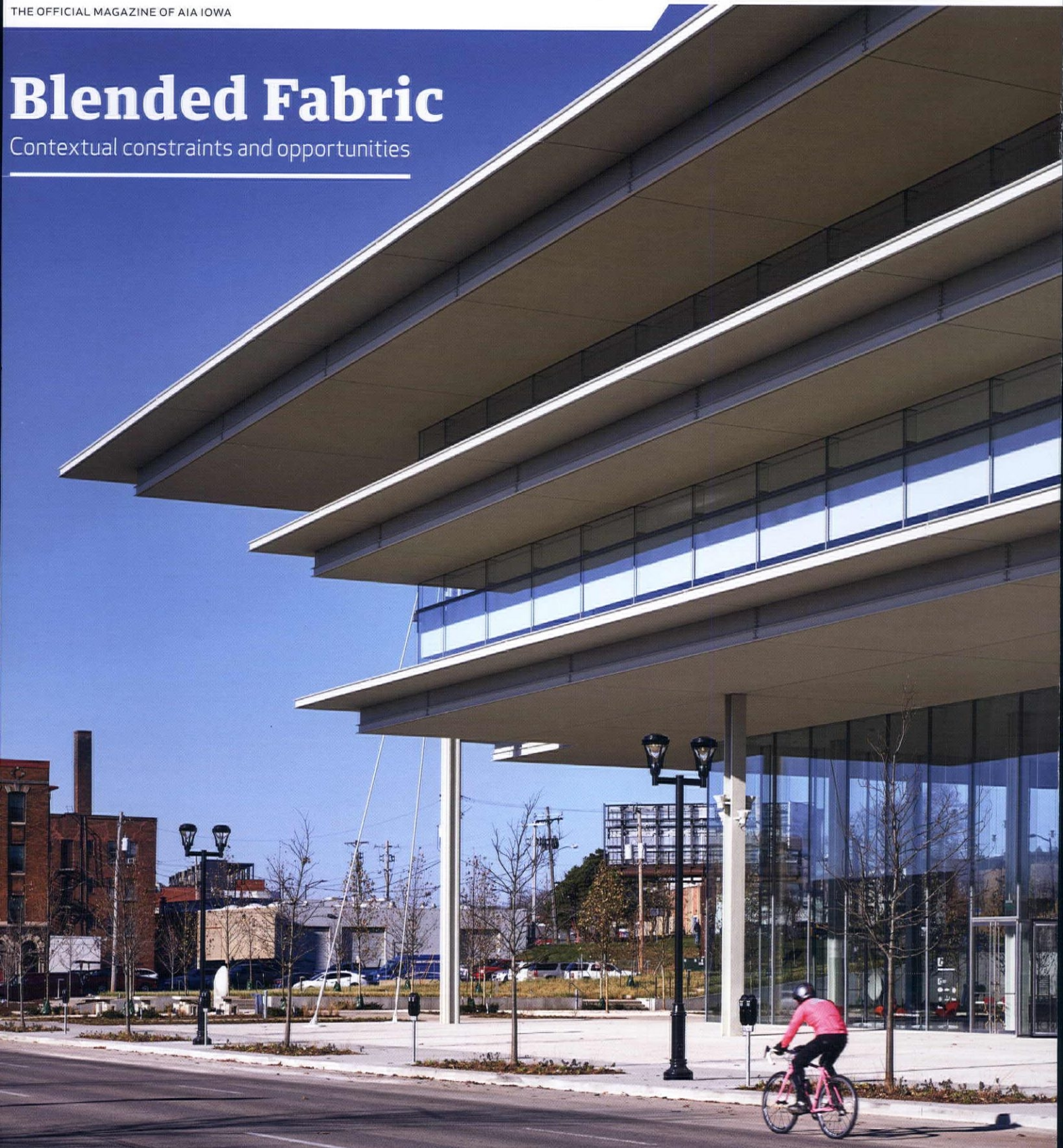


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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF AIA IOWA

Blended Fabric

Contextual constraints and opportunities



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editor's letter



Welcome!

In the summer issue titled Blended Fabric, we showcase examples of architecture that respond to diverse contextual restraints and requirements, reflecting the physical, social, and economic circumstances in which they reside. Whether it be the striking new architectural icon of downtown Des Moines, a pop-up shop making waves in Iowa City, or a building cantilevering over a steep site, each of the projects reframe and reflect their context, adding value to the communities they sit within. With a nod to the past and a focus on the future, these notable projects elevate the experience of our built environment through an elegantly blended fabric of architecture, people, and place.

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Editor, Iowa Architect

iaarchitect

Editor Anna Squier, AIA

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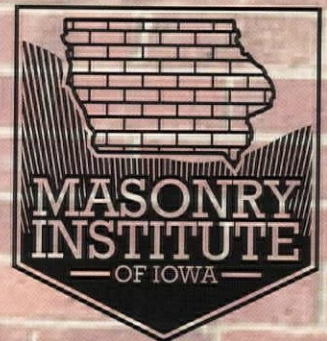
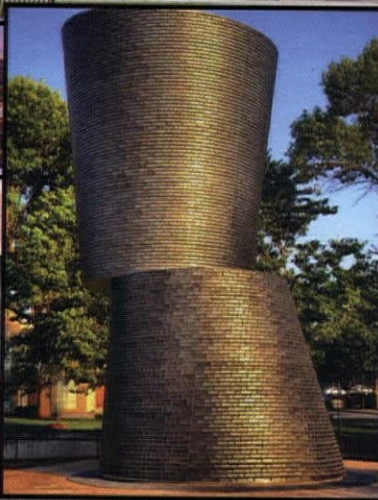
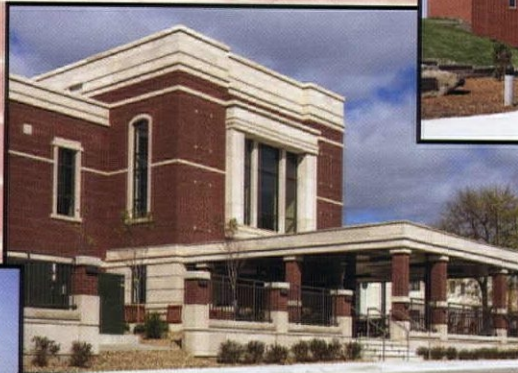
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ON THE COVER

Krause Gateway Center, p. 26



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Some buildings are timeless.

The State Historical Society of Iowa, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, congratulates the **2019 Preservation of Merit Awards** projects for their role in enhancing communities through historic preservation across Iowa.



The State Historic Preservation Office recognizes the following Historic Tax Credit Projects:

1. William H. Meek House, Des Moines
2. John Deere C-2 Building, Waterloo
3. IOOF-Erickson Buildings, Northwood
4. Cedar Rapids Milk Condensing Company

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Giving Back

AIA Iowa's Disaster Assistance Committee looks ahead to changes that could promise program growth and protection

WORDS: LEAH WALTERS

AIA Iowa's Disaster Assistance Program equips architects with the skills to prepare for and respond to disasters. Effectually, this program assembles a network of professionals as a team – the AIA Iowa Disaster Assistance Program Team – through the Chapter, readying volunteers with skills to aid in a post-disaster emergency.

The AIA Iowa Disaster Assistance Committee, led by co-chairs Tom Hurd, AIA, and Edd Soenke, AIA, previously lent volunteer aid to the state through the Iowa Department of Public Service. The program is currently in the final stages of transitioning to partner with another state agency.

Volunteers, licensed architects, and engineers must annually complete training that covers the processes, building safety evaluations, and reporting requirements in compliance with AIA Iowa's Disaster Assistance Program. Once completed, the individuals on the team are able to offer their assistance to the State of Iowa when called upon, a deed new legislation has put in place.

The 2019 Volunteer Immunity in Disaster Response bill was recently adopted into Iowa law by Governor Reynolds. "The Disaster Immunity bill is intended to give licensed architects and engineers immunity from lawsuits while volunteering during a state-declared disaster," says Hurd.

Beyond supporting Good Samaritan legislation and offering volunteer opportunities, Hurd says the committee is continually evolving and serving as a learning mechanism that teaches resilience as much as reaction – architects and engineers can further understand how to better prepare for disaster, design buildings for minimal damage, and enable quicker recovery. He hopes that by applying these lessons in the training program, businesses and homes in the future won't just "get back to normal, they can be better than before."



In the aftermath of a disaster, members of the Disaster Assistance Committee are called in to evaluate buildings for safety, structure, life, health, and welfare.



OPEN BOOK NOOKS

From overlooked to eye-catching

WORDS : HALEY SMITH IMAGES : TREVOR TOY

In the fall of 2015, Iowa State University (ISU) was one of three schools invited to participate in a student competition for the design of a new outdoor public space at the Winterset Public Library. Where some merely saw an alley lined with bushes and trash cans, a select group of students in the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Design through the Master of Architecture programs at ISU saw an opportunity. Their design, Open Book Nooks, centered around connecting the library with the George Washington Carver Memorial Park by providing seating and shade structures.

