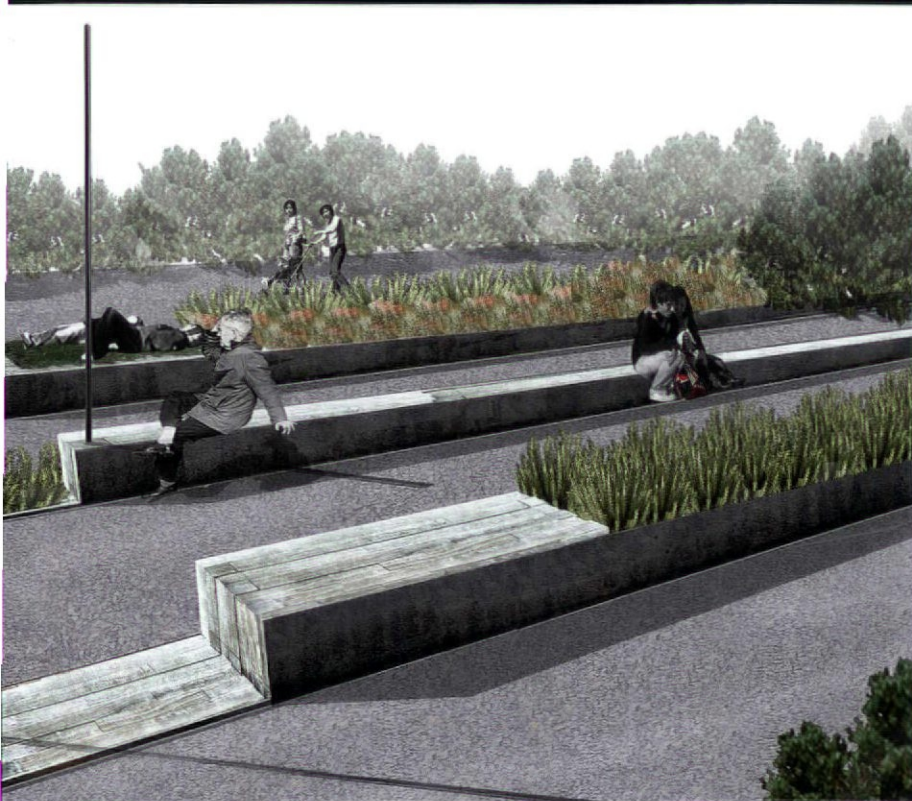
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Xi'an Scent Garden

Location: Xi'an, China

Designer: University of Toronto

Xi'an, a city in China's Shaanxi province most famously known as the home to the Terracotta Warriors, is turning over 100,000 square feet of desolate landscape in its Chanba district to the USC American Academy in China. In return, USC is curating a permanent installation of ten distinct gardens by ten different universities under the theme "Creative Nature." The gardens will be completed by April for the opening of the 2011 Xi'an World Horticultural Expo.

The University of Toronto is expressing that theme through its Scent Garden. "Design tends to emphasize the visual," says Rodolphe el-Khoury, who is a professor with the university and a partner with the Toronto firm Khoury Levit Fong. "We saw in the garden an opportunity to challenge the prevailing domination of the eye." As such, the long, narrow site will be landscaped with pine trees—in tribute to the ancient city's historic gardens—thyme and rosemary. In addition to the natural aroma created by the plantings, the university team will position scent poles along the garden for another layer of fragrance. The stainless steel poles will contain integrated scent cartridges and LED lights, which will diffuse scent and light when activated by a breeze or a fan. "The scent poles assist nature with artificial accents," says el-Khoury. "They tell a different story with fragrances from different regions of China." A glass pavilion will be constructed as a boutique, where samples of the scents will be sold.

Renderings courtesy of University of Toronto



Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts

Location: Orlando, Florida

Designer: Barton Myers Associates

Website: www.bartonmyers.com

"Theater is about creating an ambiance, an excitement and building up anticipation," says architect Barton Myers, FAIA. "And it begins with the arrival." In designing the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts in Orlando, Florida, the architect, working with HKS Architects and Baker Barrios Architects, created a dramatic sense of arrival with a massive canopy roof, which will cantilever one hundred feet in one direction and sixty-five in the other. "It's modeled after the American Airlines 747 hangars here in Los Angeles," he says. The light-weight steel structure will offer an imposing façade and shade from the Florida sun.

Inside, the center will have three separate performance spaces branching off a 350-foot lobby. A masonry "wave wall" will curve its way through the lobby to add visual interest and help contain acoustics. The theaters will include a 2,700-seat amplified hall, a 300-seat studio theater and a 1,600-seat multiroom, which will shift from a concert hall to an opera house. "I've long pushed to use wood in these rooms," says Myers. "There's a psychological connection between wood and warmth, and people who are warm hear better." The concert hall will utilize light cherry on the balcony fronts and back walls, and the larger room will have a darker mahogany along the side walls. An additional space planned for performances is the large entry plaza. The public outdoor square, opposite city hall, will serve as a venue for up to 5,000 patrons.

