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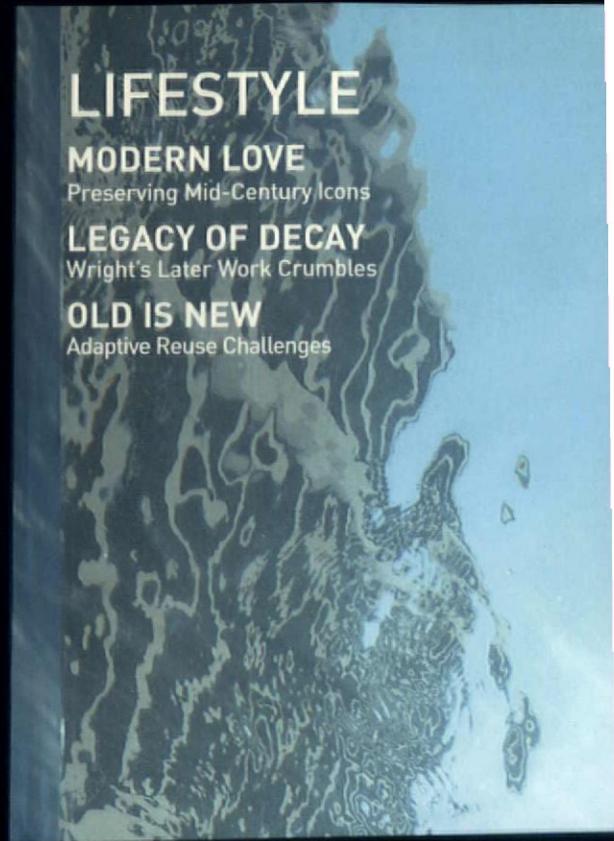
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Wright's Later Work Crumbles

OLD IS NEW

Adaptive Reuse Challenges



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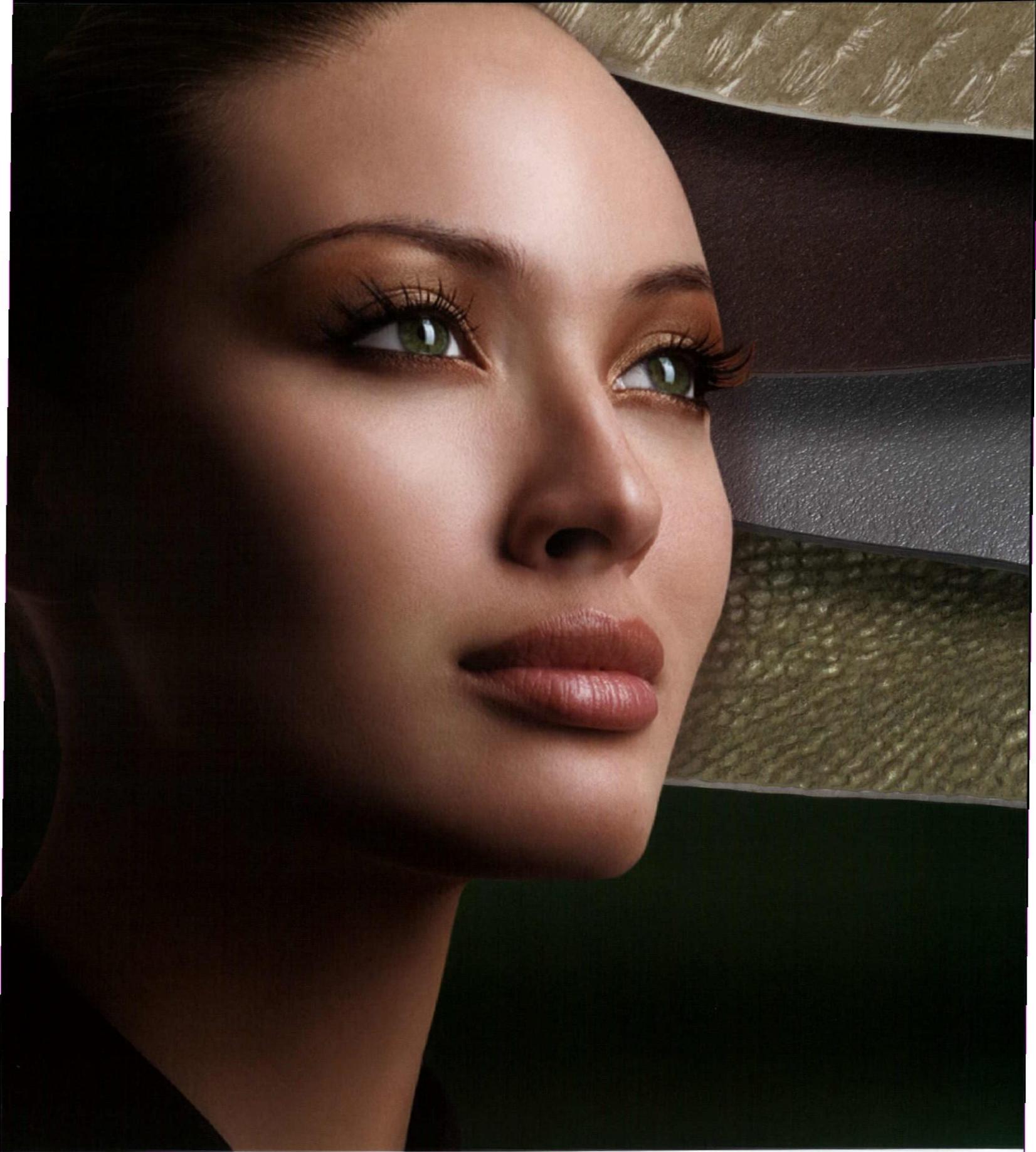
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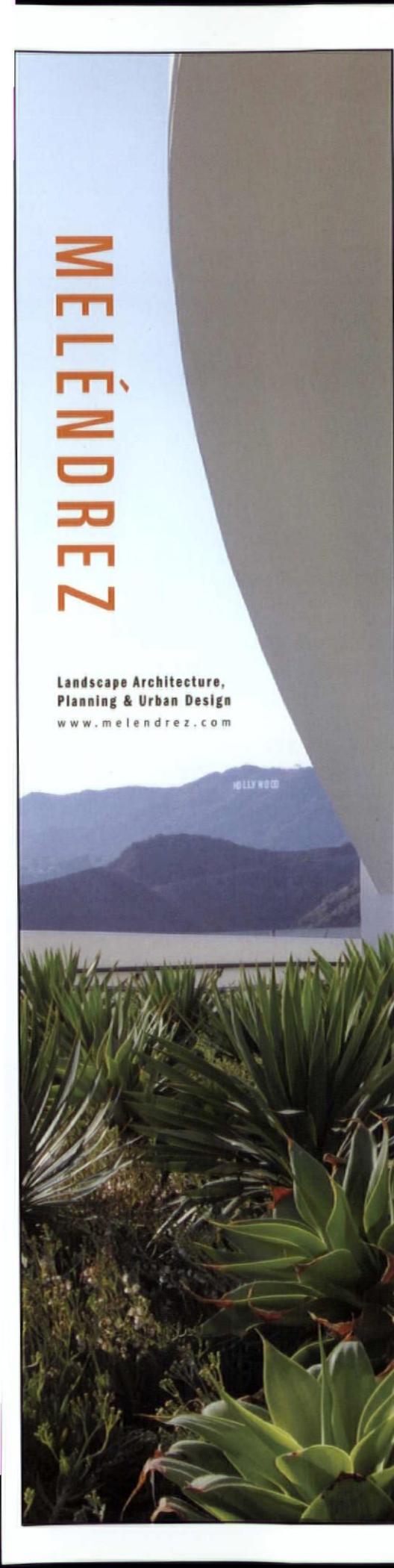
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Cover: Tim Cuppett Architect's 811 Congress Ave., Photo by Woody Welch.

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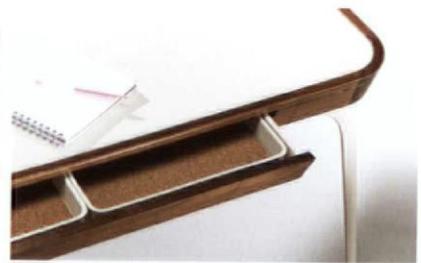
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CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN GENDALL is a New York-based architectural writer, whose work appears in *Architectural Record*, *The Architect's Newspaper* and *Harvard Design Magazine*. He studied architectural history and theory at Harvard's Graduate School of Design.

DANNY KING had to get weeded out of not one, but two schools of architecture to take the hint, but he's doing the next best thing by writing about the subject. Long curious about an imposing block-like structure that lorded over his Los Feliz neighborhood, King found that the house, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Ennis Family, was even more daunting for those trying to rehabilitate it after 85 years of neglect. A native Angeleno, King is a former reporter for Bloomberg News whose work has also appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times*.

As a teenager, **MARGOT CARMICHAEL LESTER** considered becoming an architect like her Uncle Rozier. Then she realized how much math was involved. Now she writes about architecture, real estate trends and sustainable development for several regional and national publications. Most of her reporting is focused on adaptive reuse/preservation, land-use planning and social issues related to development. The native of a small Southern college town, she lived in Hollywood for five years before returning home to live and work in the red clay and dogwoods of her central North Carolina hometown.

Over the course of his nearly six-decade career, **JOHN LAUTNER** (1911-94) established himself as one of the most influential architects of the 20th century. From the Googie-style projects at the start of his career to later meditative houses, his designs were known for their innovation and attention to materiality and space and for a consciousness of the natural environment. He spent the bulk of his career living and working in Los Angeles, and in July the Hammer Museum begins a retrospective of his work.

PETER MORUZZI is an architectural historian and founding president of the Palm Springs Modern Committee. In 2002, he received the Presidential Public Service Citation from the AIA California Council for work in the preservation of Modernist architecture in Southern California.

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"Lifestyle" gets a lot of attention these days—an inordinate amount by many measures. That whole "-style" thing generally indicates a lack of attention to substance—we don't often talk about our lifesubstance. Celebrities—what they wear, what they drive, how much they drink, where they live—that's where the focus is. To some degree, lifestyle coverage has moved recently and incrementally to more substantive issues, like using sustainable resources and cutting the carbon footprint of our structures.

So in thinking about how we'd approach a Lifestyle issue, we thought we'd try and restructure the conversation a bit, to look to the past even as we consider how we live now. By focusing on historic preservation and adaptive reuse projects we are able to engage both the way our views of the past shape the way we live today as well as how the residue of that past frames our lifestyle long after the original intent has passed.

What we learned from the exercise is that there is ample opportunity, in the right hands, to honor the past while adapting to the future. Sometimes it makes economic sense, sometimes it's just the right thing to do.

As John Gendall found in his reporting on the Mid-Century Modern buildings now turning 50, views on what's worth saving and how often conflict; many iconic examples of the period have been lost, many others are at risk. And yet a contemporary eye can bring a respectful reinterpretation to the venerable Lincoln Center.

Other efforts prove more difficult. Danny King found in looking at a pair of Frank Lloyd Wright houses now crumbling in Los Angeles that the cost of preservation often requires heroic efforts—on the part of both preservationists and those who fund their work.

And then there are those projects that take what was and rethink it for what is. In the pages of the Workbook section, and later in Margot Carmichael Lester's piece on adaptive reuse projects, we have some fine examples of projects in which existing structures that had outlived their initial uses were adapted to contemporary needs and styles.



Sandy Itzkoff

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Jonathan Diamond".

