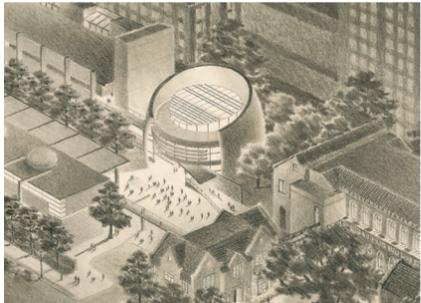


THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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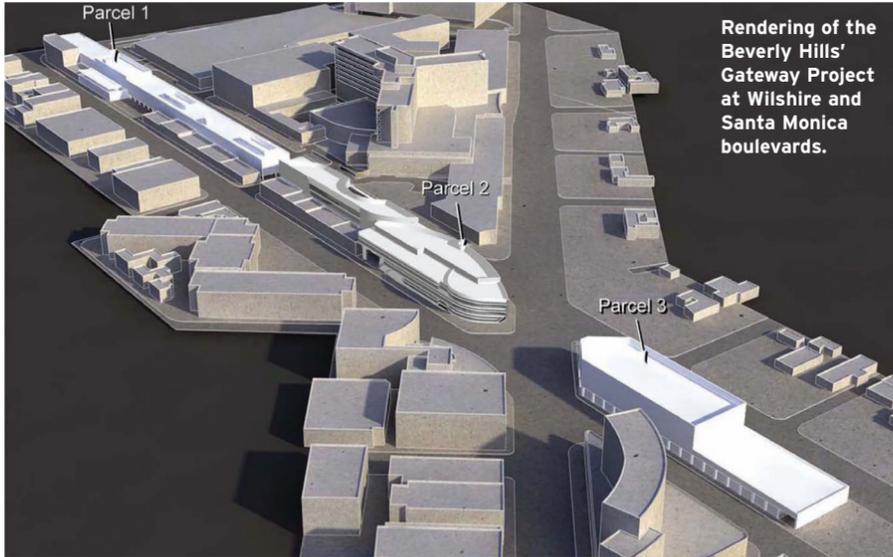
COURTESY ALL SAINTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

MEIER CHURCH ADDITION
REBUFFED IN PASADENA

HOLY FUROR

Amid clashing visions for Pasadena's historic civic center, a proposed expansion to the All Saints Episcopal Church by Richard Meier & Partners was rebuffed for the second time in six months by the Pasadena Planning Commission on December 10.

Meier's master plan mapped out the addition of four buildings, measuring about 68,000 square feet, to the church's 2.8-acre site in Pasadena's historic district. The plan would leave the exterior of the church's cloister intact while facilitating interior renovations of the parish hall and rectory. New development would be centered around a two-level, cylindrical assembly building for worship opening onto an expansive plaza. Other development would be rectilinear in form and include a two-story building with offices, conference rooms, and an outdoor cafe; a three-story daycare and youth center; and a six-story senior housing building. The plan also called **continued on page 8**



Rendering of the Beverly Hills' Gateway Project at Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards.

COURTESY CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

LA PHILANTHROPIST TO HOLD COMPETITION FOR NEW MUSEUM

Broader Horizons

More details have emerged about LA philanthropist Eli Broad's latest art venture: a new museum in Beverly Hills on the western corner of Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards. In a December 9 letter to the Beverly Hills Planning Department, Broad's lawyer, Thomas Levyn, specified that Broad's "Museum Project" would become the permanent home for the Broad Collections (containing over 2,000 artworks) and would also house a research and study center, as well as the Broad Art Foundation's administrative headquarters. The foundation currently uses a building in Santa Monica

for offices and a gallery, which is only open by appointment.

According to the letter and to Gensler, the firm that has been consulting on the project for the last few months to help devise programming and conceptual design, the new five-story building would contain 118,500 square feet of office space on four levels and 68,000 square feet of museum gallery space, archives, and street-level retail, including a museum store. Building height would measure no more than 68 feet. The public galleries, stepped back from the street to **continued on page 3**

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AS MUSEUMS STRUGGLE, ARCH & DESIGN CURATORS ADAPT

THE GOOD FIGHT

2009 may well be the year that California museums wish to forget. Institutions are reeling from drastically reduced endowments: The Getty Trust in December told *The Art Newspaper* **continued on page 6**

PLANNING CZARINA LEAVES A HIGH PROFILE

LA'S LOSS



Los Angeles Planning Commission President Jane

Ellison Usher resigned at a planning commission meeting on December 11. Usher, who transformed the commission through the adoption of a set of principals called "Do Real Planning," created enemies on the city council when she urged neighborhood groups to sue the city over a state law favoring developers who included affordable housing.

Word instantly swept the Los Angeles planning, development, and activist communities, fueled in part by texted messages, Blackberried emails, and phone calls from shocked attendees. Many asked if Usher, who had at times battled planning department director Gail Goldberg and the city council, had been forced out. In a tightly orchestrated round of interviews, Usher said no, attributing the move in part to financial concerns. Friends and **continued on page 10**



WIND-POWERED TRANSIT STATION IN PORTLAND. SEE PAGE 4

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VOLUME 03, ISSUE 1, JANUARY 28, 2009. THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER'S
CALIFORNIA EDITION (ISSN 1552-8081) IS PUBLISHED TEN TIMES A YEAR
(JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER,
OCTOBER, DECEMBER) BY THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER, LLC, 21 MURRAY
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GAME CHANGE

In our last issue I noted *The Architect's Newspaper* and SCI-Arc's plan to launch a competition promoting creative ideas for LA's transit system. Now it's official. The contest, called **A New Infrastructure: Innovative Transit Solutions For Los Angeles**, is open for entries, due by March 13. (Participants can find information and an entry form at www.sciarc.edu.) The jury will include architects Thom Mayne, Eric Owen Moss, Neil Denari; Gail Goldberg, LA planning director; Aspet Davidian, director of project engineering facilities at the LA Metropolitan Transportation Authority; Cecilia estolano, CEO of the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles; and other design experts and civic leaders.

The contest is designed to encourage solutions outside the normal parameters of LA's—and the country's—existing transportation-related schemes. We hope that entrants, including architects, engineers, planners, or (hopefully) a combination of the three, will explore new transit systems and technologies, new transit-related buildings and neighborhoods, and a new thinking about the relationship between transit, architecture, open space, and urban redevelopment. Competitors will be asked to focus on specific rail extension projects and also take a look at larger-scale, interrelated transit planning challenges.

The competition coincides with the passage of LA County Ballot Measure R, which will give the city up to \$40 billion in transportation funding over the next 30 years, and with President Obama's pledge to make the largest investment in infrastructure since the 1950s.

Here's our opportunity to think big; to break the outmoded boundaries between transit and its surroundings; between design and infrastructure; and between the professions of architecture, engineering, and planning. And to think innovative about existing new technologies such as light rail, zip cars, biofuels, as well as even newer technologies.

Fifty years ago our new highways increased our city's mobility and its efficiency. But they subsequently destroyed many of our neighborhoods and now they cannot even handle the city's voluminous traffic. Meanwhile, as many of the nation's mass transit systems continue to age, LA's transit remains stalled with limited ridership and a limited reach. Sure, there are subways, and our bus routes are certainly extensive, but who do you know that takes mass transit? I know a few, but everyone else spends their days stuck in traffic.

It's the rare Angeleno who believes that the age of the automobile will soon end. And I'm not one of them. People will always relish the opportunity to set out on their own, and cars will continue to become more efficient and ecologically sound. But we still need new transit systems to supplement them, and to insure that our city doesn't grind to a halt. These systems need to be designed to encourage riders to want to take them, and in ways that nourish and improve our neighborhoods.

Hopefully these ideas will encourage our transit planners, city planners, and civic leaders, some of whom will have a seat on our jury, to be inspired and to think fresher. Maybe a plan will become reality. We also hope this competition will draw attention to an issue that could make or break the prototypical freeway city. If no one is paying attention, we will get more of the same. Or nothing at all. Already the MTA has announced in a report that because of budget shortfalls the Red Line "Subway to the Sea" wouldn't even reach Westwood until 2032, and that the Green Line extension to LAX would take until 2018. LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has sharply criticized these dates, and we must too. If we are active in this process, imagining schemes and pressuring our government to move swiftly and innovatively, there's no telling what we can accomplish and how far we can travel.

SAM LUBELLDIVERSE TEAM PITCHES NEW
NATIONAL DESIGN POLICY

Get To Work!

With President Obama's election heralding a new role for design in government, representatives from several professional design associations met in Washington late last year to formulate a proposal for a national design policy. The unprecedented summit included members of the AIA, the Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA), the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA), the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), the International Interior Designers Association (IIDA), and other design advocacy groups, as well as various design-related government departments. A policy brief with the summit's findings, *Redesigning America's Future*, was distributed to government officials and published online this month at www.designpolicy.org. The group is asking design professionals to endorse the policy and reach out to their representatives for support.

While a similar effort, the Federal Design Improvement Program, convened designers in the 1970s under the National Endowment for the Arts, this movement specifically addresses current issues facing the economy today, said AIGA's executive director Ric Grefé.

The two main tenets of the policy include recognizing design innovation as a driving force for the U.S. economy and as a tool for efficiency in government and urban design. Some of the ten policy proposals, like establishing a 2030 goal for carbon neutral buildings and increasing research and innovation grants for designers, seem achievable, while others are more of a stretch, such as pumping up funding for intellectual property protection and creating an Assistant Secretary for Design and Innovation.

Summit attendees also hope to re-establish the American Design Council, a unified body that once represented all design fields until it was dissolved in the 1980s. The Presidential Design Awards, which attendees also want to revive, once commended the best government-funded design projects, but have not been awarded since 2000.

It was Obama's specific call to service that motivated the group to come together, said summit organizer Dori Tunstall, a professor of design anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago. "Obama seems more open to any form of citizen engagement. Looking at his campaign, I had a sense that he has a sensitivity towards design. But really, it worked as a summit and now as an initiative because as a leader, he inspires people to want to serve."

Besides the accolades heaped upon the Obama camp for the design of its campaign materials, design-related projects already on the Obama radar include the digitizing of government records (including the country's medical records), a push to augment green design standards, and a major infrastructural push for bridges, dams, roads, and schools.

John Kaliski, recently sworn-in as president of AIA Los Angeles, called the proposal "very smart," although he hoped its insistence on design's functionalism would not lessen the importance of experimentation. Coincidentally, said Kaliski, the summit's findings are in-line with AIA/LA's theme for the year: Architecture and Urban Design Matters. "We too talk about the link with economic development," he said. "But I try to put it in a contributory context that allows room for the creative quotient."

ALISSA WALKER

LETTERS

SHARING THE LIMELIGHT

Your article about the Hollywood Palladium ("Back in the Limelight," *CAN* 10_12.17.2008) was remiss in not giving credit to the architect-of-record, Architectural Resources Group. Christopher Coe is the design architect, and Peyton Hall is the historic preservation consultant on the project. I want to also mention that our team worked on the exterior renovation, and not the interior. The exterior is only substantially complete, and is due for completion in mid-January when the storefronts, vitrines, and glass paneling are installed.

JUSTINE M. LEONG
ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES GROUP
PASADENA

LIFE'S BEEN GOOD

Thank you for reviewing my exhibition at the MODAA Gallery and for the kind words about my architectural career ("Designing the Good Life," *CAN* 10_12.17.2008). I would like to make a few minor corrections to the article. I formed my partnership with Dan Palmer in 1949, not 1924, which is the year I was born. My "51-year-career" is actually 59 years going on 60 this July. I don't refer to my "design" as a "style" but rather a "language." The individual images as shown are identified by "date" but not by location or project.