It can be “difficult to contribute to a built environment,” says Digital Design Communications Professor Leslie Forehand. “Many challenges were faced along the way, such as weather, material delays or cost adjustments, and this makes the project more miraculous and fulfilling.”

When starting the project, Forehand questioned how her single-semester students would complete something that would end up taking three years. The answer was to spread out the work over three courses: schematic design, design development, and construction development and fabrication.

From start to finish, the ultimate goal of Open Book Nooks was to design a space that minimized the appearance of the concrete pathway by incorporating natural materials into the nook’s structural design, and adding landscaping that would enhance the space without blocking off Memorial Park.

“It was wonderful seeing an idea of a student in one class be developed further by a new group of students with a different charge,” says Forehand. “As with all courses, I learned a lot from the students and their research.”



Project contributors

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Trevor Toy
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Emma VanZante

*AIA Iowa Student Affiliate Members

Top: Engraved on the back of the bench is the history of George Washington Carver Memorial Park. **Bottom:** The overhang of the Open Book Nooks provide shading for readers to enjoy their new books.



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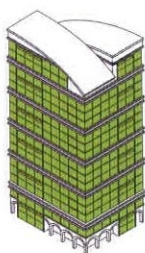


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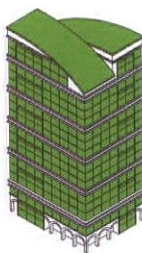
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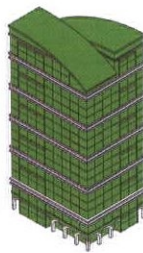
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People's Choice Award

Annual award program invites public to vote on Iowa's architecture

The American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter (AIA Iowa) is pleased to announce the winners of the third annual People's Choice Award. Throughout the month of April, the public had the opportunity to vote for architecture built by Iowa's architects. This year, nearly 544,000 votes were counted. All winning projects can be found on IowaArchitecture.org. AIA Iowa would like to extend our thanks to all who participated, and encourage you to vote again next year.

1ST PLACE

**SPENCER HIGH SCHOOL
FINE ARTS CENTER ADDITION**

ARCHITECT: CMBA ARCHITECTS
LOCATION: SPENCER, IOWA



2ND PLACE

**LINN-MAR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
HIGH SCHOOL ADDITION AND RENOVATION**

ARCHITECT: DLR GROUP
LOCATION: MARION, IOWA





3RD PLACE

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SCHINDLER EDUCATION CENTER**

ARCHITECT : DLR GROUP
LOCATION : CEDAR FALLS, IOWA



4TH PLACE

**YALI REGIONAL LEADERSHIP
CENTER - EAST AFRICA**

ARCHITECT : DLR GROUP
LOCATION : NAIROBI, KENYA



5TH PLACE

**MMCRU ROYALS INDUSTRIAL
TECHNOLOGY ADDITION**

ARCHITECT : CMBA ARCHITECTS
LOCATION : MARCUS, IOWA

I collected

AIA Iowa Impact Awards

Inaugural awards celebrate individual and firm members' impactful designs

More than 150 people joined together at this year's American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter's (AIA Iowa) Annual Spring Conference to honor the recipients of the inaugural AIA Iowa Impact Awards. This new awards program celebrates architects, designers, and other collaborators of an architectural project specifically designed to directly benefit social, humanitarian, community or environmental causes. AIA Iowa Impact Awards were awarded in the categories of Honor, Merit, and Honorable Mention. Respected professionals from the architectural community, outside the state of Iowa, acted as the jury. We invite you to learn more about these award-winning projects by visiting www.IowaArchitecture.org.

MEET THE JUDGES



SARAH JACOBSON, AIA
LAMAR JOHNSON
COLLABORATIVE



TAYLOR HOLLOWAY,
ASSOC. AIA
PUBLIC DESIGN
AGENCY



KATHERINE
DARNSTADT, AIA
LATENT DESIGN



Cross Park Place

AIA IOWA IMPACT AWARD, HONOR
ARCHITECT: NEUMANN MONSON ARCHITECTS
LOCATION: IOWA CITY, IOWA

Neumann Monson received an award for the design of Cross Park Place located in Iowa City, Iowa. The jury commented: "The jury felt across the board this project hits the criteria of the impact award and great architecture. The research-based project provided a very clear presentation, compelling macro and micro scale of information and measurable criteria when discussing how cost and budget came together to provide a housing solution for the chronically homeless. Situated in the center with easy access to bus and bike trails, this project is beautifully detailed and makes great use of humble materials and provides its users the respect they deserve."





Freedom Blend Coffee

AIA IOWA IMPACT AWARD, MERIT

ARCHITECT : ETHOS DESIGN GROUP

LOCATION : DES MOINES, IOWA

Ethos Design Group received an award for Freedom Blend Coffee located in Des Moines, Iowa. The jury commented: "This project had a difficult program [to] achieve in any space and managed to create something truly impactful out of an old car wash. The interior details and carpentry work were impressive and well executed. Overall, the entire ecosystem the program created from workforce training to social services is truly impactful."

Fort Des Moines

AIA IOWA IMPACT AWARD, MERIT

ARCHITECT : NEUMANN MONSON ARCHITECTS

LOCATION : DES MOINES, IOWA

Neumann Monson Architects received an award for the design of Fort Des Moines located in Des Moines, Iowa. The jury commented: "At first glance in looking at this project the jury did not realize the project contained affordable housing, which often is unintentionally recognizable from 100 feet away. Bringing affordable housing online via adaptive reuse of historic structures maintains the importance to the community and provides much needed housing to the community."



A Monumental Journey

AIA IOWA IMPACT AWARD, HONORABLE MENTION

ARCHITECT : SUBSTANCE

LOCATION : DES MOINES, IOWA

Substance received an award for Capturing an Artist's Vision: A Monumental Journey located in Des Moines, Iowa. The jury commented: "The beauty and details for this project encourage the viewer to pause and reflect on an underrepresented moment of history. The sculpture, created as a collaboration between artist, architect, and mason is a technical achievement that highlights the design process and the impact pioneering African American attorneys had on the nation in the early 1900s."

I collected

Years of Membership

Celebrating and thanking the long-term members of
the American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter

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years

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Member Emeritus
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Scott E. Worth, AIA
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Martin L. Miller, AIA
Paul Nichols, AIA
Todd O'Brien, AIA



25 Years (pictured)

Danielle Hermann, AIA
Brian W. Lindgren, AIA
Jessica Reinert, Hon. AIA Iowa, Executive Director

35
years

Jeffrey W. Anderzhon, FAIA
James Grundmeier, AIA



35 Years (pictured)

Danielle Hermann, AIA
Jeffrey W. Anderzhon, FAIA
Jessica Reinert, Hon. AIA Iowa, Executive Director

40
years

Roger Hadley, AIA
Robert J. Mathieu, AIA
Member Emeritus
Barney A. Bishop, AIA
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Edward Kyker, AIA
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Kevin Monson, AIA
Rodney R. Nelson, AIA
Member Emeritus
James A. Novak, AIA
Max N. Schmidt, AIA
Member Emeritus



40 Years (pictured)

Danielle Hermann, AIA
Robert J. Mathieu, AIA Member Emeritus
Roger Hadley, AIA
Jessica Reinert, Hon. AIA Iowa, Executive Director

45
years

Thomas Baldwin, AIA
Member Emeritus
Geoffrey Grimes, AIA
Member Emeritus



50 Years (pictured)

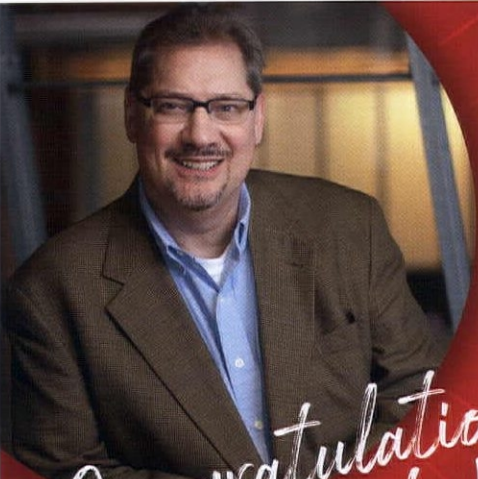
Danielle Hermann, AIA
William Nowysz, AIA Member Emeritus
Jessica Reinert, Hon. AIA Iowa, Executive Director

50
years

William Nowysz, AIA
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Richard H. Kruse, AIA
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60
years

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on the boards

Projects
In Progress

Iowa State University Sports Performance Center



Ames, Iowa
substance

The design of the new Iowa State University Sports Performance Center blends into the existing context and programmatic uses. The plaza and concourse will replace an outmoded complex and create a more seamless north entry into Jack Trice Stadium, as well as being opportune space for exterior game-day festivities. The program includes an expansion of football training and relocation of Olympic sports training spaces, an academic center, and nutrition and dining facilities for all athletes.

