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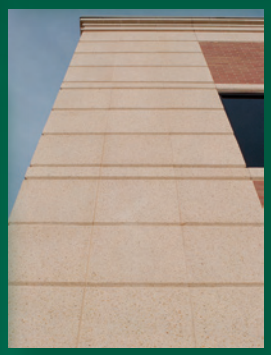

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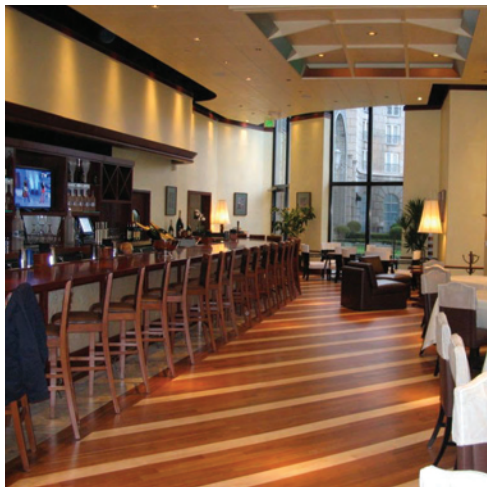

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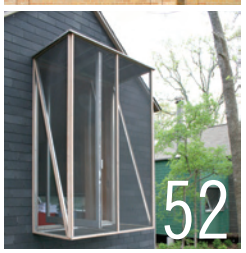
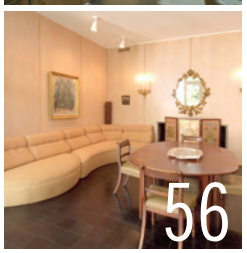
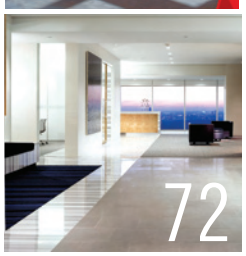
design awards edition

ON THE COVER
2007 Studio Award winner, zeroHouse by Specht Harpman.

Cover story begins on page 30







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Stephen Sharpe
EDITOR
ssharpe@texasarchitect.org

Julie Pizzo
ART DIRECTOR
jpizzo@texasarchitect.org

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Lawrence Connolly, AIA, Austin; Stephen Fox, Houston; Val Glitsch, FAIA, Houston; Greg Ibañez, AIA, Fort Worth; Nestor Infanzón, FAIA, Dallas; Max Levy, FAIA, Dallas; Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, Houston; Ed Soltero, AIA, El Paso; Bryce A. Weigand, FAIA, Dallas; Frank Welch, FAIA, Dallas; Willis Winters, AIA, Dallas; David Woodcock, FAIA, College Station

Andrea Exter
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
aexter@texasarchitect.org

Carolyn Baker
ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE
512/249-7012

Coti Bullard
CIRCULATION MANAGER
cbullard@texasarchitect.org

Megan Braley
INTERN

David Lancaster, Hon. AIA
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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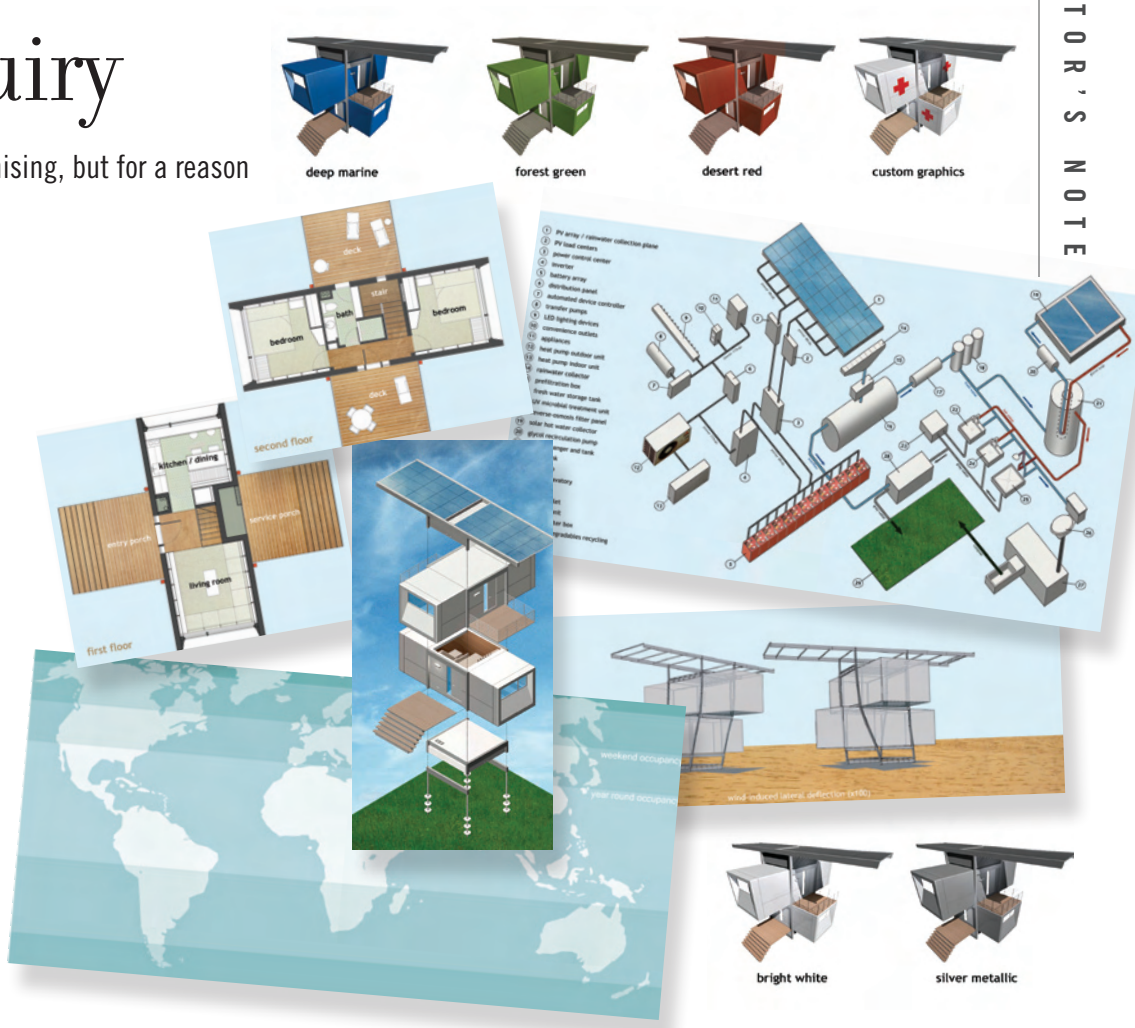
Rigorous Inquiry

Yes, the Studio Awards jury was uncompromising, but for a reason

BY STEPHEN SHARPE



Specht Harpman demonstrated pre-design research findings in the slideshow for the award-winning zeroHouse.

'I THINK WE'RE BEING A LITTLE TOO TOUGH,' suggested Peter Bohlin, FAIA, as he and his two fellow jurors were finalizing their decision on this year's Studio Awards. From a roster of 65 unbuilt entries, the jury had selected only one for an award. Bohlin thought that might send a discouraging message, especially to students and faculty, so he asked Brigette Shim and Walter Hood to reconsider their "no" votes on two other entries. Those two concepts – one by a teacher, the other by an instructor and student – had been dismissed although the presentations demonstrated apparent pre-design research, which the jury agreed was essential for an unbuilt project to be awarded. However, Shim and Hood were adamant that the proposed buildings – the culmination of the respective research – diminished each overall concept.

"[Entries such as these two are] typical of what you see in a lot of architecture programs where you have this really rigorous analysis," countered Hood, "and you end up with a dumb structure in the end because one feels that they have to make a piece of architecture. To me, it seems like, well, why go through this interesting inquiry if you're going to end up with a [generic building]."

Shim concurred: "I would have to say that when you deal with the unbuilt work, it's the relationship between research and the design proposal that you have to look at…The whole point of doing the research is that you do better design. The research and the deeper understanding should actually move your design thinking somewhere."

Rigorous inquiry, the three agreed, was missing from the Studio Award entries, with the exception of the two aforementioned projects and the one they chose for an award—Specht Harpman's zeroHouse (featured on the cover and profiled on page 84). Evidence of research would have proved to the jury that "you reasoned it through," Bohlin said in offering advice to practitioners as well as students and faculty. "So if you're in a competition like this, you would take those projects and instead of having a great picture, you would make a compelling set of arguments." Shim added, "You're making a case for the project…We need to understand a fuller picture to understand both the process and the final results."

In their Studio Awards wrap-up, the jurors spoke passionately about the need for firms to encourage investigations by their designers.

"I think that both for the schools and for the profession," Shim said, "there is a direct relationship between research and design, and that opposed to maintaining the status quo, for the discipline to move anywhere we need to make a more deliberate link between those two. As a profession, we're not going to get anywhere if we don't take on research within practice."

For larger firms, opportunities for investigation are as close as the next speculative design competition, and there may be a payoff if the concept wins the commission. But for small firms, the day-to-day necessities of bringing in work and satisfying clients often exhausts the impetus toward involved research. However, as the jury repeatedly stressed, the time and effort invested in research will pay off for the firm. Bohlin, Hood, and Shim – all hard-working practitioners whose individual work illustrates successful career trajectories – were not preaching or speaking down to anyone. Instead, each expressed sincere concern for the future of the design profession. Programs such as the TSA Studio Awards, they said, need to be nurtured and encouraged because they provide opportunities – for young designers particularly – to improve one's talent through research. "Often we don't get handed a commission right off the bat," Shim said. "So the idea that you can take an issue, a topic, an agenda that really is important to you and you can research it and actually speculate about new ways of addressing it and use a program like this to really talk about the future is precisely the spirit of an award like this."

Stephen Sharpe is the editor of *Texas Architect*.

Victory Park Omission

The article on Victory Park (p. 22, TA July/August) omitted the name of VAI Architects in Dallas from the list of firms involved with that new urban development. VAI Architects was architect of record and associate architect to HKS on Victory Plaza's East Building. *Texas Architect* regrets the omission.

HOW TO REACH US

Corrections/Letters to the Editor
Stephen Sharpe, Editor
E-mail: *ssharpe@texasarchitect.org*

Subscriptions, Address Changes, Back Issues
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NorthPark Center Honored with TSA's 25-Year Award

"IT WAS THE MOST AMAZING OPENING and we were all just delighted," a beaming Raymond D. Nasher told a reporter after more than 150,000 people attended the grand opening of the developer's latest project, NorthPark Center, on Aug. 19, 1965. Sheathed in white brick and with its exterior remarkable free of clutter, NorthPark set a new standard for shopping malls across the nation. Inside, water fountains soothed and delighted shoppers who were equally captivated by the monumental works of modern sculpture (from Nasher's personal collection) installed along the wide corridors.

Forty-two years later, the innovative design by the Dallas firm of Harrell and Hamilton Architects (now Omniplan) continues to attract accolades from architects and the general public. The mall has been expanded several times since it first opened its doors, each time with the same intent to remain true to Nasher's original vision. In recognition for retaining that sublime restraint, NorthPark Center is being honored with the Texas Society of Architects' 25-Year Award for 2007.

The three-level shopping mall, configured in an L-shape over 25 acres of a 94-acre site on the city's north side, radiated refinement from its creamy, compact profile and instantly became a prime destination for anyone seeking the latest fashion or to merely sit and watch the passing parade. Anchor tenants Neiman-Marcus and Titche-Goettinger added further luxury and prestige to the environs, with Nasher's artwork animating one's shopping experience—literally, in the case of Jonathan Borofsky's colossal *Hammering Man* sculptures, each equipped with an articulated, motorized arm. But despite the crowds and the nonstop activity, the serenity of the surrounding architecture triumphed.

"In NorthPark," observed E.G. Hamilton, FAIA, of Harrell & Hamilton, soon after the grand opening, "we have attempted to answer the problems of diverse, assertive occupancy, and gigantic scale by recognizing that we are dealing with one building. Our solution has attempted to create a sense of unity by the use of a single, simple palette of material (white brick, cast stone, and concrete), and to manage the scale by variations in the form—establishing visual areas to which one can respond pleasantly at any point."

Hamilton was the firm's partner in charge of the project. Key Kolb, FAIA, was project manager and Marvin Beck, AIA, was project architect. In addition to the overall project, Harrell & Hamilton designed the Titche-Goettinger store. Eero Saarinen & Associates designed Neiman-Marcus' building.

Omniplan expanded NorthPark in 1972 for the Nasher Company with the design of a two-story addition connecting a fourth department store, Lord & Taylor, to the center. In 2004, a second generation of architects at Omniplan began working with a second generation of the Nasher family (Nancy Nasher, daughter of Raymond Nasher, and her husband and partner David Haemisseger, now the principal owners of NorthPark) to design an expansion that doubled its size. That completed addition, recognized with a 2007 TSA Design Award, is featured on page 60.

STEPHEN SHARPE

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TSA Announces 2007 Honor Awards

AUSTIN The Texas Society of Architects has announced its annual Honor Awards to recognize significant contributions to the architectural profession and the quality of the built environment. The Honor Awards will be presented during the TSA annual convention to be held Oct. 18-20 in Austin.

The TSA Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Honor of Llewellyn W. Pitts FAIA will be presented to **Ronald L. Skaggs, FAIA**, of HKS in Dallas. This honor recognizes a lifetime of distinguished leadership and dedication in architecture and community.

Skaggs earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from Texas A&M University and a diploma in health care administration from U.S. Army/Baylor University Academy of Health Sciences. After service in the U.S. Army, Skaggs made his way back to Texas in 1970 to work as an architect with CRS Design Associates in Houston. In 1973 He joined HKS in 1973, now a 900-person firm based in Dallas with offices in 11 other U.S. cities. Skaggs currently serves as the firm's chairman.

"Ronald Skaggs' long listing of accomplishments could fill several lifetimes. We are fortunate that his lifetime has intersected with our own," wrote Bryce A. Weigand, FAIA, in a letter recommending Skaggs for the award.

In a separate letter Ken L. Ross Jr., FAIA, wrote, "His engagement, example, encouragement, and mentorship of countless young professionals, reaching well beyond the boundaries and interest of his firm, could be where his greatest legacy and contributions thrive. Ronald Skaggs has done more than support emerging professionals; he has recruited, nurtured, and motivated the current and future leaders of our profession."

Skaggs served as president of the American Institute of Architects in 2000. He currently sits on the TSA Board of Directors representing the Texas Architectural Foundation.

Gideon Toal of Fort Worth was named as recipient of the 2007 TSA Firm Award. The firm began as Don W. Kirk, Consulting Engineer in 1965. Michael Voich joined the firm in 1957, followed by Cecil Smith in 1959 and Jack Gist in 1963, to respond to the growing client base. In 1965, the firm went through the first of many name changes. Randy Gideon joined the firm in 1989 and urban planner James Toal followed in 1993. In 1997, the firm was renamed Gideon Toal.

Today, Gideon Toal is located in downtown Fort Worth with a staff of 50. The firm focuses on architecture, planning, landscape architecture, interior design, and economic development. The firm takes an active role in the community and is committed to serving the city of Fort Worth with personal involvement in nonprofit organizations that benefit urban renewal and environmental protection. In addition, the firm volunteers with other community-based organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club. One long-standing example of the firm's direct community involvement is their own program, "Paint the Town," initiated by Randy Gideon in 1996 to help bring public art into the community.

The firm has garnered numerous design awards over its 50-year history. Gideon Toal's significant projects include Tarrant County Community College Downtown Campus in Fort Worth (in design), Ericsson Village in Plano, and the Trinity River Vision Master Plan in Fort Worth.

Laurie E. Limbacher, AIA, co-founder and president of Limbacher & Godfrey Architects, will receive the TSA Award for Community Service in Honor of James D. Pfluger FAIA. She has given her time and talent to numerous ventures benefiting the Austin community for 30 years and exemplifies the stewardship required to guide the growth of a community. The award recognizes a TSA member, firm, or chapter for extended commitment to community service or significant contribution evidenced in positive impact on urban, environmental, or neighborhood issues.

Dr. Ikhlas Sabouni, Assoc. AIA, dean of the School of Architecture at Prairie View A&M University, is the recipient of the TSA Award for Outstanding Educational Contributions in Honor of Edward J. Romieniec FAIA, which is awarded to an architectural educator for distinguished achievement. Sabouni's efforts brought the Prairie View A&M School of Architecture into accreditation. Through her teaching, research, and service, she leads and inspires her students.

The TSA Award for Young Professional Achievement in Honor of William W. Caudill, FAIA will go to **Michael D. Morton, AIA**, principal of m Architects in Houston. In 2001, Morton founded m Architects. As an active member of AIA Houston, he has revived two programs, the

continued on page 116

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In Mississippi, Houston Design Firms Assist Post-Katrina Housing Recovery

EAST BILOXI Two years after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, the residents of this once-close-knit Mississippi community are still trying to recover from unprecedented devastation. In some areas of East Biloxi, nearly 80 percent of housing is estimated to have been lost or made uninhabitable from the hurricane.

Since Katrina, Architecture for Humanity an organization that promotes "architectural and design solutions to global, social and humanitarian crises" and local organizations, including the East Biloxi Coordination Relief and Redevelopment Agency, the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio of Mississippi State University and others, have been working to help families in Biloxi's first and second wards to repair and rebuild their homes and community.

Architecture for Humanity invited local and nationally recognized design firms to create viable, affordable, and sustainable proposals. Called the Biloxi Model Home Project, the program provides free design services for eligible families to build new homes. Of the 12 firms selected to participate, two were from Houston—MC2 Architects and Brett Zamore Design.

MC2 was recommended by Michael Grote, the program manager for the Biloxi Model Home Project. Grote, who graduated from the University of Houston with an architecture degree, was familiar with the design-build firm and believed that its principals' construction knowledge and cultural background would be an asset to the project. Grote's intuition was right. Vietnamese architect MC2's Chyoung Q.B. Ngyen's ability to mediate the language and cultural differences of the large Vietnamese population living in East Biloxi has been significant. Zamore, with already established ties to Architecture for Humanity, also proved to be a natural fit.

The two Houston firms were among the designers who participated in a Design Fair held in East Biloxi on Aug. 19, 2006, where they meet with eligible families and make presentations. The event allowed families the opportunity to select a team of professional designers with whom they would like to work. Of the 12 firms selected for the program, six firms (with a total of seven design concepts) advanced past this initial stage. MC2's design was selected by two families – the Nguyens and the Trans – and Brett Zamore Design was selected by the Parker family.

MC2's design for the Nguyen residence (top) incorporates a mid-level porch to connect the family with the outdoors, particularly a large oak in the back yard. Brett Zamore Design altered its original concept for the Parker residence (bottom) by turning a courtyard stair to open toward the street.

TOP PHOTO COURTESY MC2; BOTTOM PHOTO BY BRETT ZAMORE

The concepts presented at the Design Fair were, by necessity, only suggestive. While the schemes demonstrated adaptability, flexibility, and expandability, they were not designed for a specific site or to address a particular lifestyle. For example, the Trans are an older couple near retirement while the Nguyens are a young family with four children and the Parker family comprises a single mother with six children.

As a starting point, the designs had to be agile enough to accommodate a broad range of occupants. Furthermore, as part of a successful humanitarian outreach, they had to foster the traditional architectural character of the East Biloxi community. As a result, many of the residential designs gesture toward the ver-

continued on page 17

New

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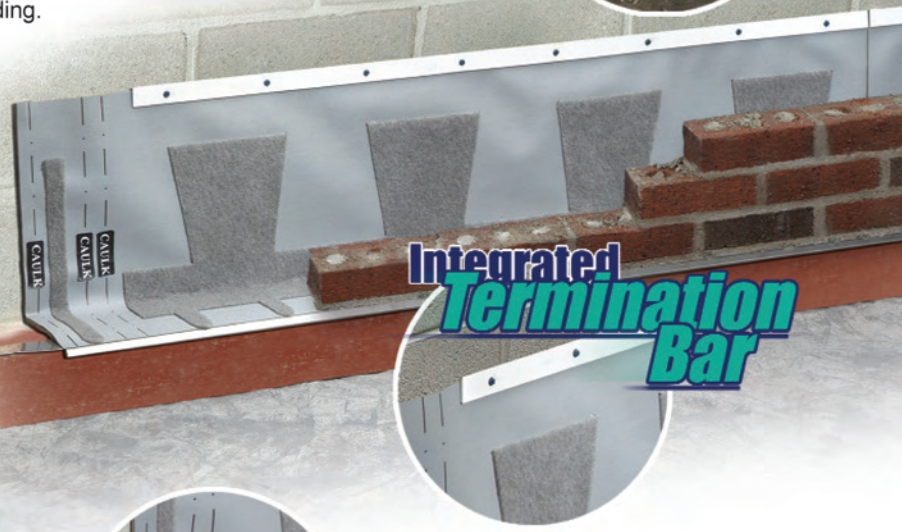

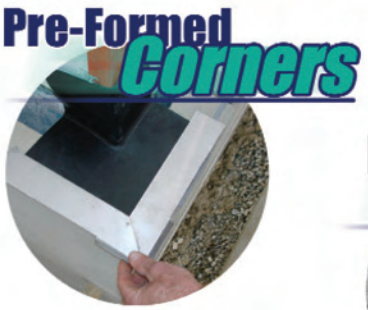

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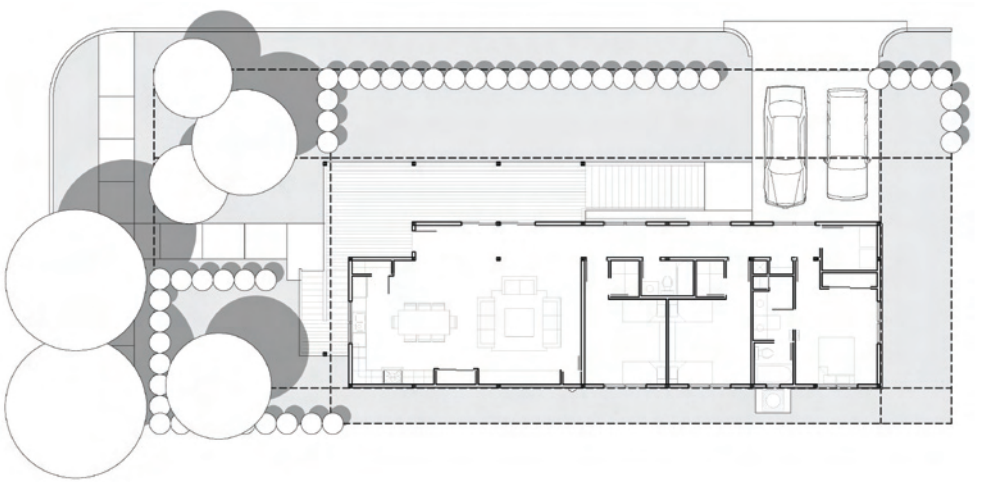
nacular typology of the bungalow, shotgun, or dog-trot house.

As fellow contributing architect Marlon Blackwell observed for his proposal (Tyler residence), "The proposition of raising a home 12 feet above the ground introduces several issues that challenge the traditional notion of the Gulf Coast streetscape and affiliated porch culture." As Blackwell noted, the meaningful social space of the front porch given over to new building techniques could further disconnect an already vulnerable community. Grote pointed out as well the difficulties elevating a house poses for affordability and safety. Grote and Architecture for Humanity are still working through and learning about what it means to elevate an entire community. Compliance with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and insurance companies' requirements and innovations in materials such as new wood treatments prompted a foundational systems specific to the varying soil conditions of the Gulf Coast.

Elevating houses to comply with new requirements also has strained designers who are struggling to create habitable spaces on the ground plane underneath the dwellings. While many of the model home project's designs provide parking and a storage area, others such as MC2 are attempting to do more. Being creative within the narrow margins of FEMA compliance, MC2 devised a cladding treatment and a lighting strategy for the underside of the Nguyen house to enhance the usability of the space. The design team is furthering the connection to the ground plane and outdoors by installing an outdoor deck 20 to 30 inches above grade that surrounds an oak tree in the Nguyens' yard.

The oak tree was where the Nguyens first met the designers and staff from MC2 and Architecture for Humanity, and where the family graciously served more than 30 strangers a home-cooked meal of egg rolls and shrimp with fried rice. This memorable event influenced MC2's final design by establishing a relationship between the kitchen and the oak tree in which the intermediate-level deck becomes an extension of the dining area and connects the family to the outdoors where they cook and garden.

For the Tran family, MC2 took cues from adaptations Mr. Tran had made to his FEMA trailer—a plastic-covered porch that provided shade and helped control the temperature of the trailer. MC2 translated that make-shift amenity into a porch that wraps around the front corner of the new house that will encourage neighborly interaction.



As a result of the owner's make-shift addition to his family's FEMA trailer, MC2 developed a porch for the Tran residence that wraps around the front corner of the house. Construction began in the summer, with completion expected later this year.

Also, perhaps in response to the need to address the social space of the front porch, the enfolded courtyard stair of Zamore's early design ultimately migrated from the southern elevation to the western elevation. The new placement strengthens the connection between the stair, the front door, and porch, thereby offering a more public face to Brown Street.

As intended at the outset of the project, all of the designs share the attribute of affordability. Depending on construction and square footage, the homes will cost from $110,000 to $140,000, with many costing less than $100 per square foot. The designs are now nearing completion, with move-in dates scheduled through September.

Rebuilding efforts along the Gulf Coast — including the work undertaken by Architecture for Humanity in East Biloxi — have been complex and not without debate over building techniques, human dignity, the aestheticizing of humanitarian work, and the need to safeguard affordability. However, detractors are often too quick to criticize and sometimes neglect to see the underlying need for solutions that respond to specific places and communities. Although Architecture for Humanity specializes in post-disaster reconstruction, its staff and volunteers did not presume to come to East Biloxi with perfect solutions. As Grote has pointed out, the model home project is a "research and development project; thus, by definition, it is a testing ground, which over time evolves and implements what it learns along the way."

KARI SMITH

The writer teaches in the School of Architecture and Design at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette.

ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY MC2

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UT Austin Enters Third Solar Decathlon

AUSTIN Students at the University of Texas at Austin have a unique opportunity to design, fabricate and test the possibilities of combining renewable energy and contemporary dwelling design through their participation in the Solar Decathlon house competition. The program began in 2000, and UT students have participated in each of the three events that have taken place since then.

[Texas A&M returns to the competition with its second entry. See p. 19 in the July/Aug. *TA*.]

The Solar Decathlon is organized by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, who challenge university teams to design and build an 800-square-foot, completely solar-powered house on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., and to test the house over a 20-day period of operation. Teams vie in contests focusing on ingenuity, energy production, energy efficiency, design, and thermal comfort. The Solar Decathlon calls for the design to appeal to the average lifestyle of the general public and to support all the power needs of a typical household, including lighting, cooking, cleaning, telecommunications, and a computer for home/office use. An electric "car" also must be charged from the photovoltaic system.

The students' design innovations and technical integrations serve as catalysts for change, leading the residential housing industry toward more sustainable practices while addressing new demands for contemporary, flexible, affordable, and environmentally responsible housing. Through the integration of solar power, the projects offer homeowners the means to move from being energy consumers to becoming energy producers.

UT Austin's entry in the 2007 Solar Decathlon will be trucked to Washington, D.C., and installed on the National Mall for 20 days in October. Twenty schools, including two from Texas, are competing this year.

