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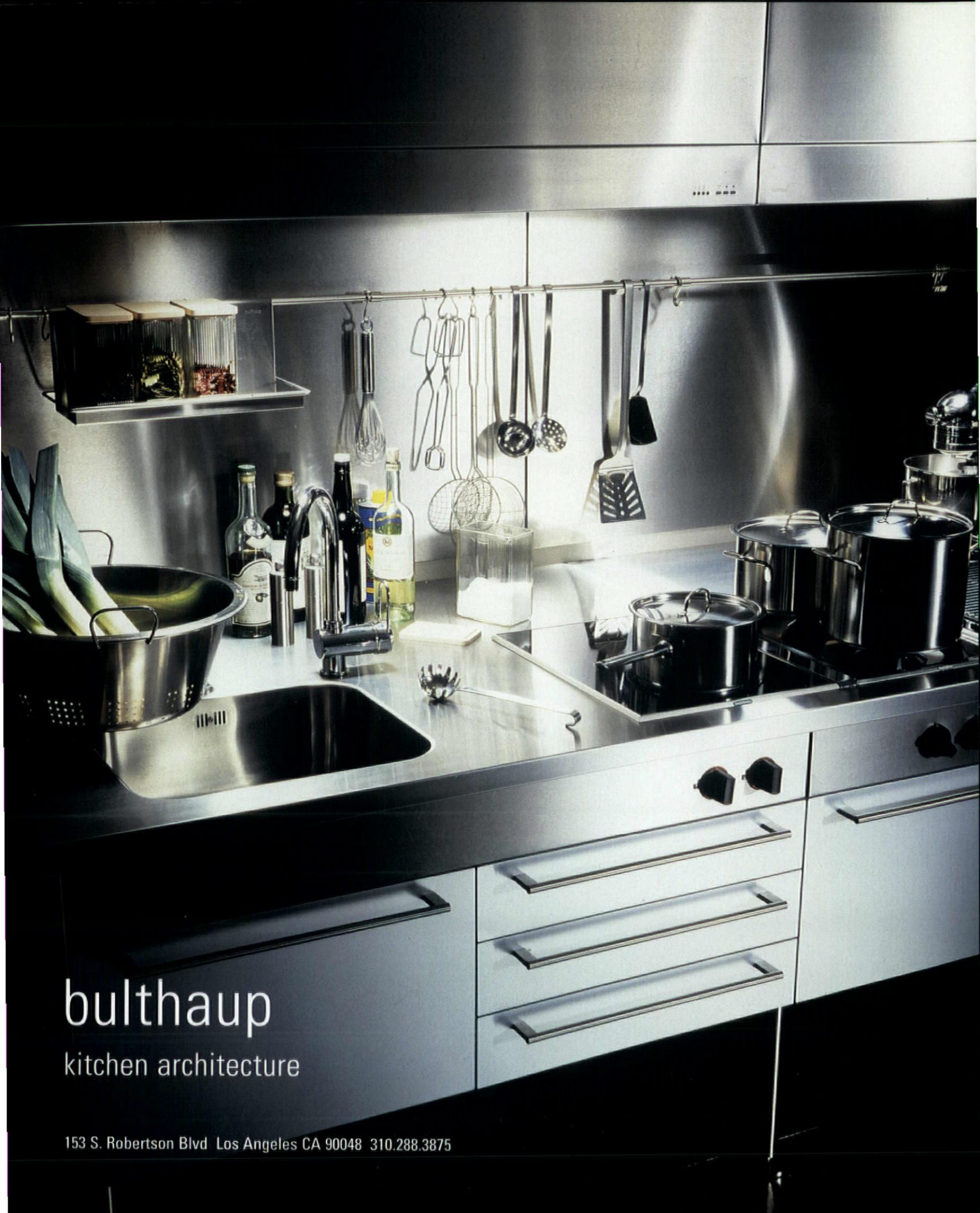
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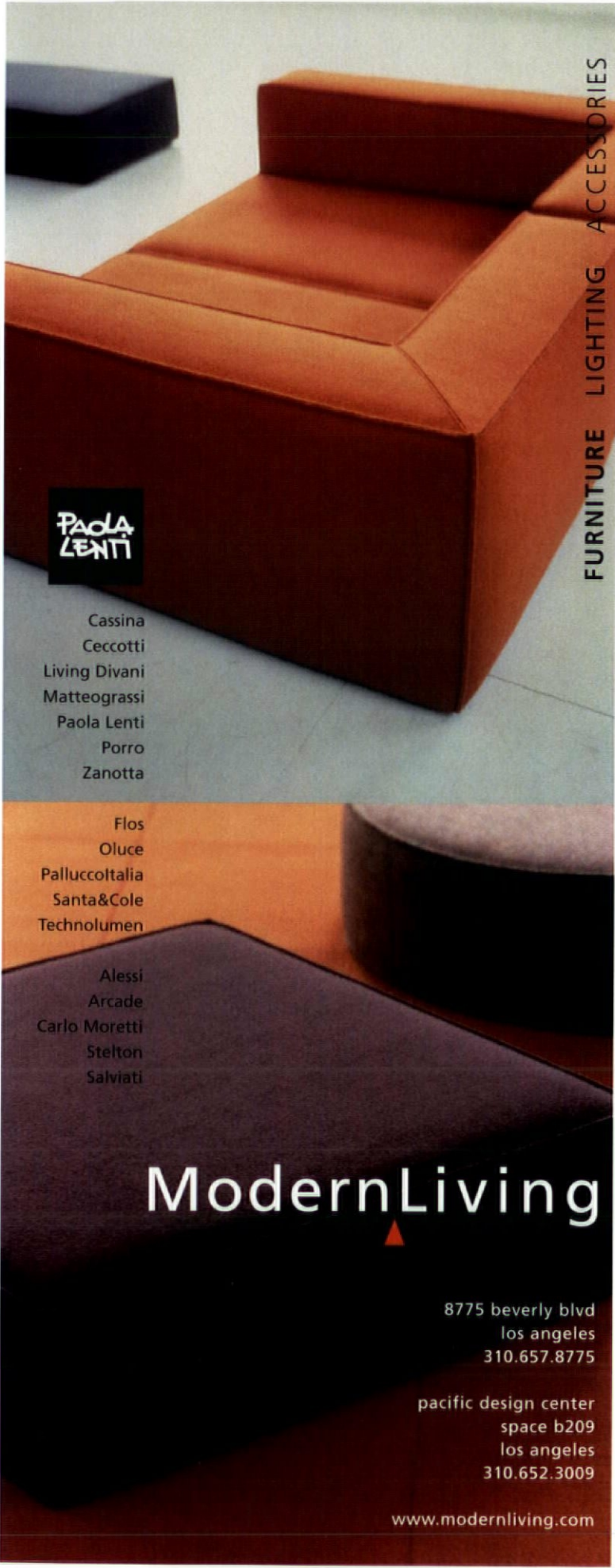
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Ann Gray Founded Balcony Press in 1994 to publish books on the art and architecture of California and now LA ARCHITECT Magazine. She was Executive Director of Design at Paramount Pictures, served on the CRA's Hollywood Design Review Committee, and is a former Board Member of Hollywood Heritage and the Freeman House.



LISA ROSEN

Lisa is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles. Born in Singapore and raised in Maryland, Australia, and New York, Lisa considers herself an LA native because she's resided here for the longest time. Lisa is currently at work on a series of children's books, the requisite screenplay, and a chronicle of her experiences as an election monitor in East Timor.



MICHAEL WEBB

Michael was born in London and has lived in Los Angeles for more than twenty years. He is the author of sixteen books including *Through the Windows of Paris*, *New Stage for a City*, *Architecture/Design LA*, and *Architects House Themselves: Breaking New Ground*. Michael is a regular contributor to *LA Architect*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Architectural Digest*, *Metropolis* and many other European and US publications.



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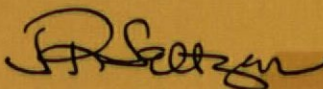

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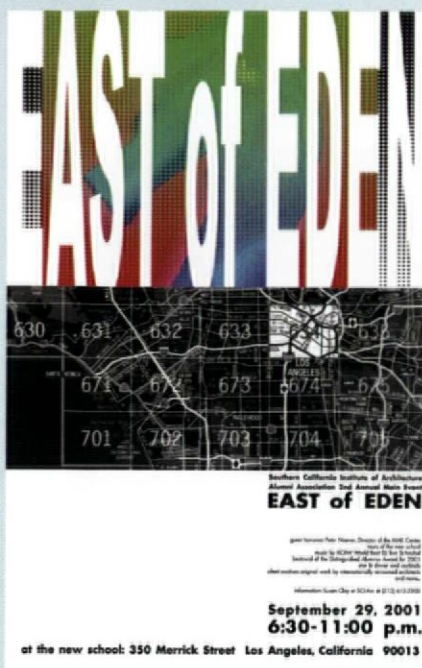
DISSENT IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE SOCIAL PROCESS, AND IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE our culture without it. Ideally, it is the means by which a civilized society can resolve conflicts of interest through compromise and without violence. Protest against architecture is rare—perhaps rarer than it should be (the World War II Memorial in Washington DC springs to mind)—and protest by architects, as a group, is rarer still. Are we, as a profession, too complacent about what gets built around us and about how the process works in general?

The protests against Frank Gehry's involvement at Playa Vista may be misdirected, but they are encouraging in the realm of social discourse. My reaction to Gehry and Maguire's involvement was one of relief—to be spared more bad architecture along Lincoln Boulevard is worth celebration. I wonder why protests didn't occur to stop the wholesale development of Lincoln Boulevard from the Marina to El Segundo, since traffic, smog, and bad architecture seem to be the net result. I am a proponent of wetlands preservation, and I do believe that the majority of Playa Vista should remain undeveloped. However, I also believe that Gehry's project is reasonable, as it will occupy historically developed land.

Another protest-worthy event was the Board of Airport Commissioners' attempted censorship of Susan Narduli's art installation in the American Airlines terminal. Perhaps most found the matter laughable, but I found it disturbing that the airport bureaucrats would single out this particular work of art to express their moral concerns. After all, the typical airport newsstand seems more likely to offend visitors with heightened moral sensitivities—*Playboy* and *Penthouse* may have protective displays, but what about *Cosmopolitan* and its on-going headline, "How to Improve Your Orgasm"—than a floor installation of discreetly portrayed male nudes. An interesting question was posed about whether or not the real issue was that the nudes were male rather than female. Many letters were written to the *Los Angeles Times* in protest; however, I don't recall reading one from the design community. (This isn't to say none were written; after all, mine wasn't published.)

Professionally, is protest frowned upon because commissions are difficult to get, and one never knows from where the next will emerge and who might be influential in the process? The reality of business makes navigating political and ethical waters difficult at best. I wondered about this after reading Martin Filler's essay in *The New Republic* (August 6, 2001, pp. 25–30), which reviewed the Mies van der Rohe shows at the Whitney and MoMA. Filler's commentary leaves the topic of the exhibitions altogether to discuss the politics of Mies and his peers. At the time, the profession and others do not appear to have been overly concerned with the ethics of architects, or Philip Johnson would not have worked another day in his life, given his alleged Nazi sympathies. While many architects of the time were opportunists, Johnson's pre-war activities were well known enough that his political leanings should have had an impact on his influential position at MoMA, or later commissions and accolades, on the basis of humanity.

In LA, our social problems, like any big city, are often more overwhelming than whether or not a building or two gets saved or built. Although we can't lose sight of the big picture, the small battles have to be fought by someone. In architecture, we should be more watchful about what is happening around us, taking interest in the process and decision-making as much as in the outcome. Right now, three significant public projects are in the works—the new Federal Building; the Caltrans headquarters competition; and the LACMA competition. Each deserves some attention by the architectural community. Are the best choices being made? This question is difficult to answer in a competitive marketplace, yet responsible architecture is a worthwhile goal, and challenging the process often improves the result. ■

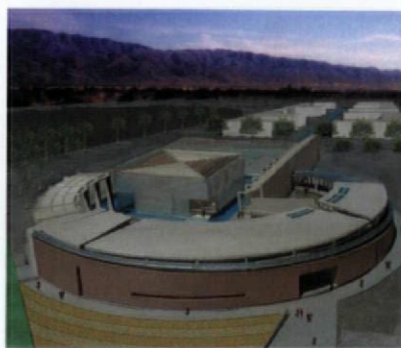


"East of Eden" at SCI-Arc, Graphics by Carlos Madrid III

Don't Miss

The annual **AIA/LA Design Awards** reception at the BGH Gallery in Bergamot Station will be held on October 5, 2001 at 6 pm. The annual AIA/LA President's and Design Awards Gala will be held at the Park Plaza Hotel, 607 S. Park View Street, LA, on October 25th. The reception is at 6 pm, the program follows at 7 pm, with dinner at 8:30 pm. Call (213) 639-0777 for tickets. The annual **SCI-Arc Alumni Association Main Event**, titled "East of Eden," will take place at the new campus, 350 Merrick Street, on September 29th from 6:30 to 11 pm. The guest honoree is Peter Noever, MAK Center; KCRW's Tom Schnabel will spin the music; the Distinguished Alumnus Award will be announced; and a silent auction will take place. Cocktails and a starlit dinner are also included. Call Susan Clay (213) 613-2200 for tickets. Don't miss the **Neutra celebration** in honor of Dion Neutra's 75th birthday. Catered by celebrated chef Fred Eric, the party will be held at Neutra's Eagle Rock Park Recreation Center, a designated cultural monument, on Saturday, October 6th beginning at 6 pm. The event benefits Neutra's continuing efforts to preserve the legacy and work of his famous father and the Neutra office. The modest donation is worth it—visit www.neutra.org to reserve a space.

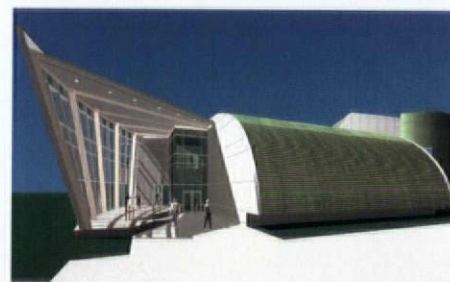
Project News



Richard J. Heckmann Center for Entrepreneurial Management, Nardi + Corsini/Architram (with LHA)

Desert, Mr. Heckmann and local business and community members. At Cal State Northridge, **Robert A.M. Stern and Fields Devereaux Architects** have completed a new Arts, Media & Communications Building that is billed as the "finest film/television production and teaching center on a campus in Southern California." Fields Devereaux has also recently completed the Art & Design Center, also at CSUN. In Irvine, a new FDA Megalab by **Zimmer Gunsul Frasca** is underway along the upper Newport Bay wetlands site. Luckily, the project is not part of the wetlands and is proceeding without protest. At Playa Vista, on the other hand, **Gehry and Partners** has been asked (via petitions and protests) by various environmental groups to bow out of Rob Maguire's proposed 60-acre development at the eastern end of the 1,087-acre site. Gehry has stated that he will not pull out of the project, since the parcel of land in question has always been industrial, serving as base of operations for Hughes Aircraft (the property is a nationally designated historic district). **Gensler** is on board working with Maguire and Gehry and will execute Gehry's designs. Gensler designed a building currently under construction for Maguire's other parcel nearby, the Water's Edge development. **Morphosis** with **Gruen, Rem Koolhaas** with **NBBJ**, and **Miralles Tagliabue** with **Langdon Wilson** are competing to design a new Caltrans building downtown. The three finalists were selected from an initial group of six that also included **Johnson Fain Partners**, **Keating/Khang** with **HOK**, **Fentress/Bradburn** and **Arquitectonica**. Dartmouth College has retained **Moore Ruble Yudell** to design a major academic and residential group of buildings. The firm has partnered with Bruner/Cott of Boston to complete the \$75 million project. **WWCOT** has been selected to plan and design East Valley High School #3 in Panorama City. The new campus will accommodate 2,000 students when it is completed in 2005. In Silver Lake, the **DWP**, the **Coalition to Preserve Open Reservoirs**, and **Melendrez Design Partners** have completed the Rowena Reservoir Project, which includes a 10-acre view garden and water feature that conceals a new ten million gallon subterranean water tank. Giving new meaning to the term "Barrista," **(M.)Arch Strategic Architectures** is designing a signature façade and branded environment for the Legal Grind, a retail/law combo offering coffee and counsel, and perhaps giving way to an entirely new wave of lawyer jokes.