Waterloo Arts Block

Designed with riverfront views in mind, the new Waterloo Arts Block blends natural beauty with an artistic aesthetic while incorporating the building into the existing River Loop neighborhood. The exterior of the building block is sculpted to capture views and relate to the surrounding cultural buildings. Not only does the carved exterior help create visual interest, but it also maximizes the number of riverfront units available. While the existing site has limited connectivity to the street due to the height of the existing raised plaza, the Arts Block will help merge the two spaces. To create an active first floor, the building will link to both the street plane and plaza near the amphitheater. The Arts Block also offers the opportunity to encourage a healthy lifestyle with both bike storage and access to nearby trails.



Waterloo, Iowa
Slingshot



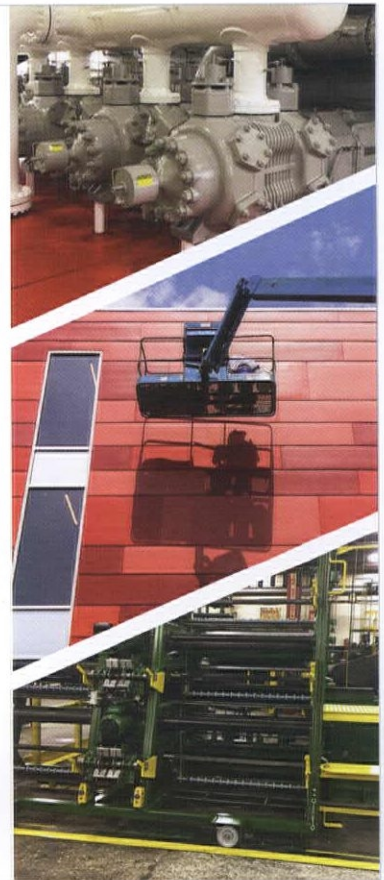
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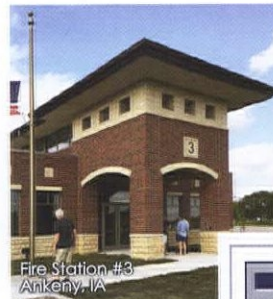
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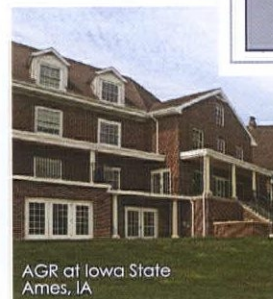
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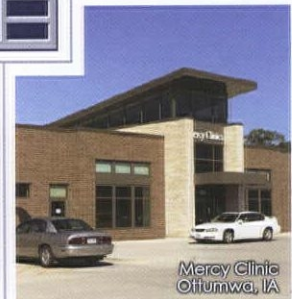
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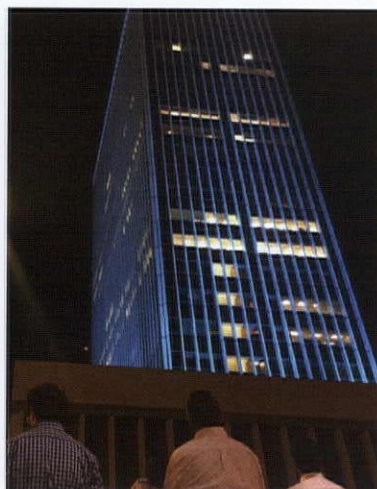
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IOWA ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION TURNS 30

Celebrating community enhancement through architecture

WORDS: CLAUDIA CACKLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE IOWA ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION IMAGES: COURTESY OF THE IOWA ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION



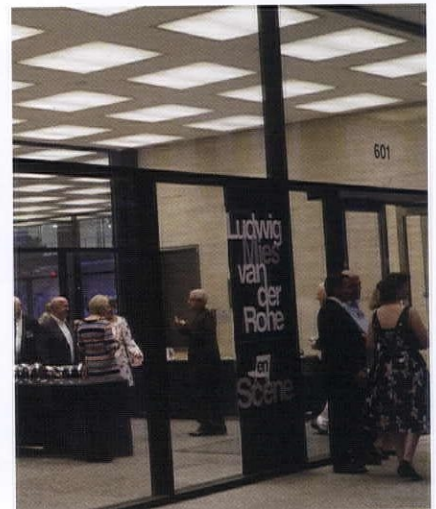
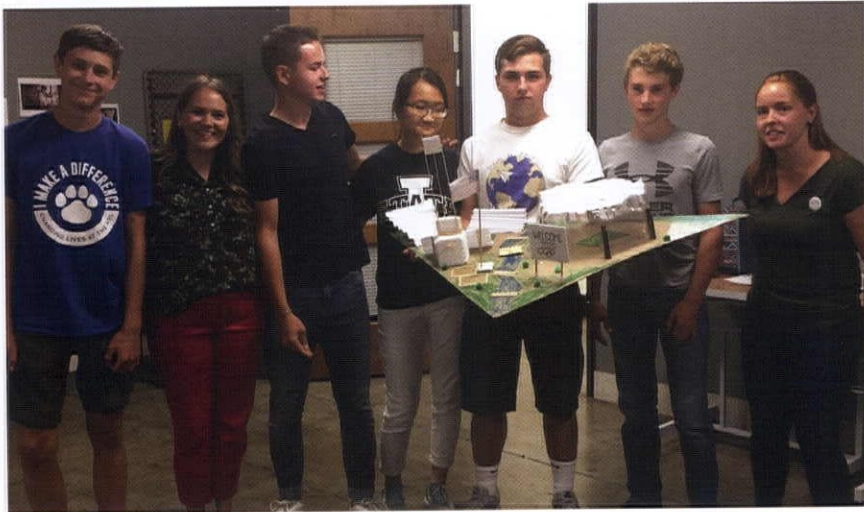
This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Iowa Architectural Foundation (IAF). Founded by a group of architects interested in funding the Architecture in the Schools program, the IAF held its first meeting in 1988 and was officially recognized as a non-profit in 1989. The IAF's goal was to establish a public foundation, separate from the American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter, with a board representing the public, architects, and allied professionals.

Over the course of the past 30 years, the IAF has reached almost every corner of the state. More than 7,000 people have participated in architecture walking tours through the Architecture in the Schools and Architecture in the Community programs, and 30 communities have participated in the Community Design Program.

IAF's past achievements are considerable. Most noteworthy, the foundation has sponsored multiple television programs – such as the “Skyscraper” series and David McCauley’s “Pyramid, Castle, Cathedral” series on IPTV – and partnered with AIA Iowa to publish “A Century of Iowa Architecture” in 2004.

We foresee a future filled with even more impact. IAF is offering an entire year of events branded for the 30th anniversary, including the Encore IAF30 Gala; Defining Modern: Masters of Mid-Century Furniture and Design, a collaboration with Saxton, Knoll, and Drake University; Eat. Drink. Architecture., an annual pub crawl and architectural walking tour fundraiser in Des Moines; and an architectural motor coach tour to Dubuque.

IAF receives philanthropic support from architectural firms, foundations, businesses, and individuals who believe in the importance of building an understanding of this most public art. In addition to contributions, IAF holds



several fundraising events each year, made possible by generous sponsors. It also earns revenue through programming.

Equally important is the large group of passionate volunteers who inspire an appreciation for architecture and design through education and outreach. Without their extraordinary commitment, none of this would be possible. IAF invites architectural professionals and enthusiasts to get involved by contacting director@iowaarchfoundation.org or visiting iowaarchfoundation.org for more information.

Opposite (clockwise): East Village Walking Tour, Des Moines; Eat. Drink. Architecture. Cedar Rapids; YPC Tour, Des Moines
Above (clockwise): IAF volunteers at the Oskaloosa Mid-Century Modern Home Tour; Mies en Scene Event; Kum & Go Corporate Walking Tour; Adventures in Architecture Camp with leaders Eli Goll, Assoc. AIA, and Holly Pohlmeier, Assoc. AIA





THINKING FOR THE FUTURE, WITH A NOD TO THE PAST

To Jake Christensen, responsible design is more than a cool building, it's about crafting a legacy

WORDS: JULIA DELLITT

IMAGES: COURTESY OF JAKE CHRISTENSEN

When Jake Christensen first started his real estate development firm, he didn't exactly know what the work would entail – but true to form, he decided to figure it out. Sixteen years later, Christensen Development is alive and well, and Christensen thrives as a leader in Des Moines, continually pushing the evolution of downtown landscapes toward thoughtful, responsible design.

"In the early 2000s, some of my peers said I was crazy to think about focusing on downtown Des Moines," says Christensen. "They said, 'downtown is empty after five o'clock, the suburbs are where everything is at.' But that wasn't nearly as interesting to me."

One of his first initiatives? Parking ramps in mixed-use development, with a goal of jump-starting the downtown housing market. For Christensen, every single building – commercial to multi-family units to surface parking lots – directly impacts both the immediate street life of the surrounding neighborhood and long-term economic success for all involved. He applies a similar diligence to every single project within his scope, making sure each reflects careful urban design, public engagement input, and collaboration with city staff and architectural design teams.

