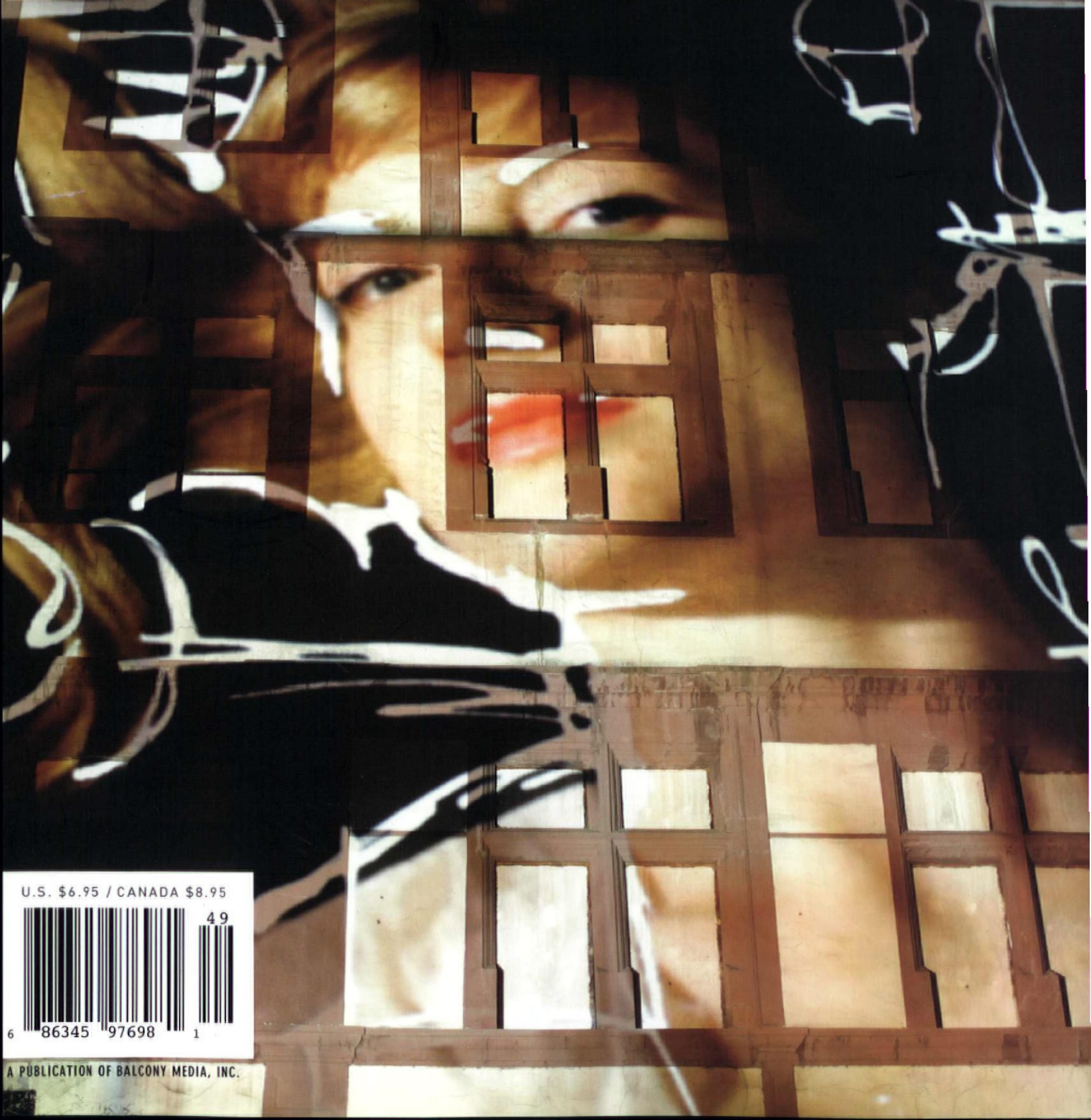


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MAY/JUNE 2011

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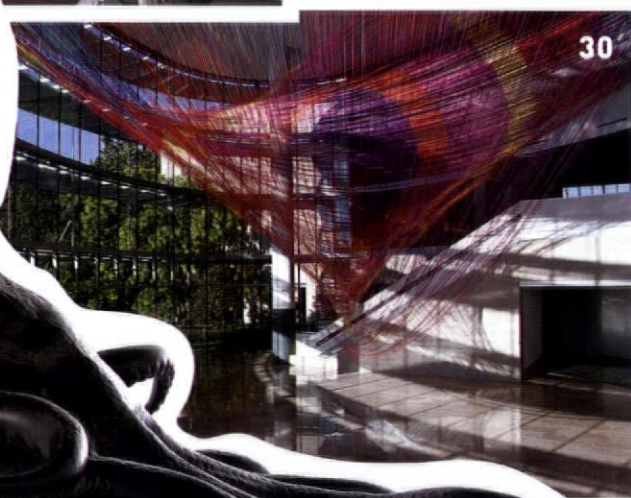
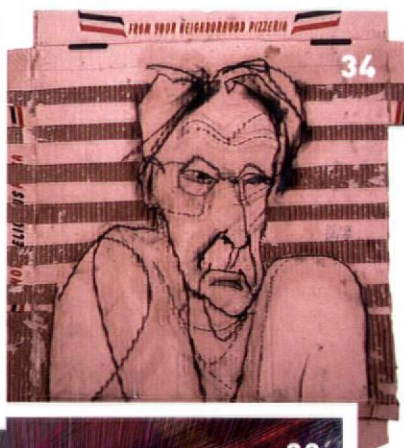
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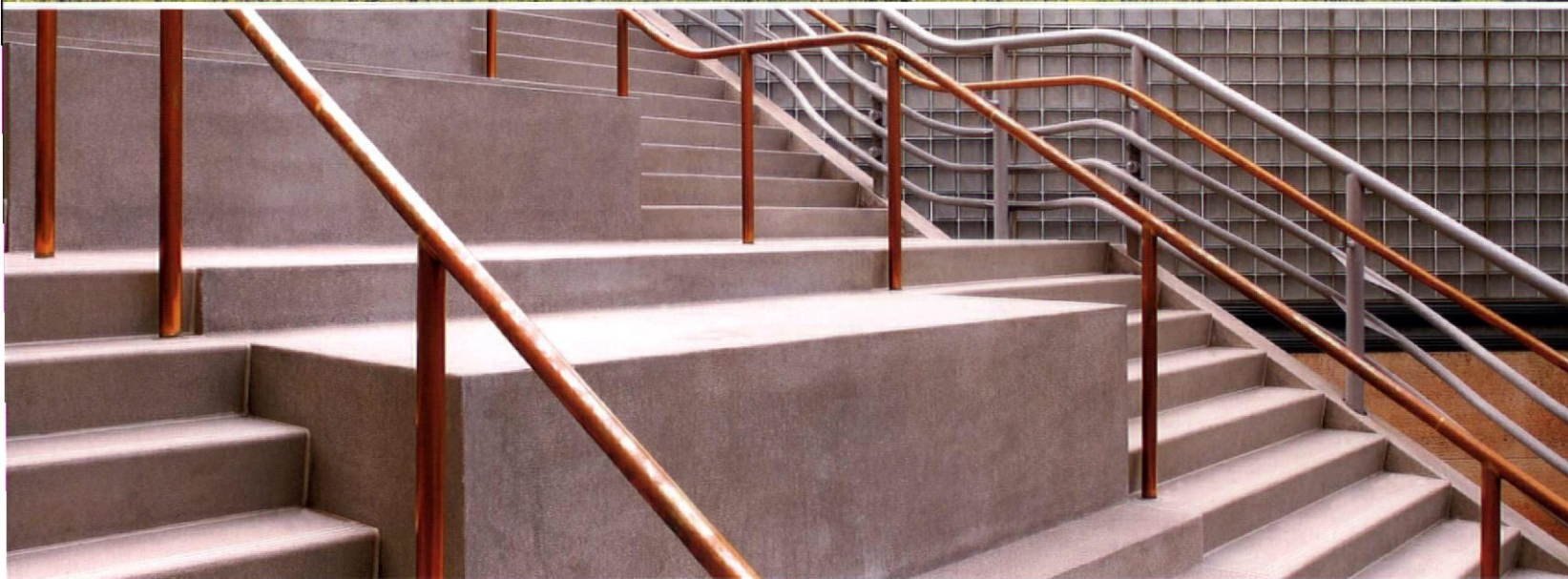


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Los Angeles County Museum of Art B. Gerald Cantor Sculpture Garden

Architect: Stenfors Associates Architects

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FORM EVENTS

Inspired Times

Toasting the year's first issue

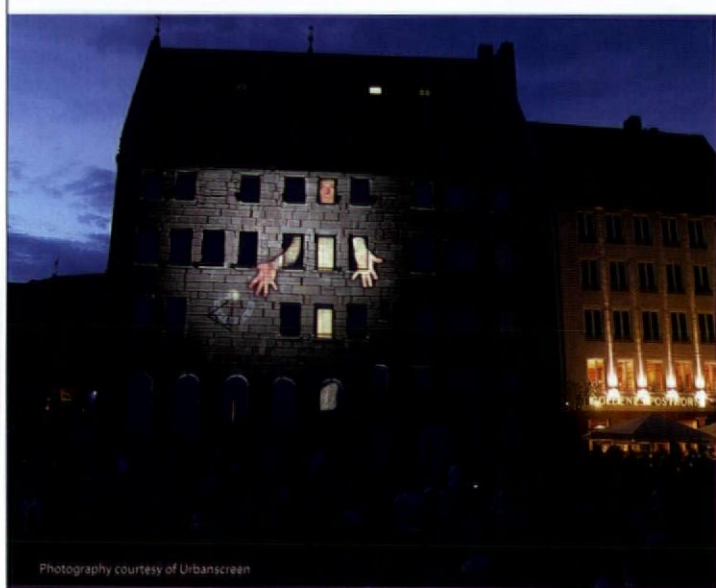
FORM honored its January/February Inspiration issue, with an event held at the Yazdani Studio of Cannon Design in Century City. Guests enjoyed cocktails provided by PAMA and IZZE and were treated to an insightful panel discussion moderated by regular FORM contributor Michael Webb. Panelists Mehrdad Yazdani of Yazdani Studio, Benjamin Ball of Ball-Nogues Studio, Lorcan O'Herlihy of Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects (LOHA) and Annie Chu of Chu + Gooding shed light on the inspirations behind their process and practice.

Photography courtesy of Carolina Farias/Claudio Farias



FORM ISSUE EVENT

ART: ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN AND ARTISTIC IMPULSE



Photography courtesy of Urbanscreen

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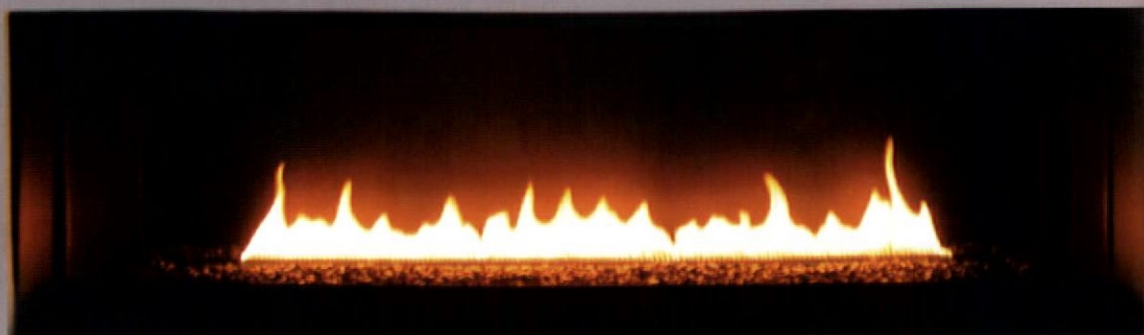
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EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue of FORM marks the beginning of a new partnership with the AIA's San Francisco chapter. In honor of our new readership, we've devoted a large portion of these pages to the innovative design taking place in the Bay Area. Our Workbook section (page 18) showcases Northern California projects ranging from the recently completed restoration of the iconic Palace of Fine Arts to the sculptural transformation of the 50 United Nations Plaza's interior courtyard, and our Unbuilt column lights up with the vision of an engaging civic art center by Aidlin Darling Design.