Renderings by Craig Mullins/Goodbrush.com



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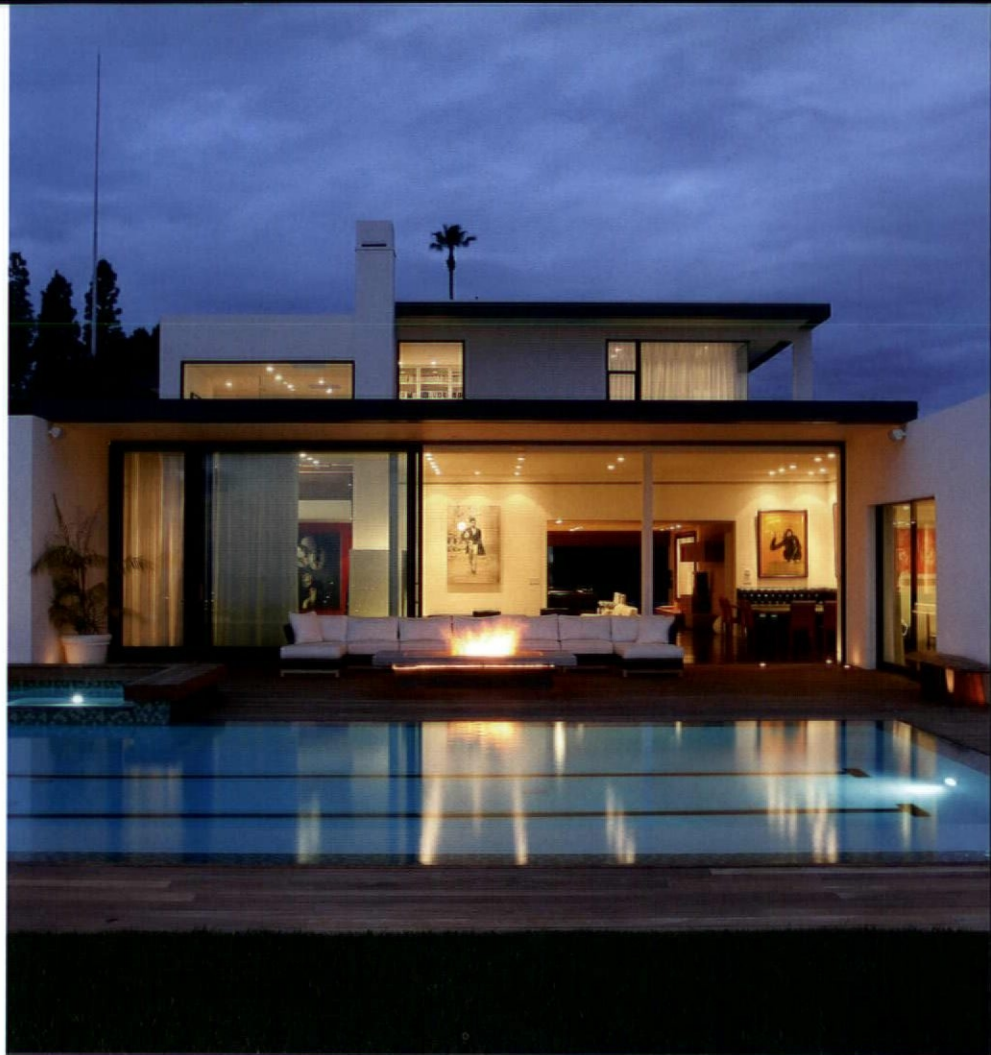
Designer: Belzberg Architects

Website: www.belzbergarchitects.com

In transforming a traditional hillside Los Angeles house into a contemporary indoor/outdoor residence, Hagy Belzberg, FAIA, of Belzberg Architects engaged the site's panoramic vistas from the first point of entry. "The basic strategy was that as soon as you entered the house, you'd be drawn through via these giant walls of glass," Belzberg explains. "The view was used as a visual suction." The architect created a clear sight line through the structure by taking down solid walls that interrupted the views and adding in massive sliding glass panels, connecting the living room with the back of the property, which was also reconfigured with the same goal.

The glass panels slide away to an outdoor sitting area, which is sheltered by a deep overhang. An expansive deck stretches from the sitting area to the swimming pool and beyond, where the architect planted a section of grass to continue the surface. The deck, built on a horizontal steel frame supported by a concrete base, appears to hover above the steeply sloping site. "It's a platform for viewing," says Belzberg, who encircled the entire deck with a cantilevered glass railing system. "When you're sitting down, your eye goes to the horizon immediately."