UC Riverside continues to add to its collection of notable architecture with new buildings by **Randall Stout Architects** and **Nardi+Corsini/Architram** (with LHA). Stout's Alumni and Visitors Center will be located at the main campus terminus of University Boulevard, flanking the recently completed Fine Arts Center. Nardi + Corsini's 20-acre Richard J. Heckmann Center for Entrepreneurial Management in Palm Desert will be a self-contained mini-campus that includes academic, residential, and commercial spaces. The project is a collaborative effort between the City of Palm Desert, UC Riverside, Cal State San Bernardino, the College of the



FDA Megalab, Irvine, Zimmer Gunsul Frasca

Form Zero Bookstore and Gallery Moves Downtown

For those who haven't yet visited Form Zero's new location downtown—this is a formal announcement that the Bookstore and Gallery has relocated from the Edgemar Complex in Santa Monica to 811 Traction Avenue, in the Arts District. For a complete listing of upcoming exhibitions and events, contact (213) 620-1920.



To Live and Work in LA

The latest in the conversion of historic buildings to contemporary live/work space is the Irvine-Byrne Building at 249 South Broadway. Constructed in 1894, and originally known as the Irvine Block, the building was designed by Sumner Hunt and was called the Pan American when it housed the Mexican Consulate during the WWII period. According to Tara Jones, president of Historic Consultants, Inc., "The building is significant for its age, its architectural quality and its design by a prominent local architectural firm. It represents the commercial architecture in Los Angeles' central business district during the 1890s." HCI, a project financing and management company, is working with developer Project Cost Management, the firm that provided general contracting for Tom Gilmore's San Fernando, Hellman and Continental projects.

Local Culture and Events

MOCA's newest exhibition, "What's Shakin," may have a title that is easier to read than the museum's recent text-intensive billboard campaign, but the two-part show—at the Geffen Contemporary and PDC (from 9/16/01 through 01/20/02)—may require as much attention and drive time in order to see everything.

The exhibition showcases architecture currently under construction in Los Angeles, including Marmol & Radziner's high school in South Central, Koolhaas's Prada boutiques, and the new SCI-Arc campus. The Disney Concert Hall and the new Cathedral will be on view at MOCA's PDC gallery. A series of Art Talks will accompany the exhibition. Call MOCA for details (213) 621-2766, or visit www.moca.org. At the AIA/LA chapter office in the Wilshire Building, the entries for the new **U.S. Federal Courthouse Competition** in downtown Los Angeles will be on view from September 16th through November 1st. The entries include submittals by Perkins & Will/Chicago (winning entry); Rafael Vinoly; CannonDworsky; and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill/San Francisco. **UrbanMotif** at the **SPF Gallery** runs from September through December. The exhibition bridges art, urbanism, photography, and poetry and features work by Mario M. Vuller. The gallery (at SPF Architects) is located at 3384 Robertson Place, call (310) 558-0902 for details. Don't miss the **Masters of Architecture Lecture with Shigeru Ban** on October 4th at **LACMA**, 6:30 pm in the Bing Theater of the Ahmanson building. For tickets, call (323) 857-6010. Another not to be missed show is the "Paul Tuttle Designs" retrospective at the University Art Museum, UC Santa Barbara (10/09/01–01/13/02). The exhibition, designed by architect Robin Donaldson, is the first retrospective of Tuttle's remarkable 50-year career in furniture design and architecture. The Sixth Annual **Echo Park Arts Festival** is scheduled for October 13–14 along Echo Park Avenue with a variety of performances and events from 12 pm to 5 pm. Visit www.EchoParkArts.org for more information. If you want to do something nice for your four-footed friends, **PAWs/LA** will present an auction of art and photography at the Park Plaza Hotel on October 21, 2001. An elite pack has donated work including Ed Ruscha, William Wegman, Herb Ritts, Mary Ellen Mark, Dennis Hopper, John Baldessari, and Judy Chicago. Call (323) 876-7297 for more information and tickets. The **Great Alexander Weekend** in Palm Springs from November 2–4 will open with a cocktail party and reception at the Riviera Hotel followed by self-guided and guided tours of the 1950s and 60s homes built by the Alexander Construction Company. Julius Shulman will oversee the weekend's proceedings as Honorary Chairman. Call (760) 200-8684 or email PalmSpModern@aol.com for more information. The stereotype of Hollywood as glitz and façade will be challenged by historian **Thomas S. Hines** at a free lecture on November 4th, 2 pm at the Regency Biltmore Hotel. Call the Historical Society of Southern California at (323) 222-0546 for more information.



The Congregation, Mario M. Muller; *Urban Motif* Exhibition



Super Z-Chair, Paul Tuttle, Artist



Sergio Zenteno, Artist; *Echo Park Arts Festival*



John Spoor Broome Library, UC Channel Islands
Foster and Partners, London

Corrections

On page 12 of our July/August 2001 issue, the John Spoor Broome Library at UC Channel Islands is properly credited to Foster and Partners, London, and the correct reference to Norman Foster is Lord Foster of Thames Bank. On page 42, we apologize for not only giving Rafael Moneo a new first name in the photo caption, but also a new job at Morley Construction. Perhaps the oversight with eternal ramifications will be our omission of His Eminence Cardinal Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles from the caption, although he is partially visible. The correct caption should read: (L-R) His Eminence Cardinal Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles; Hayden Salter, Rafael Moneo's representative in Los Angeles; Rafael Moneo; Michael Minukin, Chief Superintendent for Morley Construction. Also, Mary Eaves-Mitchell's article credits Leo A. Daly as Executive Architect for the Los Angeles Convention Center expansion, but in fact, Daly/Robert E. McKee was Project Manager. Gruen Associates was the Executive Architect. Last but not least, Michael Webb did not discover a mysterious person in drag taking notes on the outskirts of Marfa; instead, the reference to "Diary Queen" should have been to "Dairy Queen" (page 49).



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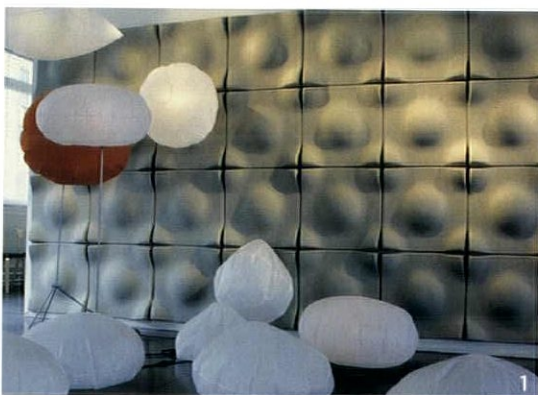
3) THE PUZZLE SCREEN received a design distinction award in ID Magazine's 2001 awards program. The screen acts as a freestanding room divider and can be assembled and disassembled in minutes without the need for tools or fasteners. It is available in Birch ply, or 14 guage steel, powder coated white. The pictured screen is Birch, 74" tall x 86" wide, although pieces can be added or subtracted for larger or smaller versions.

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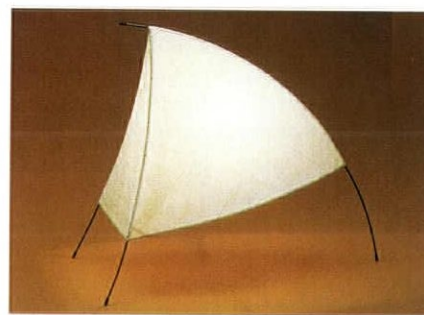
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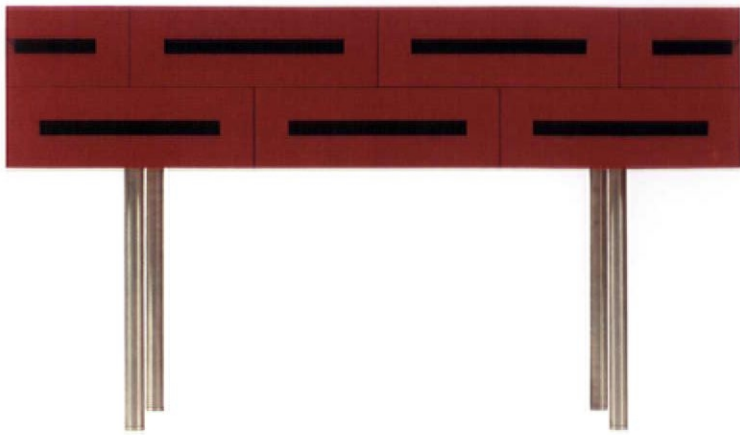


2) The CHIP chair by Snowcrash is a modern version of the traditional rocker. Like a surfboard, Chip works with the body and can be used in different positions. By adjusting balance with small body movements, one quickly finds the most comfortable position. Lean all the way back and relax with your feet up, or sit forward to watch your favorite movie.

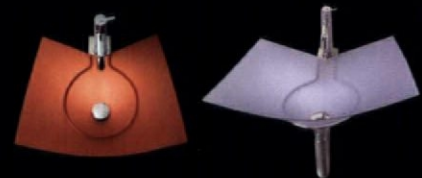


YAMAGIWA is best known for its flawless reproductions of Frank Lloyd Wright light fixtures, few are aware that they also represent some elegant modern fixtures from top Japanese designers. La Foglia table lamp was designed in 1993 by Fumio Enomoto and is based on ancient papermaking techniques. It is also available in a sconce.

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An Urban Courthouse for the 21st Century

ON AUGUST 7, 2000, THE GSA FORMALLY ANNOUNCED A DESIGN competition for the design of a new Los Angeles Federal Courthouse building. The Civic Center of Los Angeles—eight blocks east to west and seven blocks north to south, is America's largest government complex after Washington DC. The new Federal Building will contain 1,016,000 square feet, constructed to meet the 10-year requirements of the District Court and court-related agencies on a site large enough to accommodate a 30-year expansion plan. The downtown site is bounded by Broadway and Hill, and First and Second Streets, and the project is anticipated to cost more than \$300 million.

Selection of the lead designer and Architecture/ Engineering team involved a rigorous, three-stage process with four teams ultimately invited to the final stage. These included Craig Hartman of SOM/San Francisco; Ralph Johnson of Perkins & Will/Chicago and Santa Monica; Rafael Viñoly of Rafael Viñoly/New York; and Mehrdad Yazdani of CannonDworsky/Los Angeles. An independent jury of peers conducted the review—Thom Mayne (chair), Morphosis/Santa Monica; William Pederesen, KPF/New York; Peter Bohlin, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson/Wilkes-Barre, PA; and Joseph Giovannini, architect and critic—and made the final recommendation. Richard Koshalek, President of the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, served as the GSA's competition advisor.



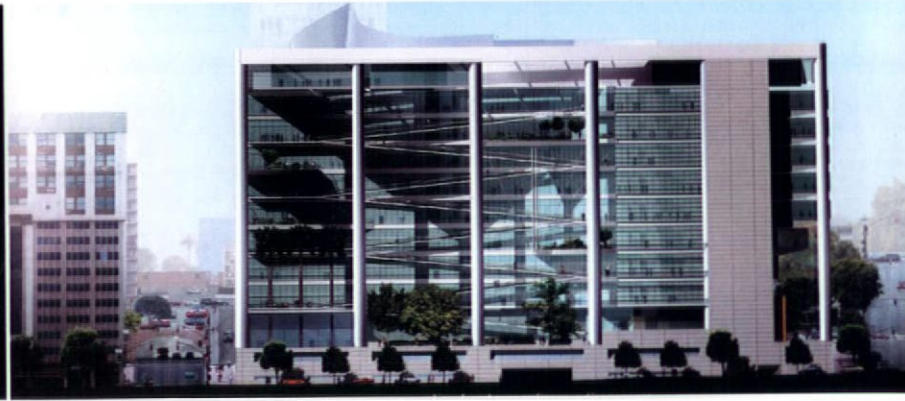
MEHRDAD YAZDANI/CANNONDWORSKY

Based on four criteria—community context, architectural strategy and image, functionality, and sustainable design—the jury unanimously selected the submission by Ralph Johnson and Perkins & Will. The jury felt that Johnson's scheme presented a strong icon for the city and community. The L-shaped structure, fronted with a slanted curving glass wall and vertical atrium facing Broadway, established an embracing and welcoming space. The scheme brought light into the building and had a clear relationship to its surroundings and thoughtful orientation to City Hall.

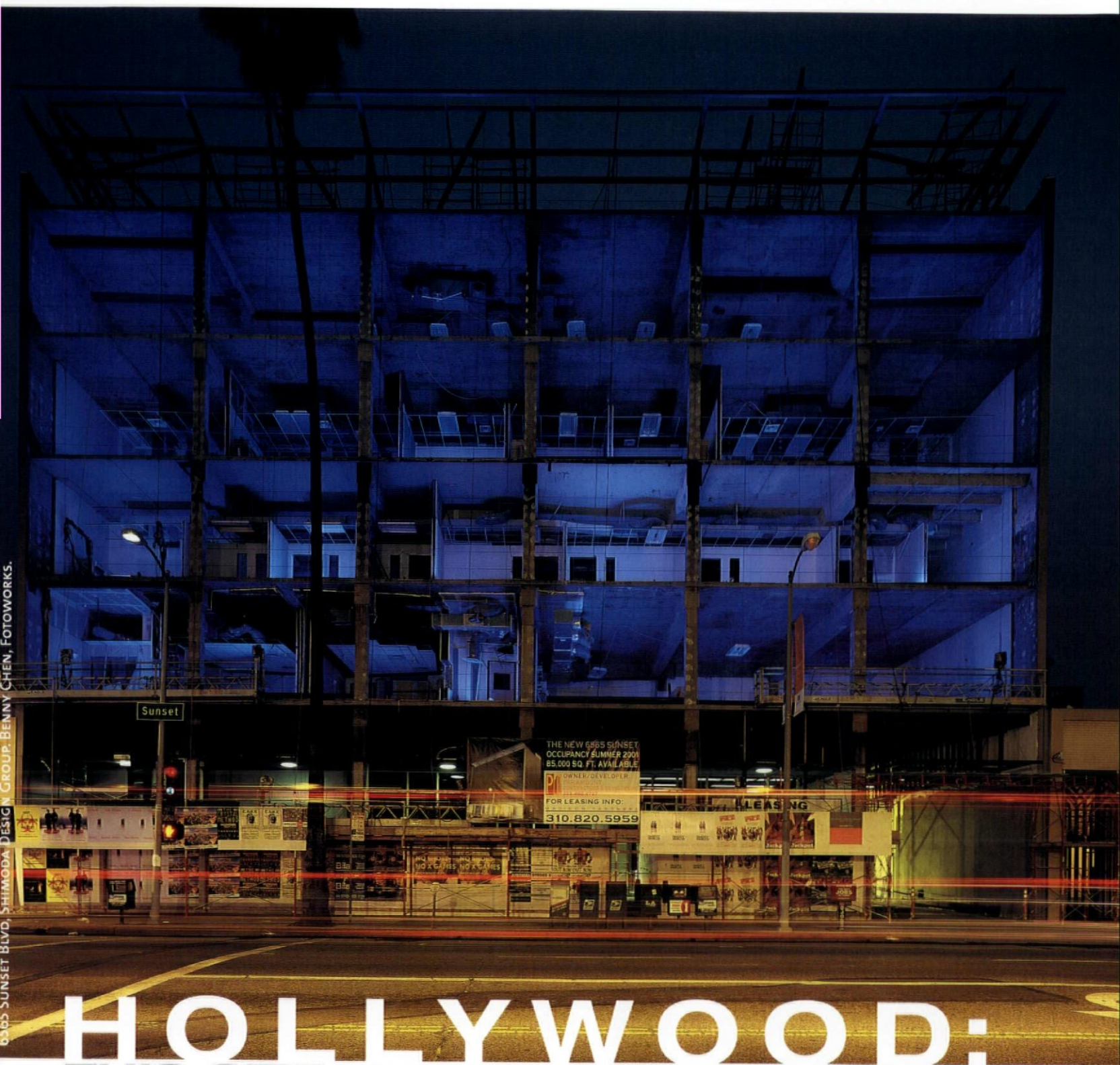
The competition boards will be on view at the AIA/LA Chapter office from September 16–November 1, 2001.



