

# COLUMNS

A Publication of the Dallas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects | Winter 2015 | Vol. 32 No. 4

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Photo Credits: Craig D. Blackman, FAIA

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COVER AND BELOW: A large crowd congregates in downtown Dallas to enjoy Aurora 2013 Festival, an annual nighttime spectacle of light, video, sound, projection, and performance. Photos by Michael Cagle, Assoc. AIA.



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The mission of *Columns* is to explore community, culture, and lives through the impact of architecture.

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*Columns* is a quarterly publication produced by the Dallas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects with the Dallas Center for Architecture. The publication offers educated and thought-provoking opinions to stimulate new ideas and advance architecture. It also provides commentary on architecture and design within the communities in the greater North Texas region. Send editorial inquiries to [columns@aiadallas.org](mailto:columns@aiadallas.org).

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### Inside the 'Life of an Architect'

Bob Borson's interview continues online to explore how his blog readers, numbering in the millions, help determine his chosen topics; why he aims for non-architect readers; and what he does in his spare time.

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### Motivating the Crowd

The interview with community advocate Jason Roberts continues online. Find out about his leadership efforts with the Oak Cliff Transit Authority, Bike Friendly Oak Cliff and more.

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Join the conversation! Explore architect-created blog posts, galleries, editorials, essays, and content from *Columns* on the AIA Dallas Springboard at [www.aiadallas.org](http://www.aiadallas.org).



## Contributors



Cindy Smith, Assoc. AIA  
*Architecture Criticism Today: Critical Mass Is Changing the Conversation*

Cindy, a refugee from the newspaper industry, is three years into her second career of architecture. She had worked as a reporter, editor, and page designer at newspapers in Tampa, Fort Worth, and Dallas before receiving her master's in architecture with top honors from the University of Texas at Arlington. Cindy is an architectural designer at Gensler and is active in AIA Dallas, chairing the Women in Architecture Network and serving on the Communications Committee.

PHOTO BY TRACY KRECK



Mia Ovcina, AIA  
*Rise of the Crowd: Crowdfunding and Crowdsourcing Help Architects and Planners Impact North Texas and Beyond*

Having spent most of her life moving across countries and continents, Mia found her way back to Dallas five years ago and has managed to stay put. As a project architect at DSGN, she has had the opportunity to work on a variety of projects that align with her passion for local, community-based architecture and planning. When she's not designing, Mia can be found dabbling in furniture design and film photography, obsessing over her ill-fated garden, or otherwise spending time outdoors.

PHOTO BY IVAYLO GETOV

## President's Message | The Rise of the Crowd, an AIA Dallas Sensation



Each fall, our **Columns Advisory Board (CAB)**, a group of visionary individuals, identifies the editorial themes for the following year's issues of *Columns* magazine. Around the same time CAB was brainstorming our 2015 areas of focus, the "AIA Foresight Report, The Changing Context, Business, and Practice of Architecture 2014" hit our mailboxes. We were especially intrigued by one of the trends, "the Rise of the Crowd," which generated much conversation. The premise as explained by that publication was that "crowdfunding and crowdsourcing signal major changes in the role of users and clients in the design process." CAB adopted this theme for the winter edition of *Columns*. Looking back on that meeting, it may have been a premonition that 2015 would ring true as the year of the "Rise of the Crowd" at AIA Dallas.

Proof in point, our "No Car Week" event grew legs and became a social media crowd favorite, encouraging people inside and outside the AIA to park their cars during the week to experience other forms of mobility. Bonton Farms, a community farm initiative championed by the 2014 and 2015 classes of the AIA Dallas Emerging Leaders Program (ELP), took crowdsourcing to the next step. It relied heavily on the power of the crowd: a diverse, otherwise unaffiliated group of designers brought together to identify a community need, formulate a project around it, and see it through to completion. Bonton Farms is now in its second year of operation and our 2015 ELP class has continued to provide design drawings for the construction of a community center/market and transitional housing in support of Bonton Farms' mission.

Throughout the year, the debate over the Trinity Parkway was championed by AIA Dallas. We reshaped the conversation around the benefit of a Great Trinity Park in our statement on the Trinity issued in March of 2015. Through this initiative we have come to realize that, as leaders in the community, our voice often becomes the voice of the crowd. Once the crowd adopts and amplifies our voice, the message becomes very powerful indeed.

This fall we invite you to join the AIA Dallas "crowd" at the annual AIA Dallas Tour of Homes as we explore what is possible when working with architects. Each year the tour breaks its own attendance record. Local architects select the featured homes—located in neighborhoods across Dallas—based on their outstanding residential architecture. Each stop not only represents one of a myriad of styles, from midcentury Modern to Modern villa, but also showcases a different scope of work, including ground-up construction, renovations, and add-ons. So often, homeowners think that hiring an architect means projects that come with a price tag to break the bank and a square footage to put AT&T Stadium to shame. In truth, architects provide a variety of services at many price points and scales. We hope you join us on our 2015 tour, enjoy the inspiration, and explore the possibilities. ■

The 2015 AIA Dallas Tour of Homes is Saturday, November 14, and Sunday, November 15. Visit [www.hometourdallas.com](http://www.hometourdallas.com) for more details and registration. A special guide to each featured home can be found on page 29.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Bullis".

Bob Bullis, AIA  
AIA Dallas President

## In Context | What is it? Where is it?

Can you identify this North Texas building?  
*See page 60 for the answer.*

PHOTO BY MICHAEL CAGLE, ASSOC. AIA

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## Editor's Note | The Madding Crowd



*Architecture is the intersection between the artistic and the social.* Thom Mayne, FAIA

*The Internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow ... Amazing developments in communications, collaboration, and efficiencies ... Access to information and the ability to give a voice to people who have never been heard.* Bill Gates

*To be far from the madding crowd is to be mad indeed.* A.E. Coppard

The conversation about architecture has grown increasingly louder with the advent of the Internet. This momentum, amplified by social media, empowers the public to shape the built environment both through social dialogue and collaborative movements.

Case in point, architectural criticism is more prevalent than ever in the North Texas region. The shifting landscape of social commentary and the hiring of an architecture critic at *The Dallas Morning News* are topics explored in Cindy Smith's article, "Architecture Criticism Today."

Delving further into the exploration of how the public is a force for change through crowdfunding and crowdsourcing, Mia Ovcina explores the struggle of finding the right army for design

in "Rise of the Crowd."

We explore these ideas in-depth throughout this issue, even while previewing our annual crowd-pleasing experience: the 2015 AIA Dallas Tour of Homes. In Detail Matters, we focus on the craft of Joshua Nimmo's stair design for one of the featured residences. Peruse the Tour of Homes guide to learn more about all of these excellent designs.

And then join the conversation online at [www.aiadallas.org](http://www.aiadallas.org). ■



James Adams, AIA  
Associate Editor-Content

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## Public Arts | The Wall at Forest Lane



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL CAGLE, ASSOC. AIA

**What is the role of public art** where there is no identifiable public realm? This is a common conundrum all over North Dallas, an area defined by auto-centric planning and the lack of pedestrian street life. In a situation like this, neighborhood life can become mostly a private matter with social interaction outside the home limited to the occasional HOA meeting or the local swimming pool club.

Separation between what is shared and what is private is essential; elements such as walls and fences say as much about the character of the neighborhood as the houses themselves.

But what about those walls that function as a barrier between the neighborhood and a public right-of-way, such as a major traffic arterial? To whom does it belong, and what are the consequences when no one claims it?

This was precisely the challenge in 1976 when Mary Beth Neale, an art teacher at W.T. White High School,

encouraged her students to paint a colorful mural over a 600-yard-long barrier wall along the north edge of Forest Lane between Midway Road and Rosser Street. Initially built by the developer of the residential subdivision behind it, the beige wall had been tagged over time with graffiti, creating an eyesore for drivers and diminishing the area's overall appeal.

Students were encouraged to submit a variety of designs influenced by America's Bicentennial, psychedelic album covers and other imagery popular among the youth at that time. The designs were then woven together into a lengthy, but unified, artistic composition.

More than merely suppressing graffiti for almost 40 years, the wall at Forest Lane succeeded as a beloved landmark in the neighborhood. Volunteers, including many who were alumni from W.T. White, are known to help refresh the mural by picking up a paintbrush on a weekend.

Recently, part of the wall was

damaged by an out-of-control vehicle that plowed into one section of it, but the volunteers stepped up again to find a way to repair and repaint the marred section.

It is because of the mural's inclusive and participatory process—not necessarily its actual artistic quality—that this example of suburban public art has endured longer than anyone had envisioned. It allows people to connect with each other as well as to a special place and time.

Volunteer Jill Farer speaks for others, saying: "It really brings us back to what the original artists must have experienced when designing it back in the '70s: all of what was important and fun in our lives. ... It still has the ability to make us feel young again."

Visit the Facebook group page—"Helping to Paint the Wall on Forest Lane"—to find out more. ■

**Julien Meyrat, AIA is a senior designer at Gensler.**



EDUARDO CASTANEDA, ASSOC. AIA

# RISE OF THE CROWD

CROWDFUNDING AND CROWDSOURCING HELP ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS IMPACT NORTH TEXAS AND BEYOND

**This past April, a park popped up** in Deep Ellum. There were programmed activities, outdoor movies, music, and art—a welcoming environment designed specifically for a neighborhood that has long debated the best way to bring a park to the area. While the park was only a four-day experiment, brought to life to coordinate with the events of the 23rd Annual Congress for New Urbanism (CNU), it helped demonstrate the importance of active, engaging, and inclusive public space to a wide variety of people. Additionally, it brought the local design community, neighborhood, and the City of Dallas together in support of the effort.

Perhaps the most impressive thing about the pop-up park was how it came to be. A group of urbanists, led by ASH + LIME Strategies, solicited design support from interested landscape and architecture firms, raised funds through a variety of venues, and coordinated the approvals and permits required by the city. Callison and TBG Partners were quick to get involved, and neighborhood associations enthusiastically threw their support behind the project. As is becoming increasingly common these days, the project was driven by community involvement on all sides, through crowdfunding and the crowdsourcing of ideas and labor.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Workers continue construction staging for the Crowdus pop-up park.

**BELOW:** Organizers' low-budget sign design delivers a big visual impact.



PHOTOS BY TBG PARTNERS



### Crowd-Driven & Crowd-Focused

Crowd-driven projects like the Deep Ellum park are not new, but they are becoming more and more popular in the worlds of design and urbanism. Forming a project around community support rather than conventional channels allows project leaders to circumnavigate bureaucracy and take hands-on control in an efficient and productive way.

"Because of the crowd-focused approach, the Crowdus Street pop-up park team was able to spread many of the tasks between many people," says Rik Adamski of ASH + LIME Strategies. "[We] were able to get large numbers of volunteers when we really needed them." Simultaneously, fundraising was successful because it used a diverse approach, pairing crowdfunding efforts with more traditional fundraising efforts and sponsorship levels for donors. Because the project was linked to CNU, crowdfunded donations came from all over the country, a fact that surprised the organizers given the hyper-local nature of the project.

### The Madding Crowd

Crowdfunded and crowdsourced projects are not all equally successful. While smaller scale community-rooted projects such as this pop-up park do well in gathering support and participation, many professionals are wary of what architectural critic Alexandra Lange calls "Kickstarter Urbanism." The critic's concerns recognize that many crowd-driven architectural and urban projects can be overly ambitious and that people often misunderstand the scale, scope, duration, and complexity of such projects.

One such project, The Lowline, was recently "kickstarted" with great success as a concept for a "reverse High Line" or underground park in Manhattan. However, the nearly \$225,000 raised will not go directly to supporting the park, but rather to developing solar technology that would make the project feasible and that could be used in the future park, pending additional fundraising.

Furthermore, critics are apt to criticize crowdsourcing and crowdfunding as design-by-social-media, an extension of the design-by-committee phenomenon, which ends up favoring the opinion of the public over design intuitions and experts. Sites such as ArcBazar—which *Dwell* magazine referred to in a tweet as "the worst thing to happen to architecture since the Internet

started"—create a frenzied design environment with a pervasive lack of quality control and financial exploitation of design labor.

### The Humanity of Crowdsourcing

Despite these criticisms, it is undeniable that, when channeled effectively, crowd-driven design can create a lot of good, especially when looking at social causes that would otherwise not get sufficient attention. "It's important to emphasize that this type of tactical project is a team effort," Adamski says. "One small group of people cannot do anything on this scale—at best, we can inspire and empower others."