"Jake absolutely works toward the big-picture view," says Matthew Anderson, the Deputy City Manager of the City of Des Moines. "For example, we once had a verbal agreement for him to build the Raygun building where the AC Hotel currently sits. When we realized the AC wouldn't fit on the block to the east, I asked Jake

if he could switch blocks. It wasn't in his best interests to swap, and he could have fought that idea, but he realized it was in the best interest of the East Village."

That's intentional. Christensen cares deeply about how development decisions impact existing areas, whether he's reacting to decades-old design mistakes or envisioning future infrastructure needs.

"For example, our downtown skywalks were necessary in the '70s and '80s, but now present a challenge, as we basically have a second-level sidewalk and a main-level sidewalk – and neither are as good as they should be," Christensen says. "On the other hand,





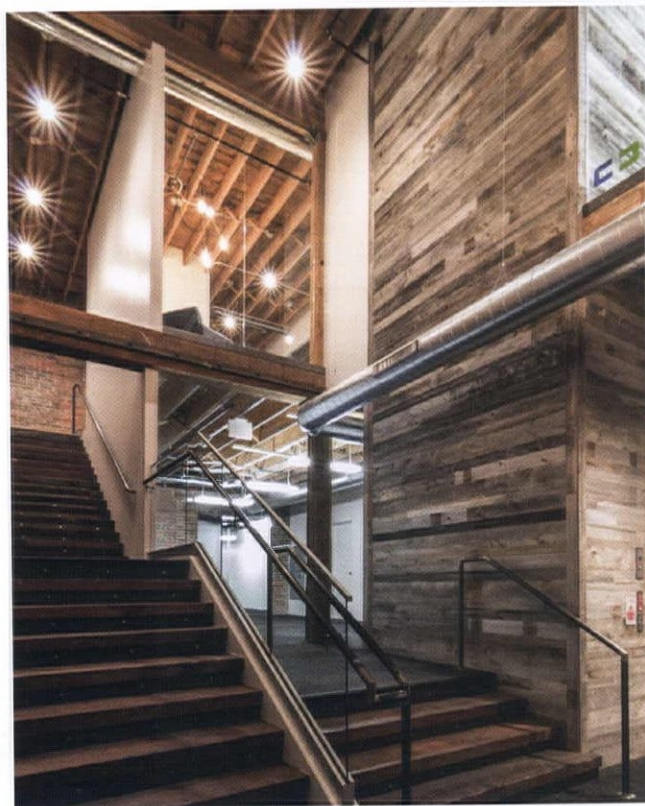
through our Connect Downtown work with the Greater Des Moines Partnership, we're starting to transform pedestrian and bicycle connections by expanding and adding [bike] lanes, which improves safety and allows businesses to flourish – two things I'm very passionate about."

Christensen also advocates for applying national best practices on a local level whenever possible. A member of Urban Land Institute (ULI) before an Iowa chapter existed, he attended meetings in other cities before participating in early committees to apply the same land use and development disciplines to Des Moines. Now, he's an active mentor to younger ULI members in an effort to pay it forward. And like any good leader, Christensen refuses to take all the credit; he's quick to name-drop his peers, referring to how their work amplifies sustainable design, too.

"Jake constantly seeks out projects that will add strength and vibrancy to Des Moines," says Dan Drendel, AIA, architect and principal at Slingshot Architecture. "He leverages great understanding of the capabilities of development and vision to create positive impacts within our urban space."

Going forward, Christensen is focused on aligning development with existing pockets of activity. He wants to see more housing options downtown, based on available bandwidth for home ownership and seniors, as well as less emphasis on parking options. And since he used to race bicycles in college, he'd love for people to be able to ride their bikes safely from one side of town to the other.

"Every project is unique, and that keeps me motivated," he says. "I have a lot more ideas than I'll ever have time in my career to complete, but I'll do as many projects as I can in Des Moines, from buildings to airport authority. Sometimes I get asked what I would do if I won the lottery, and I'd do the same thing I'm doing now. It's really cool to see so many people pulling on the rope to lift our city up. To be a small part of that is rewarding."



Opposite: In the 1940s, the building now owned by Christensen Development was home to a specialty printer that printed war propaganda. **Top:** The final look of the office building, co-owned by Christensen Development and Beal Derkenne Construction (BDC), required an exterior chemical peel plus tuck-pointing to fix the masonry. **Bottom:** Christensen chose to use existing finishes of brick and exposed structure paired with modern glass, reclaimed wood, and heavy timber stair treads to bring the building lobby together.



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OUT OF OFFICE

DOWNTOWN DES MOINES' NEW KRAUSE GATEWAY CENTER OFFERS INNOVATION INSIDE AND OUT

WORDS : CHELSEA EVERS

IMAGES : MICHELE DEHANCE

DESIGN ARCHITECT : RENZO PIANO BUILDING WORKSHOP

ARCHITECT OF RECORD : OPN ARCHITECTS





To design Iowa's newest architectural gem, Kyle Krause, chairman and CEO of Krause Group, hired the best of the best – all the way from Paris to Des Moines.

Krause wanted to build an unconventional office in the Western Gateway neighborhood of Des Moines for employees of Kum & Go, Krause Group's convenience store chain – so he cast a wide net. The group landed on European firm Renzo Piano Building Workshop (RPBW), who joined forces with Des Moines-based OPN Architects on the project.

While it's not typical for a design architect and architect of record to collaborate so closely through the entire design and build timeline, that's precisely how Renzo Piano and OPN Architects operated. "The way we've worked with RPBW has been a true collaboration," says OPN Architects associate principal Danielle Hermann, AIA. "We were working side by side throughout, from the very beginning of the process all the way through construction."

Once proposals were chosen and planning began, it became clear the atypical nature of this development would continue. Instead of specific physical features, Krause had an overall vision in mind for the project. Above all, the building should function and operate in a way that enhances the workflow of his employees. Chad Rasmussen, director of asset management at Kum & Go, says the process to achieve this goal began back in 2012.

"We had a list of guiding principles that we established before we did anything," says Rasmussen, who acted as project lead for the center. "We really defined what we wanted, and those guiding principles were sent to the architects in our request for proposal."

The principles, including community connection, flexibility, art and light, and sustainability, were taken to heart by both RPBW and OPN Architects. "We spent a tremendous amount of time talking about and mapping the lives of 10 or 15 associates in different roles in the building," Hermann says. "How do they enter the building? How do they move throughout it? How do they interact with each other? That became our page-turn design review more so than the details, because it was so important to the client to make sure that the building functioned well for the associates who worked in it."

To bring the guiding principles to life, RPBW and OPN Architects knew they had to focus on what was happening outside the building just as much as the features within. "The client wanted to deliver something that wasn't a fortress, like many other office buildings in town," says RPBW architect Giorgio Bianchi. "They wanted something open that could become a destination for this part of downtown."

Today, the center is a destination indeed, with the actual building only occupying 25 percent of the site's footprint and leaving the rest of the space accessible to the community. "We wanted to encourage the collision of people — not only within the building, but also with the public," says Rasmussen. The exterior space includes an amphitheater, interactive sculptures, cafe seating, bocce ball courts, chess tables, and a bike path. The team also added a bus stop in front of the site to offer public accessibility.

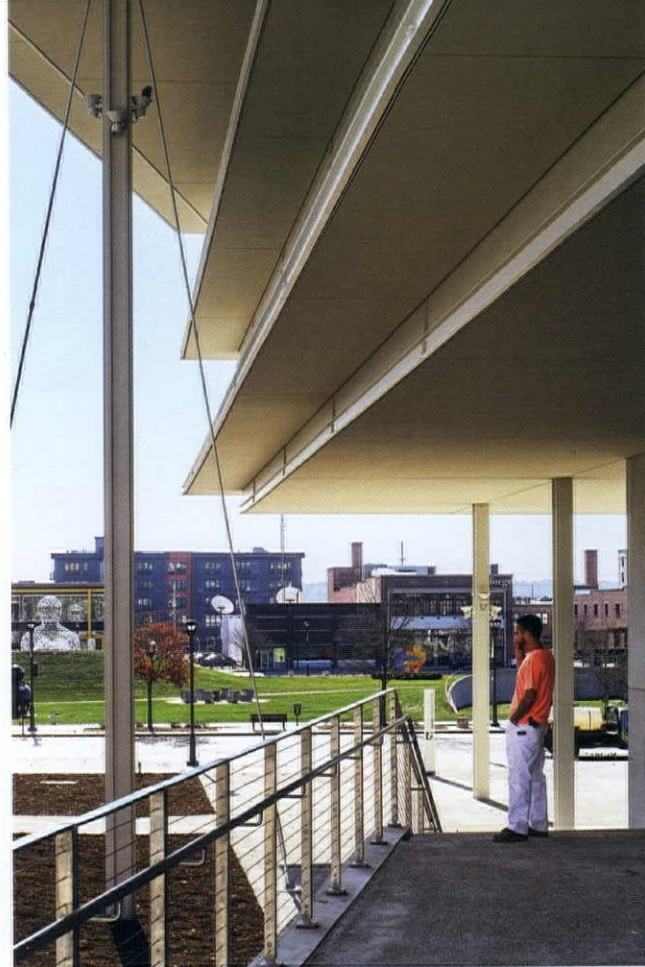
The site sits directly across the street from the Pappajohn Sculpture Park, a downtown fixture, and offers seamless access to its amenities. "People can cut through the site and use different paths to access the park," says Joe Feldmann, AIA, architect at OPN Architects. "If the building were to take up more of the site, a lot of the views and access opportunities would be lost."