These projects, aside from sharing geographic similarities, have something in common. They all in some form or another have a relationship to the fine arts. As Ina Drosu points out in her feature (page 34), *art* and *architecture* have been bound linguistically for centuries. It seems they are still interlaced today. Drosu speaks with several architects who consider painting and/or drawing to be an essential part of their creative process. In Urban Canvas (page 30), Jennifer Quail explores other intersections—involving string, video projections and paper cups—between art and architecture.

Sometimes the relationship between the two practices is direct, as with the museum exhibition, *Lunch Break*, created by Frank Escher and Ravi Gunewardena for artist Sharon Lockhart (page 12). And sometimes, it's subtle. But whether it's the sleek new design of a hotel interior inspired by the words of a poem (page 24) or an irreverent Italian Renaissance painter informing the landscape of an edible garden (page 14), the interplay between these two disciplines will leave us all with a more artful environment.



Carly Hebert

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Caren Kurlander".

Caren Kurlander
Editor in Chief

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Statement-making chair designs

KENNETH COBONPUE

Bloom, the colorful floral-inspired piece by Philippine-based designer Kenneth Cobonpue, is handcrafted with a microfiber-covered resin top supported by a steel base. Stitches radiate from the center of the petal-like material lending texture to the seat. The chair is 34¼" tall and 38½" in diameter and sells for about \$2,465. kennethcobonpue.com

MÁXIMO RIERA

The **Octopus** chair marks the debut of Spanish artist Máximo Riera's new series, the Animal Chairs. The 13' long by 3½' tall design will be produced in a limited edition of 20 for about \$56,500. The anatomically correct piece is realized through a computer-aided process, involving translating the artist's sketches into compressed foam blocks, which are then assembled, glued, sanded and painted by hand. maximoriera.com

MOROSO

A new textile, comprised of cotton canvas and recycled aluminum, gives the **Memory** chair its malleable form. Molded by the person sitting in it, the chair, designed by Tokujin Yoshioka for Moroso, will transform itself with every use. Memory measures 32½" tall and 29½" deep and sells for \$3,670. moroso.it

MARCO HEMMERLING

German architect Marco Hemmerling's **TriWing** can change its function with a simple flip. As the form is rolled on its longitudinal axis, its seat and back positions cycle from dining chair to lounge chair and back again. Custom manufactured from beech veneer panels, the piece, measuring 29½" tall by 27½" wide, costs approximately \$3,000. marcohemmerling.com



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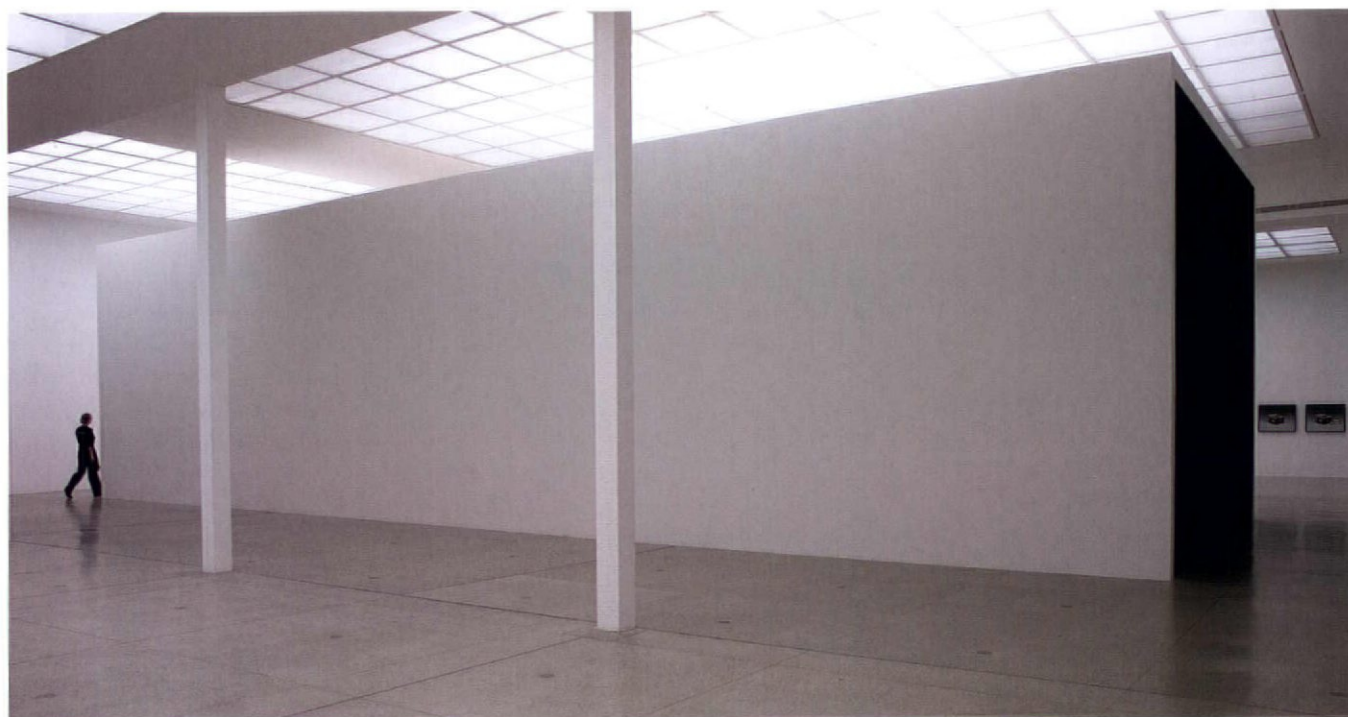
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An Artful Approach

Having designed exhibitions and galleries around the world, Frank Escher and Ravi GuneWardena of Escher GuneWardena share insights on creating space for art





How do you feel art and architecture intersect?

FE: We think that both deal with different cultural aspects that all belong together. An architect will deal more with the space and the artist will deal more with the objects in the space. You're working on the same thing but you're coming at it from two different directions. That's where it becomes interesting.

How does your work in art-related projects influence the rest of your practice?

FE: There certainly is a crossover. Our work is conceptually based rather than formally based. We try to develop a strong concept for a project that grows out of various parameters, and I think that approach comes out of the art world.

RG: Our work is also about making the architect's hand invisible. It has always been about paring things down so that you're reading the subtle manipulations of the space and light and that, in a way, it blurs the line between art and architecture.

When designing a space to display art, should the architecture disappear?

FE: The main focus has to be the art, but the space is just as important. In a way, it's like going to a concert. You go there to experience the music, but the space is there to make the

experience of the music memorable. What Ravi said about making the hand invisible is something we are generally interested in with our work. We've never been interested in loud formal gestures.

Is the viewer's experience as important as how the art is displayed?

FE: Absolutely. We've both curated exhibitions; I curated the Lautner exhibition at the Hammer, and we both curated an exhibition at MOCA on architectural follies. It's essentially important to understand the work you are dealing with and how to get the work across.

RG: We often say it's the choreography of how the viewer moves through the space and what they experience and when.

You've had a longtime collaboration with artist Sharon Lockhart. Does she come to you with specific ideas for her exhibitions?

RG: She often comes to us with some idea in mind of how she would like the viewer to experience the work. Based on her cues we have to then figure out how the space can achieve the viewer's experience as she sees it.

What inspired your design for her current exhibition, *Lunch Break*?

RG: She began delving into the subject of

how people spend their lunch hour in working-class America. She looked at this first with sculpture and then photography and then film.

FE: We came up with this idea of a tube for the film. The film is one continuous shot moving through a hallway. It was a ten-minute shot that was slowed down by a factor of eight, so it's eighty minutes long. It's absolutely straight linear movement from front to back, and it sets up this incredible axis. From that we proposed that rather than this being seen in a conventional theater, we should actually exaggerate that into this tube. So you enter this tube and you slowly walk towards this image that is also slowly moving through the space. The film, which is the main piece of the exhibition, became an object around which the whole exhibition is organized.

Would you ever want to specialize exclusively in art-related work?

FE: I think it's better to have a broad range. We do these projects because we're really interested in them, and they weave into other parts of the practice. But it's important to have a balance.

—Interview by Caren Kurlander

Look for *Lunch Break* at SFMOMA in October.

A Moveable Feast

Topher Delaney's Arcimboldo Edible Garden offers a mix of art, education and vegetables

FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT TOPHER DELANEY, a botanical garden is a library. "It's about gathering. It's about education," she says. And, as is often the case in Delaney's work, it is also about art. "That intrinsic relationship is what this garden is about," Delaney, founder of T. Delaney Seam Studio in San Francisco, says of a recent project. The Arcimboldo Edible Garden, an interactive installation garden on display beginning May 2011 at the San Francisco Botanical Garden, was conceived as a mutable interaction between art and landscape architecture.

Delaney also saw the garden as an opportunity for education. She hoped to "offer the public a connection beyond planting seeds," she explains. "It's not just an edible garden,

it's going past the first act of actually growing things to studying the growth and how it relates to our environment." Inspired by the work of the Italian Renaissance painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo, who was known for innovative paintings depicting members of the Viennese court composed of fruits and vegetables, Delaney envisioned the garden as a puzzle. Arcimboldo's paintings can be read both upside down and right-side up, and Delaney wanted to convey this in the garden. "There are two ways to look at things," she says, "and puzzles require imagination to solve. You have to be curious. You have to try it in a lot of different ways. There's a constant sense of process. The garden offers that opportunity to constantly be shifting."

To help her realize her vision, Delaney applied for a grant from the Creative Work Fund, a Bay Area arts endowment program. "Our goal is to support the creation of new works by Bay Area artists and, in doing so, to recognize artists' skills at collaborating and addressing community needs," says director Frances Phillips, who was intrigued with Delaney's proposal. "Introducing the idea of Arcimboldo, which suggests a liveliness and unruly beauty, suggested that Delaney might step outside her usual approach and challenge herself in new ways."

Once Delaney obtained the grant—one of seventeen, ranging in size from \$10,000 to \$40,000—she approached the Botanical Garden with her idea and, after it was

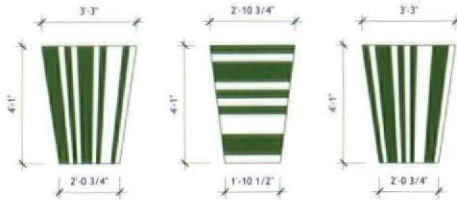


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"It's not just an edible garden, it's going past the first act of actually growing things to studying the growth and how it relates to our environment."

approved, got started. The garden itself is 5,000 square feet and is comprised of a huge variety of edible flora from across the globe.