CRAIG HARTMAN/SKIDMORE OWINGS & MERRILL



RAFAEL VIÑOLY



0.605 SUNSET BLVD. SHIMODA DESIGN GROUP. BENNY CHEN, FOTOWORKS.

HOLLYWOOD:

THIS SITE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

by Ann Gray

TOURING HOLLYWOOD TODAY, THE FIRST STRIKING THING IS THAT the entire neighborhood seems to be under construction. Hollywood Boulevard is virtually a canyon of construction barricades. My tour—in a top-down convertible, of course—was guided by Peyton Hall, a historic preservation architect with Historic Resources Group. With offices on Whitley Avenue just off Hollywood Boulevard, Hall has seen sudden and gradual changes throughout Hollywood over the past six years but now feels more optimistic, and less cautiously so, than he has in the past. The current renovations seem to spring from economic forces and well-motivated property owners rather than the heavy handed, but well-intentioned, efforts of the CRA. With the subway work mostly complete, lush street trees, and a healthy inventory of community service programs in place, land values are up and Hollywood is primed to reach its long-imagined potential.

Hall attributes much of the increased traffic and improved restaurant fare to several successfully renovated historic theaters along the Boulevard. Except for the sadly underused Pacific Theater, all of the great palaces have been put back into service—a situation considered financially impossible 10 years ago when theater operators declared the large stand-alones deadlier than the dinosaurs. Hall is particularly proud of The Egyptian. Its complicated transformation into the American Cinematheque (Hodgetts + Fung) has won virtually every preservation award, including a prestigious National Trust award. A \$6 million seismic renovation of Grauman's Chinese is underway involving the removal of offensive street front signage, and relocation of the projection system and concession stands. No one should underestimate the positive effects of Disney's leap of faith in meticulously restoring the El Capitan in 1991.

Nearby, Frank Lloyd Wright's Freeman House (owned by USC) is finally being restored with seed money from FEMA and the Getty Trust. The Hollywood Bowl has undergone a series of small improvement projects and now begins the ultimate improvement—replacement of the band shell. Griffith Observatory is undergoing a facelift, and the Cinerama Dome will become the centerpiece of a major retail complex designed by Gensler. At the northwest corner of Sunset and Vine, another major retail project has been cleared and will incorporate the façade of the streamline moderne Taft Theater Building. Capitol Records has recommitted to their location and plans additions to architect Lou Naidorf's elegant stack of records. Of course, Musso & Frank never needs restoring because, as Hall puts it, "it never changes."

In the heart of Hollywood, many smaller projects have quietly taken shape, and without the fanfare given to Trizec Hahn's Hollywood/Highland project, will ultimately become the real saviors of America's beloved Boulevard. Tom Gilmore's 6253 Hollywood Boulevard office building is now leasing and, as the first major office space to come on line, should benefit from a backlog of demand. Tagfront Architects has lovingly rehabilitated a small,

glazed terracotta building at 6356 Hollywood Blvd. Next door, the Palmer Building is a classic example of Hollywood's layering of style upon style upon style as the Boulevard changes façades like an actress in a costume drama. Clearly visible along its sides, the Palmer displays neat rows of double-hung windows and poured-in-place concrete indicative of a 1920s office block. The front is layered with a surprisingly competent 1950s geometric skin, and below a shiny new storefront promises long life for a sturdy survivor.

Hollywood's oldest surviving residential structure (built in the teens) is boarded up at the northwest corner of Hollywood and Hudson. The Hillview Apartments were so damaged by the subway's soil failure and the 1994 earthquake that they appear ready to collapse at the slightest puff of wind and are tightly girdled with pipes and chain link. Recognizing their historic importance and lovely Italianate architecture, the owner has hired Historic Resources Group to help him through the difficult restoration process. These are the real love stories of Hollywood.

At 6712 next to the Egyptian Theater, the restored Pig'n Whistle restaurant attracts a hip crowd. At 1650 Highland, the Max Factor Makeup Studio is boarded up waiting for final permits to begin its life as home of the Hollywood History Museum.

The Trizec Hahn project at Hollywood and Highland is a major mixed-use development with a hotel, retail and a premier theater for the Oscars designed by Ehrenkranz Eckstut Kuhn with Altoon + Porter. "It's supposed to be the west coast equivalent of the turnaround of Times Square, which means that the tourists that come here from around the world will have somewhere to go. We won't have to ashamed of Hollywood anymore. The conventional wisdom is that the Hollywood/Highland project will save Hollywood," Hall muses, "but if, God forbid, it fails, will Hollywood fail? I don't think so. Hollywood has never suffered from vacancies. Granted the street had too many tee-shirt shops but someone was buying those tee-shirts. It has always been a vibrant area. It was vibrant 5 years ago, and it will be vibrant 5 years from now."



PIG 'N WHISTLE



HOLLYWOOD/HIGHLAND



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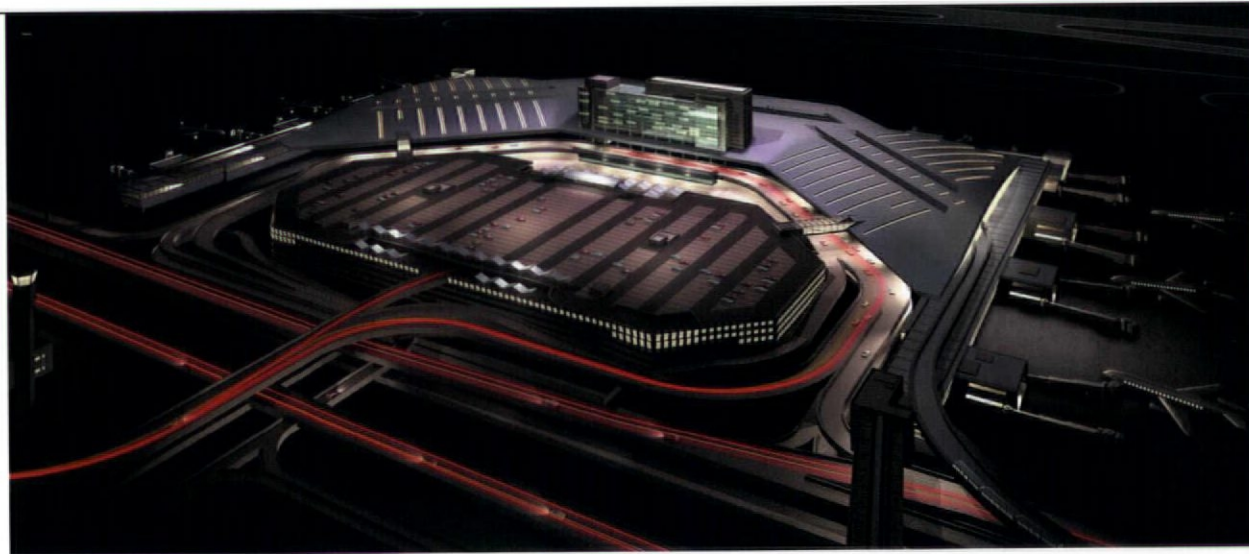
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SPF Architects' renovation of the Pantages was completed in eleven months to meet the opening date of Disney's *The Lion King*. Photography - John Linden

Cultural REVOLUTION

by Lisa Rosen

I really think that for too long, people have bought into the idea that we [L.A.] are not a cultural city. We've been told that by others. It's over. It's a myth of the past. We have evolved into something different. I think people should become aware of that and participate in it. Look around, it's all over the place. —LEONARD NIMOY, ACTOR

RIGHT NOW, THE CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT OF LOS ANGELES IS UNDERGOING A THOROUGH renovation. The work runs the gamut from protected icon to neglected artwork, from painstaking rehabilitation to radical reinterpretation of existing space. The number and range of projects do not simply attest to a boom in physical restoration; they represent a deeper, cultural transformation taking place in L.A.

In addition to being perceived as culturally provincial, Los Angeles has been denigrated for its lack of a center: the city has no heart. The city itself seems to have acknowledged this as a drawback, constantly pushing downtown as its core, to little avail. Yet city-wide, renovation work signifies that this absence need not be seen negatively. Instead of just one heart, L.A.'s sprawl allows for several all over town.

Located in Westwood, the UCLA Hammer Museum is well positioned to provide a cultural center for UCLA and the neighborhood, as well as the world at large. However, the present space—with its disjointed galleries and unwieldy entrances—does little to facilitate such interaction. Extensive renovation plans by principal architect Michael Maltzan, graphic designer Bruce Mau, and landscape architect Petra Blaisse, reconfigure the first floor to be entirely accessible to the public, with a gently sloping courtyard opening the museum out to the street at both the Wilshire and Westwood entrances. "The museum's challenges become advantages," Maltzan says, "weaving together all the disparate elements into a common cultural and public space." In addition to its permanent collection, the museum's Hammer



Projects presents emerging artists, sometimes booking shows only 3 months in advance. "In L.A., museums are young enough not to be bound by traditional models," Director Ann Philbin points out, "so there's the freedom to define and invent new institutional structures as you go along." The goals of the Hammer's programming blend seamlessly with the goals of the renovation, which is set to begin in the spring of 2002.

UCLA HAMMER MUSEUM—Courtyard Entry (above) and Lindbrook Entry (right), Michael Maltzan Architecture

There are over 300 museums in greater Los Angeles, more museums per capita than any other city in the world.

More than \$1.6 billion has been spent on museum construction in L.A. in the last 10 years.

There are more paintings by Degas housed in the Norton Simon Museum than there are in Paris.

In mid-Wilshire, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) is seeking architectural coherence. The museum has outgrown its three original buildings (built in 1965) in trying to keep up with its expanding collection. Presently the whole is less than the sum of its parts, confusing visitors as they try to navigate the jumble of galleries. The need to bring unity to the campus became greater still with the addition of the former May Company building. LACMA has selected five architectural firms to compete for the renovation commission: Steven Holl Architects (New York), Rem Koolhaas (Rotterdam), Daniel Libeskind (Berlin), Thom Mayne/Morphosis (Los Angeles), and Jean Nouvel (Paris). The firms will make presentations in September, and the Board of Trustees will make their decision later in the fall. LACMA spokesperson Keith McKeown sees the addition of the May Company building as a stroke of luck unlikely to occur anywhere but L.A. "Most large urban museums are bound in by their geography, where here, this is a unique opportunity to have this large property that's contiguous to our current campus." Once again, L.A. sprawl to the rescue. "It was also great to save a real treasure of Art Moderne architecture that came very close to being torn down."

At the Hollywood Bowl, an icon is to be torn down in order that it may be saved. The 1929 shell, the fourth one built, is so acoustically poor that musicians are unable to hear each other. Patricia Mitchell, Chief Operating Office of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, points out that "[Hollywood Bowl Orchestra conductor] John Mauceri has a phone by the podium, when he picks it up during the concert he's not ordering pizza, he's calling the sound booth to say I can see the trumpets but I can't hear them." Numerous efforts over the years have not solved the problem. After eighteen months of extensive studies, the Philharmonic and design architects Craig Hodgetts and Ming Fung had to accept that the present shell, a steel frame clad in asbestos cement, could not be successfully renovated. Hodgetts and Fung went to work designing a new, larger shell with exceptional acoustics.

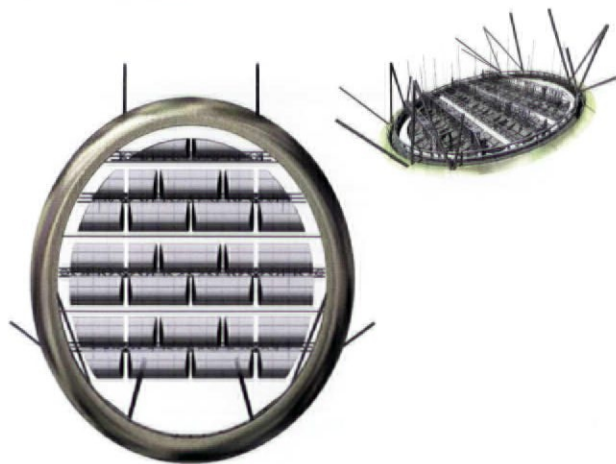
To that end, they created an "acoustical cloud," a disc that hangs thirty feet above the performers, reflecting sound uniformly. The disc even adjusts to the atmospheric changes at the outdoor venue. Mitchell praises the designers' work. "They've given great care and attention to the iconic value of the shell, while still giving it its own architectural character." Work will most likely begin at the end of the 2002 summer season.

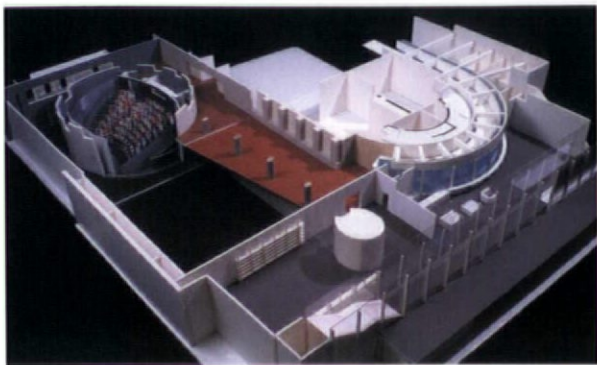


Above: The Hollywood Bowl as it exists today.



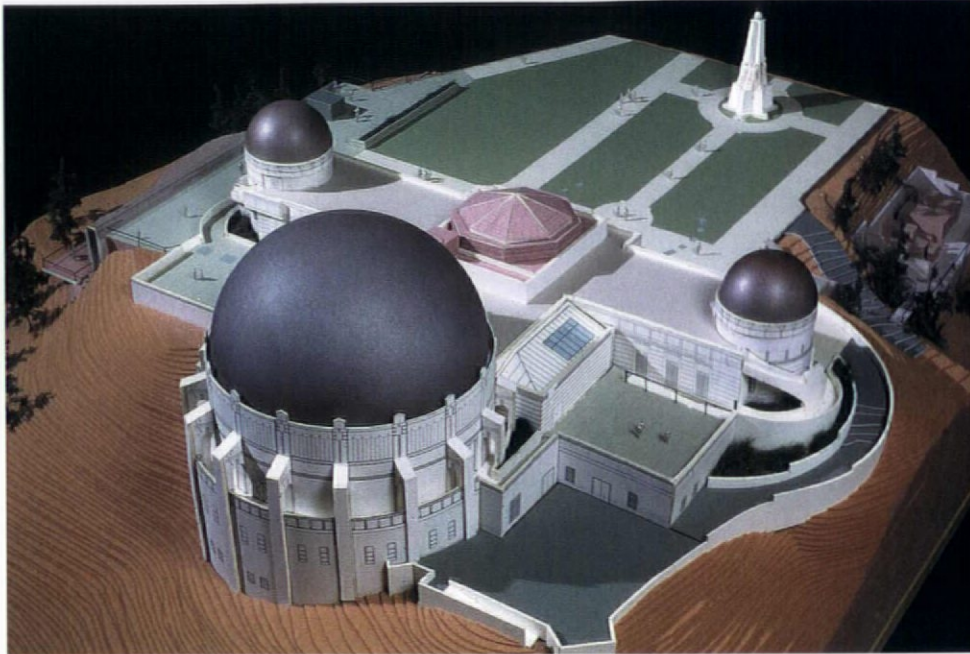
HOLLYWOOD BOWL—Above: The new shell by Hodgetts + Fung. No stranger to replacement, the present shell is the fourth one built. Hodgetts + Fung's new, larger shell will house a technological marvel—an "acoustical cloud" that will hang thirty feet above the performers and will bounce sound back uniformly. The disc will even adjust to atmospheric changes at the outdoor venue. Left: The "acoustical cloud" or disc.