The site itself is located at the crux of a shift in the city grid, which inspired the team to rotate the fifth floor congruently, creating an overhang on the north side. The bottom four floors align to the southern side of Grand Avenue, while the fifth floor is spun at exactly 15.96 degrees to match the northern city grid. "We chose the fifth floor because it offers a totally different perspective and view out from the building," says Feldmann. From there, employees can see for blocks down Ingersoll Avenue, a main thoroughfare in downtown Des Moines. Bianchi refers to this vantage point as a "view to the infinite." "Because the building is a little higher, you really have the ability to see quite a distance," he says. "On each level, people in the building can feel they're outside in nature."

To offer the best views possible, the exterior is composed of 85 percent glass. There are no perimeter offices inside the building, offering every associate a panoramic look at the sculpture park, the historic Sherman Hill neighborhood, and as far as Gray's Lake to the south. The structure's towering glass walls were, at the time of construction, the tallest in North America.

With that much glass, one might think, cooling the building in the humid Iowa summers would be a nightmare. But thanks to signature extra-long overhangs (some up to 60 feet), the interior spaces are protected from direct solar radiation. "The overhangs make it possible to reduce the solar gain in the glass because they produce shadows throughout the day," says Bianchi. "Because of this, the glass can be more transparent, and we can offer a more clever use of energy and lighting."

Other sustainable measures within the design include a green roof with native plants, LED lighting throughout the entire



Previous: Glass walls and sculptural overhangs make the Krause Gateway Center a contemporary addition to downtown Des Moines. The fifth floor, spun at an angle to mimic the change in the city grid just north of the building, offers a change in perspective from the rest of the center.

Top: Located just across the street from the Pappajohn Sculpture Park, the Gateway Center offers a unique view of the downtown Des Moines art scene. The building's second floor harbors an art gallery filled with Krause family collections. **Middle:** Forgoing traditional cubicles, Kum & Go employees can work anywhere in the office — from standing desks to sofa workstations — and enjoy different views through the building's glass walls. **Bottom:** A central staircase unifies the entire office space and encourages community between employees. **Opposite:** An open, nearly transparent exterior entices the public to enter and interact with the space. Soon, a café will open on the first floor.

"We wanted to encourage the collision
of people — not only within the
building, but also with the public."

— CHAD RASMUSSEN





Top: Twenty-nine-foot glass walls on the ground level were, upon installation, the tallest on the continent. The building's glass exterior is supported by 4,000 tons of steel. **Bottom:** Outside the modern glass and concrete building, the public can enjoy café tables, interactive sculptures, bike trails, chess tables, and a bocce ball court.

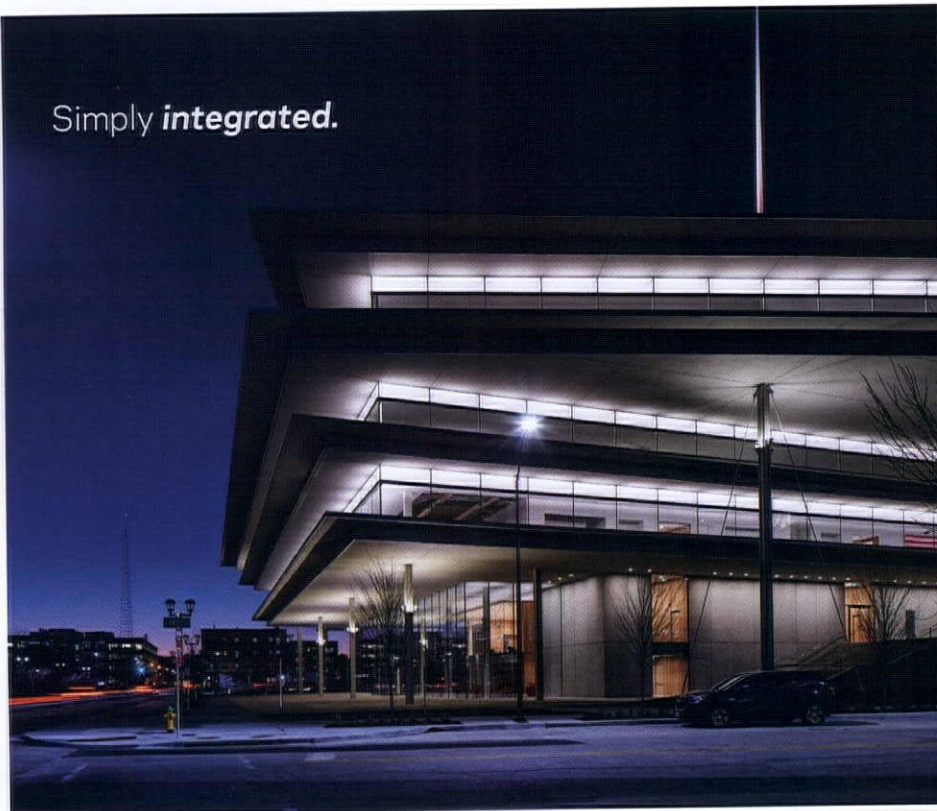
building, and efficient mechanical systems. Urban transit options up the ante: "We have bike racks and a bike storage facility in locker rooms," says Hermann. "There's mass transportation just outside, and we also run along the bike trail system." The building is targeting LEED Silver Certification, a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement.

All of these features, while beautiful, exist first and foremost in support of Krause's main goal: Employee wellness and productivity.

"There's a lot more movement of associates now," says Rasmussen. "One of the things we did in the design was try to force collisions of people, so they have to get up and have interactions with others." The office also does not have dedicated desks, instead offering employees the ability to work from anywhere on its fourth and fifth floors, including an outdoor terrace with a capacity of 994. "We just did our 90-day survey of associates," Rasmussen says. "Among the favorite attributes are the openness and light in the building." And of course, he says, it doesn't hurt that the views are "simply fantastic."

Bianchi says this effect was no accident. "Designing the building was like making music," he says. "We tried to bring harmony to all its parts, both inside and outside. The building's transparency is not only physical, it's psychological – you can see the city, the neighbors, the park. This is the success of the building: It's truly a part of the neighborhood where it is located."

Simply *integrated.*



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“ I had the opportunity to volunteer for AIA Iowa’s Architecture Month and Annual Convention, and materials from those events have been sitting on my desk since. They are reminders of how we can so effectively and brilliantly collaborate when we all share a common mission. The spirit of collaboration that resulted in these efforts allowed me to feel a sense of pride and honor. ”

Hoang Tran,
Assoc. AIA

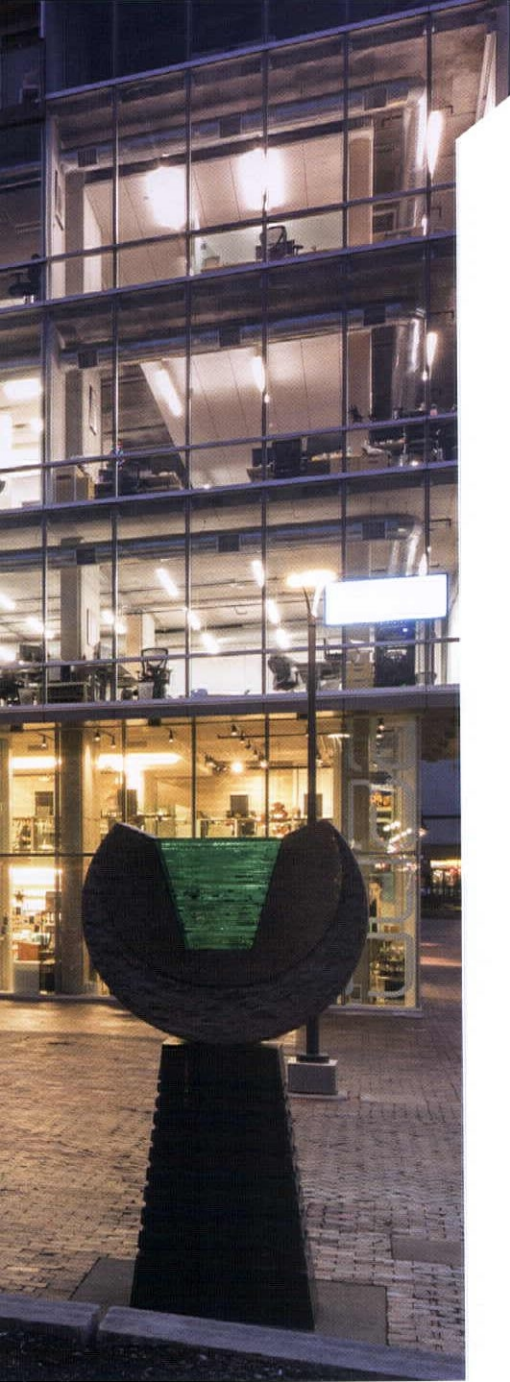
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FROM COUNTRYSIDE TO DOWNTOWN CORE

AKAR Architecture helped revitalize Iowa City's downtown core with three pop-up shops inspired by an Iowa classic: the corn crib

WORDS : HANNAH GILMAN IMAGES : SANJAY JANI ARCHITECT : AKAR ARCHITECTURE

AKAR Architecture was founded on the belief that all architecture should be a poetic response to people, nature, and function. So even while the small Iowa City-based firm is best known for its residential work, it should have come as no surprise that it'd be the Iowa City Downtown District's (ICDD) choice to create three pop-up shops that'd live in the heart of Iowa City: the Pedestrian Mall. People, nature, function — they all come together in this long-time gathering place.