Photography by Art Gray



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Erich Sattler Winery

Location: Tadten, Austria

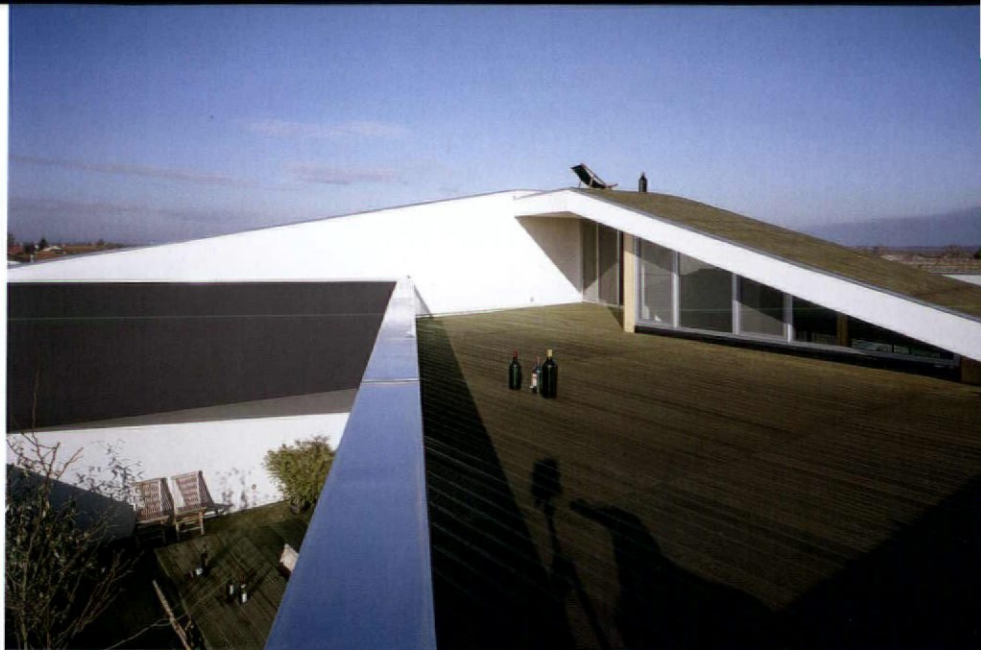
Designer: Architects Collective

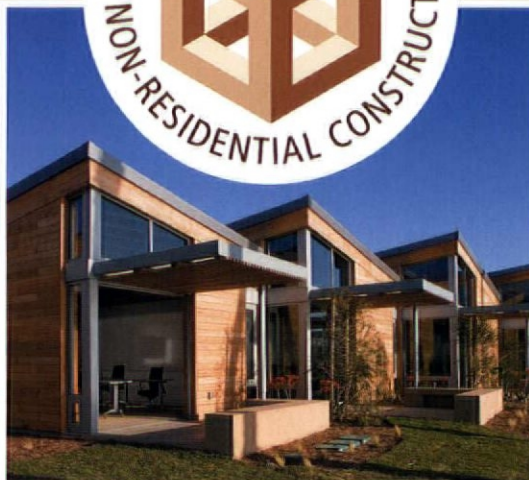
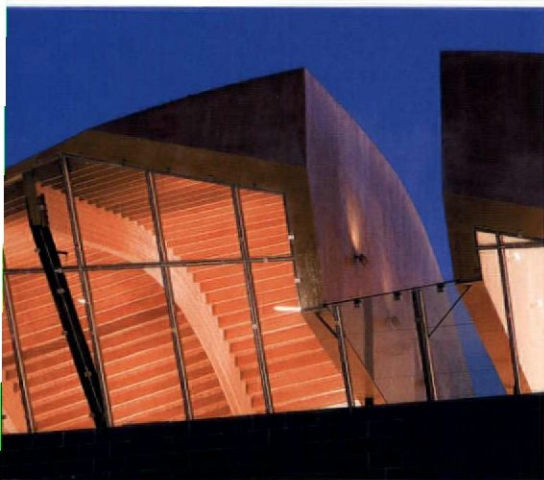
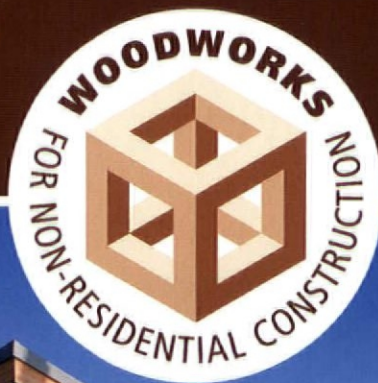
Website: www.architectscollective.net

"The Burgenland region is the warmest in all of Austria," says Kurt Sattler, principal and co-owner of Architects Collective, "and that means tastings and events can be held outside." The area's climate was a driving factor in the firm's design of the new Erich Sattler Winery. The structure, with its angled roofline and expanses of glass, creates a modern departure for the small village, but sensitive siting keeps it connected. As the property was sandwiched between two existing buildings and a central courtyard that needed to remain open, the architects built upward. A rectangular-shaped first floor houses the barrel vault, production facilities and bottle storage. Upstairs, a large flexible space contains the tasting room, guest rooms, kitchen and office. Sliding glass doors open the floor to long terraces on either side, providing cross ventilation and views. Higher still, a roof terrace overlooks vineyards, lakes and the foothills of the Alps.

The structure is made with concrete, "slow-growing and very resistant" Siberian wood for the terraces and poplar for the interior walls, doors and kitchen. "The wine tasting area needed to be very flexible," says Sattler, "in order to accommodate events from casual cooking to formal guided tastings." As such, the room is often used in conjunction with the west terrace, which can seat twenty.

Photography © Wolfgang Thaler/Courtesy of Architects Collective





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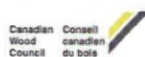
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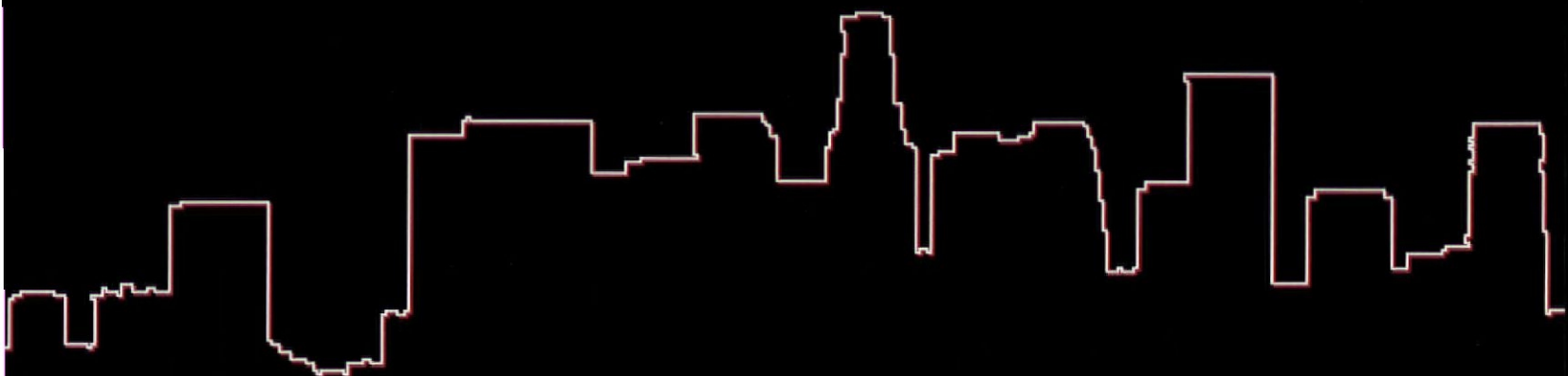
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Designing for the Senses





all in GOOD TASTE

A sample of AIA/LA Restaurant Design Award winners whets the appetite **BY MICHAEL WEBB**

A GOOD RESTAURANT SHOULD STIMULATE ALL THE SENSES WHILE FOCUSING ATTENTION ON THE FOOD. DESIGNERS MUST BALANCE a multitude of factors, from traffic flow to comfort, acoustics and lighting levels to express and enhance the joy of eating out. Easier said than done, for diners' tastes are as varied as the menus they are offered. One size does not fit all, and eateries that try to please everyone are usually as dull as boiled cabbage. The most successful are cued to the culinary offerings, simple or complex.

That's certainly true of the winning entries in this year's AIA/LA Restaurant Design Awards, which spanned the country from Los Angeles and San Francisco to New York, with one popular choice in Boulder, Colorado. Sleekly tailored or unbuttoned, shadowy or sparkling, the restaurants, bars and cafes in this selection have a common thread: they evoke the spirit of what they serve.