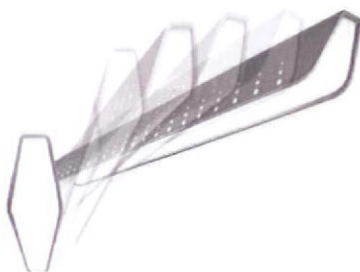
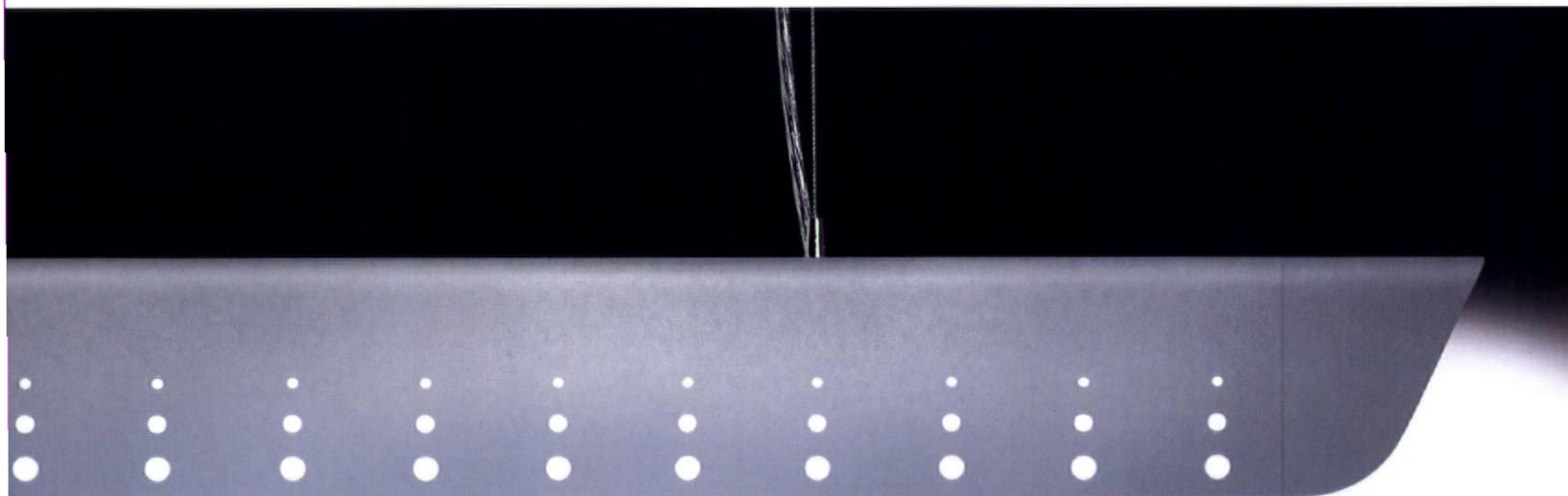
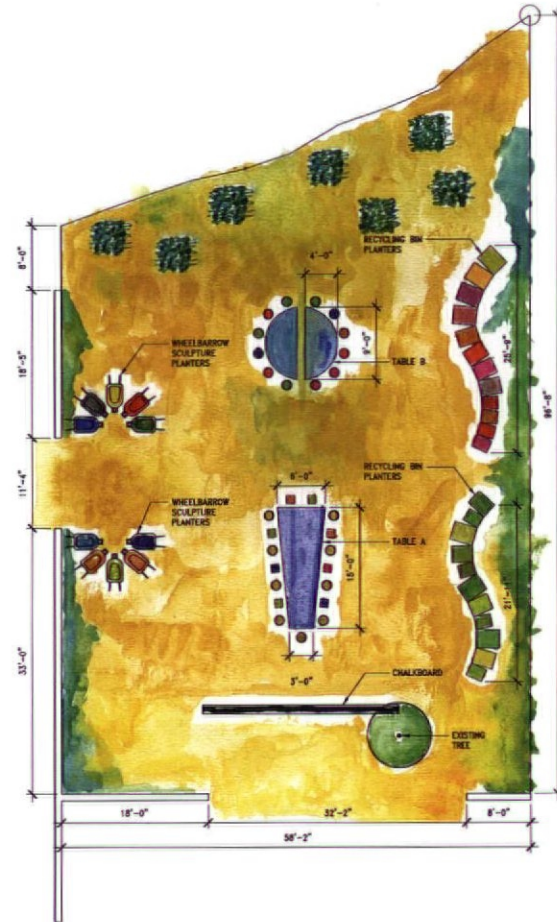


"The plant selections revolve around the focus and mandate of a botanical garden, which is diversity and education," she says. Blackboards anchor one side of the space and raised planters painted with barcodes mark the other. "The barcodes are in stripes, and they spell Arcimboldo's Garden," explains Delaney. "A barcode is a skew and everything

we purchase has a skew. That's a language. In a sense, I'm depicting multiple languages." A large fallen Torrey pine, another code, has been transformed into a table providing a central gathering point to the garden.

The Arcimboldo Edible Garden is wholly designed with the user in mind. Delaney wants the garden to expose people to the multitudinous relations between art, nature, food and different communities. "These are democratic forms, and this is democratic agency," she says. "It's not about exclusivity." In fact, the goal of the garden is quite the opposite. It's about inclusion, diversity and education. The garden represents these opportunities and possibilities. And, as Delaney says, "the library is always there."

-Lisa Kraege



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ASSIGNMENT:

Consider an architecture that is reductive, rather than cumulative, by addressing the random collection of buildings around the San Francisco International Airport (SFO) as landscape—as the potential site for an architecture that can be excavated out of their very substance.

STUDENT NAME: Phi Tran

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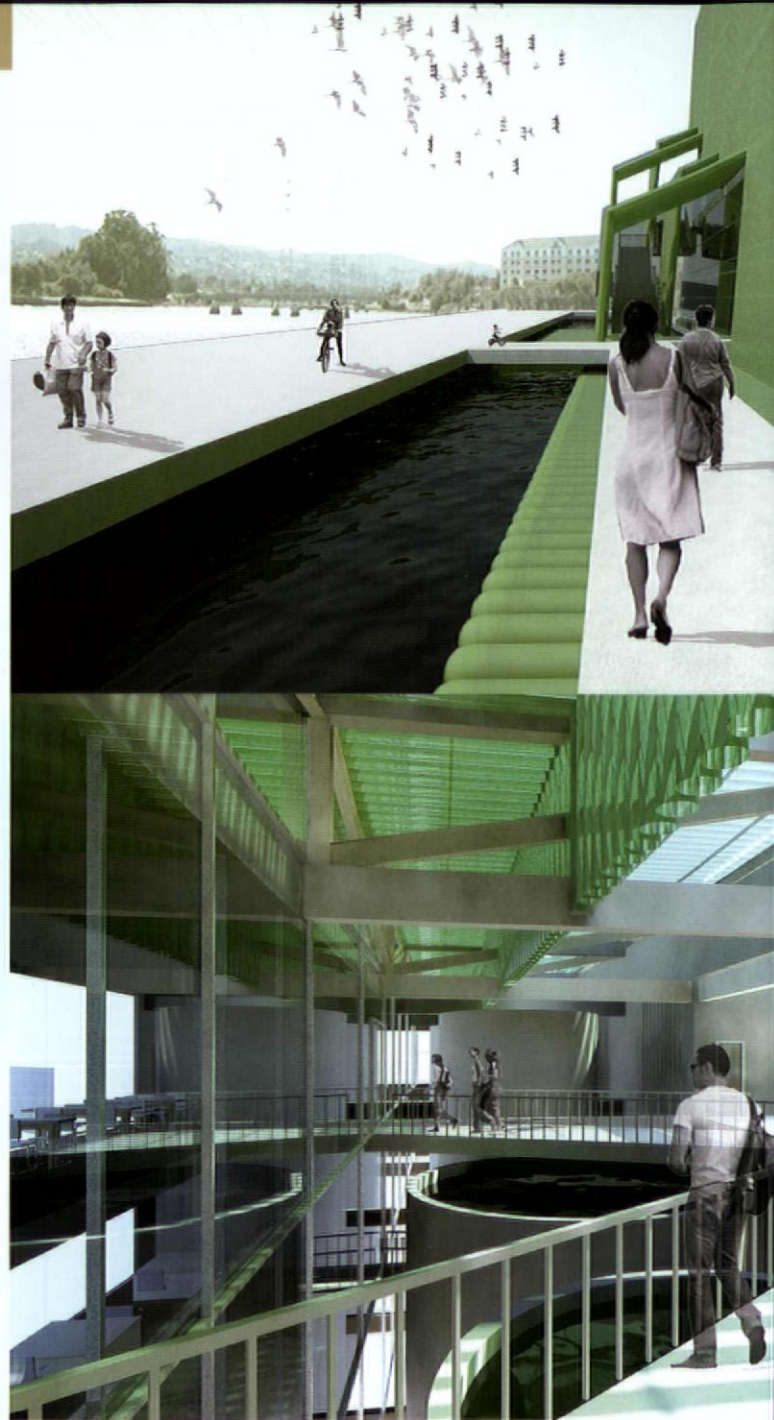
ADVISOR: Jill Stoner

PROJECT TITLE: 555 Airport Boulevard

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of Burlingame's Algae Production facility is to cultivate, process and monitor algae production for food and fuel. The production facility takes advantage of the existing building's structural components, while employing techniques such as photobioreactors, closed loop systems and open ponds to maximize production and take advantage of local saltwater resources from the San Francisco Bay. Products from the facility will be sold to SFO as in-flight health beverages.

INSPIRATION: San Francisco Bay's natural water and environmental features, localism and *The Taste of Place*

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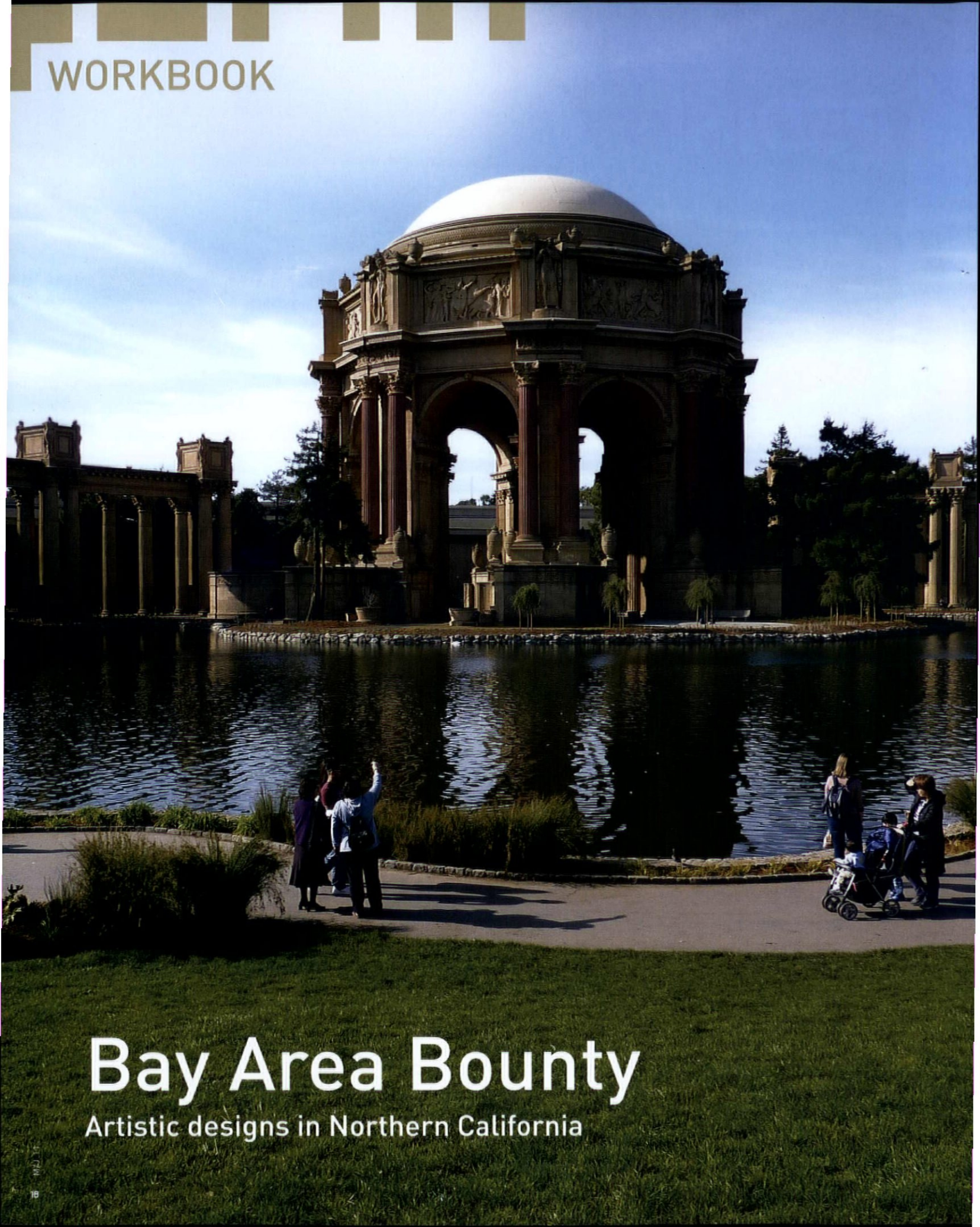


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WORKBOOK



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The Palace of Fine Arts

Location: San Francisco, CA

Designer: Carey & Co. Inc.