This socially-driven approach was the backbone of organizations such as Architecture for Humanity (AFH), which took a grassroots approach to design and construction internationally. AFH used crowdsourced design ideas and construction labor from the architectural, engineering, and construction community to tackle major housing crises, from war-torn Kosovo to post-earthquake Haiti. The international organization recently folded, but local chapters are working to find ways to continue the design mission, albeit at a more regional scale.

The Dallas chapter of AFH was established in 2009, and a committed core group of architects, designers, and planners has pushed forward with a variety of projects of varying scale, from organizing community brainstorming and design charettes to design competitions and small scale construction projects. The diversity of their work ranges from small-scale installations in Dallas to an orphanage in Haiti. In the past, fundraising initiatives have been creative (from movie screenings to pub crawls), but the chapter recently began partnering with organizations that have the resources to get projects done. This approach lessens pressure on the team and allows team members to focus more on the design work at hand.

Moving forward, "the work we are hoping to engage in is very neighborhood-based," says Ryan Behring, one of the original founders of AFH's DFW chapter. "At the neighborhood level, we see our group acting as a liaison between neighborhood leaders, community groups, the development community, and the City of Dallas." In this vein, recent involvement has focused on the South Dallas neighborhood of Cigarette Hill, which needed help with both general neighborhood clean-up and design help to establish placemaking strategies. So far, the effort has resulted in designs for



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neighborhood welcome signage, sign toppers, and landscaping at Lancaster Boulevard. Work has been accomplished in partnership with the neighborhood, 2nd Saturday (a local volunteer organization), and the City of Dallas. As with the Crowdos pop-up park, a shared vision for the neighborhood has helped advance the work, build enthusiasm, and attract participation.

### Where's the Right Crowd?

There is an ongoing struggle for many organizations in finding the right "crowd" to source from, whether it is designers or a general community. With any group consisting solely of volunteers, projects can stall depending on team members' availability; and a similar paradigm exists for the funding of projects. Fine-tuning this process—and finding the right projects, neighborhoods, and volunteers to encourage involvement and support—is often a learning experience which translates into project execution. For AFH, "we learned from our own group, that growing involvement beyond the core group can be a hurdle to development, and I think that makes us a good fit for neighborhood work," Behring says.

As groups work to find the most efficient way to approach crowd-driven design, the topic has become a prominent point of discussion within the architectural profession. Many universities have organized students to further the practice of crowd-driven design, forming community design studios in their respective cities with university funds. Similarly, the AIA has embraced the challenge on both national and local levels; the topic of crowd-driven design has inspired lectures and panels at architectural conventions and been the guiding force behind the formation of design-action groups such as the Design Voice committee in Austin.

In Dallas, the local AIA chapter has integrated principles of crowdsourcing and funding into the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP). This empowering leadership program for young architects includes a group community project as a component of the year-long course. The expectation is to organize and manage the

design, funding, and execution of a community project. In doing so, ELP relies heavily on the power of the crowd: a diverse, otherwise unaffiliated, group of designers brought together to identify a community need, formulate a project around it, and see it through to completion. Seed money for each project is often crowdfunded from the group's professional network and the projects would truly not be possible without the backing and encouragement of the overall architectural community.

Since the program's founding, projects have included a playground at CityWalk@Akard, finish-out of a youth shelter for Promise House, and various master planning efforts. Bonton Farms in South Dallas, the most recent, and arguably most successful, project to date has evolved into a two-year commitment from ELP. The project started out as the preliminary planning for an urban farm and help in obtaining city permits. It has grown to include a community center with meeting spaces and transitional housing options for community members.

### The Right Stuff

As with other crowdsourced projects, working out the availability of team members, finding a project of manageable scope and budget, and staying the course is a challenge. With the continuity of ELP, lessons learned have been passed down from class to class and this has made the projects more efficient over time. Earlier classes devoted substantially more energy to fundraising, but the focus with recent classes has been on partnering with organizations that can provide their own financial resources. Bonton Farms is an example of this; it was made possible through the involvement of His Bridge Builders and Habitat for Humanity. Volunteers from these organizations, as well as the neighborhood community and 2nd Saturday, worked to get the first phase of the project built and operational.

Pulling the project together with a diverse group of participants "may just be the biggest leadership lesson we have learned and it shows each of us how critical it is to put the right

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Programmed activity spaces and interactive events contribute to the park's success

**RIGHT:** A bird's eye view of the completed park shows what attracted the community to come

**LEFT:** Live music at the pop-up park reflects the personality of Deep Ellum



PHOTOS BY TBG PARTNERS

team together to get the task accomplished," says ELP alum Andy Moon, AIA. As one of the core team leaders, Andy and his family became so invested in the project and neighborhood that they purchased land in Bonton and are now in the process of constructing a carbon-neutral home for themselves.

ASH+LIME Strategies puts it, "A common thread in the successful crowd-funded projects I've been involved in had to do with being a project for the public good. It's typically for a situation where there isn't necessarily an organization or government body tasked with providing it, but there's a need

### Finding the right projects, neighborhoods, and volunteers to encourage involvement and support ... is often a learning experience which translates into project execution.

Architectural projects can often be too complex and involved to crowdsource effectively, but these local groups have all found that starting small and building out incrementally—through a network of community relationships, non-profit partnerships, and communication with the city—is the best way to tackle an ambitious project. These principles, along with a general desire to improve the urban fabric of our city, form the cornerstones of crowd-driven design in Dallas. As Amanda Popken of

identified by one person or a small group who can rally the community. That's the other common thread—the ability to mobilize through an effective campaign."

When done right, a successful crowd-driven project brings together a diverse group of people for a common cause that can have a powerful transformational effect on a community. ■

**Mia Ovcina, AIA is an architect with DSGN Associates Inc.**

**BELOW:** The 2014 class of the AIA Emerging Leaders Program visits Bonton Farms



PHOTOS BY ANDREW MOON, AIA

# ARCHITECTURE CRITICISM TODAY

## CRITICAL MASS IS CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

**Architectural learning and development** has always been rooted in criticism. The practice permeates every school of architecture, from desk crit to pin-up to final jury. This pattern of analysis, reflection, and adjustment continues through practice, shaping all of our projects. The critics are no longer our teachers, but are design directors and clients, and the process goes on well past the life of any single project. An internal postmortem will influence the next design, and critical outside reviews may even change industry standards. It's a constant and crucial part of the design process and architectural evolution.

"Whatever it is that we think about when we think about what architecture criticism could be at its best ... I suspect that it's grounded in the desk crit," said Thomas de Monchaux, an architect, critic, and adjunct professor at Columbia University, speaking recently at an AIA panel on criticism in New York at the Center for Architecture. "It's grounded in the crit, and the presence of that word in all of our memories. We all remember the best one we ever had; we all remember the worst one we

ever had. And that means something."

"Superb and sustainable practice requires, among other things, superb and sustainable appraisal," he said. "It might seem that life is freer and easier without fear of criticism, but every practice—and especially architecture because it is created with the crit—requires the collective self-awareness that criticism sustains."

At an individual level, criticism pushes us to do better work. Taken collectively, criticism can establish principles and standards by which future projects will be judged. De Monchaux called it "criticism as case law." Great criticism helps create great architecture, but de Monchaux contends that current shifts in journalism are holding architecture back.

"Public critical writing about architecture has ghosted away from the significant settings that once supported it," he said. "And although among today's lively ecology of socialized media there are plenty of words and pictures involving architecture, it's not at all self-evident that a meaningful and insightful critical project is being sustained."



MICHAEL HOGUE

**RIGHT:** Architect and critic Thomas de Monchaux speaks at a New York Center for Architecture event called "Edge Criticism: The Impact of Criticism on Practice." The panel was moderated by Philip Nobel, editorial director of SHoP Architects (center), and also included CLOG co-founder Julia van den Hout and New York YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard) founder Nikolai Fedak (right).



### Shifting Landscape

The profession of criticism is evolving as writers struggle to find their place in a new age of journalism. Traditional media outlets are slashing budgets, and editors are deciding that full-time architecture critics are a luxury few daily newspapers can afford. Some papers have handed architecture criticism over to the arts critics, if they even employ those. Dallas is one of the few cities left with a critic devoted exclusively to architecture, a fact made possible by a unique partnership between the University of Texas at Arlington and *The Dallas Morning News*.

The pairing was, in a way, set up by the widow of David Dillon, the newspaper's longtime architecture critic who died in 2010. Sally Dillon donated her husband's notes and papers to University of Texas-Arlington's Special Collections the following year, and the university formed the David Dillon Center for Texas Architecture in response. The center held its first David Dillon Symposium in 2012 on the subject of architectural criticism, which sparked a desire to bring a new critic to the area. *The Dallas Morning News* leadership and officials at UTA's School of Architecture conducted a national search for a shared critic who would teach at the university and write for the newspaper. Mark Lamster was hired in 2013, re-energizing the architectural dialogue in Dallas.

Lamster hasn't been shy about taking city leaders and architects to task about serious issues in Dallas. He was one of the first to back the seemingly heretical idea to tear down a freeway in Dallas, calling I-345 a "noose" around downtown. He took billionaire developer Tim Headington to task for his "record of annihilation" along Main Street under the headline "We regret to inform you that your city has been destroyed." And Lamster has had even stronger words for the city's Trinity toll road plan, calling it the "urban planning equivalent of the Iraq War."

**Good critics have always been vital to our profession, but technology shifts are changing the dialogue.**

"If you want to be a serious place and you want to seriously improve, you have to have that kind of serious dialogue and introspection about what you're doing and who you are," Lamster says. "As for me particularly, people respond to what you write, and some people like it and some people don't, and that's fine. I think it's good to have conversation. So far, I feel like I've been really, really happy here, and I appreciate the fact that people are paying attention to the things that are right."



NEW YORK CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE

### Natural Allies

No one likes to be in a critic's sights, but, in many ways, a good critic is the architect's best ally. This is especially true at a metropolitan daily with a large general audience. Architects often do a poor job of convincing a wary public about the importance of good planning and design. "They tend to speak to the public the way they speak to other architects," Lamster says. "But that's not the way people respond or are able to understand the issues that architects need to communicate. They can't talk in the jargon of architecture to a general public."

That's one of the primary reasons Dallas needs a critic, says Dr. Kathryn Holliday, the director of the UTA David Dillon Center. "An architecture critic in a major city is someone who can help create a public dialogue—and again a dialogue not amongst architects, but a dialogue for the public—about the quality of the city that we live in," she says. "An architecture critic provides a way of galvanizing the public discussion and public opinion."

This puts the critic in a role counter to most journalists: that of activist. "I think if a critic isn't activist at times when it's appropriate, they're not a critic," says Holliday, an architectural historian. "One of the roles of criticism since it developed has always been not just to say 'Thumbs up or thumbs down,' but in

the case of architecture, to really direct it toward architecture that fulfills its role in society." That also sets architecture criticism apart from more consumer-focused forms of criticism.

People read a movie review or a restaurant review in order to decide whether or not to see a particular movie or go to a particular restaurant. As often as not, an architecture critic—a good one, anyway—is writing about urban policy, social change, politics, and infrastructure. It's a complex task, and current shifts in the media industry are not favorable to complexity. The Internet has freed us from the limits of newsprint and magazine pages and brought a tidal wave of content. We now have a whole new slate of online publications like *Dezeen*, *Curbed*, *Uncube*, and *SuckerPunch Daily*. Add to that the crush of blogs, tweets, and so-called architecture porn posted on image-driven sites like Tumblr, Instagram, and flickr.

There are more people than ever writing and posting about architecture—some of it excellent. But in today's media dimite, value is measured first by dick-worthiness. We seem to love BuzzFeed's "35 Weird Architectural Mistakes," "10 Things You Don't Know About Dating an Architect," and "A Look Inside 5 Jaw-Dropping Celebrity Homes!" The most popular architecture website in the world is the superficial ArchDaily with 70 million page views a month. The site brags that users stay on the site an average of six minutes—apparently a long time in the Web world. There, you can browse through tens of thousands of posts with a mind-numbing number of stunning renderings (which may or may not resemble reality). It can be hard to find the quality amid all the static.