Michael Moran



Photography by Michael Weschler

ASSEMBLEDGE+

South Beverly Grill, Los Angeles, CA

The South Beverly Grill offers good ingredients simply prepared, and the woodsy interior with its exposed steel columns and textured brick wall evokes the solid quality and value of the menu. It was commissioned by the Hillstone Restaurant Group as a sibling to the wildly popular Houston's. Each of their properties has a family resemblance, born of a collaboration between owners and designers and a commitment to quality. Architect David Thompson of Assembledge+ worked with interior designer Brad Dunning and contractor Minardos Group to create this contemporary spin on an old-fashioned dining club, an apt choice for its location at the edge of Beverly Hills's Golden Triangle. "It's an exercise in subtlety, achieving a delicate balance of lighting and materials that should wear well and not go out of date," says Scott Walter, Thompson's partner on the project.

Walnut and cherry are used for massive bars at either side and for a louvered screen that divides them, for tables and to enclose black-leather banquettes. Fir beams from an MTA garage were recycled for the exposed ceiling joists. LEDs are employed in the pin spots that cast a pool of light on each table, illuminating the food while leaving diners in shadow, and this enhances the quiet drama of the room. Lighting rakes a relief pattern on the brick wall, and the open ceiling also adds to the sense of texture and depth.



Photography by Michael Moran

EVAN DOUGLIS

Choice, Brooklyn, NY

New York architect Evan Douglas pursued a different strategy for Choice, an informal French restaurant in Brooklyn. Best-known for fusing art and technology (Angelenos may remember his wave-form plastic installation in the Jean Prouve exhibit at MOCA/PDC, five years ago), Douglas has created a ceiling and suspended chandeliers that evoke the Old World, a grape arbor and the food emerging from the kitchen. "It's suggestive, not literal," insists the architect. "The swirling relief was inspired by the chef's pastries, and the chandeliers resemble a translucent jell emerging from the cones." Warm cove lighting

illuminates the posted menu, laser-cut from plates of stainless steel, and washes over the Chinese-stone walls and walnut seating.

Douglas believes that architecture is incomplete without human bodies, and that it should offer a cinematic experience. To realize his vision for the ceiling, he designed a hexagonal plastic tile that could be mass-produced from a CNC-milled mold and combined to create the illusion of random complexity. Lengthy experiments fed into the final design, and the choice of metallic burnt umber as a tone provides an instant patina and sets off the blown-glass chandeliers. Openings in the tiles also conceal sprinklers and speakers. "The best restaurants are sensory theater," says Douglas, "but this can be realized in a subliminal way."

