

ENVIRONMENT & INVOLVEMENT : A THREE-PART DISCUSSION ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY  
HOLISTIC EXPRESSION: DESIGNING WITH ELEMENTAL AWARENESS  
65 YEARS OF IOWA ARCHITECT DESIGNING FOR A PANDEMIC  
FALL 2020

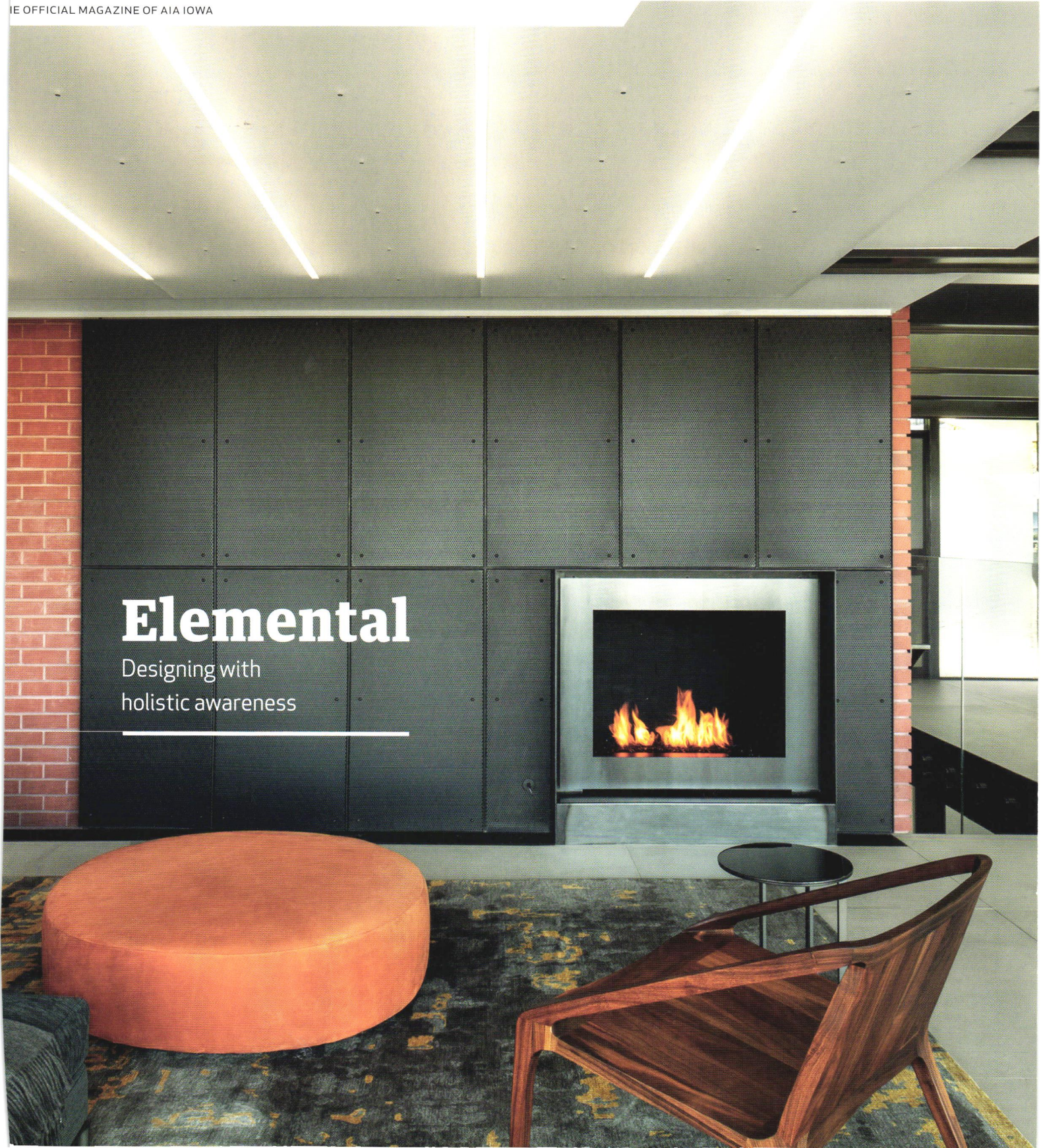
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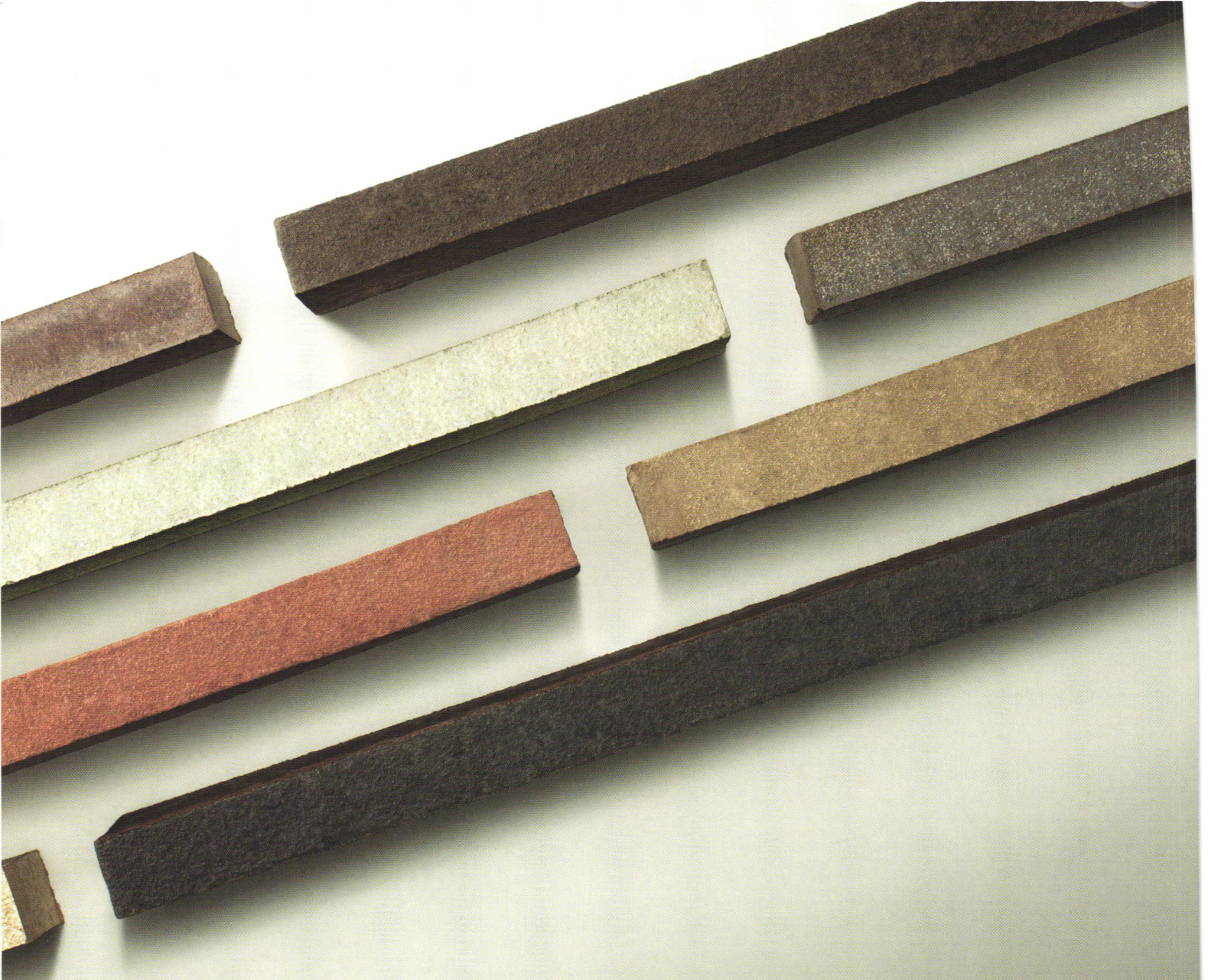
THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF AIA IOWA