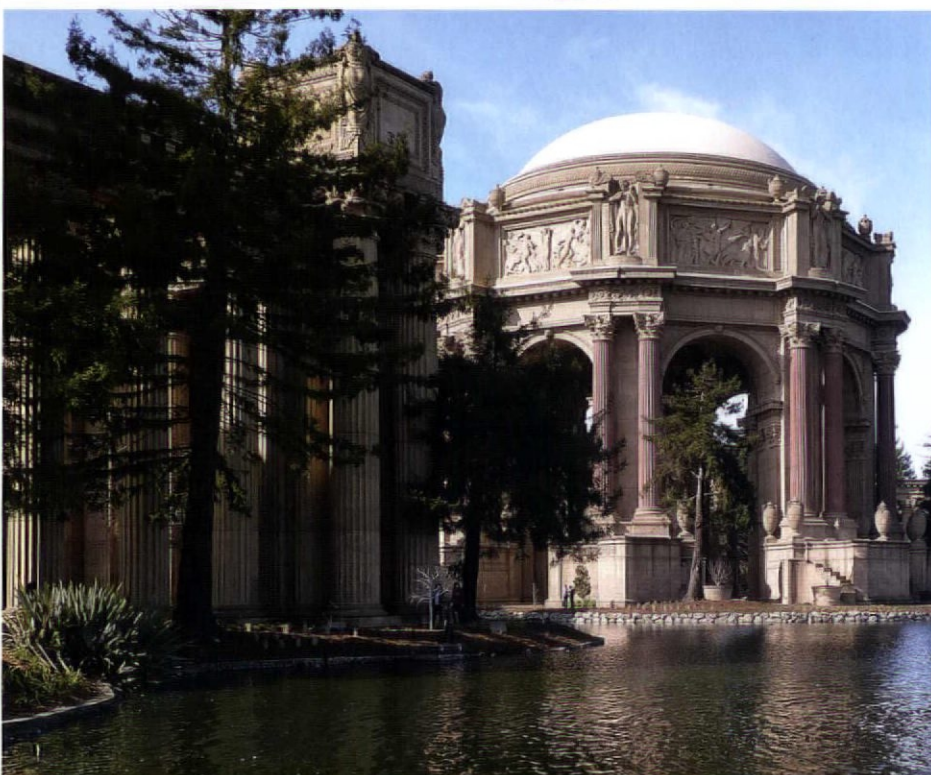
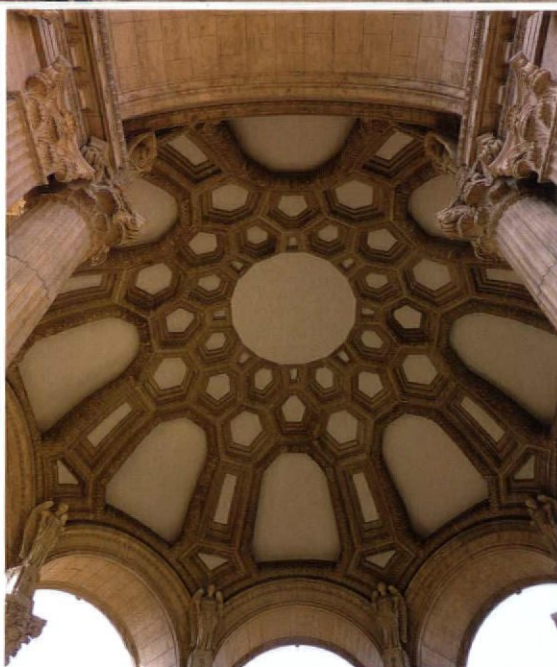
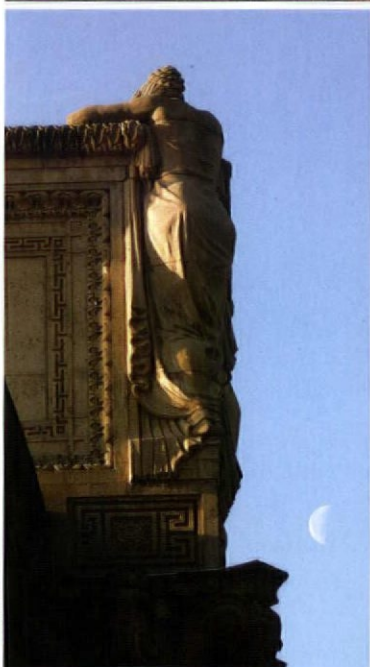
Website: careyandco.com

"The Palace of Fine Arts is a symbol of San Francisco," says architect Charlie Duncan, senior vice president of Carey & Co., the firm responsible for the recently completed restoration of the iconic structure. "It was an important element of the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, which was intended to showcase the city's rise from the ashes of the 1906 earthquake." Designed by Berkeley architect Bernard Maybeck as a temporary structure to showcase Impressionist paintings and other works of art, the Palace of Fine Arts has endured thanks to a long history of storied efforts.

Phoebe Apperson Hearst (William Randolph's mother) led the initial fundraising to keep the Palace standing after the exposition, and when the structure's wood framing couldn't survive the city's damp weather any longer, an exact replica was rebuilt in the 1960s. By 2002, the Palace was in need of attention again. Carey & Co.—historic preservation specialists, who restored San Francisco's City Hall and War Memorial Opera House—carried out a four-part restoration that culminated in January 2011. "The landscaping and buildings had deteriorated since the 1964 reconstruction," says Duncan. "The overarching goal was to repair and restore the site, while simultaneously taking the opportunity to enhance the landscape elements."

The program involved restoring the concrete dome to its original color, re-roofing the rotunda, completing a seismic retrofit of the rotunda's coffered ceiling and repairing ornamental elements throughout the rotunda and colonnade. In addition, the lagoon was restored and new landscaping was carried out in a joint effort by Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey and the City of San Francisco Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works, Landscape Division.

Photography courtesy of Carey & Co.



50 United Nations Plaza

Location: San Francisco, CA

Designer: Cliff Garten Studio

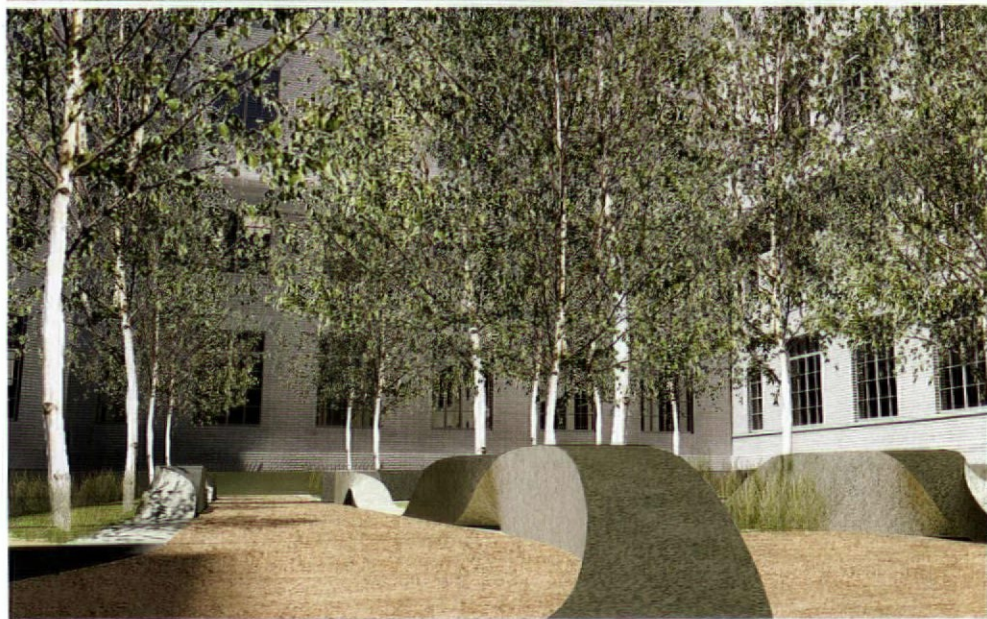
Website: cliffgartenstudio.com

With the renovation of San Francisco's historic 50 United Nations Plaza building, the General Services Administration (GSA) Art in Architecture program brought in sculptor Cliff Garten to reimagine the 10,000-square-foot inner courtyard. Arthur Brown Jr.—the architect responsible for San Francisco's City Hall building—designed the 1932 Beaux-Arts structure around a rectangular courtyard anchored by two fountains. Garten took his cues from the classical lines of the architecture and symmetrical placement of the fountains, and is transforming those references into a modern and inviting destination.

Working with the GSA's Pacific Rim Region 9, Garten was given the mission "to create something that was sculptural and that had a sustainable aspect to it, both in terms of its materials and how the landscape operated," says Garten, who, collaborating with HKS Architects and Cliff Lowe Associates, accomplished both goals with his design. Pathways of decomposed granite and existing concrete will guide people through the courtyard, and a grove of 32 white birch trees planted in a grid will offer a vertical presence. Wrapping around the courtyard, ribbon-like benches of recycled concrete will rise and twist up from the ground plane before twisting and lowering back down. Other ribbon-like benches will form semi-circular sitting areas around two fountains, which Garten will carve from granite.

"I'm interested in a democratic space," says Garten. "I'm interested in putting art out where people can see it, touch it and interact with it everyday."