The ask: Bring new life to Iowa City's downtown core

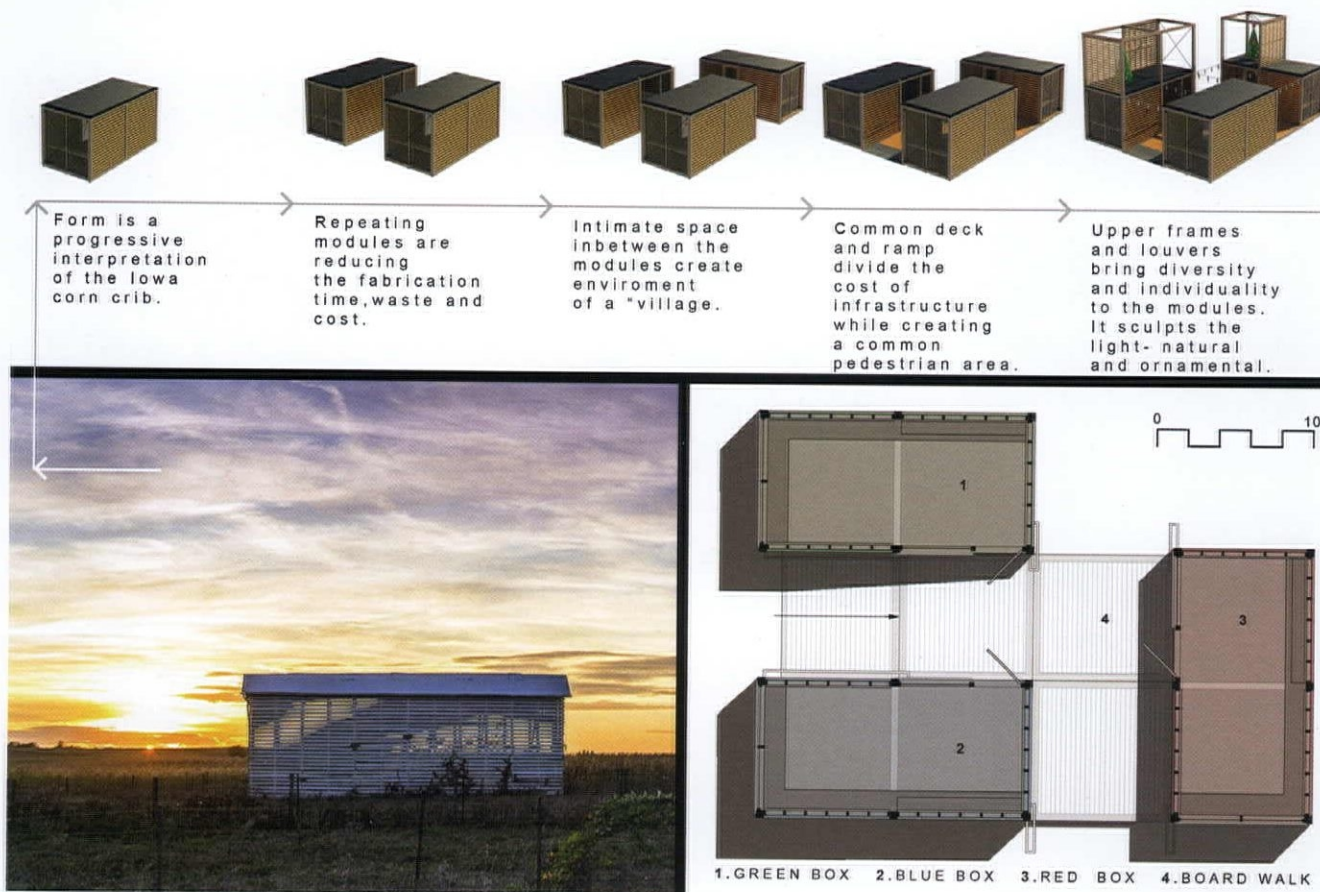
The ICDD put out an ask for qualified firms to provide the design, fabrication, and installation of pop-up shops for the 2017 holiday season. The idea was to create a holiday market — much like the Bavarian ones that have become increasingly popular stateside over the years — with modules that were ADA-accessible, heated, easily mobile, and durable.

AKAR Architecture was inspired to do something outside its expertise in residential design and submit a proposal to the ICDD for a few reasons: One, the team, led by principal Sanjay Jani, AIA, had an intimate understanding of the need for a pop-up shop to help bring new life to downtown and to retail (Jani's wife, Jigna, owns a gallery in the area), especially during the quiet winter months; and two, it was an opportunity to see how far the firm could flex its creative abilities on a small-scale project under limiting constraints. The turnaround — for both design and construction — and the budget were tight: \$33,000 for all three pop-ups. But Jani and project manager Tony Nash were a nimble team up to the challenge.

"AKAR Architecture's pitch introduced a two-story setting that exceeded our expectations, and we were especially excited about the functionality and beauty of the proposal," says Betsy Potter, director of operations at ICDD. "We had put forth a big request for three pop-up shops that would be used as temporary stores in a high-pedestrian-traffic area. So they had to be interesting, unique, transparent, and designed for commercial use. The plan from AKAR Architecture recognized the needs of a retailer both big and small with touches like adequate lighting, shelving, counter space, and extra plug-ins."



Top: AKAR Architecture pitched a two-story setting that was visible from a greater distance and was able to showcase a holiday tree. **Left:** To increase traffic flow and connectivity, the modules were arranged on an axis that aligned with existing building entrances. **Middle:** Using local materials was important to AKAR Architecture: The modules were made from rough-sawn white oak sourced from a nearby Amish community. **Right:** Crossing steel rods and straps help support the post-and-beam structural frame. Yellow pine slats clad the polycarbonate panels.



The solution: A new spin on an Iowa classic – the corn crib

Jani and Nash's inspiration for their winning design? A corn crib.

"The corn crib wasn't our first or even second idea, so I think my favorite part of the project is that we managed to come full circle back to a simple midwestern vernacular form – which [Jani] and I both love – and wrap up the multiple ideas we were working with during the design process into one cohesive project," says Nash.

"We see beauty in farm buildings sometimes differently than common people do," says Jani. "Our goal was to make people not necessarily make the connection or understand the context right away, but when they move around, it sort of hits them at some point: 'Oh, the reason it looks so familiar is because it's a corn crib.' It's not screaming to be a corn crib, but it has enough elements that for some people, it strikes them. And that's the goal of any good architecture: You don't give away everything at

first glance; it unravels as you become familiar with it."

With their corn crib-inspired design, they partnered with a team of carpenters who specialize in gazebos and storage sheds on

"That's the goal of any good architecture: You don't give away everything at first glance; it unravels as you become familiar with it."

— SANJAY JANI, AIA

the construction, and together, the team got to work. The modules, which were 8-feet by 8-feet by 16-feet, were designed intentionally to fit on a flatbed trailer so they'd be completely portable. Plus, the dimensions allowed for limited waste.

Local materials were the star – rough-sawn white oak, sourced from a nearby

Amish community, was the main material for the post-and-beam structural frame, which was supported by crossing steel rods and straps, and clad with yellow pine slats over polycarbonate panels. Some of the panels were colored, and when lit, the structures became holiday ornaments themselves, glowing like a lantern and standing out against the oft-snowy white winter landscape. Some structures stretched two stories high, offering visual interest. The interior ceilings and floors were covered with yellow pine plywood, and the slots in the walls became shelving supports for flexible interior displays that could easily be switched up.

"Due to the two-story design and feature lighting, the pop-up shops stood out even next to much larger buildings," Potter says. "They brought an attraction element to an outdoor space that is typically underutilized and vacant in the colder months."

Creating a community space

When it came time to place them on site, the structures were arranged axially on

existing building entrances, creating a canyon that invited people to enter. “We didn’t have a huge footprint to scatter, so we knew we had to cluster it tight,” says Jani. The layout was especially important in ensuring wheelchair access to each unit – individual ramps leading up to each would have chewed into the budget, so centering the structures around a shared accessible boardwalk was crucial.