In reviewing the past contests as design process and building practice, it is apparent that the challenges and possibilities of the Solar Decathlon competition are not solely limited to questions of renewable energy. In fact, logistics, material assemblies, inhabitation, building code integration and education become driving concerns that focus the Solar Decathlon houses around broader questions of interdisciplinary collaboration and sustainability as an environmental, technical and social practice. By blending design questions with logistical questions and performance questions with social questions, the competition ultimately turns a design challenge into a building process based upon principles of collaboration—between disciplines, between aesthetics and technology, between building and climate, and between ecology and economics.

The UT Solar Decathlon team's investigations suggest that progressive technologies offer solutions to the serious emerging challenges of energy efficiency and sustainable development, and thereby become a strong design-shaping force. These progressive technologies integrate photovoltaic systems, passive solar heating, solar-induced ventilation, daylighting, water-use efficiency, regenerative waste management, "smart" energy management systems, and other low-entropy open building systems that contribute to "green" architecture. The study of building systems also includes the principles, conventions, standards, applications, and restrictions associated with the manufacture and use of existing and emerging construction materials and assemblies and their effect on the environment.

The rules for the 2007 Solar Decathlon competition added "market viability" as another part of the contests. Jurors must now assess how well and easily the house can be brought to

continued on page 96

PHOTOS COURTESY UT AUSTIN SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Linda Pace (1945–2007)

SAN ANTONIO On July 2, San Antonio lost Linda Pace, the city's greatest patron of contemporary art and architecture, after a six-month battle with cancer.

The daughter of Pace Foods founder David Pace and Margaret Pace Willson, a founder of the Southwest School of Art and Craft, she studied art at Trinity University. Pace later became an accomplished artist and prodigious art collector.

"Through my own artwork and involvement with the San Antonio Art Institute, I came to realize that art-making is life-changing work," she once said, "I think it is deep and real, and I made a commitment to support artists and their work." To that end, in 1995, Linda created Artpace, a foundation that brings challenging contemporary visual artists from all over the world to live and create in San Antonio. In its short 12-year history, the uncompromising quality of the artists selected for the program has made San Antonio a destination in the world of contemporary art. Four of Artpace's alumni have won MacArthur Foundation "genius grants" and many more have been featured in the Whitney Museum's Biennial exhibition—including an amazing 13 selected in 2004.

To house Artpace, she selected a vacant 1920s-era auto showroom in downtown San Antonio. The old building was skillfully transformed by Lake/Flato architects into a vibrant, multi-use, multi-level complex of galleries, public spaces, and artist studios and residences. Open to the public on a daily basis, these spaces come alive several evenings each month as San Antonians and visitors pack the building to attend openings, artist talks and potluck dinners. San Antonio has embraced Artpace's mission—support for the visual arts has become a critical and growing part of San Antonio's sense of self in recent years.

Pace also commissioned Lake/Flato in 1992 to design her home on Elm Court in Terrell Hills. This striking complex of stone pavilions connected by glazed and open courtyards reflects her love of natural light and materials as well as her passion for the possibilities of the Texas landscape.

In 2000, searching for a site to create an urban park to honor her son, Chris, who died in 1997, Pace found the building that would allow her to extend her vision of urban San Antonio. The Tobin Building, constructed as a candy factory in the 1920s, had housed the renowned Tobin Aerial Surveys Company for 60 years. It sat gutted at the southern edge of downtown. By rehabilitating the building, she demonstrated the possibilities of downtown living in San Antonio. The project became CAMPstreet, a 20-unit loft development. My firm, Poteet Architects, was fortunate enough to collaborate with Linda on the project, as well as on her own penthouse residence in the building, designed to display her evolving art collection to best effect.

Linda Pace in 2001 with her artwork *Red Project*. Pace commissioned Lake/Flato to renovate a vacant 1920s-era auto showroom for Artpace, shown here in 1999, at 445 North Main Avenue.

The vacant site across the street became CHRISpark—a 1.6-acre park, open to the public, but maintained by its own foundation, endowed by Pace. Collaborating with Artpace artist and MacArthur grant recipient Terasita Fenandez and landscape architects Rosa Finsley and Jon Ahrens, she created a refreshing urban green space filled with site-specific artwork, fountains, and lush vegetation.

The creation of CAMPstreet and CHRISpark quickly became a catalyst for the revival of that once-forgotten section of downtown San Antonio. More than 10 redevelopment projects have been completed or are underway in the immediate vicinity of CAMPstreet and urban residential development is now booming, a trend that is serving to balance out the tourist-oriented character of San Antonio's downtown.

As a fine artist, Pace grew more assured with each passing year. She spoke often and wrote about how her work was informed by the study of her own dreams. She exhibited her "Red Project" to acclaim at the San Antonio Museum of Art in 2001. More recently, her "Mirror, Mirror" – a stunning, occupiable igloo, mirrored both inside and out – was selected for the 2007 Texas Biennial Exhibition. Just two months before her death, a large show of drawings – many dealing frankly or whimsically with her illness – drew raves.

Linda Pace deservedly received scores of honors for her philanthropy, achievements, and influence. Last year, she was made an Honorary Member of the Texas Society of Architects, an award that acknowledged her love of architecture and design. In her recommendation letter to TSA, San Antonio writer Jan Jarboe Russell perfectly captured the nature and the effect of Linda's influence on her beloved San Antonio: "Sometimes the consciousness of a single individual can reflect changed realities in ways that redefine a city's sense of itself."

JIM POTEET, AIA

Jim Poteet, AIA, practices architecture in San Antonio.

PHOTOS COURTESY ARTPACE SAN ANTONIO; TOP PHOTO COPYRIGHT 2002 JAMES MCGOON.

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AIA Brazos Awards Two Projects

COLLEGE STATION AIA Brazos recognized two projects in the chapter's 2007 Design Awards. The projects were selectedby a jurors Wes Good, AIA, of Kirksey; Lonnie Hoogeboom, AIA, of Natalye Appel & Associates; and Donna Kacmar, AIA, of architect works.

The awarded projects are Christ Lutheran Day School by Upchurch Architects and College Station Fire Station No. 5 by BRW Architects.

Upchurch Architects' Christ Lutheran Day School in Brenham is a new school building for a congregation on a mission to provide low-cost, high-quality education for young children. The design strategy employed a simple interior street scheme that corresponds to the village-like exterior and allows children to identify their classrooms upon arrival.

College Station Fire Station No. 5 by BRW Architects combines the vernacular of the Texas Hill Country with "green" building materials. Home away from home for eight firefighters, the station provides training space for the public and is designed for future expansion.

The chapter will present the awards at its September meeting.

College Station Fire Station No. 5

Christ Lutheran Day School

New Funds to Restore Courthouses

AUSTIN By tentatively approving $62 million earlier this year, the Texas Legislature set the stage for a fifth round of taxpayer funding to continue the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. The program, initiated by state lawmakers in 1999, has resulted in the renewal of 37 county courthouses. As when they were originally built, the preservation projects again serve as outstanding examples of almost-forgotten craftsmanship and ornate design by some of the nation's most noted architects, including J. Riely Gordon, Alfred Giles, and Eugene Heiner.

The latest round of funding must first be endorsed by voters in a November bond election. If passed, the funds will be available through the Texas Historical Commission. Applications for Round V funding are due Nov. 19, with awards scheduled to be announced in January.

Rededicated during ceremonies held on Aug. 4, the Wharton County Courthouse is the program's most recently completed project and represents one of the most dramatic transformations in the program's history. The nearly $7 million project earned Bailey Architects of Houston this year's Award of Excellence in Historic Architecture from THC.

Designed by Heiner and built in 1889, the original building exhibited Second Empire style complete with a clock tower and mansard roofs but underwent significant alterations decades later to reflect the Art Deco/Moderne style. Bailey Architects spent six years on the project, which included the removal of stucco from the building's original bricks and stone to rediscover Heiner's courthouse.

Wharton County Courthouse

WHARTON PHOTO BY GERALD MOORHEAD, FAIA

AIA Dallas Design Awards Call For Entries

All project submittals are due by 5 p.m. For more information on entry requirements, visit *www.aiadallas.org*. SEPT. 7

UT Austin Presents *Guerrero Viejo Revealed*

The University of Texas at Austin Benson Latin American Collection presents *Guerrero Viejo Revealed*, a selection of photographs by W. Eugene George, FAIA, and Everardo Castro Medellín. Opening reception SEPT. 27

2007 LRGV Conference

The conference will include a binational tour, LEED workshop, seminars, networking opportunities, great parties and a trade show. Register online at *www.Lrgvaia.org*. For more information, call (956) 994-0939 or e-mail *Lrgvaia@swbell.net*. SEPT. 27-29

Chinati Foundation's Open House

There will be open viewing of Chinati's collection, with two special exhibitions by David Rabinowitch. For more information, e-mail *nterry@chinati.org* or *info@juddfoundation.org*. OCT. 6-7

TSA Convention

TSA hosts its 68th Annual Convention and Design Products & Ideas Expo in Austin. Keynote speakers, Maurice Cox and Bobby R. Inman, will appear on OCT. 19. For more information, call (512) 478-7386 or visit *www.texasarchitect.org/convention*. OCT. 18-20

Natural Building Colloquium in Kerrville

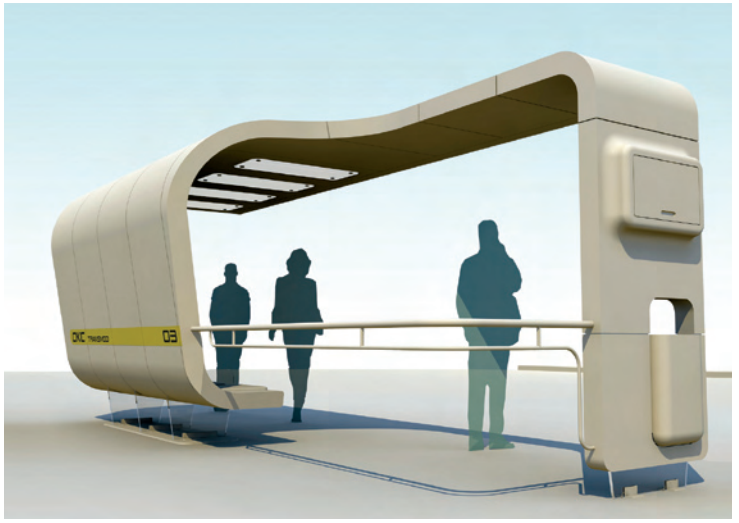
The festival will include hands-on natural building projects and discussions on sustainable building and project planning. Presenters include Dr. Richard Burt and Dr. Charles W. Graham. For more information, visit *www.naturalbuildingtexas.org*. OCT. 19-28

UT Austin Presents *Exhibiting the Nation*

The UT Austin School of Architecture explores the history of Worlds' Fairs within southeastern and east central Europe and examines the participation of the various countries in exhibitions. For more information, visit *http://soa.utexas.edu/archhistory/exhibiting*. OCT. 26-27

AIA Houston Homes Tour

The tour will feature nine architect-designed houses. Tickets for all nine houses are $25 per person. No individual house tickets will be available. For more information call (713) 520-0155 or visit *www.aiahouston.org*. OCT. 27-28



Transmod

As designed by Nocturnal Design Lab of Dallas for Metro Transit, Oklahoma City's only mass transit system, the bus stop has been transformed from a purely functional element into a self-referential icon. The designers took aesthetic cues from mass transit and the design of the bus to create a place of familiarity and comfort for the user. Transmod is made up of a series of pre-fabricated modules, which are first built off site in a controlled environment. The modules can then be easily transported to the site of the bus stop and rapidly assembled. The use of modular construction allows the structure to be flexible, as it can adapt to different sites throughout the metropolitan area. The structure can shrink or expand depending on the required capacity in each area by simply removing or adding seating modules as necessary. An interactive LCD display map with real-time visual display is incorporated into the design. This technology is intended to eliminate riders' uncertainty by providing accurate information about the arrival of the next bus.

Abu Dhabi Hospital and Clinic

Located in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, the new hospital and clinic will represent a new age for Arabian healthcare. The Dallas office of Perkins+Will has designed this iconic 2.2 million-square-foot building. Conceptualized as the hands of a child creating a sanctuary for a precious object, two buildings come together to surround the "protected" patients. The hospital is the larger building, which is adjoined to the clinic by a large atrium. At the center of the atrium, prayer centers appear to float in the building's open space. The clinic and hospital are connected within the atrium by bridges that allow easy travel between the two buildings. The glass and aluminum panels that make up the exterior of the hospital and clinic allow light into the atrium while also emphasizing the buildings' elegant form. The building and site work in unison as they penetrate the waterfront and bring water into the campus.

The Crossroads

Texas Stadium has seen the Dallas Cowboys bring home five Super Bowl trophies, but now as the team moves to Arlington, the site offers an opportunity for 486 acres of expansive urban development. The Crossroads, the master plan of this project, presents a comprehensive vision for "regenerative urbanism." Dallas-based Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum has designed four distinct districts for the site—the Library, River, Stadium, and University districts. The new development also includes shops, housing, hotel, office space, entertainment venues, restaurants, and civic spaces. The Crossroads plan aspires to restore many of the site's natural features, such as forestlands and waterways, in order to create a sustainable outside environment idealy suited for the Southwestern climate. Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum transforms Texas Stadium's super-structure through innovative urban design and rich landscaped environments.

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Richard Payne's *Texas Towns*

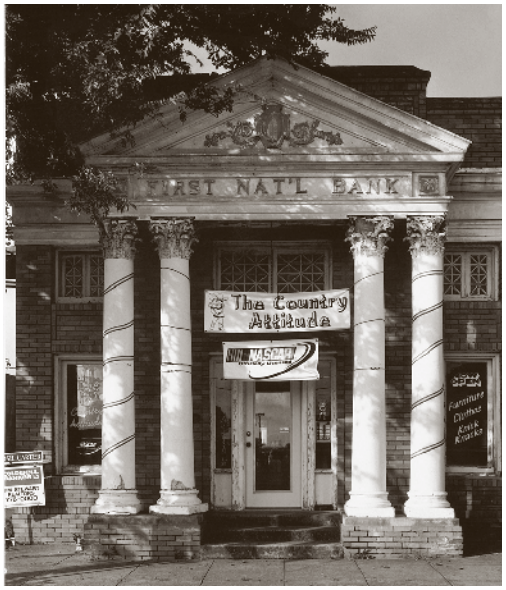
by THOMAS MCKITTRICK, FAIA

In his most recent book, Texas Towns and The Art of Architecture: A Photographer's Journey, *Richard Payne, FAIA, chronicles beautiful examples of architecture in small, dying towns across Texas. At the same time, Payne's images offer glimpses of the waning lives of people in those towns.* Texas Architect *asked Tom McKittrick, FAIA, to interview Payne about the underlying message he wanted to convey through the book's black-and-white photographs and his essay that introduces them. Responding to fairly open-ended questions from his long-time friend, Payne touched upon some of those points. Excerpts follow.*

"I have tried to communicate to anyone who will read the book that the American public in general knows virtually nothing about the architectural design process, or about the aspirations of virtually every architect to create a thing of beauty that also serves a variety of useful purposes. Those aspirations are no different from the typical person in any walk of life who wants to be the best at what they do."

"The photographs in the book represent a time in the development of Texas when architects were able to command the respect and trust of elected officials and businessmen simply because of the reputations brought with them from points north and east. Few such clients were qualified to question their designs, but all were unflinching in their desire to create structures that were worthy of the citizens."

Clockwise from top left: Atascosa County Courthouse, Jourdanton; First National Bank, Eddy; Prendergast-Smith Building, Mexia; downtown Calvert; downtown Granbury; Teague Hotel, Teague; and (center) Ingenhuett stores, Comfort



"The big questions raised in the book are: 'What are we building today, and what kinds of aspirations are represented by what we build?' How can we explain to future generations why we have left them with very little of which to be proud? What is the difference in ordinary buildings and buildings that rise to the level of art, and how can we make that difference understood by the public and those who commission building design?"

Continued on page 119

Lueders limestone compliments Acme Brick's signature Mission Blend brick at the heart of the Texas Tech campus.

Student Union Building Owner: Texas Tech University, Lubbock
Architect: Holzman Moss Architecture, New York
General Contractor: Lee Lewis Construction, Lubbock
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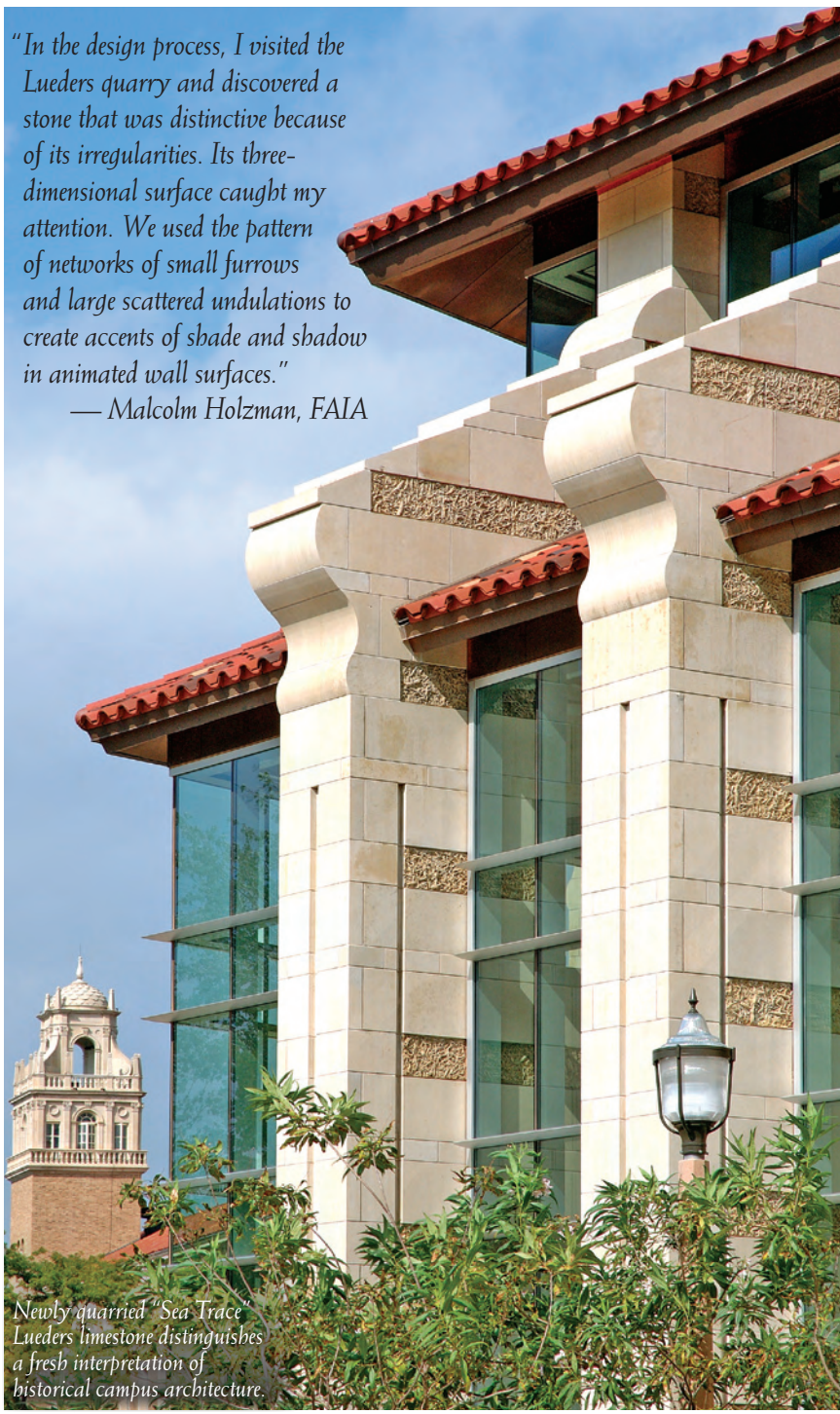
Six feet below grade, Texas Quarries reveals a 270-million-year-old record of marine life. Densely formed yet delicately figured, "Sea Trace" fossilized Lueders limestone bears the trails traced by creatures in prehistoric seas. Architects recessed the "Sea Trace" stone within surfaces of smooth Lueders limestone, then complimented the stone pairing with Mission Blend Acme Brick, to make this student center stand out on a campus with a rich building heritage. Long favored for universities, public buildings, and pristine residences, Texas Quarries' limestone has new richness and creative range today.

Animated and fragile to the eye, "Sea Trace" is Texas Quarries' hardest stone variety.



"In the design process, I visited the Lueders quarry and discovered a stone that was distinctive because of its irregularities. Its three-dimensional surface caught my attention. We used the pattern of networks of small furrows and large scattered undulations to create accents of shade and shadow in animated wall surfaces."
— Malcolm Holzman, FAIA

Newly quarried "Sea Trace" Lueders limestone distinguishes a fresh interpretation of historical campus architecture.

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Houston Legacy: Hugo V. Neuhaus, Jr.

Exhibit beautifully illustrates the modernist postwar houses designed for city's elite

by VAL GLITSCH, FAIA

On Aug. 2, more than 400 guests attended an opening preview of Houston Mod's third architectural exhibition, *Hugo V. Neuhaus, Jr., Residential Architecture, 1948-1966*, at Architecture Center Houston. Neuhaus was the premier gentleman architect for Houston's elite society in the 1950s. The exhibit includes selected items from the private collection of Graham Luhn, FAIA (a Neuhaus associate for over 20 years) and from the extensive Hugo Neuhaus Collection at the Houston Public Library.

Accompanying the exhibit is a thoughtfully investigative short book authored by Ben Koush, comprising a series of essays, an illustrated catalogue, and a foreword by architectural historian Stephen Fox

Educated at Harvard's Graduate School of Design and a fellow classmate of Philip Johnson, Neuhaus, exposed to a Johnson-filtered Miesian doctrine, identified his own version of a Miesian modern rhetoric of "stability, nobility, and enduring value."

As Koush observes, these were, ironically, the *same* virtues previously associated with classical architecture. As the intention of modern architecture was to overthrow historicism and its associated class-conscious decorative detailing, this represents a fundamental irony. Johnson's "subversive skill in positioning Mies's architecture as the socially superior form of modern architecture by 1950 was matched by his efforts to infuse Miesian architecture with historical resonance, especially the memory of classical architecture," Fox writes in his foreword.

Contradictions between the conservative and progressive aspects of mid-century values are noted by Koush, who describes Neuhaus's adaptation of Mies's materials, construction methods, and sense of proportions, which he combined with 'subtle, regional inflections' to make the work location-specific and his own. "It is the "phenomenal attributes of Neuhaus's houses – their clarity, dignity, and proportioned generosity – that guarantee their status as admirable works of modern architecture…," he adds.

Evidently, prevailing taste and sensibilities among 1950 Houston's privileged were characterized by this and other oppositions. The essay "Courtyard Houses in Texas: The Domestication of Miesian Architecture" describes Neuhaus's architecture as a reflection of those oppositions. Many of his houses "exhibit the tension between informality and the tendency towards order and restraint that continually animates Neuhaus's work," Koush observes. "The rational use of materials – solid brick load bearing walls that wrapped around glass-enclosed living areas under a roof supported by steel columns and beams – established a strong and contradictory relationship of open-to-closed and public-to-private in the Miesian courtyard house…"

In 1987, the year Neuhaus died, Anderson Todd, FAIA, wrote (as an epitaph for *Cite)* that Neuhaus's work "embodied all that was best about the modern movement." He notes that the separation of walls from structure and roof allowed for a free and open space, making "the individual one with his world…[a] world that could comfortably encompass various trappings and leftovers from the past."

Of his own work, Neuhaus wrote, "Order is a condition instantly recognizable to the human eye, deceptively simple in appearance but achieved only by constantly sifting away the extraneous." The catalogue portion of the book, "15 Houses 18 years," Koush demonstrates the breadth, variety, and high level of refinement Neuhaus brought to his practice: "Neuhaus, working in a city without a long established architectural culture, was able to reproduce in many of the exquisite Miesian courtyard houses he designed the qualities of 'Baukunst' (literally, 'building art'). They represent a rare and inspiring integration of a codified architectural language with 'utilitarian aspects of building" in ways that referenced the distinctive social culture and [the] physical environment of Houston."

Neuhaus designed this house in 1949 for his family in the Homewoods section of River Oaks. The house, one of the city's most important works of modern architecture, was rendered in inkwash by Herbert Cowell. The rendering is on display in the exhibit.

In spite of Houston's reputation for remarkable heat and humidity and unremarkable flatness, Neuhaus's houses without fail enjoy lushly vegetated and topographically eventful sites. He integrated his houses into that nature, carefully offering and framing views and, pushing the development of the courtyard house, cooling them and their owners with distinctively Houston touches—shaded porches and patios, delicate trellises, large-leaf subtropical plantings in biomorphic beds, and swimming pools.

In his concluding essay, Koush compares Neuhaus's achievements to Palladio's (an intentional classical reference) in applying "good form" to his clients' lives, elevating routine activities by formalizing them and thereby assuring their inheritance: "The social role of Neuhaus's glass walled pavilions, as well as his ranch type houses, was to reassert the relevance of Houston's established elites…[as having] a continuing role to play…by asserting leadership in matters of civic stewardship, cultural philanthropy, and resource conservation."

Neuhaus's architecture of elegant restraint and refined proportions was a good fit for Houston's elite who avoided drawing attention to themselves and whose wealth certainly could have materialized in showier edifices.

continued on page 114

Texas Society of Architects' Design Awards 2007

by Bryce A. Weigand, FAIA

HAVING OBSERVED THIS YEAR'S DESIGN AWARDS jury, I have several thoughts. One is, why doesn't the Texas landscape/cityscape reflect more significantly the fine work that Texas architects submitted in this year's design award program? There were 243 entries this year and the work is substantial. Secondly, why do architects continue to have such a difficult time portraying the charm and delight of these projects or the impact they have on a collective physical setting? Stated another way, why do our cityscapes continue to convey a notion of being in Anywhere, USA, when seemingly very good work is being generated? Even if prominently displayed along the freeways where we might see them, these projects would certainly only make a minor dent in the vista.

Nonetheless, the jury process continues to celebrate those projects which do convey in a transcendent kind of way the best hopes, dreams, and aspirations of the individual or institute which authorized their creation. The Design Awards program—however antiquated or benign to the impact of our city-making—is still one of the best ways we as architects can communicate to the public and ourselves that good design can make a difference.

This year's jury was comprised of Peter Bohlin, FAIA, of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson in Wilkes-Barre, Penn.; Walter Hood, ASLA, of Hood Design in Oakland, Calif.; and Brigette Shim, International AIA, of Shim-Sutcliffe Architects in Toronto, Ontario. A most congenial trio, they selected 13 projects to be awarded from the 243

PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ST. CLAIR

submittals and one from the 65 Studio Award entries. The process was democratic to the extreme. Here's how they chose their selections and why.

Following very simple instructions from the design committee and TSA staff, PowerPoint presentations were reviewed—rapidly. If a juror liked a particular project, it advanced to the next level. In the three hours it took to complete the first round, the jury selected 48 projects for a more in-depth viewing and some discussion. To make it to the second round, a project had to get two votes; a single vote for a project meant that it didn't warrant further discussion. In this manner, 18 were advanced on the way to a final selection of 13 projects as the winners for this year's Design Awards. Now the conversation increased relevant to the project's merit.