A few miles east in Griffith Park, the Griffith Observatory awaits expansion designed by architect Stephen Johnson of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates. The ingenious construction, occurring under the front lawn, will double the size of the facility while leaving the original building intact. Rehabilitation of the observatory will be undertaken by associated architect Brenda Levin of Levin and Associates. Lending some distinctly Angeleno flavor to the project are Leonard and Susan Nimoy, who have donated one million dollars toward a new theater, the Leonard Nimoy Event Horizon. Star power to help fund star power. "The fact that an icon and institution like the Griffith is now ready for refurbishing like this, tells us that there's finally some maturity here, and we are actually developing a history," notes Leonard Nimoy.

A completed renovation that attests to that belief is the Pantages Theater, one of the grand Art Deco buildings of Los Angeles. The Pantages project was driven by economic forces: the theater's owner had booked the L.A. premiere of "The Lion King" pending a complete renovation. Zoltan Pali, a principal in the L.A. firm SPF:architects, restored the theater to its former glory in only 11 months, just in time for the play's opening night. The job was the first purely conservation work that Pali had done, and he found the process liberating. "After all, one of the most difficult things is to put pencil to a blank piece of paper," he laughs. The stunning results won an L.A. Conser-



GRIFFITH PARK OBSERVATORY—Above: The Griffith Observatory, which opened in 1935 and was originally designed by Austin and Ashley, is considered to be Art Deco with "modified Greek" influences. The new planetarium will be housed fully within the historic architectural dome. The new interior structure will be a 75-foot diameter perforated metal acoustical dome and 300 reclining seats. Nearly all of the new public spaces will be located underground. Left: The Leonard Nimoy Event Horizon will be a 200-seat theater used for special lectures, demonstrations, and astronomical and cosmological multi-media productions.

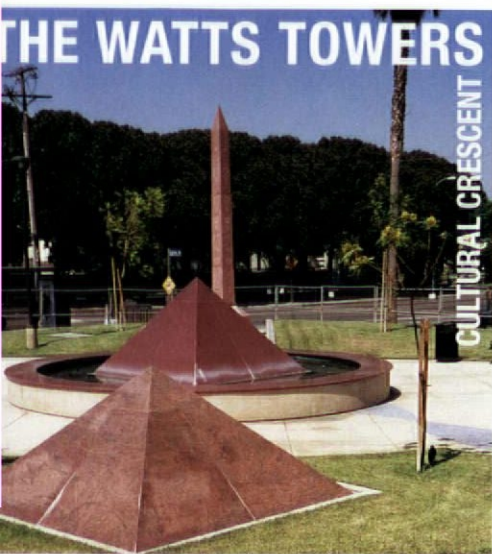
The thing about all of these institutions is they're still perceived as private clubs—the kids from L.A. Unified are bussed to these places, but the parents don't take them there. Art and music are part of our spirit, the key is how early you are exposed to it, and how you let people know they are welcome there. Outreach is the key.

—JOE ADDO, ARCHITECT



SPF: a stripped the interior to bare plaster, and then entirely redecorated, down to the gold leaf application. Photography: John Linden.

Can a renovated landmark help rehabilitate a neighborhood?



THE WATTS TOWERS CULTURAL CRESCENT

is a small strip of land that holds great dreams for the community. Various local groups have been working for years with L.A.'s Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to use the newly restored Watts Towers as the anchor for a community arts, education, and entertainment center. What has been created so far is an open-air museum, designed by principal architect Robert Takata and architect Joe Addo, that begins at the historic Watts train station next to the 103rd Street Blue Line station. An adjacent Gateway Plaza holds three small pyramids and an obelisk, referencing ancient Egypt and Nubia. A blue tile paved Nile Walk wends its way through the rest of the Crescent. Passing a short bike path, the Nile Walk reaches a small plaza and amphitheater, where performances such as the Watts Jazz Festival can be held. Engraved in black granite on the back walls of the amphitheater is a timeline of people and events that have shaped the history of Watts.

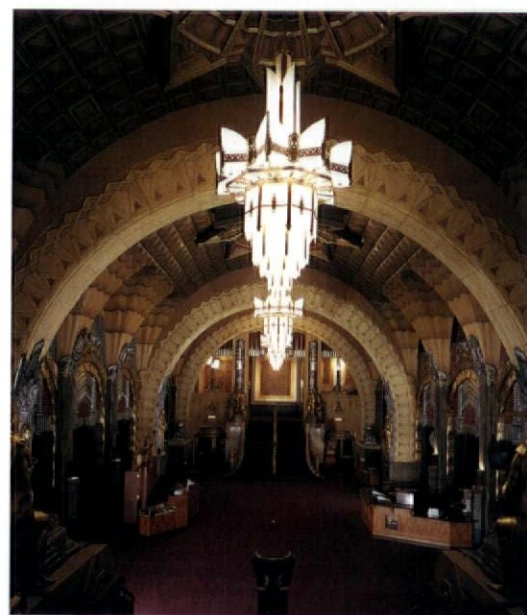
As attractive as the setting is, the Cultural Crescent is far from complete. Plans—to transform the train station into a transportation museum, to put a canopy on the sun-baked

vancy 2001 Historic Preservation Award. The theater's success suggests that with the right combination of owner, client, and architect, L.A.'s wealth of grand theaters in downtown could also be restored in an economically viable manner.

From months to decades, the path to restoration of the Watts Towers has not been so smooth. Soaring, intricately woven structures, decorated with shells, broken glass and pottery, the Towers are a world-renowned work of art; yet, they have been surrounded by scaffolding and various efforts at restoration for 28 years. As Watts Towers Art Center director Mark Greenfield likes to joke, "It took Simon Rodia 33 years to build the Towers, it's only taken 28 years to restore them." The work is slow in part because the concrete-covered steel frame has partially rusted through, and the State's original attempt at restoration was to fill cracks, making the problem worse. The present work involves cutting away whole sections, inserting metal, then reapplying concrete and the original decorations. The Towers are set to reopen on September 28th, a victory for the supporters of the Towers who have persevered for years to see the work accomplished. The Watts community has also been renovating the area around the Towers with a project called the Cultural Crescent. Designed by landscape architect Robert Takata and architect Joe Addo, they hope to create an arts center that will invigorate the surrounding neighborhood. (See sidebar)

Downtown, another architectural wonder is motivating community leaders to renovate the area around it. The excitement bouncing off the walls of Frank Gehry's Walt Disney Concert Hall has inspired plans to realign Grand Avenue. "We had been thinking about how to best approach the fact that we had a 21st century building, and an original campus that was very reflective of 1960s architecture," Joanne Kozberg, president of the Music Center, explains. "How do we bring these two extraordinary blocks together, and engage the community?" At the Music Center's request, Frank Gehry formed a group of the designers whose work is also seen along Grand Avenue: Arata Isozaki, architect for the Museum of Contemporary Art; Laurie Olin, landscape architect; Rafael Moneo, architect for the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels; real estate developer Stuart Ketchum; and Altoon + Porter Architects serving as Executive Architects. The proposed pedestrian-friendly plans would turn the Avenue into a sweeping esplanade, lower the entrance to the Music Center plaza to street level, and ultimately transform the area between the Pavilion and City Hall into an 11-acre urban arts park. It's an enormous vision, to be implemented in a number of practical stages. It's also a nod to L.A.'s car culture, that a redesigned street could become integral to cultural improvement.

"There often are pioneers who establish a new vision for the city in bits and pieces," says Maltzan, "which then creates a broader wildfire." The first sparks of this present activity started over 20 years ago.



PANTAGES—Much of the work involved fixing the mistakes of a 1970s renovation. In order to bring the interior lobby back to its original state, Pali removed a circular concession stand that had been built in the center of the room. Photography: John Linden.

There are more Frank Lloyd Wright buildings in L.A. than in any other city in the world.

There are more than 1,100 theatrical openings a year at 250 theaters in L.A. More than 4 million tickets to L.A. theaters are sold annually

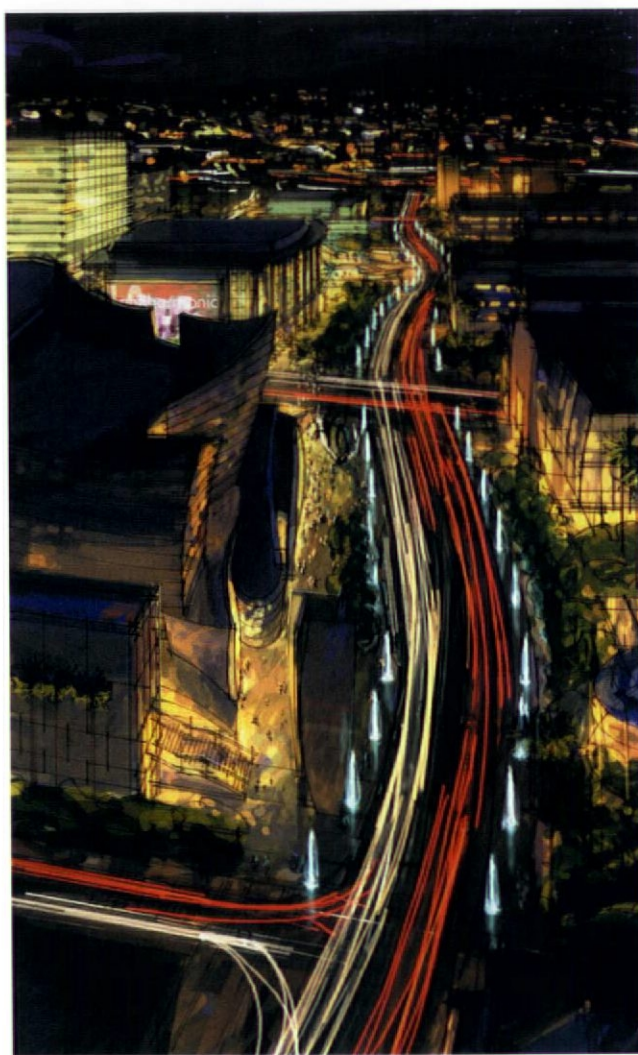
Twice as much money is spent on cultural activities than on sports activities.

People like Fred Fisher, Michael Maltzan, Frank Gehry of course—these are international architects, not local anymore.

That's the thing that's changing.

They are not regional anymore; they're seen as part of the international culture.

—ANN PHILBIN DIRECTOR,
UCLA HAMMER MUSEUM



GRAND AVENUE MASTER PLAN—The grand plan for Grand Avenue would bring together various cultural institutions by linking them with a pedestrian oriented streetscape.

Brenda Levin is key to the present interest in preservation. Building by building, Oviatt by Wiltern by Bradbury, her work showed the value of restoration, and caught the public's attention. Levin in turn credits the L.A. Conservancy for their tremendous efforts in saving the city's historic buildings and changing public attitudes. The '84 Olympics are widely recognized as the beginning of the transformation of the city into a cultural center, as is Isozaki's MoCA, and Richard Meier's design for the Getty Center. The end of the Cold War and the downsized defense industry played a part in re-balancing the city, as did the recession of the 1980s. Even the enormous growth of the city's population has helped build the current momentum.

Now that the city is coming into its own, what comes next? Philbin hopes that the public will take a more active part in financially supporting the arts. Joe Addo envisions museum satellites, at places like the Watts Cultural Crescent, making the cultural offerings of the city more accessible to everyone. Levin is bullish about the future of downtown and is hopeful that battles such as that over City Hall's restoration never again have to be waged. Pali hopes that by saving cultural monuments, society will be encouraged to make better buildings in the first place. The combination of preservation and new design does signal a city that is becoming balanced, as proud of its past as it is hopeful for its future. "We need to realize that what is happening here is being watched around the world, a very new city has the potential to crystallize itself and finally live up to its potential," Maltzan says. "It'll be an incredible story if it's successful." ■

amphitheater, to create an open-air market, a movie theater complex with space for multimedia training, in short to create a thriving cultural center—still need funding. The parties involved are confident that the rest of the development will take place—eventually. "Nothing in Watts happens overnight," says Watts Towers Art Center director Mark Greenfield. "I've got Cultural Crescent plans that go back to the mid-70s, and they're just now happening."

The Watts Towers are central to the redevelopment plan. Even while closed, the landmark drew about 20,000 visitors yearly from all over the world. That number will surely grow upon the reopening in September. An active Crescent could benefit from and develop that tourist base. It could also go far in changing the negative perception that most outsiders have held about Watts since the 1965 riots. "In order to market the Towers as a tourist attraction, you've got to make people feel they're going to be relatively safe here," says Greenfield. "I've been coming here for 8 years and I haven't had a problem yet, but that's not to say it couldn't happen tomorrow, and that's not to say it couldn't happen on Melrose." As helpful as tourist dollars and an improved public image would be, the biggest goal of the Crescent goes much deeper. Roy Willis was CRA project manager from 1987 to 1999, and considers the Crescent one of the most satisfying projects of his career. "How many people have a chance to help create and renovate their own community in their own image?" Willis asks. "That's the significance. I'd like the people outside to appreciate about Watts, but it's more meaningful that people inside of Watts participated fully in improving their neighborhood." The Crescent is in a state of flux, much like the surrounding community. Nobody believes that an arts center will solve all the problems, but everyone hopes that it will create an economic turnaround and a focal point for civic pride. The Cultural Crescent speaks to the vision, perseverance, and spirit of a community.

—Lisa Rosen



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design	Varenna

countertop	steel
doors	grafite embossed lacquer
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hood	Piatta

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Low embodied energy, natural, local and non-toxic materials of pigmented stucco, unpainted plaster and concrete, bonderized sheet metal, syndecrete, translucent glass, beech flooring and exposed vertical grain fir cabinets comprise the palette for this house.



The 7,500 sq. ft. house is a case study in innovative environmental materials, methods and systems. Features include a solar domestic pool and radiant heating for slate floors, natural ventilation strategies, including heat recovery and exhaust by solar chimney, engineered wood products, trusses and steel framing, recycled lumber, high performance heat mirror glazing, cotton insulation and zero-VOC paint.

Cool Efficiency in Bel Air

by Michael Webb

DAVID HERTZ ESTABLISHED HIS SANTA Monica firm, Syndesis, in 1984, after graduating from SCI-Arc, apprenticing to John Lautner, and interning with Frank Gehry. Some admirers of his inventive, environmentally sensitive houses wish he had devoted more time to architecture and less to the production and marketing of Syndecrete®, his patented lightweight concrete, which he has employed for kitchens, bathrooms and commercial spaces. Though important as a demonstration of how waste materials can be recycled and used for integral decoration, it has distracted him from building and (as he now acknowledges) can realize its full potential only if it is licensed for mass production.

However, Hertz's practice is now surging, and one of his more exciting achievements is the 7,500 sq. ft. house he recently completed in Bel Air. Entrepreneur Keith Lehrer (formerly a drummer in the

punk rock band Circle Jerks and now CEO of an eyeglass company) gave the architect a free hand, asking only that he create a calming, ordered space that would serve as a restorative after his frequent business trips. He applauded the architect's concern to make energy efficiency one of the determinants of the design, which involved a radical remodel of the existing 1950s ranch house. The street façade is reticent, but the interior opens up in back through walls of glass to hills and a distant view of downtown. Existing trees at the edge of the lawn were removed to leave a solitary pine, sculpted by a Japanese gardener. The pool leads one's gaze to the reservoir at the base of the canyon.