### A Mixed Bag

"In some ways, it makes criticism a lot more vital; in other ways, it really dilutes the pool," Holliday says. "One of the big issues in criticism is how do you develop authority? How do you become THE critic? If you're a critic for *The New York Times*, you have instant authority because you write for *The New York Times*. If you're a critic for a big daily newspaper like *The Dallas Morning News*, then you have immediate authority that the paper has vested in you by giving you that position. And that's something that bloggers are going to have a harder time developing because they don't have the backing of an institution. It doesn't mean they're not powerful, it just means there are a lot of different models, and modes, and roles for architectural writers."

It may take time to find equilibrium, but the media's shift toward a more democratized Internet is bringing some exciting changes. Established critics can easily share thoughts on national and international issues with peers around the globe. Local writers and activists can more easily enter the conversation, and the public can more easily engage with the architectural community. With every new platform, more people are able to enter the conversation. "I think it's a golden age of architecture criticism," Lamster says. "There has never been this much good writing about architecture, design, and urbanism."

Nor have there been this many avenues for that discussion. "Something new is coming along, it seems, like every month—a new way to have dialogue," he says. "It's very exciting. I love that you can communicate in all these different ways—short, long, photography, what have you. So I think it's an exciting moment, and I'm glad that my newspaper is committed to having this kind of criticism in Dallas." ■

**Cindy Smith, Assoc. AIA is with Gensler.**

## On the Street

# WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SPACE?

People love Dallas' architecture. What's your favorite space? Here are comments from a variety of *Columns* readers who've shared their favorite places and told us why.



CHRISTOPHER MANN

### Winspear Opera House

*"I love the interior of the Winspear Opera House, especially the performance hall. When you visit, it feels like you're inside a large, lavish egg."*

Tom Huang, Sunday and enterprise editor,  
*The Dallas Morning News*

*"The shape and color of this building the function it serves, and its surrounding environment brings feelings of hope and exuberance to me."*

Azi Soltani, senior architectural representative,  
American Tile and Stone

### Nasher Sculpture Center

*"The Nasher is elegant yet welcoming, spacious but not overwhelming, and fits beautifully into the Dallas Arts District."*

Craig Holcomb, executive director,  
Trinity River Commons Foundation

*"Perfect proportions, engages the street, awesome roof, clean details throughout."*

Julien Meyrat, AIA,  
Gensler



ANDREAS PRAEFCKE



CHARLES SMITH, AIA

### Kalita Humphreys Theater

*"As a late Frank Lloyd Wright building it feels slightly less proscriptive than some of his other work. It's also an appropriate scale for the neighborhood and it's sited beautifully."*

Kate Aoki, Assoc. AIA,  
DSGN Associates

### Cistercian Abbey

*"I like Cistercian Abbey in Irving because it is so rough and crude on the outside, but the interior is so much more beautiful. Nothing says wood like that ceiling. You feel so safe under that roof and between those walls."*

Christopher Mann, photographer



CHRISTOPHER MANN

## Perot Museum of Nature and Science

*"I absolutely love the Perot Museum; especially the texture and pattern on the outside walls!"*

Don Clampitt, chairman,  
Clampitt Paper Company

*"You have to include the mastery and ingenuity of the Perot Museum of Nature and Science building in downtown Dallas, a beautiful and functional building that helps to set the Dallas skyline apart!"*

Meridan Zerner, sports dietitian,  
Cooper Clinic



CHAD DAVIS, AIA



JAMES WILSON

## The Pump House

*"The Pump House, Willow Wood Street an example of preserving what was once considered a defunct 1920s-era water pump station and repurposing the structure into something useful, handsome and relevant for today."*

Meg Fitzpatrick, MMF Strategies

## Thanks-Giving Square Chapel

*"The Philip Johnson-designed Thanks-Giving Square Chapel is not only beautiful, but more importantly symbolic of one of the most necessary actions we can do... give thanks!"*

Christian Yazdanpanah, manager of  
strategy, United Entertainment Group



PETER CALVIN



CHAD DAVIS, AIA

## Fort Worth Water Gardens

*"Despite its history of tragedy, the FortWorth Water Gardens remains a compelling and frustrating public space that rewards repeated visits to watch [people] navigate through its precarious waterscapes."*

Kate Holliday, PhD, associate professor, director,  
David Dillon Center for Texas Architecture,  
University of Texas at Arlington



PETER CALVIN

### The Hall of State at Fair Park

*"The Hall of State at Fair Park and the South Texas Room (aka Aluminum Room) because it is a combination of technology and a declaration of love for Texas. The decorative features and the paintings are amazing"*

Olivier Meslay, associate director, curatorial affairs, Dallas Museum of Art

### Fountain Place

*"Fountain Place is truly timeless. Its design remains fresh, as if its construction could have been completed last week."*

Joe Don Holley, AIA, associate principal and senior vice president, HKS Inc.



PETER CALVIN



ANDREAS PRAEFCKE

### Federal Reserve Bank

*"The Federal Reserve Bank is a simple, well-designed building. It's not flashy or trying to grab a lot of attention, but it has elegance and character which makes it much nicer than a lot of other buildings in [that] area."*

Charles Brant, AIA, project manager, Perkins+Will

### The Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge

*"The Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge ... has grace and elegance, is iconic, and it sets a progressive tone for new development in South Dallas and areas near the parkway."*

Chris Callegari, AIA, Gensler





## Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth

*"The detail of the carefully crafted concrete is almost impossible to imagine, along with the massive size of the structural elements."*

Shannon Carpenter Bearden, AIA,  
associate, Gensler

FORT WORTH CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

## Kimbell Art Museum

*"Kimbell Art Museum by Louis Kahn. I've always loved how the mathematically complex cycloid vaults capture the light and illuminate the gallery space."*

Briar Hannah, AIA, principal,  
studio b architecture



ROBERT LAPRELLE



VALLEY HOUSE GALLERY

## Valley House Gallery & Sculpture Garden

*"A Modernist art gallery and four-plus acre sculpture garden surround a mid-century Modern home located in its original North Dallas location, providing a perfect place to escape the busy city."*

Cris Jordan, DCFA board member,  
and Scott Potter, CBRE



## Swine Building

*"The Swine Building (historic name: Livestock Building No. 2) by George Dahl for the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition. It is designed perfectly for its purpose."*

Nancy McCoy, FAIA, partner,  
Quimby McCoy Preservation Architecture

## Profile | Jason Roberts



NICHOLAS MCWHIRTER, AIA

**Jason Roberts is the founder** of the Oak Cliff Transit Authority, an originator of the Better Block Project, and co-founder of the Art Conspiracy and Bike Friendly Oak Cliff. His focus on revitalizing inner-city neighborhoods was recognized with a Champions of Change award from the White House in 2012. Jason's consulting firm, Team Better Block, has been widely recognized, including being showcased at the United States Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND.**

I grew up in Garland and other towns around Dallas. From an early age I spent much of my free time outside, playing in creeks and exploring nature. I developed an appreciation for living in harmony with nature that serves today as a framework for my wanting to see our cities be livable with public spaces for everyone to enjoy.

**HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN URBAN REVITALIZATION?**

Some of my early jobs were in the tech field during the dot-com boom. I developed websites and I had time in the evenings to read and study. I began to read books by Jane Jacobs and blogs on urbanism, and I became interested in neighborhood revitalization.

**WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO OAK CLIFF?**

After leaving Denton, following time at the University of North Texas, I wanted to move to Dallas. East Dallas around White Rock Lake was too expensive for my budget, but I found affordable housing in Oak Cliff. I found some pockets of burgeoning front-porch communities in Oak Cliff similar to what Jane Jacobs described in her books.

**HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED AS FOUNDER OF THE OAK CLIFF TRANSIT AUTHORITY?**

Using my background in web development, I built a website for a concept called Oak Cliff Transit Authority in 2006. Having the site online for people to view almost created an illusion that what was still basically just a concept was actually a viable organization. We saw that there was interest in bringing this to reality, so we incorporated as a non-profit in 2007. We also began to hold lots of meetings to get community involvement about what the Transit Authority could and should be. The vision became to revive the Dallas streetcar system, and our group later spearheaded the city's efforts to obtain a \$23 million TIGER stimulus grant from the Federal Transit Authority to help reintroduce a modern streetcar system to Dallas. We are very pleased that the initial 1.6-mile track from near Union Station to the intersection of Colorado and Beckley opened this past spring, and there are plans underway now to expand the line to Bishop Arts.

**HOW DID THE BETTER BLOCK PROJECT DEVELOP FROM A CONCEPT INTO REALITY?**

In 2010, a group of friends created an art project called Better Block in which we decided to create our dream neighborhood block in about a day using very little money. We never envisioned the project becoming a national movement and being part of a larger trend of citizen-led efforts to rapidly transform blighted communities around the world.

On a European vacation I had fallen in love with city blocks filled with old and

**BELOW TOP:** A building slated for demolition is converted into a bike shop in Akron, OH.

**BELOW:** An Akron turn lane is converted into a plaza, complete with *al fresco* seating and landscaping.

young people, street music, flower shops, cafés, old buildings, and small marketplaces. When I returned to Dallas, I drove around Oak Cliff and saw boarded-up and vacant buildings, wide streets, small sidewalks, and little street life. I commented to a friend, "Why can't we have blocks that look like the ones throughout Europe?" He scoffed, "Let's be honest: Dallas will never be Paris." That night, I began looking into what was holding my neighborhood back. I found a series of ordinances that prohibited or heavily taxed things that foster amazing urban blocks. From restrictive zoning



PHOTOS BY JASON ROBERTS



PHOTOS BY JASON ROBERTS

**LEFT:** Developed in tandem with the Italian community of Akron, a pop-up bocce court is installed in a temporary plaza.

**BELOW:** A vacant lot becomes a plaza garden, thanks to Keep Akron Beautiful volunteers.



**LISTENING TO?**

Modern garage rock, '60s soul, '40s blues.

**LIKE TO WATCH?**

French foreign films. A favorite is *Amelie*.

**STILL ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?**

See a university open a campus in Oak Cliff.

rules, parking minimums, exorbitant fees on café seating, landscaping, and more, I learned that the ability to have a great block like those I had seen abroad was largely forbidden.

We developed a plan that was the opposite of those found in traditional planning: Work cheaply and quickly, use temporary products, break rules, and focus on action over dialogue. The goal was simple: Build our dream block in 24 hours using anything at our disposal. Artists were key, borrowing was imperative, and the potential of going to jail was likely. A group of friends and I met at night in a theater prop warehouse and began laying out a vision for the block. ... Paint and clean buildings; create bike lanes; set up outdoor cafés and fruit stands; string lights across the street; convert vacant buildings to art galleries,

flower shops, kids' art studios, and coffee houses. Lastly, we printed out the ordinances we were going to break and hung them in every window. On a Friday night in April 2010, we began transforming the block, and by Saturday morning the street was unveiled. What we saw that day challenged everything we'd been told. People walked to the street, sat outside, drank coffee, and read newspapers. Flowers hung from window sills, old men played chess,

*Break rules and focus on action. A vision is fruitless without action.*

children made art in former auto shops, teens pedaled in freshly painted bike lanes, residents began volunteering in our pop-up shops, and musicians appeared unexpectedly with open guitar cases and performed on street corners. The street came roaring back to life. In 24 hours and with less than \$1,000, we built our dream block and disproved the skeptics. Most notably, we learned that a vision is fruitless without action.

**WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THEN WITH BETTER BLOCK?**

The initiative has spread more than we ever imagined. The project has now become an international movement, occurring everywhere from Melbourne, Australia, to Tehran, Iran, and has been featured in *The New York Times*, in *Dwell* magazine, in TED Talks, and on National Public Radio. Team Better Block was even showcased in the United States Pavilion at the Venice Biennale as a part of its Spontaneous Interventions theme. The American Society of Landscape Architects has also given a National Honor Award to Team Better Block. ■

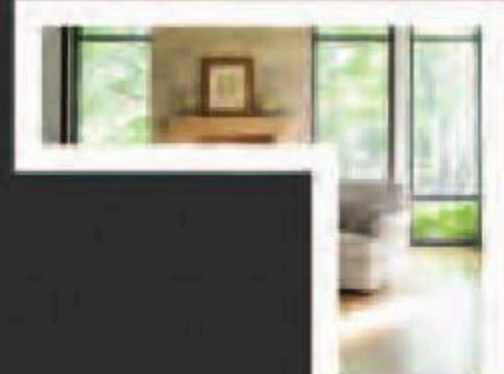
Interview by Nāte Eudaly, Hon. AIA Dallas, executive director of the Dallas Architecture Forum

The interview with Jason continues online. Find out his leadership in Oak Cliff Transit Authority, Bike Friendly Oak Cliff and more.  
[www.aiadallas.org/columns/roberts](http://www.aiadallas.org/columns/roberts)



P R E S E N T S

AIA Dallas  
**TOUR OF  
HOMES**  
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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 | SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15 | 10AM TO 5PM

Thank you for joining us for the **NINTH ANNUAL AIA DALLAS TOUR OF HOMES**. Each year the Dallas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects is proud to showcase the work of our members for you to enjoy. This year's tour, as in years past, promotes the work of some of the finest architectural design talent in North Texas.