I look forward to your newspaper for all my "architect news." Thanks for doing a great service to the profession.

WILLIAM KRISEL

CORRECTION

In our feature on practicing in China ("China Express," *CAN* 10_12.17.2008) we erroneously referred to Beijing's National Aquatics Center as the Ice Cube. It is properly known as the Water Cube.

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EAVESDROP: ALISSA WALKER

ELECTRONIC BLIGHT ORCHESTRA

Make it stop! Los Angeles' ongoing battle to put the lights out on those searing electronic billboards got another surge of power this month as statewide legislation was introduced to help fight the blight. After LA enacted a three-month citywide moratorium on new digital billboards in December, this month **Assemblyman Mike Feuer** introduced Assembly Bill 109, which proposes a two-year statewide moratorium on the construction and conversion of digital billboards. Yes, billboards were preparing to build and digitize *themselves!* It's like *Transformers!* AIA board member and LA Planning Commission member **Michael Woo**, who first proposed the LA moratorium in December, wrote a fantastic piece in the *LA Times* where he explained these shiny suckers are not only dangerous, they're actually plotting to take over the city: A new type of LED-embedded glass will turn entire sides of high-rises into king-size animated ads for Full Throttle energy drinks. Watch for local residents gouging their eyes out with spoons.

FALLOUT OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

The very public reverberations continue after the December resignation of LA's Planning Commission president **Jane Usher**, who bade farewell to **Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa** with a spirited letter of wishes for the city to carry out in her absence. (Our favorite: "We must begin by ending our current artifice: we have not enforced our billboard permit program ban." Ahem.) After her dramatic exit, **Kevin Roderick** said in his weekly commentary on KCRW that Usher's outgoing statement was actually much more vicious than it appeared at the outset, saying that it "essentially called BS on the mayor's approach to letting developers build wherever a bus might someday pass, in the name of transit-friendly growth." Ouch! Although critics were initially incensed that the overly developer-friendly **Sean O. Burton** was appointed to fill her seat, everyone was quite pleased to hear that architect **Bill Roschen** was named as president early this year. The principal of Hollywood-based Roschen Van Cleve Architects describes his work as "place-based design." It's about time.

WE'LL MISS HERB KATZ

On a sad note, a beloved fixture in the architecture community and a pioneer of Santa Monica's revitalization, **Herb Katz**, died on January 7 after a long battle with cancer. As president of RTK Architects since 1966, Katz was the designer of a diverse list of projects, including many civic, institutional, and educational works in Santa Monica, where he also served as mayor. Hundreds of people attended his memorial service on January 12, which was covered in the next day's *Santa Monica Daily Press*, slugged the "We'll miss you, Herb" issue. Katz was first elected to Santa Monica's city council in 1984 and served the city in some governmental capacity every year until his death. Now that's what we like to call community service.

SEND TIPS, GOSSIP, AND TASTEFUL BILLBOARDS TO AWALKER@ARCHPAPER.COM



A massing model of the proposed Gateway Project.

BROADER HORIZONS

continued from front page provide open space at the intersection, would display rotating installations of works from the Broad collections, as well as loans from other collections. There would also be about 273 below-ground parking spaces.

A source close to the proceedings but unable to speak for the record said that the shortlist for a competition to design the museum included Thom Mayne, Jean Nouvel,

Shigeru Ban, Rafael Viñoly, and Christian de Portzamparc. Advisors to the competition include Frank Gehry, long associated with various Broad undertakings, and critic Joseph Giovannini. The architects will present schemes in mid-February.

Gensler confirmed that if approved, the new project would be located on one or two parcels of a three-parcel site currently reserved for commercial and retail development, now known as "The

Gateway." The long, linear building would have an unobstructed floor plate and mediate between the busy nature of Santa Monica Boulevard and the pedestrian-oriented Little Santa Monica Boulevard.

Broad, recently in the news for bailing out the ailing Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) to the tune of \$15 million, only just cut the ribbon on the \$56 million Renzo Piano-designed Broad Contemporary Art Museum at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art—also on Wilshire Boulevard—last year. Gensler was executive architect for that project and the firm said it would be happy to be considered for the new museum. The Broad foundation could not be reached for further comment on the project. **SAM LUBELL**

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with OFFICE Giancarlo Valle



COURTESY PARA PROJECT

Brooklyn-based Para Project, along with Manhattan-based OFFICE/Giancarlo Valle, recently transformed a 5,000-square-foot former auto body plant in West Hollywood into Phillip Lim's third fashion boutique. The building's windowless facade lets the fashion be experienced intimately, said Para architect Jonathan Lott, who added that his firm worked on "changing the typography of the typical storefront." The closeness of the entry is drawn out as amoeba-shaped walls unwind into distinct niche rooms with varied styles. The rooms display clothing on thick recessed curving partitions juxtaposed to mirrors, creating the illusion that the rooms are actually circular, and "making the store's layout less aware of the geometry of the box," said Lott. The space's unwinding character brings about what Lott describes as a "prolonged experience," spreading exposure to the merchandise over a winding path. The intricate design—as opposed to the minimal clothing display—also contrasts to artificially lit back rooms with soft, spiky walls and adjacent sky-lit spaces where the surfaces are made of bamboo, cork, and leather. **OWEN SERRA**

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The new "old" office building in Burbank; right: before the overhaul.



AN OLD LINGO, STILL ELOQUENT

Cruising along Riverside Drive in LA's Toluca Lake neighborhood, around the block from the Warner Brothers Studios in Burbank, a brand-spanking-new Hollywood Regency-style building, complete with attenuated columns, wooden shutters, decorated round windows, finely-crafted dentils, and white-painted brickwork is likely to stop you in your tracks. The Toluca Lake Executive Building perks up a fairly drab shopping street while managing not to be a cloying reproduction. The 10,000-

square-foot, two-story structure, sandwiched between a stucco box and an asphalt parking lot, is a paean to authenticity—with a knowing wink to the late 1930s style that was, in the original, conceived and executed by Hollywood set decorators.

In reality, the building is a recently completed makeover of a 1960s office complex. The modernist version of the building was an undistinguished layer cake of peanut-brittle stonework and beige plaster, with aluminum-

framed punched windows applied to a steel frame. A fitting example, in other words, of developer, or dingbat, modernism, characterized by maximal square footage slammed into a minimal site. And that's the first irony, because nowadays you're not supposed to bulldoze even lousy instances of 1960s modernism. You're supposed to make them better.

That's exactly what Pasadena-born-and-bred architect Tom Marble proposed to his clients, Bob and Tamara Bowne. "They really wanted it to look like a neo-Georgian or Federalist with red brick," Marble said. "I really didn't want to do that. But when I found out they were serious, I pointed them in the direction of Paul Williams" for inspiration. Williams, of course, is the underrated Hollywood architect (his clients included Frank Sinatra, Lucille Ball, Barbara Stanwyck, and Lon Chaney, Sr.) and the first African-American member of the AIA, whose trademark was Hollywood Regency.

Marble realized he could yank a piece of Hollywood's self-conception from the past and give it life by plopping it right under the noses of all those hip Hollywood players who nowadays crave the pedigree of a Richard Neutra or a Harwell Hamilton Harris. The little building represents Hollywood glamour and grandeur simply by conjuring a piece of the town's

self-made, mythic past. There's another irony. While Williams' buildings, from the Cocoanut Grove (where the Oscars were once doled out) to Perino's Restaurant (where stars gabbed, gossiped, and gormandized) are being razed on one side of town, a "new" Williams pops up somewhere else. Marble is trying to throw the juggernaut of blithe erasure a bit off-course.

None of this would be true if Marble, and his clients, had not dedicated themselves to getting the details right. The brick, for example, is full thickness, and you can immediately tell that the facade is no mere decoration. Four wooden columns support a broken pediment that divides the building perfectly in half. Flanking the pediment are twin hanging English coach lanterns whose chains bisect the two round windows lined up on the second floor. Each of these elements, like the frieze above and the boxwood below, are proportioned correctly, so that a casual observer will read the composition as a whole, while a pedestrian passing by will grasp the individual weight, and visual pleasure, of the separate parts.

The building thus unfolds and reveals the pleasure of fine details. This is no less true on the interior, where most of Marble's effort went into converting a cheerless two-story lobby into a quietly elegant, choreographed



COURTESY MARBLE ARCHITECTURE

entrance. Wainscot and exaggerated window and door casings and turned staircase balusters are calibrated to exude Hollywood Regency. Just as the exterior can be understood as both genuine and imitation, so too the interior.

"It's a stage set, and it's a real building, and it functions as both," Marble said of the building, which has fallen under the radar of most locals, not to mention architecture critics. By committing an anti-modernist sin, Marble has pulled off a minor miracle in a city where modern architecture is usually downright dull, or worse. The Toluca Lake building thrives on visual and compositional complexity, on a play of shadow and depth, and on the cumulative grace of complimentary materials. And by carefully considering proportions and details, Marble has achieved a rare authenticity. If detail and the faux confection called Hollywood Regency aren't making a comeback, at least Marble's foray into those disregarded languages proves they can still have a place in the urban terrain.

GREG GOLDIN

PORTLAND'S TRANSIT EXPANDS WITH SUN AND WIND-POWERED STATION



COURTESY HENNEBERY EDDY ARCHITECTS

INHERIT THE WINDS

Portland already has a fairly impressive network of bus, light rail, and streetcar lines. Thanks to a complicated plan by transit agency TriMet to add another light rail line, extend current lines, and revitalize an aging downtown transit mall, it will soon be even more comprehensive. Scheduled to open in September, the South Terminus, a new station designed by Hennebery Eddy Architects, will span the length of a city block and anchor the whole project

near its end point at Portland State University.

Inspired by "solar wind diagrams and particle movements in physics," according to principal Tim Eddy, the architects created a crescent-shaped sculpture that soars 40 feet to obscure the station's power traction substation and signal communications building. Pedestrians will see only shadowy forms through the cladding of semi-transparent photovoltaic panels draped over the steel-framed structure. Together with 22

pole-mounted wind turbines, the panels will produce almost all on-site power needs. Passers-by can monitor generated energy through a series of LED lights and markings within the granite bench wall along its south end. A series of swales will handle on-site storm water collection, and double as irrigation for the various native flora such as Oregon iris, wild strawberries, and Oregon ash trees that will be part of the landscaping.

AMARA HOLSTEIN

LA CONSERVANCY RELEASES PRESERVATION REPORT CARD

A-LISTERS

The Los Angeles Conservancy has released its 2008 Preservation Report Card, evaluating the preservation efforts of all local governments within the 9.9 million square miles of Los Angeles County. In the report, the Conservancy identifies an honor roll of seven cities that earned "A" grades, eight surprising "Notable Improvements," and a discouraging 32 cities considered "Preservation Truants."

This is only the second report card in the Conservancy's 30-year history; the first one was issued in 2003. To develop the list, the Conservancy interviewed representatives from all 89 local governments to determine historic preservation issues and evaluate city surveys and ordinances regarding historic resources.