Throughout the house, there is a constant alternation of tight enclosure and unfettered space, and a Japanese aesthetic that infuses the simplest forms. Cubist fireplaces, furnishings, and art works

enrich expansive surfaces and serve as scaling devices. From the stone-flagged entry, which suggests a rock crevice, one steps into a loft-like living area with a sunken seating area that allows an unbroken view of the horizon from across the room. An intimate dining area, open kitchen and family room are tucked in beneath the second-floor master suite, and a skylit corridor leads to a library and guest rooms.

A curved wall, covered in steel-troweled black cement, cuts through the house,







The roof of the living room and master bedroom (left) are constructed out of recycled timbers, detailed to create an exposed and honest expression of the framing and structural system and their connections.

dividing the high volumes from the low, and doubling as a south-facing wall for heat collection. This plays off crisp white and Syndecrete®-clad walls, floors of wide-planked beech or polished concrete, an exposed ceiling vault of fir beams, and handsome built-in cabinets. Stairs and an elevator cage of perforated steel lead up to the master suite and a rooftop belvedere. This open shaft serves as a solar chimney that evacuates hot air, or recirculates it through a heat recovery ventilator and the open steel truss ductless plenum of the second floor.

Light floods or filters in from every side, blurring the divide between house and landscape, and three skylit glass cylinders pull light down to the kitchen. The dining room looks into a walled Zen garden that shuts out the forecourt. Hertz designed a table in the form of a wooden slab that can be raised and lowered hydraulically, allowing guests to be

seated on floor cushions or on Jacobsen chairs. Scrim-shaded ceiling lights provide a soft glow at night. The white cubist sculptures of Kasimir Malevich, which the artist dubbed "prouns," may have inspired the geometric cutaways of steel-troweled and waxed plaster on a wood frame that surround the fireplace in the library. Their blocky forms conceal speakers and shelves.

On the second floor, a gallery overlooks the living room, and wire strings that can be bowed like a giant bass are mounted on a section of the curved wall that leads on to a gym and music room. The master bedroom is cantilevered over a terrace and juts into the treetops to maximize views. Hertz designed the platform bed with its flaps and side tables of straight grain fir, integrating this with the room. Foliage casts its shadows on the translucent glass of the bathroom and dressing area. ▀



The 40' perforated steel, woven wire fabric and mesh stair and elevator core creates an open shaft which is used as a solar chimney to exhaust and recover heat which collects at the high ceilings of the living room and master bedroom.

CLIENT: Keith Lehrer

ARCHITECT: Syndesis, Inc.—David Randall Hertz, AIA; Sergio Zeballos; David Thompson

MODEL: Al Binn

CONTRACTOR: Michael MacDowell

STRUCTURAL: Parker/Resnick

MECHANICAL: RA Marks

LANDSCAPING: Robert Cornell + Associates

PHOTOGRAPHY: Tom Bonner

MANUFACTURERS/SUPPLIERS: Trus Joist; MacMillan; Southwall Technologies; Carrier Corporation; Scholfield Solar; Glidden Paint Company; Post-Consumer Products







Re-Cycled

Sooahoo Designers
by Shimoda Design Group

IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE THAT THE CLUTTER of bicycle repair once filled this pristine, minimal space. Soohoo Designers' building is a well-disguised modern intervention in Torrance's downtown redevelopment zone, an area characterized by Spanish/Mediterranean style buildings and an "old town" feel. Shimoda Design Group has transformed the 3,600 sq. ft. former bike shop into a sleek environment that is consistent with Soohoo's image and award-winning work.



In spring 2000, Patrick Soohoo purchased the one and a half story brick building with the hope of moving his core studio into a more creative and inspirational workspace. (Soohoo Designers is a creative strategy and graphic design firm.) Up to that point, the firm had occupied a typical floor in a typical high rise in north Torrance. The bike shop provided a great venue in that the existing space had high ceilings, a mezzanine and an abundance of circular skylights that bathed the raw space with natural light. Soohoo and his Creative Director, Kathy Hirata, outlined a number of objectives for each area of the space and began to develop a plan and program for the new studio. They collected ideas and images for the interior and exterior of the new office; however, it became apparent that the design and execution of the new space would require more time and energy than either of them had expected. On June 7th, they gave Shimoda Design Group the opportunity

to develop their objectives with a very modest budget and a requested move-in date of October 27th.

The design team quickly proposed several alternatives for the renovation of the façade and the redefinition of the interior. Due to time constraints, construction was phased in order to complete the interior as soon as possible. The façade was stripped of its storefront coverings and painted white with a modest red awning built over the existing front door. The bulk of the renovation focused on the interior space.

The existing brick shared walls provided a warm, rough-hewn backdrop to newly inserted translucent offices and open workstations. Like phosphorescent jellyfish, these carefully placed items capture and optimize the light from existing skylights. The selection of building materials was based on a desire to maintain as much natural light as possible. Once inside, the reception area maintains a degree of formality while

allowing glimpses of the studio beyond. The "as is" quality of the brick walls contrasts the refined look of the bamboo flooring and the curvilinear, iridescent reception desk. The visitor seating area is adjacent to the glow of the creative director's office, and from the outset, the visitor is bathed in the energy of the workspace without actually being in it. A hidden door provides access to a conference room that acts as the storefront display. The inhabitants are veiled by a white mechoshade nested in a brightly painted red wall. From Marcelina Avenue, one can see a presentation unfold.

Not only does the transparency of the space maximize natural light, but it also encourages the perception of "big space" in the narrow, 28' by 98' building. The ground level contains two offices and six open workstations. Each station is custom built with translucent fluorescent light dividers and overhead bookshelves. The corridor connecting the server room, restrooms and production room to the studio space is lined with the owner's extensive collection of antique masks. The mezzanine level contains three offices and four open workstations. The renovation also included new restrooms, pantry, HVAC system and new data and telecom infrastructure.

Soohoo Designers realizes that the message of its work is communicated on many levels. Through Shimoda Design Group's efforts, the firm is able to effectively convey the right blend of sophistication, style and attention to detail that is characteristic of its projects. ■ —DR

CLIENT: Soohoo Designers; Patrick Soohoo, Owner; Kathy Hirata, Creative Director

ARCHITECT: Shimoda Design Group
Joey Shimoda, AIA; Angela Fleming; Ling Sun

CONTRACTOR: CSB Contractors

MILLWORK: Cabinets Inc.

FLOORING: Bamboo 54 Inc. and Durkan Carpets

PLASTIC GLAZING: Polygal

PHOTOGRAPHY: Benny Chan, Fotoworks





Water flows out of the central eight-foot circular disk in the plaza at the uppermost corner of the site. The plaza is paved with random flagstone and furnished with two, poured-in-place concrete seat walls. Planting includes indigenous trees, ornamental grasses, lavender, and California poppies.

River Garden Park

Calvin R. Abe Associates' Microcosm of the L.A. River

WITH ARCHED COLONNADES, CLOISTERED courtyards and lush gardens, Lawry's California Center resembled a Spanish-style estate rather than a typical corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility. According to Kathleen Bullard, director of the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens, Lawry's corporate restructuring in 1992 resulted in the abandonment of the cultural landmark and the loss of 600 jobs.

After seven years, the development of a retail facility threatened the gardens and courtyards. "The community was up in arms," said Bullard. "Home Depot

was going to bulldoze the site, and the community did not want to see it destroyed." An innovative solution was found after the community spoke to its representatives, and subsequently, the property was subdivided. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMCC) purchased the part of the site that contained the smaller buildings and gardens. Their funding stipulated that the land become the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens, and the old corporate buildings were sold to Home Depot as a retail facility to recapture jobs that

had been lost. Today, the SMCC and other non-profit environmental and conservation organizations are housed on the site, as well as the Community Technology and Education Center, an organization that offers low-cost, short-term training courses.

In 1999, the SMCC asked the Los Angeles chapter of the ASLA to conduct a pro bono, community design charrette to plan the River Garden Center. Fortunately, the local organization was looking for a community project to design for display at the ASLA's national conven-



A visual metaphor for the river, the 3-tiered terrace is littered with successively smaller stones and grasses, reinforcing the transition from mountains to floodplain.

tion in Boston as part of an exhibit titled, 100 Years—100 Parks. The concept arrived at during the design workshop included an open space park on the northwest corner of the property, celebrating and interpreting the Los Angeles River in a natural manner.

Calvin R. Abe & Associates was selected by the SMCC to design the River Garden Park in June 2000. Abe, known for creating unusual and artful designs, visited Spritzer Falls, the source of the Los Angeles River, for inspiration. According to Abe, "I wanted to show what the river is about now. People forget that it's a natural system. The water starts out in a beautiful canyon filled with alders, oaks and sycamores;

only in the valley does it become an urban channel." Abe's design is symbolic; it captures the essence of the river's progress, and represents how water moves through the watershed, from the upper reaches, through the urban setting, to the river estuary and out to sea. The park contains an actual watercourse engineered with a mechanical system. Several design elements mark the course of the river.

Water flows out of a central, eight-foot circular disk in a plaza at the uppermost corner of the site, meanders into a channel and continues down through the landscape. Designed by Art Share, a Los Angeles non-profit organization, the water feature is inlaid with tile work





A serpentine path of random flagstone converges with the watercourse and separates from it, bisecting the large open space into two grass lawns for community events.

depicting an idyllic scene of Spritzer Falls, including vegetation and wildlife found in the riparian environment.

The curvilinear stream course is surrounded by a recycled, broken concrete edge that symbolizes the Los Angeles River as it is today. As it does in the urban context, the river here moves into a straight-edged, concrete channel where it is alternately revealed and concealed. A continuous line of tumbled, recycled blue glass at the base of the channel suggests the essence of the river. Native grass, which grows in a grid pattern on the slope above, refers to the grass growing out of weep holes in the concrete channels of the L.A. River. As

the channel descends, it is surrounded by wetland plants and lined with greenish glass pebbles—like the river entering an estuary—where it mixes with the salt water of the sea. A pebbled area represents the river's arrival at the ocean. Water collects in the bottom pool where it is re-circulated, filtered and pumped back to the top. The vortex is a beautiful sculptural element that provides a sense of continuum, tying the water to its source and recalling the evaporation-transpiration cycle found in nature.

As Bullard appropriately states, "Abe's design says built forms can be beautiful. The park celebrates what the river is, in all its current forms, and what it can be." ■

CLIENT: Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (a joint powers agency of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy)

DESIGN TEAM: Calvin R. Abe Associates
Calvin Abe, Kiku Kurahashi, Chris Manning,
Linda Daley, Matilde Reyes, Alexandra Tasker,
Martha Williams

CONSULTANTS

CIVIL ENGINEER: John M. Cruikshank Consultants

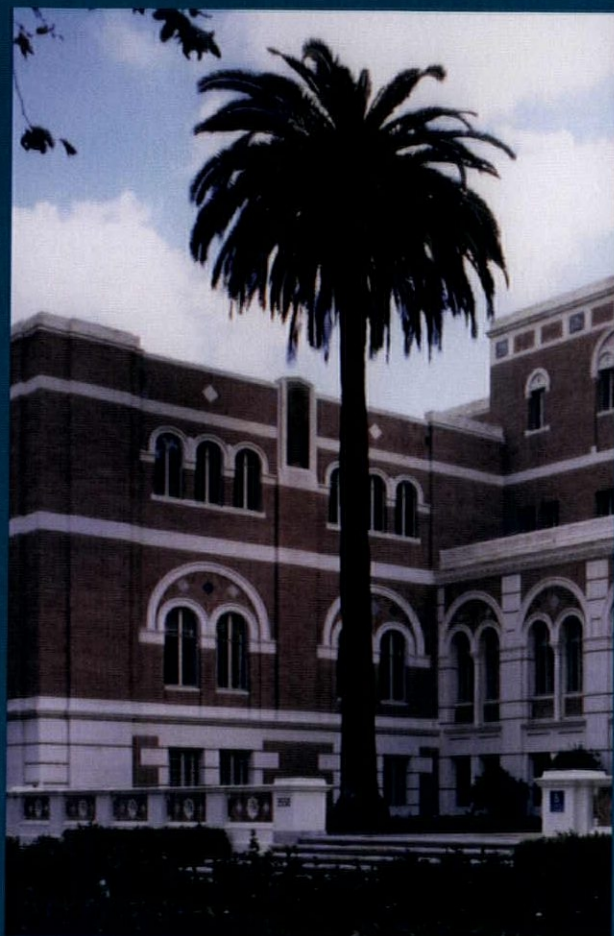
WATER FEATURE ENGINEER: Stewart4

LIGHTING CONSULTANT: Prudential Lighting Products

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER: Kipust Engineering, Inc.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Prashant Gupta





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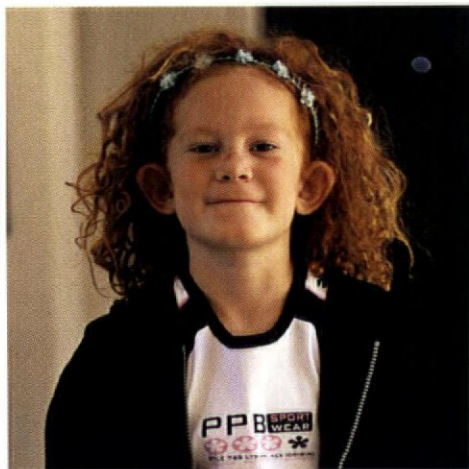
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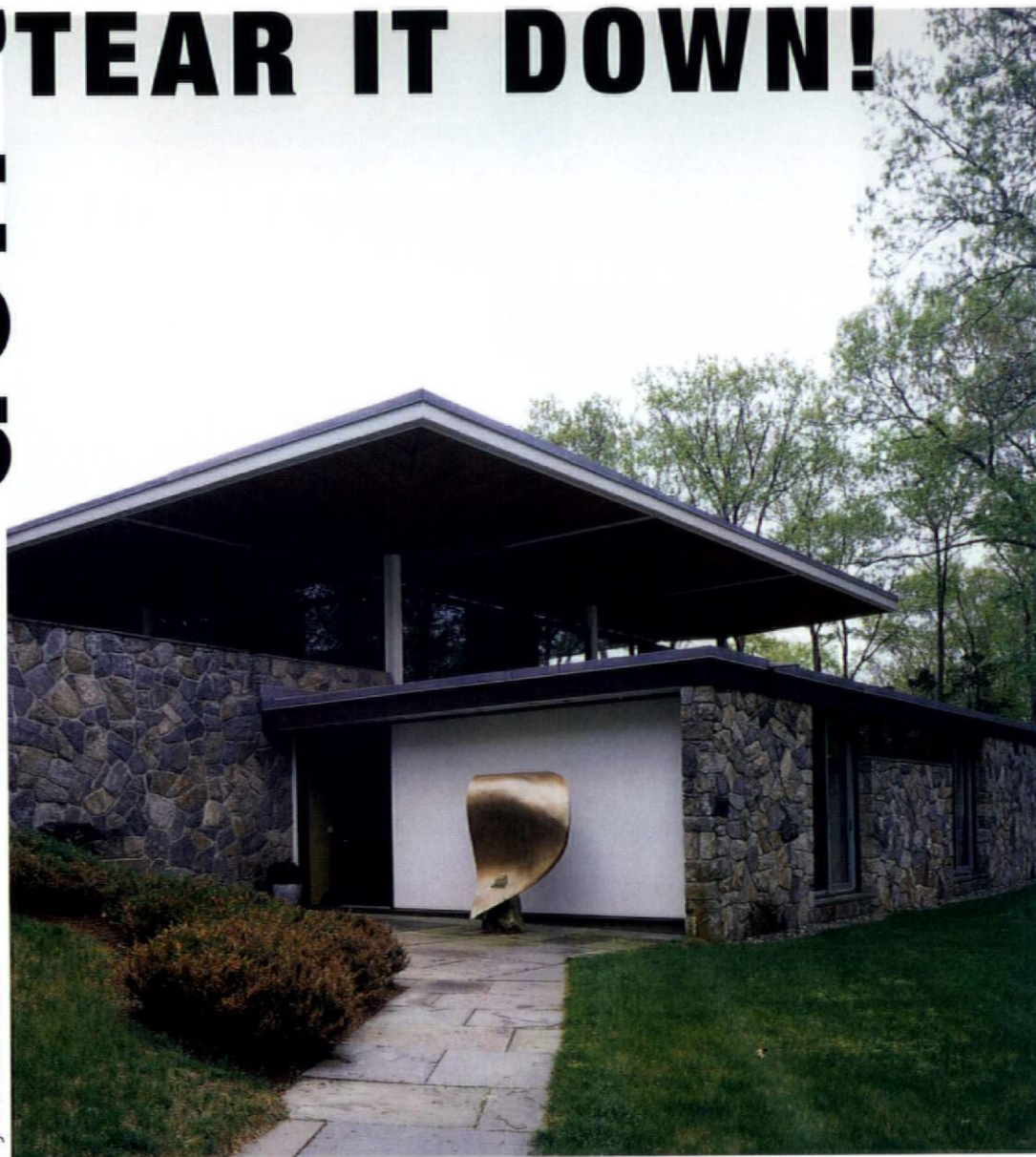


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An excerpt from the introduction to the newly published
Modernism Reborn: Mid-Century American Houses
by Michael Webb



Towers House, Essex, Connecticut 1956-58. Photography: Roger Straus III.