## 9TH ANNUAL

The professionals who organized this event went to great lengths to select a collection of homes that would showcase an interesting variety of styles, sizes, and locations, each with something unique to offer. Each residence is a result of the personal relationship and collaboration between the architect and the homeowner.

Take your time, ask questions, and find enjoyment in each of these beautiful homes. We hope you leave our tour with a new appreciation for the important role the architect plays in residential design.

Thank you and enjoy the tour!



Daniel Day, AIA, LEED AP and Jennifer Workman, AIA, LEED AP BD+C  
Committee Chairs, 2015 AIA Dallas Tour of Homes

*The mission of the Dallas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects is to empower architects to excel and impact their practice, profession, and community.*



# THANK YOU

We want to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors for making this tour possible each year. We would also like to thank the participating AIA architects and the gracious homeowners for allowing a glimpse into their homes. The quality of the homes on this year's tour fosters a culture of superior design. We hope you enjoy what these homes have to offer.

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO**

- All of our wonderful sponsors. We are grateful for their support.
- The volunteers for their devotion of time to this important community event.
- The staff of AIA Dallas for their dedication to promoting the value of architecture in our community.

## **2015 AIA DALLAS TOUR OF HOMES COMMITTEE**

Ashlee Lehmann – Hocker Design Group

Celi Sims, Assoc. AIA – Acme Brick

Chris Anderson – Domiteaux + Baggett Architects

Colbert Henning – Grand Openings

Daniel Creekmore – Perkins+Will

Daniel Day, AIA – Perkins+Will

Douglas Payne, AIA – Domiteaux + Baggett Architects

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Jennifer Workman, AIA – GFF

Laura Baggett, AIA - Domiteaux +  
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Laura Eder, AIA – GFF

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

AIA Dallas, the seventh largest chapter of the American Institute of Architects, empowers architects to excel and impact their practice, profession and community. AIA Dallas has a membership base of more than 2,100 members and 300 architectural firms. More information about AIA Dallas can be found online at [www.aiadallas.org](http://www.aiadallas.org).

**AIA** Dallas

## MAJOR CHAPTER EVENTS INCLUDE

### WINTER 2015

Holiday Party

### SPRING 2016

Acme Brick | AIA Dallas Golf Tournament

Architecture 360

Celebrate Architecture

Design Awards, Unbuilt

RETROSPECT

### FALL 2016

Tour of Homes

Design Awards, Built

Ken Roberts Memorial Delineation Competition



## EVENTS

Ongoing Exhibitions

Panel Discussions

Walking Tours

Youth Programs Year Round

Form Follows Fitness 5K

ROCKITECTURE

More information about DFCA can be found online at [www.dallascfa.com](http://www.dallascfa.com).

# TOUR INFORMATION

## HOURS

Saturday, November 14

Sunday, November 15

10AM to 5PM

## ADMISSION

Each individual patron of the AIA Dallas Home Tour must be wearing an official wristband to gain entry to all of the featured homes. Tickets are \$25 per person, purchased in advance, or \$30 per person, purchased online or at the door during the tour. Tickets for viewing an individual home may be obtained for \$10 on the day of the tour and are good for that day only. Tickets can be purchased in advance at [www.hometourdallas.com](http://www.hometourdallas.com).

## RULES

1. No cameras or photographs are allowed inside the home (this includes cell phone cameras). Anyone taking photos outside or in the homes will risk the surrender of his/her ticket.
2. Please remove your shoes or wear the provided booties at each featured home.
3. Turn off or mute cell phones while in the homes. Please take calls outside.
4. No food or drinks may be taken inside the homes.
5. No smoking is allowed inside the homes or on the property. Please dispose of cigarette butts before entering the property.
6. Do not open closed doors, closets, cabinets, drawers or refrigerators.
7. Do not enter areas that have been closed or blocked off.
8. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult at all times. A child under the age of 6 must hold the hand of an adult while walking through the house.
9. Please follow all street signage regarding parking and do not block driveways or walk on lawns or landscaping.
10. Follow all signage and path markers.
11. No pets allowed.
12. No large bags or backpacks allowed on the property.

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- 7 Briar Creek | Est. 11 Architecture
- \* **PREMIERE PARTY HOUSE**  
Brookview Residence | smitharc architects



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## BROWDER STREET

**ARCHITECT** | Shipley Architects

**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | Dan Shipley, AIA, Kurt Urbas

**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | Charles Smith, AIA

**COMPLETED** | 2014

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | 2,700

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | Glasshouse, Capital Distributing, Knottile

Within recent years, the Cedars, one of the oldest neighborhoods located just south of Downtown Dallas, has been undergoing a transition toward a livable, walkable neighborhood reverent of its historic roots. 1818 Browder is set on an affordable half lot, unique in that zoning requires no setback along the slender plot yielding a courtyard placed between the home and a 10-foot high wall along the northern edge of the property line. The exterior remains true to the neighborhood's industrial roots with a palette of cement, stucco, and sheet metal with wood batten accents. The interior, 2,700 square feet in total, features two stories of living space around the courtyard. Sliding doors in the background conceal private space from view. Concrete flooring on the ground level and red oak on the second level unite the entire living space with industrial finishes and fixtures accented throughout.



## WANETA DRIVE

Built within the strict guidelines of the #10 Dallas Conservation District, Benners' design for a contemporary ranch-style home masterfully balances a progressive agenda with the existing dialogue of the Greenway Parks neighborhood. Modern in approach, from spatial configuration to material selection, the home is uniquely tailored to the client's needs but not devoid of an attempt to re-purpose existing design elements from the original structure nor to include a sustainable design approach. Key to the home, from the beginning of the design process, was function with spatial configuration focusing around an active family with children. The extensive renovation is a proven example of how contemporary architecture can fit seamlessly within a National Historic Landmark neighborhood.

**ARCHITECT** | David Benners Architecture

**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | David Benners, AIA, Hocker Design Group

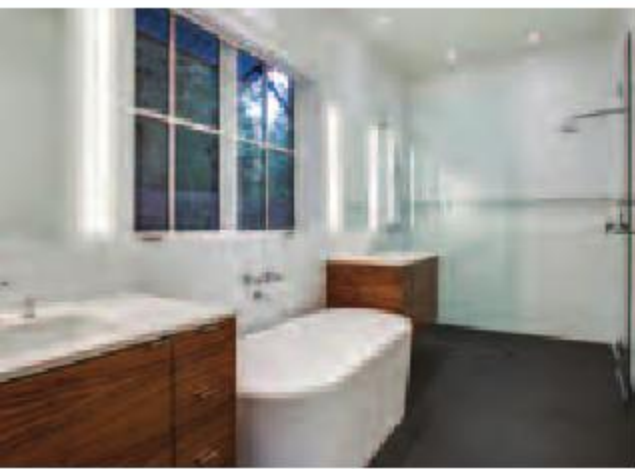
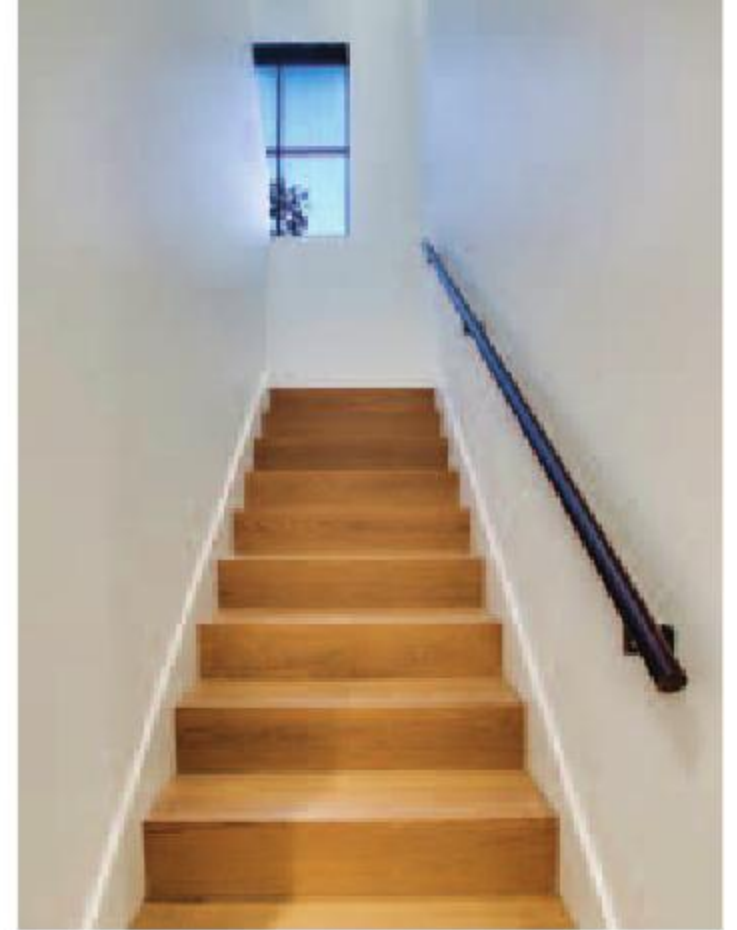
**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | Matt Callahan Photography

**COMPLETED** | 2011

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | 4,379

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | Il Granito, Daltille, Grand Openings, Knoxtile, SubZero Wolf

3



## DURANGO DRIVE

**ARCHITECT** | Todd Hamilton Architect

**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | Todd Hamilton, AIA, Matthew Thomas, Scott Slagle

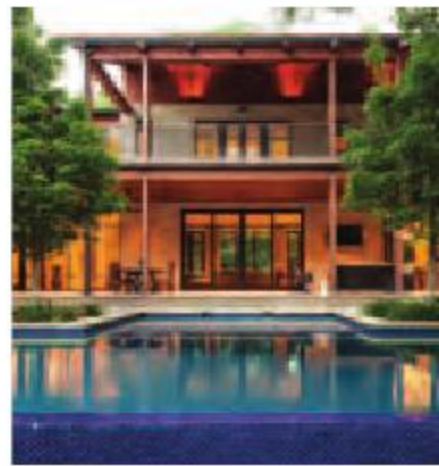
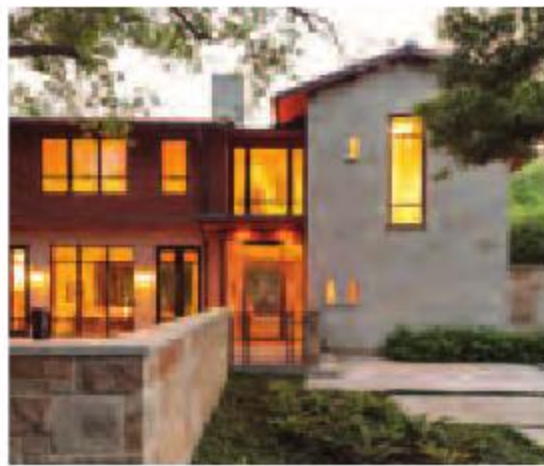
**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | Shoot2Sell

**COMPLETED** | 2015

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | 3,700

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | Distinctive Roofing, Sierra Pacific Windows, TKO Associates, Inc., Bread Stone Ovens, LLC, Capital Distributing, Daltille, Thomas Development and Construction

Conceived as a minimalist farmhouse, the architecture appropriately connects with its surrounding Midway Hollow neighbors through a warm and inviting design approach. Designed for entertaining and family enjoyment, the home features an open interior layout connected with a series of large outdoor living spaces. Traditional farmhouse design elements are modern design elements. The front façade showcases this expression from the standing seam roof to the lap siding exterior surface. Exterior wrap-around porches complete the design, three in total featuring an outdoor fireplace, a wood fired oven, and a screened-in porch that serves as an extension of the dining room.