The cluster was designed for mingling; to attract buyers from each others’ corn cribs and keep the flow of people moving in and out. It worked the way it was intended, says Jani, affecting people and making them stop to interact and purchase. “I could see the success just being there,” he says. “People expressed right away, ‘Oh, this is so cool! This was needed,’ or ‘I wish we had more of these.’ It’s rare that people analyze spaces like architects, but as an architect, I could see the success in the way people behaved and enjoyed and moved around.”

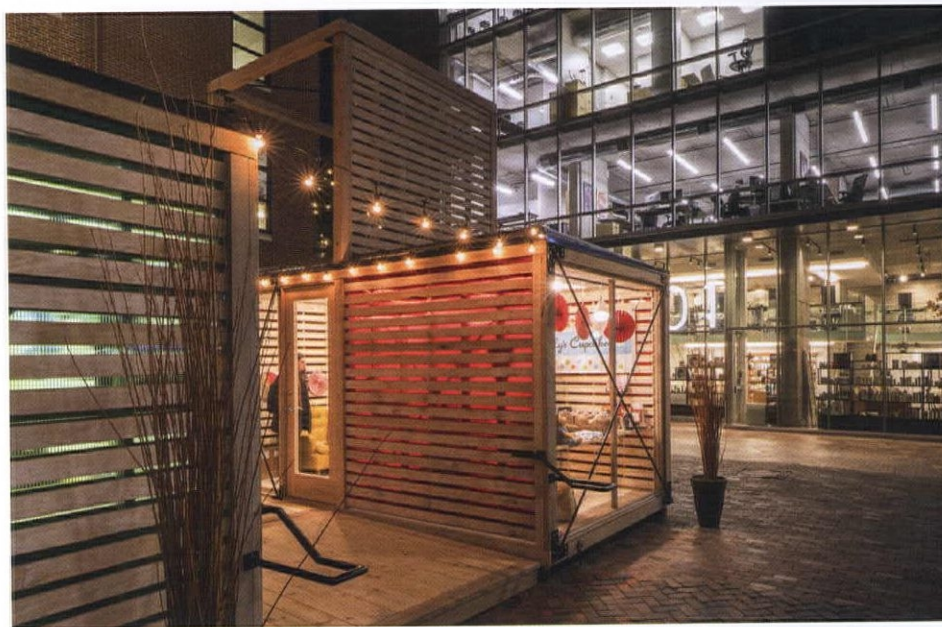
It was such a success that the structures have had a life beyond their original use and have inspired more thought around pop-up shops in the downtown area. And while the pedestrian mall is currently undergoing a renovation, the construction is slated to conclude this year, meaning the AKAR Architecture’s structures will be back and ready for their next life, whether it’s to host a vendor during the 2019 holiday season or the library for a summer reading program.

Beyond that, the team says it’s always rewarding to do something that serves others. “I think the most rewarding part of the project was seeing how successful it was and how people reacted so positively toward it. It’s fun to see Iowa City continue to use them in new ways,” says Nash. “It’s always nice to give back to the community where you live and work and I am proud to have been a part of it.”

Opposite: The form was inspired by the Iowa corn crib. This illustration shows the progression of the modules and how they came together.

Top: The modules were structured strategically, with accessibility and traffic flow in mind. The goal was to create a buzz of activity. **Middle:** Interior slats became places for shelves to rest for vendors to showcase their products.

Bottom: Each module was marked with colored glass to give it its own identity. String lights added a warm, inviting glow.



SECOND LIFE

A former elementary school reborn full of mid-century character and nostalgic details



WORDS : LEAH WALTERS IMAGES : CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA, INTEGRATED STUDIO ARCHITECT : ASK STUDIO

In the corridors of one of Cedar Rapids' newest affordable housing options, Monroe Place, colorful tiles blanket the walls and wood cubbies line the spaces between units. The features hearken back to the building's origin as a baby boomer-era elementary school.

Built in 1961, the single-story Monroe Place is characterized by its modernist, geometric form and extensive use of glazing and overhangs.

The mid-century showpiece could have easily been left to deteriorate. Instead, when the school shuttered in 2013, it was purchased by Affordable Housing Network, Inc. and its fate was sealed: It would become Cedar Rapids' first school repurposed for housing and set a precedent in the region for adaptive reuse.

The ambitious project was led by ASK Studio and guided by a single goal. "The project is all about constraint," says

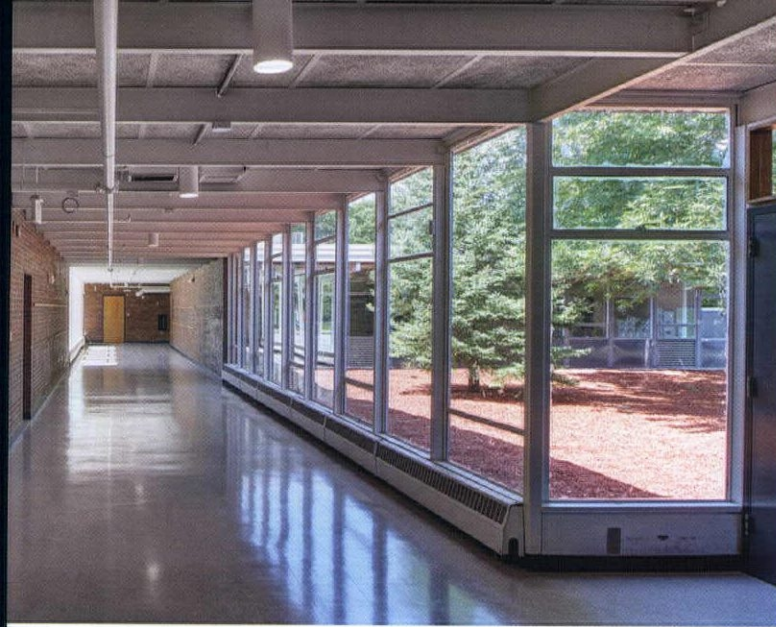
principal-in-charge Brent Schipper, AIA. "It is respecting the skeleton of the building, literally."

The design team's priority was to preserve the site's historical elements while responding to the demands of a modern residential building. As it turned out, the details that define the space — expansive corridors, an abundance of windows, and exposed beams — were the design team's biggest obstacles.

The challenge was to completely reinvent Monroe's use from a transparent public space to private, comfortable living spaces.

"The nearly all-glass facade makes for beautiful spaces, but not a common rhythm for housing," says Schipper.

The team had to reimagine the configuration to "make the best use of the spaces while maintaining the existing character," says Patrick Denahey, AIA, who served as project architect.



Without imposing on the existing footprint or historical features, the new layout accommodates 19 two-, three-, and four-bedroom units and utilizes the height of the former cafeteria and gymnasium for airy, spacious lofts.

But getting everyone on board initially posed something of a problem.

"There was early input from some sources that the corridor was a waste of space and should be shrunk," says Schipper. The design team had to prove to decision makers that preservation of the corridor wasn't just the cost-effective solution, it was integral to embracing the building's history.

What looked like a space constraint to the client was an opportunity to Schipper and Denahey. Behind layers of conduit and ductwork that had accumulated over decades, the original beams were waiting to be exposed again.

"With Monroe, the exposed roof beams are the most significant feature of the architecture, so these needed to be kept clear to express their pattern and purpose," says Denahey.

To bring the beams back to their former glory, extra care had to be taken to route and conceal new systems within existing service tunnels and new walls. The effort was worth it.

"My favorite element of the project is seeing the beauty of the rhythm of beams," says Denahey. "They have a magical quality supported on slender exposed columns."

Thoughtful design is evident all over Monroe Place, which opened its doors to residents in July 2018.

The original mural and bright tile work are a playful reminder of the building's original use. Chalkboards still line the classrooms-turned-living areas and, in some places, the old doors still identify teachers who once walked the halls.

As Schipper puts it, the project's greatest success is that "the prior life of the building is always on display."



Opposite: Monroe Place's exterior appears just as it did when it first opened as an elementary school. **Left:** Floor-to-ceiling windows flood wide halls with daylight. **Top:** The former cafeteria and gymnasium spaces were utilized for two-story lofts. **Middle:** Designers took care to uncover the beams in the hallway, once covered by decades of mechanical upgrades. **Bottom:** Original doors and cubbies lend character to both private and common spaces.



slope solutions

A less-than-ideal site helps to surface up a more-than-ideal building for the University of Iowa

WORDS : KELLY ROBERSON **IMAGES :** NICK MERRICK, HALL + MERRICK **ARCHITECT :** BNIM

Growth is a tricky conundrum for landlocked cities and institutions. Growth equals more people, a potential economic infusion, and vitality. But growth also equals traffic and both a shortage and overuse of already-limited space.

That was the case for the College of Engineering at the University of Iowa. In just 13 years, from 2005 to 2018, undergraduate enrollment rose 82 percent, shorting students, staff, and teachers education and research space in the main engineering building, the Seamans Center for the Engineering Arts and Sciences. It also forced a disconnect as students and faculty were shuffled to nearby buildings, says Kevin Nordmeyer, AIA, principal at BNIM. “By creating an expansion, they could bring programs back into the facility and continue to build upon the strong community of students and faculty within the college,” he says.