Merit, not age, should be the yardstick, and posterity will judge us harshly if we neglect this principle.

IN THE 1950S, MOST PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTS TOOK modernism for granted—it was the way you built, a basic syntax—and they enjoyed a strong sense of collegiality. Their dreams of rational design and factory production had been dashed by home-builders and

unions that saw no point in changing profitable and moderately efficient methods of construction. Bank loan officers were as timidly conservative as ever, and the vast majority of Americans, once they had a choice, opted for an ornamental overlay on their stucco boxes. Modernism

remained a minority taste, but there was a steady demand that kept its practitioners productive. "The group was more important than the individual—it was cool to be anonymous," recalls Pierre Koenig. "Designers were trying to create better, cheaper ways of living: it was the second half of the century versus the first—an era of optimism that was destroyed by the turbulence and inflation of the late '60s."

By the mid 1960s, architects had seen and responded to Le Corbusier's chapel at Ronchamp and other sculptural buildings. They had broken out of the box, and the old orthodoxy seemed dead. Then modernism itself came under attack—from Robert Venturi, arguing for complexity and contradiction in architecture; Peter Blake deploring shoddy, inhumane construction; and Jane Jacobs excoriating massive urban renewal. As America grew disenchanted with the idea of progress and swung to the right, trend-spotter Tom Wolfe cleverly repackaged xenophobia and philistinism in his polemic, *From Bauhaus to Our House*. Others piled into the fray, and homeowners who wanted to foster the illusion of an "olde town" in featureless suburbs started mandating pitched roofs and picket fences.

An architecture that had been introduced to America as a style and had never put down deep roots was easily displaced by other fashions. It never went away, but it did go out of favor. A few classic modern houses were lovingly preserved by their original owners, but many more suffered neglect and abuse. The huge growth of wealth in the 1980s and 1990s had a devastating impact. "Modest modernists edged out by McMansions," read a recent headline in *The Vancouver Courier*, and the same could be said for communities across the United States. Realtors urged buyers to tear down houses that appeared to have outlived their usefulness, or to be too small for their sites, and indulge in the American cult of gigantism and conspicuous consumption. Builders eagerly responded to the call, loading their spec offerings with such essential amenities as crystal chandeliers, marble tubs with gold faucets, and gyms with room for an Olympic team.

In reaction to this second Gilded Age, discerning nonconformists have embraced the frugal or daring experiments of fifty years ago. The concept of mid-century modern began with 1950s furnishings—typically boomerang tables, Eames chairs, and George Nelson clocks—and mutated into an appreciation for the architecture of the era immediately before and after World War II. Interest has grown as that period receded into history and became a product of the last century. Neglected gems by Neutra, Schindler, Breuer, Lautner, Harris, and Rudolph are being snapped up, and the search has broadened to include the work of architects who never achieved fame or were forgotten.

Houses that were once viewed as brash and shocking, and may have been conceived as subversive statements, appear to a new generation as period artifacts, enhanced by the patina of age. I live in one of a group of apartments near UCLA that Neutra designed in 1937 as income property. He had a hard time leasing them, for unadorned white cubes stacked on a bare hillside scared off prospective tenants, and some went away muttering "moon architecture!" A fellow Austrian, the Oscar-winning actress Luise Rainer, moved in and wrote to Neutra that she had always been afraid of modern houses, thinking them cold and unwelcoming. "How different it is," she exclaimed, "the moment you live inside! The clearness, the long lines of windows which allow the light to come in and the eye to rove out, all this gives you a strange feeling of happiness and freedom." The Eameses lived here through the 1940s, and the apartment inspired the first design for their house in Pacific Palisades.

The growing popularity of mid-century modern has a more solid foundation than the cycle of fashion and a reaction against ostentation. The best of these houses have a timeless beauty, harmonious proportions, clean lines, openness, and abundant natural light. They represent a triumph of honesty over pretense,

and their simplicity inspires nostalgia for what is now perceived to be a more innocent era. (How the boomers do love their misty-eyed recollections of childhood!) Even the sparseness can be an attraction. Architects were working hard to eliminate excess pounds from their work long before the rest of the middle class became obsessed with hard bodies. Today, these houses seem to have taken their turn at the gym, and provide flattering



frames for their well-honed owners. Living within constraints with a minimum of clutter, and doing without the walk-in closets, luxury spas, and great rooms that your neighbors find indispensable brings a sense of virtue. In fact, these open-plan houses correspond more closely to the casual, unstructured life-style of young people today—dressing down, working from laptops in bed or on a sofa, and eating on the run—than they did to patterns of living a half century ago.

Too few people share this passion, and too many remarkable modern houses are still being trashed. Perhaps the title of this book should be "Don't tear it down!" Good architecture has always been a scarce resource, and the best modern buildings deserve as much care and respect as those from earlier eras. Preservationists are often swayed by sentiment and fight for picturesque fragments while ignoring extraordinary work of the past 50 years. Only a limited amount of construction can—or should—be saved. Merit, not age, should be the yardstick, and posterity will judge us harshly if we neglect this principle. ▀

Case Study House #21, Hollywood, California Pierre Koenig 1958–59, Photography: Roger Straus III.

0 Robert Newsom, FAIA
 0 Mehrdad Yazdani
 0 David Body, AIA, RIBA
 7 Dan Dworsky, AIA
 2 Doug Dworsky, AIA
 2 Tim Rommel, AIA
 . Cathryn Bang, AIA
 9 Craig Hamilton, AIA
 2 Bob Levine, AIA
 2 John Parkin
 2 Laurie Salmore
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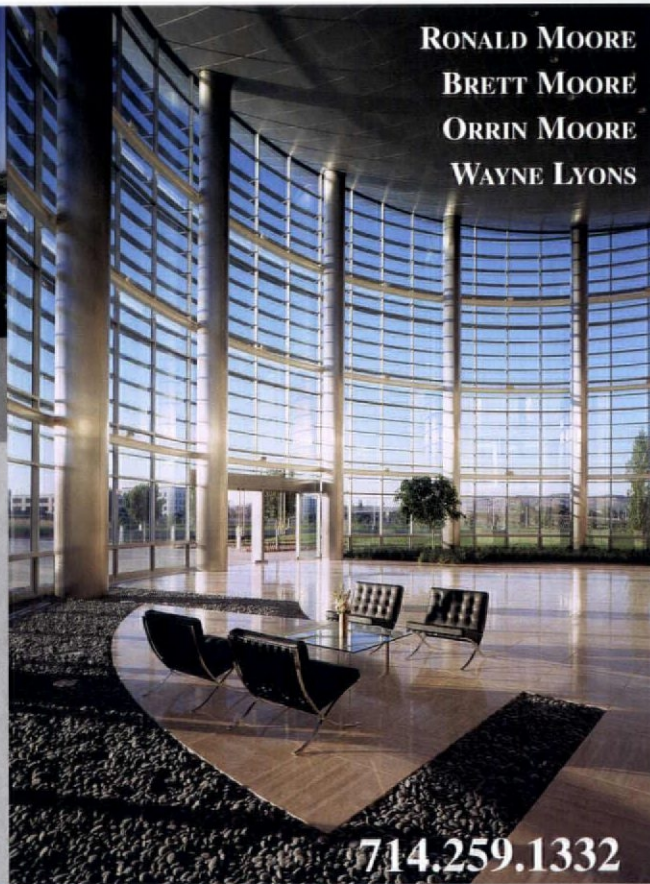
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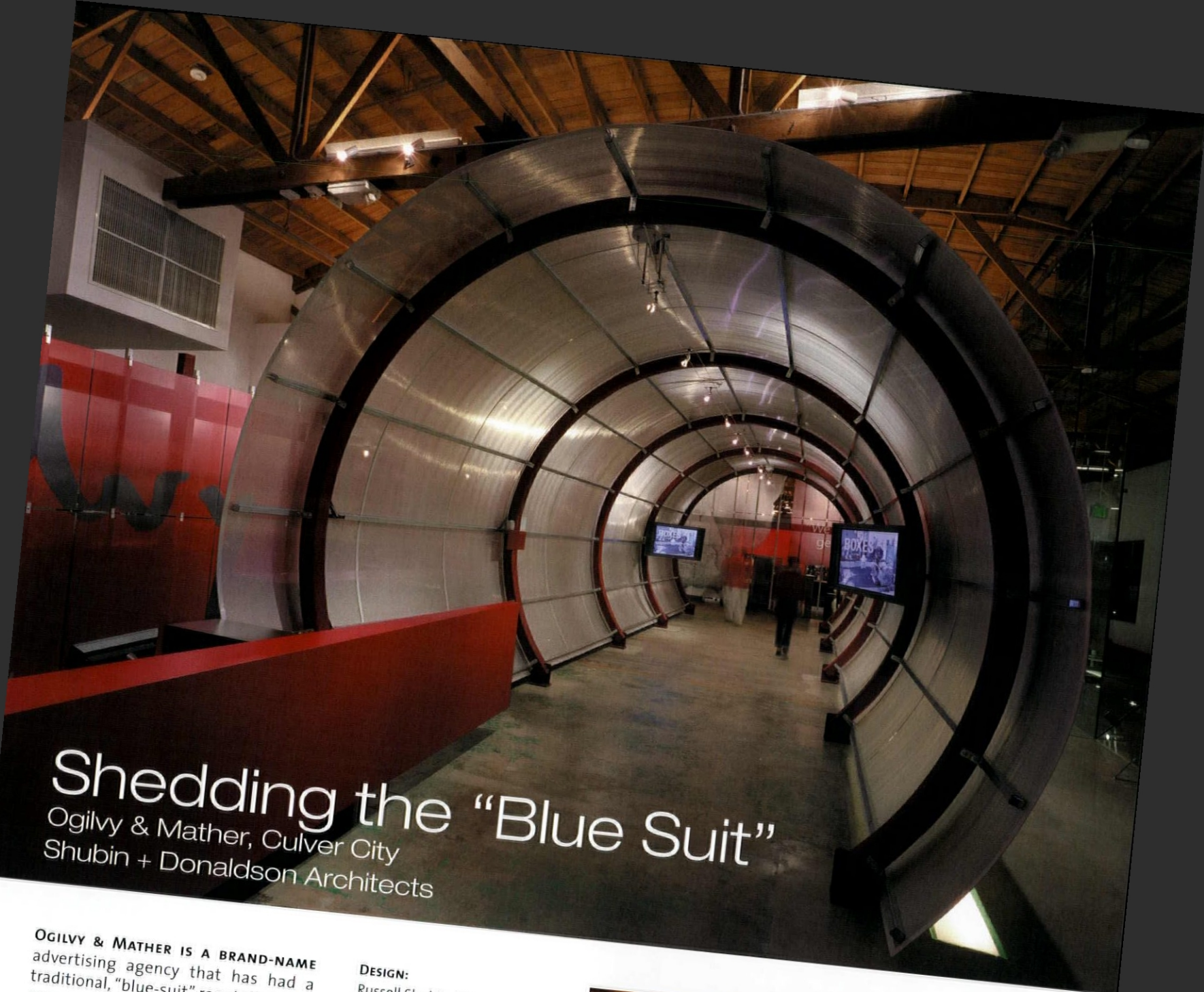


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DESIGN:

Russell Shubin AIA, partner;
Robin Donaldson AIA, partner;
Sean Hagan, project architect/
manager; Josh Blumer, project
architect; Fred Besançon,
Mahyar Abousaeedi,
Mark Gee, Mark Hershman,
Mina Javid, Brennan Linder,
Rob Sutman, project team.

CUSTOM FURNITURE:

Shubin + Donaldson and
dTANK

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:

Sierra Pacific Constructors

STRUCTURAL:

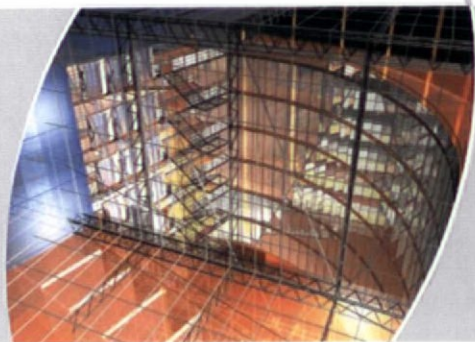
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Tom Bonner



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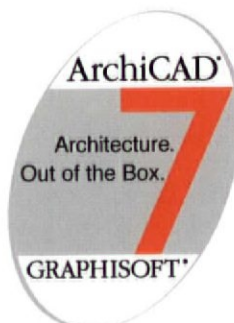
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MIES AND FRANK: From Gallery to Page

By Michael Webb

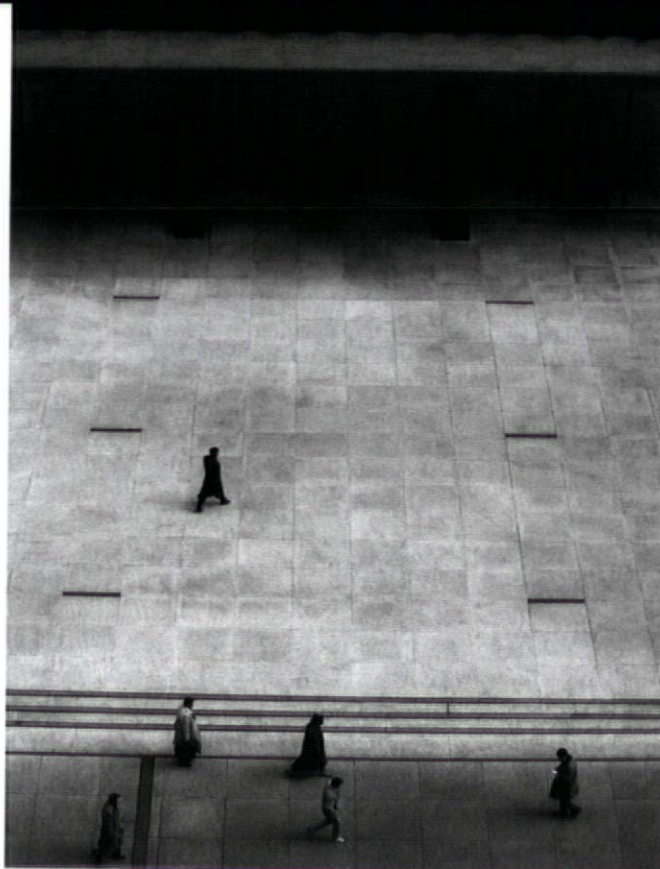
THREE GREAT ARCHITECTURAL EXHIBITIONS WERE PRESENTED IN New York this summer. The Guggenheim's dazzling take on Gehry is now off to Bilbao; MoMA's *Mies in Berlin* is about to move to Berlin and then to Barcelona, and the Whitney's *Mies in America* will be reprised in Montreal and Chicago. Non-peripatetic Angelenos will have to make do with the superbly produced companion books that Harry N. Abrams has published.*

Mies has long been the patron saint of MoMA's Department of Architecture and Design and its tutelary deity, Philip Johnson. Exhibition curators Terence Riley and Barry Bergdoll drew extensively on the architect's archives, which the museum preserves, to show how Mies achieved greatness in Europe before emigrating to the U.S. in 1938. The Whitney covers the last three decades, presenting Mies as the colossus who created a succession of monumental structures, put his stamp on American cities, and exercised a baleful influence on lesser talents.