Jonathan Diamond

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EVENTS

JULY

10-13 National Alliance of Preservation Commissions: Forum 2008

The Alliance's bi-annual meeting engages training and issues updates for planning commission members from across the country. Astor Crown Plaza Hotel, New Orleans

more information: NAPC, www.sed.uga.edu/psso/programs/napc/forum.htm, or 706-542-4731

21-22 Intelligent Environments

The conference aims at contributing to the realization of the Ambient Intelligence vision, where physical space becomes augmented with computation, communication and digital content, thus transcending the limits of direct human perception. University of Washington, Seattle

more information: conferences.theiet.org/ie08

Ongoing

Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner

A retrospective of the life and career of John Lautner (1911-94), one of the most important and influential architects of the 20th century, will be on display at the Hammer Museum from July 13 through October 12. The exhibition will include newly crafted large-scale models will give a sense of the internal spaces and scale of key projects and digital animations will reveal Lautner's construction processes. Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles

more information: www.hammer.ucla.edu or 310-443-7000

Ongoing

Home Delivery: Fabricating the Modern Dwelling

This exhibition, opening July 20 at the Museum of Modern Art, will offer an examination of both the historical and contemporary significance of factory-produced architectures. The program will feature historical documents, full-scale reassemblies and films that trace the roots of prefabrication in the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, Jean Prouvé, Richard Rogers and others. Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York

more information: www.moma.org or 212-708-9400

AUGUST

11-29 Eco-Homes: Ecological Building & Appropriate Technology

An intensive course offering a broad overview of the elements of home building and design with a focus on Permaculture principles. Participants will have direct involvement in hands-on practice sessions and ongoing building projects in various stages of construction. Lost Valley Educational Center, 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, Oregon 97431

more information: (541) 937-3351 x112, epcp@lostvalley.org or www.lostvalley.org/EPI

25-28 Arc-Interiors 2008

The second annual gathering of the heads of Interior Design at North America's largest architectural and design firms. The program offers seminars to keep up with industry developments and networking opportunities with other design professionals and supplier, or "solution provider" companies. Newport Beach Marriott, Newport Beach, California

more information: oliverneeds@bondevents.com, 704-248-7945 or www.arc-interiors.com

Ongoing

Biennale Architecture 11th International Architecture Exhibition

The 11th International Architecture Exhibition, directed by Aaron Betsky and entitled Out There: Architecture Beyond Building will take place in Venice from Sept. 14 to Nov. 23. Large-scale, site-specific installations will ask: How we can be at home in the modern world? Participants will include Diller Scofidio+Renfro, UN Studio, Massimiliano Fuksas, Nigel Coates, Erik Adigard, Work Architecture, Droog Design, Philippe Rahm and Kathryn Gustafson, as well as architects who will create viral forms. Padiglione Italia, Venice, Italy

more information: promozione@labiennale.org, 39 041 5218828 or www.labiennale.org

SEPTEMBER



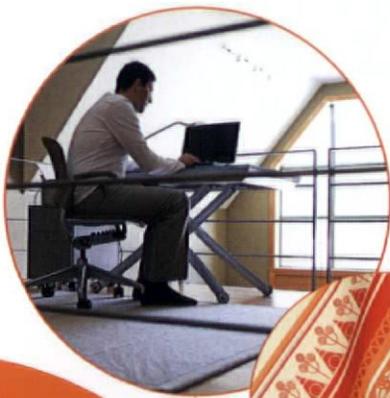
Ongoing

Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future

The exhibition and accompanying catalog represent the first public unveiling of the architect's complete archives, the largest repository of Saarinen-related material in the world, donated to Yale University in 2002. Previously unknown projects, personal documents and other items have been discovered in this material and shed light on Saarinen's complex story. Through August 23. National Building Museum, 401 F St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

more information: www.nbm.org or 202 272-2448

TWA Terminal, New York International (now JFK International) Airport, Jamaica, New York, circa 1962. © Ezra Stoller / ESTO.



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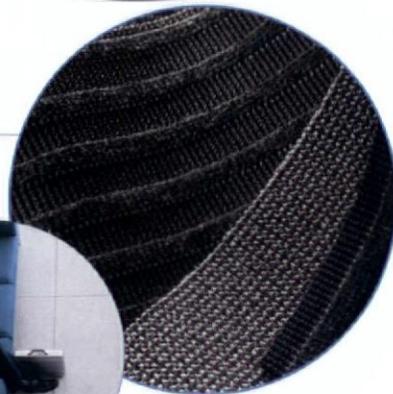
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SHOWROOM



1 Performa, Blanco America

Blanco's line of Performa stainless steel sinks are marketed to residential users as companions to professional style appliances that also complement to stone, quartz and solid surface countertops. Their high-capacity bowls are 10 inches deep, have flat bottoms and an off-center rear drain that allows stemware to stand easily. The bowls are made from 18 gauge, 304 series stainless steel, with 18/10 chrome/nickel content.

more information: Blanco America, 800-451-5782 or www.blancomerica.com

2 Ashland-e Tiles, Hakatai Enterprises

Hakatai Enterprises, an importer and distributor of glass mosaic tile, has expanded its Ashland line to include the Ashland-e series, comprised of between 30 and 70 percent recycled glass from bottles and/or other waste glass. The company also added new colors—including warm and cool earth tone colors, sizes and

finishes to broaden application options, including interior and exterior walls, countertops and backsplashes. Tiles come in 1-by-1 inch mosaics and 1-by-2 inch subway-style mosaics.

more information: Hakatai Enterprises, 541-552-0855, info@hakatai.com or www.hakatai.com.

3 Agata, Neptune

Merging bed and bath, Neptune has released Agata, a tub that presents as a platform bed wrapped in exotic woods—down to the built-in pillows. The company seeks to take the functional features of outdoor spas and bring them inside. The double-sided skirted bathtub is available as a bath only, or with Activ-air, Mass-air or a combination of Activ-air and Mass-air. Colors include biscuit, bone, sterling silver and white. Chromatherapy and an iPod docking station are optional.

more information: Bains Neptune, 888-366-7058 or www.bainsneptune.com



4 EasyIncline Vanity, Dan Brunn

Los Angeles architect Dan Brunn has developed the EasyIncline vanity, he said, as a "reinterpretation of the classical household furniture technique which integrated wood with stone tops, and as a detournement of the typical kitchen counter stone material into a novel, unusual use." To do so he rounded specific joints, creating a softer feel for the hand and strengthening the connection of the planar material. The EasyIncline combines CaesarStone, wood, high gloss lacquer and stainless steel.

more information: Dan Brunn, 310-804-6963, info@danbrunn.com or www.danbrunn.com/furniture





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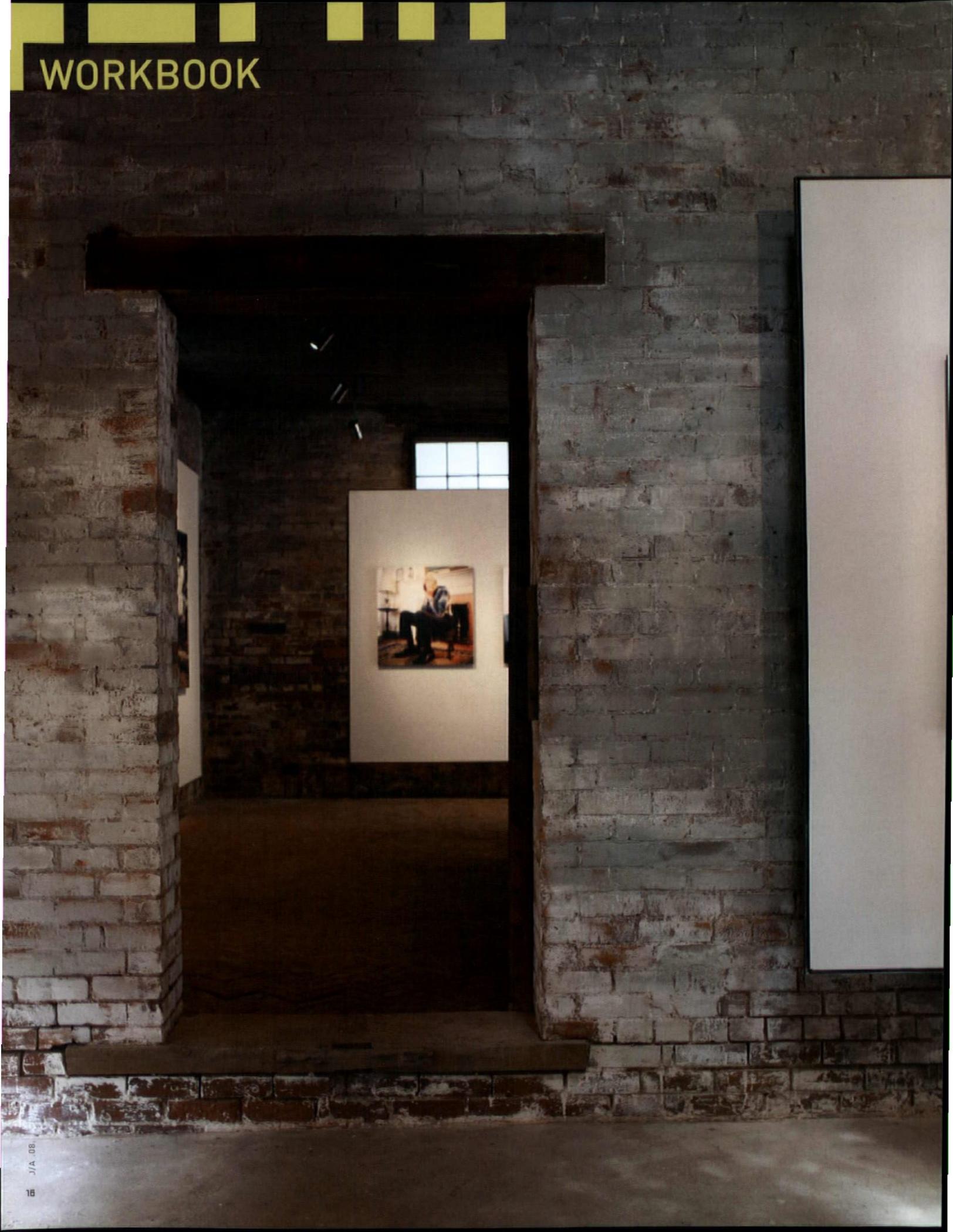
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WORKBOOK





Whitespace Gallery

Location: Atlanta
 Designer: BLDGS
 Web site: www.bldgs.org

The Whitespace gallery was to be housed in a simple, utilitarian structure built as a stable in 1893. The approach was not a restoration, although restoration was involved. Instead, traces of previous, damaging interventions were retained as evidence of an unfrozen history leading up to the present.

In the 1960s a large opening was made in front wall to create a large picture window, with total structural and visual disregard for the original brick arched openings. The original opening was not restored, but left to tell its own story. Likewise, haphazard cuts in the carriage house ceiling, made in the past to accommodate air conditioning for an upstairs apartment, were left as odd cuts in the otherwise beautifully aged and unfinished bead-board ceiling.

The property was cleared to reveal the core of the historic structure, which allowed the freedom to make discreet, clear additions and to create them with the same utilitarian attitude present in the original structure. New glass and steel doors, clearly contemporary, were left unfinished to rust and quickly gained a relationship to the patinated brick and wood on the interior. The glass remains a sharp contrast to the mellowed surfaces in its clarity and reflectivity, speaking to the multiple eras of the building.

Likewise, new light fixtures, with a grid of power in the ceilings to allow for flexible re-positioning, were fabricated from unfinished steel components. While the function they meet is expressly contemporary, the material and form is so straightforward that they are as timeless as the sparkle of light they project.

Five fixed wall panels were each designed to set off from, but relate to, the delicateness and toughness of the original structure—playing lightness and thinness off of solidity and mass. One cantilevered, rotating panel elevates this sense of lightness—offering operability and flexibility in a subtle, surprising relationship to the fixity of the brick walls. It is one of the ways we tried to introduce a complexity of program flexibility into a very simple three-room plan.

Top right: Whitespace/Susan Bridges. All others: bldg



blü Beverly Hills

Location: Beverly Hills, California

Designer: Gensler

Web site: www.gensler.com

The 1972 office building was purchased with the intention of receiving a quick makeover, placing retail at the street and renovating and re-leasing the office space on the upper floors. Gensler's market research found that apartments would be more successful and the result was a high-end, 37-unit residential project.