Renderings courtesy of Cliff Garten Studio





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Crocker Art Museum

Location: Sacramento, CA

Designer: Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects

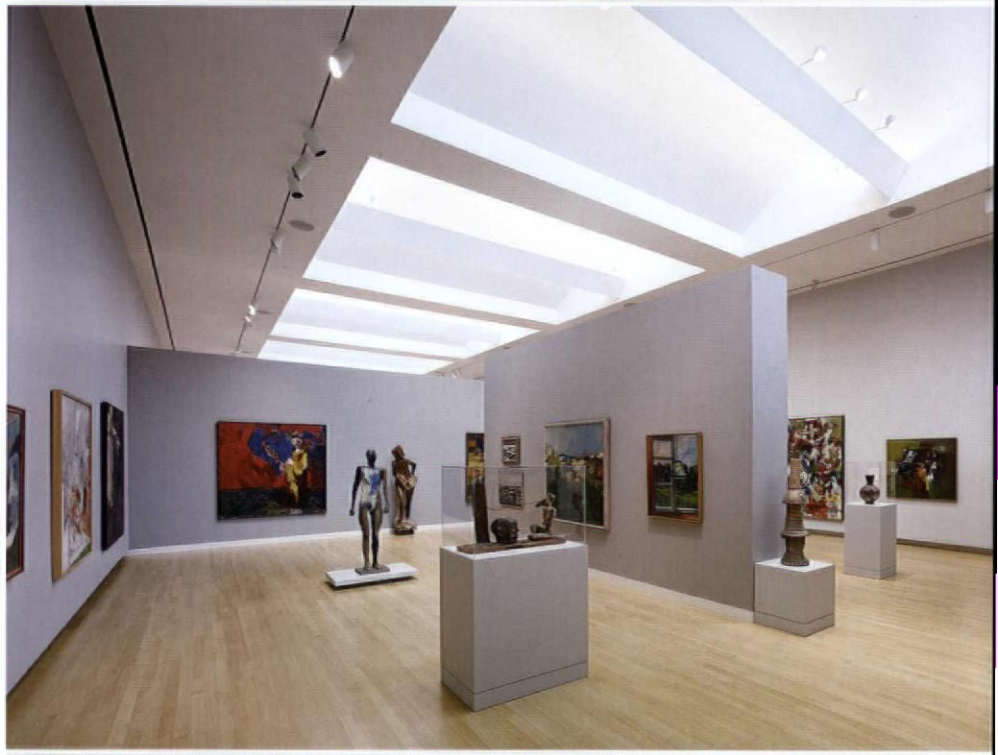
Website: gwathmey-siegel.com

In 1868, Judge Edwin B. Crocker commissioned local architect Seth Babson to renovate his Sacramento, California, house into a large Italianate mansion and to design an adjacent gallery building to display his family's art collection. More than 140 years later those buildings still stand as part of the Crocker Art Museum, which is recognized for significant collections of California art and European drawings.

But over the years the museum outgrew its accommodations, and the venerable New York firm Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects was brought in to design an addition and create a master plan for the complex. "The challenge was to create a design for the new wing that was iconic," says principal and founding partner Robert Siegel, FAIA. "One that could establish a new visual identity for the museum as an institution, without diminishing the image of the existing museum. The solution was a counterpointal composition in which the new wing was sympathetic to the scale of the existing building while providing the functional needs and architectonic image of a contemporary museum."

The new 125,000-square-foot Teel Family Pavilion will house space for temporary exhibitions and permanent collections, along with art studio space, a teacher resource center and a library. Marked by a rounded entrance volume and saw-tooth roofline, the structure sits off-axis from the existing buildings, but connects to the galleries for easy circulation.

Photography by Bruce Damonte





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W San Francisco

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Designer: Stanley Saitowitz/Natoma Architects Inc.

Website: saitowitz.com

"This city is a point upon a map of fog," poet Ambrose Bierce famously wrote of San Francisco. For Stanley Saitowitz/Natoma Architects, those descriptive words sparked the concept for their redesign of the W San Francisco's public spaces. "For me," says partner Stanley Saitowitz, "the quote captures the essence of San Francisco. It's both vague and specific, complex and simple, pointed and open ended. It also has definite and quintessential San Francisco imagery—point, map and fog—to manifest in the design."

As the firm goes about recreating the hotel's lobby, lounge, bar, restaurant and sitting areas, those key words will be transformed into a sleek new interior. Floors of Bolon vinyl will be laid out in patterns like those of a city grid, and wood panels will pull the grid onto the walls. Perforated draperies and backlit ceiling fabric will mimic the city's notorious foggy weather, while custom furniture will be extruded from the floor grid, inspired by the buildings making up the iconic cityscape.

"The W brand is now interested in making each hotel site specific," explains Saitowitz. "The interior landscape will evoke the landscape of the city in a way that tells guests: You are here."

Renderings courtesy of Stanley Saitowitz/Natoma Architects



Marin Living: Home Tours

Saturday, May 21, 2011, 10am–4pm
www.aiasf.org/hometours



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San Francisco Living: Home Tours

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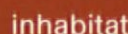
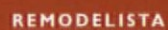
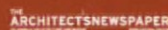


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Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center

Location: San Francisco, CA

Designer: Anshen+Allen and

Stantec Architecture, A Joint Venture

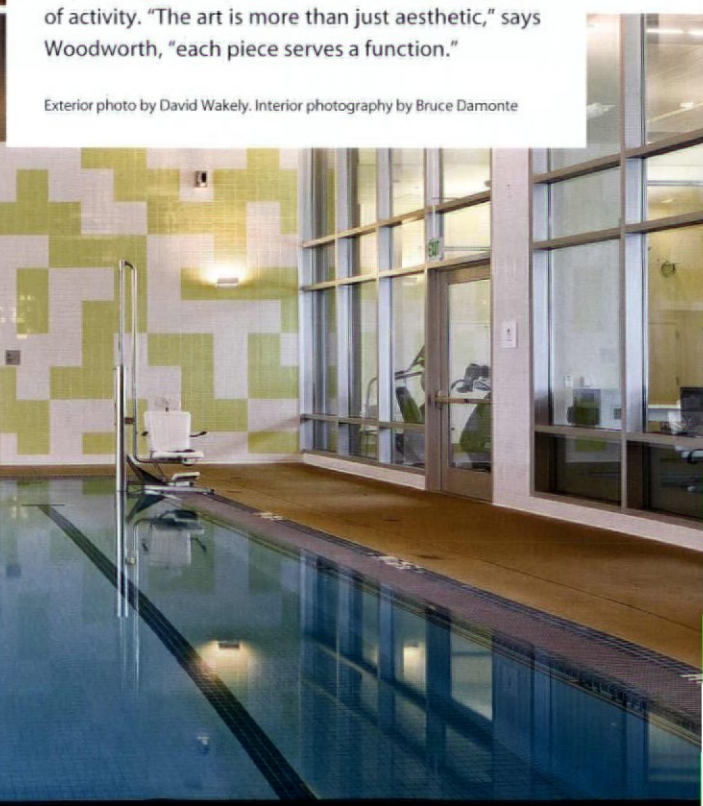
Website: anshen.com; stantec.com

Laguna Honda Hospital has been an integral part of San Francisco healthcare since it opened its doors in 1866. The 62-acre campus has morphed through the years to serve needs as they arise, but its most recent changes hope to affect both the quality of care and the quality of life of its 780 residents.

Anshen+Allen and Stantec Architecture, A Joint Venture, designed a new facility comprised of two residential towers flanking a pavilion, which houses an indoor boulevard lined with a café, theater, art studios, library and other meeting places. The towers are steel-frame with stucco and architectural concrete exteriors, while the pavilion is glass and steel. "This difference was intentional," says Sharon E. Woodworth, senior architect and associate principal. "The towers' red-toned elements reference the red-tile roofs of the original buildings in contrast to the modern pavilion, which literally and figuratively links old to new across the valley."

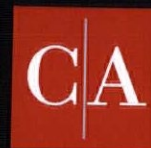
To meet the requirements of the city's Art Enrichment Ordinance—which calls for 2% of the construction costs be allocated to public artwork—the architects worked with the San Francisco Arts Commission to include site-specific artwork as an active part of the design. Eighteen artists and \$3.9 million dollars provided for sculptures, paintings and mixed-media works placed throughout the campus to help with way-finding, sensory stimulation and encouragement of activity. "The art is more than just aesthetic," says Woodworth, "each piece serves a function."