The 18 were discussed at some length concerning what new ideas were conveyed, what impact the project made on the landscape, the campus, the street or the city. Is it a novel approach and solution or has it been done by somebody else as well or better? It seems, at least to this committee member, the major questions we often do not convey clearly are: what is the problem or question we are attempting to answer and how does that solution address the question. The reoccurring theme of what is the context of the project and how it fits in continually goes unaddressed or only tacitly touched upon. To be sure, professional quality photography and exceedingly clear drawings are absolutely paramount in a two-dimensional competition attempting to describe a three- and four-dimensional object…architecture.

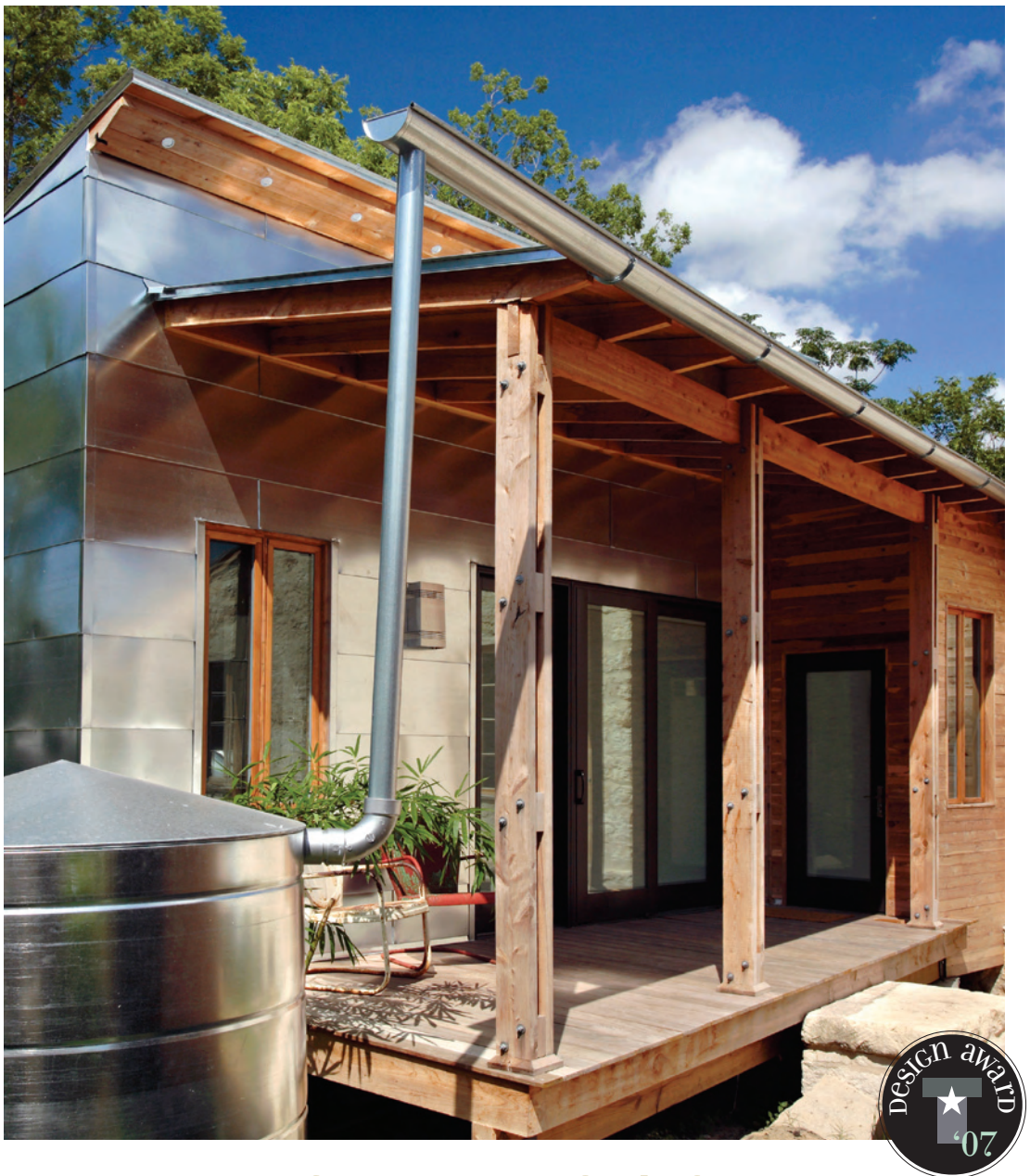
The awarded projects in this year's competition did exhibit the above qualities. They conveyed clearly the surroundings and the setting of the place. The photography and illustrations allowed the jurors to grasp the idea and challenge of the program and solutions, and beyond that exhibited the potential delight of being in the space and the charm in moving through it.

This year's awarded projects (featured on the following pages) varied widely in typology but a couple of types are notable because they are not frequently recognized by TSA juries. Of the 13 winners, five were either restorations, conservations, or renovations that the jury applauded for respecting historical roots and re-energizing a worn or tired building.

Another refreshing aspect of this year's selections was the awarding of large, more complex, and oftentimes dismissed institutions (shopping centers and church-related facilities) because the program is too difficult to follow in a two-minute review or because the project had too many ideas to clearly explain.

All of this year's winners conveyed the ethereal notion of transporting one to experience the joys of architecture handsomely crafted—almost like the curling up with a good book allows insights into the mind's eye to discover and experience the joys of another time and place. Perhaps 13 winners this year won't do much to affect our larger landscape, but they can challenge our collective selves to strive for architecture that does delight the senses with abundant well-being while performing the daily chores of work, play, home, and spirit. Or to quote juror Peter Bohlin, FAIA: "Identify the opportunity; reflect the possibility."

Bryce A. Weigand, FAIA, chairs the TSA Design Awards Committee.



Casa 218

by J. BRANTLEY HIGHTOWER, ASSOC. AIA

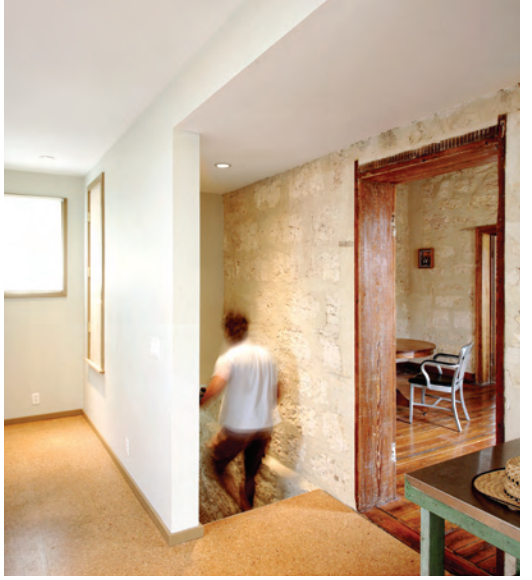
PROJECT Casa 218, San Antonio
CLIENT Withheld by request
ARCHITECT Candid Rogers Architect
DESIGN TEAM Candid Rogers, AIA; Marisa Saldana; Gonzalo Fraga; Ayuko Hishikawa
CONSULTANTS Lehmann Engineering
PHOTOGRAPHER Chris Cooper

RESOURCES **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** TYVEK; **METAL ROOFING:** Posey Steel; **SPECIALTY DOORS:** Pella; **WOOD WINDOWS:** Weather Shield; **LUMBER:** Temple-Inland

While many Texas cities have experienced a renaissance of downtown residential development, this trend has been curiously absent in San Antonio. With only a few residential projects recently completed or underway, the idea of living in or near downtown simply has not taken root in the same way it has in places like Austin or Dallas. To be sure, downtown San Antonio has a vibrant street life, but that life has for many years consisted of tourists ingesting burrito platters along the Paseo del Rio or purchasing coon-skin caps in front of the Alamo.

Still, the city is ripe with possibilities. Candid Rogers, AIA, has recognized this fact and his Casa 218 demonstrates the possible results. Located on Lavaca Street just south of the city center, in the shadow of the Tower of the Americas, the house and studio project reveals the inherent potential of the many solidly built homes in the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to downtown. The project also illustrates the degree to which an infill development can breathe new life into an existing neighborhood while preserving the character of its underlying urban fabric.

Dating back to the early 1870s, the Lavaca neighborhood represents one of the city's oldest intact residential quarters. Whereas the King William district located directly to the west became the address of choice during that era for prosperous businessmen of German decent, the Lavaca neighborhood was home to an ethnically diverse working class. Even today, many of the 600 or so homes in the area have remained in the same families, having been handed down through multiple generations, which has contributed to its social stability.



However, that stability did not prevent some properties from gradually descending into disrepair. When Rogers first became involved with the project, 218 Lavaca was occupied by a small two-room stone house with a dilapidated wood frame addition in the rear. Rogers began by removing the addition and working to secure the original stone structure. Most likely built in 1873, this understated limestone structure became the formal and historic anchor for the project. The foundation walls were secured and the basement was renovated as a design studio. Above ground, the plaster that had encased the exterior stonework for decades was removed, revealing rough limestone masonry. The architect took a similar approach on the interior by exposing the structure to maximize interior volume as well as to highlight the historic construction techniques.

Rogers constructed a new kitchen and bathroom wing that extends behind the original structure and maintains its overall width. Connected to the original architecture via a new internal basement stair, the addition reflects the elemental character of the existing stone house without overt stylistic references. Perpendicular to this wing is a somewhat larger bedroom wing that consists of a master bedroom, a guest bedroom, a bathroom, and a porch that opens onto an intimate, landscaped courtyard defined on its third side by a detached one-car garage. A low stone wall screens this courtyard from Lavaca Street, allowing it to be simultaneously read as a visual extension of the street while also denoting the space it encloses as private.

While the project encompasses a number of elements (existing house, new addition, new garage, defined

GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1 COMPLEX ENTRY
2 COURTYARD
3 EXISTING STRUCTURE
4 GARAGE
5 PORCH
6 BEDROOM
7 CLOSET
8 KITCHEN

courtyard, etc.) their assembly creates a dense and cohesive whole, which was noted by juror Walter Hood: "As an urban project it has the ability to think about infill in a very different way. This project serves as a good example of how you can begin to fit [the] automobile as well as infill for more housing uses within a small site."

As well as occupying a tight site, the project exists within a relatively small and compact neighborhood. It takes but a few minutes to walk Lavaca Street's three blocks. The street possesses a rich character derived from a diversity of houses. Through the artful blending of the old and the new, Casa 218 respects the nature of that existing context while at the same time expanding and updating the street's architectural vocabulary. With the garage and kitchen/bedroom wings clad respectively in horizontal cedar boards and galvanized metal panels, they clearly read as additions. That said, they also harmonize with the existing fabric in such a way to not draw attention to themselves. Instead, they provide a contemporary frame to the much older original stone house. Juror Peter Bohlin, FAIA, recognized this quality when he commented that the project made clear "what was old and what was new without belaboring the point."

The hallmark of the project is not the integration of old and new, but rather the intuitive strategy of inserting contemporary building elements into an existing context. This technique of thoughtfully integrating old and new was by no means the path of least resistance, as noted by juror Brigette Shim. Rogers, she said, "could have just demolished the whole thing and built something in a totally different scale there, but I think [he] understands not only the scale of the existing house but [how] to actually re-contextualize it in a new grouping of buildings. I really love the collage."

Perhaps more significantly, the project's ability to harmonize with its context has not been lost on the residents of the surrounding neighborhood. Before it was honored with a TSA Design Award, Casa 218 was formally recognized as a "good neighbor" and awarded a 2006 Movers and Shakers Award by the Lavaca Neighborhood Association. The group's president, Joan Carbabin, described the award as a means of recognizing transformative individuals and projects that actively enhance the livability of the neighborhood. While Carabin, who lives just a few doors down from Casa 218, will readily admit that the project is not the first adaptive renovation of a home in the area, its final form did represent one of the most dramatic improvements to a "neglected property." It was the convincing example set by the change of a derelict 130-year-old stone building into a modern home that earned the project the award. "If that sort of transformation can occur," Carabin explained, "it can serve as a powerful example for other property owners and may well inspire others who have never considered living in older neighborhoods."

Perhaps the most compelling attribute of this project is its ability to inspire others to action. As similar developments begin to occur in the old neighborhoods around central San Antonio, one can only hope that they will all be as sensitive to their context as Casa 218.

J. Brantley Hightower, Assoc. AIA, works with Lake/Flato Architects.

Chinati Gallery

by MARK T. WELLEN, AIA

PROJECT Chinati Foundation Temporary Gallery, Marfa
CLIENT Chinati Foundation
ARCHITECT Ford Powell & Carson Architects and Planners
DESIGN TEAM John Gutzler
CONTRACTOR Cook Construction
CONSULTANTS Don Ray (structural)
PHOTOGRAPHER Andy Mattern
RESOURCES METAL ROOFING: MBCI; **METAL DOORS AND FRAMES:** Kawneer; **METAL WINDOWS:** Winco

Marfa, located in the vast expanses of far West Texas, has become the Mecca of the minimalist art world and its holiest shrine is the Chinati Foundation's Fort D.A. Russell. In the 1970s, Donald Judd (who abhorred the minimalist moniker) led the effort to turn the long-abandoned U.S. Army cavalry post into a venue for exhibiting his and other like-minded artists' work. Three decades later, the Chinati Foundation's global impact continues to grow and its various installations attract a steady stream of pilgrims throughout the year. Attendance peaks during its Annual Fall Open House when 2,000 visitors from around the world swell the town to twice its population.

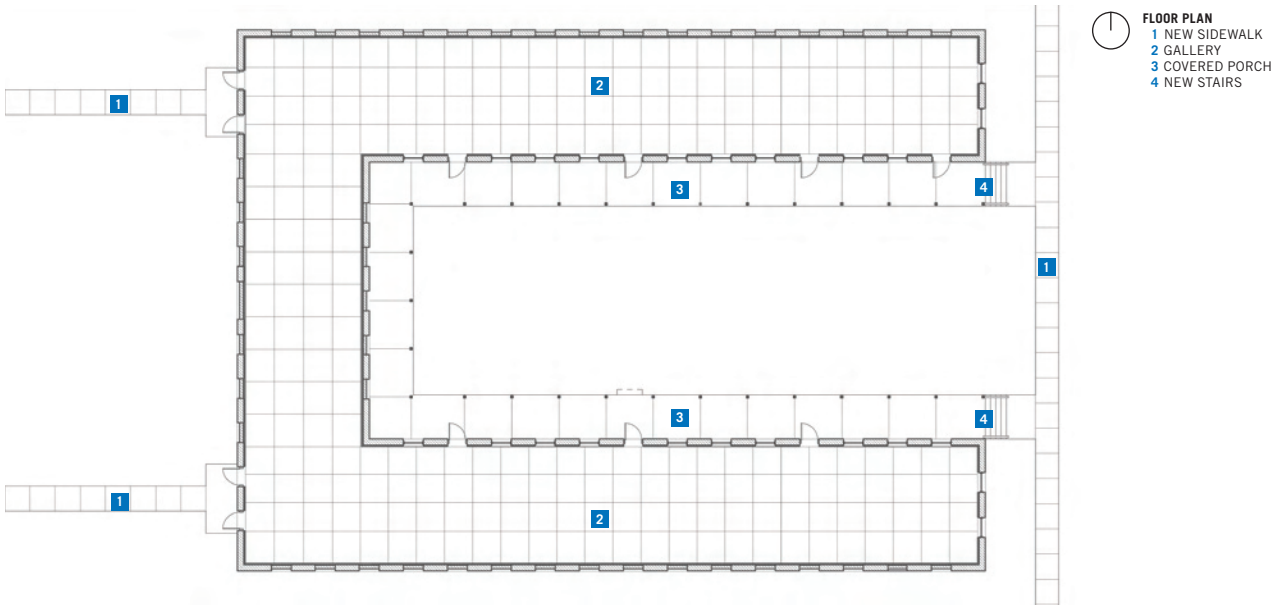
Chinati's most recent addition is the Gallery for Temporary Exhibits, a pro-bono project executed by Ford Powell & Carson of San Antonio under the direction of John Gutzler, AISD, IIDA, a firm partner and it's director of interior design. The project is the third in an on-going series by FP&C for Chinati. The firm previously completed the Wesley Gallery, a project that reconstituted an abandoned stable of crumbling adobe and concrete as a permanent exhibit space for the work of artist John Wesley. (The project received a 2006 TSA Design Award and was featured in *TA* October/November 2006.) FP&C also rehabilitated a series of dilapidated barracks buildings to house the permanent installation of Untitled Works (Marfa Project) by the late Dan Flavin. (See *TA* March/April 2002.)

At first blush, one might question the appropriateness of awarding a project with such an understated program. But closer inspection reveals the designers'

meticulous ongoing efforts to create exhibit space that reinforces the precepts of Chinati's founder.

As with the previous Flavin and Wesley galleries, this latest project presented a minefield of technical difficulties. Structural problems were significant primarily due to poor original construction. (Built sometime around 1917, the U-shaped building was one of several barracks whose permanence apparently was not an issue with the original construction crews.) Poured-in-place concrete walls and floors lacked reinforcement and often contained numerous filler stones to save concrete, similar to efforts by local ranchers in their construction of water tanks. FP&C also stabilized the walls with steel straps, and in some cases reinforced with rebar. (The heavy dash finish of the exterior stucco conveniently helped hide the obvious repairs to the walls.) Additionally, the poorly framed roof structure was stiffened and adequately braced, and the almost completely replaced floor was reinforced with a mesh of steel.

Of critical importance to the interior was the employment of a system of drywall components which effectively isolates both the interior wall studs and the ceiling grid from the structure (and one another) to allow for maximum movement of the gypsum wall board. In a significant technical departure from FP&C's previous projects at Chinati, the owner decided to eliminate control joints in the drywall at the window and door penetrations, choosing instead ongoing vigilance in the repair of the inevitable cracking. Retaining a subtle reveal between the ceiling and wall planes not only addresses the technical problem of cracking, but serves to support the planer quality of walls and ceilings as well



as the play of light within the space. (Interestingly, years before, Judd and Flavin hung a test panel of plaster from the existing ceiling structure. Its subsequent failure provided a lesson for architects on the galleries.)

On the exterior, conscientious efforts minimized the palette of new materials to just two types of metal finish. The deep-fluted corrugated roof panels, the carefully detailed gable vents, and the narrow-frame doors and single-hung windows were primarily fabricated of aluminum. Stair rails of galvanized steel were designed with flat bars that tend to disappear as the visitor approaches. Three railing prototypes (including a Judd-inspired wooden assembly) were reviewed before the architects and owner elected to proceed with the most understated design.

Perhaps the project's greatest success resulted from the decision to infill almost all of the perimeter window openings (their locations along the exterior are now marked by a three-inch recess of the infill panel). This strategy restricts the natural light entering the un-air-conditioned gallery mostly to windows along the interior court of the U-shaped plan, light that is filtered by the deep overhang of the porch roof which wraps the interior court. Functionally, this gesture provides long blank interior walls for exhibit space, but more importantly, combined with the minimal openings at the short end walls and the use of roller shades, it enables a subtle and delicate manipulation of light—beautifully exploited in a recent temporary installation by artist Robert Irwin. (FP&C is now collaborating with Irwin on a permanent installation to be housed at the old post hospital.)

Another minor departure from the original structure was the modification of the porch construction. Where the half-gabled end elevation of the porches had been enclosed with horizontal siding, FP&C left the area entirely open to allow the line of the roof to read more clearly while also freeing the porch space. This reductive modification, along with the previously mentioned re-interpretation of the gable vents and windows, is in keeping with Judd's principles of eliminating the superfluous while honoring the simplicity of the original piece and was therefore deemed by both owner and architect as an improvement over what came before.

Gutzler is effusive in his appreciation for the contributions brought by contractor James Cook of Alpine. As any veteran of projects in remote locations knows, it is rare to find someone in such conditions who is not only eminently qualified to handle the difficult aspects of minimalist construction but also truly committed to executing the work to a high level of quality. Gutzler is equally complimentary of the Chinati Foundation Director Marianne Stockebrand and her contributions. With her intimate understanding of Judd's intentions for the development of Chinati, she served as an invaluable sounding board for the design team's efforts.

The theme of subtle variations of individual pieces within the sameness of the whole is eloquently expressed in Judd's 15 Untitled Works in Concrete and 100 Untitled Works in Mill Aluminum, as well as in the original master plan of Fort D.A. Russell. Likewise, the concept of "keep it simple" – extolled by FP&C's founding partner O'Neil Ford – couldn't be more apropos here. In this project, the designers have woven together both ideas masterfully to support Judd's mission while at the same time enhancing the pilgrim's journey.

The writer is a principal of Rhotenberry Wellen Architects in Midland.

Christ Church

by DONNA KACMAR, AIA

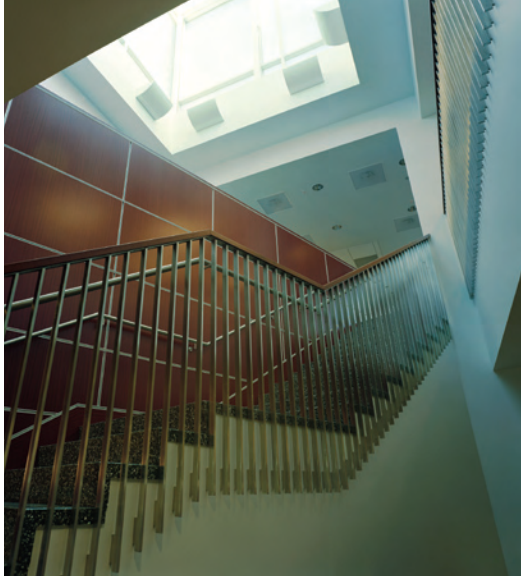
PROJECT Mixed-Use Project for Christ Church Cathedral, Houston
CLIENT Christ Church Cathedral and Episcopal Diocese of Texas
ARCHITECT Leo A Daly/LAN + PageSoutherlandPage, A Joint Venture
DESIGN TEAM Lawrence W. Speck, FAIA; Steve Parker, AIA; Melanie Starman Bash, AIA; John Stultz, AIA; Joan Albert; Richard Arave, AIA
CONTRACTOR Tellepsen
CONSULTANTS Haynes Whaley (structural); Mathis Group (project management); Landtech Consultants (civil); Lockwood, Andrews, & Newnam (MEP); Clark Condon (landscape); Worrell Design Group (food service)
PHOTOGRAPHER Timothy Hursley

RESOURCES **MASONRY UNITS:** St. Joe Brick Works; **GLAZED MASONRY UNITS:** Elgin Butler; **GLASS:** Craftsman Fabricated Glass; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** Vistawall; **TILE:** Daltile; **TERRAZZO:** National Terrazzo Tile & Marble; **ALUMINUM CANOPY:** Avadek

The new additions and renovations at Christ Church Cathedral bring together many functions and offer a civic approach to Episcopal ministries on two energetic blocks of downtown Houston. Completed last December at a cost of $19.1 million, the project encompasses 201,102 square feet of new or renovated space. The work complements Christ Church's role in the community and extends its ability to provide a range of services.

A joint venture of Leo A Daly LAN + Page Southerland Page, the building design was completed in eight months yet the project took much longer for the client to conceive. In 2000, the congregation of Christ Church Cathedral started developing goals for the next 50 years. After a year and a half of testing and refining six "bold goals," the church's long-range planning committee translated the ideas into a building program and then began the process of assembling property directly east of the cathedral.

In 2003, the church commissioned the joint venture to design a master plan that included new facilities for an outreach center, the Diocesan Center, and a parking garage. Together, these three pieces have enabled the church to expand services available to its congregation and the general public, especially people living on the downtown streets. Even the new garage serves a varied clientele by providing paid parking for people going to the courthouse or baseball stadium when not in use by the congregation. Joe Reynolds, the dean of the cathedral, recounts his predecessor, Milton Richardson, as saying that a downtown church needed three things—"excellent preaching, fine music, and free parking."



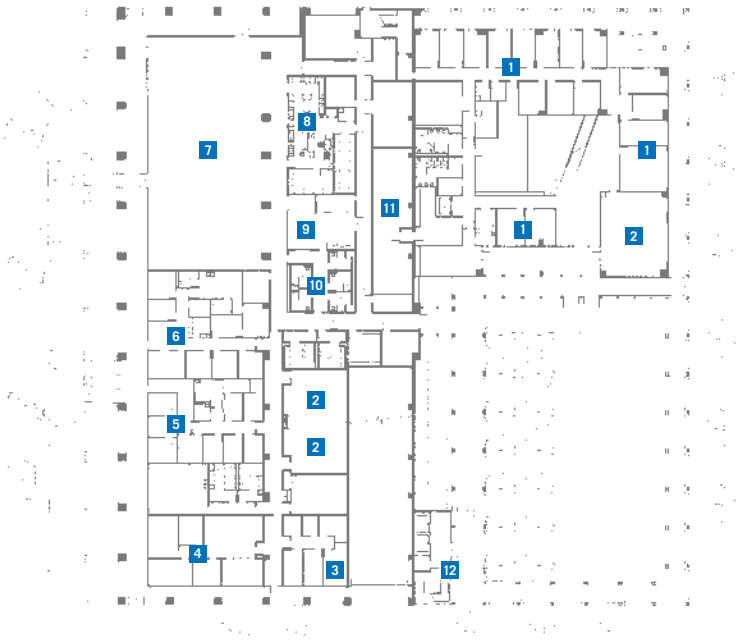
The Diocesan Center, an entity separate from Christ Church, is the administrative headquarters for the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas that includes 160 churches spread across an area that stretches from the Louisiana border to Austin and from Tyler to Matagorda. The offices and meeting rooms, resource centers, and records housed within the center support multiple Diocesan programs, foundations, and members.

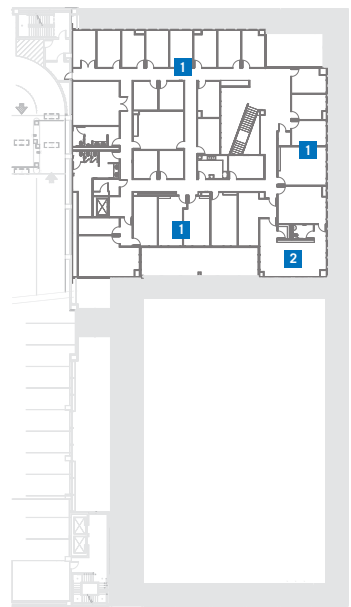
Determining the program for the outreach center took additional time, including 12 weeks of panel discussions in which church members and several invited nonprofit groups considered services that would assist the homeless population of downtown Houston. As a result of those discussions, Christ Church's pastoral outreach was focused on providing services such as meals, showers, and laundry, which would allow church members to become personally acquainted with individuals living on the streets. Those one-on-one relationships would then enable church members to guide homeless individuals toward other professional assistance, such as mental health services, which the panel discussions identified as having the greatest positive impact on the street population.

The outreach center, the Diocesan Center, and the garage are positioned on the east half of the two-block Christ Church complex. The west block houses the cathedral, hall, a south-facing courtyard, music halls, rehearsals rooms, as well as the church's existing administrative offices. A few areas of the west block were renovated (including having an entire floor removed) and a new contextual brick-clad administration building (McGehee Hall) was added, along with a second-floor, glass-and-steel skybridge. McGehee Hall also contains a youth center on the third floor in a large vaulted space.

The new east block uses a more modern architectural vocabulary, and is also organized around a south-facing courtyard (described by TSA Design Award juror Brigette Shim as "in effect a gift, not only to the program of this building but to a denser neighborhood.") at the corner of Texas and San Jacinto on the southwest corner. The outreach center is on the north face of the block with the parking garage above. The Diocesan Center has its own identity and separate entrance, and sits on the southeast section of the block.