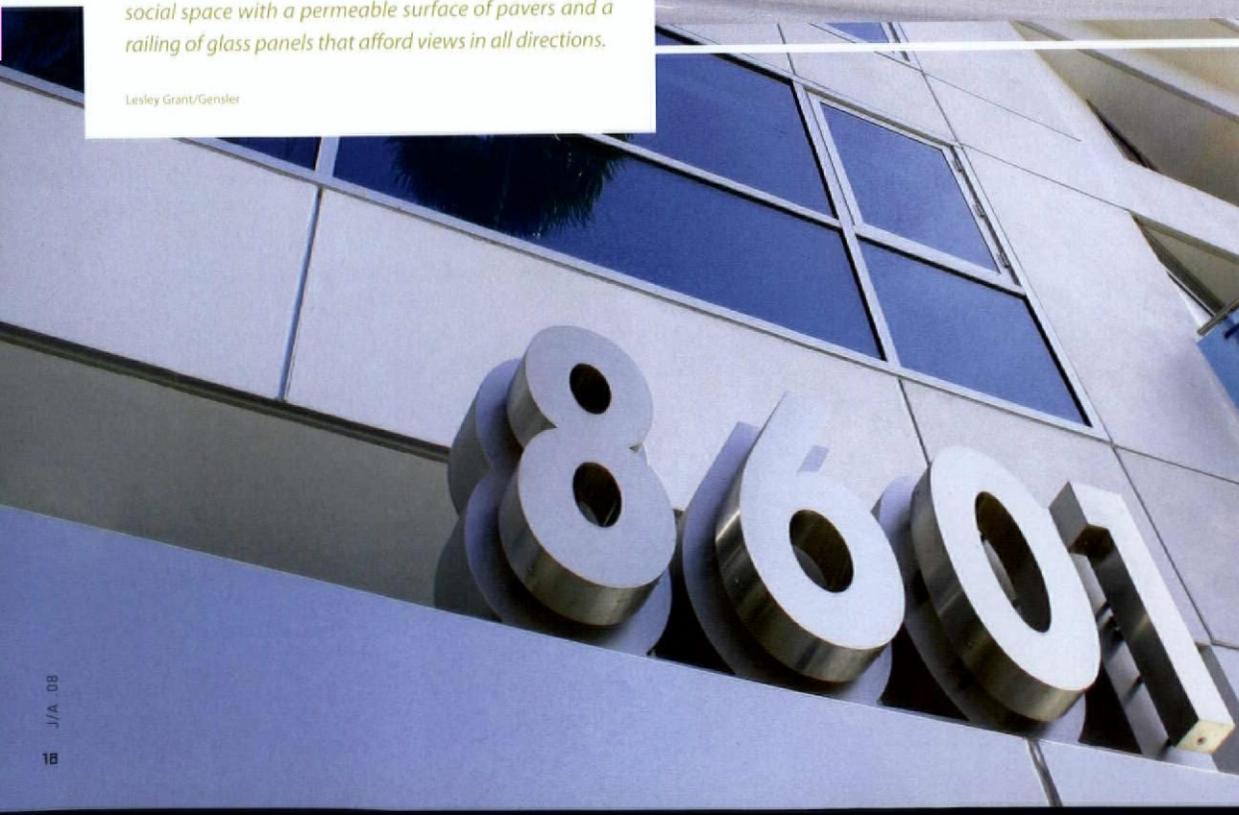
The property had to be retrofitted to meet seismic codes, and the design team used this to its advantage, incorporating exposed steel brace frames into the aesthetic of the units.

The exterior skin was demolished and the interiors were gutted down the floor slabs. To update the building's dated façade, the design team created a new skin with a smooth, steel-troweled plaster from the lobby and retail space on the street to the third floor. The remaining eight floors are a rougher sand finish.

The project's arctic blue glazing was an unintentional flourish, resulting from a misunderstanding. Original schematic design renderings appeared to have blue glass, which really was intended to be a reflection of the sky. The client liked the blue color so much Gensler had the windows made to match the sketches. Privacy issues for lower-floor residents were addressed by the installation of spandrel glass at the base of each glazed opening. The spandrel glass also appears as a railing on the balconies on the building's south elevation along Wilshire.

The building's original roof was little more than a surface for mechanical equipment and drainage of rainwater, and the rehabilitation transformed it into a social space with a permeable surface of pavers and a railing of glass panels that afford views in all directions.

Lesley Grant/Gensler





811 Congress Ave.

Location: Austin, Texas

Designer: Tim Cuppett Architects

Web site: www.cuppetchitects.com

Rather than fight the eccentric 22-foot by 150-foot dimensions of the three-story building sited in the middle of a city block, a decision was made to bring natural light deep into the building. Daylight from existing south-facing openings was shared through a common circulation zone. Interior glazed walls transmit this light into private spaces.

A four-story stair structure provides a continuous climbing path from street level to a rooftop penthouse/cabana. Conceptually, it was to serve as a sliver of light penetrating into the existing space. Ultimately, it became a cascade of light and water that helps link all four stories, both physically and figuratively.

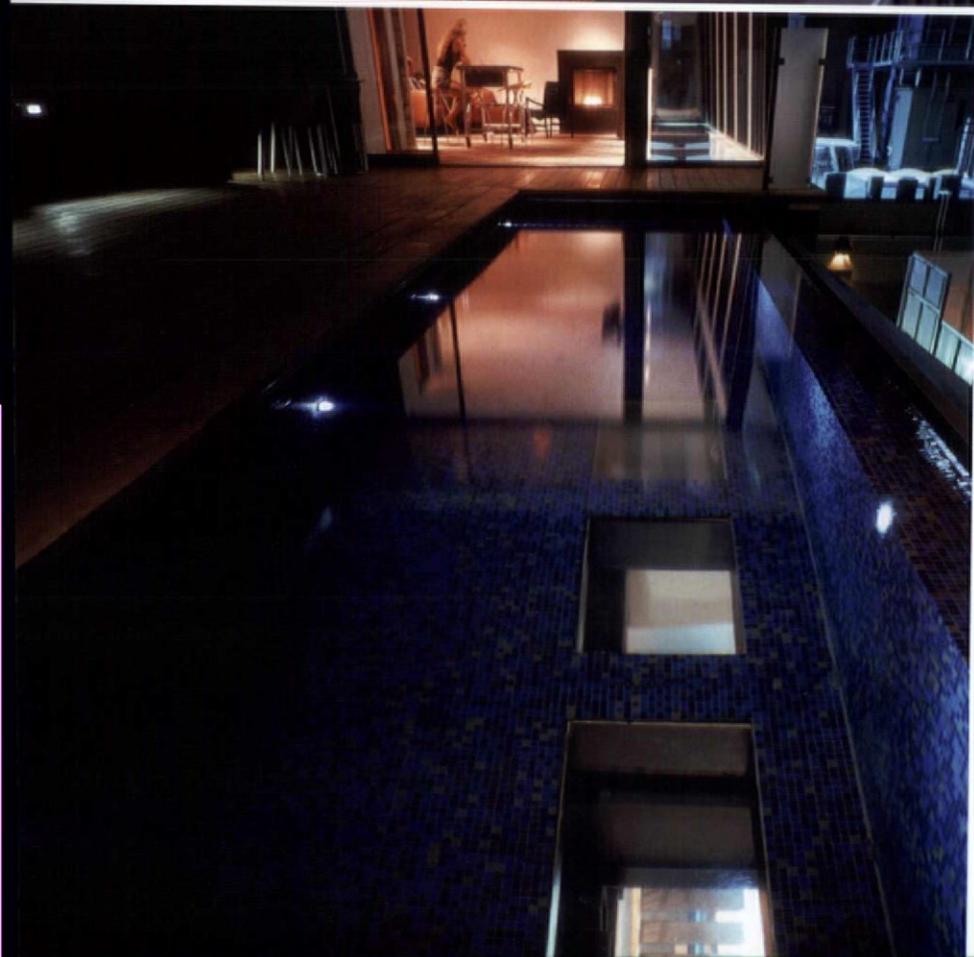
Over the stair is a lap pool with skylights in its floor, which in addition to providing an ever-rippling lens for natural light to the stairs below, serves as an oasis within a green garden nestled amongst downtown high-rises. A lawn of drought-tolerant grass covers the rest of the roof surface.

Interior finishes were selected to contrast with the existing masonry walls. Public spaces exhibit more polished finishes, such as terrazzo on the first floor, while warm wood was chosen for the "private living" floors.

Finishes at the penthouse, complimentary to the garden beyond, were selected for comfortable lounging. Etched glass is used throughout the house as a lens for transmitting natural light.

During construction a historically significant stone façade was exposed along with rubble-stone interior walls. New materials were chosen for their contrasting characteristics to the heavy, rough texture of the stone. A new exposed steel structure, steel stair/railings, etched glass, terrazzo floor were selected for their simplicity and sleekness. Quarter-sawn white oak was used on upper floor levels to warm the otherwise cool palate.

Top: Paul Barlagy; Bottom: Woody Welch



Lee Residence

Location: Encino, California
Designer: Kenneth Lee
Web site: kdllarchitects.com

The home once owned by entertainers Sonny and Cher had been ravaged by a fire and a decision had to be made whether to tear down what remained or rebuild it. Having made the choice to save the house, the project entailed salvaging as much of the remaining structure as possible and then modernizing and updating the classic 1960s California home.