## SUNNYBROOK LANE

Warm and modern, the Sunnybrook home blends seamlessly with its natural surroundings. Taking a campus-like approach to the composition, the home is conceived as a series of structures that create a variety of outdoor rooms between them. The entirety of the home is slender and stretched, paying full respect to the beautiful natural setting that encompasses the home. A neutral palette of materials further emphasizes the respect that architecture pays toward the site and focuses on accentuating the daylight and views that enter the house.

**ARCHITECT** | SHM Architects

**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | Mark Hoesterey, AIA, Enrique Montenegro, AIA, Andrew Stiglmeier

**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | Nathan Schroder Photography

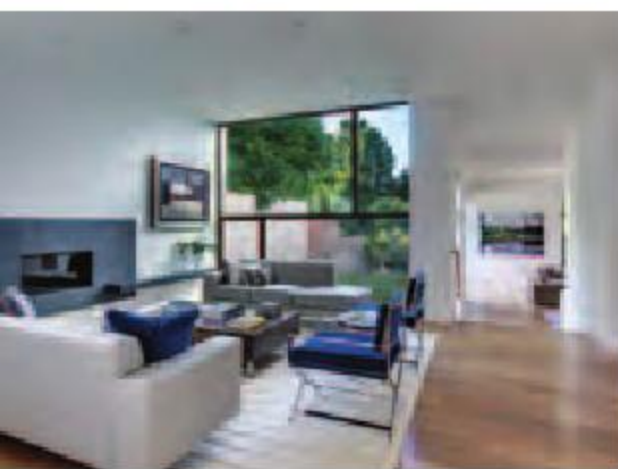
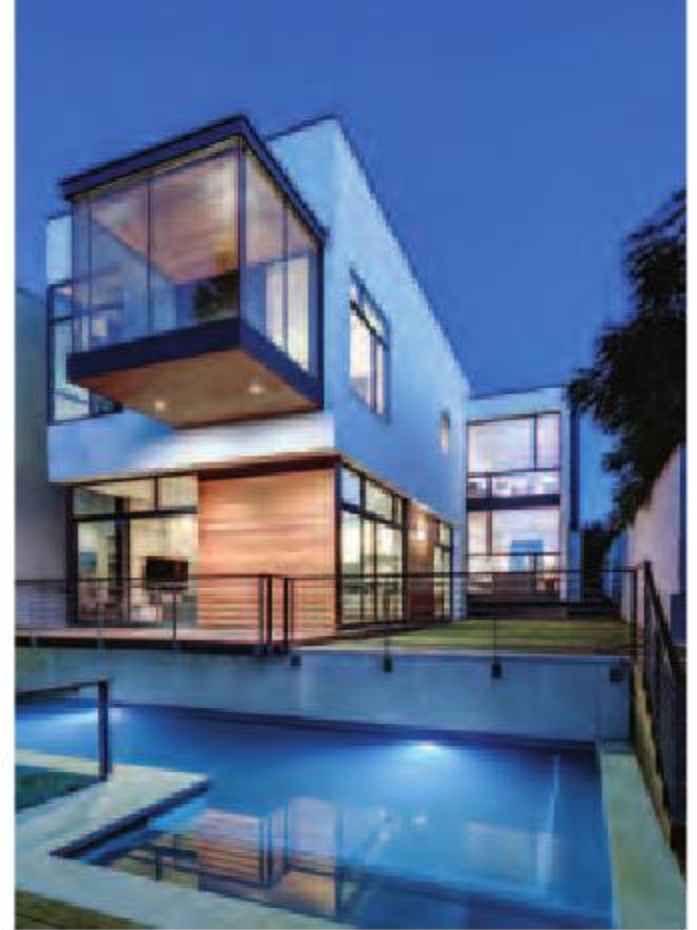
**COMPLETED** | 2014

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | 8,238 Main Residence + 1,497 Guest House

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | Daltile, Tatum Brown Custom Homes, Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery



5



## WINDING LAKE DRIVE

**ARCHITECT** | Marc McCollom Architect

**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | Marc McCollom, AIA

**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | Charles Smith, AIA

**COMPLETED** | 2015

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | 5,000

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | Architectural Lighting Associates, Il Granito, Horizon Italian Tile, Bury, Inc., Knottile, M&M Design Studio, SubZero Wolf, MESA, S&H Development, Westside Kitchen and Bath

Designed for a young family from Mexico City, the home focuses around ample visual connection throughout the living space beginning from the street toward a spring-fed pond at the edge of the site. The form of the house, conceived as two interlocking volumes, displays carefully orchestrated openings to control views from the street within and provide full visual connection toward the pool and pond beyond. A simple interior articulation focuses the visitor's attention on design features such as the staircase, a sculptural element comprised of a wood, steel, and glass palette evocative of the entirety of the home's material composition. The linear progression of the architecture toward the edge of the site comes together with the interplay of the sculpted pool at the edge of the pond and the cantilevered volume of the interior private study above.



## VANGUARD WAY

Quiet and subdued, the architecture respectfully stitches the relationship between home and site together like a treehouse deep within the woods. Materials are kept simple and monolithic, clearly defining openings outward toward the site and balanced with a metal veneer that reflects the shadows of the trees against the simple canvas of the house. By maintaining as much of the existing landscape from the outset of the design process, the natural edge of the site serves as a backdrop to the entirety of the living space within. In line with the mission of the Urban Reserve, the home utilizes a series of sustainable design techniques ranging from passive solar strategies through carefully designed shading elements to articulated openings to the extensive use of recycled/recyclable building materials.

**ARCHITECT** | NIMMO  
**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | Joshua Nimmo, AIA

**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | NIMMO

**COMPLETED** | 2015

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | 2,150

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | ProBuild, Capital Distributing, Dwellings...A Kagan Company, Horizon Italian Tile, Marty's Hardwood Floors



**ARCHITECT** | Est. 11 Architecture

**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | Dan Finnell, AIA

**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | Skyler Fike

**COMPLETED** | 2013

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | 3,420

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | Glasshouse, Lights Fantastic, Capital Distributing, SubZero Wolf

## BRIAR CREEK

In the face of an impending demolition, the homeowners opted to renovate this existing mid-century ranch-style home tucked away along a tributary of White Rock Lake. The entirety of the 3,400 square foot interior space was reconfigured to meet the living demands of the homeowners while respecting the original mid-century roots. The living space has been converted to an open plan with increased views outward toward a tree-lined yard. Vaulted ceilings work in tandem with the exterior openings to allow in an abundance of daylight. The entirety of the renovation brought the home to a modern standard of energy performance, and yet the composition maintains an aesthetic appearance respectful of the existing architecture and neighboring community.



## **BROOKVIEW RESIDENCE** (PREMIERE PARTY HOUSE)

The Brookview Residence is a progressively designed home tailored to evoke the feeling of a modern resort. A key feature lies in the expression of spatial volume that affords to the homeowner equal parts interior and exterior living and entertainment space. Extensive use of Texas shell stone and panoramic glass walls give the home a warm and luxurious atmosphere throughout all moments of the day. Strong horizontal roof lines create a defined datum that anchors the house to the site and frames the interior. The connection to the landscape adds the final touch, a visible element seen throughout the entirety of the home.

**ARCHITECT** | smitharc architects

**PROJECT DESIGN TEAM** | Jason Smith, AIA and Signe Smith, AIA

**PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT** | Stephen Karlisch

**COMPLETED** | 2014

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** | withheld by request

**FEATURED SERVICES + PRODUCTS** | ProBuild, Glasshouse, Waterford Construction, Westside Kitchen and Bath, Bury, Inc., SubZero Wolf

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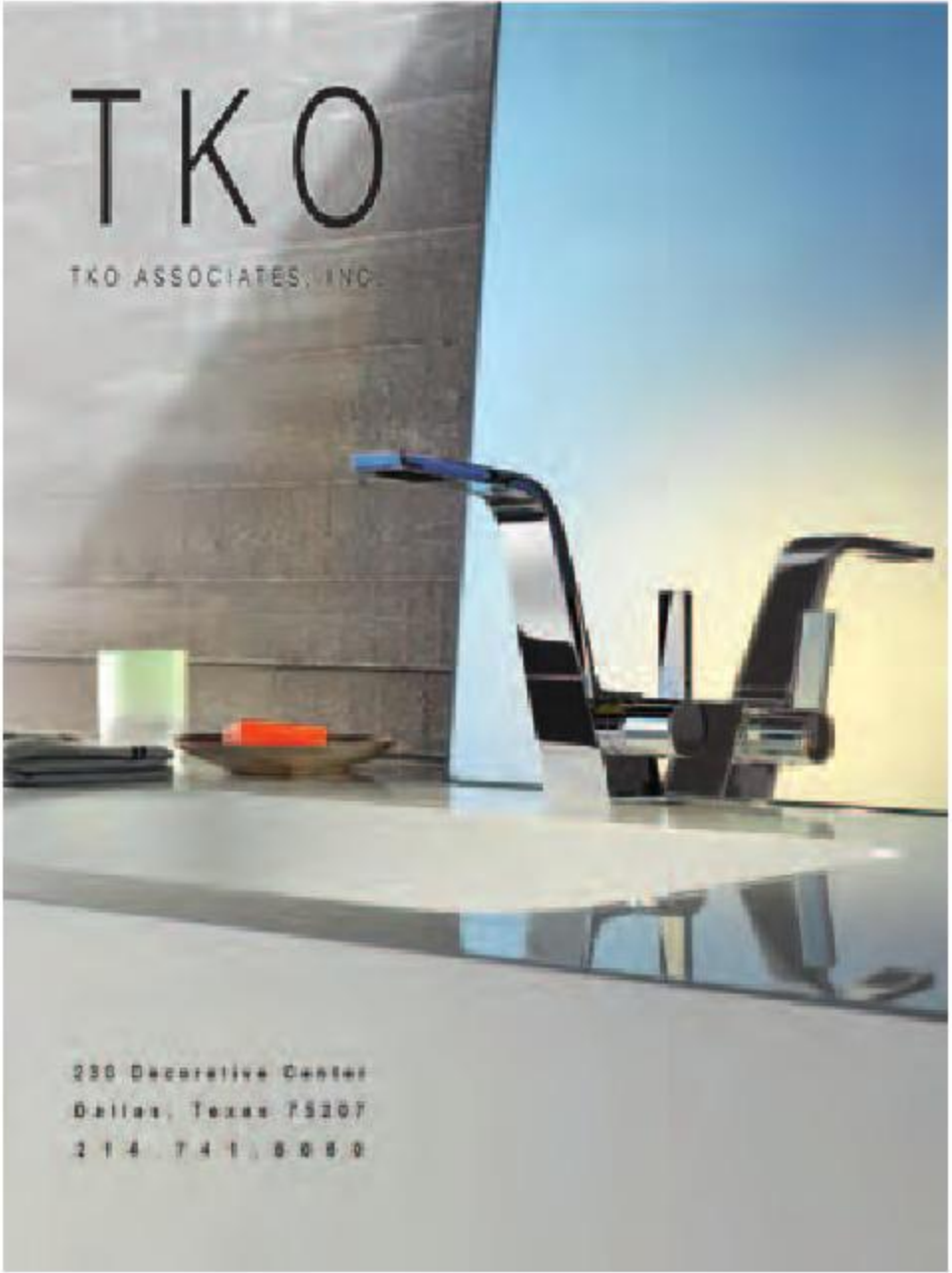
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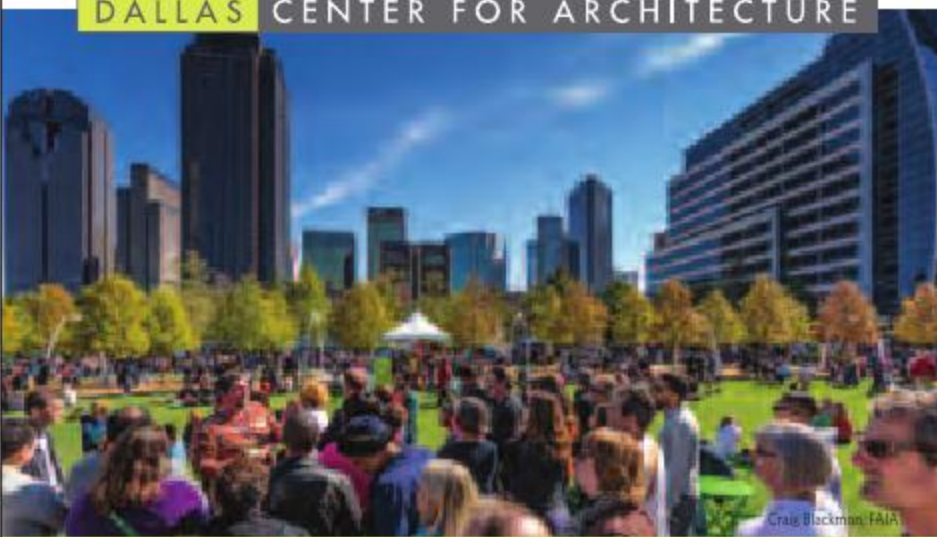
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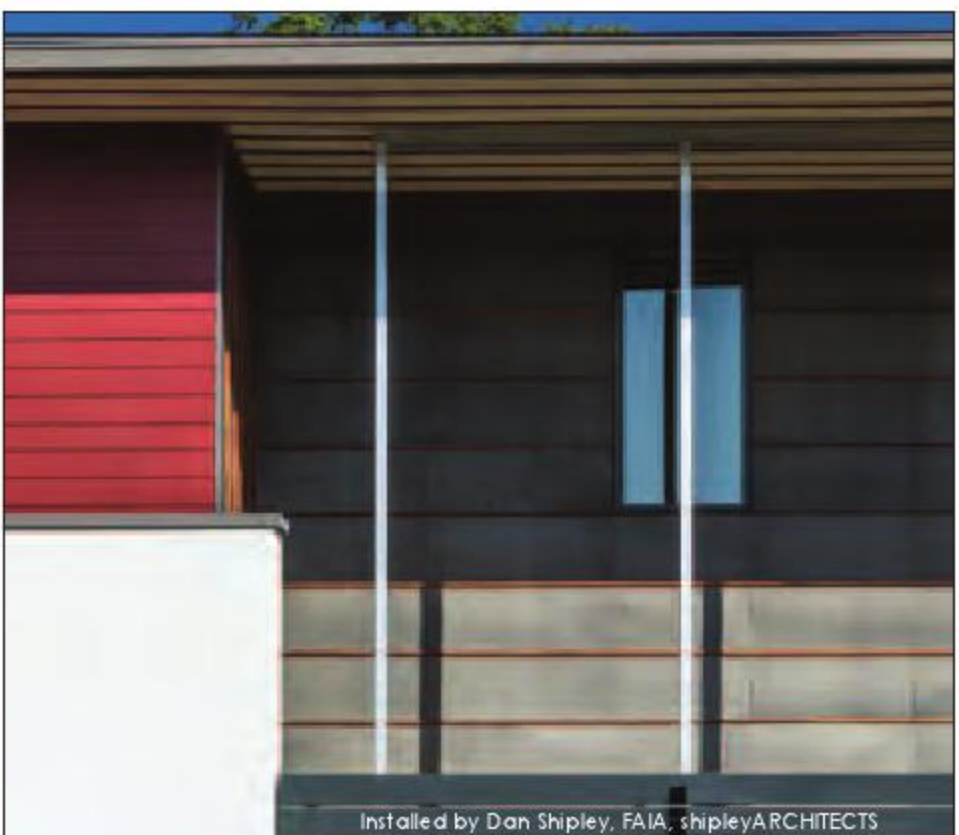