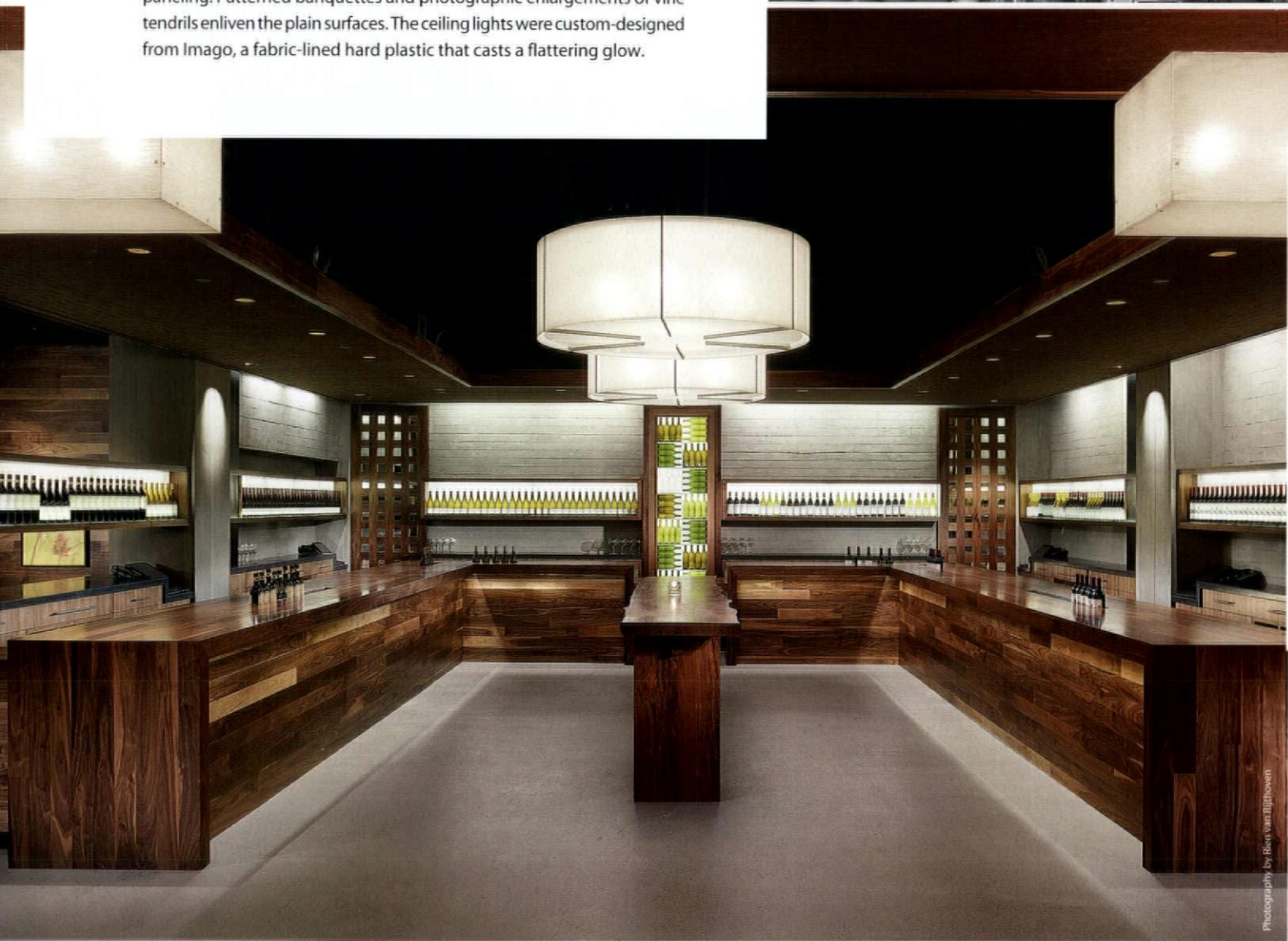


BCV ARCHITECTS

Press Club, San Francisco, CA

San Francisco was once known for its clubby interiors, and Christian von Eckartsberg of BCV Architects has updated that tradition in the Press Club, a wine bar that's located south of Market Street in the base of the Four Seasons Hotel. "We wanted to bring the wine country experience to the city, and add urban sophistication to the earthiness of tasting rooms," says von Eckartsberg. "All the materials contribute to that evocation of the grape, especially the backlit screens of colored bottles framed by wine pallets that capture the autumnal tones of harvest."

Eight boutique wineries showcase their vintages in a street-level shop and in a succession of basement rooms that progress from stand-up counters to a sybaritic lounge to an enclosed private dining room. Board-form concrete adds texture to the American black walnut paneling. Patterned banquettes and photographic enlargements of vine tendrils enliven the plain surfaces. The ceiling lights were custom-designed from Imago, a fabric-lined hard plastic that casts a flattering glow.





ROTH SHEPPARD ARCHITECTS

Modmarket, Boulder, CO

It's a leap from this wine shrine to Modmarket, a cool white tube serving organic salads and sandwiches in a Boulder, Colorado, strip mall, but nature was the point of departure in both. Roth Sheppard Architects was inspired by a farmers' market selling produce from a row of stalls. They emphasized the linearity of the skinny storefront with a long counter and a hundred-foot-long banquette on the facing wall and used white to set off the wholesome, freshly prepared ingredients. Drywall arches over the bamboo tables and canopies the Corian serving

counter, which is faced with white Astroturf. Natural light from tubular skylights washes over the walls and polished concrete floor.

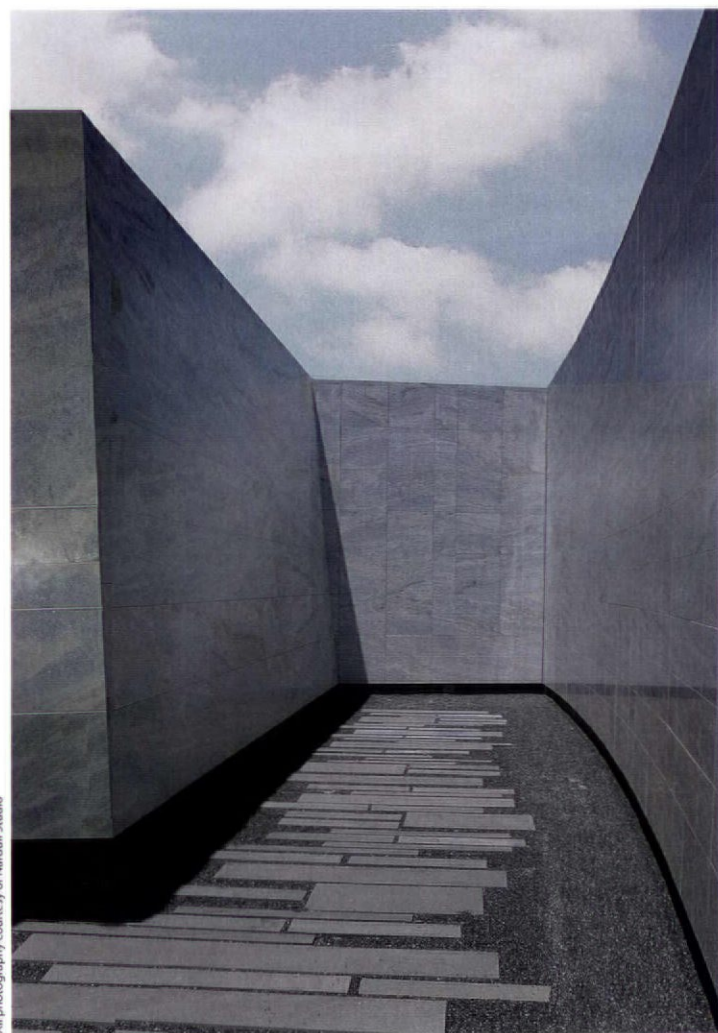
During the lunch rush there's a cheerful bustle akin to an open-air market in the interaction of servers and customers lining up for their orders. "Most of our restaurants distill the essence of the menu," says design principal Jeff Sheppard, "and here we tried to communicate the purity and honesty of the locally sourced foodstuffs."

In an era of standardization and excursions into flashiness, these four interiors stake out middle ground: each has a distinctive character and is designed to showcase, not upstage, the kitchen. If you could eat décor, these would prove tasty treats. ■



The Garden of Earthly Delights

Narduli Studio awakens the senses by juxtaposing a vibrant garden with a sculptural columbarium **BY JENNIFER QUAIL**



All photography courtesy of Narduli Studio

"BY ITS NATURE, A GARDEN ENGAGES ALL OF OUR SENSES," SAYS ARCHITECT Susan Narduli, principal of the interdisciplinary design firm Narduli Studio in Los Angeles. "Being alive, with resilient purposes quite independent of human intention, a garden allows us to transcend ourselves."

The architect, who worked as a project designer for Frank Gehry before opening her own firm, put that theory to work in designing the award-winning Columbarium and Garden of the Senses at Chapman University's Wallace All Faiths Chapel at the Fish Interfaith Center. Drawing on her previous work as a sculptor and installation artist, Narduli set out to affect both "an emotional and intuitive experience" through the physical environment. "I came to understand ways to craft space that build on nuance," she says of her work as an artist, which has influenced projects from the Santa Monica Museum of Art to the redesign of California Institute of the Arts. "So my relationship to materials and form comes from that sensibility. I look for the inherent meaning beyond an object's physical properties."