Among the "A"-listers was Los Angeles, which established an Office of Historic Resources in 2006 and boasts the state's second largest Mills Act program, allowing jurisdictions to enter into contracts with owners providing lower taxes in return for preservation. The city has also embarked on its first historic resources survey, the largest project of its kind ever undertaken by a single municipality, covering over 800,000 parcels. Another "A" went to Long Beach, which has 130 designated landmarks, longstanding preservation programs, and a preservation ordinance that's now being strengthened. Other top marks went to Pasadena, South Pasadena, Santa Monica,

West Hollywood, and Whittier.

Among the "Most Improved" were cities like West Covina, Calabasas, San Fernando, and Huntington Park, which before 2006 had no historic protections whatsoever, but has now adopted an historic preservation ordinance for designating significant public or semi-public interior spaces and signage. Michael Buhler, director of advocacy for the Conservancy, calls the city "a poster child for the positive effects of our first Report Card."

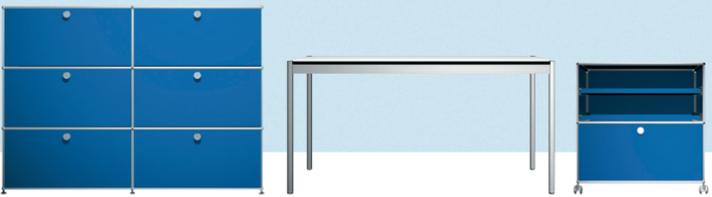
Less impressive was the high number of "Preservation Truants," 32 cities with no legal protections for historic resources. Those include Downey, where legendary Googie-style coffee shop Johnnie's was torn down last year. The good news: the city has committed \$900,000 to insure that the shop is accurately reconstructed and is discussing establishing a preservation program there. Other cities on the "Truants" list include: Agoura Hills, Arcadia, Bell, Bellflower, Bradbury, Carson, Cerritos, Compton, Diamond Bar, El Monte, Hawaiian Gardens, Hawthorne, Hidden Hills, City of Industry, La Habra Heights, La Mirada, Lakewood, Lomita, Lynwood, Maywood, Monterey Park, Palos Verdes Estates, Paramount, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, Rosemead, Santa Fe Springs, Temple City, Walnut, and Westlake Village.

Yet despite these downers, Buhler was pleased with the findings overall: "Certainly things are better since 2003. Over a dozen cities have improved their policies," he said, adding cautiously, "There's a lot of work left to do." The full Report Card can be downloaded at www.laconservancy.org. MIKE SCHULTE

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MARISSA ROTH

THE GOOD FIGHT

continued from front page
that its endowment had lost 25 percent of its value since last June. Meanwhile, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Los Angeles was just delivered perhaps the most public blow of all: donor default. Exacerbated economic woes resulted in a massive drop in donations, forcing the museum to dip into its emergency savings. Financial strain has shuttered its Geffen Contemporary space for six months, and forced the resignation of Jeremy Strick, the museum's director since 2001. After considering a proposed merger with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (which is partially reliant on government funds), the museum accepted a no-strings infusion of cash from arts super-patron Eli Broad, who promised to match endowment funds up to \$15 million. The museum also added a CEO position, naming Charles Young, a former UCLA chancellor.

The uncertainty of MOCA's future has left many pondering the fate of architecture and design departments at museums throughout the state. But a closer look finds them faring far better than anticipated. MOCA's architecture and design curator Brooke Hodge said she is continuing work on three planned exhibitions, as well as several major projects that are in development. The only significant change so far is to the next architecture

exhibition, a survey of local firm Morphosis, which was rescheduled from its March opening to an August date. "It's too early to predict whether there will be any further impact," she said.

The museum also recently announced a renewed agreement with the Pacific Design Center, where MOCA has had a satellite location since 2000. The space will offer expanded programming with a greater focus on architecture and design, said Hodge. "My aim is to develop an innovative and inspiring program of exhibitions that touches on important issues and developments in the design disciplines both at home and abroad," she added. Planned for 2009 are two exhibitions exploring the intersection of craft and computation: A site-specific installation by Ball-Nogues Studio, and *Boolean Valley*, an installation by architect Nader Tehrani of Office dA and ceramist Adam Silverman.

Meanwhile, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's (SFMOMA) architecture and design department had been in the midst of an acquisitions spree since Henry Urbach took over as its curator in 2006. An exhibition that closed January 4 showcased more than 300 objects acquired by Urbach, and chronicled the decision-making process that went into each acquisition. "Sure, there's going to be an effect on what's available to us to acquire," said Urbach. "But

MOCA may be LA's latest black sheep, but its architecture department is doing just fine.

I think this time will allow us to be more thoughtful and discriminating," he said, noting that he is now on the lookout for big-ticket pieces at a discount. For spring, Urbach has scheduled the first solo exhibition of J. Mayer H., an architecture firm in Berlin.

Another bright spot for architecture and design is at the Getty Research Institute in LA, which recently announced the formation of a design and architecture department. Headed by Wim de Wit and associate curator Christopher James Alexander, the department includes the Getty's impressive holdings like Julius Shulman's archives and the papers of architects and critics like John Lautner, Pierre Koenig, Ray Kappe, Daniel Libeskind, Philip Johnson, and Reyner Banham, and unique acquisitions like the Bauhaus Papers and archives of the International Design Conference at Aspen. The first exhibition planned under de Wit's tenure will unite many of these: a survey of California architecture from 1940-1990, tentatively planned for 2013 or 2014.

De Wit will also launch a consortium for architects to share best practices, including practical information about the economy. "These will be to meet and learn more about each other's works and see how we can help each other," he said, adding that he is looking forward to more collaborations like the symposium organized in conjunction with the Hammer Museum's John Lautner show last fall.

While museums are busy saving themselves, chances are there will be less outreach to rescue endangered mid-century modern houses. A few years ago Michael Govan, then newly named director of LACMA, banded about an interest in acquiring some mid-century architecture to help preserve it, a groundbreaking move. While LACMA has yet to deliver on such a promise, hope may lie in the strength and agility of smaller institutions: The LA-based MAK Center just added a third house to its roster, the Fitzpatrick-Leland House, designed by R.M. Schindler.

AW

ASU JOURNALISM SCHOOL CONSTRUCTED WITH SPEED OF PRINT

BILL TIMMERMAN

Phoenix Rising

The big news in Phoenix this holiday season was the opening of the long-awaited light rail line that linked its densifying downtown to Arizona State University's (ASU) main campus in nearby Tempe. But perhaps an even bigger game-changer was the permanent arrival of the media itself. ASU's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and local public television station KAET/Eight opened at a prime spot along the new Central Avenue's rail line. For the time being, the Cronkite School crisply delineates the northwest edge of downtown's vertical burst—a counterpoint to the vague boundary of America's sprawling, fifth-largest city. The Cronkite School's crown, a colorful array of burnt-hued corrugated steel panels inspired by the U.S. broadcast frequency spectrum, signals the building's presence from afar.

In response to the city of Phoenix's RFP to deliver the project at breakneck speed (20 months to the first day of school), LA's Ehrlich Architects teamed up in September 2006 with HDR as executive architect and local giant Sundt Construction. The proposal's success depended in part on Sundt's concrete expertise and a regular structural bay to get all but the top floor into the ground quickly. Sundt would also contribute a lineup of pre-selected subcontractors, streamlining construction sequencing. In addition, the proposal featured a thoroughly integrated team of designers and consultants that enabled groundbreaking to occur four months later, having already completed programming, blocking, stacking, and strategies to accommodate future construction. This model for design-build project delivery made for "zero value engineering, no change orders, and a much more holistic approach to design," said Elaine Solomon, vice-president of science and technology at HDR.

Once the four-story lower concrete structure containing the school's facilities was in place, a steel structure above was employed for KAET's column-free television, radio, and sound stages. The complex interlocking of different facade materials speaks to the varied functions behind, including classroom areas, lecture halls, news broadcasting facilities, and sound studios. The burnt-hued stripes indicate studios; woven metal mesh screens the glazing of the "leadership suite" and the adjacent Reynolds Center for Business Journalism. As a background, sand-colored block surfaces shield the classrooms and the Cronkite Theater.

The south facade is the most likely to be

experienced by pedestrians strolling along the Taylor Mall toward ASU's downtown campus. This elevation is animated with an installation by lighting and environmental artist Paul Deeb, in which suspended aluminum shards dance between two layers of translucent glass over the entire height of the main staircase. The gap serves as a mini thermal chimney, adding real cooling to the psychological cooling of the waterfall effect of bouncing light.

Once inside the school, a multicolored palette and a repeat pattern of floor-to-ceiling inscriptions of the First Amendment give the mix of programs and spatial types some consistency from floor to floor. The building is full of new technologies and facilities in support of the school's aim to "foster a dynamic interaction among the students, faculty, and the community that they [as journalists] serve," said Ehrlich Architects project architect Matthew Chaney. The design team also made efforts to render the media literally transparent with such details as the LED news ticker marking the building entry, or the visual connection between sidewalk and the second floor Cronkite News Service. Internally, this elimination of boundaries also occurs in the Cronkite News Watch studio, where the newsroom and the broadcast desk are contained in the same space, within eyeshot of each other.

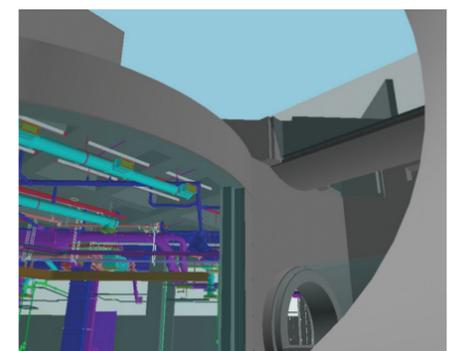
The second floor holds the heart of the school—the First Amendment Forum. Several tiers and balconies, casually furnished with mobile elements, define the multi-level void and overlook a small stage. Next door to the forum, the Marguerite and Jack Clifford Gallery exhibits memorabilia from the career of legendary newsman and school namesake Walter Cronkite.

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BENNY CHAN

A pool connects the wings of the L-shaped house (left); exposed wood ceilings give a second floor office space a more workshop feel (top); a free-form wood table was made by Wilkinson's father (above); sliding glass doors in the living room and dining room open almost completely, connecting the diverging spaces (bottom, right).

GENSLER BREAKS GROUND ON CHINA'S TALLEST BUILDING



COURTESY GENSLER

SHANGHAI SURPRISE

Eighteen years ago, Shanghai's financial zone was just farmland. Today, Pudong is bustling and newly dubbed the "Supertall District," a designation soon to be reinforced by Gensler's Shanghai Tower (above), a 2,073-foot building, the tallest in China and second tallest in the world.

Some might think that with the global economic downturn in full effect, it is a poor time to begin construction on such a project, which broke ground on November 29. But firm founder and chairman Arthur Gensler disagrees. "By 2014, when the building is done, the economy should be really booming," he said. "All those big international firms that are pulling back right now will be looking for space and making deals in two or three years; they'll be looking to expand into China again." Also working in Gensler's

favor are the falling costs of materials—which may result in that rarest of architectural feats: a project that comes in under budget, by as much as 30 percent according to Gensler.

Gensler beat out four international offices and five Chinese architecture institutes with a spiraling glass office tower whose startling transparency sets a new precedent for Shanghai. The building's 120-degree twisting form was derived from wind-tunnel tests, with the resulting optimized enclosure reducing wind loads by 20 percent. But the spiraling envelope is only the outer layer of a double-skinned building. An inner skin encloses nine stacked cylindrical towers with eight atria dividing the Shanghai Tower vertically. These "sky gardens" were derived from a building code requirement for areas of refuge that expanded to provide green space and commercial services, and to accommodate HVAC systems. Along with their local partner, the Architectural Design and Research Institute of Tongji University, Gensler hopes to achieve certification from both the China Green Building Council and the U.S. Green Building Council. Wind turbines will generate on-site power and a spiraling parapet will capture rainwater for reuse within the building. A multi-level retail podium will mitigate the building's scale at ground level, standing in stark contrast to the heavy, bomb-shielding bases of neighboring high rises.