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## Scene & Heard | 2015 AIA Dallas Unbuilt Design Awards

**The Dallas chapter** of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) recently selected five designs to receive the 2015 AIA Dallas Unbuilt Design Awards, the highest recognition of works that exemplify excellence in unbuilt projects by Dallas architects.

This year's recipients were selected by a jury composed of world-renowned architects, including Jenny Wu, partner at Oyler Wu Collaborative; Elizabeth Whittaker, AIA, founder and principal at Merge Architects; and Adam Yarinsky, FAIA, principal at Architecture Research Office (ARO).

"The 2015 Unbuilt Design Award submissions highlight the incredibly diverse work being done by Dallas architects in communities around the world," says Heath May, AIA, HKS Inc., 2015 AIA Dallas Design Award Committee chair. "This year's winning projects exemplify beautiful and inspiring designs that are responsive to contemporary issues."

The Unbuilt Design Awards are part of AIA Dallas' Design Awards program that recognizes outstanding work by Dallas architects. The Unbuilt Design Awards aim to provoke a discussion about the future of design among the community and architects. ■

**1 B3 Plot Cultural Pavilion Concept, Dubai, UAE**  
Designer: RTKL Associates Inc.

**2 Grotto: An Infill Prototype, Dallas**  
Designer: NIMMO

**3 Dallas Holocaust Museum I Center for Education and Tolerance, Dallas**  
Designer: GFF

**4 Dalian Airport Terminal Competition, Dalian, China**  
Designer: Corgan

**5 Dallas Holocaust Museum Center, Dallas**  
Designer: OMNIPLAN Architects



The 34 entries included projects from around the world and featured various building structures from stadiums and pavilions to residential and branch libraries. View the complete gallery of 2015 entries and recipients, including the People's Choice Awards and Critic's Choice Awards, at [www.tiny.cc/unbuilt-design-awards](http://www.tiny.cc/unbuilt-design-awards).



## Lost & Found | Casa Mañana, Fort Worth



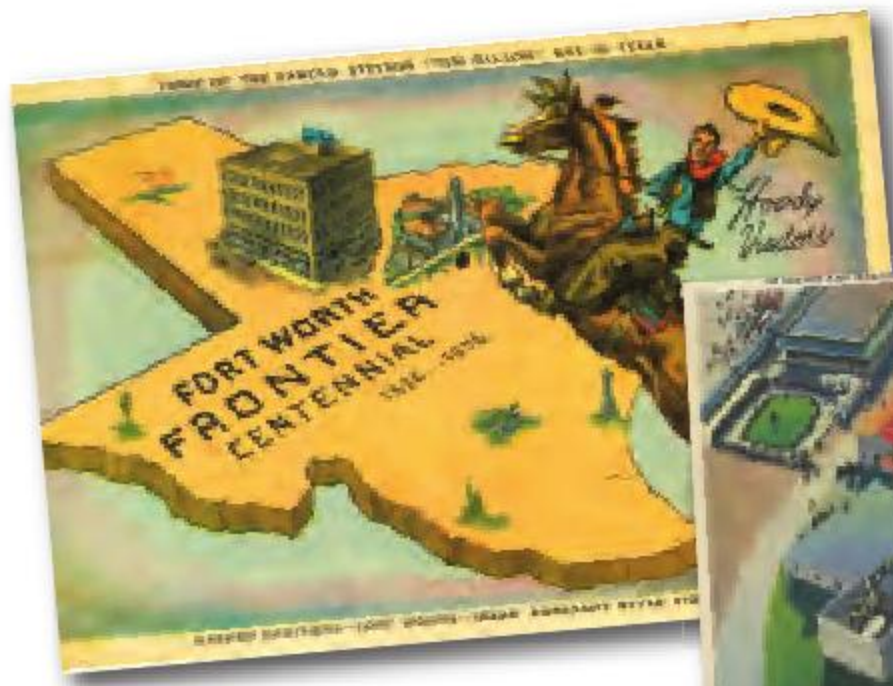
IMAGES PROVIDED BY LARRY SCHUESSLER AND CAROL ROARK

**Capitalizing on the 1936** Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas—and wishing not to be outdone by Dallas—Fort Worth opened its own fair the same year and named it the Frontier Centennial. It was touted as the “fun” fair, as opposed to Dallas’ hosting of the “educational” fair. A large sign outside of Fair Park advertised the fair as “Wild and Whoo-pee” 45 minutes west.

The Frontier Centennial was the brainchild of Amon Carter and a group of local business leaders who hired New York master showman Billy Rose to organize the fair and its many colorful activities. The centerpiece of the Centennial was Casa Mañana, a 4,000-seat amphitheater and café built to hold the “Frontier Follies.”

Fort Worth architect Joseph Pelich was hired to design the mammoth building, which contained the world’s largest revolving stage: 130 feet in diameter and weighing 17,000 tons. The stage sat in a

**ABOVE AND BOTTOM RIGHT:** Historic photos highlight the exciting venues open during the 1936 Frontier Centennial, including its crown jewel, the Casa Mañana.



**BELOW:** These postcard images promoted the Centennial and showcased the open-air Casa Mañana. At the far right is the current enclosed Casa Mañana, which opened in 1958.

130-foot by 175-foot tank of 9-foot-deep water, which gave the appearance of a floating stage. The center of the stage had a permanent theatrical set, two bandstands and dressing rooms for the performers. Mounted on the front rim of the tank were 43 pipes which shot geysers of water that created a "curtain" effect when turned on during the performance. Richard Bruckner designed the engineering for the stage system which could revolve in under two minutes and slide back and forth with the help of two 450 horsepower motors, one to propel the stage forward or back and one to rotate it.

Architecturally, the amphitheater favored the Spanish style and even had a Spanish name meaning "house of tomorrow." Over 30 blue and white Spanish-styled arches rose nearly 30 feet to the roof and stretched over 280 feet around the curve of the 320-foot façade. The arches and roof covered two levels of horseshoe boxes and a 50-foot bar, which was dubbed the world's longest. Patrons passed through the arches into the open air on the other side where 19 graduated tiers of seating spread out towards the stage at the lowest level. Each tier held tables for the customers to dine while viewing the performances. Smaller arches with double tiers framed the perimeter of the outdoor seating area and extended to the stage, which created an enclosed atmosphere.

After the centennial closed, Casa Mañana continued to operate by offering various types of performances. However, with mounting costs, sagging ticket sales, and the looming world war, it closed after the 1939 season. Unsuccessful campaigns to reopen the facility in 1940 and 1941 failed. The temporary nature of the original structure showed itself as it began to fall apart due

to lack of maintenance. In 1942, the structure was demolished, although the stage machinery remained for many years on the property. The demolition was not the end of Casa Mañana though. In 1958, a new Casa Mañana opened near the site of the old one. This time the design featured a fully enclosed geodesic dome over a theater in the round. The building was designed by A. George King and Associates with the geodesic dome developed and designed by Kaiser Aluminum Corporation.

In addition to Casa Mañana, the Frontier Centennial featured several other buildings and themed areas including The Last Frontier, Pioneer Palace, an enclosed theater for the Jumbo performance, and The Sunset Trail. There were numerous sideshow attractions at the centennial; however, none more popular or controversial than Sally Rand's Nude Ranch. The ranch building featured "Venus-like" female figures, arms outstretched, holding up the roof of the