As the Interfaith Center is a place of worship for all religions, the university requested the creation of a sacred space without reference to traditional iconography. "As I started working on the project I realized that the compelling challenge—and promise—of this commission, was not only in looking beyond doctrine, but in reflecting on life going on in the midst of death," Narduli says. "That is how I came to see the poetry of the garden sited beside the columbarium as a metaphor for our humanness, how we embrace life knowing we're mortal."

Architect Susan Narduli's Garden of the Senses at Chapman University's Fish Interfaith Center stimulates the senses through architecture and landscape. **OPPOSITE:** Fragrant herbs grow untended between stone pavers and release their scent as visitors walk through the space. **LEFT:** Smooth blue marble reflects the sky, and narrow stone pavers form an asymmetrical pathway through brittle gravel in the restrained columbarium.

As such, Narduli says the spaces at the Interfaith Center were designed to embody those two sides of human experience, “the sensory, with all its immediacy, coexisting with our knowledge of its impermanence; the recognition that we will lose everything, our bodies and our senses.”

The very disparity of the two spaces—one a garden full of life and the other a repository for last remains—made the transition between the two spaces a critical part of Narduli’s thought process. She eliminated plans for a gate at the entrance to the columbarium and widened the connection between the two spaces. “I didn’t want a barrier,” she says. “I thought about the difference between life and death—just a breath really.”

“We form all types of associations that may start with the senses, but then elicit deeper responses that reflect and define the way we understand our environment.”

To further affect “a subtle shift” between the two spaces, Narduli opted for a flowing ground plane throughout the areas with a continuous surface of stone pavers. In the columbarium, the stones are set within dry gravel that makes a brittle sound as one walks. In the garden, herbs nestled between the pavers release their fragrances with each footstep. While the inert gravel stimulates touch and hearing and the fragrant herbs engage the sense of smell, there is a give-and-take to each experience. “In the Garden of the Senses, when someone touches a lemon geranium or the sage it stimulates the plant to release more fragrance which in turn excites our senses,” she says. “In the columbarium, the sensory experience is more nuanced. The gravel accepts and remembers the marks left by people. One feels oneself leaving that footprint, and hears gravel whispering, giving way with each step. It shifts and yet it remembers.”

Polished stone was selected for its ability to bring a sensual tactile experience not typically found in an outdoor setting. The stone was “used symbolically,” says Narduli. “In the columbarium, the polished blue marble not only extends to the sky but reflects it. In the garden the polished onyx becomes the symbolic light that speaks of the eternal and transcendent.” The polished forms become vertical elements along the wall between the garden and the columbarium and large faceted benches. At night, these lit stones provide the garden’s only source of illumination, and during the day, the benches offer places for visitors to stop and immerse themselves in the changing experience of the garden. In this way, she says, the stone becomes a signifier, one that triggers the senses, which in turn tell us to note something out of the ordinary. “We form all types of associations that may start with the senses, but then elicit deeper responses that reflect and define the way we understand our environment,” Narduli says.

Narduli has described the garden as “a cacophony of plantings, fragrance and the tactile” and she wanted it to remain largely untended so the plants would come to define the space. In addition to the herbs, plants such as the lemon geranium were selected for their seasonal blooms, the way they attract birds and butterflies and the way they perfume the air. Throughout the garden, unlikely neighbors were grouped together to accentuate their textures and scents, leading to soft, furry leaves growing near spiny succulents. The goal here, Narduli says, was to create an environment where “something is always in bloom and birdsong is common most of the year.”

“The garden is exuberant,” the architect says. “It’s like an eruption. Plants grow between the pavers, over the benches and intermingle with each other.” And that was the intention: a place teeming with life and its possibilities. Narduli says that when she is in the garden, she finds herself “very aware of entering a place that is indomitably alive.” Her hope is that all visitors will experience that same “awareness of vitality in the world, and our place within it.” ■

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Narduli put in a variety of plants, including herbs, lemon geranium and succulents, to create a verdant, fragrant experience in the garden. Tall, polished-stone forms seem to grow in smooth contrast alongside the spiky plantings. Stone pavers weave around a fountain by artist Lita Albuquerque and sculptural onyx benches, which offer visitors a place to sit and interact with the space.



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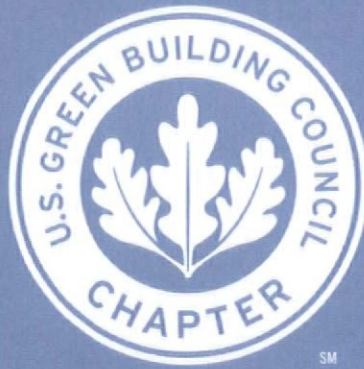
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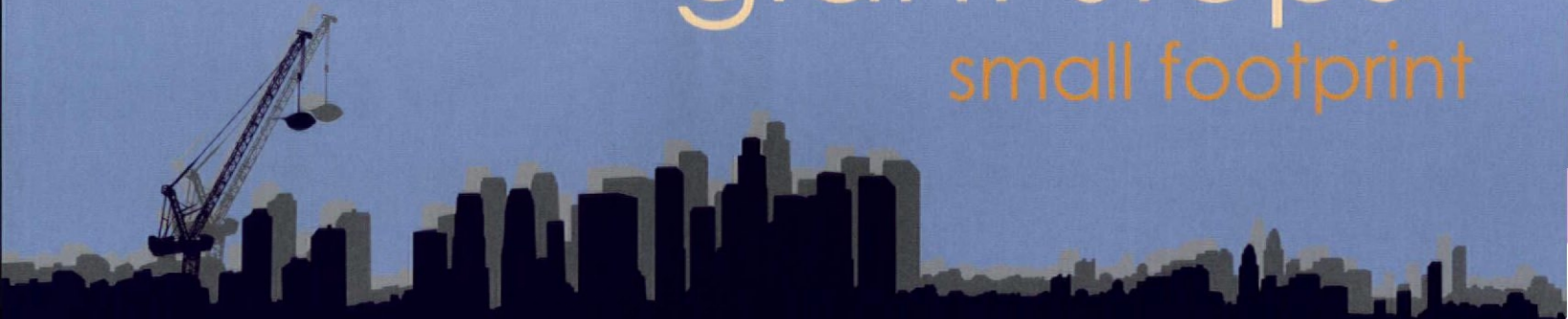
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SPA CONSULTANT: Spa Synergy