The concrete-frame, three-story parking garage, with 350 spaces for the congregation and public use, is wrapped with alternating panels of laminated glass and brick that fill the garage with natural light. A direct connection between the garage and the Diocesan Center is provided on the second level of the parking structure; other users can take the galvanized steel tube-frame fire stair down to the courtyard level to enter the garden, church or outreach center beyond.





GROUND FLOOR PLAN (LEFT)
1 DIOCESE OFFICES
2 CONFERENCE ROOM
3 BRIGID'S HOPE
4 NEW HOPE HOUSING
5 CATHEDRAL HEALTH MINISTRIES
6 COMPASS
7 THE BEACON
8 KITCHEN
9 LAUNDRY
10 HYGIENE AREA
11 STORAGE
12 PARKING GARAGE ENTRANCE

SECOND FLOOR PLAN (RIGHT)
1 DIOCESE OFFICES
2 BISHOP'S OFFICE

The John S. Dunn Outreach Center is located on the street level, tucked below the garage, and can be accessed through the courtyard, underneath a covered walkway and past a gurgling fountain, or from the building's north side. The courtyard entrance is used primarily by the many people who volunteer their time each month. People seeking services enter from the north side of the block where an arcade with ceiling fans provides a shaded place to socialize and rest. The arcade is separated from the public sidewalk by a layer of greenery that encourages each group to feel comfortable in their space. The largest space in the outreach facility is given over to the Beacon, which is equipped with five individual shower rooms, a laundry dropoff, a commercial kitchen, and a large dining space where volunteers serve hot meals. Though designed for durability and heavy use, the architects specified elegant glass wall tile in the shower rooms and colorful, glazed masonry units in the dining space. The two exterior walls of glass provide natural light and a visual connection to the city (which, according to the architects, helps alleviate the sensation of being "trapped").

The Dunn Center also provides separate office and conference spaces for other nonprofits that are autonomous but have varying connections to Christ Church. Services such as mental health counseling, services for women after incarceration, housing, and job training and placement services are all housed in the building and have a direct physical connection to the Beacon, as well as a separate street entrance. While enjoying needed hygiene services and a hot meal, interested clients can be directed to these other services available on site.

The two-story Diocesan Center is rendered with large expanses of glass shaded by deep horizontal louvers and has a more formal relationship to the courtyard and garden. Most staff offices look out to the street and the buffer-zone gardens that wrap the east and south edges of the block. The entrance foyer has terrazzo floors and a stairway that leads up to the second floor. A large four-sided lantern spills daylight into the entry, stair, landing, and hallways to give the building a light and bright feel. Ceilings are held away from the glass storefront, allowing more filtered natural light to fill the offices. The first-floor conference room and second-floor Bishop's office have three sides of glass that overlook the serene courtyard and the city skyline beyond. The placement and orientation of the Diocesan Center strikes a balance between the contemplative garden and the active city, which mimics the role of the Diocese as being balanced between internal reflection and civic extension.

This award-winning mixed-use project teaches architects about putting together a good building, while the commendable efforts of the client team present a valuable lesson to everyone about how to be a good citizen. The project also demonstrates that refined urban design and committed shareholders are essential components to creating a truly livable city where responsibilities are shared by all citizens for the good of the whole community.

Donna Kacmar, AIA, is principal of Architect Works, Inc. and associate professor of the University of Houston's Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture.

Farley Studio

by RICHARD WINTERSOLE, AIA

PROJECT Farley Studio, Cleburne
CLIENT Kyle and Angela Farley
ARCHITECT M.J. Neal Architects
DESIGN TEAM M.J. Neal, AIA
PHOTOGRAPHERS Viviane Vives; M.J. Neal, AIA

RESOURCES STRUCTURAL INSULATED PANELS: Steel SIP Fabricators;
TILE: Daltile

After a chance encounter in a Fort Worth bar, things turned out pretty well for Kyle and Angela Farley. It was there the bartender introduced Kyle, a golfer and artist, to MJ Neal, AIA, who just happened to be teaching a design studio at the University of Texas at Arlington. The Farley's owned property outside of Cleburne, about a half-hour's drive south of Fort Worth, and wanted to build a residence and painting studio. The Austin architect was happy to oblige the Farleys by designing a place for Kyle to spread out and paint.

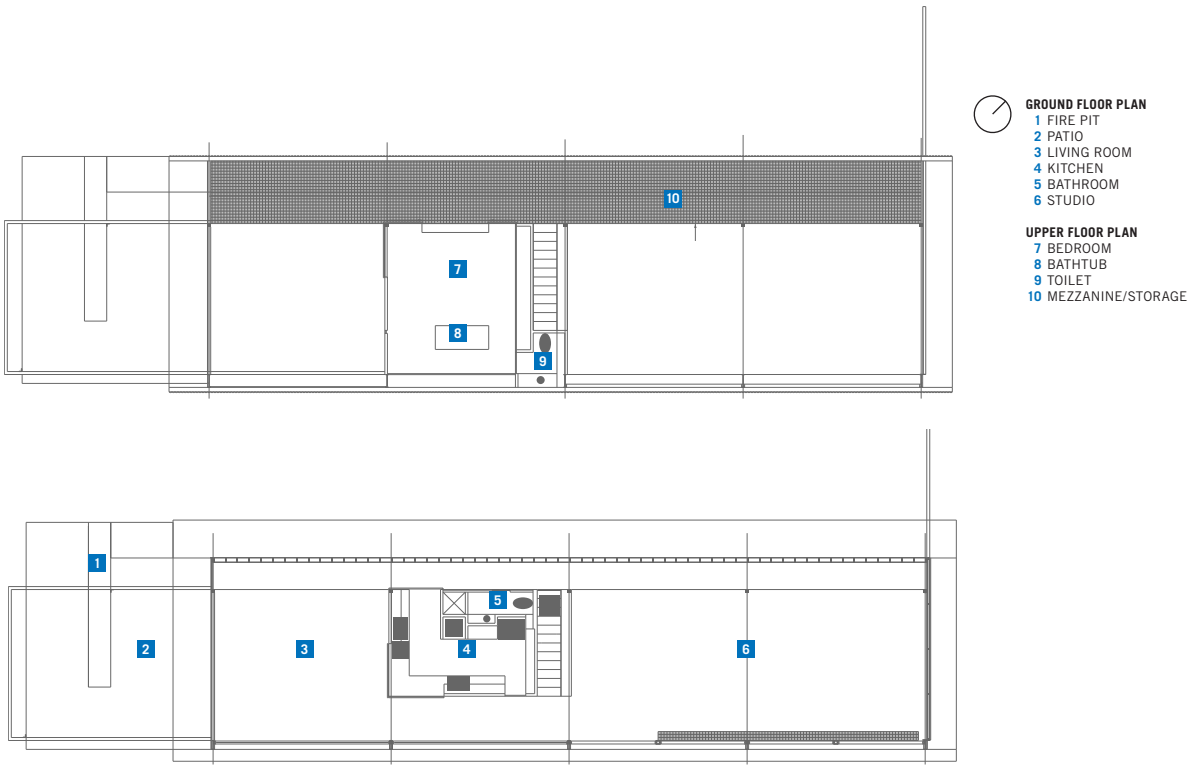
Although less than two acres, the site has a distinctly rural feel, being at the end of a long, winding road. Upon passing through the last stand of large post oaks, the dirt drive leads to an existing pond and fields and sky beyond. It's the sort of generic north central Texas countryside where houses coexist with storage buildings, fencing, and livestock. During the day, wildlife and wildflowers provide a focus for the eye. One can also see – and feel – the weather changing. At nighttime, darkness envelops the landscape beneath a big expanse of sky. Angela, an accountant who commutes 150 miles each day, looks forward to the respite of the peaceful destination, notwithstanding the occasional firework salvo from the not-quite-distant-enough yahoos. Apart from broadcasting native wildflower seeds and thinking about a future installation of artwork, the Farleys have made a conscious decision to leave the natural palette as they found it.

To respect the site and accommodate a challenging budget, the goal was to simplify. The program consists of only the essentials—living room, kitchen, powder

room, and studio on the ground floor with a bedroom and bath above. Equally important was a simple, strong design concept. According to Neal, "If you have a strong concept and the idea is simple, the project transcends." And transcend it does. By day, the building is a straightforward, linear metal-and-glass box that shares the site with only the existing native vegetation, pond, stock tank, and windmill. At night, however, it appears to levitate and float above the landscape.

Simple materials, employed conceptually, express individual building systems. A slot in the concrete slab serves as a fire pit (set on axis with the existing stock tank). Another slot within the studio space collects the sand and gravel Kyle uses in his art. At the back porch, steps cast into the slab overhang slightly to reveal the edge. Atop the slab stands a prefabricated steel superstructure reminiscent of an off-the-shelf metal building, which imparts a rhythm and reference to experience the interior spaces. Six-inch-thick enameled-metal structural insulated panels (SIPs) are affixed with screws to the steel structure for enclosure and protection. A skin of corrugated, galvanized steel shields the structure from the elements with no apparent trim.

Translucent polycarbonate panels are attached to wood studs on the east and north side walls and soffits. The translucency of the panels creates a delightful ambiguity. At different times of the day they allow light in and/or out—sometimes they seem opaque, sometimes not. Suspended from a cantilevered steel beam, a sliding panel opens the studio to the outdoors and allows Kyle to work at a larger scale than before. The panels change personality whether they are lit from the front or back,



and panels in the same space can be lit from different directions at the same time. This performance, a visual ode to polycarbonate, is best experienced as dusk slips into night.

On the second floor, bar grating appears to be suspended in space, and defines another slot for circulation, storage, and north-side soffit light filter. Like the polycarbonate panels, the grating also manifests multiple readings. Aside from its usage, the material has different degrees of opacity depending upon the angle of view. As handy storage, everything is visible from the side, above, and below. The west wall is glazed from top to bottom in blue-tinted solar glass, imbuing the sky and landscape with a sort of Oz sensation minus the Munchkins. The same glass is used on the south side and is shielded by the corrugated, galvanized steel skin. Long, low windows on the south side reveal views of knees, ankles, and nearby vegetation. A secondary steel structure defines the west patio and fire pit area, and frames the starry night. Plans for a suspended metal screen will allow Kyle and Angela to fine-tune this exterior space.

In the middle of the building, separating the studio from the living room, stands the metaphorical Chinese box. The box sits as an object in space. Originally designed as cedar but constructed from southern yellow pine plywood, the Farleys' Chinese box contains the kitchen, powder room, and stairs on the first floor, with the master suite above. According to Neal, the ancient Chinese crafted puzzle-like containers to hold valuables accessed by sliding panels or secret compartments. Here, sliding panels reveal or conceal the kitchen counter. Other openings slide, pivot, or pocket as desired to open or close spaces. Not only does the box contain the Farleys important possessions, it also contains air—the 600-sq.-ft. box is the only mechanically air-conditioned space. When opened, the conditioned air bleeds out; when closed, it stays in the box. Conserving energy is important to Neal, thus the SIPs serve as a thermal umbrella and air is encouraged to circulate through the building from end to end. The Farleys plan to add a large, low-velocity fan to improve the air circulation. When ambient air breezes through the home, the Farleys and their guests are truly in touch with the natural world.

The Design Awards jury admired the building's relation to the landscape, and especially appreciated the nighttime transformation. "The evening view of this project," remarked Brigette Shim, "where you read it as a metal box almost levitating off of the landscape, was powerful as an image because it talked about how the transformation of the building from day to night… and the way the glazing has a mute, almost solid quality, and how that transforms at night to allow this metal box to levitate in the landscape was really poetic." The jury also praised the architect for his appropriate use of modest materials to compose, in the words of juror Peter Bohlin, FAIA, "a terrific building," adding, "The quality of light is terrific. The detailing is pretty darn flawless. It's emotionally compelling. We admired it greatly and there was no question that this should receive an award from the first moment we saw the building."

Richard Wintersole, AIA, practices architecture in Aledo.

Frame/Harper House

BY BEN KOUSH

PROJECT Frame/Harper House Renovation, Houston
CLIENT Dana Harper
ARCHITECT Stern and Bucek Architects
DESIGN TEAM David C. Bucek, Jr., AIA; William F. Stern, FAIA; Daniel Hall, Henry Kwon
CONTRACTOR Eaves Construction
CONSULTANTS Michael Hardin & Associates (roofing)
PHOTOGRAPHER Hester + Hardaway

RESOURCES UNIT SKYLIGHTS: Naturalite

Genius sometimes strikes quickly. According to one of those quintessential Texas stories, architect Harwood Taylor designed his residential masterpiece for childhood friend David Frame and his wife Gloria during a flight from Midland to Houston in Frame's private plane in 1958. Frame recently confirmed that story, adding that the only change from the sketches was the omission of translucent marble panels proposed by Taylor to allow more light into the solid-walled front elevations. Taylor and J. Victor Neuhaus III founded Neuhaus & Taylor in 1956. The firm (later renamed 3D/I) is now remembered, if at all, for the blandly efficient office buildings churned out in the 1970s. In the first decade of his career, before he went corporate, Taylor designed a series of remarkable modern suburban houses in Houston that culminated with the Frame House.

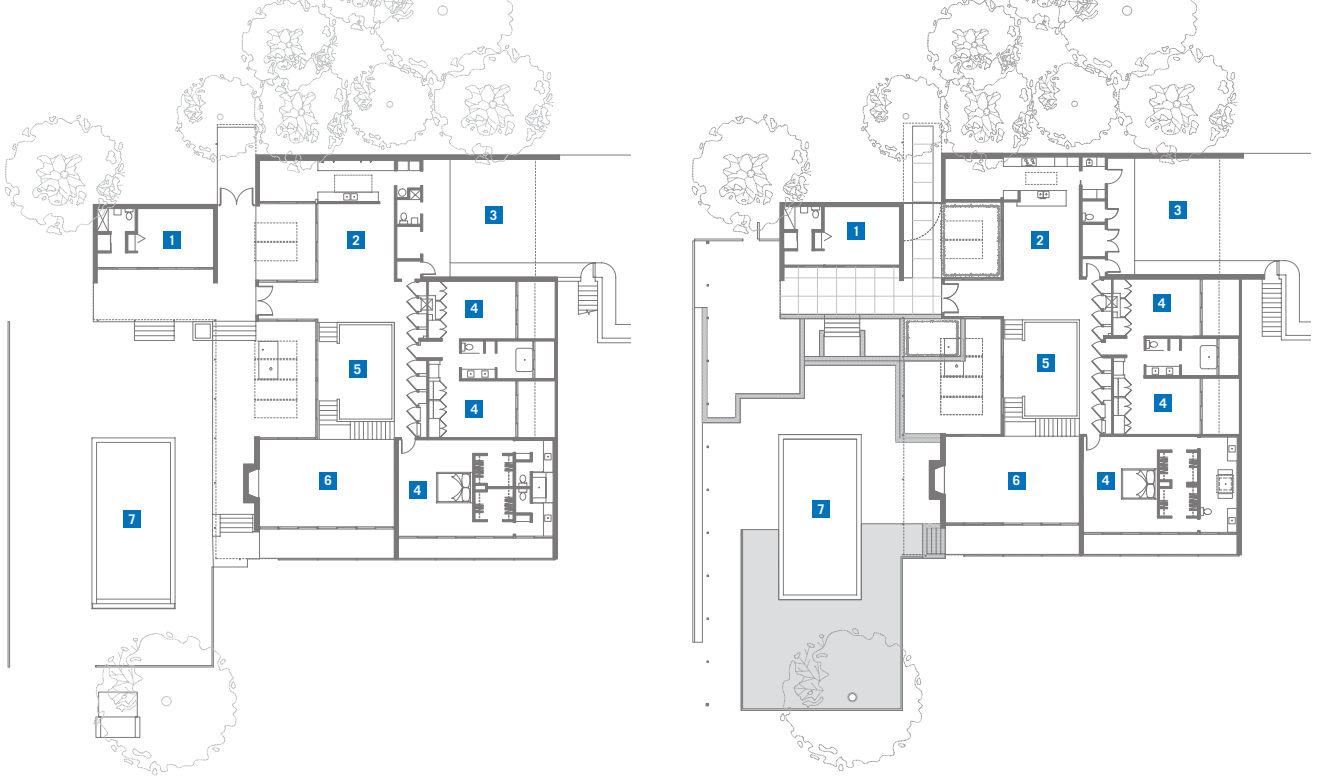
The Frame House is exceptional because of the way Taylor developed its section to take advantage of the secluded site in the Memorial area, which slopes steeply down to Buffalo Bayou. As one moves through the house, the cream-colored terrazzo floor starts to descend, first to an intermediate sitting area and then, by way of cantilevered terrazzo steps, to the family room with its 18-foot-tall ceilings and a two-story wall of glass facing the gray-green bayou forest beyond. Landscape architect Fred Buxton designed the plantings that used to hang from numerous baskets and cascade over multi-level terraces alongside the house. Shortly after its completion in July 1960, Charlotte Tapley, the home furnishings editor of the *Houston Chronicle*, reported

how Gloria Frame worked closely with Buxton and "spent six weeks before they moved in May supervising and planting hundreds of plants," so many that she declared "I'd be afraid to total up the number." As Tapley further noted, "Petite brownette [sic] Gloria is a little amazed by her own home."

Taylor's design was recognized immediately for its architectural excellence. In May 1960 it was featured on the Contemporary Arts Association's Modern House Tour IX, it was published extensively in the *Houston Chronicle, Houston Post* and nationally in *House & Garden*. In February 1961 the house was featured on the Museum of Natural History Guild's Kitchen Tour. That same year TSA gave the Frame House a merit award for design.

The Frames lived in the house and maintained it in good condition for about 20 years until they sold it to its second owners, who subsequently made many insensitive alterations. They removed the terraced landscaping and painted the entire house white, including its dark-stained walnut paneling and load-bearing walls of pink Mexican brick. They filled sunken terrazzo soaking bathtubs in children's and parents' bathrooms with concrete. They removed the lacy, cast-plaster screens separating the living and dining rooms designed by Gloria Frame's father, Joseph Klein, and the unusual turquoise St. Charles steel kitchen cabinets with their little shiny stainless steel legs. In the main living areas they covered over a series of recessed light coves in the ceiling depicted in superb photographs by Ezra Stoller, which were published in *House & Garden* in September 1961. They also replaced the original copper roof flashing with galvanized steel flashing that had rusted to the point of failure by 2004 when the house's third owner, Dana Harper, persuaded them to sell it.

Harper, an artist and native Houstonian, had been living in New York for several years and was planning to buy a house in Texas to spend more time with his large, extended family. He despaired at the thought of Houston's mostly undistinguished housing stock until



1960 FLOOR PLAN (LEFT)
1 GUEST HOUSE
2 DINING ROOM
3 CARPORT
4 BEDROOM
5 LIVING ROOM
6 FAMILY ROOM
7 POOL

2007 FLOOR PLAN (RIGHT)
1 GUEST HOUSE
2 DINING ROOM
3 CARPORT
4 BEDROOM
5 LIVING ROOM
6 FAMILY ROOM
7 POOL

a friend told him about a uncompromising, modern "mystery house" languishing on street of banal 1960s-era tract houses. Although the Frame House had been uninhabited for several years prior to Harper's visit, he was immediately taken by it and envisioned its eventual restoration. He commissioned Stern & Bucek Architects to assist in the process after speaking with Hilary Crady, one of the Frame children who had grown up in the house and who had collaborated with the firm during the recent restoration of the Menil House (see page 56). As with its construction, the restoration of the Frame House was a team effort. Harper also worked closely with contractor Carl Eaves of Eaves Construction who used copies of the original drawings to reconstruct nearly all of the subtle architectural details that had disappeared.

Stern & Bucek brought the technical expertise the architects had gained from their work on the Menil House and other restoration projects. To remove the white paint but not damage the soft brick they used a solvent they first discovered when researching methods to restore similarly delicate surfaces at Rice University's Herzstein Hall. Inside the house, the solvent had to be sprayed on and removed by high-pressure water jets, so they erected barriers to protect surfaces not being treated and to direct the flow of solvent-laden spray from the walls to areas where it could be vacuumed into holding tanks. When the architects began stripping the walnut paneling they discovered after removing the paint, much to their horror, that the wood had been bleached before it was painted and was beyond salvaging. All the walnut paneling the visitor sees in the living areas is new.

Restoration of the roof was similarly laborious. An inappropriately applied commercial roofing membrane was carefully peeled away along with the rusted galvanized steel gravel stops. A new four-ply coal tar built-up roof was installed, which was consistent with what Neuhaus & Taylor had specified in 1958. The original architectural drawings were used to reconstruct the copper flashing pieces. Although the old roof membrane itself was well designed, the provisions for drainage were inadequate for Houston's heavy rains. New, larger scuppers were installed and the existing internal roof drains were cleaned of debris and given new covers to prevent future clogging.

What to do about the gutted kitchen was a vexing question. The architectural drawings and archival photographs clearly showed the configuration of the missing St. Charles steel cabinets. However the company (now called Charlestowne Kitchen and Bath) had long since abandoned both modern design and production in steel. The architects proposed fabricating steel cabinets to match but found the cost prohibitive. Finally, walnut-veneer cabinets raised on legs to match the originals were devised as a compromise. Another problem was how to reconcile the old enclosed kitchen layout with Harper's desire not to be separated from guests while cooking for dinner parties. After much debate everyone agreed that they would leave the kitchen open and adapt the new layout as closely as possible to Taylor's design.

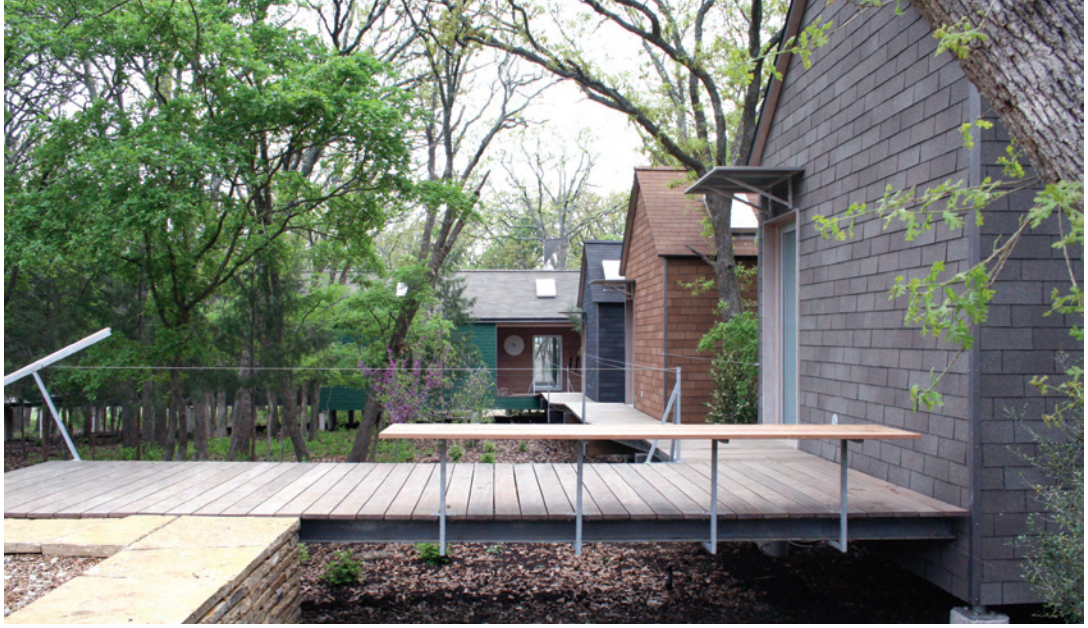
One intriguing aspect of this rehabilitation was the sensitivity with which all the team members approached it. Almost every intervention was discussed and examined sometimes to the point of exhaustion before action was taken. This extreme care is apparent to all who visit the finished house.

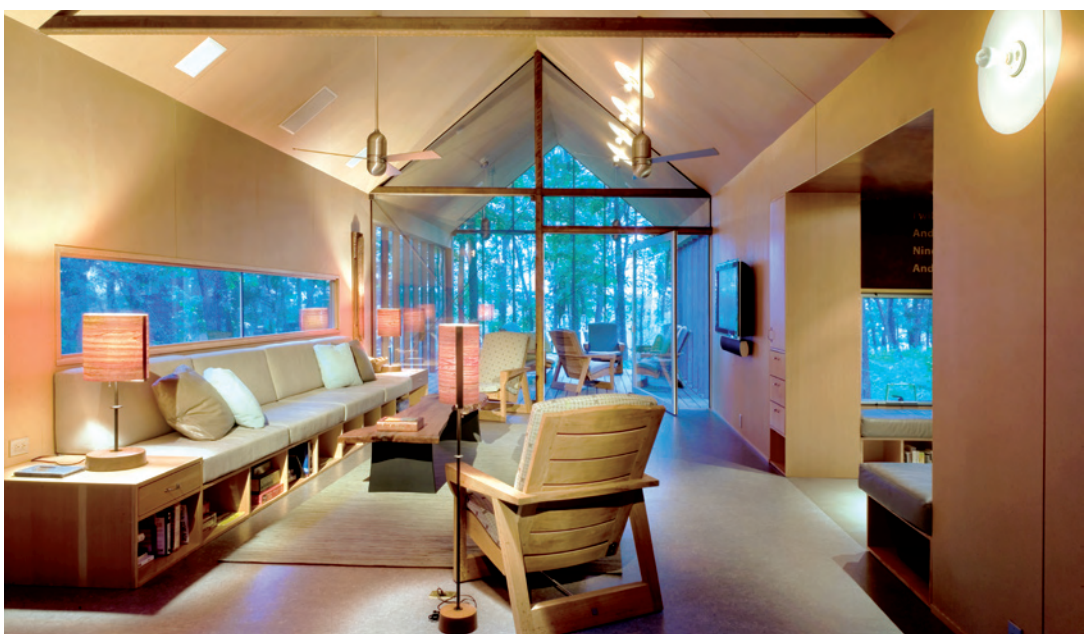
Ben Koush works with DMJM Rottet in Houston.

House at Wind Point

by MICHAEL MALONE, AIA

PROJECT House at Wind Point, Hunt County
CLIENT Garrett and Cecilia Boone
ARCHITECT Max Levy Architect
DESIGN TEAM Max Levy, FAIA; Marc McCollom, Assoc. AIA; Jason Smith; Matt Fajkus; Clint Brister
CONTRACTOR Ben Garrett
CONSULTANTS Walker Engineering (structural); NGL Design (interiors); Rosa Finsley and Redenta's (landscape)
PHOTOGRAPHER Charles Davis Smith, AIA; Max Levy, FAIA
RESOURCES METAL DOORS AND FRAMES: U.S. Aluminum; **UNIT SKYLIGHTS:** Skyline





I will arise and go now,
And go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there,
Of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there,
A hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade

And I shall have some peace there,
For peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning
To where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer,
And noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now,
For always night and day
I hear lake water lapping
With low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway
Or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

It's not difficult to imagine William Butler Yeats sitting in the sublime inglenook of Max Levy's House at Wind Point composing his poem *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*. The words that client Garrett Boone memorized as a boy are affixed to the enclosing walls of the nook just off the living room. Yeats himself would have found this a worthy place for lyric exposition.

Having lost our connection to poetry in this visually saturated media age, we might be reluctant to think of carefully crafted verse as a source of aesthetic inspiration for conjuring up images for our built environment. It's easy to feel snide about someone putting forth an idea in lyric poetry as the basis and guide for art, even more so architecture, but very hard to ignore that idea when it is so clearly present in the making of an exceptional building.