The high points of both shows are familiar—from the Friedrichstrasse tower and Barcelona Pavilion of the German years to the Lakeshore Apartments and Seagram Building of the later years. The challenge was to make them seem fresh, by adding context and detail. Fortuitously, the two halves of Mies' career are linked by the unrealized Resor House, which was designed to bridge a stream in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. He began the project in Berlin, and finished it after his move to Chicago. To see the evolution of the house on paper and in a detailed model is to discover an architect struggling to respond to a new set of conditions, in contrast to the solitary genius dispensing icons—like the New National Gallery in Berlin which brings the wheel full circle.

MoMA's exhibition differs from its previous explorations of Mies in showing him as a product of his turbulent times and including aspects of his career the master tried to hush up. Here, are the early Schinklesque houses that manifest his attachment to German tradition—roots that he tore up in 1921 to remake himself as a modernist. Here, is his 1926 monument to the communist martyrs, Liebknecht and Luxemburg, with its hammer and sickle, there, a few years later, his unrewarded bids for Nazi government patronage. What made this exhibition so rewarding was the installation of large presentation drawings, new models, and videos within a discontinuous network of partitions that evoked the plans of the architect's classic houses; also the recreation of the sensuous Silk Café that Lilly Reich created with Mies for a 1927 fashion exhibition.

The Whitney show, curated by Phyllis Lambert, offered fewer surprises; its exhibits and installation were far less visceral and engaging than those of its twin. One missed the daring and diversity of the early work, as well as the bold use of color and patterned marble. The excitement of walking around the Farnsworth house or Seagram never palls; on the wall, these



Michael Moran, photographer; Born Pomona, California 1951; Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, architect; Aachen, Germany, 1886—Chicago, Illinois 1969; *Untitled* (Seagram Plaza), Winter 1993, Colorsplan ink jet print, © Michael Moran

classics become part of an overpowering obsession with perfection and detail. Guiltily, one remembers Venturi's jibe, "Less is a Bore." The multitude of tiny drawings and plans are more easily appreciated sitting down, turning pages at leisure and flipping from one project to another, than standing in a crowded gallery—so buy the book and digest this amazing oeuvre a small piece at a time.

No volume could capture the thrill of the Gehry exhibition or the physicality of his response to the Guggenheim rotunda. Wright loathed modern art and deliberately sought to upstage it; Gehry's design team exploited the dynamism of the space but veiled the spiralling galleries with drapes of steel mesh, suspended from the periphery of the skylight. These liquid expanses of metal caught the sun, created moiré patterns where they overlapped, and parted to reveal the void. They focused attention on the succession of models and sketches that illustrated 25 recent projects and 15 earlier landmarks, and evoked the shimmering planes of the architect's current work. An organic sculpture, inspired by the "horse's head" conference room in the DG Bank in Berlin, was supposed to occupy the rotunda but it failed to appear. Even so, the exhibition was a triumphant celebration of America's greatest living architect; disappointingly, the book is little more than a parade of images with project descriptions and brief essays that explore the same territory in an attractive, but conventional format. Only in its coverage of the last three years does it add significantly to Monacelli's *Frank O. Gehry: The Complete Works*. ■

* *Mies in Berlin* edited by Terence Riley and Barry Bergdoll (\$70 hc). *Mies in America* edited by Phyllis Lambert (\$75 hc). *Frank Gehry, Architect* edited by J. Fiona Ragheb (\$85 hc).



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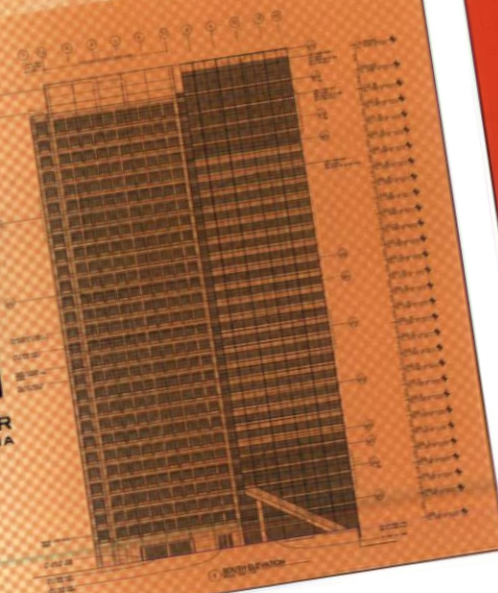
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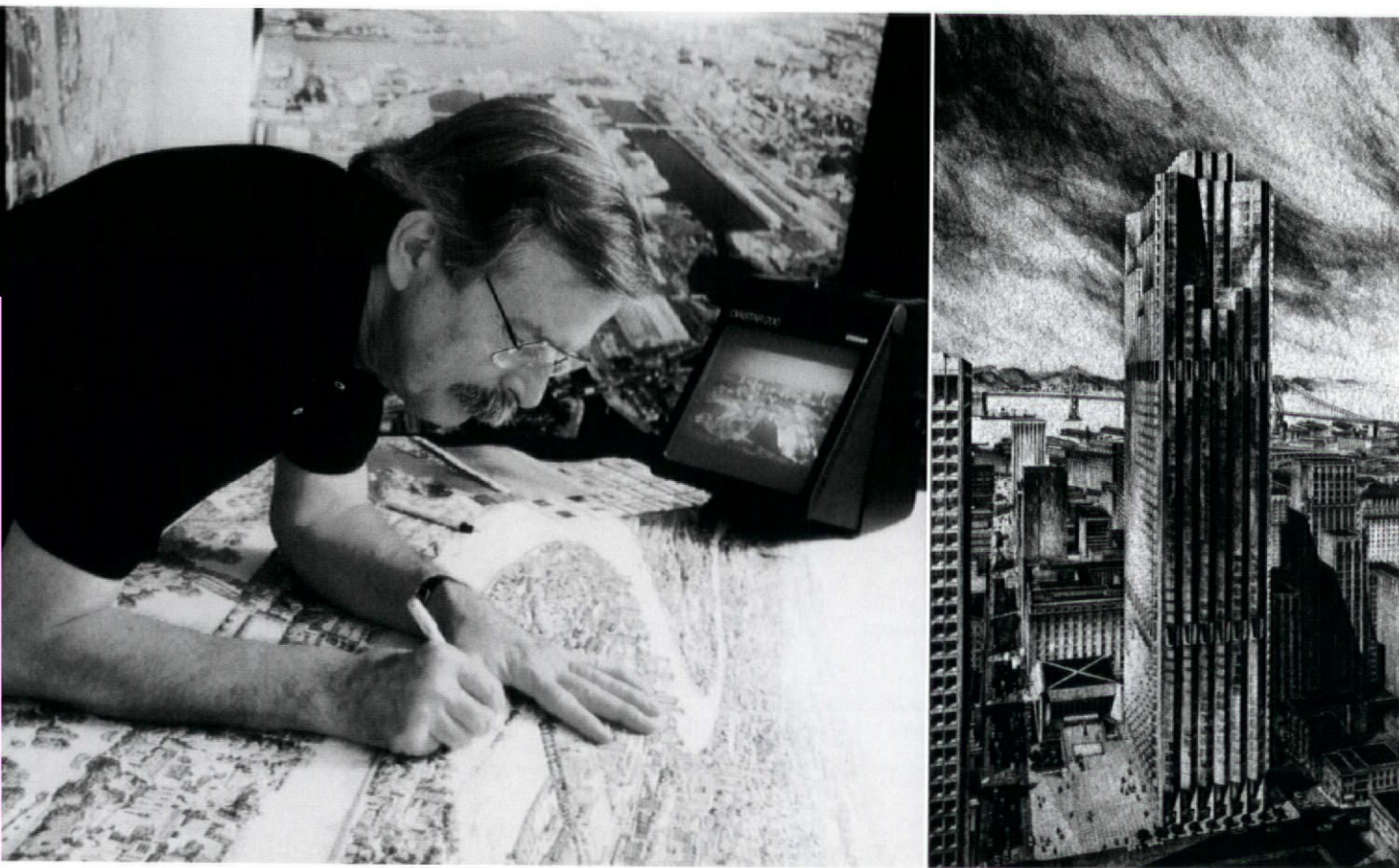
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MEMORIES OF Carlos Diniz

by Rick Keating

On July 18, 2001, Carlos Diniz died of complications following heart failure. Known as an innovator in the field of architectural illustration, Carlos was the principal illustrator for many of the major architects of the last half century, with nearly 3,000 commissions making up his portfolio of work. In addition to those mentioned in the following tribute, he worked with Minoru Yamasaki, I.M. Pei, Cesar Pelli, Sir Norman Foster, Frank Gehry, Ricardo Legorreta, Barton Myers, Charles Moore, HOK, and the Rouse Company. Carlos was a graduate of the Art Center College of Design, was made an Honorary member of the American Institute of Architects, and lectured at USC and Cal Poly Pomona. A retrospective of his work can be found in the book *Building Illusion*. —DR



Left to Right: Carlos Diniz at Work. Photo by Annette del Zoppo; Bank of America Headquarters, San Francisco—one of Carlos' early commissions for SOM.

In the late 1960s as a young designer at SOM, I was brought into Nat Owings' office in the Alcoa building by one of my heroes, Chuck Bassett, to meet Carlos Diniz. It was obvious that this was one of the colleagues that Chuck and the San Francisco office depended on to round out the firm's work. The two, Bassett and Carlos, had clearly spent many hours together, collaborating on the design and rendering of buildings. At the time, the project that Carlos was completing for Chuck was the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. The building was colored heavily by the rich heritage of SOM in the city of San Francisco, and the firm's contribution to almost all of the significant buildings in that city.

Carlos had drawn renderings for the Bank of America in the

early '60s, which was under construction in 1968 when I was graduating from Berkeley across the Bay. Still today the grandest of office buildings, I can see it both as the drawing in pen and ink and as the actual building. Carlos captured the character that the collaboration of Bassett, Mark Goldsmith, Pietro Belluschi, and Larry Halprin had created. Halprin, in a moment of hyperbole, likened the building to "the towering granite peaks of the High Sierras." Carlos drew it like a rock cliff, craggy and broken granite against the sky.

During the same period, SOM designed the Weyerhaeuser Headquarters building in Seattle, which recently won a much-deserved 25-year award. Carlos told me that he drew more trees



in that one drawing of Weyerhaeuser than he had ever done in his life. In some ways, the trees, as well as Mount Rainier in the background, were compelling aspects about the humility of that beautiful building. Marc Goldstein had him render the Kapalua Resort shortly thereafter, and the relationship between Carlos and SOM was cast in stone, or more appropriately pen and ink.

Shortly after meeting in San Francisco, we met again in Iran. New architectural commissions were scarce in the States at that time, and those of us who could, kept busy in various parts of the Middle East. Carlos worked on several projects simultaneously for different partners of SOM, and I shuttled back and forth from Chicago to SOM's fledgling office in Tehran. Carlos, as usual, had one eye on the work of the day, and then the late afternoon became a concern as to where we were going to settle in for the evening. Usually, it was the lobby of the Tehran Hilton, where, among the caviar and vodka, you could find almost any American architect you wanted.

Both David Childs and Bruce Graham were early champions of Carlos' growing reputation. David used Carlos on almost every building he worked on in Washington DC, and one or two after he relocated to New York. Bruce, never one to not have the last or grandest gesture, hired Carlos for a new University for the King of Saudi Arabia, and for projects for the Reichmans who were building the Canary Wharf project in London. While SOM was undoubtedly Carlos' patron on many projects during this period, there are many other designers with whom he worked not only with drawings, but also with visions of urbanity that still have poignant power.

When I moved to Los Angeles in 1986, my first business relationships were with Rob Maguire and John Cushman, but the first professional reconnect was with Carlos. At the time, he had done a series of drawings for Rob for his takeover of Bunker Hill. It was a beautiful suite of drawings that captured all that Maguire was ambitiously hoping to create in that part of the city, and again, Carlos implemented the larger vision. During that time, we discovered a mutual interest in cars. Carlos had a lime green Jaguar XKE, as well as a Dino Ferrari and a black

Porsche cabriolet. Carlos and a number of other architect/car buffs rarely missed the Pebble Beach Concours D'Elegance, an annual event that furthered our bond and appreciation for this vehicular form of retinal stimuli.

From those first moments in the early '70s, to the day when Ian left me what I immediately felt was an ominous message, I had 30 years of working with Carlos on various endeavors as well as enjoying the pageant of architecture and other shared interests.

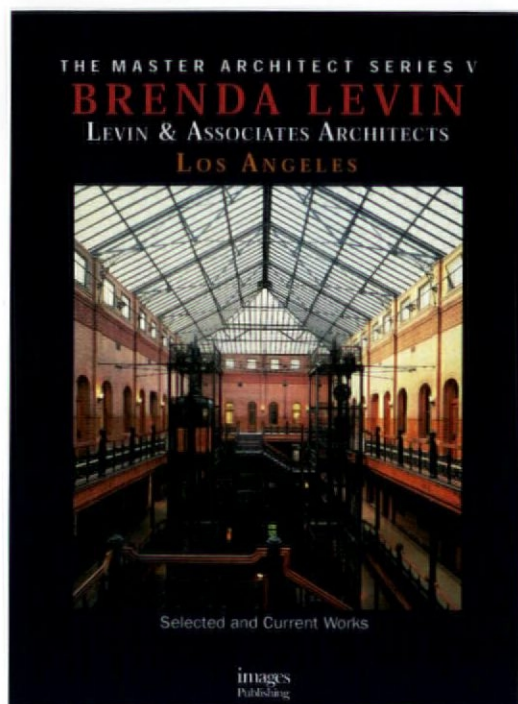
There have been moments in architecture when I have thought that I had it all figured out, only to start a rendering with Carlos or his son, Ian, and see through their eyes that there are a few more considerations. There is a relatively famous picture of Carlos doing the Canary Wharf drawing where the subject matter is all of London, and the caption reads "Carlos doing what he loved most." The life of completeness has to be that, and I am sure that he lived it the way he was most satisfied.

Later, the opportunities for architecture the scale of Canary Wharf were completely exhausted, and Carlos was considering leaving his offices in the Granada building to work from his house in the Hollywood hills. During several conversations, he expressed much anguish about what this might mean to his practice. I mentioned that from his poolside patio, all that was necessary was his talent, the pleasure of his company, a continuous supply of good Scotch, and the world of architects would come to him. We all did, and we will all miss him much more than that. ▀



Ca' d'Oro (Cropping of Original Painting). Since his semi-retirement in 1997, Carlos was painting a series of views of Venice, Italy, a city he fell in love with while stationed there during WWII.

Eroding Boundaries



Brenda Levin:
Selected and Current Works
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IMAGES PUBLISHING, \$60 HC

When medals are handed out to architects who have enriched the quality of life in L.A. and nurtured its heritage, Brenda Levin should be first in line for her brilliant restoration of the Oviatt, Fine Arts, and Bradbury buildings (long before downtown became fashionable), and the midtown Wilshire Center and Chapman Market. She, and developers Wayne Ratkovich and Ira Yellin, understood that old buildings can have second lives and deserve respect. Her impeccable taste is evident in the photographs of the late lamented Rex—il Ristorante, now tarted up and disfigured by a new owner.

Additions to the Huntington Library and the campuses of Occidental and Scripps colleges display her skill at fusing past and present, and the Buena Vista Pumping Station is a virtuoso display of high tech modernism on what was probably a minimal budget. This is a handsome, thoughtful volume on a richly talented architect.