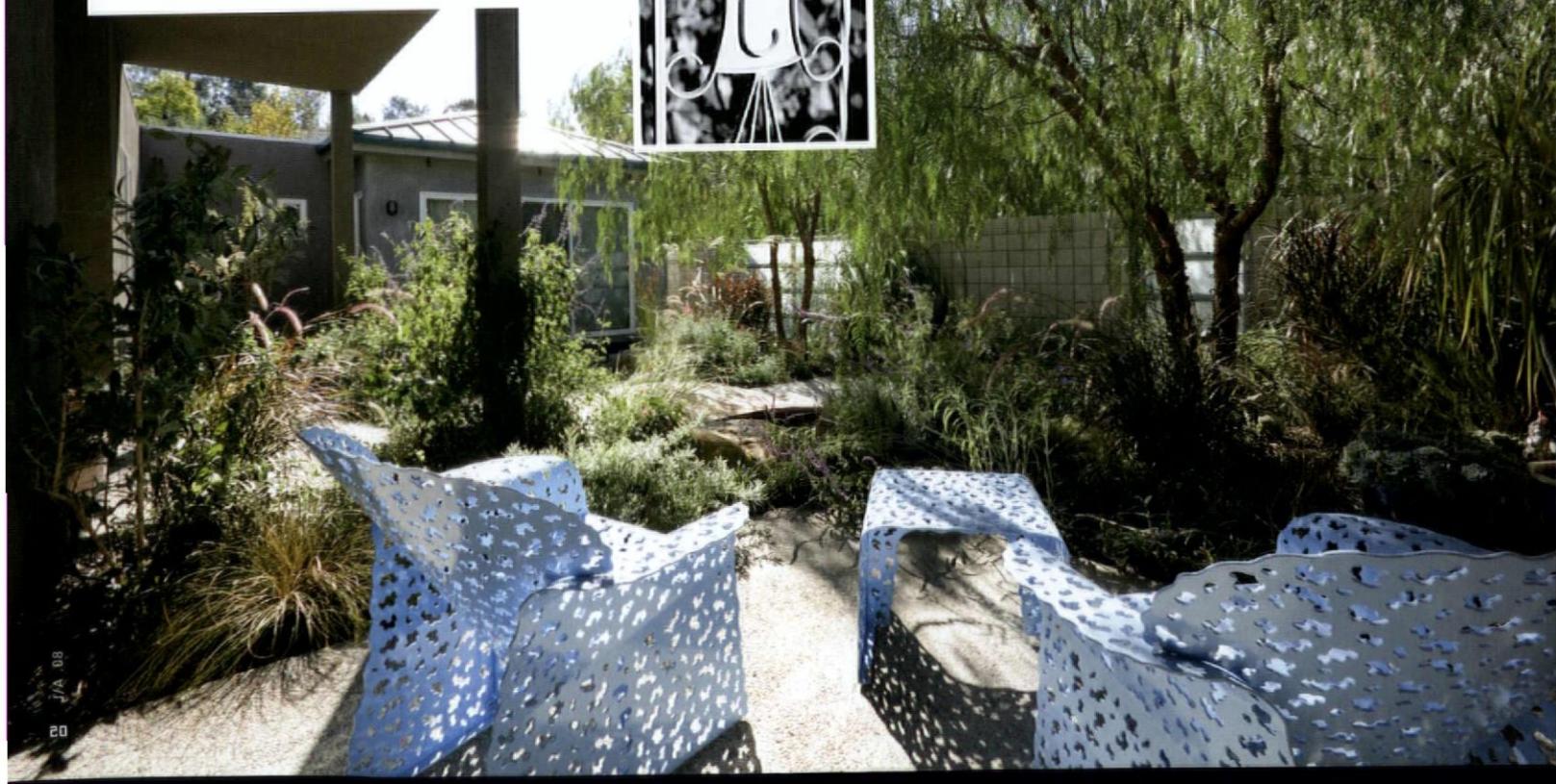
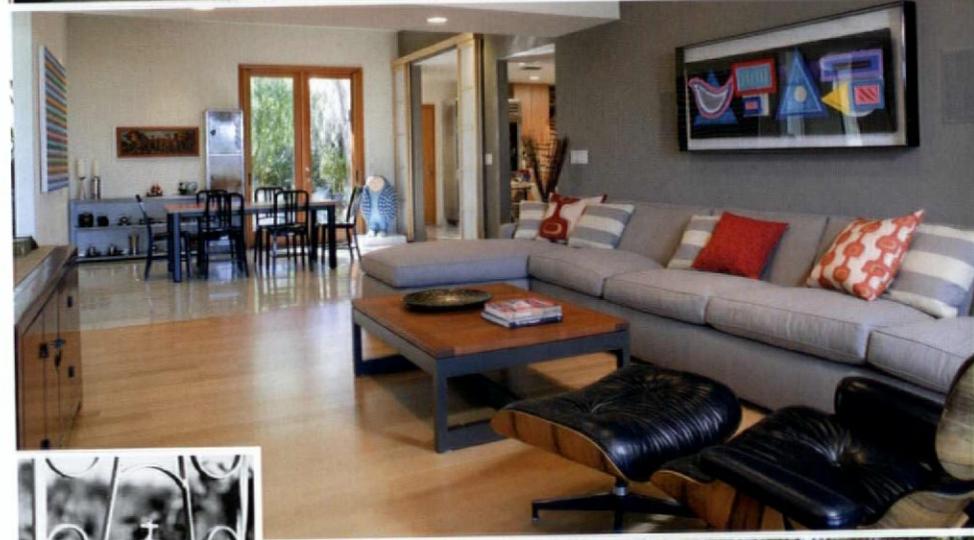
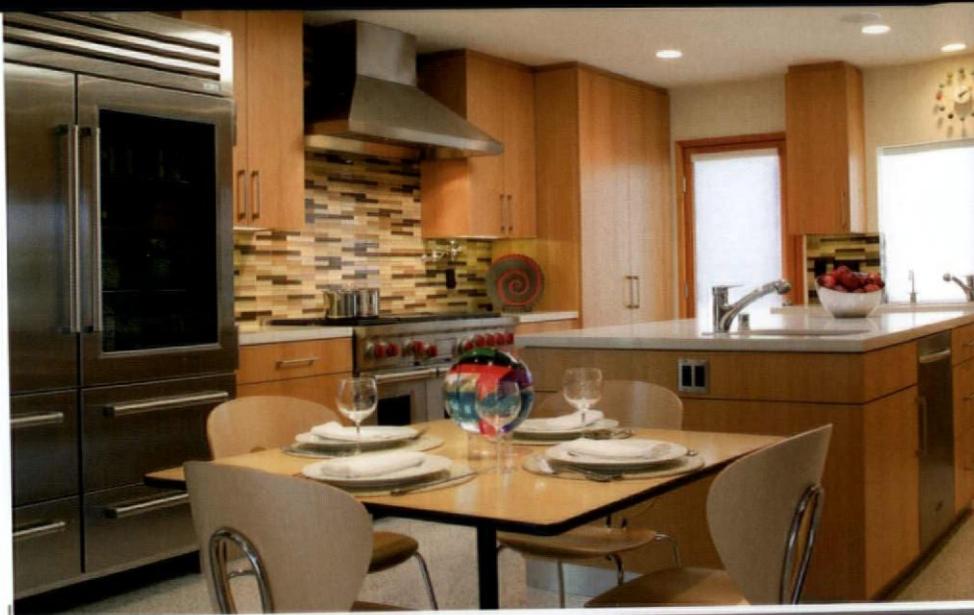
One of the primary challenges was to respect the architecture of the '60s while improving upon it. The volumes were classic representations of a home of that era: 10-foot ceilings in the major living spaces and eight-foot ceilings in the secondary spaces. The existing spaces of the floor plan were reorganized and expanded by 500 square feet. The addition of studio space, expansion of existing closet space and creation of a gourmet kitchen all fit in the original footprint of the home.

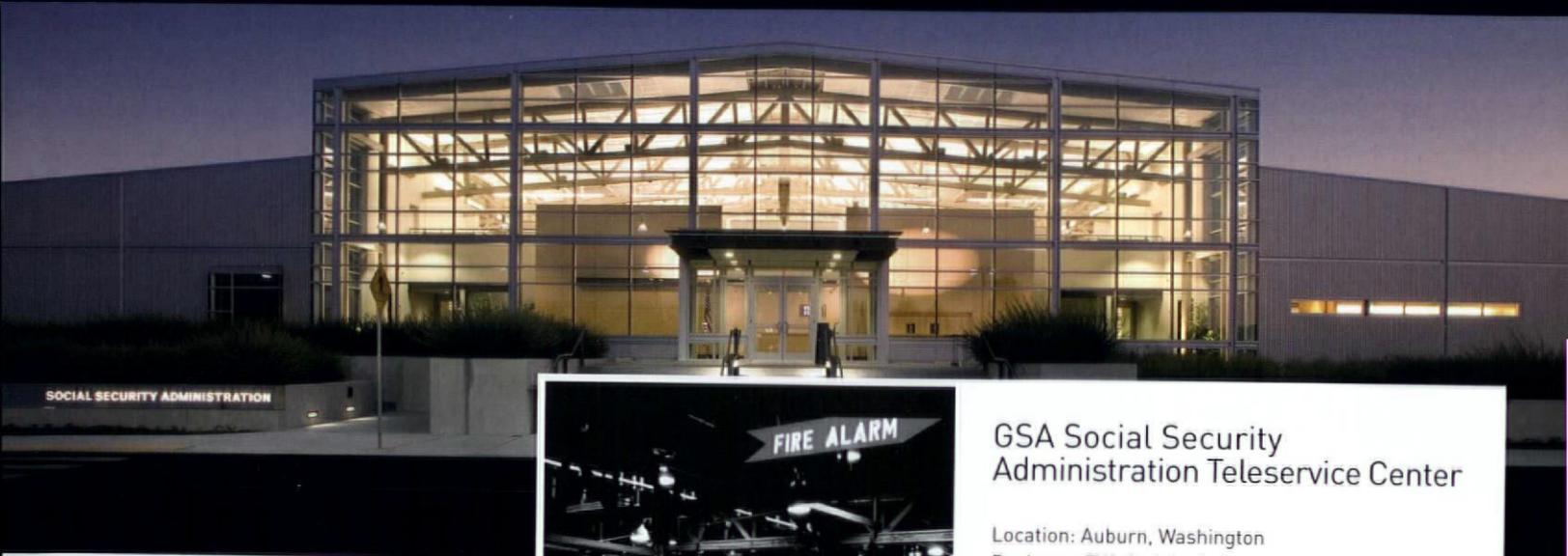
The reorientation of the garage to the street allowed for the creation of the pavilion studio and an extensively landscaped and redefined entry court.

The flat roof common to the period enabled the addition of solar panels, which provide between 50 percent and 75 percent of the home's energy.

Outside, the existing concrete driveway was converted into a lush entry court of native plants and koi pond. The rear yard was also redesigned, utilizing the original pool design by inserting an elevated spa with a cascading waterfall.

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SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION



GSA Social Security Administration Teleservice Center

Location: Auburn, Washington
Designer: TVA Architects Inc.
Web site: www.tvaarchitects.com

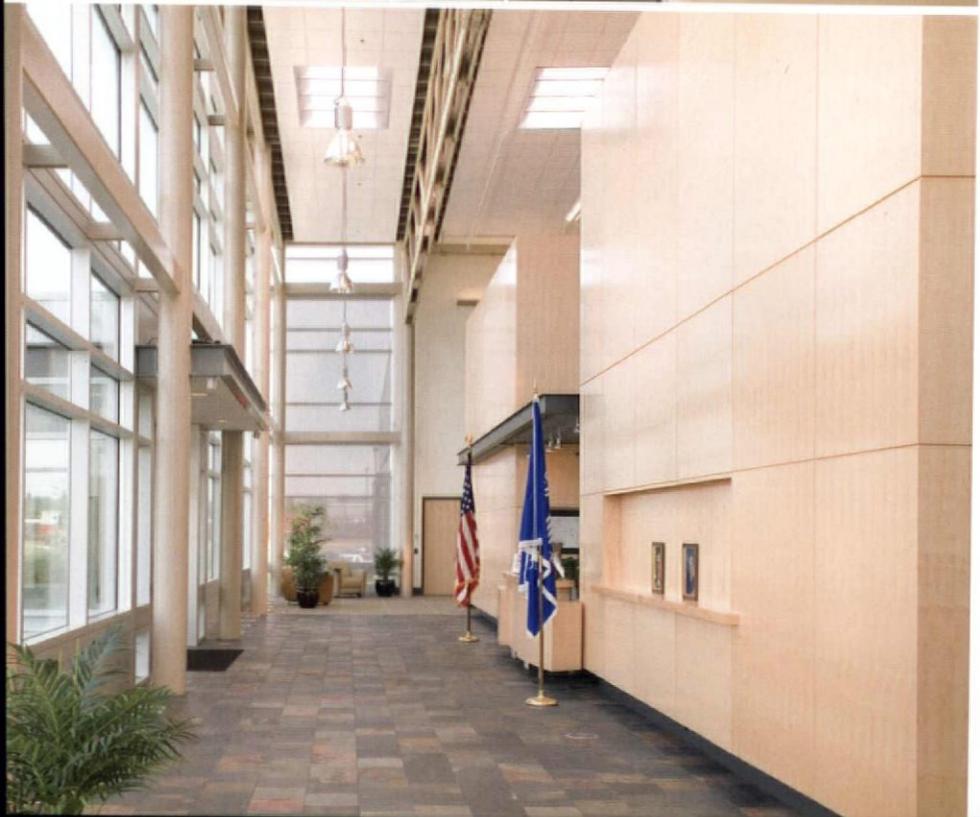
The adaptive reuse of the Social Security Administration (SSA) Teleservice Center based in became an exercise in reclaiming, salvaging and recycling an undervalued asset from a bygone-era for conversion into workspace worthy of the 21st century. Housed in a former warehouse, the call center design called for occupying the two northern bays of the building, taking 80,000 square feet of the original building, which consisted of an asbestos-clad 160,000-square-foot timber-framed structure, supported by bare trusses and columns. The addition of a 40,000-square-foot mezzanine expanded the project to a total of 120,000 square feet, and increased the occupied area by 50 percent.

Daylighting and underfloor air distribution emerged as key sustainability strategies. Approximately 75 percent of the facility is daylit and occupant productivity and energy savings are increased via abundant use of prismatic skylights and strategic vertical glazing, which work in conjunction with an automatic dimming control system to continuously monitor daylight levels and dim the electric light levels in daylight zones.

An underfloor air distribution system working in conjunction with a raised access floor provides supply air. In addition to energy reduction, the mechanical and electrical infrastructures are concealed below the floor, freeing the open volume and preserving the dynamic structural truss system.

The building's interior organization responds to program criteria for a densely populated floor-plate influenced by building entries and the challenges created by the existing column spacing. Primary circulation occurs in the north/south direction at the building perimeter, and along the east and west column grids that define the higher limits of the vertical space, along which a series of clad full-height shear walls enhance the definition of space. The north curtain wall extends the full length of the two middle bays, enabling soft northern light to flood the space and provide a direct connection to the exterior environment.