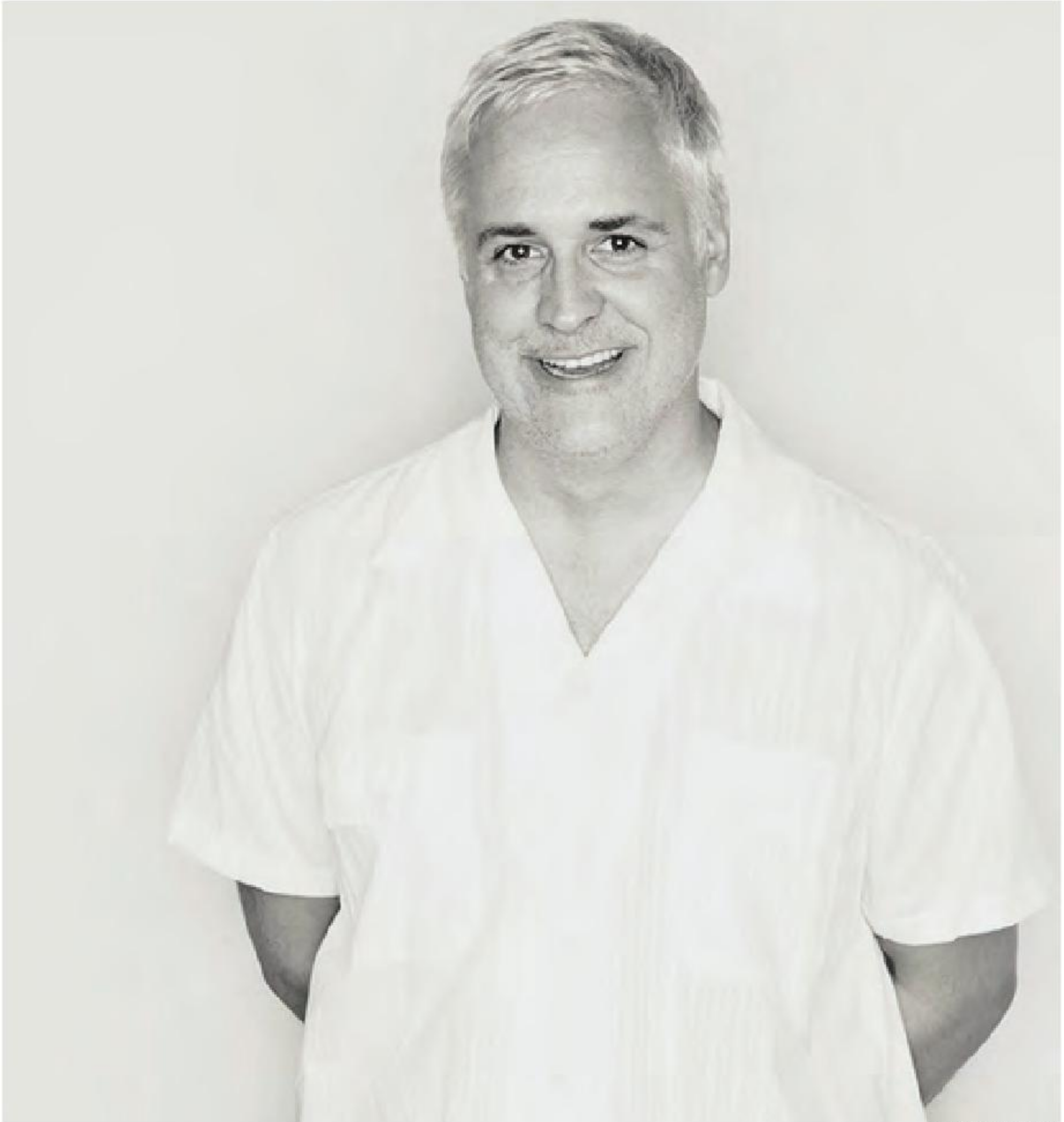
portico. The roof supported a sign made out of individual letters which spelled "Sally Rand's Dude Ranch." The "D" in "Dude" was crossed out and the letter "N" was affixed above it. Inside the ranch were bare-breasted women wearing cowboy boots, hats, and holstered six-shooters who sat on horseback, shot arrows at targets, tossed horseshoes, and more.

There has always been a rivalry between Dallas and Fort Worth and that was never more apparent than in 1936 when each city celebrated the centennial—in completely different ways. They vied for crowds during the height of the Depression when people wanted to escape the reality of their difficulties. In true Texas fashion, there was a choice: Dallas for a grand experience that celebrated the history of Texas or Fort Worth for an entertaining and risqué time which celebrated the wild frontier. ■

**David Preziosi is the executive director of Preservation Dallas.**



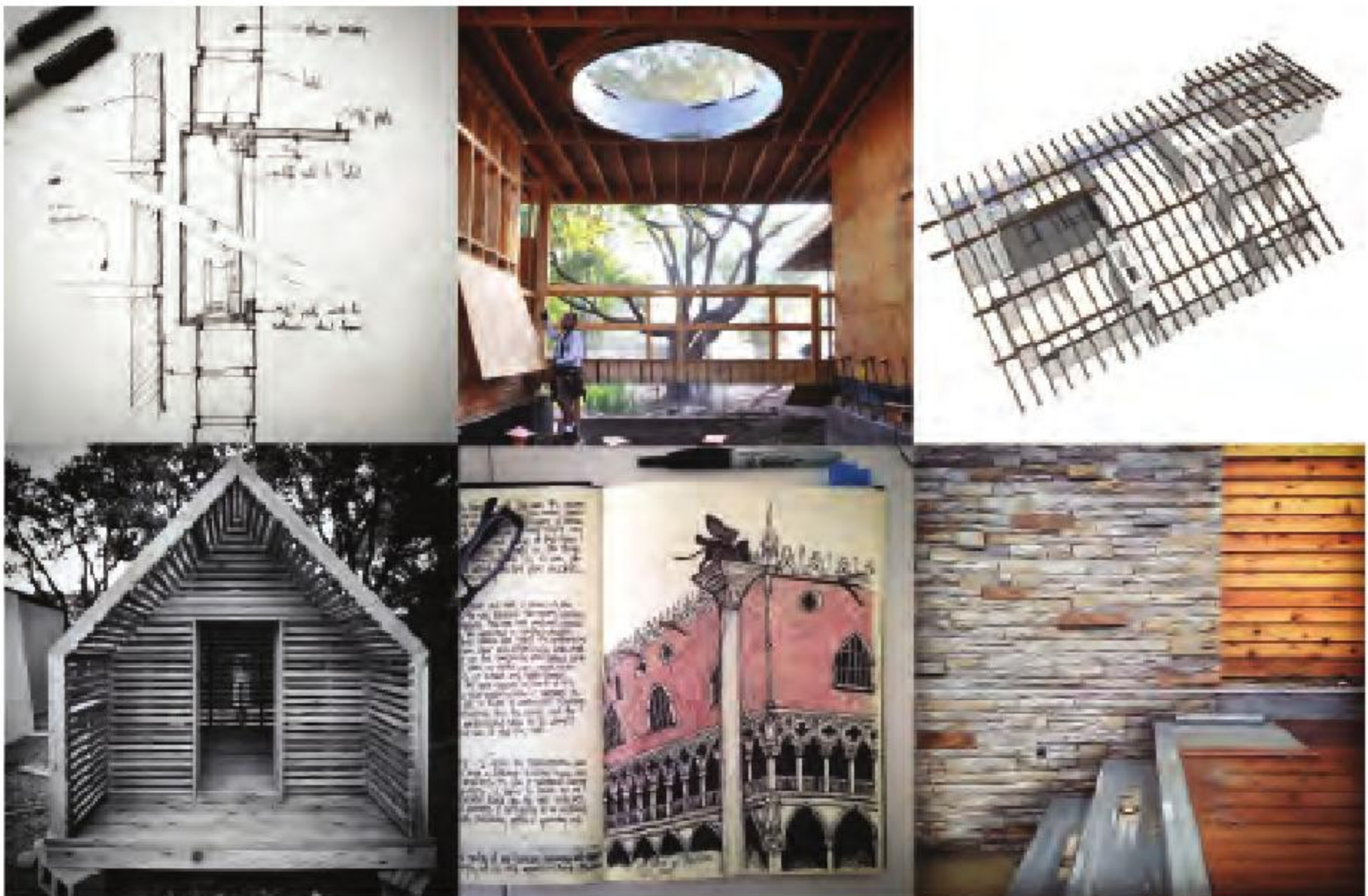
## Profile | Bob Borson, AIA



BOB BORSON, AIA

**If you are familiar with the architectural blog** "Life of an Architect," then you probably know its author and creator Bob Borson, AIA. The blog's reputation as a source for information on what it means to be an architect is narrated by Bob and characterizes his daily experiences doing what he describes as "the best job in the world." In August, Bob won the Texas Society of Architect's 2015 Award for Excellence in the Promotion of Architecture through the Media in honor of John G. Flowers, Hon. AIA. A principal at Malone Maxwell Borson Architects, Bob's wide array of project experience encompasses large-scale commercial work, prototype retail design, historic preservation, and client-based single family residential. Bob uses his blog to communicate the ins and outs of the profession using his signature mix of humor, wit, and knowledgeable insight into life as an architect. Perhaps it is this enthusiasm and transparency of the profession that has attracted over five million readers—architects, architecture enthusiasts, and those curious or considering a career in architecture—from 237 countries and territories. We sat down with Bob to discuss his reasons for creating the blog, how architects can leverage social media, and ways in which he uses his blog to help support local organizations in the community.

BELOW: Photos from Bob Borson's blog illustrate the variety of topics covered in his writing.



**YOU ARE THE AUTHOR AND CREATOR OF "LIFE OF AN ARCHITECT." WHY WAS THE BLOG CREATED?**

I started writing "Life of an Architect" in January 2010 as the result of a conversation I had with a friend of mine who specializes in the use of technology for lawyers. While having a conversation, he made a comment ... in a very cavalier way that I took to mean "Come on, Bob! Everybody knows this!" However, his comment made absolutely no sense to me at the time. I started thinking about how set in my ways I had become and started worrying that I was becoming technologically irrelevant. Everything around me was changing, but it didn't really impact the way I went about my business. I decided then that I was going to make some changes, and creating "Life of an Architect" was the first step.

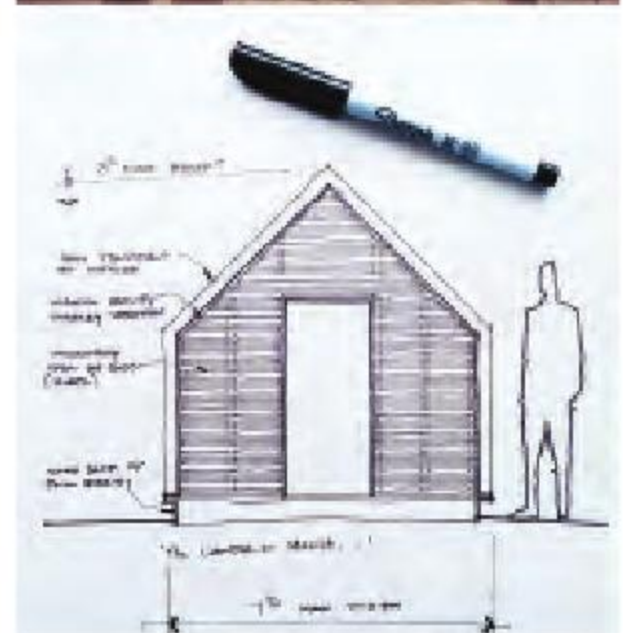
**WHAT SETS YOUR BLOG APART FROM OTHER ARCHITECTURE BLOGS? ARE THERE ANY GUIDING PRINCIPLES?**

The thing that makes my blog unique among architectural blogs is that I write in the first person and tell stories as part of

the learning process. I try to make the articles show my personality. I like to think that I am an amusing person and like to help people out if I can offer value. The combination of those two attributes has made my site approachable to people with all sorts of different levels of architectural knowledge. I don't talk down to the people who are reading my articles and I try to avoid industry jargon as much as possible. As a result, there are people from all ages and demographics who frequent my blog regularly and that is something I find pretty amazing and humbling.