The Shanghai Tower will complete a supertall triumvirate with Jin Mao Tower and Shanghai World Financial Center. Gensler gave the trio a name: "The past, the present, and the future." **JIMMY STAMP**

HOLY FUROR continued from front page for multiple outdoor courtyards and gardens. Materials were described during the public presentation, including stone quarried from Bouquet Canyon to match the cloister's facade, a copper sunscreen, architectural concrete, and tubular steel railings.

In its action, the commission not only declined to approve the church's master plan as presented but reversed a prior decision—made on May 28, 2008—which had allowed the church to file a Mitigated Negative Declaration, which would have been far less cumbersome than filing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The action also came after the city's Design Commission, charged with making recommendations to the Planning Commission, had approved the project on October 13.

"It's difficult not to think that the planning commissioners came into the meeting already having made a decision against us," said the church's rector, Ed Bacon, responding to *AN* via e-mail. "We had followed all of their rules and suggestions, and then they changed the rules. It was frustrating in light of the fact that we're trying to make an important contribution to the community, both in ministry and architecture."

According to Keith Holeman, a spokesperson for All Saints, the church will continue to pursue approval of a master plan for expansion, but has yet to decide the best route. "There are potholes that you go through here," noted Holeman. "Disappointments along the way. But we're also very positive about the project." (Meier's office referred requests for comment to the

church.)

Several options now lie before All Saints: follow the planning commission's requests and return to the commission with a new master plan and an EIR, or make their case before Pasadena's city council with or without a completed EIR.

Though representatives of the church claimed the project complied with directives given by the commission in May (after the first rejection of the plan), the commission sided with community residents like Marsha Rood, who asked at the December 10 meeting: "Should Pasadena look like new development, or new development look like Pasadena?" Rood, who served as the city's development administrator from 1982 to 2000, said that the endeavor violated the 2004 Central District Specific Plan, enacted to protect the area surrounding Pasadena's civic center—which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. She contended that Meier's plan did not pursue a relationship with the civic center, which sits directly across the street from the church, and violated the scale, massing, and rhythms delineated in the specific plan as well as the palette of materials and colors.

The specific plan does call for designers to maintain stylistic unity for civic buildings and draw inspiration from classical Italian and Spanish models, but it also states: "This should not prevent contemporary interpretations responsive to the Southern California environment." It is unclear when the church and its architect may return to make its case for contemporary architecture in Pasadena. **TIBBY ROTHMAN**

Clive Wilkinson Architects have specialized in transforming industrial lofts into exuberant workspaces, but to house himself, Wilkinson sought what he called "a neutral studio feel."

Initially, he planned to convert a trio of West Hollywood rental units into condos that would generate income. After that project stalled, he was offered a triangular-shaped double lot at a bargain price across Melrose Avenue from the Pacific Design Center, and decided to do something ambitious. Yet though the house came out at 3,500 square feet, it's almost hidden from the leafy side street, and has a rural sense of seclusion from within.

Wilkinson tore down two decrepit bungalows to clear the site and designed a pale-toned stucco house that is outwardly plain and set back behind a forecourt planted with olive trees. A high blank wall extends along the north side, shutting out the commercial properties on Melrose and a tall building to the north, and reducing heat from the sun. On the other side of the wall, thanks to large sliding glass doors, you can look all the way through the house from forecourt to rear garden, and the feeling of openness and transparency strengthens the fusion of interior and landscape. The house is naturally ventilated, from the sliders to the five electrically operated skylights. The projecting roof and good insulation reduce the need for heating, cooling, and artificial lighting.

The unaffected simplicity of the structure recalls the Case Study era, but Wilkinson has infused it with a spirit of invention. He has rotated the house a few degrees to accommodate the angularity of the site. There's an emphasis on diagonal axes in the linear sequence of rooms that open onto a pool to the south and a Japanese garden to the west. One enters through a corner of the low-ceilinged living room and continues on through the sliders to the pool, or from the opposite corner to the lofty dining area and open kitchen. Unenclosed stairs lead up to a studio and guest bedroom. At the far end of the house is the master bedroom, a free-standing tub, and a stepped dry garden reminiscent of the desert around Palm Springs where he likes to spend weekends.

Exposed wood ceiling studs and concrete floors give the interior the character of an industrial loft, but the raw surfaces are softened by plantings and eclectic furnishings. A free-form wood dining table was crafted by Wilkinson's 88-year-old father. The palette is monochromatic, except for two elements from recent jobs: vibrant green plastic curtains, laser-cut in a leaf pattern, from the JWT offices in Manhattan, and honeycomb storage units in golden yellow acrylic, left over from the Children's Place in Pasadena.

MICHAEL WEBB



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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 28, 2009

LA'S LOSS continued from front page colleagues of Usher did not break ranks with her official explanation, despite widespread rumors to the contrary.

Usher told *AN*, "I have pushed my message and my agenda, and I have made progress." But, she said, "there is a time and a place for every leader. Sometimes [it requires] a new leader to push the message to a new level."

Usher had served as the commission's chair since 2005, when she was appointed by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, but her participation in Los Angeles politics reaches back to Mayor Tom Bradley, whom she served as an in-house attorney. While initially focusing foremost on pragmatism and compromise, Usher rapidly became an advocate of sound planning policies and what she called "elegant density."

Her planning manifesto for Los Angeles, "Do Real Planning," which the commission adopted unanimously in 2007, followed development principals advocated by architects and planners such as demanding a walkable city, identifying smart parking requirements, and requiring density around transit. Usher was considered by many to be at odds with the mayor's development interests, and is said to have clashed with the planning department over turf and authority. She frequently and vocally sided with neighborhood groups to protect communities against unwanted development.

Her departure was seen as the loss of an advocate on issues ranging from a billboard moratorium to thoughtfully considered city building. Planning Commissioner Michael Woo, a former city councilmember who now teaches at the USC School of Policy, Planning and Development, credits Usher with a number of achievements. Most prominent among them, he said, was her transformation of the commission from a "passive, quasi-judicial role" into a proactive, policy-making body as exemplified by the commission's "Do Real Planning" position. Woo also cited the commis-

sion's revisions to the city general plan's housing element.

"We set higher targets for more housing [despite] opposition from some business groups that thought we were doing too much," he said. "But the city council approved our version." Woo added that Usher discovered and leveraged each commissioner's specialty, that her ability to work collaboratively fostered votes that were unanimous, and that her skills as an attorney will be missed.

Few had thought Usher would survive the controversy last March surrounding her open letter of opposition to the city's enactment of SB1818, the affordable housing density bonus. Usher objected not only to the ordinance, but also to the fact that the city had enacted it before the planning commission had an opportunity to review it. She rapidly deployed via the internet an open letter in which she laid out a precise legal blueprint for the ordinance's legal deficiencies, and encouraged neighborhoods to sue over what she believed to be a usurpation of neighborhood authority, despite her often-expressed support of smart growth.

Her resignation letter, which ran four pages, was full of such contradictions. While lauding LA Live, which many in the architectural community view as an inward-facing island, she advocated neighborhood-centered planning. Divided into seven categories, the letter recommended, among other things, providing mixed-income housing, enacting urban design guidelines and street standards, and updating the city's environmental mitigations.

In regards to density, she suggested that the city build vertically, but not in a precipitous fashion. "Please reject any proposed update that relies on the careless, sprawl-inducing approach of adding density at every rapid bus stop; this would be unnecessarily hostile to many of our appropriately low-rise residential neighborhoods that also reside along our long, multi-faceted corridors," the letter said. At the time of Usher's resignation, she said she had not yet secured her next position. **TR**

AT DEADLINE

QUESTIONABLE CANNING

Bruce McClendon, Los Angeles County's chief planner, has been fired by County Chief Executive Officer William Fujioka. Fujioka told *The Los Angeles Times* that county rules barred him from disclosing the reason for the dismissal, which was made effective immediately. McClendon told the *Times* that he believed the firing was likely in retaliation for him becoming a whistle-blower against the Board of Supervisors.

PEDESTRIAN VICTORY

On January 8 the LA City Planning Commission approved new urban design and downtown street standards, meant to bring walking-friendly features to downtown LA. The Urban Design Standards establish principles for sustainable design, setbacks, and architectural details relating to the street front. The Downtown Street Standards would change street classifications to help balance car, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic and other uses. The standards must now be voted on by the LA City Council.

NOT EASY BEING GREEN

A report by environmental and planning organizations ARC Ecology and Bionic says that the city of San Francisco and Lennar Corp. have ignored the natural habitats of Hunters Point and Candlestick Point, where they are planning a major new development that will include more than 10,000 residential units and cost over \$1.5 billion. The result, they say, is less parkland, dispersed habitats, and a bridge traversing a natural waterway, as well as a large football stadium near fragile parkland. The mega-project is seeking approval by next fall, with completion set in about 15 years.