Inset: TVA Architects; All others: Stephen Cridland



Voda Spa

Location: West Hollywood, California
Designer: Workplays Studio Architecture
Web site: www.workplays.com

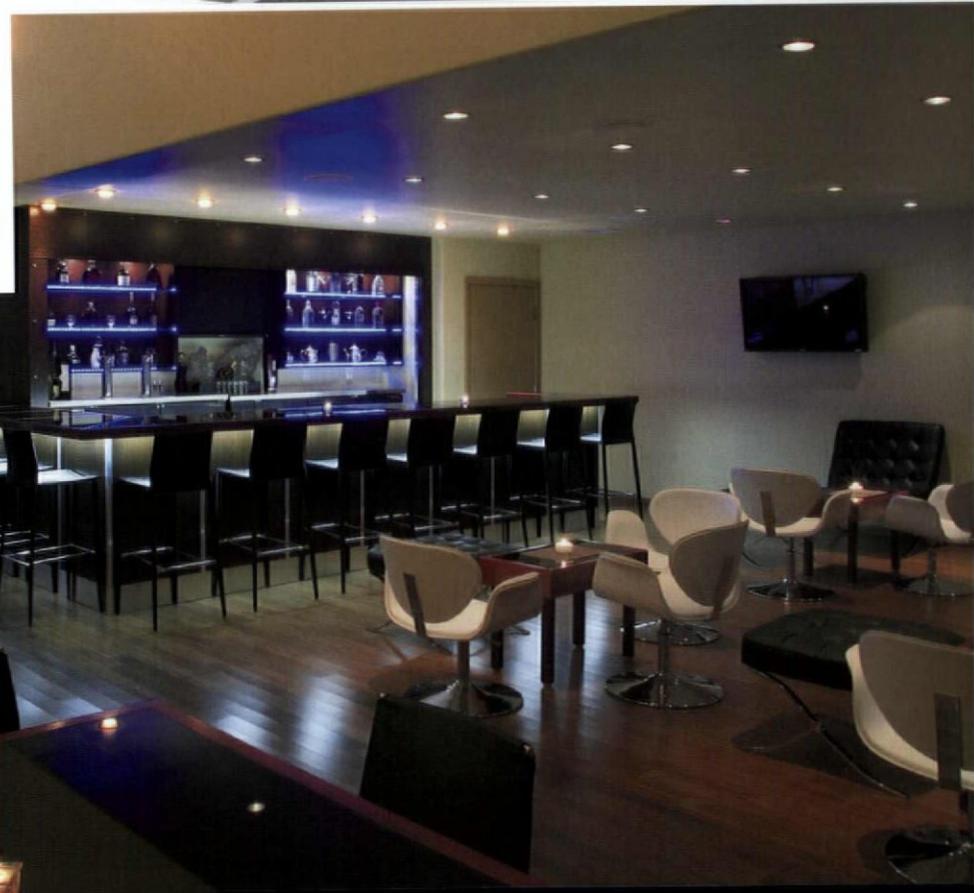
The Voda Spa project grew out of an adaptive reuse exercise in transforming an original Packard car showroom (and in the recent decades a twice-renovated and abandoned mortuary space) into a community-serving spa and meeting house.

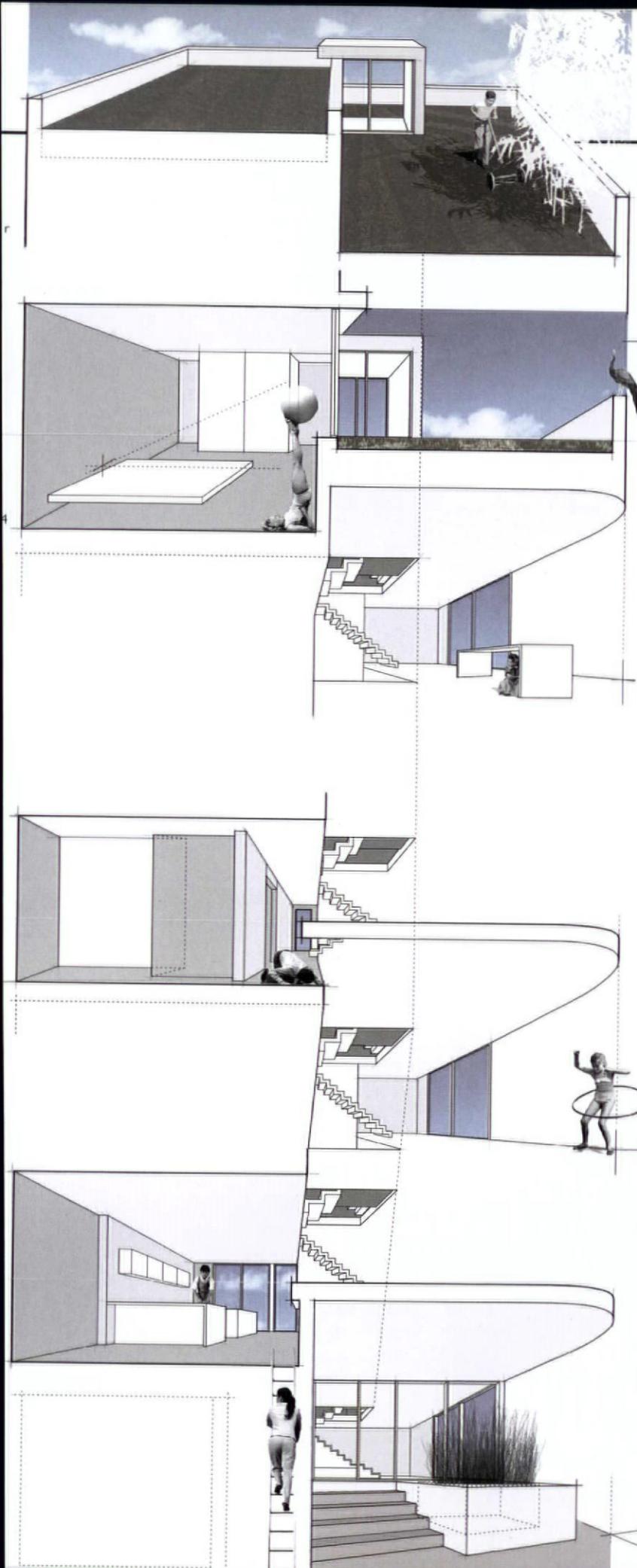
Although the original car showroom structure had been oriented to the boulevard, the mortuary use had turned inward, with much of the exterior façade plastered in and the entry moved to the west and thus decentralized. The new spa program called for a re-centered entry space from which the bathing and cleansing rituals would unfold.

Over the course of careful demolition work, the structure's original entry, pre-dating the mortuary, was uncovered along with the tracings of its original exterior window bays. Because of budget limitations, it was decided to restore only the original central entry bay with meticulously reconstructed glass, woodwork and moldings that were modeled after remnants found hidden in the walls. Fortunately, the original redwood exterior wall and roof framing was salvageable. From a fully gutted interior, existing bowstring trusses above became the point of departure for laying out the new spatial sequences of the spa interior. Overhead day-lighting strategies (skylights, light wells and clerestory windows) were inserted as the primary mode to deliver life into the heart of the Spa's interior.

The change of use also required integration of a new heating, cooling and ventilation system as well as complete new wiring for media and a state-of-the-art audio/visual system. Moreover, the central program of the project, the main Russian sauna, is a high-heat steam room that necessitated onsite construction of a custom, brick-walled boiler by a native Russian craftsman.

Voda Spa





Northern Liberties Residence

Location: Philadelphia

Designer: Qb3

Web site: www.qb3design.com

Sited on a vacant corner in the Northern Liberties section of Philadelphia, this house for a small growing family stitches itself into the neighborhood by responding to local cues. Curved brick corners to negotiate the irregular street grid, trinity elevations, 16-foot street frontage and a material palette of brick volumes and stone bases are all translated into a new vocabulary.

The site is a double lot on which two volumes are placed; one entered by car at grade and one by foot up to an entry stoop, typical of Philadelphia. This initiates the vertical rhythm of the house, with related uses visually connected but functionally distinct across the split-level section. On this small and irregular site, full lot coverage completes the street elevations and allows viable interior spaces. The three-story brick skin fills the site and wraps the glass-lined interior environment. Divergent paths of brick and glass skins form intimate exterior rooms within the brick enclosure.

The curved brick corner orients the interior living spaces toward the private core of the house and forms the roof garden wall where prominent views to Center City and the surrounding neighborhood culminate the ascent of the stair.

Qb3

WALSTROM HOUSE

When John Lautner (1911-94) returned from visiting the site that would be home to the Walstrom House in Los Angeles, his initial designs took three general forms: a tube angled on the steeply sloped hillside, a pair of cylinders and a tower.

The pair of cylinders design was quickly discarded, and the tower was eventually built.

The "tower" design of Walstrom House (1969) consists essentially of two large triangles braced into the hillside. In the catalogue accompanying a Lautner retrospective at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, Frank Escher, a principal at Escher GuneWardena Architecture Inc. and administrator of the Lautner Foundation from 1995 until its archive was moved to the J. Paul Getty Trust in 2004, described how the two triangles and a downhill-facing wall are set perpendicular to each other, with a path crossing the arrangement at an angle, creating a trapezoidal footprint.

"The small distortion sets off a surprising geometry," he wrote. "The wooden structure of the roof converges slightly from one side to the other, the two walls are different lengths and end at varying heights on the hill, as the ramp continues through the house."

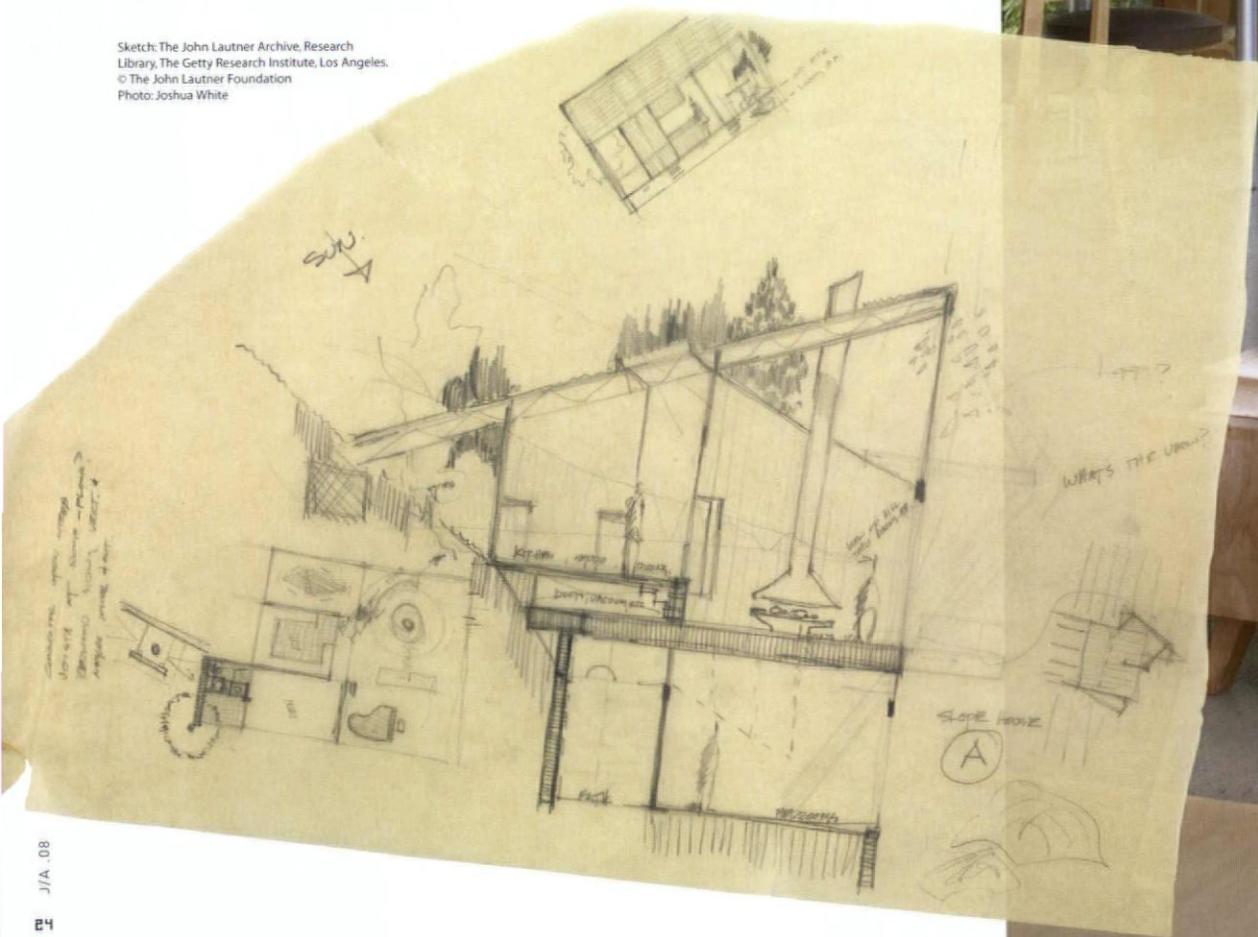
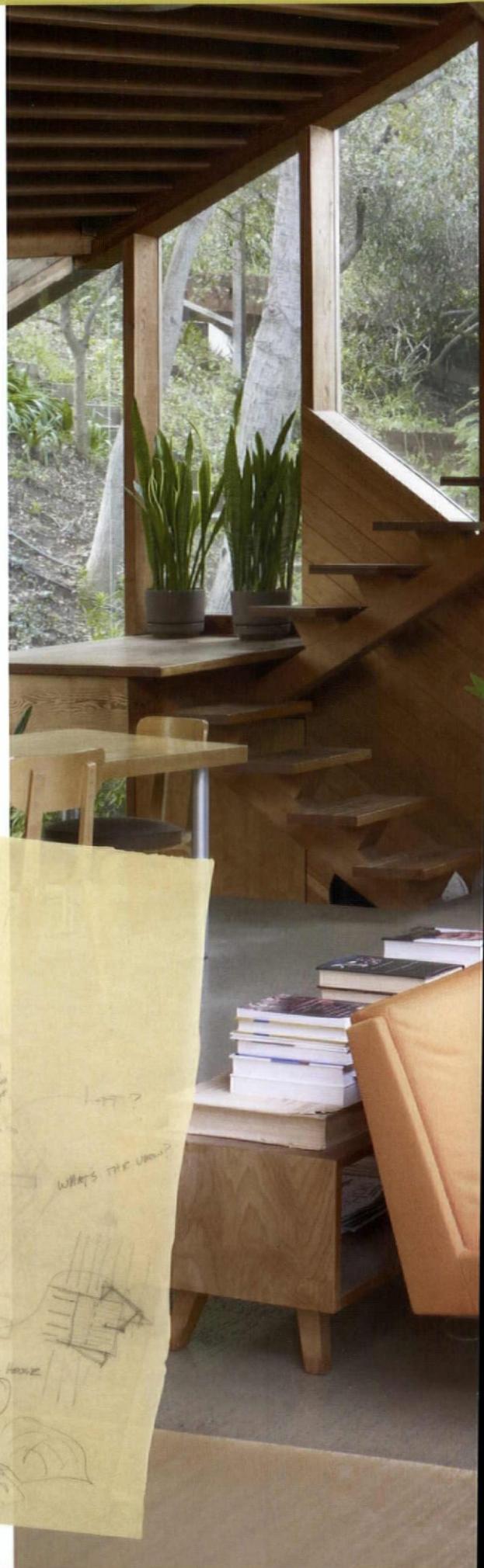
The design was in many ways reflective of Lautner's earlier work, taking the triangulated planes he once rendered in concrete and applying them in wood.