The notion of a second home as a place of retreat from the crushing travails of the world may be the worst possible cliché, but still the one so many architects embrace when explaining the design efforts for a house placed accessible to nature. The discourse explaining the design is often limited to how "natural materials" (wood, stone, etc.) and romantic notions of composition create a frame for urban man to escape into nature and become a part of it with the goal of cynically restoring his soul so he can return to the real world and carry on. Houses such as these are at their very best when interweaving the lives of the inhabitants into communion with their sites, with the unique landscape, and the act of dwelling, not visiting.

The idea of interweaving a house (and a life) into its site is hardly new, but it's often an idea better stated than executed. Max Levy's House at Wind Point is clearly an exception. Paired with thoughtful clients in love with a wooded lake-front site and eager not to force their house within that rustic context, Levy had the opportunity to literally explode the program of the lake house and artfully insert the component parts reassembled as a coherent plan into the slope and trees. Consistent with Levy's much-recognized work, thoughtfully crafted in service to an optimistic humanism, Wind Point provided a place worthy of his best efforts. A raised path of ipe decking overarched by tree branches and sun-cast leaf patterns, connects the gabled, single-volume cabins into a plan of coherent circulation where each small building is a study in miniaturized space rich in detail. Set among

SITE PLAN
1 MAIN LODGE
2 CABIN
3 PARKING
4 BOATHOUSE

the closely spaced trees, these forms seem much larger and more portentous than they actually are, evoking cathedrals and Gothic tracery despite the opacity of their massing and rigorous dedication to their small scale. Verticality is not a characteristic often associated with modest one-story buildings, but Levy has conjured up what his clients and their guests most often characterize as a cathedral, a fitting image for a building that so clearly heightens the awareness of its site.

The painstakingly organized plan is clear—a long walkway connecting a modest arrival court with its simple garage *cum* boat shed leading to the other six modest structures, cabins really. As glimpsed from the entry drive, the garage is the first structure visible on the site and acts as the primer for all of the buildings in the compound. Further, it is the only one that is not concealed by trees. A path of raised walks connects the motor court, the guest cabins and the main lodge with its wind vane marking a sheltering porch. The straightforward system of raised paths in no way obscures the delight and surprise of moving through the site and experiencing views into the surrounding forest between the buildings. Along the raised walk visitors pass three rhythmically spaced guest cabins, each sheathed in a different color composition shingle. From the main building – containing living, kitchen, dining and utility under a continuous gable roof – connecting walks pinwheel off to a bunkhouse and the detached master cabin. Walking along these paths increases the awareness of just how carefully sited the structures are—one can touch trees from every point along the walk, not just look at them. Integral to Levy's planning for the house was this very conscious effort to retain all the trees possible and in the end only one was lost. Equal care was expended by the contractor to ensure that construction activities didn't carelessly undermine the planning. The result is a composed complex of buildings interwoven within the landscape.

The main lodge is the most elaborate and densely detailed building in the complex. Open from end to end, the narrow, linear building is bookended by screened porches and opens full height into its gable roof. Here the sense of verticality is most clear—the screens are framed by slender fir columns that virtually disappear amid the backdrop of trees outside. One's gaze is always upward, toward the ceilings or into the canopy of trees.

The finishes are simple—utilitarian three-tab shingles for exterior cladding that mimic the texture of the trees' bark and aluminum pivoting windows and doors. Projecting screen boxes allow the pivoting windows to open freely in the direction of prevailing breezes. The cabin interiors are all faced in clear finished MDF, which brings a luminosity and texture like leather, further completing the sense that one is in a camp, a tent really. Linoleum floors and fir cabinetry contrast with the simple palette and assume a luster and warmth but doesn't detract from the focus on the windows and views.

The architect and his clients have fulfilled the promise of Yeat's great poem, and as a visitor I could "hear it in the deep heart's core." Weeks after my visit I hear it still.

The writer directs the Michael Malone Studio within WKMC Architects.

Menil House

by BRUCE C. WEBB

PROJECT Menil House Renovation and Conservation, Houston
CLIENT Menil Foundation
ARCHITECT Stern and Bucek Architects
DESIGN TEAM William F. Stern, FAIA; David C. Bucek, Jr., AIA; Daniel Hall
CONTRACTOR R.B. Ratcliff & Associates
CONSULTANTS Haynes Whaley (structural); Walter P Moore (civil); CHPA (MEP); Jane Anderson Curtis (landscape); Hilary Crady (fabric and furnishings); Source Design (paint); Ellen Beasley (architectural historian); Michael Hardin (roofing)
PHOTOGRAPHER Hester + Hardaway

RESOURCES **MASONRY UNITS:** D'Hanis Brick and Tile; **UNIT SKYLIGHTS:** Naturalite; **TILE:** Daltile; **CORK FLOORING:** Dodge-Regupol

The house Philip Johnson designed for John and Dominique de Menil in the Briarwood subdivision introduced the International Style to Houston's opulent and architecturally conservative River Oaks neighborhood. The high-profile house, completed in 1951, helped to spur interest in the new, minimalist, post-war architecture engendered by Mies van der Rohe, providing opportunities for a generation of talented young architects that included Howard Barnestone, Harwood Taylor, Anderson Todd and Hugo Neuhaus to season the domestic landscape of the culturally nascent city.

Thanks to a methodical $3.3 million restoration undertaken by the Menil Foundation, this landmark of Houston's domestic architecture has been brought back to life by Houston's Stern and Bucek Architects, not simply as Johnson designed it, but as the Menils lived in it.

Johnson was finishing work on the much more iconic glass house he was building for himself in New Canaan, Conn., when he began his work for the Menils. His design – a one-story, flat-roofed, 5,600-square-foot house – comprised a long, central rectangle with a large, inset outdoor garden court around which the living spaces of the house were organized in an open plan. A block of bedrooms for the family's children was attached to the back and a service extension with kitchen, laundry, and carport projected to the west. The singular feature of the house is the 160-foot-long brick wall on the front of the house broken only by a three-panel glass entryway and two double-pane horizontal awning windows that admit natural light into the kitchen. Johnson assiduously sited

the house on the wooded three-lot property, setting it back from San Felipe Road and thus giving it a serene, leafy natural enclosure.

Unlike the absolute Platonic purity of his glass house, the Menil house was more a hybrid both in its construction and its formal composition. The Menils came at the architect with a complex program that frequently changed and included accommodating a growing art collection and the need to accommodate parties for the international cadre of cultural and political figures whom the Menils cultivated. The client's agenda could be sometimes complex and ambiguous, asking for the high style of the East Coast cultural elite while cautioning against ostentation and rigid formalism. Even more contrary, Dominique de Menil didn't intend to suppress her own eclectic tastes in art, furniture and decoration. Johnson had predictably recommended using Miesian furniture to finish out the seamless aesthetic he had in mind, but she turned the job of completing the interiors over to Charles James, a New York fashion designer known for his sculpted ball gowns and lavish fabrics, and whose tastes and sensibilities couldn't have been more different from the modernist party line. James, in his only foray into designing domestic interiors, provided counterpointal quirkiness. As might be expected, Johnson was not impressed. He remained unenthusiastic about the house and was reluctant to have it photographed or published.

The Menils later undertook two alterations to the house—converting two bays of the carport into offices for their art collection and adding a billowy canvas canopy mounted on the roof to cover the garden courtyard.

FLOOR PLAN 1951 (LEFT)
1 CARPORT
2 BEDROOM
3 PLAYROOM
4 KITCHEN
5 LIVINGROOM
6 COURTYARD
7 STUDY

FLOOR PLAN 1997 (CENTER)
1 CARPORT
2 BEDROOM
3 DINING ROOM
4 KITCHEN
5 LIVINGROOM
6 COURTYARD
7 STUDY
8 COLLECTIONS ROOM

FLOOR PLAN 2004 (RIGHT)
1 CARPORT
2 BEDROOM
3 DINING ROOM
4 KITCHEN
5 LIVINGROOM
6 COURTYARD
7 STUDY
8 COLLECTIONS ROOM

Following Dominque de Menil's death in 1997, the house passed to the Menil Foundation Board of Trustees who elected to restore it and preserve its cultural significance. Working with Stern and Bucek and an extensive team of consultants, the trustees set a goal of conserving the house and its legacy, respecting and maintaining it as it was lived in and the intentional changes made over time. There would be no attempt to recover the original intentions of the architect or to pare the house back to the way it was when first occupied.

Years of neglect and deferred maintenance had resulted in some serious problems, including roof leaks, deteriorating window frames and hardware, old wiring and plumbing, and the plaster ceiling showed considerable damage and staining. With the goal of disturbing the house as little as possible, the architects devised ingenious strategies for hiding their work. Certain walls with their original paint intact were designated as "sacred walls" and were left untouched while those that had been repainted were given new coats of fresh paint exactly matched to the topmost or latest layer. Selected walls that had been covered with fabric, much of it antique velvet, were also preserved or replaced with custom dyed materials. To achieve a precise match of the fabric, the architects consulted with Anne Coleman, a Charles James scholar and former curator of fabrics and textiles at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Having decided to replace the ceiling because of damage from roof leaks, the architects were able to install the new wiring in the ceiling cavity. However, asbestos was found in the acoustical layer of plaster, which needed to be abated—an operation that would introduce moisture and threaten the walls. Simply covering them with protective sheets was deemed inadequate since it might produce a destructive build up of mold and mildew, so the architects had cavity walls constructed around the protected surfaces through which dry air could be circulated from remote dehumidifiers. The scheme worked and the surfaces were undamaged. While the ceiling cavity was exposed, new plumbing lines and roof drains were installed. And because the roof-mounted canopy had been the source of water penetration, a new support system was designed and installed that anchored the canopy frame to the internal steel frame of the house without penetrating the roof membrane.

Some of the floor-to-ceiling cypress window frames had significant rot damage and were repaired or replaced entirely. Also, all the large glass was replaced with tempered glass to meet new safety requirements. A new drainage plan for the three-acre site will ensure that ground water damage to the house will no longer be a problem. And, guided by vintage photographs, landscape architect Jane Curtis restored the semi-tropical garden courtyard.

The architects produced over 50 architectural and technical drawings for the restoration, but the project involved an equal amount of scholarship. In the end, the careful restoration pays homage to the importance of mid-century modern buildings in Houston's architectural heritage. It also recognizes the leading role that the Menils played in advancing Houston's culture.

Bruce C. Webb is a professor in the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture at the University of Houston.

NorthPark Center

by JONATHAN P. ROLLINS, AIA

PROJECT NorthPark Center Expansion, Dallas

ARCHITECT Omniplan

CONTRACTOR Whiting-Turner Contracting Company

CONSULTANTS Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers (civil); Datum Engineers Inc. (structural); Mesa Design Group (landscape); ARJO Engineers (MEP); DeShazo, Tang & Associates Inc. (traffic engineer); Candela (lighting); Schirmer Engineering Corporation (fire protection engineers)

PHOTOGRAPHER Craig Blackmon, FAIA

RESOURCES **CONCRETE TOPPING:** North Texas Bomanite Inc.; **RETROPLATE CONCRETE POLISHING SYSTEM:** Texas Stone & Tile; **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme Brick; **MODIFIED BITUMINOUS MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Firestone Building Products; **PEDESTAL PAVERS:** Wausau Tile Inc.; **SKYLIGHTS:** Naturalite Skylight Systems; **GLASS:** Viracon; **FASCIA AND SOFFIT PANELS:** Alucobond; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Vistawall; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** Vistawall; **TILE (GRIS FOUSSANA LIMESTONE):** Stone Marketing

As a second generation project for both owner and architect, the expansion of NorthPark Center both completes and refines the original design. Built in 1965 for developer Raymond Nasher, the original center was at that time one of the largest climate-controlled retail environments in the world. Architects Harrell and Hamilton (the Dallas firm later became Omniplan) drew inspiration from concepts more common in urban planning than in retail design, organizing a series of nodal points along perpendicular axes.

Simply and elegantly detailed in a mid-century palette of stained and waxed concrete floors, cream-colored brick, and precast concrete double Ts, the broad aisles of the original structure provided a perfect venue for the display of Nasher's impressive collection of twentieth-century sculpture. NorthPark quickly became a premier Dallas retail destination, and received the American Institute of Architects' Award for "Design of the Decade—1960s" as one of the first commercial centers in the U.S. to create space for the display of fine art. In 1992, NorthPark was recognized with the AIA's 25-Year Award for Design Excellence.

In the new million-square-foot expansion for Nasher's daughter Nancy and her husband David Haemisegger, the architects extended the original asymmetrical U-shape and completed the square, creating a new 1.4-acre park space in the center. The new design builds on planning ideas established in the original, and introduces several larger scale program elements, including a 15-screen cinema and a food court. The use of materials and execution of detailing in the expansion

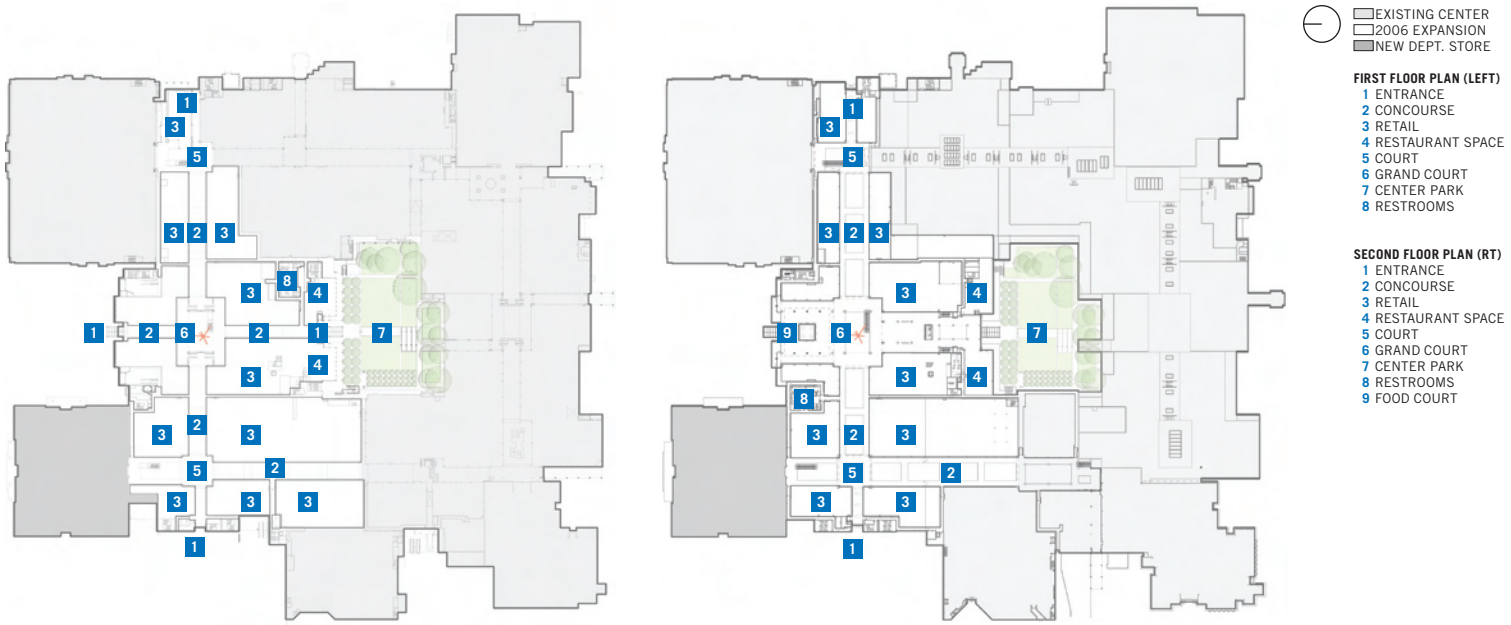
are a logical extension of the original as well, using the same limited palette with new elements and materials introduced at key points and gathering spaces.

The square internal circulation path is enhanced by larger spaces at the corners and at the approximate midpoint of each leg. These spaces, christened "courts" by the architects, modulate the processional experience and provide unique landmarks along the way. Most notable is the new Grand Court, dominated by Mark Di Suvero's monumental sculpture *Ad Astra*. This orange three-story steel sculpture serves as a visual terminus for a busy, new mall entrance where patrons also access the movie theaters. Escalators to the theater lobby are located immediately adjacent, providing dynamic views of the sculpture.

The courts reinforce the idea that procession through the center traverses a sequence of spaces addressed by storefronts, as opposed to a less differentiated space defined only by the storefronts and signage. The courts in the expansion also represent an evolution in the methodology for the display of public art. Where the original construction provided relatively uniform space for a collection kept in constant rotation, courts in the expansion are both demarked and defined by more permanent large-scale pieces like Joel Shapiro's *20 Elements* and the Di Suvero.

Among the new destination spaces is CenterPark, the outdoor court at the core of the complex that includes a multi-level lawn, textural landscaping with native grasses, and linear beds of seasonal color and mature live oaks, as well as Claes Oldenburg's *Corridor Pin, Blue*. Each side of the square provides an opening into the garden, allowing for natural light, views, and visual orientation from deep within the interior. Though currently underpopulated, several restaurants are under construction that are expected to energize this space via outdoor seating along the edges of the garden.

Another new destination space is the food court. Located on the second level, the architecture is com-



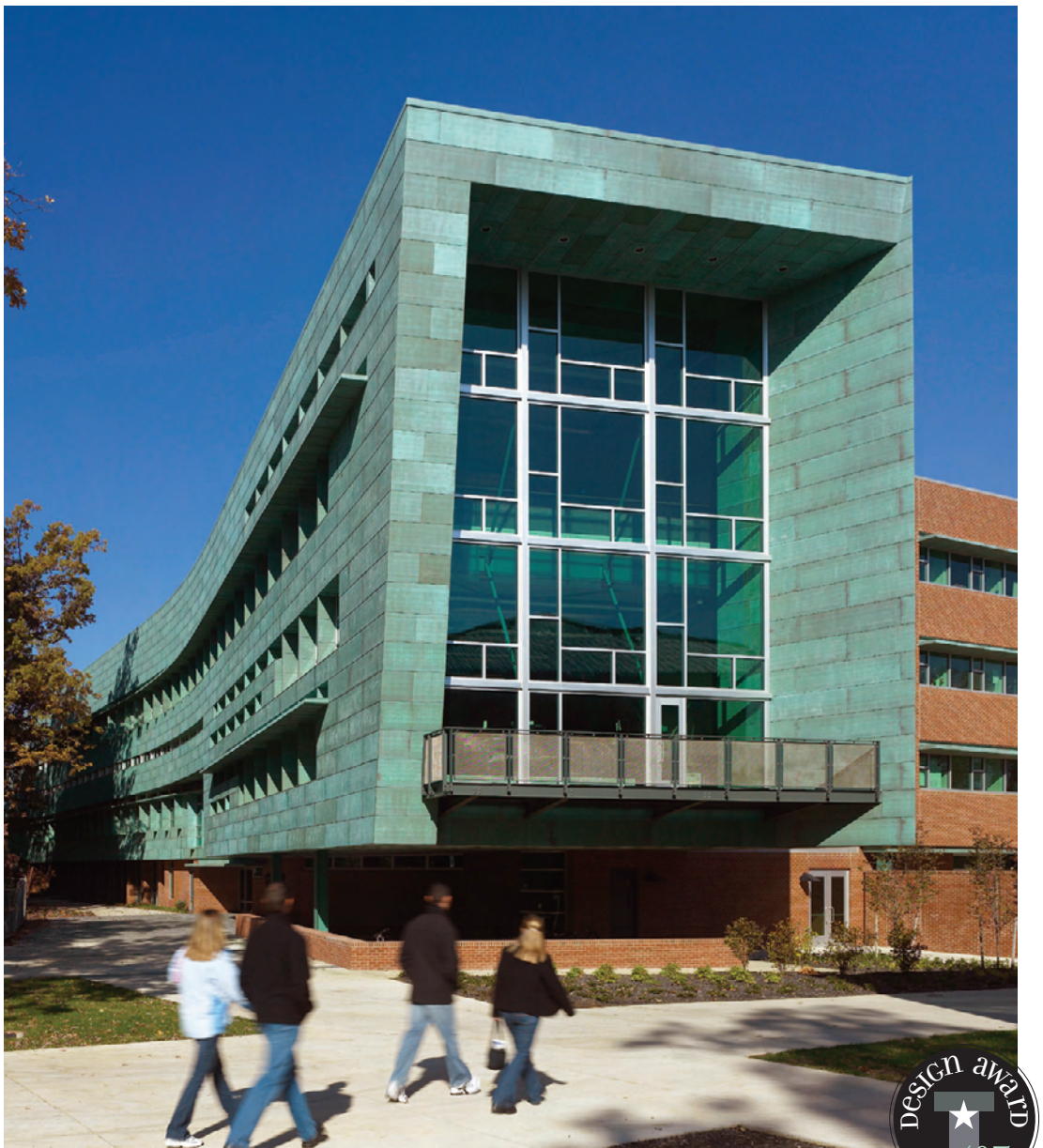
pletely consistent with the conventional retail spaces. Here, the food sellers line two opposing sides of a nearly perfect square, their areas defined by demising columns of cream-colored brick, with consistent-sized signs in a constant horizontal band. A smooth limestone floor and space-defining elements of blond millwork provide a clean, polished, and modern feel. Like the rest of the center, this space benefits from abundant natural light around the perimeter, filtered by the exposed ribs of the roof structure. At the center, a glass atrium opens to the sky and invites outdoor seating in temperate weather. The location of the atrium at the geometric center of the food court, along with balanced day and night illumination, allows the atrium to be read as a vitrine with a constantly changing display.

Though deftly treated, the concrete floors, exposed brick walls, and expressed double Ts of the original construction represented relatively economical construction. The expansion maintains that basic palette, though the double Ts have been replaced by a one-way, cast-in-place system that allowed for greater refinement of the connection details and more variation in their end conditions. This variation is used to great advantage in admitting natural light to the interior by a combination of clerestories and continuous skylights. Daylight is modulated either by the deep ribs of the roof structure or by vertical fins. This treatment allows for abundant controlled light, and creates constantly changing patterns over the course of the day. The architects realized early in the design process that computer models would not provide a sufficiently accurate sense of the play of light, and elected to study the daylighting elements with physical models as well.

Ceilings in the expansion are remarkably refined for a retail environment. Natural and artificial illumination, mechanical systems, and sprinkler networks are well integrated and produce a deceptively simple result. The roof structure is legible throughout, providing a consistent rhythm, but varies from fully revealed at the perimeter skylights to partially exposed in an adjacent parallel band and then to a wide central zone where the members are concealed but their spacing is inscribed on the ceiling in a pattern of reveals. Nearly monochromatic, the carefully composed and layered ceilings provide an effective counterbalance to the polished and reflective concrete below.

The architecture is intended to provide a regular spatial framework for the retail fronts, rather than creating a theatrical experience. Throughout the complex, the architecture has a presence independent of the retail displays. Proportions of the common areas are carefully handled, resulting in a sense of spacious promenade rather than narrow aisles between storefronts, and the circulation space is mercifully free of vendor carts. Regular rhythm and restrained but sophisticated detailing, along with the sense of permanence conveyed by the materials palette, create a quality of repose that is reinforced by unusually stringent tenant storefront and signage design criteria. In combination with the presence of a large and exceptionally well-displayed collection of public art, this gives NorthPark a degree of civic character unusual in a building made for retail. Already a financial success, NorthPark Center prevails anew as a venue for light, commerce, and art.

Jonathan P. Rollins, AIA, is an associate principal of Good Fulton & Farrell.



Penn State SALA

by CHARLES ROSENBLUM

PROJECT Stuckeman Family Building for the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Pennsylvania State University
CLIENT Pennsylvania State University
ARCHITECT Overland Partners Architects
ARCHITECT OF RECORD WTW Architects
DESIGN TEAM (Overland) Robert Shemwell, FAIA; Jim Shelton, AIA; Fernando Ortega; (WTW) Richard De Young, AIA; Joseph Nagy, AIA
CONTRACTOR Whiting-Turner Contracting Company
CONSULTANTS LaQuatra Bonci Associates (landscape); Arup (structural & MEP schematic design, energy and daylight modeling); H.F. Lenz Company (MEP); Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani (structural)
PHOTOGRAPHER Jeffrey Totaro/ESTO

RESOURCES MASONRY UNITS: Glen-Gery Brick; **METAL DECKING:** Epic Metals; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Firestone; **METAL ROOFING AND WALL PANELS:** Revere Copper; **METAL DOOR FRAMES:** Steelcraft; **MAPLE VENEER DOORS:** Mohawk Doors; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Kawneer; **ETCHED GLASS:** McGregor Industries; **GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING AND ACCESSORIES:** Dietrich Metal Framing

More than bringing together two allied disciplines of design education at Penn State, the new Stuckeman Family Building for the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture also connects two campus grids at a pivotal point. Moreover, the 110,000-square-foot facility teaches by example. Conceived with the objective of achieving a high level of LEED certification, the new building incorporates numerable strategies that demonstrate to students that value of sustainable design. Overland Partners of San Antonio led the design team on the $26 million project that was subsequently certified LEED Gold by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Accolades from the faculty and students that use the new building were echoed by the TSA Design Awards jury. Comments from Peter Bohlin, FAIA, summed up the jury's collective thoughts about the project: "This clearly was the best of the campus buildings that the jury looked at. Beyond that, it certainly embodies a lot of the interests that we all share, in dealing with issues of sustainability, qualities of the light, intelligence use of materials, and so on, those things that we all see as a sustainable necessity. On the other hand, it's a building for young architects and therefore it has those lessons to teach. And beyond that, within a fairly straight-forward budget for a campus building, it does make spaces that the students would value and enjoy being in. So from all those points of view, we thought it was a darn good building."

Bohlin, whose practice is based in Pennsylvania, specifically appreciated Overland's design of the four-story-tall curtain wall of recycled metal. "The copper skin is quite compelling," he said. "And the way the

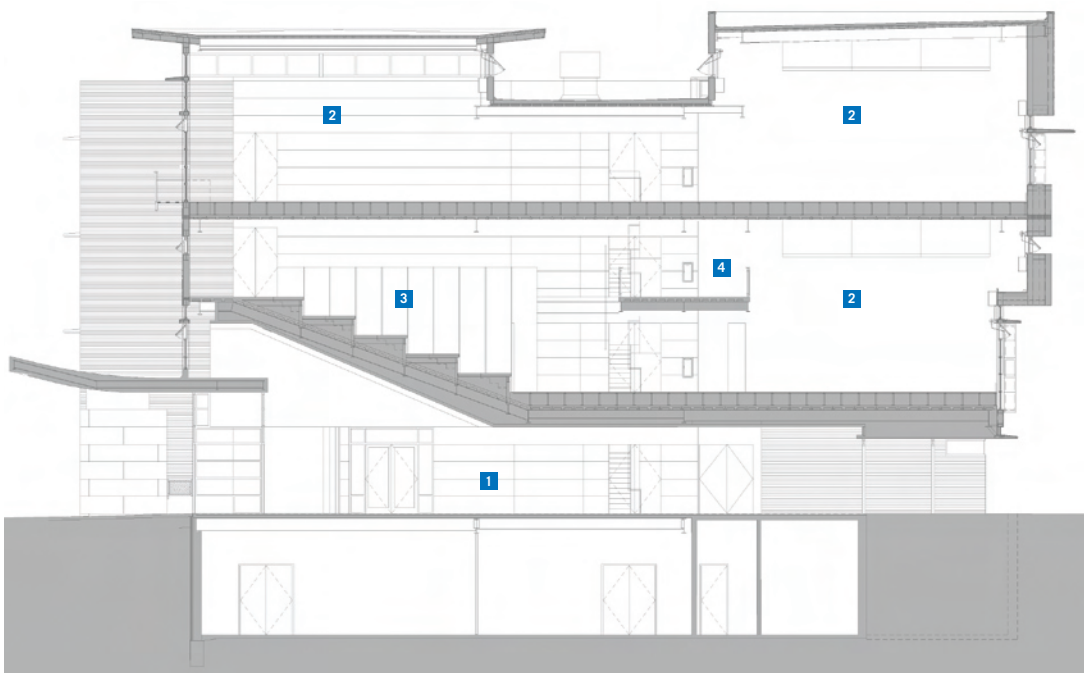
windows have been positioned in that curved copper wall is done with some great sensitivity. I suspect that this building is a wonderful sundial as the sun shifts around that building. And the patina also relates to our vision of what the natural world is, certainly in Pennsylvania where things are green."