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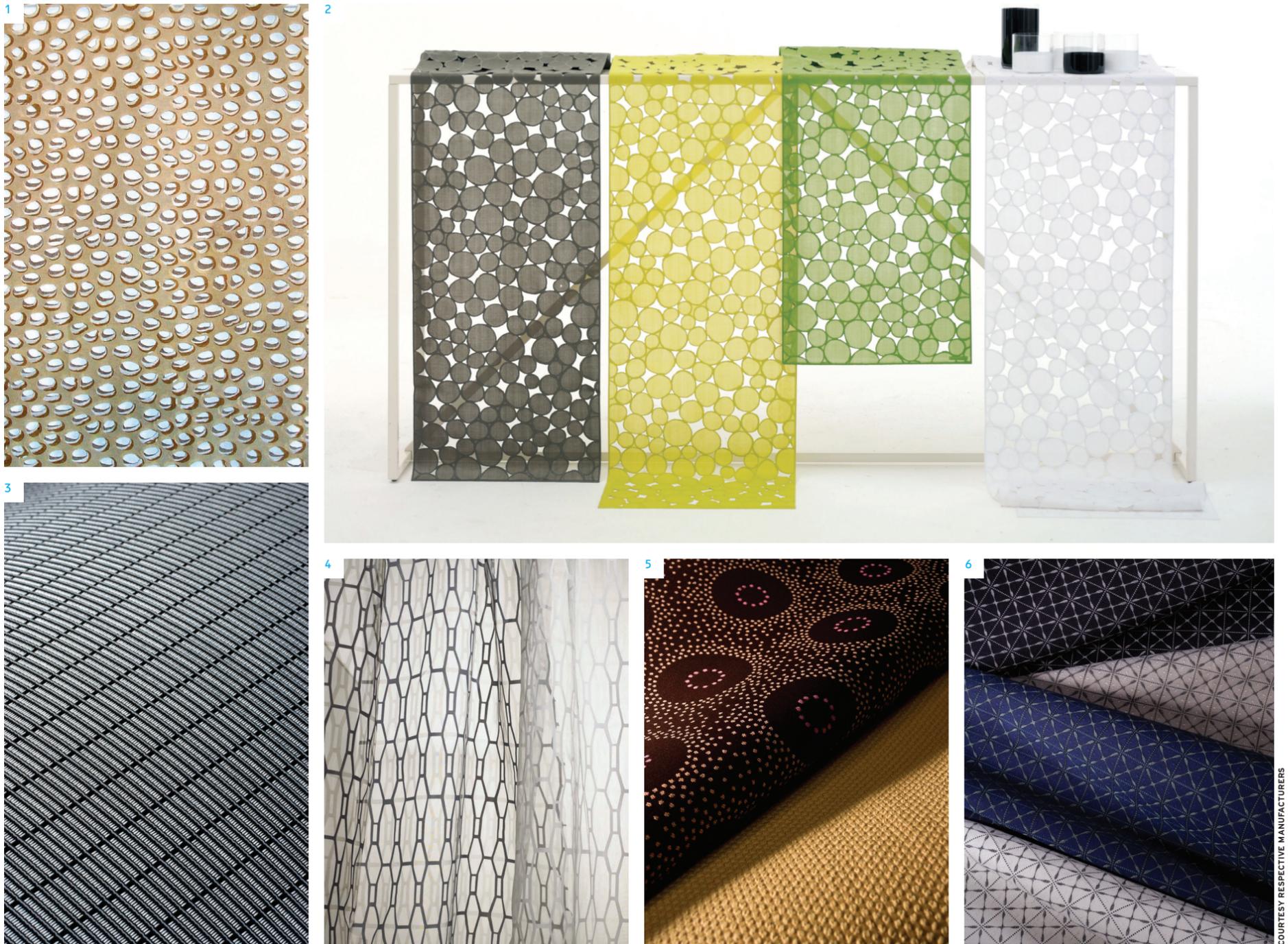
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Using the concept of reduce, reuse, recycle, Israeli-born products designer Liora Manné has created the Kobu Collection of Textiles. Produced by her own patented Lamontage process, in which acrylic fibers are layered and then interlocked by needle-punching to create custom colors, Manné designed a collection of textiles that are both sheer and opaque and can be used for fabrics, screens, shades, wall coverings, or floor coverings. Made from both acrylic and recycled fibers, Kobu Circles is available in natural and charcoal shades and comes in sizes as wide as 17 feet by 8 inches and as long as needed. www.lioramanne.com

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3 MECHANISM MAHARAM

New York-based Maharam brings quality design and a clean aesthetic to all their products. Mechanism, one of Maharam Design Studio's latest textile collections designed in-house, uses a technical grid pattern to create a futuristic feel. Using a filament yarn with a metallic sheen, the fabric is knit in a repeating rectangular pattern. Made of 100 percent polyester, Mechanism is available in a variety of colors and sizes. www.maharam.com

4 AIR RIGHTS KNOLLTEXTILES

KnollTextiles' January 2009 collection, designed by Suzanne Tick and named The State of Matter, comprises a range of upholstery, panels, drapery, and wall coverings made from a variety of polyester fibers, some containing recycled postindustrial or post-consumer content. Air Rights, a drapery fabric made from 100 percent polyester, is organized around a grid system composed of octagonal and rectangular shapes. The semi-transparent fabric serves as both a privacy screen and as a viewport to adjacent settings. www.knolltextiles.com

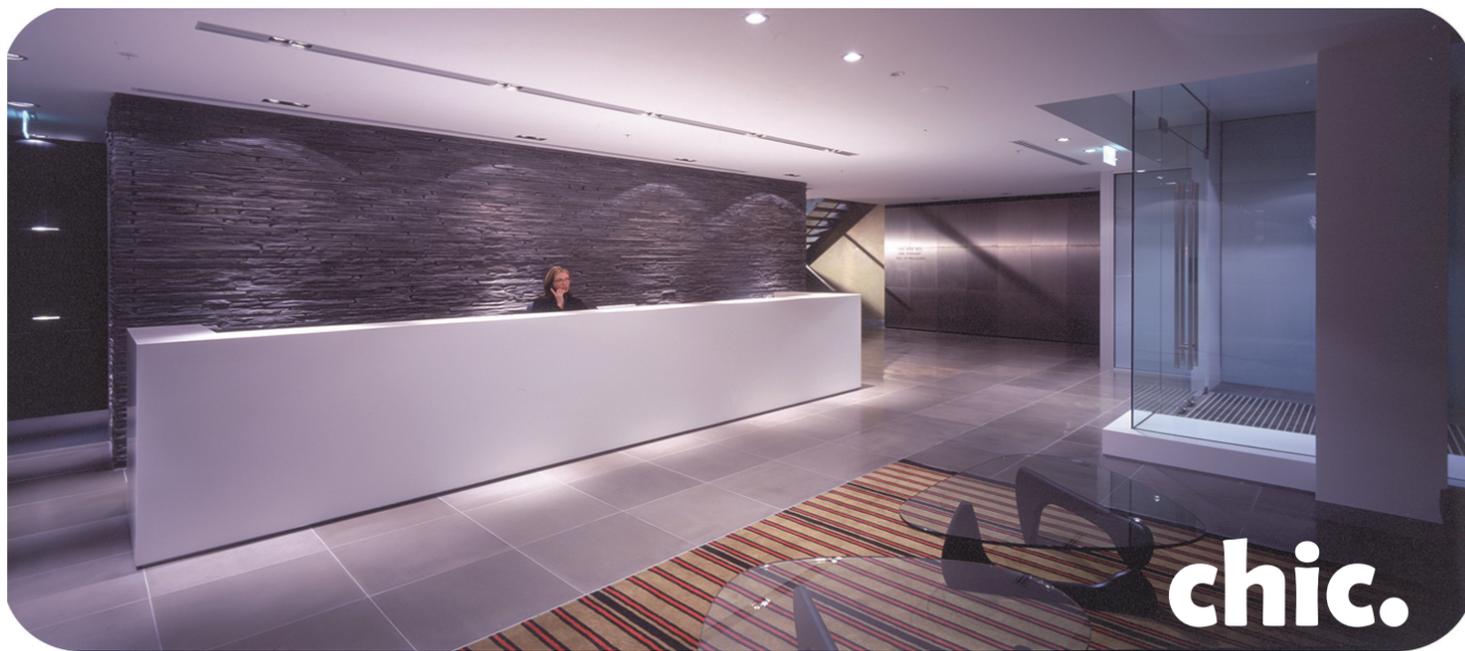
5 NIGHT SKY CARNEGIE

Appropriately named, Carnegie's most recent upholstery collection, Night Sky, combines bold colors and celestial designs. Fabricated using Crypton Green, a high-performance fabric optimized for the environment with at least 50 percent recycled content, Night Sky is as sustainable as it is aesthetically pleasing. Designed by in-house creative vice-president Mary Holt, Night Sky is available in seven patterns and 58 colors, including Eclipse and Pebble (pictured). www.carnegiefabrics.com

6 WINDRAD UNIKA VAEV

As the newest additions to Unika Vaev's Archive Collection, the Hoffmann Collection is comprised of three different historic Josef Hoffmann prints: Bijou, Linien, and Windrad. Developing the patterns and the repetition of forms for which the Austrian architect was well known, the patterns create classic, elegant, and luxurious designs that still look modern. Designed in 1906, Windrad, or "Windmill" in German, is built upon square elements. Made up of 52 percent viscose, 46 percent cotton, and 2 percent polyester, Windrad is available in a variety of colors, including White Noise and Black Pixel, which pay tribute to Hoffmann's interest in black and white within his patterns. www.unikavaev.com. DR

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 28, 2009

Despite a national downturn in hotel construction, California is still riding a catch-up wave of new projects. By Alissa Walker

Checking In



JAMES MERRELL





COURTESY RESPECTIVE HOTELS

Previous page, top: Frames encircling fine art and fantastic views of the Hollywood Hills are trademark Philippe Starck moves for the rooftop pool of the SLS. Previous page, bottom: A private, overnight guests-only lobby at the SLS with a baroque moderne white-on-white palette. Opposite, top: A furry pink chair is part of the confection-laden offerings at SLS's Patisserie, one of seven "microclimates" for dining and drinking in the labyrinthine Bazaar. Throughout the hotel, intrepid guests can find dozens of different proposals for what "SLS" stands for; here on the pillar to the left, it's Soft Like Silk. Opposite, bottom: night-time and the SLS rooftop pool transforms into a clubby lounge. This page, left: Hotel Palomar's striking splintered red glass mosaics and bold floor stripes designed by Cheryl Rowley are meant to evoke vintage Hollywood glamour in Westwood. This page, right: A former Hyatt in West Hollywood is remade into the first location of the hotelier's new design chain, Andaz, which means "personal style" in Hindi. Among the modern appointments are nods to its Sunset Strip address, like books about rock'n'roll.

A slew of new hotels have debuted in California over the last year, riding what will likely be the last big wave of development for some time due to a slowing economy and dismal travel forecasts. They're the lucky ones: The results from the November 2008 STR/TWR/Dodge Construction Pipeline show that 93,219 hotel rooms nationally have been abandoned in various stages of development, from preplanning to in-construction. That's a 75 percent increase in such abandonments since 2007. Other data from the Pipeline also point to a slowdown: Through November 2008, 1,565 hotels nationally were in construction, down from November 2007, when there were 1,609 hotels in construction.

In California, most new properties were a long-time-coming response to hotel room deficits in many tourist-heavy areas. In Beverly Hills, for example, a luxury hotel had not been built from the ground up since the early 1990s, while in San Francisco, the 32-story InterContinental is the largest hotel to open in the city in two decades. Two major California cities saw massive and much-needed room additions adjacent to their convention centers: the 420-room Hard Rock Hotel in San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter, and the aforementioned 550-room InterContinental San Francisco, located near the Moscone Center in SOMA. (Los Angeles will have to wait until 2010 for its 54-story Ritz Carlton, part of the downtown development LA Live.) Across the U.S., this seems to be the case as well: The country has seen an exceptionally slow growth of only five percent in new rooms since 2001, according to the American Hotel & Lodging Association.

This cautious expansion led to an age of conservative design for California hotels. Even the most anxiously anticipated debut in the state, the SLS Hotel—the first venture into the hotel niche from nightlife wunderkinds SBE Entertainment (famous for their Philippe Starck-designed LA bars and restaurants like Katsuya, S Bar, and XIV)—went for wit and whimsy rather than over-the-top, cutting-edge design. It's a huge departure from the sleek, cold modernism of the recent past—think the Standard

or Mondrian of the late 1990s.

"Instead of a very sparse, modern design, the approach we took is multi-layered in color and texture and decor and accessories," said Theresa Fatino, chief creative officer for SBE. "Guests can come back over and over and feel that same sense of discovery, these feelings of rejuvenation and delight and wonderment and surprise." This sensation—that they'll discover another Starck design pun, or find a new favorite dish on José Andrés' menu—aims at bestowing upon guests a feeling of belonging to some perpetual in-crowd.

While the boutique concept is alive and well—Thompson Beverly Hills and London West Hollywood both nod aesthetically to their New York predecessors—these properties have seen the same style evolution, towards warm, sumptuous luxury and a sprinkling of nostalgia. "In the LA area, there's a trend of capturing the glamour of old Hollywood and incorporating it into a design relevant to today's lifestyle," said Bryan Oakes of Gensler, project architect for the Hotel Palomar in the Westwood neighborhood of LA. The Montage Beverly Hills is modeled after the Mediterranean-influenced estates that sprang up in the city during the Golden Age of Hollywood, while Hotel Palomar and the London West Hollywood reference the same period with dramatic, sparkly interiors and Hollywood-referencing art. The Thompson Beverly Hills indulges a noire-ish theme, with deep, dark interiors that are signature of the designer Dodd Mitchell. Here, black leather upholstery, black lacquered wall panels, and glossy black wood floors convey *Chinatown* chic.