LIGHTING DESIGNER: DJC Coalition

CONTRACTOR: Italian-Thai Development

CLIENT: Amburaya Resort

Xi'an Scent Garden

XI'AN, CHINA

PROJECT TEAM: Rodolphe el-Khoury with Drew Adams, James Dixon and Fadi Masoud

Erich Sattler Winery

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ARCHITECT: Architects Collective

PROJECT TEAM: Andreas Frauscher, Patrick Herold, Richard Klinger, Kurt Sattler

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY: Gartner Schienerbau

CARPENTRY: Holzbau Kast

GLASS FAÇADE: Metallbau Raditsch

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DESIGN TEAM:

FIRM PRINCIPAL/PARTNER IN CHARGE: Barton Myers, FAIA

ARCHITECT: Ryan Ihly (project manager); Peter W. Rutti (project architect)

PROJECT TEAM: Lynn Pilon; Charles Lee, Aaron Spell, Peter Wilson, Wayne Thomas, Eric Gonzales, Dean Lee, AIA, Gudmann Gudfinnsson, Gregory Crouch, AIA, Anne Harrington, Ali Jeevanjee, David Karp (architects)

EXECUTIVE ARCHITECT: HKS Architects, Inc.

ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT: Baker Barrios Architects

DEVELOPER MANAGER: Hines

THEATER PLANNING: Theatre Projects Consultants, Inc.

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PRINCIPAL: Hagy Belzberg, FAIA

PROJECT ARCHITECT: Justin Brechtel, RA

STRUCTURAL CONSULTANT: MJM Consulting

Structural Engineering

MECHANICAL CONSULTANT: John Dorius & Associates

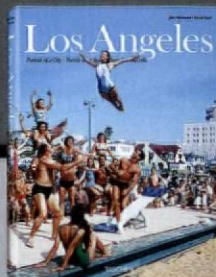
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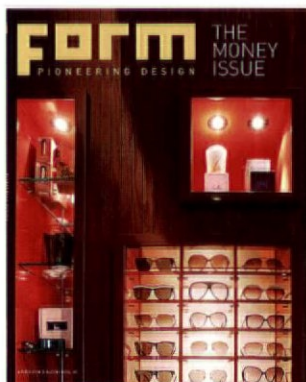
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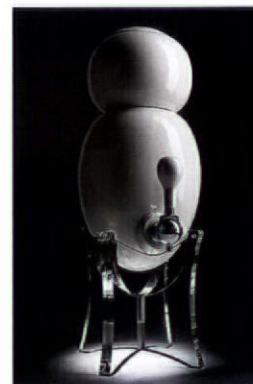
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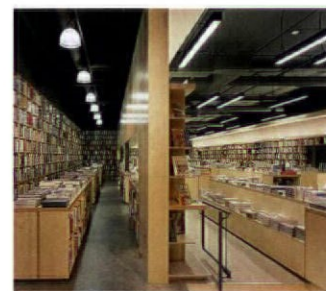


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Keeping the sound down in urban, mixed-use projects

URBAN NOISE IS NOT A NEW PROBLEM (Julius Caesar was said to complain about the noise of chariot wheels on the stone streets of Rome), but as the population grows, and people live, work and play in closer proximity to existing transportation corridors, the imperative to accurately assess noise impacting these adjacent properties becomes more acute.

A recent factor contributing to an increase in people's exposure to environmental noise is the sustainable design movement. Green design promotes the development of dense, mixed-use communities on infill sites, close to public transportation. And as the benefits of transit-oriented projects become more apparent, some jurisdictions are providing developers with incentives, including expedited permitting and subsidies, to design and build at these sites. Additionally, green building rating systems such as the USGBC's LEED Neighborhood Development (ND) and efforts of organizations such as the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and others are providing the frameworks to do so.

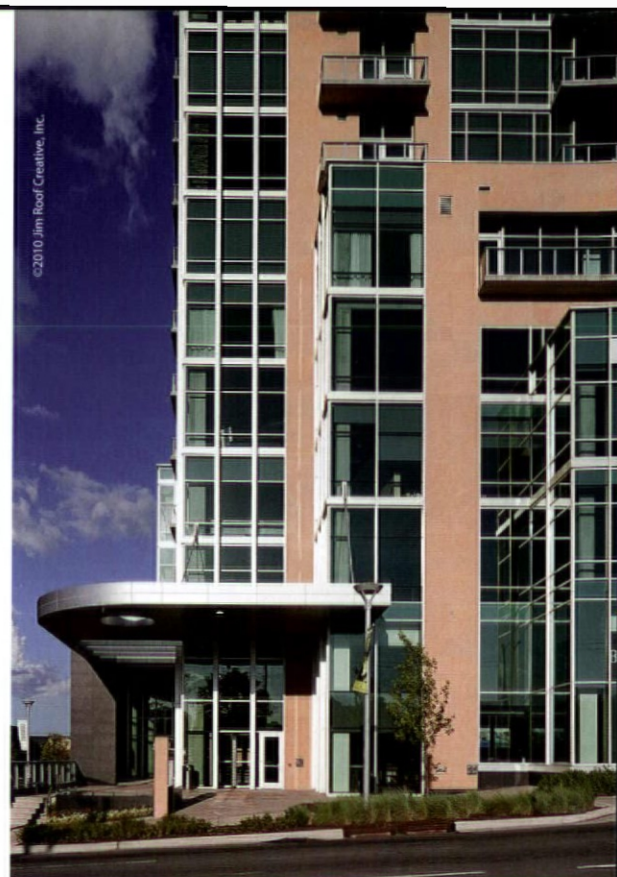
But if these close-knit mixed-use developments don't accurately determine and mitigate unwanted acoustical consequences, the dissatisfaction of the occupants could undercut the project's eco-friendly intentions. Excessive noise levels have been shown to adversely affect people's health in significant ways, including disturbing sleep, and increasing stress and distraction. So how can we uphold the value of mixed-use developments without undermining them in the process?