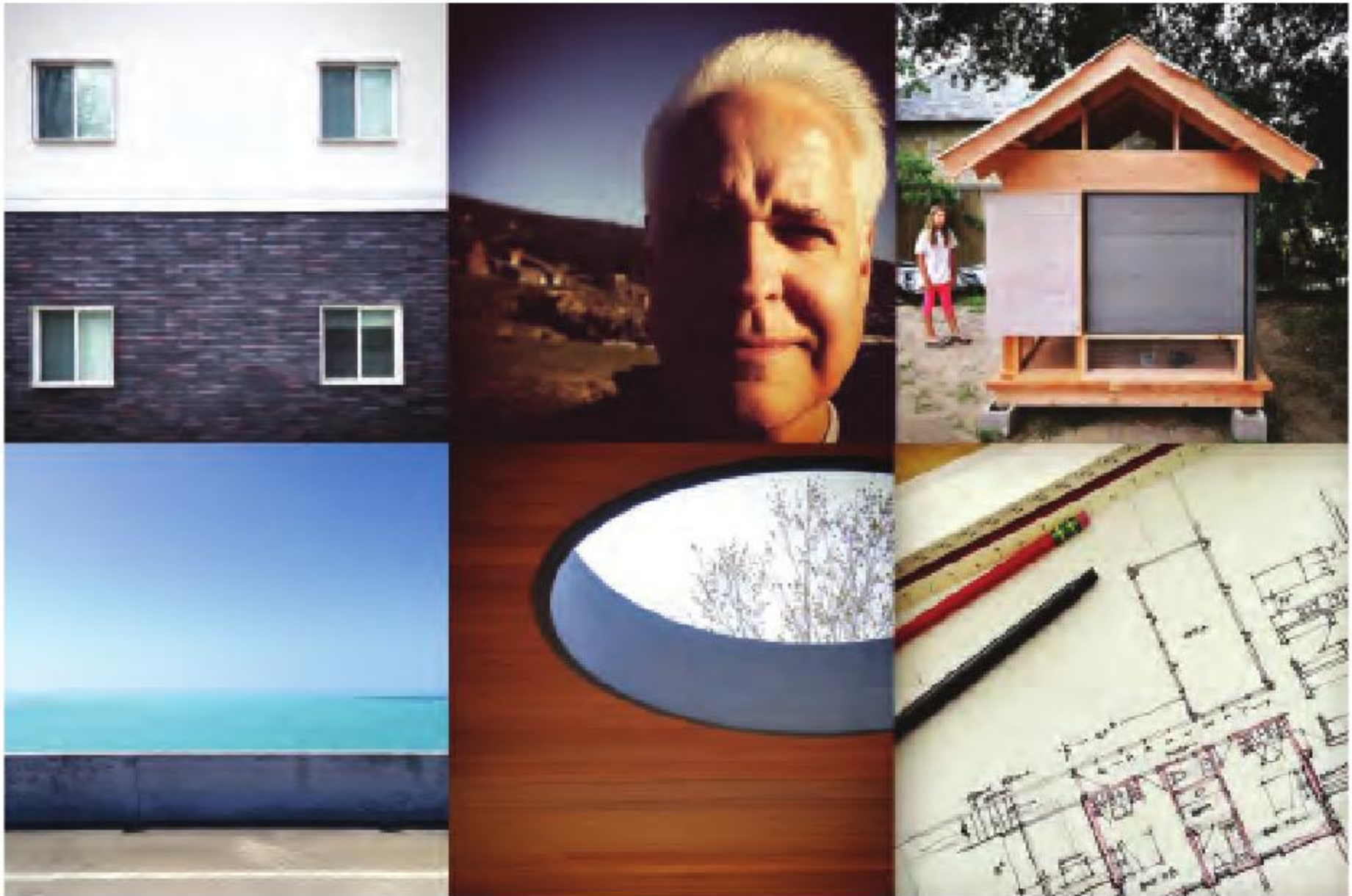
**AS AN ARCHITECT, DO YOU FIND THAT YOU HAVE OBLIGATIONS TO THE CITY, COMMUNITY, AND GENERAL POPULATION? HOW DO YOU DEFINE THIS ON "LIFE OF AN ARCHITECT"?**

I generally stay neutral on this topic because the answer is subjective, depending on who is asking or answering the question. I think my role—and the role that my site plays in a larger sense—is not unique to me being an architect. My task as a human is to make things better; I just happen to do it through architecture.



PHOTOS BY BOB BORSON, AIA

**BELOW:** Borson's "personal" professional life is on display through photos used in his "Life of an Architect" blog.



PHOTOS BY BOB BORSON, AIA

**SPARE TIME?**

... Turning on the TV and lying on the couch...

**READING?**

...Books that involve dragons [for his daughter] ... I tend to prefer autobiographies...

**FAVORITE VACATION SPOT?**

... I am currently writing a blog on the topic...

**YOU HAVE USED THE POPULARITY OF YOUR BLOG FOR CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS HERE IN DALLAS. HOW HAS SOCIAL MEDIA ALLOWED YOU TO HELP CASA (COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES) AND BRING ATTENTION TO THEIR CAUSE?**

This year, Dallas CASA will be celebrating the 20th year of their Parade of Playhouses event. I have designed playhouses for them in the past and always find it completely rewarding. Using "Life of an Architect" as a digital platform to garner attention, I decided to start a playhouse design competition on my site. I have readers from every single inhabited place on the planet and, with a simple request, I was able to get amazing

projects designed and submitted from all over the world. Over the past four years, I have received over 1,300 entries from 59 different countries.

**ARE THERE OTHER TYPES OF BLOGS YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PURSUING BESIDES "LIFE OF AN ARCHITECT"?**

No. Writing a blog—at least how I write it—takes up an amazing amount of my time. There are very few things that I feel passionately enough about to put in the same amount of work it takes to blog. In addition to writing the articles, I use only my own photographs and prepare all my own graphics, and this level of creative work eats up most of the free time I am willing to give. The other consideration that I was not prepared for was what happens when you actually achieve some level of success when writing a blog. I spend far more time responding to comments and emails than I do preparing content for the site.

**YOU HAVE INVESTED MUCH TIME AND LABOR INTO "LIFE OF AN ARCHITECT." WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MOST REWARDING ASPECTS OF THIS?**

While it has surprisingly turned out to benefit me professionally, the best is when

you receive an email from someone who expresses gratitude for the site and shares how his or her life has been improved as a result. I initially started "Life of an Architect" simply as an exercise to learn something new and it has turned into a resource for people all over the world. I've had strangers recognize me and ask to have their pictures taken with me—something that I find completely shocking. People have introduced themselves and broken down into tears as they start talking about my site and the role it has played in some aspect of their lives. Their gratitude has affected me in a profound manner and has impacted my life in a way that would have been impossible to imagine five years ago. ■

Interview by Ezra Loh, Assoc. AIA, with Corgan.

Bob's interview continues online to explore how his blog readers help determine his chosen topics, why he aims for non-architect readers, and what he does in his spare time.  
[www.aiadallas.org/columns/borson](http://www.aiadallas.org/columns/borson)

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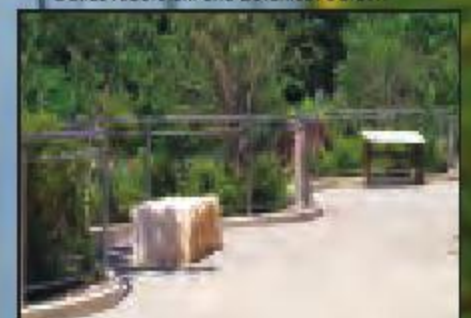


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## In Context | Dallas City Hall

Continued from page 9



THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

**I.M. Pei's Dallas City Hall**, completed in 1977, is an imposing Modernist monument of cantilevered buff concrete, a color chosen to resemble Texas' earth tones. The structure was awarded the Texas Society of Architects' 2015 25-Year Award in August.

The inverted pyramid design is a function of the space requirements of the building. Pei devoted the main second level to public services so citizens could come to conduct business free of the clutter and bustle of offices. Called the Great Court, this floor is notable for its dramatic view to the vaulted ceiling and skylights nearly 100 feet above. The expanding upper stories house the city's numerous civic offices.

The building slopes at a 34-degree angle, creating an inclined façade that reaches toward downtown. Three giant cylindrical pillars appear to support the structure, although they do not actually bear the load of the building. Pei added the pillars, which contain the stairwells, after then-mayor Erik Jonsson worried that the original design would scare people because it looked like it would fall over. The cantilevered floors are, instead, supported by seven pairs of 18-inch bearing walls that are post-tensioned vertically and match the slope of the façade.

The design provides shade and protection from the weather at the base of the building. Pei also persuaded the city to dedicate two full blocks to a park and plaza that acts as a front yard to City Hall. The plaza features a 180-foot fountain with red floating sculptures by Marta Pan, as well as a large Henry Moore sculpture called *The Dallas Piece*.

Dewberry recently completed a renovation of the first floor entrance lobby, replacing the faulty escalators with a new grand stair to the Great Court. The renovation also included a new security vestibule and exhibition space on the ground floor. ■

Contributed by Cindy Smith, Assoc. AIA, with Gensler.

## Critique | Professionals Share Perceptions of Publications



### On Becoming an Architect

**This memoir by Frank Welch, FAIA** is a very personal journey, sprinkled with gems of universal truth. He reminds us eloquently that accomplishments in life are appreciated most fully upon reflection—a puzzle that looks much easier after several pieces are joined together.

Throughout this book, Frank shares with us a cherished gumbo of experience, talent, and time that made this great architect. As with attempting to replicate a great chef's meal, knowing the ingredients is only a start. Frank's recipe begins with Sherman, TX; then he adds in the army, Texas A&M, Paris, love, marriage, children, photography, drawing, (scotch?), friendship, and a generous helping of

encounters with several giants of Modernism. On top he sprinkles sheer luck as well.

"So much in my life has depended upon friendship and good luck," he writes. "But to develop, an architect also needs a client who will inspire and trust him, who will give him the opportunity to show what he can build."

This memoir published by Texas Christian University Press is full of inspiration. "The opportunities in a lifetime often emerge quietly, inauspiciously," he states. "There is no fanfare. No one announces, 'This is your chance! Make the most of it!'"

Frank inspires us to be ready for our own unique chances, to grab hold of them. We can all learn so much from him. ■

**Reviewed by Lisa Lamkin, AIA, principal with BRW Architects**



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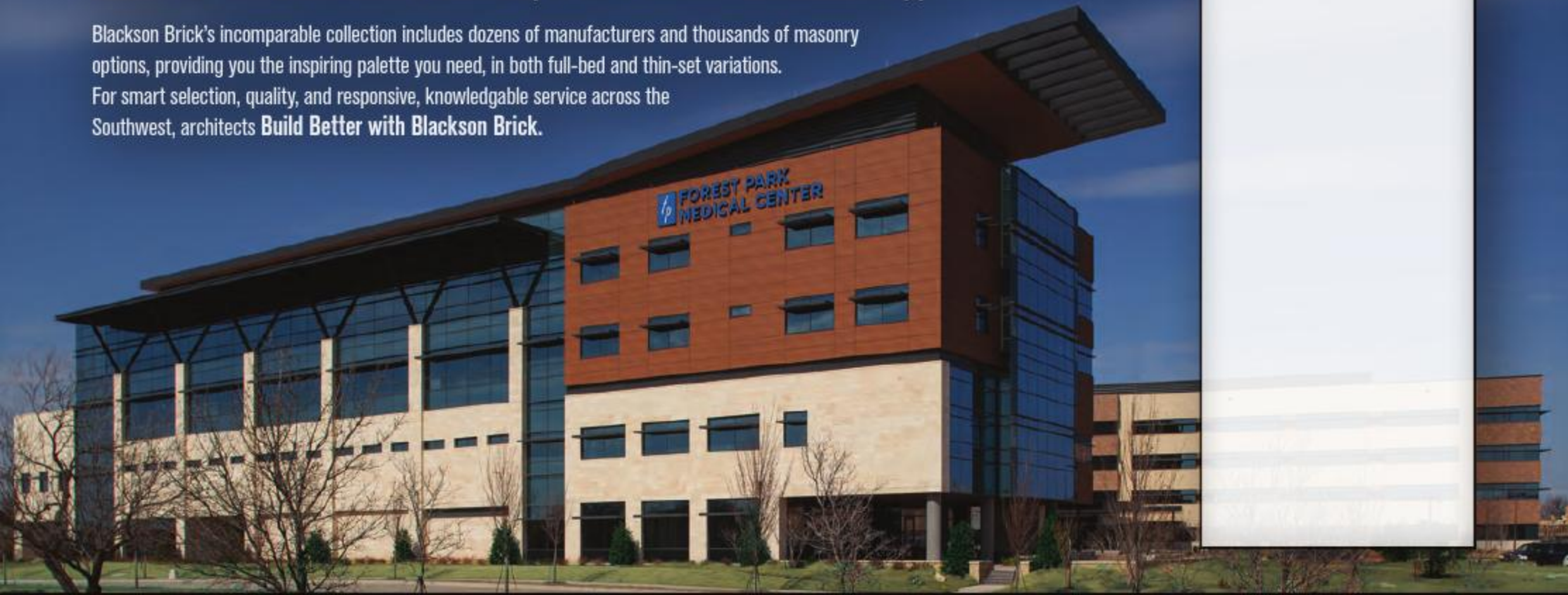
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*"We worked with our client to create forms defined by function and animated by warm, rich stone and brick textures, layers, and patterns. The dominant limestone facade has a running bond that mimics ripples in the adjacent river. Complementary blends of Roman brick carry on that feeling of movement and activity and tie together the pieces of this new campus. We loved working with Blackson Brick developing this palette; their representatives had great solutions for every challenge and opportunity we presented them. They were real partners for success over a tight 14 months of design and construction."*

— Justin Parscale, AIA, Associate Principal, Perkins+Will, Dallas

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