California continues to capitalize on the renovation of its older hotels by elevating former discount motel-like properties to luxury status, said Oakes. "One of the successes of Palomar is that we took a dated 1970s building, originally built as a Holiday Inn, and elevated it to a chic four-star hotel." This seemed to work best for new boutique operations like the Thompson Beverly Hills, which inhabits a crisp white modernist box that was once a 1960s Best Western, and the London West Hollywood, a

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 28, 2009

revitalization of a tired, nondescript Wyndham Bel-Age. For the green-aspirational, a renovation could also be spun as a huge sustainable selling point: The Good Hotel in San Francisco combined two aging hotels into one eco-friendly property, complete with room appointments made from reclaimed materials and the option to contribute to a carbon offset program upon check-in.

While the hotel pool has traditionally been the place for designers to show off, a growing emphasis is focused on creative public spaces that are twists on the hotel bar. Whether these are seamlessly melded indoor/outdoor lounges or multi-functional lobbies, designers are giving guests more reasons to come out of their rooms and hang out. "Trends ebb and flow, but I think that one area that should always be emphasized is that of the social gathering space," said David Rockwell of the Rockwell Group, who calls for public spaces that are "open, transformable, and comfortable." He outfitted the first W's for the Starwood chain and designed the Aloft (scheduled to roll out 500 locations worldwide over the next five years) with three major areas that encourage congregation and socialization: a communal lobby area with gaming and pool tables, the wxyz bar, and a 24-hour snack bar. The Bazaar at the SLS Hotel is broaching yet another approach: a warren of spaces blending bar, lounge, restaurant, and boutique for design retailer Moss, allowing guests to nibble and sip (and shop) in a variety of environments throughout an evening.

One trend perfectly timed with the sagging economy is that of the discount

design chain, which has swept into Southern California with the opening of two new ventures: Andaz is Hyatt's first design hotel, and Starwood's Aloft designed to deliver W-level accommodations at Holiday Inn prices. "One major trend in the last few years has been the recognition that the everyday traveler also appreciates a high level of design," said Rockwell. (Aloft's first California location is in Rancho Cucamonga). "We transformed this type of otherwise nondescript hotel into a chic oasis by using materials and amenities that are state-of-the-art, but simple and affordable." The 257-room Andaz was designed by New York-based Janson Goldstein to give personality to the former "Riot House" Hyatt on the Sunset Strip in LA, with a variety of colorful appointments from local retailers that add high-end flavor to simple, modern rooms. (Of note to music fans: The hotel's famous balconies, once launching pads for televisions and other after-party detritus during the hard rocking years, have been replaced with glassed-in sunrooms.)

According to trend-tracking site HotelNewsNow.com, 2009 national occupancy is only predicted to dip slightly, down 3.9 percent, but that's where the discount design trend might win over guests: In a December 2008 survey of business travelers by Orbitz for Business and *Business Traveler*, only half of the respondents expected to travel less in 2009, but 79 percent of travelers said they have been pressured to cut costs. For those hitting the road, there still might be a few new places to write home about.

ALISSA WALKER



Clockwise from top left: Starwood's Aloft concept designed by the Rockwell Group brings urban-inspired, loft-like accommodations—nine-foot ceilings, big windows, high-energy public spaces—to the discount chain world; The pool at the London West Hollywood, where the decor combines British wit (bulldogs, English topiaries) with Hollywood glamour (leather, fire pits) as designed by Collins Design Studios; Located at the entrance to San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter, the Carrier Johnson-designed Hard Rock Hotel provides an aesthetic transition between the city's all-business convention center and its fun-loving entertainment district; The meticulously-landscaped (by Nancy Goslee Power and Associates) Montage Beverly Hills is a Mediterranean-inspired oasis of courtyards and terraces meant to feel like rambling Hollywood estate in the heart of the city's business district.

COURTESY RESPECTIVE HOTELS

JANUARY

WEDNESDAY 28

LECTURE

Suzanne Jackson, Betye Saar, Carolyn Peter
Modern Art in Los Angeles:
Gallery 32
 7:30 p.m.
 The J. Paul Getty Center
 1200 Getty Center Dr.,
 Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING

School Buildings –
The State of Affairs:
A New Architecture for
a New Education
 AIA San Francisco
 Center for
 Architecture + Design
 130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

THURSDAY 29

SYMPOSIUM

Schools of the 21st Century:
Architecture,
Politics + Policies
 10:00 a.m.
 AIA San Francisco
 130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

FRIDAY 30

EXHIBITION OPENING

Dateline 09
 Contemporary
 Jewish Museum
 736 Mission St.,
 San Francisco
www.thecjm.org

FILM

Utopia:
A Living Documentary
 7:30 p.m.
 The Exploratorium
 3601 Lyon St., San Francisco
www.exploratorium.edu

SATURDAY 31

LECTURES

Dr. Susan Lowery
Constructing and
Reconstructing Our World
 6:00 p.m.
 Santa Barbara
 Contemporary Arts Forum
 653 Paseo Nuevo,
 Santa Barbara
www.sbcaf.org

Margaret K. Hofer

The Women of
Tiffany Studios
 7:30 p.m.
 Art Center College of Design
 1700 Lida St., Pasadena
www.gamblehouse.org

FEBRUARY

SUNDAY 1

WITH THE KIDS

Family Art Stops /
Enfoque Artístico
 2:00 p.m.
 The J. Paul Getty Center
 1200 Getty Center Dr.,
 Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

TUESDAY 3

TRADE SHOWS

SURFACES 2009
 Through February 5
 Sands Expo & Convention
 Center, Las Vegas
www.surfaces.com

World of Concrete

Through February 6
 Las Vegas Convention Center,
 Las Vegas
www.worldofconcrete.com

WEDNESDAY 4

EXHIBITION OPENING

Gay Outlaw
 Gallery Paule Anglim
 14 Geary St., San Francisco
www.gallerypauleanglim.com

EVENT

Design San Francisco
 Through February 6
 San Francisco Design Center
 2 and 101 Henry Adams St.,
 San Francisco
www.sfdesigncenter.com

FRIDAY 6

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Austere: Selections from the
SFMOMA Collection
Otl Aicher: München 1972
Patterns of Speculation:
J. MAYER H.
 San Francisco Museum of
 Modern Art
 151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

SATURDAY 7

EXHIBITION OPENING

Future of Sequoias:
Sustaining Parklands in
the 21st Century
 Oakland Museum of
 California
 1000 Oak St., Oakland
www.museumca.org

WEDNESDAY 11

LECTURE

Curtis Roads
Microsound
 7:00 p.m.
 SCI-Arc
 W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
 960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING

Wayne Thiebaud:
Seventy Years of Painting
 Palm Springs Art Museum
 101 Museum Dr.,
 Palm Springs
www.psmuseum.org

THURSDAY 12

EXHIBITION OPENING

Tauba Auerbach, Desirée
Holman, et al.
2008 SECA Art Award
 San Francisco Museum of
 Modern Art
 151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

FRIDAY 13

LECTURE

Peter Macapia
The Smell of Geometry
 1:00 p.m.
 SCI-Arc
 W. H. Keck Auditorium
 960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

SATURDAY 14

EXHIBITION OPENING

Bob Dob
Francisco Rodriguez Maruca
 Billy Shire Fine Arts
 5790 Washington Blvd.,
 Culver City
www.billyshirefinearts.com

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SUNDAY 15

LECTURE

Dewey Crumpler,
Matthew Thomas
Spirituality in Abstraction:
A Dialogue Between Artists
 2:00 p.m.
 California African American
 Museum
 600 State Dr., Los Angeles
www.caam.ca.gov

EXHIBITION OPENING

Dan Graham: Beyond
 Museum of
 Contemporary Art
 250 South Grand Ave.,
 Los Angeles
www.moca.org

MONDAY 16

EVENT

Frey II Tours
 Through February 17
 Palm Springs Art Museum
 101 Museum Dr.,
 Palm Springs
www.psmuseum.org

TUESDAY 17

EXHIBITION OPENING

La Roldana's Saint Ginés:
The Making of a
Polychrome Sculpture
 The J. Paul Getty Center
 1200 Getty Center Dr.,
 Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

FILM

Architects Herzog &
De Meuron:
Alchemy of Building
 6:00 p.m.
 Palm Springs Art Museum
 101 Museum Dr.,
 Palm Springs
www.psmuseum.org

CONFERENCE

The Art Center Summit 2009:
Expanding the Vision of
Sustainable Mobility
 Through February 19
 Pasadena Convention Center
 300 East Green St., Pasadena
www.artcenter.edu/summit/

WEDNESDAY 18

LECTURE

Alex McDowell and
Greg Lynn
 7:00 p.m.
 The Hammer Museum
 10899 Wilshire Blvd.,
 Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

SATURDAY 21

SYMPOSIUM

Possessed:
The Obsession of Ownership
 9:30 a.m.
 Palm Springs Art Museum
 101 Museum Dr.,
 Palm Springs
www.psmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Dave Muller
 Blum & Poe
 2754 South La Cienega Blvd.,
 Los Angeles
www.blumandpoe.com

EVENT

Compostmodern 09
 8:30 a.m.
 Herbst Theatre
 401 Van Ness Ave.,
 San Francisco
www.compostmodern.org

SUNDAY 22

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Continental Rifts:
Contemporary Time-Based
Works of Africa
Transformations: Recent
Contemporary African
Acquisitions
 Fowler Museum of Art
 308 Charles East Young Dr.,
 Los Angeles
www.fowler.ucla.edu

Mario Garcia Torres

MATRIX 227
 Berkeley Art Museum and
 Pacific Film Archive
 2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley
www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

WITH THE KIDS

Drop-In Art-Making:
Drafting and Drawing
 1:00 p.m.
 Contemporary
 Jewish Museum
 736 Mission St.,
 San Francisco
www.thecjm.org

MONDAY 23

LECTURE

Sally Singer
Conscientious Consumption:
Sustainability and the
Future of Luxury
 7:00 p.m.
 The Hammer Museum
 10899 Wilshire Blvd.,
 Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

TUESDAY 24

EXHIBITION OPENING

German and Central
European Manuscript
Illumination
 The J. Paul Getty Center
 1200 Getty Center Dr.,
 Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

WEDNESDAY 25

CONFERENCE

CAA 2009 Annual Conference
 Through February 28
 Los Angeles
 Convention Center
 1201 South Figueroa St.,
 Los Angeles
www.collegeart.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Galaxy:
A Hundred or So Stars
Visible to the Naked Eye
Taking Refuge: Buddhist Art
from the Land of White Clouds
 Berkeley Art Museum and
 Pacific Film Archive
 2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley
www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

SATURDAY 28

EXHIBITION OPENING

Amy Bessone,
Nicole Cherubini,
Mari Eastman, et al.
An Expanded Field of
Possibilities
 Santa Barbara
 Contemporary Arts Forum
 653 Paseo Nuevo,
 Santa Barbara
www.sbcaf.org

WITH THE KIDS

Union Station Family
Walking Tour
 11:00 a.m.
 Los Angeles Conservancy
 523 West Sixth St.,
 Los Angeles
www.laconservancy.org



ARJEN SCHMITZ

SCHOOL BUILDINGS – THE STATE OF AFFAIRS:
A NEW ARCHITECTURE FOR A NEW EDUCATION

AIA San Francisco
 130 Sutter Street, San Francisco
 Through March 27

While good architecture is not always synonymous with good education, the designs on view at the AIA San Francisco's Center for Architecture + Design Gallery demonstrate the powerful role the built environment plays in students' ability to learn. Based on the original exhibition presented in Zurich in 2004, the show explores the changing needs of educational facilities and ways in which architecture has adapted to new pedagogical demands. With teachers requiring more flexible spaces—not only classrooms but also community halls, new-media labs, and athletic venues—architects have made a welcome break with the dark warrens of the past. Once airless hallways have given way to light-filled spaces full of riotous color and new materials that convey both serenity and joy. In the process, educators are finding that design can have a surprising impact on students' social and emotional well-being. In an era of shrinking municipal budgets, the 31 recent projects in this show—from Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Germany, Scandinavia, and the Netherlands (including Utrecht's Voorn School by Frencken Scholl Architecten, above)—also suggest how schools can fit into mixed-use projects to build not only better lives for students but healthier neighborhoods for all.