"Lautner had interest in how things were put together," said Escher. Lautner's architecture was informed by the materials and the way they were put together, he said, "construction and form went hand-in-hand."

As a purely wood construction Walstrom House is a masterpiece of the form, according to Escher, and because it has been well maintained over the course of its 40-year life, the house, still in the hands of its original owners, hasn't needed the kind of restorative attention required by many of its contemporaries.

"Like a good pair of shoes," said Escher, "you have to do the proper maintenance. Houses don't look after themselves."

Sketch: The John Lautner Archive, Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.
© The John Lautner Foundation
Photo: Joshua White





The mid-20th century saw a prodigious output of architectural production, due to post-war building booms and industrial efficiency, leaving an enormous inventory of artifacts.

MODERN LOWE

PRESERVATION CHALLENGES
ARISE AS MID-CENTURY
MODERN ICONS TURN 50
BY JOHN GENDALL



ARCHITECTURE IMAGINES NEW WORLDS. This pursuit is taking the discipline to an unlikely point: a few decades in the past. There exists a growing urgency over the state of Mid-Century Modernist architecture as many works face the wrecking ball. The victims are not limited to marginal works, but include canonical projects: Paul Rudolph’s Westport House was demolished last year, Richard Neutra’s Cyclorama Center is now empty and on the road to demolition and Kisho Kurokawa’s Nakagin Capsule Tower is set to be torn down shortly. The task of preserving these buildings, or of even considering them for preservation, presents a challenge unprecedented to anyone involved—archi-

fects, preservationists, city administrations, owners and architectural enthusiasts. Not long ago, preservationists dealt almost entirely with buildings comfortably belonging to the annals of history, having passed through generations of use and documentation. This is no longer the case. The discipline of preservation has jumped into the fast lane, undergoing a complete retooling to deal with quickly emerging issues. The question of Mid-Century Modernist architecture looms large, presenting a set of unique challenges, chief among them historic preservation’s break-neck pace. That buildings of such recent vintage actually qualify to be considered for preservation indicates the dis-

cipline’s acceleration. The National Register of Historic Places begins to consider buildings once they turn 50. In some cases, particular regions accommodate an even speedier process. In New York City, for instance, architecture at a spry 30 years old qualifies for landmark status. And these agencies are sometimes willing to make exceptions for even younger buildings, often deciding what to raze, what to save and what to modify, while the architects’ spouses, children, and, in some cases, the designers themselves, are still alive and very much invested in shaping their legacies. The other main challenge is that there is simply so much of it. History no longer leaves

much opportunity for natural selection. The mid-20th century saw a particularly prodigious output of architectural production, due to post-war building booms and industrial efficiency, leaving an enormous inventory of artifacts. Add to this the proliferation of

types of buildings—churches, houses, and other buildings, like warehouses. But in the 20th century, we developed buildings with highly focused functionality.” Prudon, author of *Preservation of Modern Architecture* (John Wiley, 2008), identifies one of the most salient preserva-

large segments, often prefabricated, and with materials of a specific lifespan, which means that to restore them, we must work segment-by-segment and with materials whose fabricators often no longer exist.”

Preserving Mid-Century Modern buildings, however, takes more than materials.

“Preservation involves three main elements: the technical skill of intervening in buildings, staving off underlying threats and environmental degradation and, lastly, advocacy,” said Henry Ng, executive vice president of the World Monuments Fund. “When preserving Modern buildings, it takes more of the third. The public just doesn’t have the same commitment to these buildings. Everyone can appreciate cathedrals, temples and ancient monuments, but when buildings are built in our lifetimes, sometimes it takes a lot of effort to educate communities on the architecture’s significance.”

Preservation, therefore, is not simply about sticks and bricks; it demands a reappraisal of

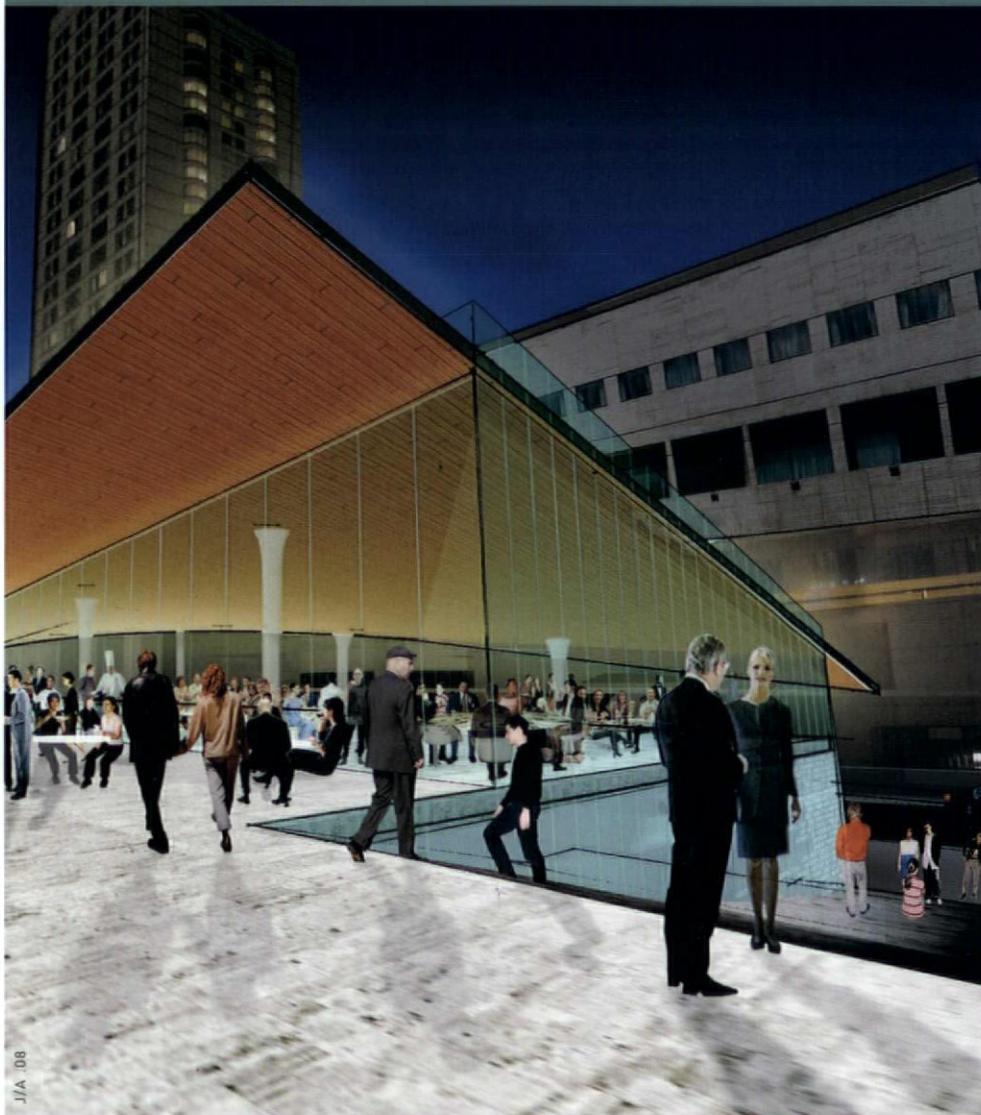
“The city is a growing, moving, changing thing. Buildings are different from art: they have a functional mandate. If you can’t make them function, they become just relics.” – Charles Renfro

typologies (research labs, airport terminals, hotels), and the problem becomes that much more delicate.

“The Industrial Revolution brought about a growth of different building types,” explained Theo Prudon, an architect and professor of historic preservation at Columbia University. “Four hundred years ago, there were three

tion concerns as “functional obsolescence.”

The exploration of architectural technologies, a hallmark of Modernist practice, further complicates contemporary preservation. “When buildings were built stick-by-stick, brick-by-brick, we could restore them stick-by-stick, brick-by-brick,” Prudon said. “But Modernist buildings were mostly built in



entire ideologies. Modernist architects conceived these buildings as departures from history, often couching them in revolutionary terms and visionary manifestos. For these architects there was no looking back, but to preserve their work we must do just that.

Architecture now finds itself amidst a new set of conditions, where it continues to imagine future directions while grappling with the successes and failures of its immediate past. Historic preservationists have been typically confined, in perception and often in practice, to historical contemplations, while their peers who designed contemporary buildings went about the task of proposing new conditions of possibility. Now, the dialectical divisions between past and future, preservation and production are beginning to evaporate as progressive architects begin to take on preservation.

Rem Koolhaas, for example, has—without compromising his pop icon status—taken up the mantle, teaching a studio at Harvard last year on preservation and using many of his recent speaking engagements to discuss the subject. His firm was recently selected to restore London's 1962 Commonwealth Institute.

And Diller Scofidio + Renfro, one of the few practicing architectural firms rightly considered avant-gardist, has also become centrally involved in preservation. Its design to transform an obsolete elevated rail line in Manhattan—the High Line—into a contemporary park is now beginning to take shape.

Farther uptown, the firm is overseeing a restoration and expansion of Lincoln Center. With constituencies including the New York Philharmonic, The Metropolitan Opera, and the Juilliard School; a large piece of real estate in a busy area of Manhattan (four square-blocks on the Upper West Side); and buildings designed by Mid-Century luminaries Eero Saarinen, Philip Johnson, Gordon Bunshaft, Pietro Belluschi, Max Abramovitz and Wallace Harrison, and a plaza designed by landscape architect Dan Kiley, the complex makes for a tricky site to stage interventions. But intervene, they will.