Within the building, fledgling architects and landscape architects share rich visual and material connections to the outdoors from inside open, airy studios.

The site initially seemed hugely undesirable and uniformly unloved. (Terms such as "degraded," "back-of-the-house," grim-looking," and "a leftover" were commonly used to describe the site.) The ill-defined parking lots and an imposing water tower reinforced the hodge-podge nature of the proposed location wedged between arts buildings and dormitories. But closer study underscored the heavy pedestrian traffic and the dynamic, pivotal quality of two abutting campus grids. "The building had to fit in such a way as to knit together the many disparate parts," said Bob Shemwell, FAIA, an Overland principal and the project's lead designer. (Also part of the design team were two Pittsburg firms, WTW as the associate architect and LaQuatra Bonci Associates as the landscape architecture firm.) And the results are successful. The new parking lot, with bioswales for stormwater treatment, is a beautiful and instructive design on its own, and its planning with new athletic fields and axial walking paths leading to and through the building has changed the perception of this whole area. "This part of the campus previously had no order," said Dan Willis, head of the architecture department. "Now it seems like the perfect site for the building."

With forms that respond with logic and clarity to function, site, and client, the new building comes across as a collage. The donor "wanted a more traditional building," Shemwell said. The east facade appears to be two buildings in the campus's traditional brick. The office wing to the south, with its horizontal ribbon windows and brises-soleil, connects to the studio wing to the north, where three-story brick piers with copper-clad spandrels give way at the upper-most level to a double-height wall composed largely of glass. The building's main eastern entry, with an upturned canopy, sets on an axis at the juncture of these two wings—as does the imposing water tower located on the building's opposite side. "We knew it wasn't going away," Shemwell said. The architects emphasized its position on axis with the main entrance, allowing it to look, from some positions, like a dome. They neither fought it nor surrendered to it, but saw its potential as being one part of an additive composition rather than a controlling feature.

Then there's that green wall. A wrapping skin at the north end of the building, it opens into a giant rectilinear tube that frames views at the south. To the architects' credit, this prominent component of the project is more



SECTION AT ENTRY
1 LOBBY
2 STUDIOS
3 MULTI-MEDIA CRITIQUE SPACE
4 MEZZANINE/ CRITIQUE SPACE

than just green in color—the copper cladding is composed of more than 90 percent recycled material and the designers have included a variety of openings to bring daylight to a surprisingly gray region. ("Fewer sunny days than Seattle," noted Shemwell.) The vaguely Corbusian rhythm of openings and shades in a sculptural surface is a fairly matter-of-fact indication of interior space and structure, yet the result is much more spirited and willful than the sedate east facade. In fact, the two sides of the building could almost be from different decades. But despite arguments for architectural coherence, coexistence of divergent approaches seems appropriate for a building that newly unites two disciplines.

As responsive as it is to its site, the building is to a large degree designed from the inside out. The architects explored numerous schemes early on and also completed a later self-imposed redesign. Still, they adhered to a simple but ingenious sectional diagram developed at the beginning of the process during a four-day charrette that solicited ideas from professional designers, faculty, staff, and students. It creates double-height studios at the building perimeter on the second and fourth floors of the studio wing. "The design of the building is really about sectional connections," Shemwell said. "There are places where you can stand and get a feeling of all of the floors simultaneously." The third floor, devoted to critique spaces, is really a small mezzanine at the center of the building.

The building that began with sustainable design ideals incorporates them with instructional intentions. All of the studios have raised floor plenums to make the ease and efficiency of adaptable air and electrical distribution apparent. "All of the windows are operable and controlled by a weather station on the roof," Shemwell said. And the HVAC system will circulate either fresh or conditioned air, depending on the need at any given moment. Less visually apparent are features such as locally sourced brick and the recycling of 79 percent of construction waste. But the fabric of this building and its landscape both demonstrate a commitment to sustainable principles from the large scale of conception through the small details of use. "Overland deserves credit for helping educate the university" on issues of sustainability, said department head Willis. Tellingly, Penn State now pursues LEED ratings on all of its capital projects.

In addition to achieving sustainable design ideals, the new building exhibits numerous artistic and functional successes that bear out the faculty's vision of an interdisciplinary pedagogy. It is also, by the way, one of the least expensive buildings per square foot on campus. "I think one of the most exciting things about the building is to be in the studios on a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday," said Brian Orland, head of the landscape architecture department. Amid the hum of activity and within the instructive armature of building and site, the long-anticipated unity of architecture and landscape architecture is at its clearest.

This article was adapted from a review by architectural historian and critic Charles Rosenblum that was originally published in the July/August 2006 *TA*. Rosenblum teaches in the School of Architecture at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburg, Penn.

Design award '07

Roma Plaza

BY MARIO L. SÁNCHEZ, PH.D.

PROJECT Roma National Historic Landmark District Visitors' Complex and Plaza, Roma
CLIENT City of Roma
ARCHITECT Kell Muñoz Architects
DESIGN TEAM Steven Land Tillotson, AIA; Balde Bernal, Assoc. AIA; James Ed Carleton, AIA; Buddy Smith; Manuel Hinojosa, AIA; Beto Gonzales
CONTRACTOR Joe R Jones Construction
CONSULTANTS Hinojosa Engineering (structural); Turner Collie & Braden (civil); Halff Associates (MEP); Professional Services Industries (environmental); UTSA Center for Archeological Research (archeology/archival); 1+2 Design (exhibit design); Restoration Associates (decorative paint conservation)
PHOTOGRAPHERS Chris Cooper; Dustin Brown

RESOURCES CONCRETE PAVEMENT: Texas Lehigh Cement; **DECOMPOSED GRANITE:** Keller Materials; **MASONRY UNITS:** Valley Block & Brick; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Austin Hardwoods

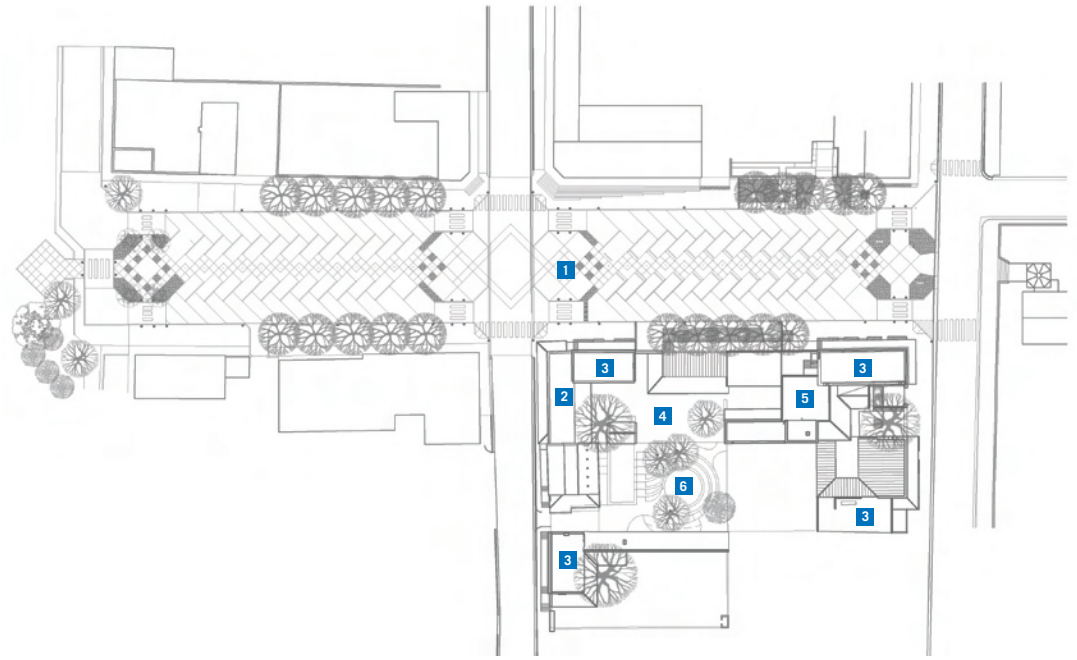
On the Rio Grande, midway between Laredo and Brownsville, Roma is the stellar setting for an award-winning civic design by Kell Muñoz Architects of San Antonio. Perhaps no other community of the border better demonstrates a regional sense of identity and history. Settled during the Spanish Colonial era, Roma was founded in 1848 as a trading center that benefited from a series of fortunate circumstances—the siting of a magnificent plaza overlooking the sandstone bluffs of the Rio Grande, the flourishing of trade by steamboats along the river, and the arrival of the talented German master mason Heinrich "Enrique" Portscheller. All of these contributed to the making of a very picturesque town with a colorful heritage still vividly portrayed through an exceptional collection of structures which in their design, materials, and construction techniques reflect the cultural continuity of the Texas/Mexico borderlands.

The intrinsic spatial and architectural qualities of this community heritage are recognized in the Roma Visitors Center and Plaza Project completed by Kell Muñoz Architects with funding by the Texas Department of Transportation and the City of Roma. Building on earlier efforts to stabilize several outstanding structures in the Roma National Historic Landmark District as part of a phased master plan, Kell Muñoz, with Steven Tillotson, AIA, as project architect, designed what is the second and pivotal segment of that long-term endeavor. Encompassing the rehabilitation of the upper portion of the plaza and the first publicly accessible building dedicated to heritage interpretation, this second phase gives credence and continuity to that earlier effort originally conceived

by the Dallas-based Meadows Foundation in a bold, now-legendary public/private partnership initiative to transform Roma into a heritage tourism experience.

Beginning with the plaza, Kell Muñoz set to recapture a culturally hybrid space originally laid out as a broad, two-block-long avenue in an 1848 U.S. plat. That plan, however, transformed into a Hispanic plaza with the introduction of Our Lady of Refuge Church at one end and the construction of walled commercial establishments around its perimeter. Historically unpaved and open to views of the Rio Grande, the plaza was insensitively subdivided and landscaped in 1976 to commemorate the U.S. Bicentennial. According to Tillotson, the greatest challenge of the project was the recovery of the plaza. That objective, he said, made him "juggle multiple visions" until the idea emerged for "a unified solution to serve different contemporary uses that also maintains a historically compatible interpretation of the space."

After removing numerous obstructions and non-historic materials, the plaza was regraded to provide adequate drainage and an accessible slope through a complex interplay of grades. Tillotson, a 25-year practitioner, described that aspect of the project as "perhaps the most difficult grading problem I've ever encountered." Vehicular traffic was reintroduced to the upper plaza by means of a one-way circular loop with diagonal parking along the center of the space, sheltered by curbed islands at each end. The diagonal motif is reinforced by mesquite wheel stops and the scoring of the concrete surface, which is topped with a rock salt finish to recall the texture and color of the caliche that originally covered the plaza. Serving a dual function,



SITE/FLOOR PLAN
1 FOUNTAIN
2 WORLD BIRDING CENTER
3 EXHIBITS
4 PATIO
5 VISITOR'S CENTER
6 AMPHITHEATER

the diagonal pattern cleverly provides a template for organizing community events, thereby reintegrating the space into the life of the city.

Restricting parked vehicles to the center of the plaza enabled Kell Muñoz to garner added space along the sides for pedestrian traffic and landscaping. Wide concrete sidewalks with irregularly scored curbs to recall the region's traditional sandstone curbing denote pedestrian space. Large beds within the sidewalks incorporate plantings and restored *banquetas* (historic buff-brick sidewalks) align the base of the buildings to complete the surface composition of the plaza.

Striking, yet muted in its response, the refurbished plaza represents, in the words of juror Brigette Shim, a set of "…very thoughtful urban interventions…that make you appreciate the buildings precisely because of their relationship to a more refined urban context." The openness and simplicity of the design also restores Our Lady of Refuge to its rightful place as the focal point of the plaza, while allowing for uninterrupted vistas of northern Mexico across the Rio Grande. That view evokes a shared heritage that socially, culturally, and economically refuses to recognize walled boundaries.

At the southeast corner of the plaza, a residential/commercial complex is part of the continuous architectural fabric that tightly defines urban space in this border city in a manner reminiscent of Mexico. Built in the late nineteenth century for the family of José Camilo Sáenz Salinas, the flat-roofed, one-story, one-room deep, L-shaped complex encompasses a dwelling and store that enclose a rear courtyard typical of the region. Rehabilitated as a branch of the World Birding Center, the "Roma Bluffs" facility is one of nine such branches throughout the Lower Rio Grande Valley managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The residential portion of the complex bears the imprint of Portscheller, with its brick cornice, raised pilasters, architraves, and entablature. Exterior brick in the entire complex was repointed with lime mortar and protected with a lime-based paint. More challenging to refurbish were the three-layer-thick brick roofs encased behind the corniced parapets, which were finished with a traditional lime wash.

The same minimalist approach applied to the exterior also worked for the interior rehabilitation. Environmental systems were introduced that are respectful of interior volumes, plastered walls, and the hefty, hand-hewn cypress wood beams. Remnants of hand-stenciled, polychromed decorative patterns – an unexpected find – posed a challenge during construction. They were stabilized and cleaned, and incorporated within the newly plastered walls. Interpretive exhibits stand away from the perimeter walls, allowing for minimal disruption to the continuity of the decorative surfaces. The courtyard was paved with traditional buff-color brick and landscaped with indigenous plants.

Providing a much-needed point of contact for visitors, the World Birding Center finally opens to the public one of the numerous historic family compounds in the city. Interpretively, the center also diversifies the tourism experience in Roma, linking it to a greater, regional ecotourism endeavor that brought 6,000 visitors to the city in the first four months of this year. More important, seen as an ensemble, the plaza and visitors center project generates a sense of accomplishment around the rescue of a singular city in our borderlands, transforming it, as crisply noted by juror Peter Bohlin, FAIA, into "a place we all wish to visit."

The writer is an architect with the Texas Department of Transportation.

Royal Bank of Scotland

by WILLIAM RIOS, AIA

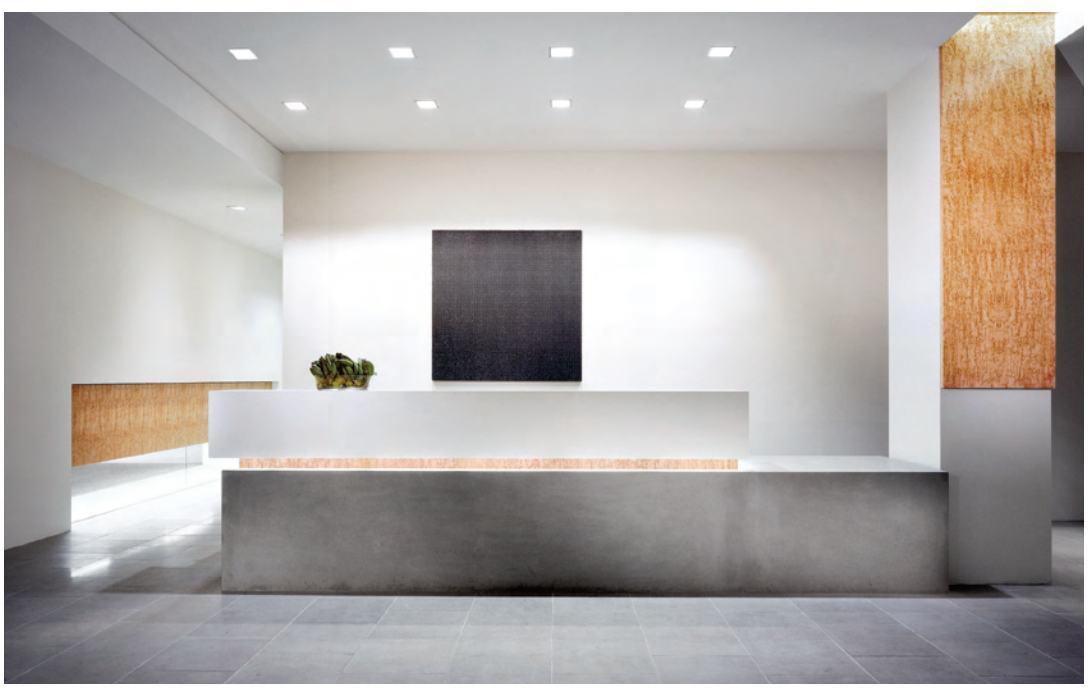
PROJECT Royal Bank of Scotland, Houston
CLIENT Royal Bank of Scotland
ARCHITECT DMJM Rottet
DESIGN TEAM Lauren Rottet, FAIA; Kelie Mayfield
CONTRACTOR Basic Builders
CONSULTANTS Wylie & Associates (MEP)
PHOTOGRAPHER Benny Chan

Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), an international financial institution offering diverse banking service to retail and corporate clients, appropriately maintains offices in downtown Houston. The bank hired the local office of DMJM Rottet to design interiors for its approximately 15,000-square-foot space in the 75-story JP Morgan Chase Bank building (formerly known as Texas Commerce Tower, designed by I.M. Pei & Partners and completed in 1981).

According to Kelie Mayfield, an associate principal for DMJM Rottet who served as project designer, the project developed around three central concepts: 1) define separate offices for two departments but create opportunities for collaboration; 2) incorporate light and space throughout the office suites; and 3) implement "brand presence" in finishes, art, and furniture.

Royal Bank of Scotland's new offices, completed in 2004, occupy approximately half of the building's sixty-fifth level. The floor plan posed a challenge due to the building's chamfered southwest corner, Mayfield said. With full-height glass panels extending the entire 33-foot width, the chamfer was the obvious focal point for the interior scheme. "Given RBS's location on the sixty-fifth floor, we wanted to take advantage of the chamfer, with its floor-to-ceiling glass, and sought to make the space feel a lot more open," she said. The result is a floating glass box set within the space.

Due to a recent corporate reorganization, the program called for two distinct departments that would be physically separate. The two departments each connect to the chamfered area by wings' lining the exterior sides of the structure. But in addition, the program required



space for collaboration between the two departments. "What we decided to do was depart from the formal plan of having the breakroom and employee areas in the back and centralized the plan so the two distinct operating companies could overlay the space and maintain their separate identities," Mayfield explained.

In response to another of the client's criteria, DMJM Rottet took advantage of opportunities for bringing light and views to all work areas. "One thing we've always said is that 'views and natural light are free,'" Rottet said of her firm's design philosophy. "Their location affords them an endless view of the urban landscape in all directions from the tallest building in downtown Houston." The effect is obvious in every area, from the reception area to the conference rooms, but is most striking where the breakroom opens onto a perimeter corridor overlooking the Houston cityscape. That specific area, said Kevin Howard, managing director of the bank's Houston office, is often used for entertaining clients. They are always impressed with the space, he said: "The view from the office of downtown with all the lights on during a clear night is just spectacular." Moreover, the lighting design was configured to complement the natural light from the exterior glazing. "We used a lot of indirect lighting to enhance the idea of the floating box," Mayfield explained. "Gaps between the wall planes, and the wall and the ceiling, were infused with artificial light to create a sense of volume and space." The sense of balanced natural and artificial light is carried throughout the project, even into individual employee work areas.

While a visit to the new offices reveals a quiet continuity, there are surprises around every corner — a

SITE/FLOOR PLAN
1 OFFICE
2 RECEPTION
3 CONFERENCE ROOM
4 COFFEE
5 MEETING ROOM

framed view out a window, an art installation, a carefully detailed accent finish along the wall, or an especially remarkable piece of furniture—that invite one to experience each space in a singular way. Mayfield attributed such "small moments" to a focus on branding the project for the client. "Branding is something we are interested in as a company," she said. "We conceived the space as an object of beauty with small moments that happen when someone is still and focuses their attention on an urban landscape or a piece of art. We wanted to help Royal Bank of Scotland sell their products and services by designing a space that recognized their rich heritage and strong identity."

The deep blue of the reception area's carpet, for example, complies with the institution's color requirements. The rich hue also complements the elegance of the white marble finishes and natural lighting. And in a nod to the bank's national heritage, small niches exhibit various Scottish tartans. Even the art reflected this idea throughout the project. Particularly notable was the installation by local artist Paul Fleming in the conference room—a wall-mounted radial array of small white star-shaped "cups" filled with translucent blue resin. Sparkling and ethereal and reflective of the RSB brand, the artwork reinforces the idea of the office as being a box floating in the sky. Other pieces include large format paintings, small framed prints, and a variety of sculpture.

Wood-grained accents throughout the project complement the clean lines of modern, custom-designed furniture. RSB's Kevin Howard explained the furniture selection process: "We were open to selection by the designer and we decided from a number of pieces that they felt lent themselves to our space and we tried a number of pieces to see what worked with the ambience." Ultimately, each space in the office reflected the elegance and heritage of the Royal Bank of Scotland in views, art, and furniture.

All things considered, this project is a great success as evidenced by awards juries at the local, state, and national levels. Before being selected by the TSA Design Awards jury, the Royal Bank of Scotland interiors project received awards from AIA Houston in 2005 and from the national AIA in 2006. TSA juror Brigette Shim was particularly taken with the project: "We saw many corporate interiors in this round of the jury process and the jury felt this was a very successful project. I think precisely because of the scale of the interventions, that things were not fussy and overly furniture-driven, but there was a wonderful, gracious series of very large public spaces and the movement from lobby into boardrooms into reception spaces flowed extremely well. The restraint that was used for the material selection, the relationship between the furniture choices and the spatial experience, I think, was just very well handled. It was sophisticated, it was elegant, and I think it created a really wonderful interior space."

William Rios, AIA, works with Hermes Architects in Houston.

Satterfield & Pontikes

by CHRIS KOON, AIA

PROJECT Satterfield & Pontikes Corporate Headquarters, Houston
CLIENT Satterfield & Pontikes Construction
ARCHITECT Kirksey
DESIGN TEAM Scott Wilkinson, AIA; Russell Wooten; Randy Thomas, AIA; Bob Inaba, AIA; Brian Malarkey, AIA
CONTRACTOR Satterfield & Pontikes Construction
CONSULTANTS Walter P Moore (structural and civil); DBR Engineering Consultants (MEP); Glauser McNair Nursery (landscape)
PHOTOGRAPHER Jud Haggard

RESOURCES **MASONRY UNITS:** Featherlite; **CONCRETE:** Southern Star; **METAL MATERIALS:** Structural Steel; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** Sharon Stairs; **WOOD PANELS:** Panel-Tech; **METAL DOORS AND FRAMES:** Raco; **STRUCTURAL GLASS DOORS:** Admiral Glass; **GLASS GUARDRAIL:** Admiral Glass; **TILE:** Daltile; **PROTECTIVE COVERS:** Avadek; **EXTERIOR SUN CONTROL DEVICES:** Admiral Glass; **GARDEN ROOF:** American Hydrotech

The new corporate headquarters in Houston for Satterfield & Pontikes Construction represents a rare building type where both the contractor and the client are one and the same. Any architect, owner, or contractor who has experienced the pains of construction administration can imagine the benefits this unity would bring to the design process. Add to these benefits a mutual interest in Building Information Modeling (BIM) and process takes on new meaning.

In this building the actual standards of the construction industry are pushed beyond the comfort levels of traditional cost estimates, printed drawings, and shop submittals to a level that begins to define the construction process of the future. One might question the implications of BIM on design and quality of space. The project confirms that BIM is a design tool – like pencil, clay, or chalk – and the design is the result of both the person controlling the tool and the tool's capability.

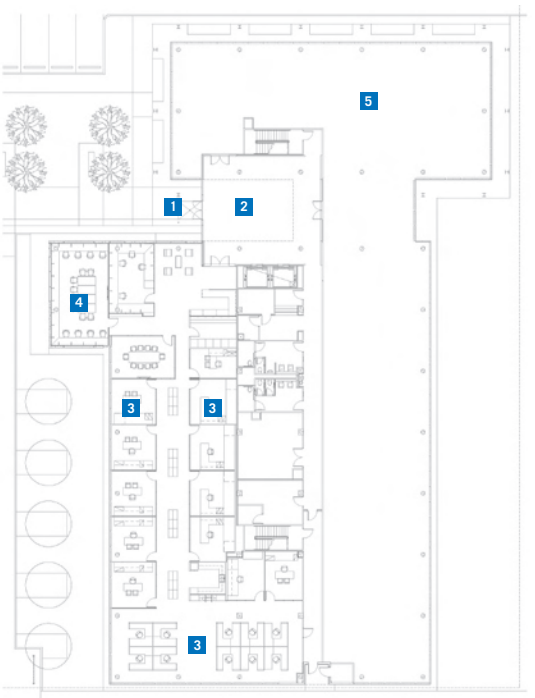
In northwest Houston, just off of Beltway 8, the site is located in what might be termed a mature office park with existing buildings occupying lightly populated landscaped sites. The most refreshing aspect of this building is its approach. In an area populated by tilt-up office buildings, this building sets itself apart. The cladding of glass and steel curtainwall reflects and absorbs light like a polished gem in a field of roughly worn stones. The building presents itself as more refined and thoughtfully composed than its neighbors. The benefit of this differentiation has helped the owner immensely as two-thirds of the space is speculative office that is quickly being leased to interested and thoughtful tenants who find value in the design.

The building is massed as two connected rectangular boxes that are slightly shifted. From the approach, the first box is wrapped in a continuous field of repeated curtainwall bays. Each side has equal modularity and detail: there is no articulation at the cornice or base of the facade. One can imagine the cladding going on in any direction without end—an isotropic plane. Aside from the rectangular proportion of each individual glass pane that grounds the building and the slight variations in the glass type used in each bay, the first box is undifferentiated. A closer look at the facade reveals a simply detailed mullion cap on all sides of the box that makes a world of difference to the play of light on the facade, elevating this speculative office building to a new standard.

Contrasting the undifferentiated box is a second, more articulated mass that peeks out from behind the other introducing the visitor to the entrance of the site as he turns the corner into the property. This mass fronts a steel superstructure of thin columns supporting a sunshade that protects the inside from the eastern and southern sun. The facade is capped with a thin cornice overhang that completes the trabeated design while providing protection from the sun. Counting the columns, one can ascertain that the dimensions of the second mass are based on the golden ratio, which provides, subconsciously, a comforting proportion.

On the other hand, the odd number of columns on both the short and long sides (three and five, respectively), create a slightly unsettling balance that results in a central column where Ictinus and Callicrates would have expected a void. The environmentally conscious visitor in his fuel-efficient vehicle, fortunate enough to have parked close to the side of the building, is allowed to slip into the building without experiencing the order apparent in the landscape design with its central park extending onto the north side of the site. To anyone else, the rhythm and unity of the central park design and the strong axis that connects the parking lot to the entrance of the building again elevates the speculative office building type to a higher standard of design. The impact of this second impression to clients of Satterfield & Pontikes (and to the clients of other future tenants) will go a long way in communicating the firm's values, standards, and capabilities. As a park, this area will prove to be an asset to the building occupants who choose to lunch or perhaps conduct meetings outdoors as the plants and groundcover grow to maturity.