COURTESY, J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM

DIALOGUE AMONG GIANTS:
CARLETON WATKINS AND THE RISE OF
PHOTOGRAPHY IN CALIFORNIA

The J. Paul Getty Center
 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles
 Through March 1

From California's scenic mountains and coastlines to its burgeoning cities, *Dialogue Among Giants* captures a pictorial history of the state in the 19th century through photographer Carleton Watkins' camera lens. Best known for his photographs of San Francisco and Yosemite, the San Francisco-based Watkins also produced a rich body of work along the Pacific Coast and in Southern California, including pictures of the Columbia River in Oregon—such as *The Dalles, Extremes of High and Low Water, 92 Feet, Columbia River, Oregon* (circa 1883, above)—California's 18th-century missions, and silver mines in Nevada. Thematically arranged, the show examines Watkins' previously unknown early career as a daguerreotypist, enamored by California's Gold Rush era, and follows his switch to a mammoth-plate camera in the 1860s that allowed him to take stunning images on 18-by-22-inch glass negatives. The exhibit also discusses contemporaries such as Eadweard Muybridge and Charles L. Weed, who also journeyed into Yosemite and left behind a fascinating visual dialogue, as the various photographers re-created one another's views. More than 150 pictures are presented in this superb survey of Watkins' career, which was sadly truncated when San Francisco's 1906 earthquake and fire destroyed his negatives.



COURTESY PAP

NOMAD 2.0

More Mobile: Portable Architecture for Today
Edited by Jennifer Siegal
Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Inflatable pods, clothing as shelter, floating platforms, lunar settlements, stackable containers, and a carbon-neutral micro-compact home are the latest variations on a theme that began with the yurt and the wigwam. *More Mobile* is the sequel to Jennifer Siegal's earlier collection of inventive and

whimsical proposals from around the world, *Mobile: the Art of Portable Architecture*. "Anything you can't fold up and take with you is a blight on the environment and an insult to one's liberty," was her mantra then, and still is. As founder of the Venice-based Office of Mobile Design, she is both polemicist

and practitioner, and her latest projects are included alongside those she has assembled by an international cast of other architects in this new, seductive pocket book.

The timing couldn't be better for a collection of ingenious experiments. Waves of foreclosures, a near-Depression, and an enlightened new administration committed to fresh approaches provide an opportunity unmatched since the critical housing shortage of the mid-1940s. Then, Buckminster Fuller and others proposed that factories churning out tanks and bombers could be retooled to manufacture

houses. Special interests (the unholy trinity of builders, unions, and loan officers) snuffed out this and other bright ideas for rational construction. The Dymaxion house was forgotten; Levittown triumphed. Now, here's a second chance. Mobility is one aspect of prefabrication—as in the Airstream trailer—and it can be combined with sustainability to create a new paradigm for human settlement.

Siegal puts a fresh spin on that classic in *Storehouse*, a modular titanium-and-fabric display unit with a roll-out molded plastic base that doubles as seating. Commissioned

for the National Design Triennial at the Cooper-Hewitt, it's designed for mass production. Still more adventurous is Siegal's Hydra 21, an emergency shelter that inflates on contact with the sea and expands to resemble a giant jellyfish. When the oceans start to rise, we may all be living this way, growing our food hydroponically and sleeping on the equivalent of a waterbed. Studio Dre Wapenaar in Rotterdam has fabricated a lightweight reading kiosk that looks like an up-ended lampshade, and teardrop-shaped tents for tree-huggers that can be suspended on high branches, out of reach of predatory

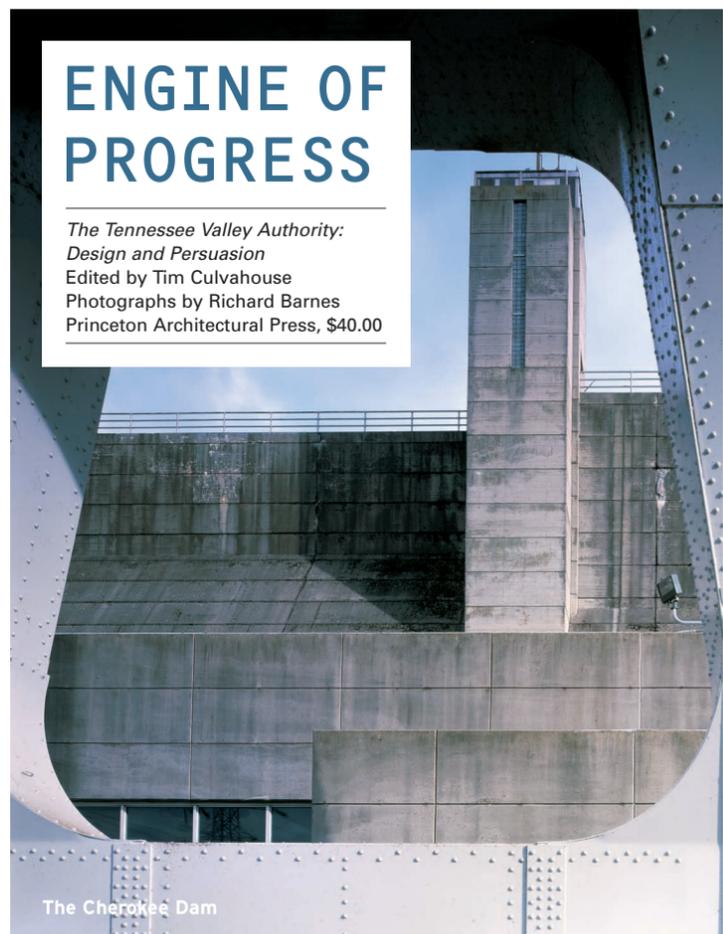
animals. Elsewhere, extruded plastic capsules alternate with habitable vehicles. One could imagine a collection of these structures touring the country on a flatbed truck to spread the message.

Few of the schemes shown here are likely to furnish literal solutions, but their diversity and audacity should inspire every architect and plant seeds for new growth. The houses and suburbs most Americans live in are as outmoded and wasteful as a Cadillac El Dorado: Siegal is mapping a path to the future.

MICHAEL WEBB IS AN LA-BASED ARCHITECTURE CRITIC.

ENGINE OF PROGRESS

The Tennessee Valley Authority: Design and Persuasion
Edited by Tim Culvahouse
Photographs by Richard Barnes
Princeton Architectural Press, \$40.00



The Cherokee Dam

COURTESY PAP

Considering our current economic crisis and the challenges we face in sustaining our neglected public infrastructure, *The Tennessee Valley Authority: Design and Persuasion*, a set of essays celebrating the history and development of the legendary public works program, is a timely illustration of the power of investment on a grand scale. It arrives just after the 75th anniversary of Congress' passage of the legislation that chartered the TVA at the urging of President Roosevelt in 1933. The TVA was a flagstone of Roosevelt's "engine of progress"—the New Deal—and has outlasted the other ambitious programs of social change put together in his first term.

TVA's purpose was multifold: to improve navigability and flood control on the wild Tennessee River, to reforest and repair the land of the vast Tennessee Valley that had been ravaged by over-farming of cotton and tobacco, and to bring electricity to the impoverished communities of the Southland. This last item was a good example of the authority's use of flexibility and initiative. The hydroelectric dams worked on a regional level: The Tennessee Valley watershed

spanned 290,000 acres and included parts of seven states. Today, the TVA is the country's largest producer of electric power, mostly by renewable resources including hydroelectric, solar, and wind, as well as nuclear- and coal-powered energy plants.

Editor Tim Culvahouse and his fellow contributors are at their best when they focus on the singular achievement of the TVA in placing the design of its facilities in the forefront of the modern design movement. As Christine May's chapter on the TVA architects makes clear, "If this project was to usher in a new age, its look had to be modern." Earle Draper, director of the authority's Housing and Planning Division, hired young architects, engineers, and planners and appointed inspiring leaders like Benton MacKaye, Eliel Saarinen as a consultant, and Roland Wank. Wank was trained in the 1920s in a Bauhaus-like institute in Brno in the now-Czech Republic, and arrived in America in 1924. He had been the project architect for the magnificent Union Station in Cincinnati, a modernist transportation icon. It was Wank's persistence in arguing for a redesign of the Norris Dam that

led to its transformative image of a compositional whole, unifying the various engineering elements.

The essay on "Redefining Landscape" by Jane Wolff describes TVA's radical ideas about transcending boundaries and local identities. In the space of a dozen years, the agency completely remade the physical and social terrain of a seven-state region roughly the size of Ohio. Its basis for planning and landscape was the geomorphology of the Tennessee Valley watershed—what Benton MacKaye called "bioregionalism." As the 900 miles of the Tennessee River and its tributaries flowed through the varied landscapes within the TVA jurisdiction, it served a population as varied as its terrain. What the people had in common was the Great Depression and, in the poorest part of the United States, not much to hope for. The dams provided abundant electricity and fostered a new infrastructure of roads and towns. Forests were replanted and new farming techniques were introduced to control erosion. The project was a lasting demonstration that large-scale planning is possible in a democracy, conceived and, as inscribed **continued on page 19**



COURTESY PAP

Mud Slinging

Earth Architecture
Ronald Rael
Princeton Architectural Press, \$45.00

Could the United States really be the largest consumer of mud bricks in the industrialized world? Ronald Rael makes this claim in his introduction to *Earth Architecture*, then shows that the building

material, despite perceptions that it's only used by and for the poor, is popular with every economic and social class in the world. In China, for example, 100 million people live in earthen homes, as

A mud oven for making charcoal in Chile, 1999.

does 15 percent of the rural population in France. Even Ronald Reagan, at Rancho del Cielo, and Chairman Mao lived in mud brick buildings.

Rael investigates works of architecture that employ "the ancient technology of earth" but are informed by issues of contemporary society. He begins with the role of earthen architecture in the theories of Vitruvius, Semper, Loos, and Speer, and with the French builder François Cointeraux, whose "new way of thinking about rammed-earth architecture" influenced both Boulée and Ledoux.

Le Corbusier is featured for his system of rammed-earth and compressed-earth blocks at the Murondin project, where the mechanical services in these mud-huts were so sophisticated they impressed even Reyner Banham.