World Architecture 1900-2000: a Critical Mosaic

SERIES EDITOR KENNETH FRAMPTON
SPRINGER VERLAG, TEN VOLUMES, \$75 EACH HC

Now that the new century is well begun, we may be spared more of these well-intentioned, but doomed attempts to synthesize the best of the century past. At least the recent MOCA show, *Architecture at the End of the Century* (though not the ponderous companion book), had many exhilarating moments and intriguing insights. The project under review was organized and published in China, and reeks of stuffy, committee-driven pedantry. The same three sets of "complimentary remarks" preface each overpriced volume, and the omniscient board gives equal space to Europe and to the Indian sub-continent—which has, for lack of funds and selerotic politics, contributed little of its own to 20th-century architecture. Nor has the former Soviet Union much to boast of beyond the brief interlude of Constructivism, during which little was built, but the Stalinist froth that followed is given equal weight. In the Latin American volume, the Argentinian editor has heavily favored his own country while ignoring Cuban modernism (even the celebrated Art Schools) and the key position of Montevideo in the '30s and '40s. Overall, the layouts are old-fashioned and many of the pictures drab. How could Frampton and Springer have lent their names to such a poorly conceived, badly executed project?

West Meets East—Mies van der Rohe

WERNER BLASER
BIRKHAUSER, \$60 HC

A slim, elegant, sharply focused study, in drawings and black and white photographs, of the extraordinary affinities between Mies's work and the traditional buildings of China and Japan. Wright acknowledged his debt to Japan and actually built there, though the influence was more evident in his art than his architecture; Mies collected Chinese books but found common ground with the East more through philosophy than first-hand experience. Yet the parallels—in plans and pavilions, courtyards and framing devices, columns and screens—go far beyond the pervasive influence of post-and-beam architecture on mainstream modernism.

You Have to Pay for the Public Life: Selected Essays of Charles W. Moore

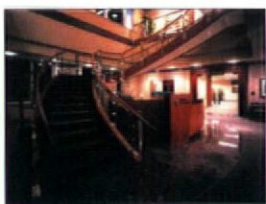
EDITED BY KEVIN KAIM
THE MIT PRESS, \$45 HC

The essay that gives this anthology its title and could serve as a mantra for LA was written for an issue of Yale's *Perspecta* magazine that was edited by Robert Stern (then a student) and also contained essays by Louis Kahn, Paul Rudolph, Philip Johnson and a first excerpt of Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction*. (A copy must now be priceless; someone should reprint it.) However, it's unlikely that any architect or critic could match the wit, originality, erudition, and curiosity of Moore—whose writings may prove more enduring than most of his buildings. In this marvelous collection, he addresses Soane, Schinkel and Schindler (though not all together), reviews Vincent Scully (his professor), explores Hadrian's Villa and historic Monterrey, talks about his own buildings and tweaks a few noses. One essay (on architecture and technology) is titled "Plug It In, Rameses, and See if It Lights Up, Because We Aren't Going to Keep It Unless It Works." Who could resist plunging in?

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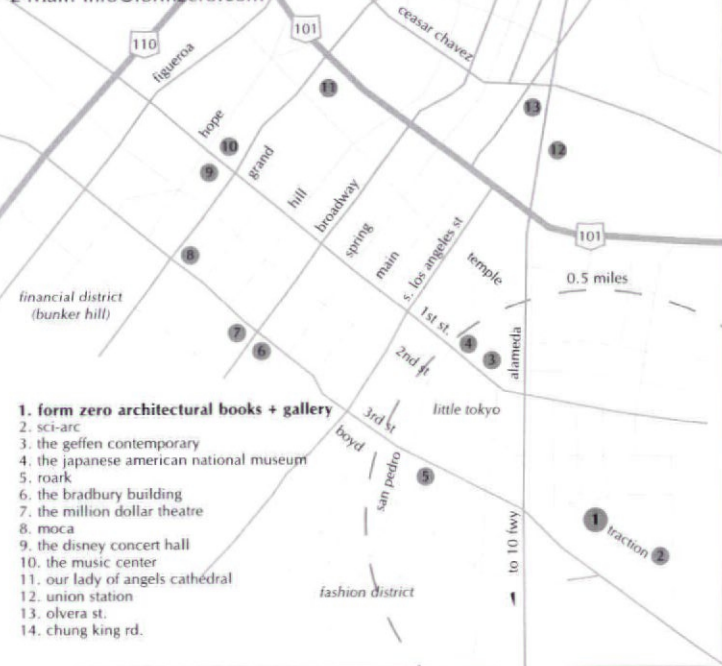
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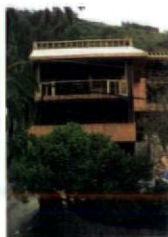
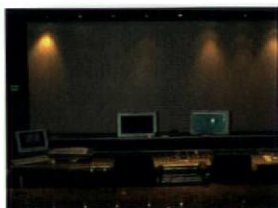
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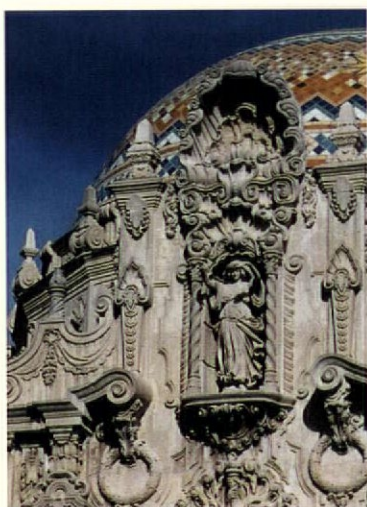
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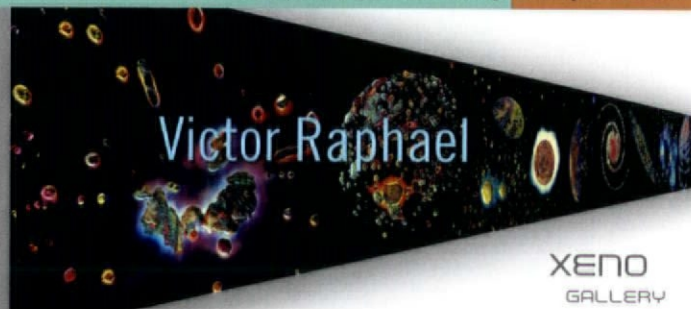


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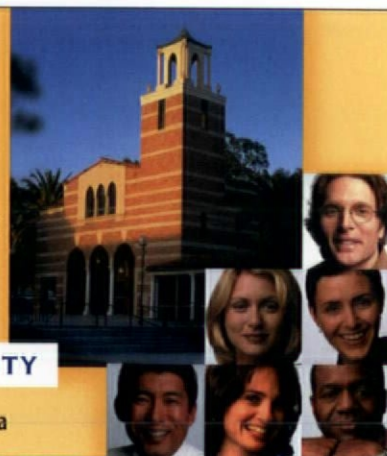
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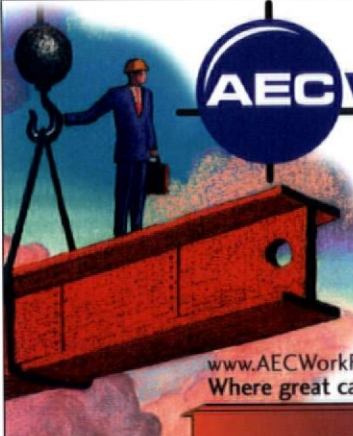
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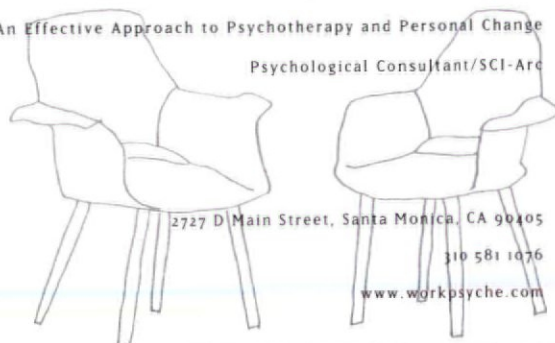
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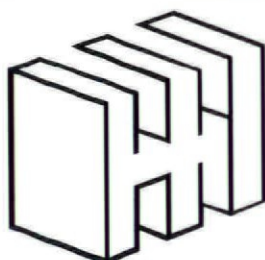
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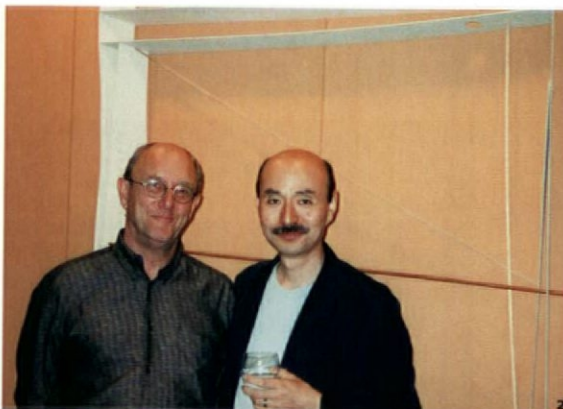
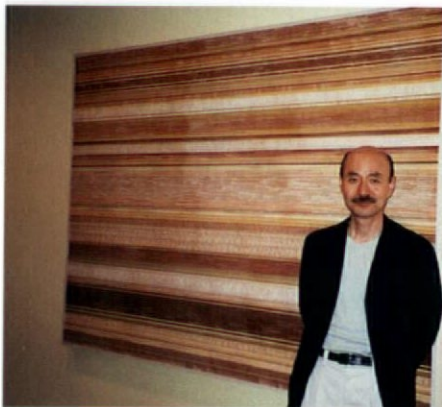
VARENNA LOS ANGELES • OCTOBER 1

Pacific Design Center
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GENSLER Art Show

Gensler hosted their 83rd annual art exhibition June 13th featuring the work of sculptor Takenobu Igarashi. Igarashi's works in wood, steel and stone are included in several public and private collections including MoMA/NY and the Cooper-Hewitt.

- 1) Takenobu Igarashi
- 2) Author Michael Webb, Takenobu Igarashi
- 3) Gensler president Andy Cohen, LA Architect publisher Ann Gray
- 4) *White Sun*, marble

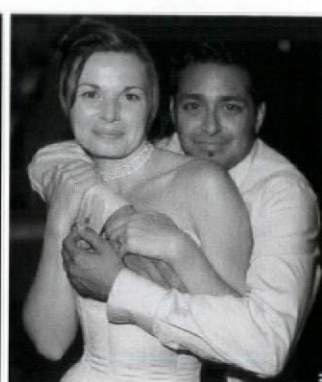


Photography: Walter Levi

DMLA at the Hollywood Athletic Club

Fundraisers can be tedious, but not the annual AIA/LA Interior Architecture Committee's DMLA. The beneficiaries are worthwhile—student scholarships and the Habitat for Humanity—and the event is pleasantly devoid of lengthy speeches. Thank you to the committee: Heidi Painchaud, Wirt Design; Melanie Becker, Vitra; Carlos Madrid III, DMJM; Guy Painchaud, Gensler; Kathleen Neary, Knoll; Karen Rector, Westfall; Kam Kamran, HKS; Walter Cousineau, Knoll; Lori Bendetti, DuPont; Paula Steinle, Western Office Interiors; and Sandy Rempe, Brayton. Student competition winners were: First Place: Jamie Myer and Cathy Pack, SCI-Arc; Second Place: Benito Sanchez and James Fisher, Pasadena City College; Third Place: Janet Puglisi and Silvia Hendrawan, CSU, Long Beach; and Honorable Mention: Felicia Martin and Jade Lai, Otis School of Art & Design.

- 1) Clockwise from upper left: Paul Davis, NBBJ; Lesley Grant, DMJM; Danette Riddle, LA Architect; Joey Myers, NBBJ; Heidi Painchaud, Wirt Design; Galit Reuben; and Guy Painchaud, Gensler; 2) Left to right: Francisco Delgado, The Steinberg Group; Nadine Apmann, DMJM; Heidi Painchaud; Carlos Madrid III; 3) Heidi Painchaud, Carlos Madrid III.



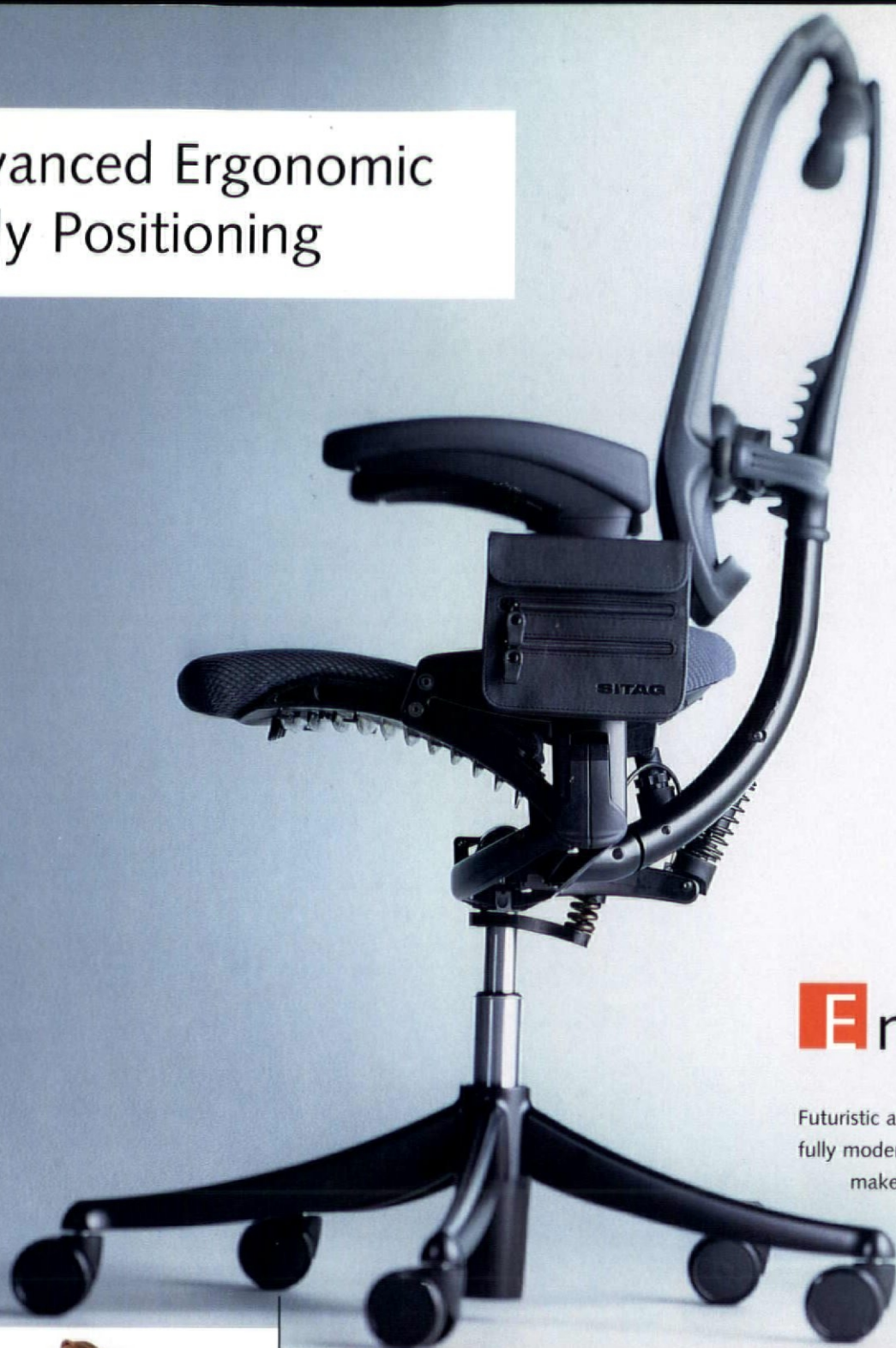


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