Exterior photo by David Wakely. Interior photography by Bruce Damonte



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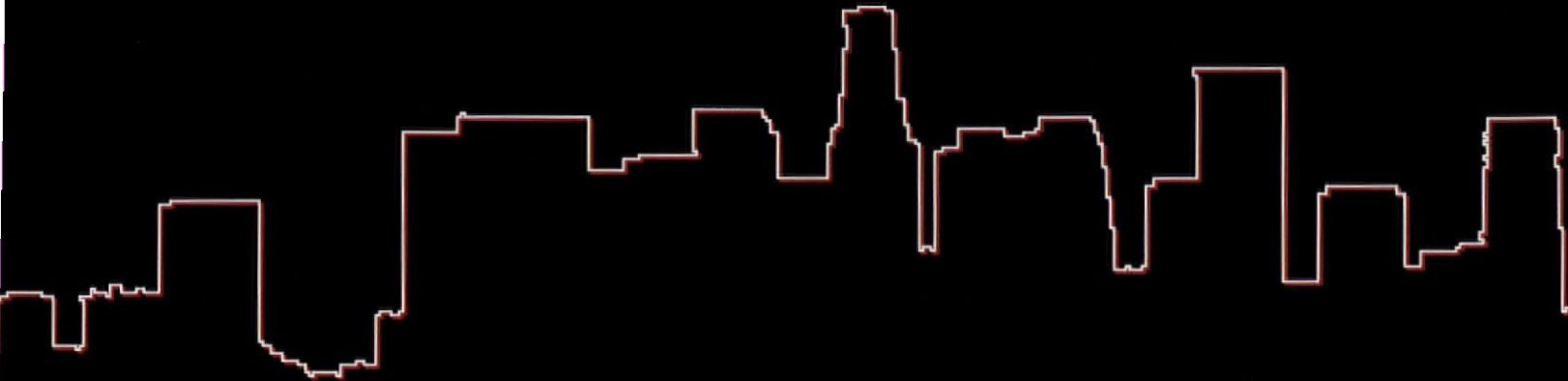
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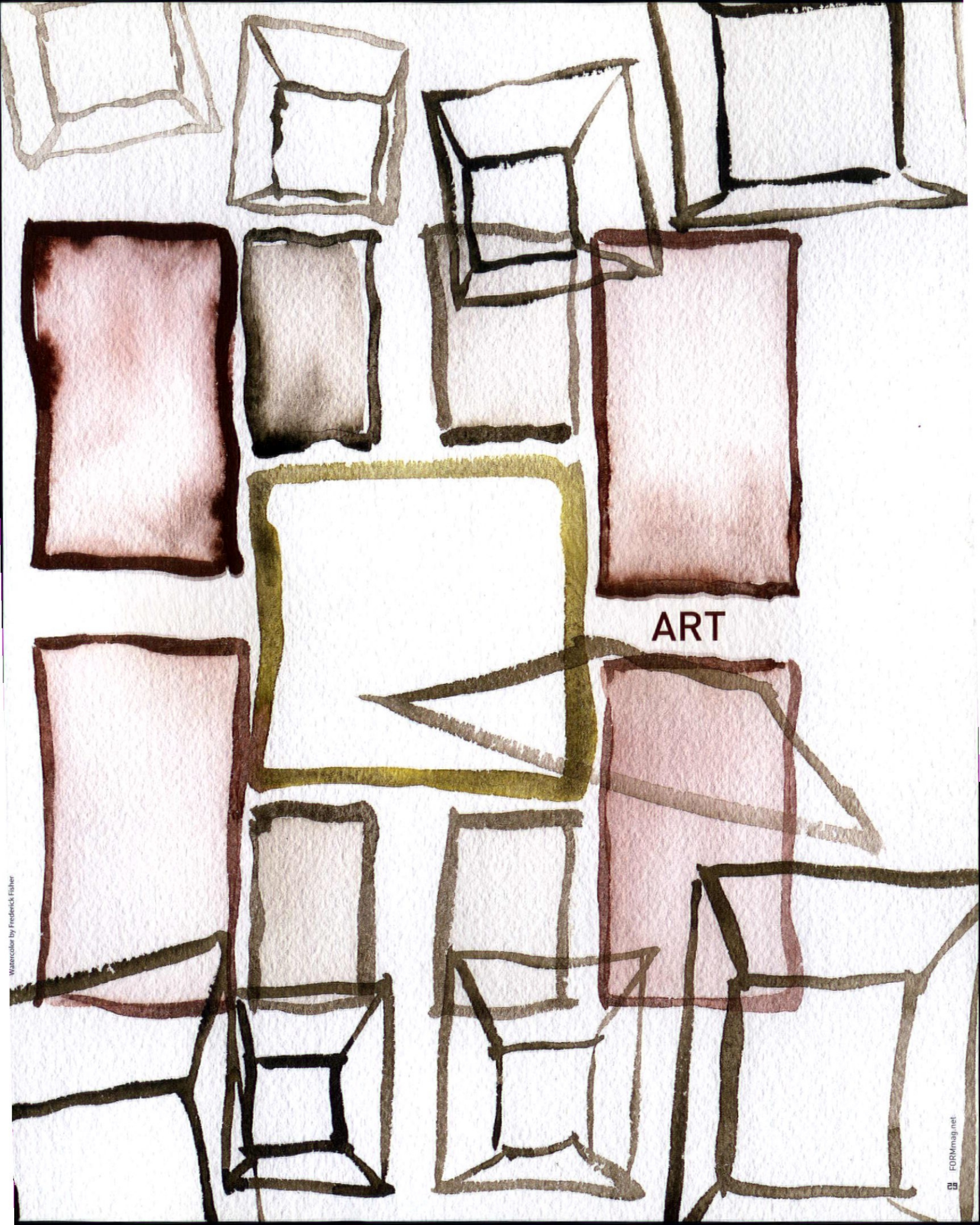
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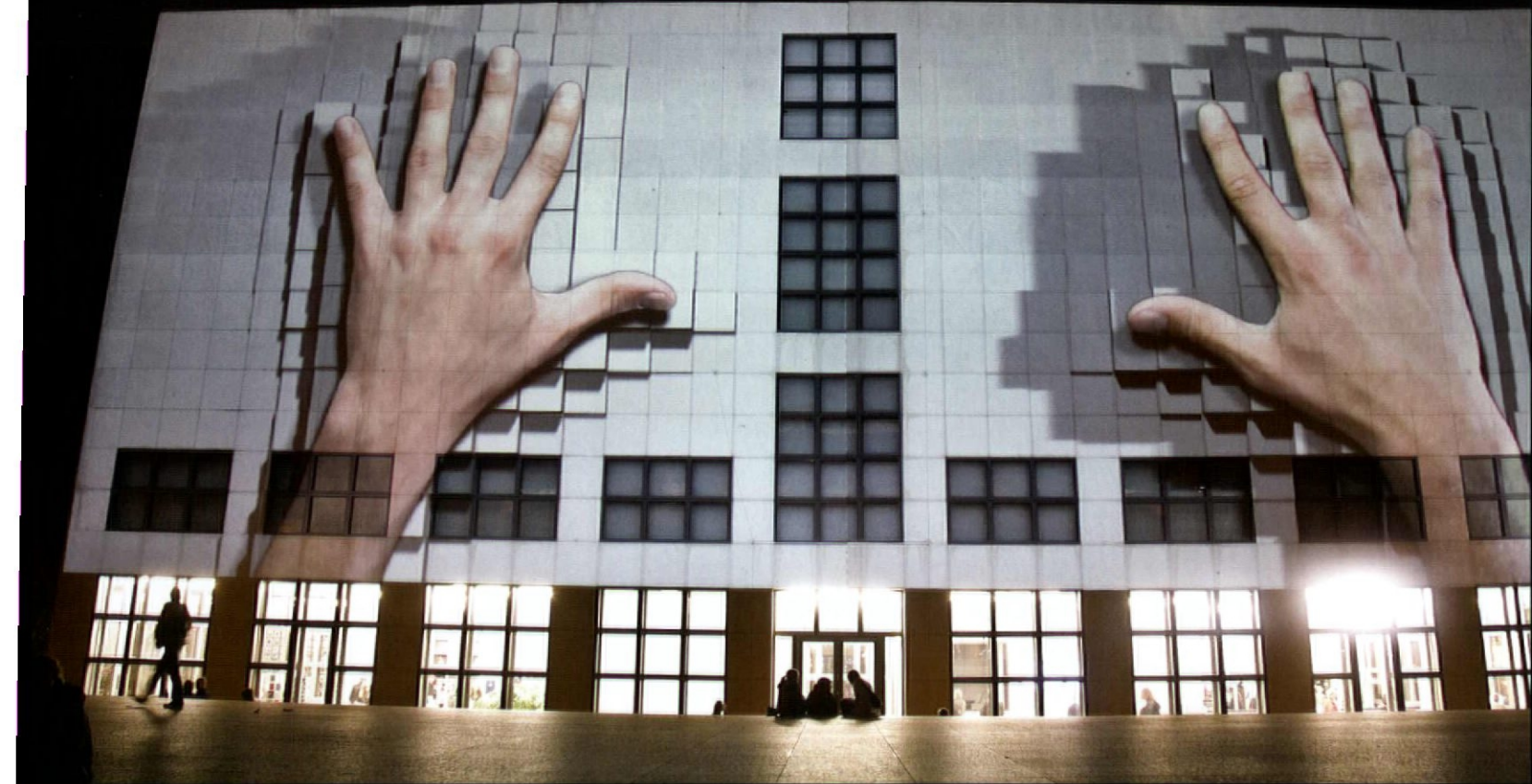
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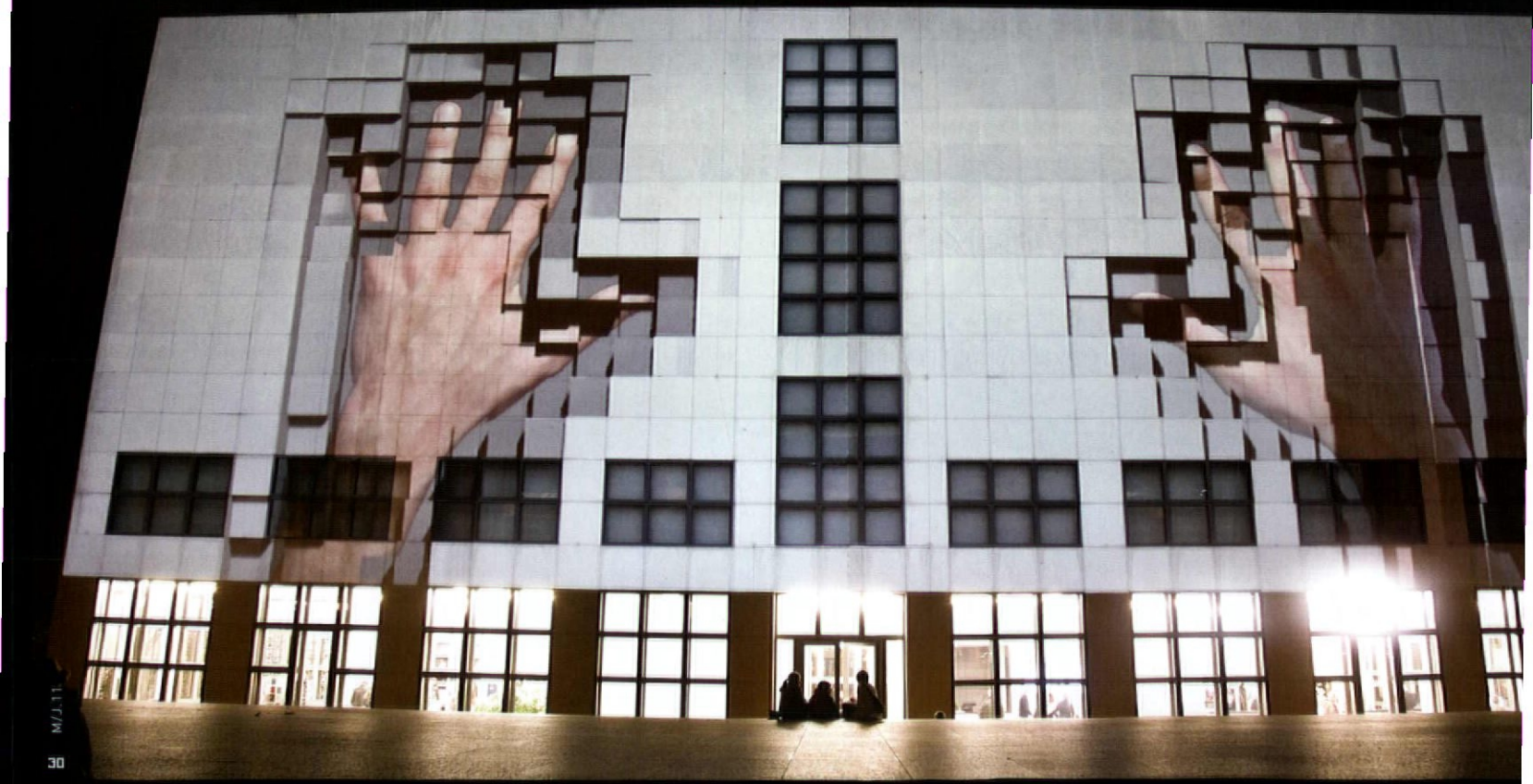


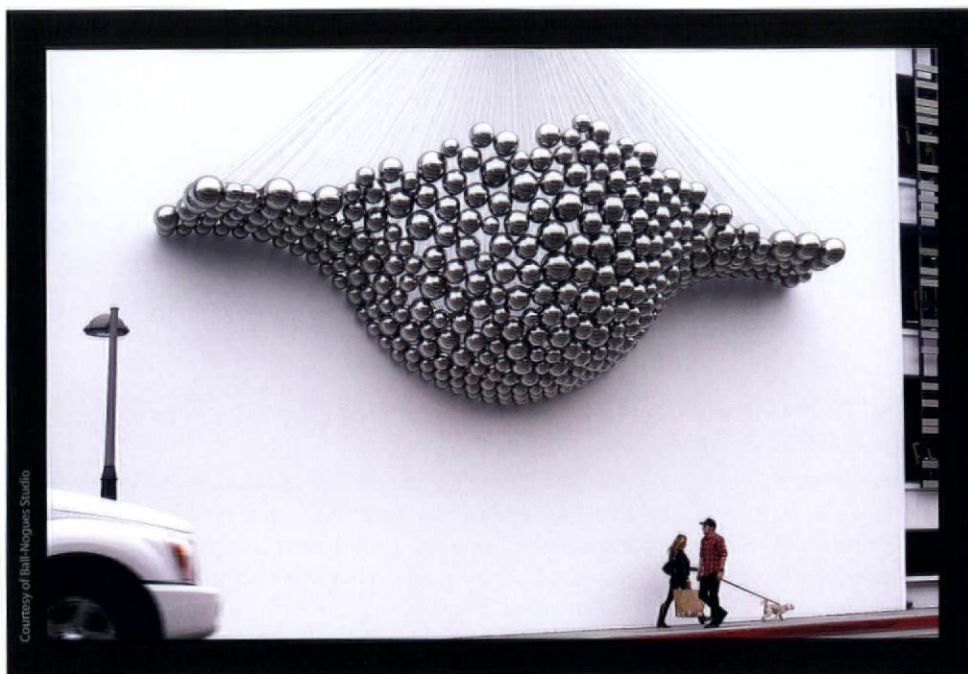
ART



URBAN CANVAS

Artists find innovative ways to explore the built environment **BY JENNIFER QUAIL**





LEFT: *Cradle* by Ball-Nogues Studio is made up of stainless steel spheres suspended from the side of a parking garage. OPPOSITE: A site-specific video projection by Urbanscreen appears to break through its architectural canvas.