## Elemental

Designing with  
holistic awareness

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# editor's letter



**Justin Burnham, Assoc. AIA**  
Editor, Iowa Architect

## Welcome!

This year, workers planted new trees along the boulevard I use to commute downtown. A variety of species have replaced ash trees cut in recent years. As elements, these trees are spatial and utilitarian. Once mature, their grandiosity defines the street character and they provide much needed shade in summer months. Soon, the leaves will mark time by turning brilliant colors then falling—resulting in many indelible memories for residents, joggers, and commuters alike.

This issue explores how parts are selected and organized into a holistic expression. Each material has a life cycle that begins with origins from the earth, then architecture reorganizes nature. Compositional choices range from pragmatic to poetic. Factors often include the program and some degree of protection from the elements—sun, wind, and rain.

How are design decisions broken down into elements, literally and figuratively? In one case, it may be a budget-conscious backdrop for hosting community-led art workshops. In other cases, it may be responding to the context—ranging from a block with a recognizable architectural legacy, to rethinking a house with a good framework, to inserting new elements within an existing building.

As Lou Kahn famously said, “Even a brick aspires to be something better than it is.” In this issue we feature projects that speak a language with an elemental awareness.

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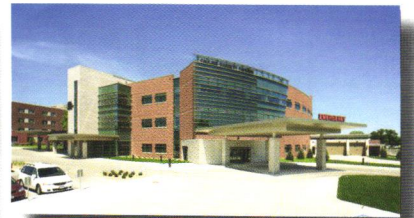
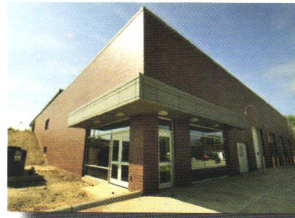
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Founded in 1975, the Masonry Institute of Iowa is a non-profit association dedicated to promoting the use of brick, stone, and block in construction. We look forward to meeting with you and your team to help you define your goals in designing with masonry. Call us today to learn more!