Lincoln Center became a signature piece of Robert Moses-guided urban renewal when it was finally completed in 1969. Urban renewal efforts undertaken by New York City in the '60s led to the advent of superblocks—large

swaths of regular city blocks physically and programmatically consolidated into one continuous massing. Lincoln Center's 16.3-acre campus sits on a giant plinth, slightly elevated from the city streets below. This intentional gesture rendered the campus uninviting, if not impenetrable, to anyone not holding a ticket for that night's performance. Its very inception is, ironically, precisely what earned it the ire of preservationists in the first place, since to first get at it the city had to fell a few blocks small Victorian-era buildings, thereby fulfilling the twin dogmas of Modernism: the tabula rasa and a gaze that never looked to the past. But now, apologists of Mid-Century Modernism are busy rebuffing that code. In order to preserve it, one must—forbid the thought—look to the past.

"The city is a growing, moving, changing thing," explained Diller Scofidio + Renfro Partner Charles Renfro. "Buildings are different from art:

"When buildings were built stick-by-stick, brick-by-brick, we could restore them stick-by-stick, brick-by-brick. Modernist buildings were mostly built in large segments, which means that to restore them we must work segment-by-segment and with materials whose fabricators often no longer exist." – Theo Prudon

they have a functional mandate. If you can't make them function, they become just relics.

"But," he cautioned, "the task for architects is to do it well. These projects take a lot of care."

The most immediately recognizable changes will be to reconcile its estrangement from the city. On the site's most public edge, along Columbus Avenue to the east, the architects plan to expand the staircase that connects the city to the plaza and to improve its access by both car and foot. To the north, 65th Street acts as a service road, separating the main campus from Juilliard. The new scheme will reconstitute this thoroughfare as a central spine, providing easy access to the institutions that flank it. An expansion to the Juilliard building will soon extend as a cantilever from its upper floors, creating a canopy over a new glazed lobby area. In the plaza a new restaurant, housed in a para-

baloid pavilion will create new public amenity. Its roof will be covered in a lawn, meant to accommodate lounging in what had been an exclusively travertine hardscape. LED screens will broadcast the center's calendar and announcements.

"We really tried to tap into the DNA of the place," said Renfro. "Without a doubt, the additions will alter these buildings, but we hope to grow them organically, using the language of the original architecture." Citing the competition that won them the commission, he said, "We actually liked Lincoln Center. It's great. It's just had a lot of problems."

One challenge, he said, was to "reveal the beautiful, but hidden, objects contained in the building, and reveal the organs of the buildings that are already there," something his partner Liz Diller likes to call an "architectural strip-tease." To do accomplish this, the architects will chip away at the travertine-clad walls to

connect the street and plaza with the interiors.

What is most remarkable here is not that they break down the distinctions between inside and outside, public and private—those are tired tropes of architectural criticism. But break down distinctions, they do. What Lincoln Center signifies is the erasure of boundaries between past and future. It is, at once, as much about dealing with legacies of the past as it is about proposing new conditions of possibility—and not in the simple framework that reduces projects to "old plus new."

Diller Scofidio + Renfro approach the site's past, present and future as simultaneous moments. If well executed, the different interventions, from different moments in time, should react synergistically, creating not just an accretion, but, by building on mid-20th-century legacies, a new direction for 21st century architecture. ■



LEGACY OF DECAY

The Fight to Save Wright's Crumbling Concrete Houses

BY DANNY KING

Steve McAvoy is quick to point out why Frank Lloyd Wright's textile-block houses in Los Angeles are no ordinary rehabs.

Sitting in the living room of Wright's Ennis House, which manages to simultaneously convey the heaviness of the 30,000 concrete blocks used to construct the home and the lightness of its perch atop the eastern flank of the Hollywood Hills, McAvoy, secretary-treasurer of the nonprofit that owns the property, points out the intricate, church-like leaded-glass windows that allow guests to overlook the Los Angeles basin and beyond.

"They were repaired by Judson Studios, who built them in the '20s," said McAvoy of the 15-foot-high windows. "They had bullet holes in them."

Ennis House and its Freeman House counterpart to the west were built in 1923, and both are in the midst of lengthy rehabilitation efforts designed to shore them up structurally while preserving the Mayan influences that marked the middle period of Wright's long career. Some of the issues that plagued the homes were typical of the many houses Wright built on challenging terrain, including hillside movement and slightly pitched roofs that caused drainage problems and water damage. Others, such as the 1994 Northridge Earthquake and Los Angeles' record-breaking 2005 rains, caused problems curators of his Midwestern prairie-style homes would never dream of.

"Wright's houses from his earlier career in Oak Park were probably better built than later houses," said Richard Guy Wilson, commonwealth professor in architectural history at the University of Virginia. Later on, "he was constantly pushing the envelope as far as structure and materials."

At root of the problems were the concrete blocks themselves, whose stark and foreboding appearance belied a delicate nature that's helped drive the cost of the homes' rehabilitation efforts toward the \$8 million mark—and counting.

Fresh off a six-year stint in Japan, where he built Tokyo's since-demolished Imperial Hotel, Wright built four textile-block homes in Los Angeles between 1922 and 1925, including the Storer House in Hollywood and the Millard House, also known as La Miniatura, in Pasadena. Simultaneously moving to more modern texture while paying homage to both Mayan and Aztec architecture that influenced the American southwest, Wright used 16-by-16 inch concrete blocks embedded with a handful of varying cubic and diagonal patterns as a primary design scheme.

Using the dirt excavated from the homes' sites, the 150-pound blocks were formed on-site as workers pounded the concrete into the molds. They developed hairline cracks almost immediately and soon after began chipping on their exterior sides after exposure to the sun

and rain, according to Kenneth Breisch, director of the historic preservation programs at the University of Southern California's School of Architecture, which owns Freeman House. Structurally, some of the stacked blocks, knit together by strands of rebar and used to support the homes against the hillside, collected moisture from rainfall and began to give way, a situation exacerbated by the 1994 earthquake.

But while the issues plaguing the homes have been similar, the rehabilitation efforts have diverged.

Charles and Mabel Ennis spent \$50,000 to build their home, which includes a 6,000-square-foot main house and a 1,200-square-foot chauffeur's quarters. By 2005, however, it had decayed to the point of making the National Trust's list of 11 most endangered historic places. Given one month by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to start spending a \$2.5 million rehabilitation grant, the Ennis House Foundation, whose board members include actress Diane Keaton and Eric Lloyd Wright, the architect's grandson, rushed into a stabilization effort that eventually included replacing about 3,000 of the home's 30,000 blocks using a higher-strength concrete that closely matched the original blocks' color and texture.

A \$4.5 million construction loan from supermarket magnate Ron Burkle enabled the foundation to embark on its largest structural undertaking—digging up the motor court and dropping three 60-foot,



nine-ton concrete columns into the hillside. Invisible to the eye, the columns support the 2,000-square-foot driveway atop the property while allowing the blocks in the 30-foot-high retaining wall below serve an ornamental rather than structural function.

The home, whose marble hallways and tile bathrooms are likely a result of Mabel Ennis's insistence over Wright's objections, also required repairs to all 18 roofs and some teak ceilings because of extensive water damage.

Still, a view from street below reveals dozens of sandstone-colored blocks literally peeling in the sun as well as the collapse of a wall on the southeast corner of the property caused by a February 2008 deluge. All of which supports McAvoy's claim that the foundation, which doesn't open the home to the public, could spend another \$10 million rehabbing the house.

In contrast to Ennis House, whose restoration aims to adhere closely to the house's look at its 1924 completion, the rehabilitation of Freeman House has been more gradual and aims at a later period, when Lloyd Wright, John Lautner, Gregory Ain and, most notably, Rudolph Schindler, had put their own imprint on the 2,500-square-foot structure.

Bequeathed in 1986 to USC by Harriet Freeman, the house, which affords a view down Highland Avenue to Los Angeles' South Bay, is being used as a case study of sorts for architecture students learning how to sensitively restore a residential landmark.

So far, USC, which also operates the Greene & Greene craftsman landmark Gamble House in Pasadena, has allocated about \$1 million on items such as covering and supporting the blocks holding up the house's rear terrace with a concrete veneer, installing steel trusses across the clerestory and sinking concrete piers 20 feet into the ground in place of the original block foundation, which had been sunk as little as six inches into the soil.

Still, while students are studying how to best match the original concrete blocks that need replacing, they're also getting an opportunity to figure out how to incorporate items such as the furniture, lower-story room divisions and a built-in kitchenette that Schindler designed between 1928 and his death in 1953. Such an exercise will allow the house to be restored less to its original configuration than as a period representation of the art, architecture and liberal Hollywood politics of the 1940s and '50s, a period in which the Freemans used their social contacts to get architects like Schindler and Lautner to update the property, Breisch said.

"The students can really gain hands-on experience working with the house," said Breisch, "in contrast to something like the Gamble House, which is all white gloves and velvet ropes." ■

PREVIOUS PAGE: Ennis House, its imposing facade standing atop the eastern flank of the Hollywood Hills, is being rehabilitated with private funds. THIS PAGE: The University of Southern California, which was bequeathed Freeman House in 1986, is using the property as a training ground for architecture students.



The rehabilitation of Freeman House aims at a later period, when Lloyd Wright, John Lautner, Gregory Ain and Rudolph Schindler put their own imprint on the 2,500-square-foot structure.



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"Architecture is frozen music..."

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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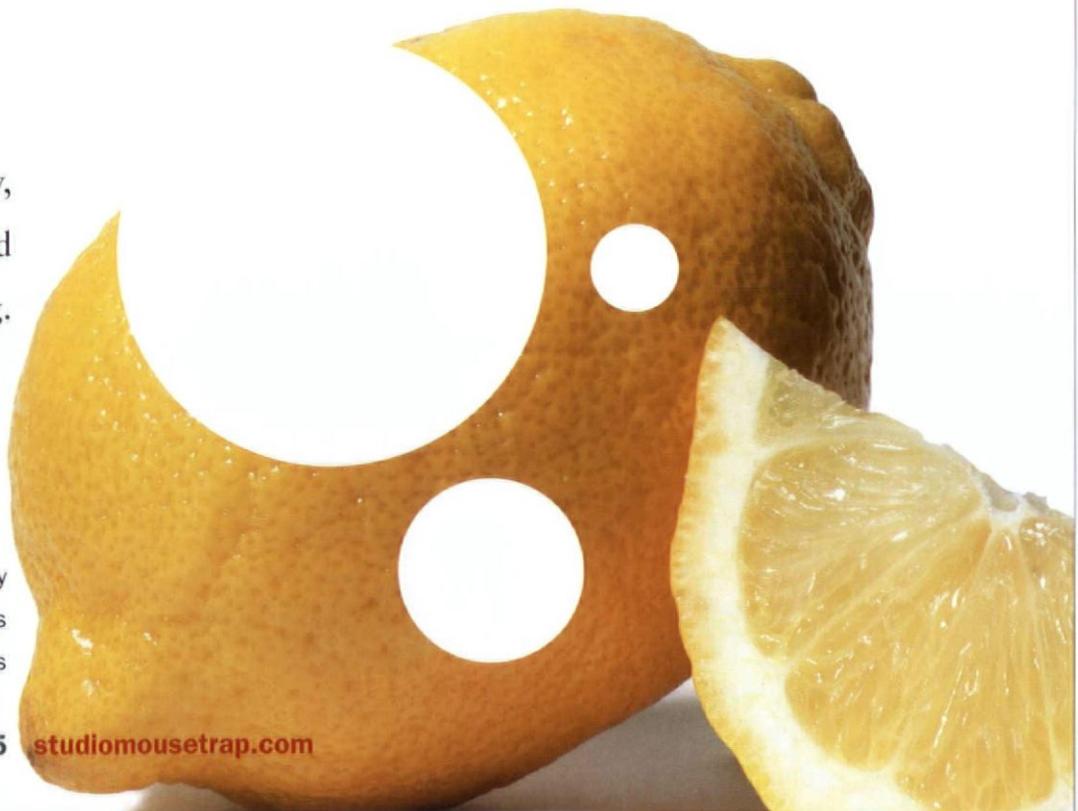
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Seth Boyd