The building solves the problem of how to create a street presence and have the entrance at the opposite side or "back of the house." Grounding the parking lot facade is a single-story, tilt-up protrusion that houses a plan room topped with a garden roof. The form is an aesthetic gesture to both the manmade (tilt-up structures) in the area and the natural roots of the site—the *genius loci* in a simplistic, speculative sense.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
1 ENTRY
2 LOBBY
3 OFFICES
4 CONFERENCE
5 LEASE SPACE

SECOND FLOOR PLAN
3 OFFICES
4 CONFERENCE
5 LEASE SPACE
6 GARDEN ROOF TERRACE
7 SUN SHADE SYSTEM

Inside the building, Satterfield & Pontikes' corporate and local offices occupy about one-third of the space. The lobby is somewhat sterile, but the interior space planning of the offices is to be applauded. The corridors are of ample width and function to illustrate that while the exterior expresses modular efficiency the interior confirms that space is not solely about economy of reproduction but about value and quality, even where space is unprogrammed. The circulation space expands and contracts to allow for lobbies, seating, and gathering areas, thereby enhancing the value beyond simple use. Each corner space contains shared program such as conference rooms or lunchrooms, breaking the traditions of office hierarchy created by the executive corner office of the past.

Second to the use of space, light makes an impression as it generously floods the interior offices and spills over into the corridors. While each office perimeter controls privacy, the transparency of the corridor walls allows the perception of space to flow without constraint between offices, conference room, and corridors.

The cleanliness of the ceiling plane adds to the quality of the space, but the exposed concrete structure in the corridors seems to be a gesture more aesthetic than cost-driven or environmentally sensitive considering the effort to create a gypsum enclosure or plenum between the light cove and the underside of the structural slab. Then again, this cover tends to shield all the fussy mechanical stuff that is best hidden from potential clients who might not understand the sustainable benefits of an open plenum system. As a marketing tool for Satterfield & Pontikes to attract tenants or future clients, this building is and will be a success. The building differentiates itself above the standard speculative office building in its approach to sustainable design, aesthetic value, efficient space planning, and construction quality. Even nonarchitects will appreciate the difference of quality and value apparent as they approach, enter, and inhabit this building.

Perhaps most significant to architects, the project furthers the use of BIM design process by demonstrating a successful endeavor between the architectural profession and the construction industry.

In a wrapup interview with the TSA Design Awards jury, Brigette Shim said the project elevates the contractor-owner building type to new levels of quality. "This type is usually just such an abysmal building type," she said, "that is really about quick profit and not about a) sustainability and b) good architecture. The fact that both of those can reside within this project is very, very impressive." She added, "This becomes a very positive model about ways that the private sector can address issues head-on [by] doing a building that is both profitable but also is exemplary in terms of the quality of its design. The two are not mutually exclusive, and I think the fact that they are combined within this building type is a very positive thing."

Chris Koon, AIA, is an associate principal with the Houston office of Berkebile Nelson Immenschuh McDowell Architects

Triple-S Steel

by STEPHEN SHARPE

PROJECT Triple-S Steel Headquarters, San Antonio
CLIENT Triple-S Steel
ARCHITECT Lake/Flato Architects
DESIGN TEAM David Lake, FAIA; John Grable, FAIA; Darryl Ohlenbusch, AIA; David de la Hoya
CONTRACTOR Hooker Contracting Company
CONSULTANTS Civil Engineering Consultants (civil); Steve G. Persyn Consulting Engineers (structural); JD3 Engineering (MEP); Cochran & Associates (fire code); Drash Consulting (geotechnical)
PHOTOGRAPHER Chris Cooper

Glimpsed from a half-mile away, the first sight of Triple-S Steel Supply's new facility in San Antonio is a welcome anomaly amidst the industrial landscape of the former Kelly Air Force Base. The warehouse/office/store complex is also huge, although there's little surrounding context to give the approaching visitor a sense of scale. Slowly, as the eye distinguishes the vehicles in the parking lot, the visitor begins to comprehend the building's sheer enormity—looming over a relatively small office/showroom at the front is a 200,000-square-foot warehouse that is 600 feet long by 275 feet wide by 30 feet tall.

Here on the city's southwest side, Triple-S Steel has established a presence that is remarkable not so much for its size but for its design that calls attention to a building unlike anything else around. The design has been recognized as innovative by the American Institute of Steel Construction, as well as by this year's TSA Design Awards jury.

The client, a family-owned structural and ornamental steel distribution company, asked Lake/Flato Architects to design an architecturally significant building that would stand out from the pre-engineered steel structures that are common to the area around the decommissioned military airfield, now a commercial enterprise zone. The project required a gigantic scale due to the nine 10-ton horizontal cranes that were to be installed within the warehouse. The cranes operate within the warehouse's two outer 100-foot-wide segments and its 95-foot-wide middle segment.

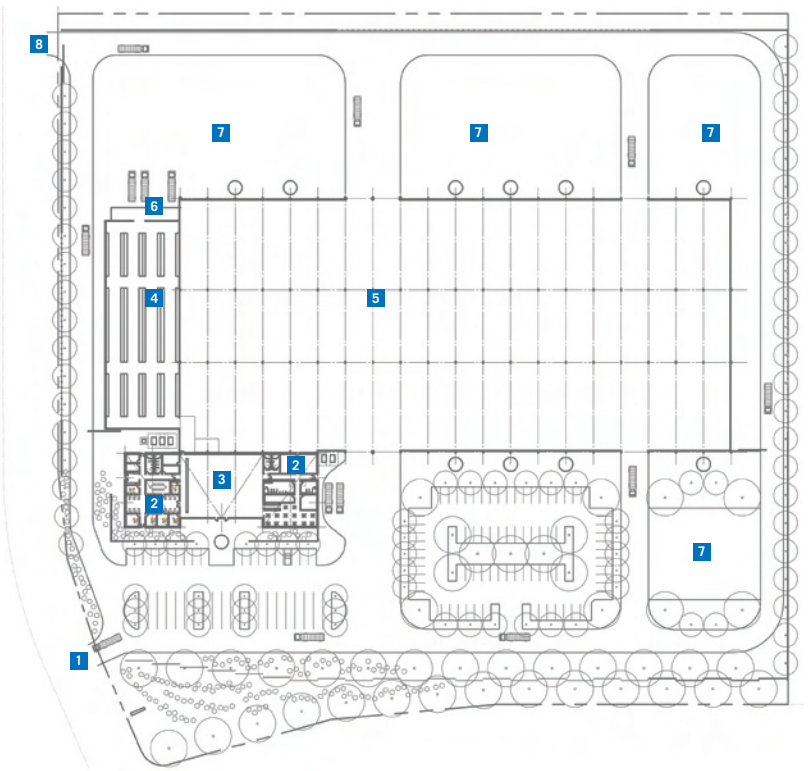
According to John Grable, FAIA, who was part of the design team, "Functionality and practicality drove the

aesthetics." To create an iconic warehouse, Lake|Flato devised a kit of parts based on the structural shapes and sections found in the company's catalogue. More than just a strategy to stay within budget, the use of off-the-shelf materials provides a real-world showcase for steel detailing. The warehouse's steel exoskeleton is framed with 6-inch-thick, tilt-slab concrete panels attached to the back of the steel columns and terminating 10 feet below the roof structure. Deep overhangs provide rain protection while still allowing for cross ventilation. Set atop the warehouse are six light monitors measuring 30-feet across and 14-feet tall.

Dwarfed by the vast warehouse at its rear, the office/showroom is designed on a decidedly more human-scale to suit the people who work inside and the company's retail customers. Its winged roof references the facility's location adjacent to the still-active airfield. Inside the showroom, exposed steel trusses express the structural integrity of the company's products and abundant clerestory windows provide enough natural light to minimize the need for artificial lighting during daylight operations. To mitigate the strong sunlight along the showroom's west-facing facade, the architects improvised sunscreens by using horizontal rows of three-inch-by-three-inch steel angles. In a similar fashion, the architects installed double-angle outriggers and braces to extend the warehouse's roof line and used galvanized "Z" purlins as sunscreens.

On the exterior, sunlight on the steel structure constantly animates the building envelope, with shadows of the overhanging sunscreens moving slowly across its concrete skin. Surprisingly, when seen close-up, the exposed steel effectively reduces the mass of the building and demonstrates the inherent elegance of the project's steel components.

According to TSA Design Award juror Walter Hood, ASLA, the project represents "a building type that is



SITE/FLOOR PLAN
1 MAIN ENTRANCE
2 OFFICES
3 SHOWROOM
4 STEEL PRODUCT WAREHOUSE
5 CRANE-OPERATED WAREHOUSE
6 LOADING DOCK
7 STORAGE YARD
8 TRUCK ENTRANCE

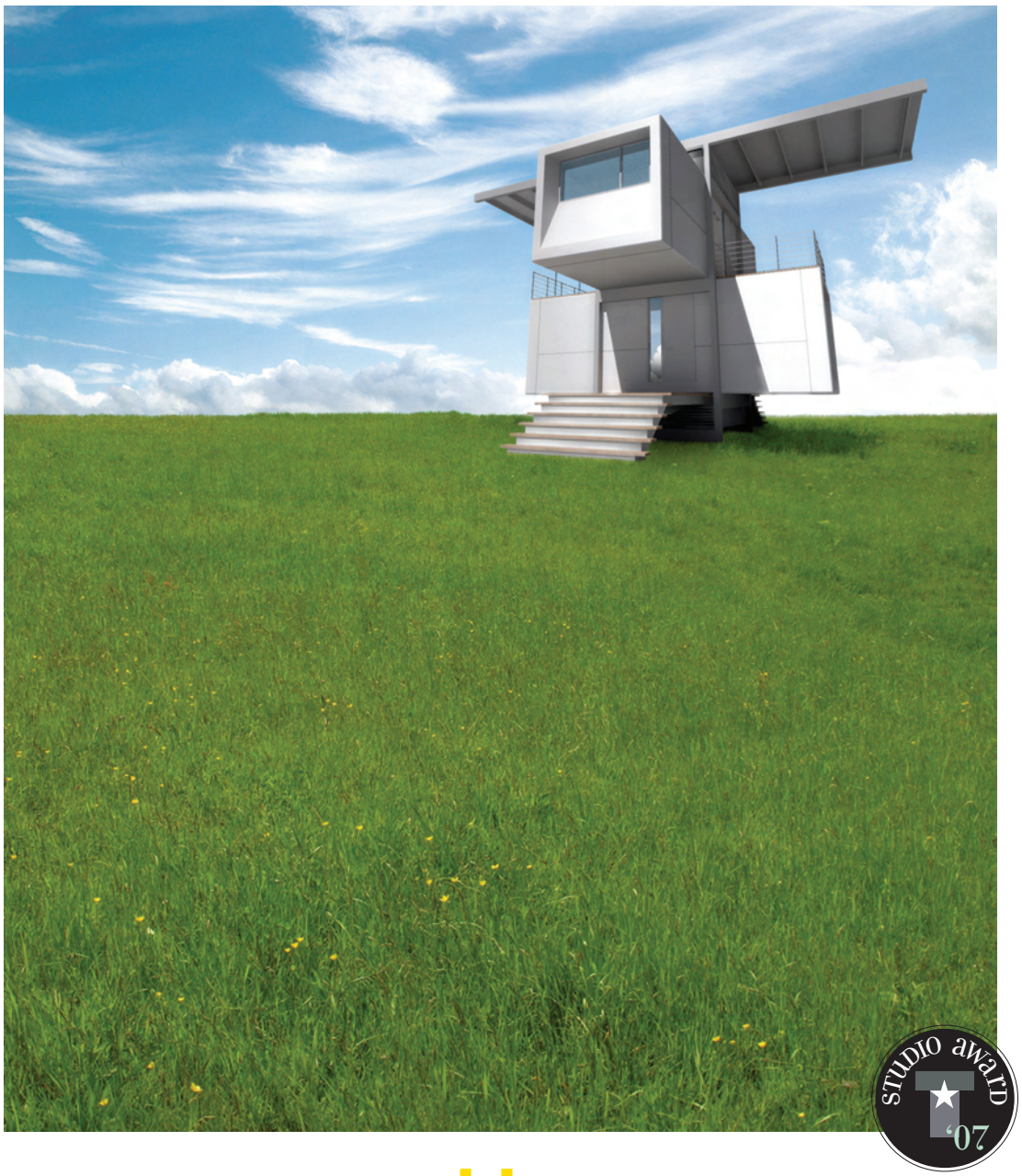
ubiquitous, that we see in our landscape, but here the architect has taken this type to task in really looking at the materials that are being sold within the plant or being fabricated within the plant and looked at that as a way to begin to shape the structure itself. From the industrial bays to the showroom, the tectonics of the building has a way of engaging the visitor [to say] 'This is what we do here,' but also in making the envelope for someone to experience. And it's a very hard thing to do, because on one hand the building is highly didactic and on the other hand it has to be highly functional. Machinery is going on in the back, people are selling things in the front and to create an architecture that blurs those two boundaries, I think this building should be applauded for that. The manufacturing component could have been easily forgotten. The elements could have been hidden, but here they're exposed, and they're exposed in a way that is celebratory."

Fellow juror Brigette Shim was equally enthusiastic in selecting the project for a Design Award: "I think that this building type is so important. It's so much a part of the economic engine that drives all of North America, and I would say it's a building type that is often neglected by architects. So the fact that this was a steel company [and] the fact that they could use their own off-the-shelf elements to actually create their own building that is both warehouse and office, I think, is fantastic. It's both advertising, but it's also about good architecture. For me, within the warehouse part of the building I appreciated the clerestory windows, the way that natural light came into a big warehouse space, and then the attention to the office spaces, to trellises and pergolas, all using their own material – steel – to actually create a wonderful range of spaces that serves the fabrication aspect and the office aspect of their needs."

Triple-S Steel's new building also earned national recognition this year from the American Institute of Steel Construction in its 2007 Innovative Design in Engineering and Architecture with Structural Steel awards program in the category of Projects Less than $15 Million. And, according to the architects, the owner's satisfaction with the project and long-standing history with the steel industry has led the Stein family to fund a new AISC award for innovative design in steel construction. Based in Houston, Triple-S Steel began as a small new and used steel distribution yard owned by Bruce Stein. His father, Johnny Stein, formed his own scrap metal company, Dixie Iron and Metal Co., in 1932.

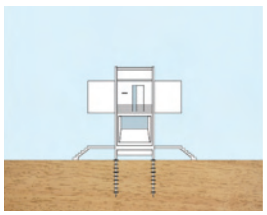
As described by TSA Design Award juror Peter Bohlin, FAIA, "The steel headquarters is rather simply realized, using steel elements that the company produces or which they supply, and the plan is pretty straight-forward. The sun shading and its edges are carefully conceived. The result is really a very good corporate project, and one that says a good deal about the quality of Texas architecture."

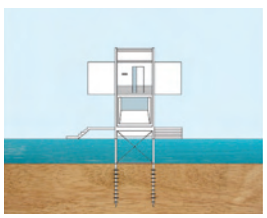
Stephen Sharpe is the editor of *Texas Architect.*

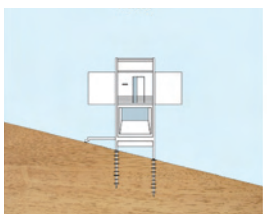


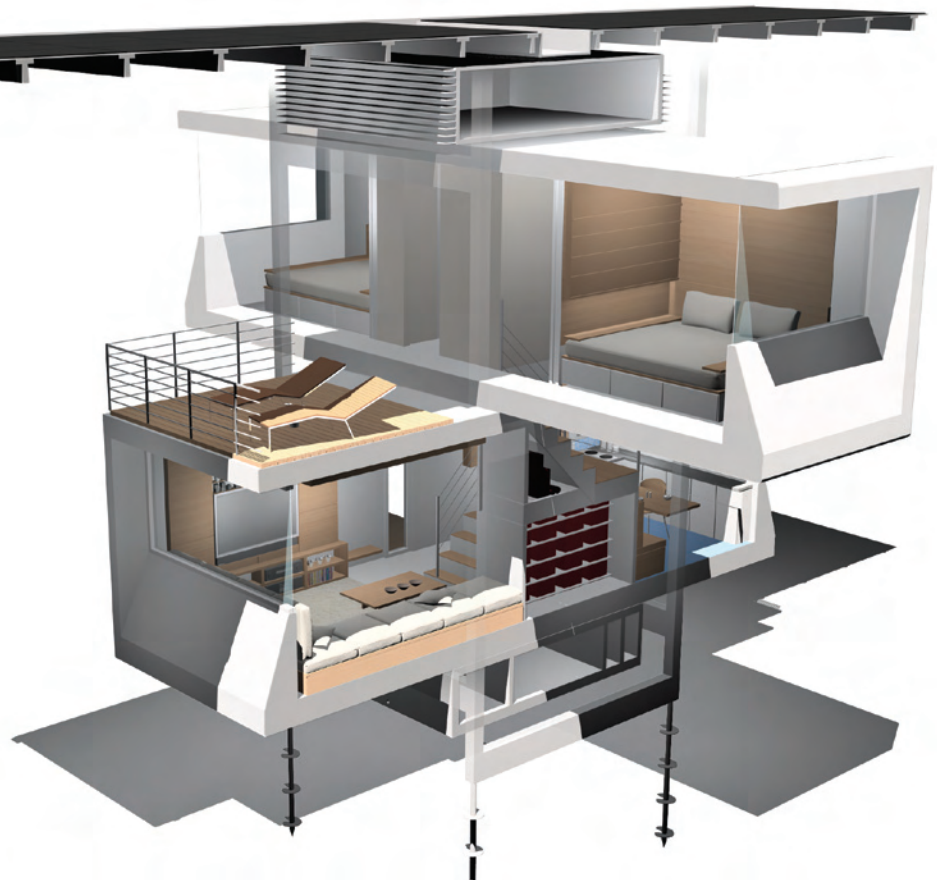
zeroHouse

PROJECT zeroHouse
ARCHITECT Specht Harpman
DESIGN TEAM Scott Specht, AIA; Louise Harpman, Assoc. AIA; Devin Keyes; Frank Farkash
CONSULTANTS Architectural Engineers Collaborative (structural); J. Schripsema & Associates (solar power design)









ZeroHouse is a 650-square-foot prefabricated house designed to operate autonomously, with no need for utilities or waste connections. It generates its own electrical power, collects and stores rainwater, and processes all waste. Shipped to a site on two flatbed trailers, it can be field-erected in less than a day. The house, fully air-conditioned and heated, is configured to comfortably support four adults with two bedrooms, a full bathroom, a kitchen/dining room, and a living room. In addition, two elevated exterior terraces and an outdoor shower extend the living spaces.

Conceived by architect Scott Specht, AIA, of Specht Harpman, zeroHouse can be used in remote or ecologically sensitive locations. It can be installed in places unsuitable for standard construction, including in water up to 10-feet deep or on slopes of up to 35 degrees. ZeroHouse employs a helical-anchor foundation system that touches the ground at only four points and disturbs the ground to a minimal degree. The tubular steel frame can withstand winds of up to 140 mph, and the living modules feature flexible attachment points to the frame to allow for deflection and movement without damage.

Essentially maintenance-free, the exterior is clad with integrally colored body panels with steel frame components that are bonded and powder-coated for corrosion prevention. Photovoltaic panels, solar hot water panels, and other devices are rated for indefinite use and do not lose efficiency with continuous exposure. The house can be put into a self-regulating "hibernate" mode that conserves power while maintaining necessary housekeeping functions.

The design and engineering work on the project was funded by a venture capital group with the intent of creating a start-up company to produce and market zeroHouse. Initial studies indicate that zeroHouse will sell for approximately $350,000.

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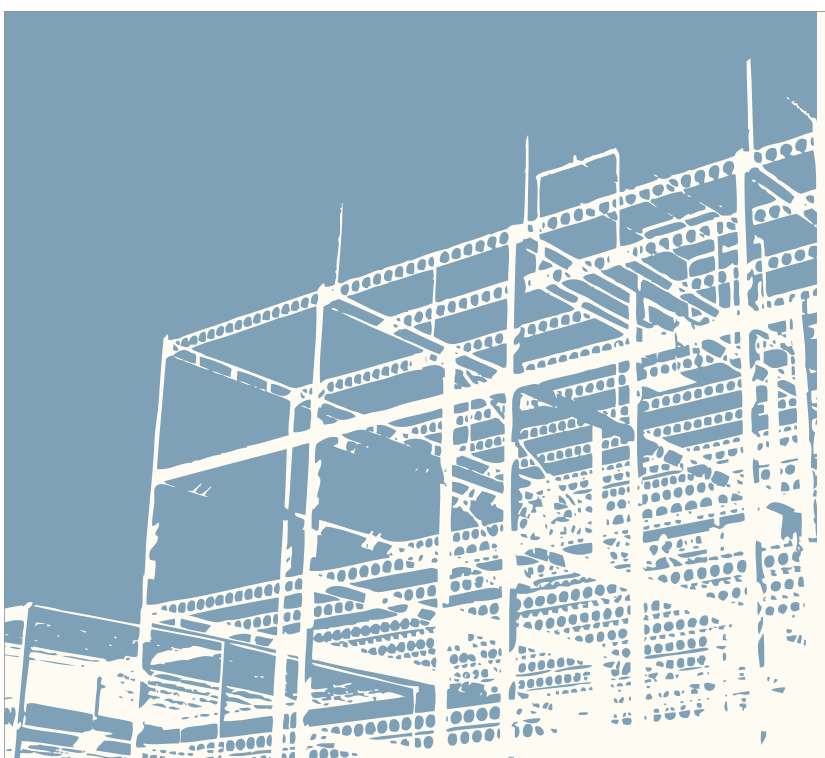

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Memorial Hermann Medical Plaza

PROJECT Memorial Hermann Medical Plaza, Houston
CLIENT Mischer Healthcare Services
ARCHITECT Kirksey
DESIGN TEAM Jim Dietzmann, AIA; Tomas Barrera, AIA; Bob Inaba, AIA; Scott Wilkinson, AIA
CONTRACTOR D.E. Harvey Builders
CONSULTANTS Haynes Whaley (structural); Walter P Moore (civil); Wylie Consulting Engineers (MEP)
PHOTOGRAPHER Aker/Zvonkovic Photography

RESOURCES **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** TXI; **PRECAST ARCHITECTURAL CONCRETE:** Coreslab Structures of Texas; **UNIT MASONRY WALL ASSEMBLIES:** Oldcastle Eagle Cordell Concrete Products; **ARCHITECTURAL METAL WORK:** Vision Products; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** Vision Products; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** American Hydrotech; **UNIT SKYLIGHTS:** Plasteco; **GLASS:** Viracon; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** Arrowall Company; **TILE:** Daltile; **METAL CEILINGS:** Chicago Metallic; **FLUID APPLIED FLOORING:** Sonneborn

The new 31-story addition to the Texas Medical Center (TMC) offers 500,000-sf of retail, ambulatory surgery, and professional office space to an area that previously lacked adequate lease space for physicians. In addition to solving that problem, Houston-based Kirksey has created a focal point for the TMC skyline. Located at the intersections of Fannin, Main, and McGregor, the building's design fits an 11-story parking garage, 15 floors of doctor's suites, and 2 floors of a 100,000-sf Ambulatory Surgery Care Center into a tightly packed area. Kirksey's unique design incorporates an illuminated crown that at night becomes a beacon of changing colors. The center includes the Roger Clemens Institute for Sports Medicine, the Memorial Hermann Breast Center, and the Memorial Hermann Imaging Center. Kirksey effectively integrated the new building into the Texas Medical Center through the use of skybridges that connect the new tower to surrounding buildings, including the Hermann Professional Building to its west and the UT Professional Building to its south.