However, to get to that point, they had to conquer some significant site constraints. For starters, there was an elevation change — more than 30 feet — from east to west across the site and immediately to the south; this was a pedestrian path with stormwater runoff that had to be managed. Another pedestrian path — this one a switchback — provided less-than-ideal accessibility. Staging and construction access would also prove to be university and architectural concerns. Finally, in addition to improving density and sensitively addressing the site, BNIM had to make sure the new structure united both the history of the campus and the existing building.

As a solution, BNIM decided not to build the structure into grade. Instead, they organized the main body of the building along Capitol Street and elevated the addition above the ground plane. That allowed light, air, and space to expand at street level and maintain



Opposite: The horizontal patterning on the high-performance panels recalls the lines on the original neoclassical building. Perforated fins on the windows shade the east and west glass from solar heat gain and provide relief and texture on a long facade. **Top:** Sustainable design strategies enabled the facility to receive LEED Gold designation. **Middle:** Along the main public corridor and the pedestrian path on the third floor, glass is the main material, denoting the more public circulation zones. Smaller punched windows denote more private office and research spaces. **Bottom:** Thin, rainscreen high-performance concrete skin and window penetrations on the addition align with the original window openings and have a similar punched expression, albeit with more visual texture and interest over the facade.



pedestrian openness and connectedness to the site for the occupants of the Lindquist Center immediately west of the addition. The result was a long, slender form running north to south adjacent to Capitol Street.

With a three-story glass connector, the architects were able to create both separation and assimilation. Originally, the university didn't see the need for a lobby, but BNIM identified its importance as a connection to the existing building and social hub, where students are able to connect and collaborate, with small nodes at key locations in the addition's upper floors as well. And because growth isn't static, possible future iterations of the building were included in planning. But it is the vitality and connections in the here and now that most excite Nordmeyer. "The elevation gives a really strong visual and physical connection to the new main lobby, surrounding landscape, streetscape, and surrounding buildings," he says. "And there's the engineering design studio space at the center of the lobby to connect between student project activities and the activity and flow of students through the lobby and facility."

Sometimes, additions have unexpected benefits, changing the dynamic of a space and the user's experience in unintended and welcome ways. Such is the case for the Seamans facility: Students and faculty find the collaborative experience impacting the very nature of their studies and teaching. And future additions to the facility? Who knows what changes they'll engender, but they have a very good example indeed to follow.





REMAKING HISTORY

A repurposed commercial relic brings urban charm to downtown Iowa City

WORDS : CHELSEA EVERS **IMAGES :** CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA, INTEGRATED STUDIO **ARCHITECT :** NEUMANN MONSON ARCHITECTS

Most people wouldn't look at an abandoned commercial building with a 1,000-square-foot footprint and think, "There's so much potential here."

But that's exactly what Mark Ginsberg envisioned when he purchased the space next to his downtown Iowa City jewelry store, M.C. Ginsberg Objects of Art, and asked Neumann Monson Architects to help him bring his vision to reality. Formerly an ice cream parlor and pharmacy, the building was in rough shape, with false ceilings, furred walls, and clutter abound – but the Neumann Monson Architects team saw potential. "Mark's main goals were to update the building and maximize the quality and quantity of rentable space without tearing it down and building

new," says Neumann Monson architect Nathan Griffith, AIA. "He also wanted something unique – something that hadn't been done in Iowa City."

The result? A mixed-use space that lives much larger than you'd imagine. With a retail business on the bottom levels and a live/work space with a balcony above, 112 E. Washington Street makes use of every square foot of its vertical capacity. Reset floors offer more head space and mean that even the basement is leasable, thanks to an innovative solution from the design team. "We cut a 5-by-8-foot hole in the first floor, right at the storefront, to bring light directly to the basement," says Griffith. "It transformed the dark, dingy basement that was only fit for storage

Opposite: The top floor of the renovation looks nothing like its previous life as an apartment with false ceilings and furred walls. **Top:** To bring light into the basement, the design team made an innovative choice to cut a 5-by-8-foot out of the floor of the storefront. **Middle:** The main floor is occupied by Moss, a plants and gifts store. **Bottom:** Among one of the first live-work spaces in Iowa City, 112 E. Washington has a footprint of just 1,000 square feet.



into a bright showroom space." Now, the first floor is occupied by a plants and gifts store, with an accompanying (and surprisingly bright) workshop space in the basement. The live/work space on the second and third floor are home to an engineering firm.

Before the redesign began, Ginsberg and Neumann Monson Architects made an important decision: Above all, preserving the building's historical integrity was paramount. "We decided very early in the design process that we wanted to strip away the recent layers of material to reveal the historic character of the building from the 1920s," says Griffith. "The existing upper facade was one of only a few examples in the community that told a story about the state of the world in the early 20th century, and the building facade was in fact rebuilt around the time of World War I."

To keep the space's story intact, architects removed not only the interior finishes but also the floors, ceiling, and roof, exposing the rich character of the brick and plaster walls that once defined the interior space. In the process of renovating, the crew found a wealth of artifacts from years past. "The construction phase was a process of discovery," says Griffith. "Many elements of the building's previous life were uncovered and celebrated." Discoveries included a large 1920s mural of the city streetscape, a coal chimney, and painted brick left exposed upon renovation. New materials were added only where structurally necessary, and always in contrast with the original building. "We wanted the new work to be experienced alongside the old fabric," says Griffith. "This pairing became a kind of conversation between designers and builders that spanned a century; between the team in the early 20th century and us."

project credits

Collected

People's Choice Awards

Spencer High School Fine Arts Center Addition | 12

Location: Spencer, Iowa
Architect: CMBA Architects
Contractor: Schelling Construction
Acoustical Consultant: Stan Roller & Associates
Civil Engineer: Kruse, Cate & Nelson
MEP Engineer: EDA, Inc.
Photographer: Paul Brokering Photography

Linn-Mar Community Schools High School Addition and Renovation | 12

Location: Marion, Iowa
Architect: DLR Group
Contractor: Larson Construction
Engineer: DLR Group
Photographer: Michael Robinson

University of Northern Iowa – Schindler Education Center | 13

Location: Cedar Falls, Iowa
Architect: DLR Group
Contractor: Mortenson Construction
Engineer: DLR Group
Photographer: Michael Robinson

YALI Regional Leadership Center – East Africa | 13

Location: Nairobi, Kenya
Architect: DLR Group

MMCRU Royals Industrial Technology Addition | 13

Location: Marcus, Iowa
Architect: CMBA Architects
Contractor: Wiltgen Brothers
Engineer: Resource Consulting Engineers, LLC
Photographer: Paul Brokering Photography

AIA Iowa Impact Awards

Cross Park Place | 14

Location: Iowa City, Iowa
Architect: Neumann Monson Architects
Contractor: McComas Lacin Construction
Civil Engineer: HBK Engineering
MEP Engineer: Modus
Structural Engineer: HBK Engineering
Photographer: Wayne Johnson, Main Street Studio

Freedom Blend Coffee | 15

Location: Des Moines, Iowa
Architect: Ethos Design Group
Engineer: Saul Engineering, ABACI Engineering
Photographer: Dan Cross

Fort Des Moines | 15

Location: Des Moines, Iowa
Architect: Neumann Monson Architects
Contractor: The Weitz Company
MEP Engineer: Modus
Structural Engineer: Raker Rhodes Engineering
Landscape: Reynolds Urban Design
Photographer: Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio

A Monumental Journey | 15

Location: Des Moines, Iowa
Architect: substance
Contractor: Neumann Brothers
Brick Manufacturer: Endicott Clay Products
Engineer: Saul Engineering
Masonry Contractor: Seedorff Masonry Inc.
Steel Fabrication: Johnson Machine Works
Photographer: substance

Features

Out of Office | 26

Location: Des Moines, Iowa
Design Architect: Renzo Piano Building Workshop
Architect of Record: OPN Architects
Contractor: Ryan Companies
Photographer: Michele Dehance

From Countryside to Downtown Core | 32

Location: Iowa City, Iowa
Architect: AKAR Architecture
Contractor: Hardy Lawn Furniture
Engineer: Shoemaker Haaland
Photographer: Sanjay Jani

Second Life | 36

Location: Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Architect: ASK Studio
Contractor: Woodruff Construction
Engineer: Twin Rivers Engineering
Photographer: Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio

Slope Solutions | 38

Location: Iowa City, Iowa
Architect: BNIM
Contractor: Knutson Construction
AV/Acoustics Engineer: The Sextant Group
Civil Engineer: Shive-Hattery Architecture-Engineering
MEP Engineer: Design Engineers
Structural Engineer: Saul Engineering
Landscape: Shive-Hattery Architecture-Engineering
Photographer: Nick Merrick, Hall + Merrick

Remaking History | 40

Location: Iowa City, Iowa
Architect: Neumann Monson Architects
Contractor: TD Builders
Structural Engineer: Raker Rhodes Engineering
Photographer: Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio



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