While attempting to tackle these issues, it's critical that designers address noise control early in the design phase. In mixed-use projects,

this can mean tempering environmental noise impacts—such as traffic—tenant-to-tenant noise and the sounds and vibrations from loud mechanical systems. Not only are retrofits expensive and disruptive, but providing sufficient coordination between the architectural design and engineering requirements can at times be insurmountable once a project is built.

Terrazzo, a mixed-use project in the up-and-coming Gulch section of Nashville, Tennessee, represents one development that addressed these issues from the start. Terrazzo combines ground-level retail, three stories of commercial offices and ten stories of condominiums on a site overlooking Interstate 40 and other major thoroughfares. The project's architect, Hastings Architecture Associates, commissioned an environmental noise study to learn how they could best protect the future residents from the sounds of the roadway.

Based on the exposure to, and setbacks from, the dominant noise sources, sound-rated window assemblies—laminated glazing, thick glazing or large air spaces between panes—were recommended to reduce exterior noise intrusion. Solutions for decreasing potentially excessive noise transmission between tenants and residents included, incorporating sound-isolating partitions, such as double-stud walls, furred walls and resiliently attached gypsum board ceilings. The noise and vibration generated by mechanical systems could be cut down by incorporating internally lined ductwork, silencers, selecting quieter equipment or routing ducts over less-sensitive spaces. As Terrazzo was being designed for LEED certification, formaldehyde-free glass fiber



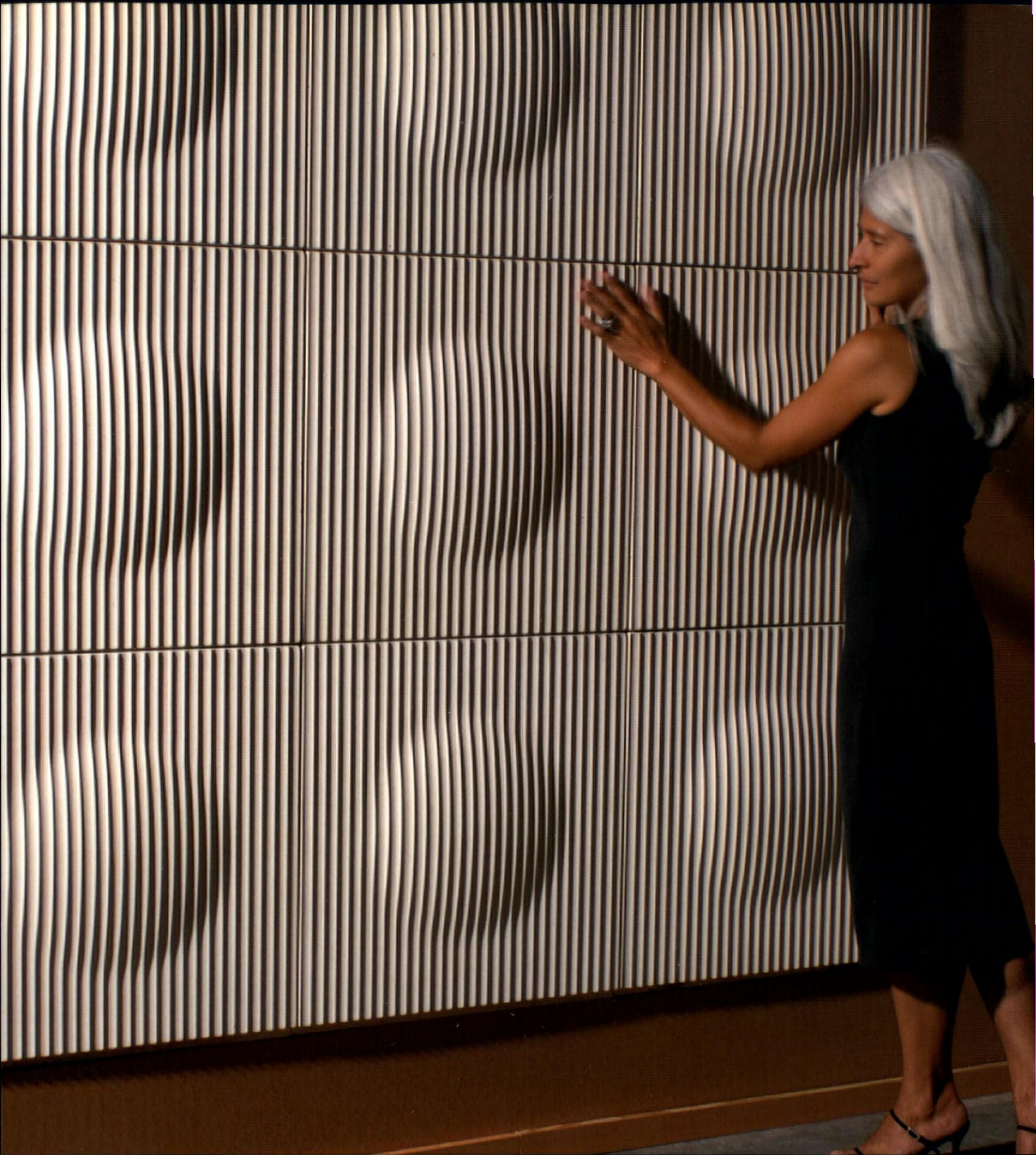
In designing the mixed-use project, Terrazzo, Hastings Architecture Associates looked for ways to combat potential noise disturbances—both inside and outside of the building—early in the design process.

insulation was specified and installed after the assessment.

While beneficial, these changes are not without financial consequence. Laminated glass increases the price of window assemblies by about \$3 per square foot, similar to the cost of noise-reducing partitions. Abating noise from mechanical equipment can add about 10% to the price of an installed system. But upgrading the acoustical performance of a building should be weighed against the potential downside of unsatisfied residents.

By recognizing and designing for the impacts of noise pollution both inside and outside of the building, Terrazzo, as well as many others around the country, have proven to meet the needs of the developer, the designers, and ultimately the occupants, without sacrificing the project's sustainable goals.

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