By the nature of their purpose and existence, art and architecture are born to very similar fates. The moment a project conceived in the creative is submitted for public viewing and interpretation, its life begins to morph and change from eye to eye and thought to thought. But when the two disciplines intersect and an installation is created for a specific structure, the result can be an immersible experience, where art utilizes its intended space as both canvas and boundary.

Benjamin Ball, who, with Gaston Nogues, founded Ball-Nogues Studio—the Los Angeles-based creative team behind award-winning installations including *Table Cloth*, a hanging fabric of connected tables designed to activate a UCLA courtyard—notes that it's easier to discuss an intersection between art and architecture when looking at art in the public realm. "I think public art and architecture are now expected to communicate with a general audience in ways that a lot of artists and architects are only now becoming comfortable with," he says. "An artist working in the public realm has to be able to play both sides of the fence, they have to critique from within."

The studio's installations—from stainless steel spheres hanging from the side of a Santa Monica parking garage to wisps of strings spiraling across the atrium of the Indianapolis Museum of Art—connect with the public while energizing their structural canvases. "Our interests are not monolithic," Ball says. "The works share their physical context with architecture as well as sharing a relationship to the general public and the city. These are very different contexts than

galleries. So, in these cases, we can't ignore the lessons we learned while working as architects."

Los Angeles artists Jenna Didier and Oliver Hess, who work collaboratively as Didier Hess and serve as co-directors of the outdoor exhibition space Materials & Applications in Silver Lake, also consider architecture as a central factor in their work. Hess explains that they see art as "the infrastructure in which architecture and other systems-related disciplines can condense expressive forms of space with a minimum of dogmatic restrictions." The partners believe the large-scale projects they envision and bring to life allow them "to really interface with the public at a level very few tend to."

For a project Didier and Hess are currently developing, the team is fusing "a prostheses of nature" onto a fire station in Baldwin Park. A system of lights suspended within brass origami flowers—"vaguely inspired" by the chalk dudleya plant, otherwise known as the "live forever" plant—will drape around the corner of the brick facade. A moisture sensor will be used "to create animations of gradual waves

traveling over the surface of the building, illustrating the history of sensor readings taken at the site and creating a connection between us and the natural systems of the environment," says Hess.

The creative team behind the Germany-based Urbanscreen has a different approach to creating site-specific works. "We perceive our work as being a temporary occurrence in public space," says cofounder and managing director Manuel Engels. "We provide an alternate view

Aphidoidea, a design collaborative based in downtown Los Angeles, defines the purpose behind their work as "striving toward a more creatively built environment." The group produces installations tailored to specific venues—such as creating a suspended, undulating ceiling made from paper cups for a coffee house—but sees the completed work as only one possible variation. "You could say that an installation will not lose impact but rather gain different reactions when it's

"You could say that an installation will not lose impact but rather gain different reactions when it's readapted into another context." – ANDREW JASON HERNANDEZ

of one's architectural environment." Urbanscreen realizes this view through Lumentecture, custom video projections that have "the potential of converging two different realities," Engels says. Through exact measuring, projections are tailored to interact with specific buildings. Normally static facades appear to undergo physical changes or become animated with the choreography of virtual figures moving in and out of windows.

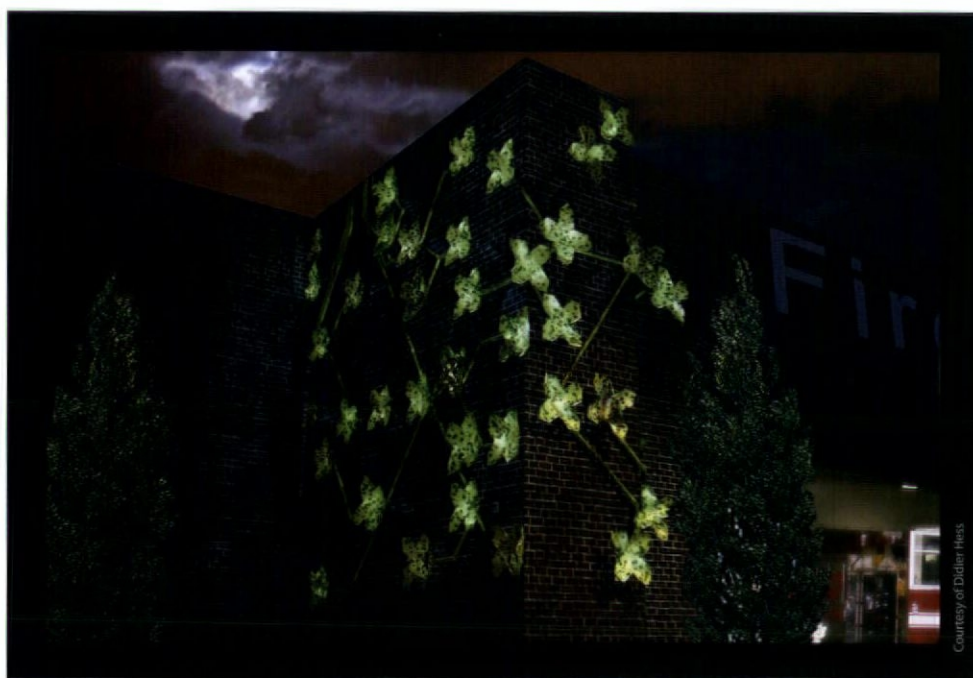
The building itself is not only a crucial player but a virtual stage as well. "We are emphasizing a certain kind of calmness that honors the sublime atmosphere of the architecture," says Engels. "It enables the building to tell a story, shifting between witness and narrator. The interplay between projection and architecture is essential."

readapted into another context," explains architect and member Andrew Jason Hernandez. "An original, great idea or concept doesn't necessarily have to change if the location changes, but it must evolve and adapt to its new surroundings, which will circumstantially generate a different reaction."

Though their work is naturally tied to its constructed environment, as with an upcoming interactive lighting project for the Santee Court lofts, the group shares the belief that both the art and architecture are derived from the same place. "In its initial stages," explains Hernandez, "a concept is not defined as artistic or architectural. In its pure essence, it is just that—an idea." ■

■ To see a selection of Urbanscreen's video projections, visit FORMmag.net.

RIGHT: Didier Hess designed brass origami flowers to light up in waves around a fire station in Baldwin Park. OPPOSITE: A rippling ceiling installation by Aphidoidea was crafted from 4,000 paper cups and 15,000 staples.





What Dreams May Come



When architects put down the plans and pick up the brush BY INA DROSU

In language, the words *art* and *architecture* share Greek roots of *ar* and *teks*, both indicating the notion of weaving or fitting elements together. For centuries architects have entwined fine art and architecture into the aesthetics that give life to our constructed environment, and inspiration to those who benefit from it. They continue to do so today.

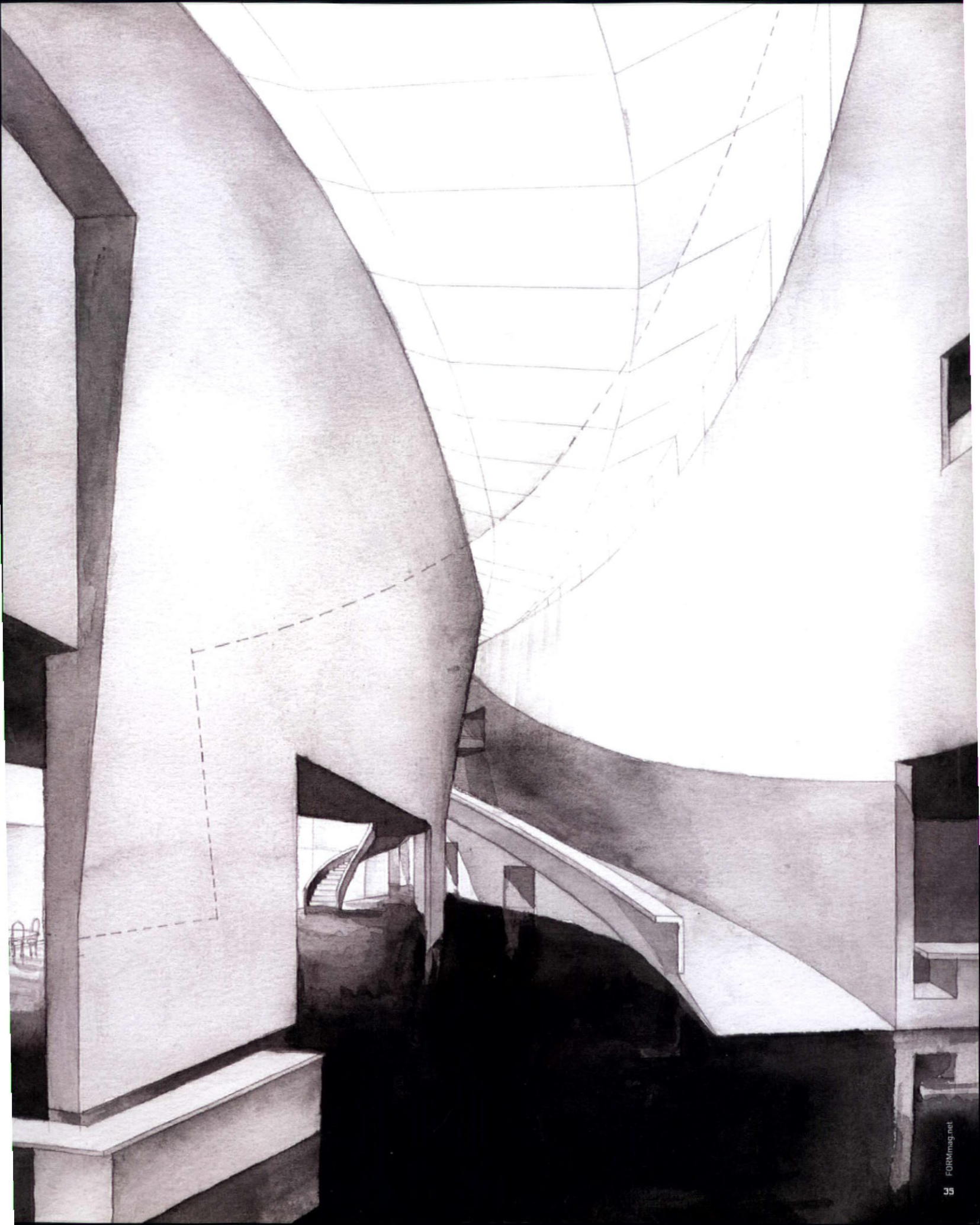
Over his drawing board, **Steven Holl**, AIA, of Steven Holl Architects in New York has a shelf full of 5" x 7" watercolor books:

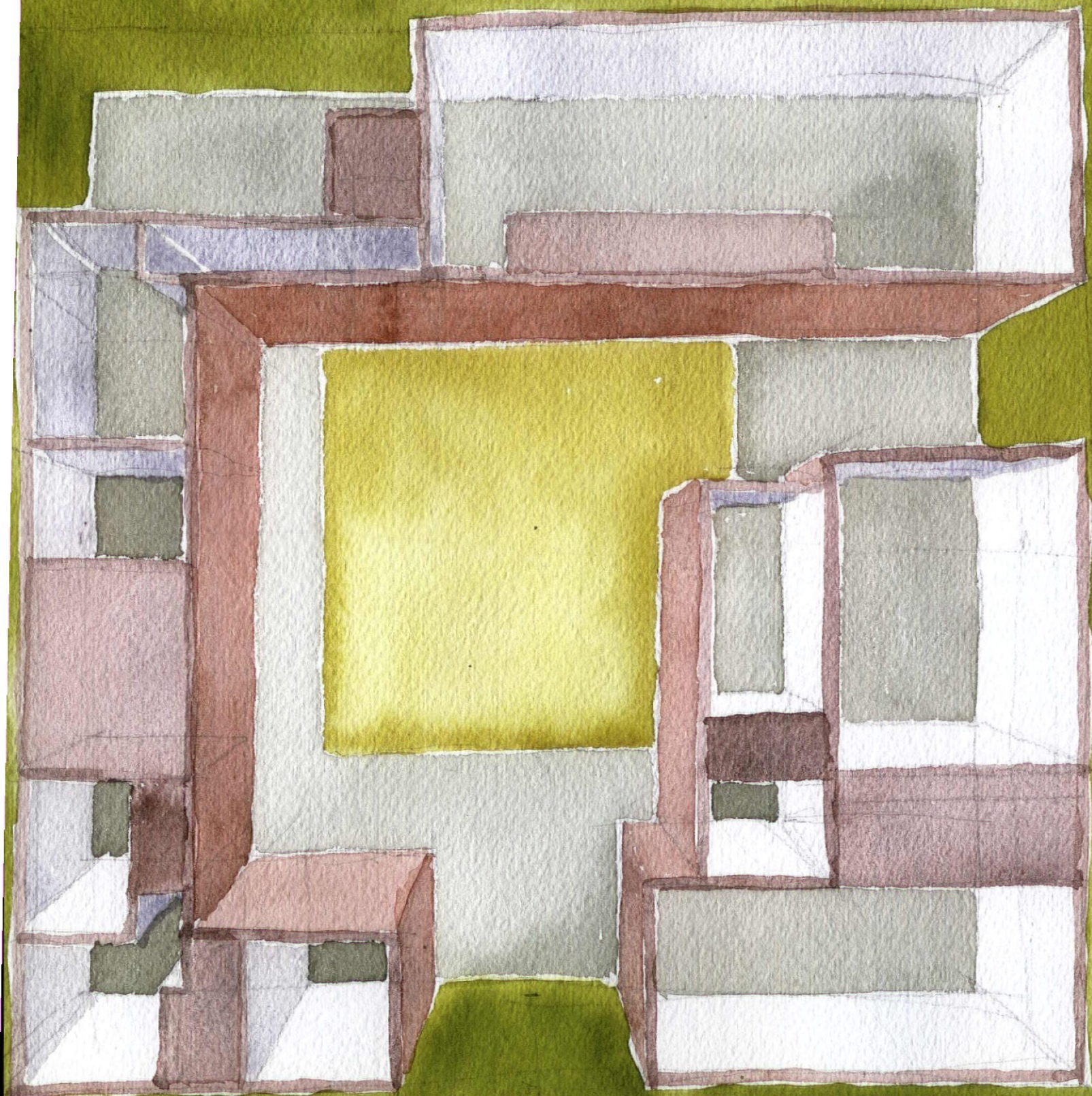
twenty-five years of "architectural fantasies" brought to light daily with the dawn. The visual journals, replete with sketches ranging from formal concepts to studies of light, or just imaginative "drifting," are a cornerstone of his creative process resulting in an architectural end. "As the initial inspiration of a work is a fusion of the analogue process of the brain-mind-hand, I feel these first drawings are crucial in the design process," says Holl. "Sometimes the small paintings are playfully

vague, yet at the same time they capture the idea that will drive the design of an entire project."

The mind's wandering in this creative labyrinth, winding itself around a known project or an imaginary hint to form the suggestive kernel of a new possibility, is a process shared by other seasoned architects including Los Angeles-based **Frederick Fisher**, FAAR, of Frederick Fisher and Partners Architects, **Michael Lehrer**, FAIA, of Lehrer Architects, **Lorcan O'Herlihy**, FAIA, of Lorcan O'Herlihy

ABOVE LEFT: *The Encyclopedic Museum*, watercolor and graphite on paper by Frederick Fisher. ABOVE CENTER: *The Necklace*, oil and charcoal on canvas by Lorcan O'Herlihy. ABOVE RIGHT: *Anemone 3*, oil by Patricia Sonnino. OPPOSITE: *Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art*, watercolor by Steven Holl.







Architects (LOHA), and **Patricia Sonnino**, LEED AP, who spent 20 years at Sasaki before starting her own practice in San Francisco.

The watercolor landscapes, architectural sketches, and still lifes of Fisher are “a way of crystallizing ideas,” he says. “And of letting ideas come to the surface unexpectedly.” His painting style is more about abstract ideas than specific forms, yet his studies in art and art history inform his architecture profoundly both directly through historical perspective, and indirectly through the sustained limberness that mind and hand acquire in what he calls a “much slower and deliberate process than picking up a pencil or working on the computer.” Fisher commends the usefulness of computers in communication and model-making, saying great architecture has been created by people “who probably never pick up a pencil.” He

adds, however, that there’s “a certain loss of sense of space and scale in students when there’s no pushback from physical objects” in three-dimensional space.

Lehrer agrees that life drawing is “training for the eye and the soul.” He considers it his great “bias” that, although architects can be great designers for many reasons, art and art literacy are essential—live figure drawing in particular, which he has practiced since childhood and currently holds monthly sessions at his office. “As an architect one has to know human form, human scale and human dimension—the scale and relationship of a bilaterally symmetrical form that is capable of infinite expression and complexity,” he says. This knowledge must become second nature, inscribed into one’s brain. Lehrer internalized early Vitruvius’s precept that an architect needs to know how

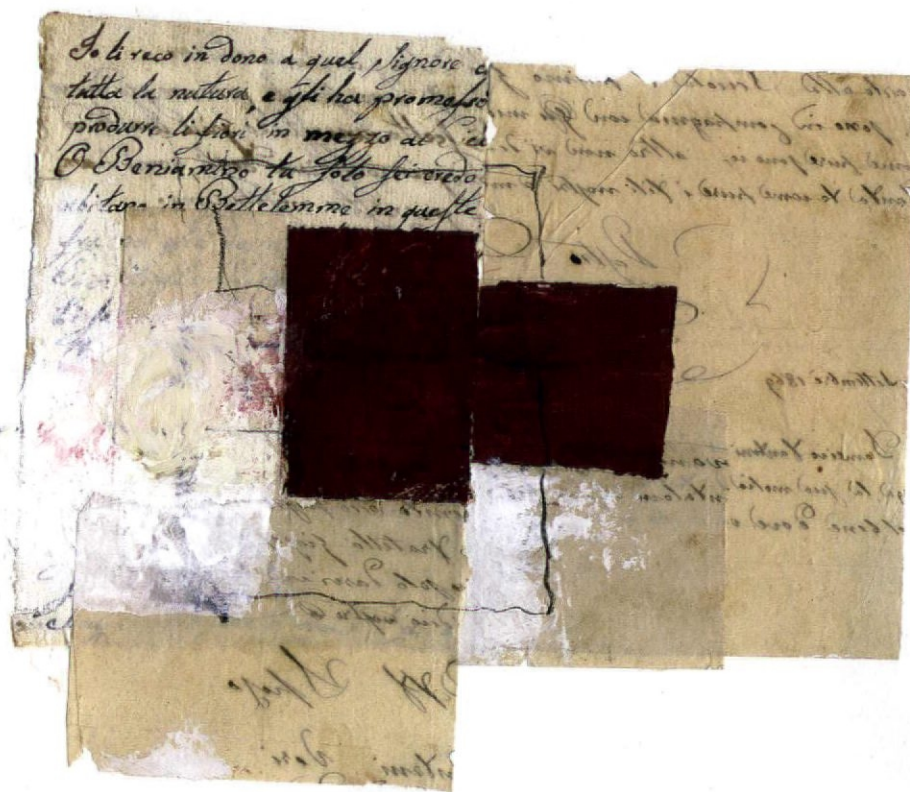
“As an architect one has to know human form, human scale and human dimension...”

— MICHAEL LEHRER

OPPOSITE: Santa Ynez residence, watercolor and graphite on paper by Frederick Fisher.
ABOVE LEFT: Morandi Museum, watercolor and graphite on paper by Frederick Fisher.
ABOVE RIGHT: Pencil and eraser on paper by Michael Lehrer.



3



to draw, to paint and to sculpt. The live figure drawing and art(ist)-in-residence programs of the firm focus the "visual agility" he sees as crucial in the absorption and application of the visual palette. Free creative process and engagement outside of one's own discipline also serve to pry one out of one's comfort zone, engendering greater imaginative power. "If you don't have that in your brain and soul," says Lehrer, "if you are not passionate about the beauty of that form and creating places to honor human form, movement and emotion, to me that's a deficiency."

The positive reinforcement of art and architecture is clear as well for O'Herlihy, who considers them to be necessities on both the personal level, as refiners of his vision and aesthetic, and the creative level as partners in the reciprocation of ideas. Though he considers himself an architect first, "breaking ranks from architecture and moving

meaningfully between various artistic fields is both possible and essential," he says, as his abstract line and circle paintings would suggest. "When I paint it's because I want to paint, not to escape the field of architecture. Ideas come from painting, and I like to take that voice created through my paintings into the world of architecture and allow that vision to influence me."

Having painted since the age of five, Sonnino considers it her visceral grounding base, diffusing her colorist's flair into twenty-plus years of architectural practice. "I think about buildings the same way I think about painting, but I don't think about painting the same way I think about buildings," she says. The former evokes an emotional, personal and subconscious impact on the latter, which she sees as far more cerebral, collective and outward. She also underscores the physical immediacy of painting that architecture does

not share. "If I were a builder and had my hands on it, maybe it would be the same thing," she states, but architecture is a "much different beast" that one creates in the abstract.

Many architects understand architecture as a field defined by problem solving but, according to Holl, "you cannot find out anything about things that you don't know if you just think in a pragmatic, objective way. You have to let the dream occur—you have to have a dream intersecting." *Firmitas. Utilitas. Venustas.* ■

OPPOSITE: Watercolor and charcoal on paper by Michael Lehrer. ABOVE LEFT, TOP: *Jigsaw*, oil and pencil on canvas by Lorcan O'Herlihy. ABOVE LEFT, BOTTOM: *The Dancing Thread*, oil and charcoal on canvas by Lorcan O'Herlihy. ABOVE: *Red and White 1*, collage painted with gouache on old letters purchased at an Italian flea market by Patricia Sonnino.



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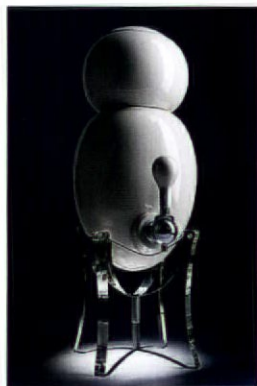
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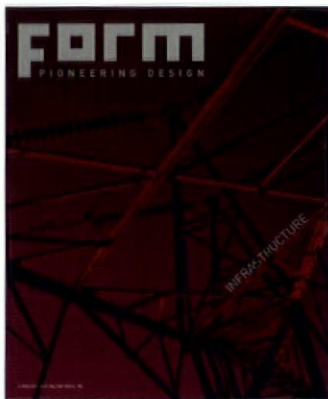
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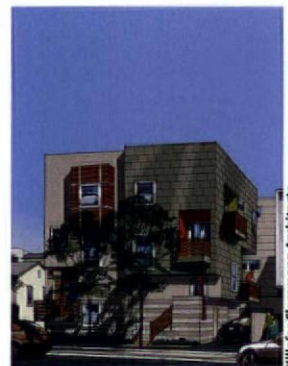
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