Rael also discusses Egyptian Hassan Fathy on modern perceptions of earthen structures, and how rammed-earth architecture influenced the non-earthen structures of early modernist architects Antoni Gaudi, Rudolf Schindler, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Contemporary earthen projects (47 of them) are divided into four categories: structures of rammed earth, mud brick, compressed-earth block, and molded-earth projects. We find the usual array of southwest adobe McMansions, wineries, modern residences using earthen materials by Will Bruder, Marwan Al-Sayed, and Antoine Predock, and a surprising number of projects in far-northern climates like Germany and Sweden. But the best projects are the low-cost ones, like a modular prototype for a peat bog house by the Irish architects N3, and a spectacular sculpture mimicking the circular Chilean mud ovens used to make charcoal by traditional charcoal-makers. Adobe Alliance's Simone Swan, who learned her trade from Fathy, keeps his philosophy of earthen construction alive with self-built vaulted mud structures near Presidio, Texas.

Earth Architecture is a satisfying survey both for the professional "mudder" and for those who want a quick scholarly survey of earthen buildings from all over.

WILLIAM MENKING IS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF AN.

ENGINE OF PROGRESS

continued from page 18 over every public entry, "Built for the People of the United States of America."

Barry M. Katz and Steven Heller both explore the ways in which design was put to service in selling the progressive program to a skeptical public. The visitor centers and the dams themselves illustrated that the creative minds of science and government could work with the natural features of the region to produce an integrated work of surpassing beauty and productivity. In his review of the TVA show at MoMA in 1941, Lewis Mumford asserted that in the TVA, America had produced "modern architecture at its mightiest and best." Unfortunately, allied attempts in the late 1930s to create an indigenous craft industry in the model town of Norris was not so successful, because a streamlined aesthetic for domestic products such as teapots and furniture was not popular among rural homemakers.

A selection of recent color photographs by

Richard Barnes captures the variety of monumental structures and simple recreational settings throughout the project. His photo essay argues that the dramatic interventions of the TVA into the natural landscape have aged well and coexist comfortably now with clusters of houseboats, hikers, and campgrounds.

One of the book's primary faults is its lack of an index. But each chapter contains numerous endnotes that tie the essays to countless other references and make this a convincing historical survey. An appended chapter offers some helpful guidelines for an itinerary through the current facilities, including the tip that a number of powerhouses and observation decks are no longer open to the public, an apparent response to post-9/11 security concerns. As we look toward an uncertain future, the TVA deserves to be revisited.

WILBUR L. WOODS IS A SENIOR PLANNER AT THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING IN NEW YORK.

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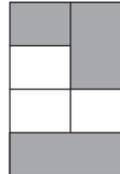
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 28, 2009

A New Infrastructure: Innovative Transit Solutions for Los Angeles

An open ideas competition sponsored by SCIFI at SCI-Arc and The Architect's Newspaper

Entries due March 13, 2009

Measure R, a half cent sales tax in Los Angeles County, will provide as much as \$40 billion for transit-related projects across the city of Los Angeles over the next 30 years.

In response to this historic opportunity, the SCIFI (Future Initiatives) program at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) and The Architect's Newspaper are sponsoring an open ideas competition for architects, engineers, urban planners and students to propose new plans for LA County's transit infrastructure.

The competition jury will include **Thom Mayne**, Principal and Founder of Morphosis Architects; Professor, UCLA; **Gail Goldberg**, Director of Planning, City of Los Angeles; **Neil M. Denari**, Principal of Neil M. Denari Architects; Professor, UCLA; **Cecilia V. Estolano**, CEO of Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles and **Eric Owen Moss**, Director, SCI-Arc; Principal of Eric Owen Moss Architects as well as **transit engineers from LA Metro**, developers, and local civic leaders.

For further information please visit www.sciarc.edu or www.archpaper.com

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KINETIC MAN ON THE MOVE

Seattle-based architect Tom Kundig had what he would call a “really terrific 2008.” In May he was awarded the Architecture Design Award for the Cooper-Hewitt’s 2008 National Design Awards, and last fall the AIA named his firm, Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen, Firm of the Year. Born in California but of mountain-climbing Swiss descent, Kundig spent his formative years in Canada and Alaska, where he first worked as an architect, before turning to architecture at the University of Washington and becoming a partner at Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen in 2000. Kundig quickly became known for his use of natural, sustainable materials and his love for kinetic architecture—designing dynamic elements often powered by antiquated machinery but softened by nature. Kundig talked to *AN* about the secret to Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen’s longstanding partnership and why Seattle’s architecture might at last be entering a golden age.

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER: Some people would say your Cooper-Hewitt win and the AIA Firm of the Year would mean Seattle is finally getting noticed. Do you guys see it that way?

TOM KUNDIG: In the past, I’ve thought that maybe it’s fair that the East Coast and California don’t recognize good stuff is being done in other places. Now I don’t. I think sometimes work flowers out of an

area, and regions get a little bit insecure about what’s being generated in their area. But there’s been work coming out of Arizona for a few years now that’s really been terrific. There’s work coming out of the Midwest that’s really terrific. I think there has been some great work that’s come out of Seattle, maybe it’s better right now, maybe it’s going to get even better. **What about personally, how is your own work evolving?**

I think one of the important issues every professional has to think about is how you continue to change and morph and still be true to the core of yourself. And I think that’s a full-time job. It’s a chore but I think people like Glenn Murcutt or Peter Zumthor or Herzog and de Meuron or Steven Holl—and there are others, many others—are able to achieve that recalibration and continue to be inventive. That’s a challenge.

You’re known for your residential work. Are you shifting your focus from that? I’m working on some things that are different in scale, certainly, from the past. Some urban work, some highrise and midrise that, depending on the economy, might be built. There’s one, Sun Valley Center for the Arts, which is looking for funding right now. It’s really my first small community center; it’s a kunsthalle, basically.

You’ve become well known for using simple, affordable materials. In fact, you once described something as “dirt

cheap,” but in a good way!

Maybe it’s just something that’s important to me, being frugal and efficient by nature. There’s the types of materials, first of all. Leaving them as-is makes them beautiful as-is. And it’s humble, it’s modest, and it’s not indulgent. You basically take a material and let it be what it wants to be. That seems awfully efficient, and yes, dirt cheap!

You’re also famous for your experiments with kinetic architecture. How did this become a signature part of your work?

When I was a kid I grew up in a mining-logging-farming area, and of course there was a lot of machinery, a lot of practically-designed—and in their own way, beautiful—machinery. And when I lived in Alaska, I would go way out in the country, hiking and mountain climbing, and I would see these pieces of machinery way the heck back there, powered by water coming off the side of a mountain or by wind. The guys who designed these were *geniuses!* I think as I was developing an architectural voice, I realized there was something similar about building that I found fascinating: that buildings could be changed by people using them. You can literally move walls or furniture and move it on a scale that reminds you that in fact you’re capable—with geometry and physics—of moving these things.

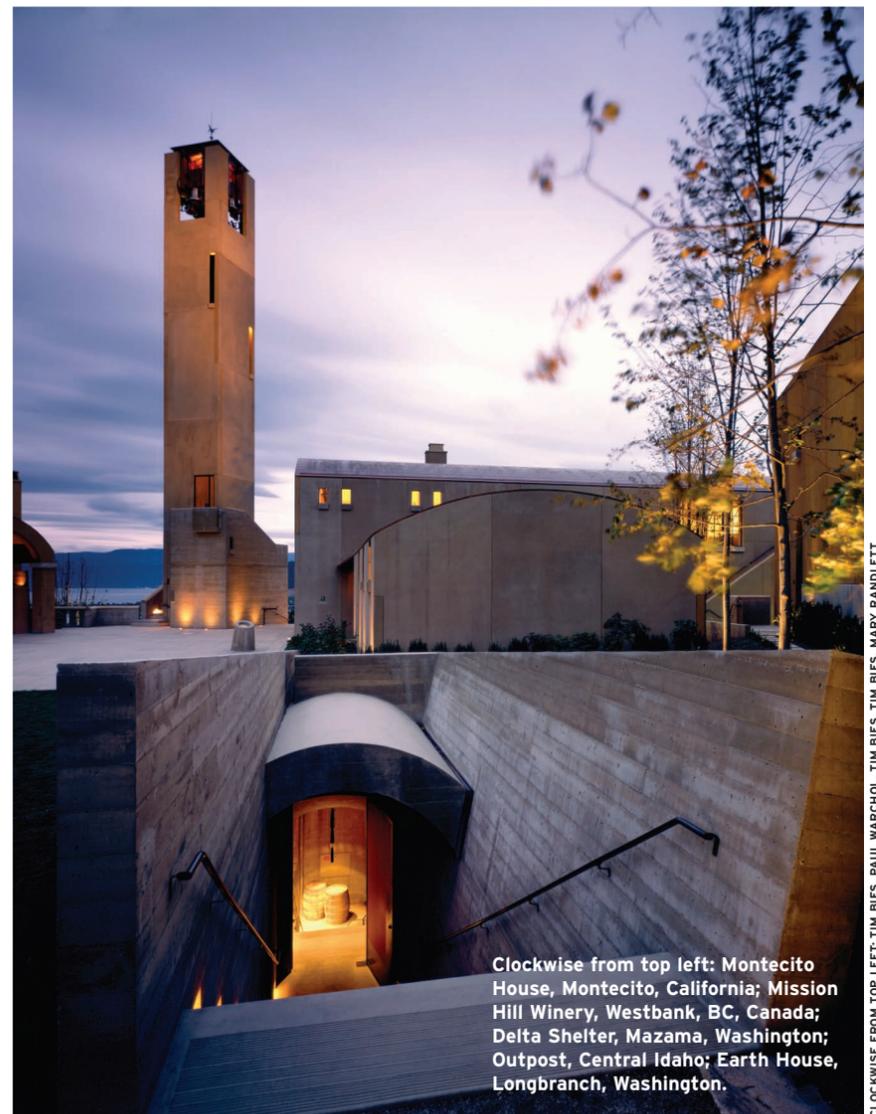
How did you join Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen?

Jim Olson founded his firm in 1966, and when I came down from Alaska in 1986, of course I knew the old firm, and this new firm that was reconfiguring itself [with

Rick Sundberg]. I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do because I had my own firm in Alaska and I had started to feel a little more personal about my work. So I joined the firm in 1986 as a test to see if I could work with a group of people and it felt really comfortable. It wasn’t so much that my voice was exactly like their voice, but if you did good work, it was a firm that skeptically but supportively let you use your own voice and develop it.

What’s happening in Seattle architecture that’s exciting?

Hopefully, some of the stuff we’re doing right now. I’ve got some projects I’m excited about, but they’re not built yet. I think there’s some good work going on, but nothing big and splashy like the Olympic Sculpture Park and the Seattle Public Library. Now, those were both out-of-city architects; if we can do something for our own city on that scale, that would be great. The Olympic Sculpture Park would’ve been a dream commission. That integration of the landscape and art in an urban setting—that would have been really interesting to me. Especially in a civic setting, you can’t get much better than that! There are some waterfront projects, too, it’s basically the removal of our viaduct, our Embarcadero, and that could have some interesting possibilities. And of course, Obama’s new infrastructure directive, that could lead to interesting stuff, because during our massive infrastructural building in the 30s, boy, there were some wonderful things being done, from dams to powerhouses to bridges.



Clockwise from top left: Montecito House, Montecito, California; Mission Hill Winery, Westbank, BC, Canada; Delta Shelter, Mazama, Washington; Outpost, Central Idaho; Earth House, Longbranch, Washington.



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