old is new

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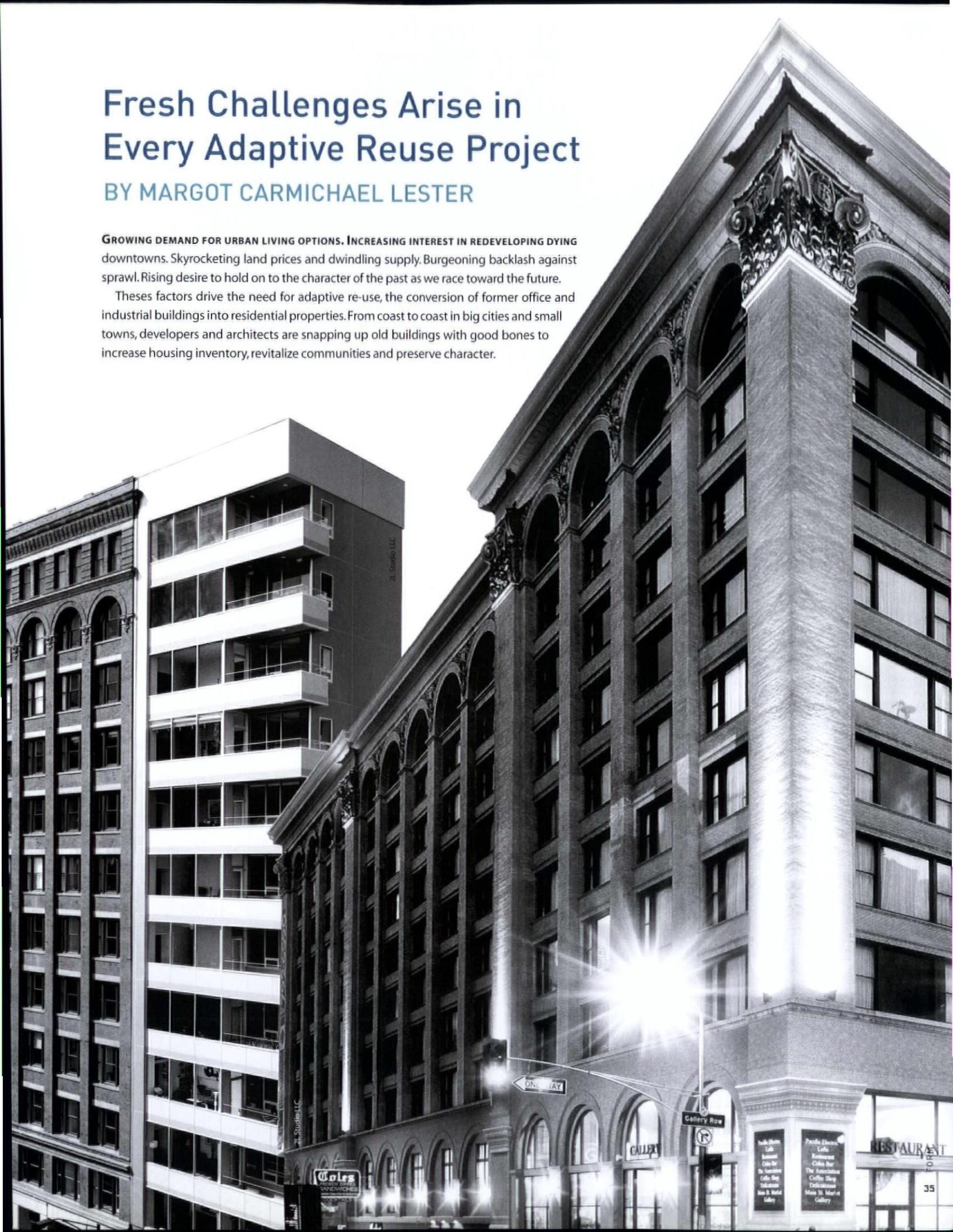
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Fresh Challenges Arise in Every Adaptive Reuse Project

BY MARGOT CARMICHAEL LESTER

GROWING DEMAND FOR URBAN LIVING OPTIONS. INCREASING INTEREST IN REDEVELOPING DYING downtowns. Skyrocketing land prices and dwindling supply. Burgeoning backlash against sprawl. Rising desire to hold on to the character of the past as we race toward the future.

These factors drive the need for adaptive re-use, the conversion of former office and industrial buildings into residential properties. From coast to coast in big cities and small towns, developers and architects are snapping up old buildings with good bones to increase housing inventory, revitalize communities and preserve character.



"We appreciate the community improvement value of these projects—taking an underused or even vacant structure and giving it new life, a new use and a new role in its neighborhood," said Jonathan Barnes, president of Jonathan Barnes Architects in Columbus, Ohio. The firm designed The Brunson Street Lofts, a turn-of-the-century Chicago Style office building that received an American Architecture Award for Best New Building Design in 2007. "One by one, projects like these can

"The designer must spend more time upfront understanding the building. This often becomes hot, dirty and sometime scary work." – Scott Thompson

really transform dilapidated and depressed neighborhoods and cities."

But transforming these buildings isn't always easy. Residential adaptive re-use projects are simply more complex than new construction.

"The designer must spend more time upfront understanding the building. You want to see everything you can in the structure including basements, sub-basements, attics and roofs. This often becomes hot, dirty and sometime scary work," said Scott Thompson, a senior associate with global firm HOK's Atlanta office who has worked on preservation and reuse projects for 15 years. "I've learned how to climb scaffolding, ride in the bucket of an 80-foot Genie lift and face large insects and animals."

Integration of new systems is also more complicated with older construction types that never anticipated their new uses. Most of these structures, particularly mills and factories, had minimal plumbing, electrical and heating, much less telephone and data lines.

"The structural systems are often load-bearing masonry without plenums, chases or cavity walls," Thompson said. "You use what you have, including abandoned fireplaces or gravity furnace ducts. You run things in attics and basements or low-profile spaces."

Things get even more mucked up when the project has achieved historic landmark status. In addition to preserving or restoring facades, interior design aspects may also be off-limits. In those cases, architects must design with them in mind.

"Anything that's part of the historic fabric of the building has to be retained," noted Wade Killefer, principal of Killefer Flammang Architects in Santa Monica, California. The firm has completed award-winning preservation projects, including the Pacific Electric Building, a Beaux Arts structure in downtown Los Angeles that received the 2007 Preservation Award for Adaptive Reuse from the Los Angeles Building Council. "Corridors, beautiful materials, lobbies, public areas—they all might have to stay."

Most of the time, these elements provide inspiration and opportunity for architects. But not always. "It can be difficult when the fire code conflicts with the historic code," Killefer said. "The fire code always wins. So as the architects, we have to find solutions so both factors are not compromised. It's hard."

But instead of turning architects off, the obstacles and impediments of adaptive reuse contribute to the allure. Preserving and repurposing buildings designed by other great architects provides a test of mettle not often afforded by new construction.

"These are the most complex and challenging projects we encounter," Barnes said. "And we like complexities, challenges and working with constraints because we do our best and most innovative work in that context." ■



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CREDITS

Whitespace Gallery

LOCATION: Atlanta

DESIGNER: BLDGS, Brian Bell, David Yocum

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Montagne Design Build, Brian Mills

ENGINEER: Palmer Engineering, Chris DeBlois

METALWORK/GLASSWORK: Dixie Modern, Seth Rogers

PHOTOGRAPHY: Top right: Whitespace/Susan Bridges. All others: bldg

blü Beverly Hills

LOCATION: Beverly Hills, California

GENSLER DESIGN TEAM: Andy Cohen, Juliet Taft, Glenn Rasmussen, Scott Taylor

PROJECT ARCHITECT/PROJECT MANAGER: Gary Downer

INTERIOR FF&E: Yuka Mizutani

DIGITAL RENDERINGS: Mel Peter

CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION: Colette Smith, Nicole Torres, Rudolpho Tinocco, Ryan Mileski, David Wilmans

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: R.D. Olson Construction

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Saiful/Bouquet Inc.

MECHANICAL ENGINEER: A.O. Reed & Co.

ACOUSTICAL ENGINEER: Veneklasen Associates

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: LRM Landscape Architects

PHOTOGRAPHY: Lesley Grant/Gensler

Lee Residence

LOCATION: Encino, California

DESIGNER: Kenneth David Lee

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: CRL Landscape Design, Catie Lee

ENGINEER: Enco Structural Engineering

LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR: Clark & White

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: K.D.L. Construction Inc.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Erhard Pfeiffer

GSA Social Security Administration Teleservice Center

LOCATION: Auburn, Washington

DESIGNER: TVA Architects Inc., Robert L. Thompson, RJ Johnson, Marc A. Labadie

ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT: CNJA Architects Inc., Eric Sward

SUSTAINABILITY CONSULTANT/ENERGY EVALUATION:

Konstrukt, Jeff Cole

SPACE PLANNING/INTERIOR WORKSPACE DESIGN:

IA Interior Architects Inc., Jeff Miller

CIVIL ENGINEERING: RoseWater Engineering Inc., Amy Haugerud

MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING:

Glumac International, Scott Vollmoeller

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: KPFF Consulting Engineers, Jerry Abdie

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Murase Associates Inc., Mark Tilbe

PHOTOGRAPHY: Inset:TVA Architects. All others:

Stephen Cridland

Voda Spa

LOCATION: West Hollywood, California

DESIGNER: Workplays Studio Architecture,

Ric Abramson, principal; Gregory Fischer, project architect; Chris Megowan, team member

ENGINEER: ARC Engineering

PHOTOGRAPHY: Voda Spa

811 Congress Ave.

LOCATION: Austin, Texas

DESIGNER: Tim Cuppett Architects, Tim Cuppett, Bruce Loethen, Andrew Perez

INTERIOR DESIGN: Tim Cuppett, Tracy Overbeck Stead

ENGINEERING: Structures, Jerry Garcia

CONTRACTOR: J. Pinnelli Co.

LANDSCAPING: David Wilson Garden Design

PHOTOGRAPHY: Paul Bardagy

Northern Liberties Residence

LOCATION: Philadelphia

DESIGNER: Qb3 LLC, Kevin Angstadt, Patrycja Doniewski, Stephen Mileto, Timothy Peters, Jacklynn Arndt, Kerry Larkin

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: The Kachele Group

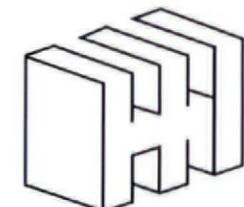
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: McCoubrey/Overholser

RENDERINGS: Qb3



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PRESERVATION, NOT REINTERPRETATION

IT'S EASY TO SUPPORT HISTORIC PRESERVATION in the abstract—and most architects do—but when your own project is impacted by the presence of a historic resource that's when preservationist ideals face their toughest test. If you accept that historic preservation is integral to a community's understanding and appreciation of its built environment then it is incumbent upon you to explore alternatives to demolition—or extensive alteration—when approaching a commission involving historic properties.

With restoration or rehabilitation, then, as a given, certain buildings prove more challenging to deal with than others. Modern buildings, in particular, are prone to failures of materials, systems, and construction methods due to the experimentation inherent in modernist philosophy. Carrying this progressive thinking to the present day, some architects argue that it is wholly appropriate to replace older materials—glazing, lighting systems, surfaces—with cutting-edge technology instead of seeking out materials that more closely match the original. I strongly disagree. While newness and change were indeed central to the Modern Movement, it is inappropriate to insert contemporary interpretations of progress into a Mid-Century Modern building. The building should be preserved, restored or rehabilitated to reflect the ideals of the time it was conceived and built.

Fortunately, if one accepts this more restrained response to the acknowledged deficiencies of modern buildings, there are tools and resources available to help. The National Park Service (NPS) provides specific guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, restoring and reconstructing historic buildings on its Web site (www.nps.gov). There you can become familiar with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (the Standards). As a result, you will not only be more fluent in the



technical aspects of preservation but you'll be prepared to educate clients in the rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of their building versus accepting an initial demand for new construction.

The NPS' Technical Preservation Service offers guidance for planning successful rehabilitation projects and interpreting and applying the Standards with discussions on energy efficiency, accessibility, health and safety and new additions. Some states, including California, have adopted historic building codes that make provisions for the special treatment of historic buildings so as to allow reasonable alternatives for situations where strict compliance with established regulations would negatively affect a building's historic appearance or jeopardize its economic viability. And historic

The Menrad Residence in Palm Springs, California, was designed by William Krisel of Palmer & Krisel in 1958, who guided its restoration in 2007.

preservation tax incentives, including the federal government's 20 percent tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic structures, can help "make the numbers work" in convincing ambivalent clients about the value of such an approach.

With these tools you will be better prepared to solve the problems that come with rehabilitating historic buildings. And, of course, the hope is that future generations of like-minded architects will work to preserve the best examples of your work.

— Peter Moruzzi

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