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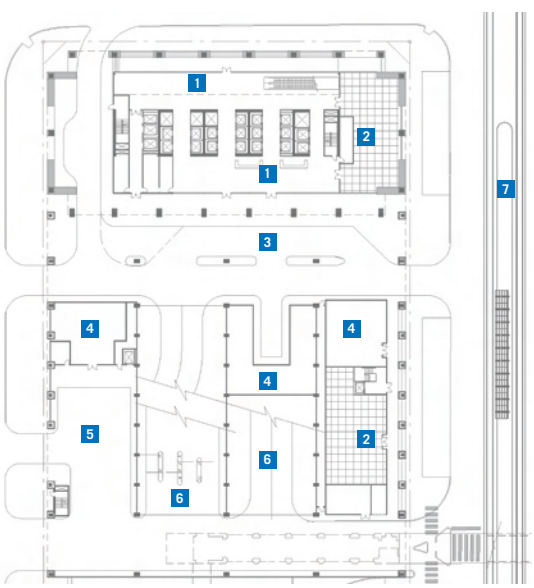

GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1 LOBBY
2 RETAIL
3 DRIVE THRU
4 MECHANICAL ROOM
5 DOCK AREA
6 PARKING GARAGE RAMPS
7 METRO LIGHT RAIL

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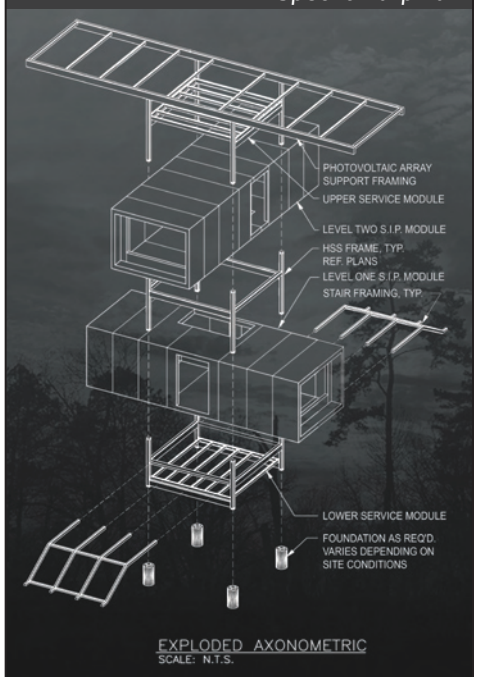
zeroHouse
Specht Harpman



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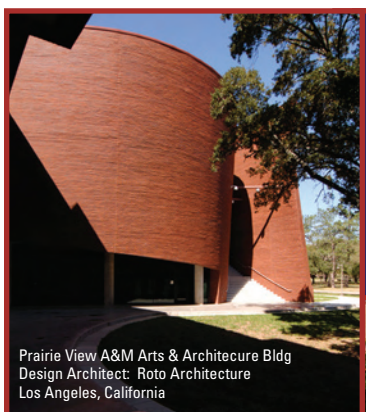
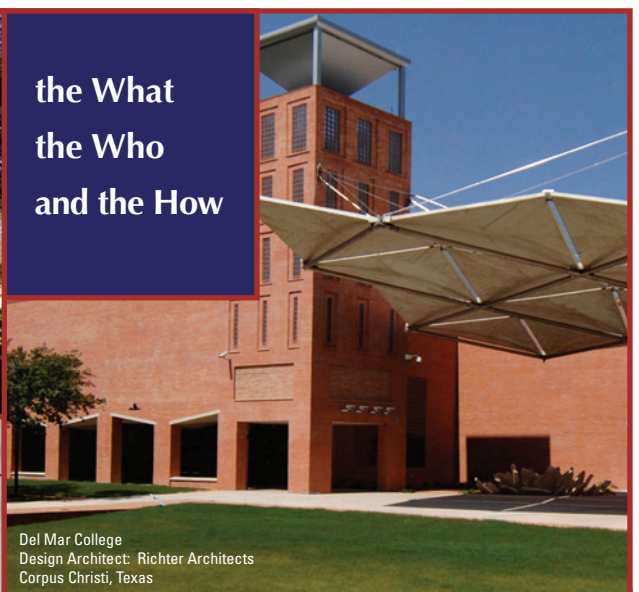

Prairie View A&M Arts & Architecure Bldg
Design Architect: Roto Architecture
Los Angeles, California


Del Mar College
Design Architect: Richter Architects
Corpus Christi, Texas


Trinity University - Ruth Taylor Art & Music Bldg
Design Architect: Kell Munoz Architects
San Antonio, Texas


Trinity University - Northrup Hall
Design Architect: Robert A. Stern Architects
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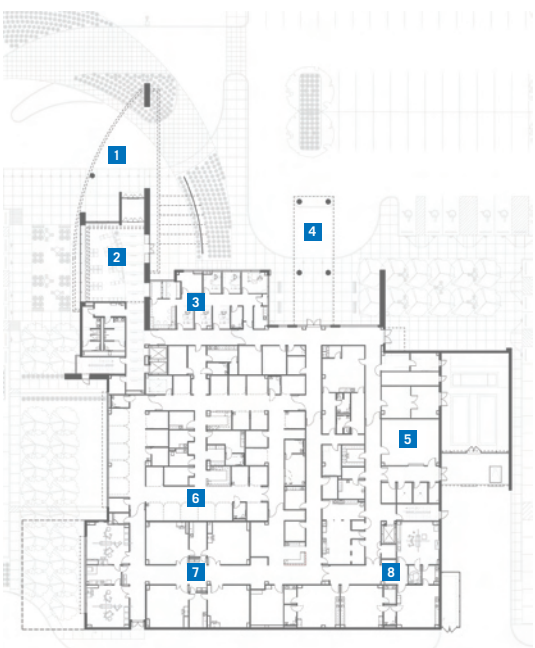
Simmons Ambulatory Surgery Center



GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1 MAIN ENTRANCE
2 PUBLIC WAITING
3 ADMITTING
4 PATIENT DISCHARGE
5 ENGINEERING/SERVICE
6 PRE-OP/RECOVERY
7 SURGERY
8 ENDOSCOPY

PROJECT Simmons Ambulatory Surgery Center, Dallas
CLIENT Parkland Health & Hospital System
ARCHITECT Perkins+Will
DESIGN TEAM David Collins, AIA; Randy Hood, AIA; David Winfrey, AIA; Michael Tresp; Kirsten Heckt
CONTRACTOR Hill & Wilkinson
CONSULTANTS L.A. Fuess Partners (structural); Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers (civil); Piazza Engineering (MEP); Mesa Design Group (landscape)
PHOTOGRAPHER Mark Trew Photography

RESOURCES BRICK: Lakewood Brick (Blackson Brick, dist.); **CAST STONE:** Arriscraft (Blackson Brick, dist.); **GLASS:** Viracon; **METAL PANELS:** Alcoa; **MULLIONS:** Viracon; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Bacon Veneer; **DECORATIVE GLAZING:** Skyline Design; **TERRAZZO:** American Terrazzo; **TILE:** Crossville Ceramics, Daltile, Interceramic; **METAL PANELS:** Alcoa

Part of the Parkland Health and Hospital System, the 62,000-sf, freestanding building sits near a busy intersection across from Parkland Hospital. The Dallas office of Perkins+Will has designed a stunning image of glass juxtaposed against stone. The large, curved, composite aluminum canopy shelters the patient drop-off at the entrance of the building. Following the curve around, leads one to the animated sculpture garden moving in the wind. The glass walls of the building allow sunshine into the lobby, creating warmth and a celestial atmosphere. The strong lines that form the exterior of the building are maintained within. The first floor of the surgery center includes six operating rooms and four endoscopic rooms that can easily be converted to operating rooms should the caseload suddenly increase. The second floor is a multi-physician orthopedic and pain clinic. The building is designed for future expansion.

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Designing the Right Fit

Intersections between moisture barrier systems are often where failures occur

by Andy MacPhillimy, AIA

IN my 30-plus years as an architect I have seen few moisture intrusion problems that were the result of product system failures. More frequently, failures occurred at the intersections and transition details between moisture barrier systems. Such failures were caused by a variety of issues, including trade craftsmanship, system product incompatibility, or failure in the "joint" design.

This article will first establish an approach for proper design for applying moisture barriers and the related joints between moisture barrier systems. Second, it will examine the range of factors critical to the design of the associated joint details. Last, it will look at best practices during the construction phase that ensure these details are properly constructed.

Design Approach for Moisture Control

In his article "Protecting Against Moisture" in the September/October 2006 *Texas Architect*, Joseph L. (Chris) Crissinger identified four methods of moisture movement through building enclosures: (moisture-laden) air, capillary action, liquid flow (water), and vapor diffusion.

Of these, this article focuses on the protection against moisture intrusion as water and air.

The complex issues of vapor diffusion control and the use of vapor barriers/retarders are well discussed in the article "Use of Air Barriers and Vapor Retarders in Buildings" by Charles W. Graham, PhD, AIA, in *Texas Architect* September/October 2004. However, many of the design factors and need for continuity are similar between air and vapor barriers.

Figure A

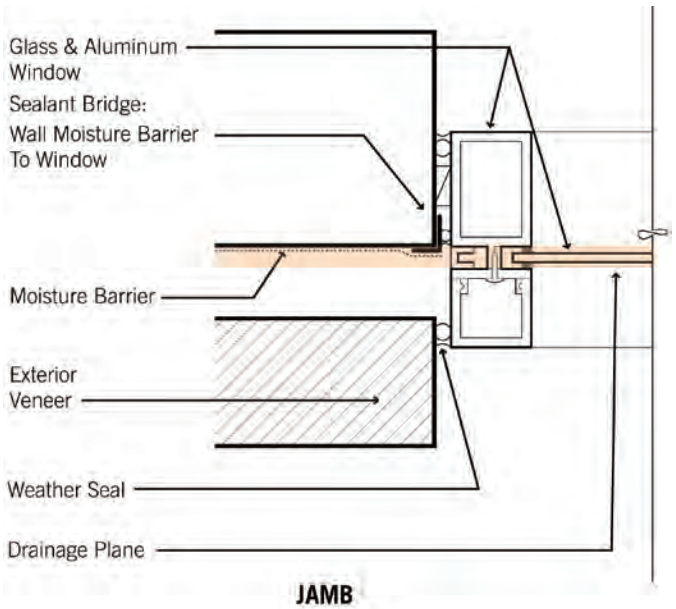
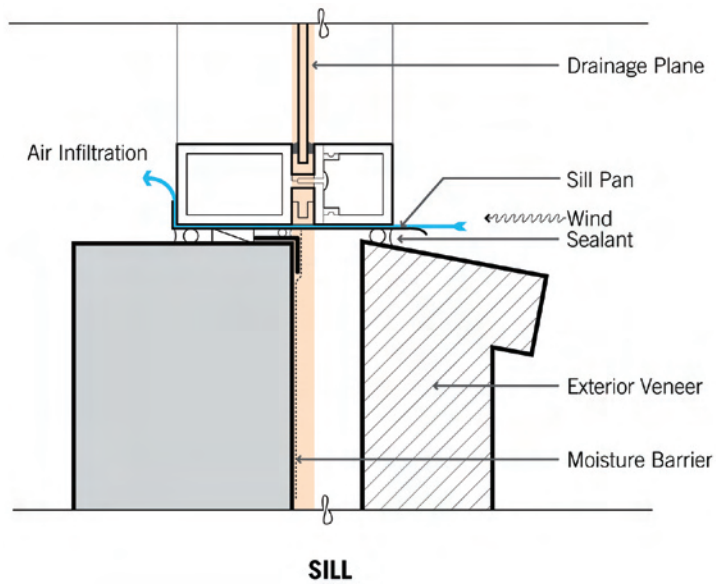


Figure B



Control of water intrusion into building assemblies is best achieved by establishing a continuous "drainage plane" that extends across, and in some cases through, all the building enclosure elements and assemblies. These include windows, precast, sealant, flashings, moisture barriers, and roofing systems. Elements such as brick, stone, metal panels, and plaster provide environmental protection as "weather barriers" but should not be considered moisture barriers. An important test of the successful detailing of the "drainage plane" is the ability to trace its "line" throughout all the details of the building enclosure assemblies—*without lifting the pencil*.

In reality, due to gravity's downward pull on water, detailing to prevent water intrusion can be successful even with some minor discontinuities. One example is the typical punched window installation with a masonry veneer. Sealant typically ties the wall moisture barrier to the window frame, protecting the head and jambs as shown in Figure A. Properly placed to the frame, this provides for the continuity in the drainage plane. A common detail at the sill is the use of a "pan" to guide water collected and guttered within the window back to the exterior. However, without additional gaskets or sealant, this may not provide a complete barrier against air infiltration. See Figure B. Study your standard details to see how many have hidden paths for air.

Similar to a drainage plane, an effective air barrier should be traceable throughout the building enclosure, and not cross an unsealed joint or porous material. Note that the drainage plane and air barriers often can

Local Councils Promote Education

The successful design and construction of a building's exterior enclosure defines the aesthetic sense of a building, it secures protection from a variety of weather conditions, and today it is an integral part of strategies for sustainable building design.

In recognition of the importance of the building enclosure design, the Building Enclosure Council Initiative was created in May 2004 through a partnership between the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the Building Enclosure and Environmental Council (BETEC) of the National Institute of Building Science. Its mandate is to create a series of BEC chapters across the country to "promote and encourage discussion, training, education, technology, transfer, the exchange of information about local issues and cases, relevant weather conditions, and all matters concerning building enclosures and the related science."

With an initial goal of nine local councils by 2007, there were 17 as of July, with another two or three cities considering establishing their own BEC. Sponsored as an autonomous profit center by local AIA chapters, each local BEC is an interdisciplinary forum with architects, engineers, consultants, manufacturers, contractors, educators, and owners. Texas has two councils, known as BEC Dallas and BEC Houston.

BEC NATIONAL Building Enclosure Council

To learn more about the BEC program, access information at *www.bec-national.org* and the National Institute for Building Standards at *www.nibs.org*. To participate in the Dallas chapter, contact George Blackburn III, AIA, at *gblackburn@sunited.com. To join the Houston chaptercontaact* or Andy MacPhillimy, AIA, at *andy.macphillimy@morrisarchitects.com*.

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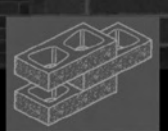

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be, but are not always, concurrent, and should be verified separately.

Achieving continuity of the drainage plane and air barrier across other areas of the building enclosure can be challenging. For parapet construction, detailing should support continuity of sheet or applied waterproofing from the edge of the roofing system up and over the parapet to overlap the wall moisture barrier. Again—items like parapet caps are environmental protection and are not intended as the primary moisture barrier. Continuity becomes more challenging when there are overhangs or special conditions such as concealed gutters. Here, strategies for water control are easily achieved, but the continuity of the air barriers can be difficult to integrate into or across other building systems.

> An important test of the successful detailing of the "drainage plane" is the ability to trace its "line" throughout all the details of the building enclosure assemblies—*without lifting the pencil*.

Design Factors for Detailing

As a detailer contemplates the desired aesthetic relationships between the various building elements, it is easy to assume that these relationships are "static and stable." Depending on the location and exposure within the exterior enclosure, transitions between moisture and air barrier systems can be subject to dynamic movement (wind and live load), long-term building movement (structural creep and building settlement) and, though these are smaller in magnitude, to thermal expansion and contraction.

Industry design guidelines used by structural engineers allow for minimum structural stiffness of the building structure. Allowable deflections can be as much as a half inch to one inch on long spans. Similarly, wind load on a building can create measurable joint movement in vertical joints between structure and the exterior wall construction. Failure of the architect and engineer to coordinate on the allowable design deflections in building detailing may result in joint failure, compromising moisture and air infiltration protection. A separate class of

movement that should not be overlooked in joint design is differential movement due to thermal expansion and contraction of materials.

Last and most often overlooked in the development of building details is acknowledgment of building material fabrication and erection tolerances. Tolerances are generally established by industry trade organizations. As a simple example: The construction tolerance for placement of masonry is +/- 1/8 inch vs. +/- 1/4 inch in precast. A minimum 1/4-inch sealant joint is recommended for performance. Without also looking at the window fabrication tolerances, this suggests a minimum design joint of 3/8 inch at masonry and 1/2 inch at precast.

Best Practice for Detail Implementation

In an August 2006 meeting of the Houston chapter of the Building Envelope Council, a panel including an architect, a roofer, a window installer, an owner and general contractor were challenged to identify methods and actions that were most effective at minimizing the opportunity for problems developing in the exterior enclosure. (See p. 92 sidebar on Building Enclosure Councils.)

The panel achieved consensus on the importance of the following:

- Building "technical" exterior mockups that include the most common building details to prove out the details and the craftsman's techniques.
- Conduct preconstruction conferences on exterior systems to establish common understanding, share issues and concerns, and agree on expectations.
- Conduct appropriate industry standard tests such as window water test during construction to verify performance.

The most important consensus was the recognition that each party involved in the design, fabrication, and construction made important contributions to the performance and ultimate success of the construction.

Conclusion

Successful protection against moisture intrusion requires coordination of moisture barriers across all the building assemblies to achieve a high level of continuity with a particular focus on the appropriate design of the details at the intersections and transitions between the moisture barrier systems.

A principal with Morris Architects, Andy MacPhillimy, AIA, chairs the Houston chapter of the Building Enclosure Council.

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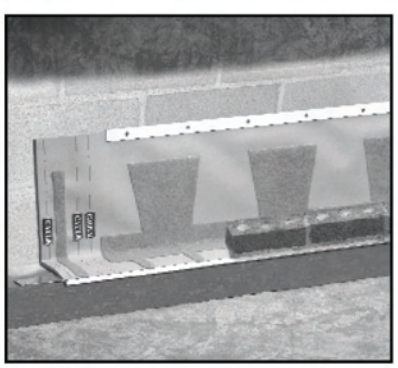

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continued from page 19

market and also whether the house has market appeal, is livable, has a flexible layout and is affordable.

To respond to this requirement for a broad-based market appeal the 2007 UT SolarD team adopted an interdisciplinary approach. Although the student-led team remains under the direction of the School of Architecture, it also includes a diverse partnership of faculty leads from different disciplines from Engineering to Marketing to Interiors, and with an Advisory Council of business and industry professionals. The team has developed a 7.6 kW PV array with a skin-based design strategy that responds to orientation, climate and culture. The 14-foot-wide x 50-foot-long streamlined, single-wide design was determined by shipping dimensions.

The house is being entirely prefabricated by the student team headed by Alex Miller under the construction direction of Lecturer Russell Krepart in a hangar at the old Mueller Airport in Austin. The house will be shipped by truck to Washington, D.C., as a wide-load transport and unloaded on the National Mall using a system of hydraulic jacks. Onsite labor is reduced in this design scheme to the installation of the solar collectors and landscape decking. Because the house is made using lightweight, metal-faced R-30 structural insulated panels as a single air-tight envelope, the infiltration load is reduced to less than one half of air change per hour and an energy recovery ventilator is incorporated into the house to ensure adequate amounts of fresh air.

Participation in the Solar Decathlon allows students to develop the knowledge of how to apply and test their ideas and theories on sustainable design. This kind of knowledge is rooted in the realm of values. And these kinds of values and consequences are acquired through the actual building experience. In this way students are able to evaluate the performance of design decisions. Hands-on learning seeks to re-establish the continuity and inter-relationship between the processes of conceiving, making, and using buildings. In architect Samuel Mockbee's words, "It's the importance of making and thinking at the same time."

The hands-on process fosters a pedagogical approach that encourages faculty and students to discover how buildings really work as they are constructed and occupied. Through observation, simulation, and data gained by designing and then building the project, students see firsthand the success and failure of different design approaches. Analysis of the material observed in the field, along with comparisons to values derived by model studies, computer simulation and calculations, gives students an opportunity to assess whether the stated design intent has been achieved and to understand and describe the variety of ways occupants actually experience a building. This level of understanding involves both disciplinary and interdisciplinary learning. It is in this area that the Solar Decathlon experience is especially potent as the forum in which disciplinary knowledge and interdisciplinary understanding take place.

MICHAEL GARRISON

Michael Garrison is co-director of the Center for Sustainable Development at UT Austin's School of Architecture.

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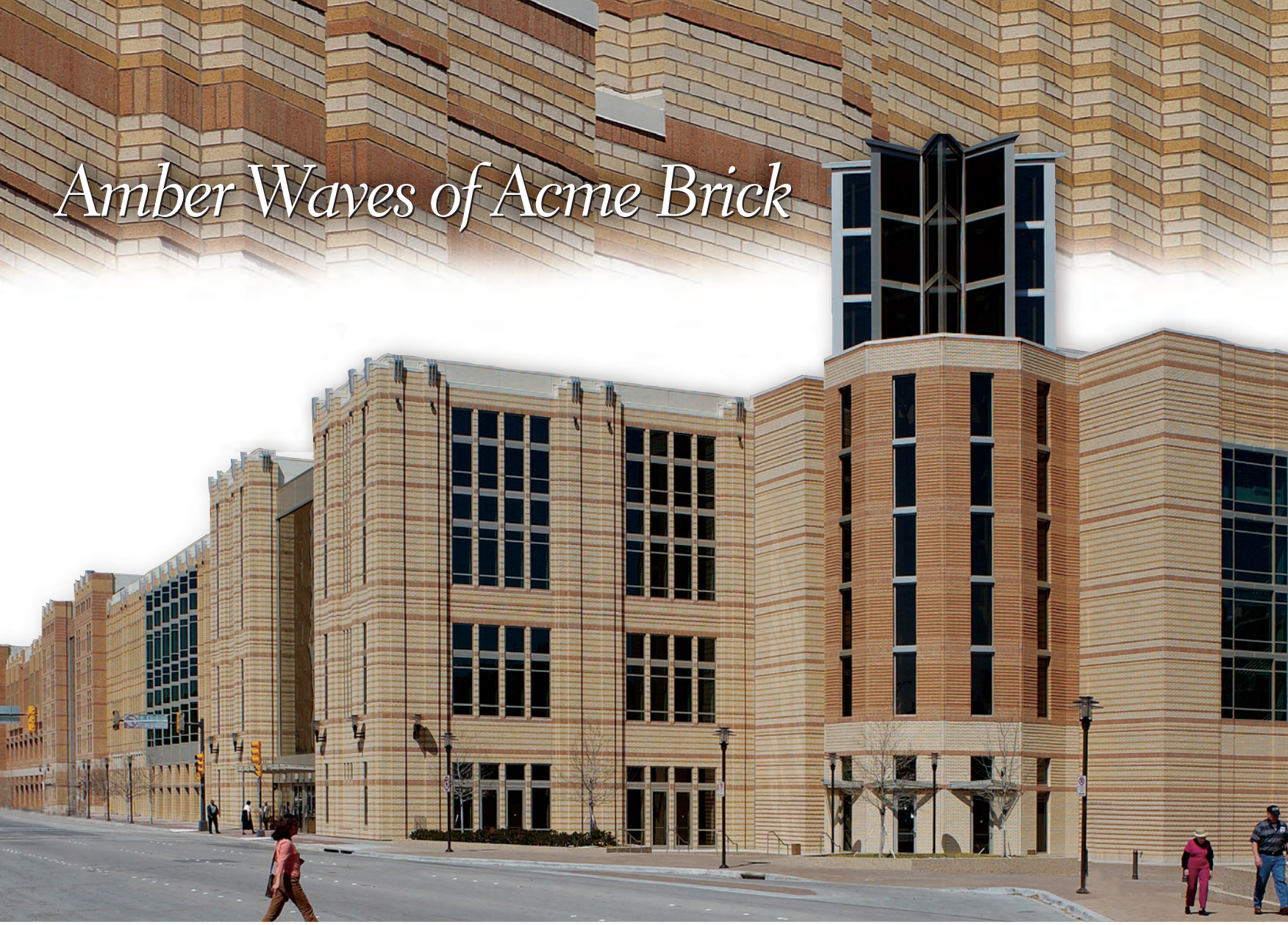

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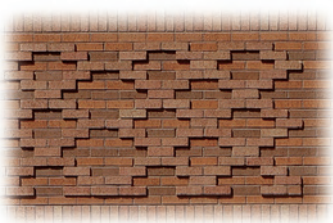

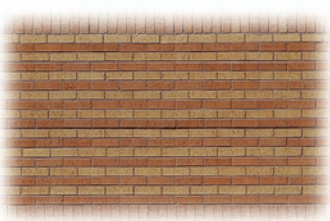

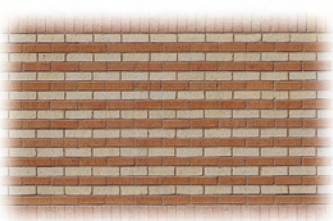

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Design Architect: HOK, Dallas
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Koush cautions in his closing words that "as Houstonians go about eradicating the city's cultural legacy of modern architecture, these houses face a particularly grave danger."

Of the 15 houses documented in the catalogue, seven appear in the exhibit curated by designer Don Emmite and installed in Architecture Center Houston's Walter P. Moore Gallery. To define the exhibit area within the open space of the gallery, Emmite used some of the gallery's props (i.e., rolling boxes) that he painted either charcoal or cantaloupe, which he describes as "a popular 1950s color making a comeback." The layout works very well.

As in the original Neuhaus House, the anticipation of the view is hidden upon entry by the location of solid walls (two of the boxes) bearing exhibition narratives. From here the main exhibit opens eastward in a uncoiling path, beginning with Neuhaus's own house.

The Neuhaus House 1949-50 is certainly the largest and most refined of those shown. Original drawings, on loan from the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, sit in protective cases. Stunning in their clarity and preservation, Neuhaus's drawings are reminiscent of a time when architects enjoyed making beautiful drawings by hand. They are composed—precise, black, hard lines for the house contrast with decidedly paler, free-hand lines depicting the landscape design. A vintage firm brochure sits with watercolor sketches by the landscape architect C.C. Fleming and an inkwash rendering by Neuhaus's partner, Herbert Cowell, FAIA,who at 93 remains an accomplished watercolorist.

Of certain interest are the construction documents displayed. Several references made in the essay's texts relay how carefully Koush examined these in researching Neuhaus's work. The sheets are as carefully composed as the buildings, reserving generous amounts of white (paper) framing each detail, revealing both the care that went into the construction information and the level of maintenance eventually bequeathed to the owners.

Models by University of Houston architectural students further illustrate the Neuhaus House, the Detering Bay House 1955-56, and the Letzerich Ranch House 1962-63.

Each house is described in large-scale vignettes—black-and-white photographs accurately depicting the house as the owner occupied it, often from their seated point-of-view. Emmite eliminated color from the photographs (when it existed) to unify the variety of the houses selected. The effect is successful and very readable. Graphically, the exhibit is quite sophisticated and achieves the serene experience that Emmite sought, which evokes the feeling of the actual houses.

The nonprofit Houston Mod is dedicated to promoting knowledge and the appreciation of modern architecture and design in Houston and Texas. Through education efforts such as this exhibit and book, Houston Mod encourages "careful preservation and conscientious rehabilitation" of Houston's modern architectural legacy. It is a sobering fact to note that, of the 15 houses documented, only eight remain.

Val Glitsch, FAIA, is a *TA* contributing editor.

Hugo V. Neuhaus, Jr., Residential Architecture, 1948-1966 *remains at Architecture Center Houston through Sept. 28. Admission is free.*

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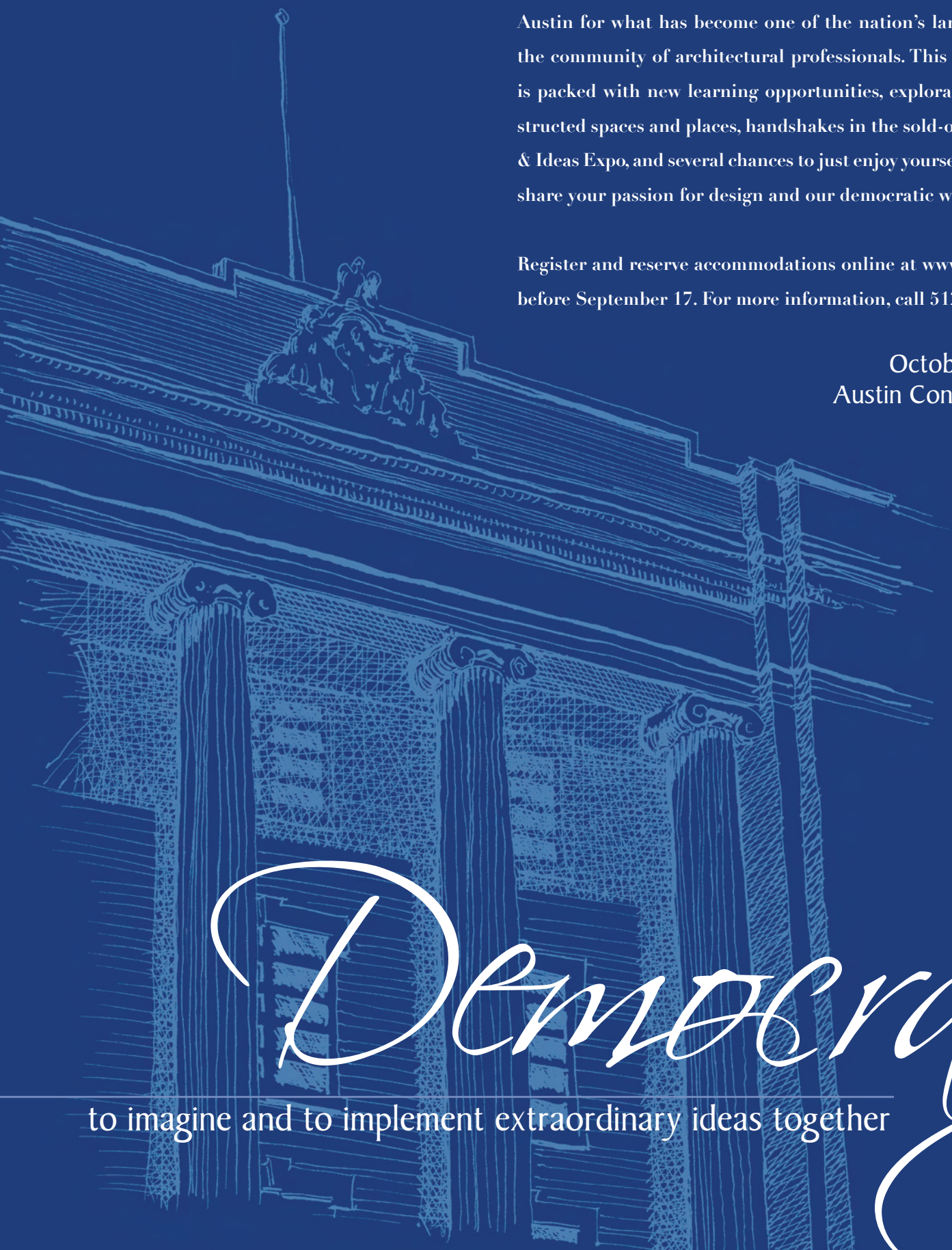

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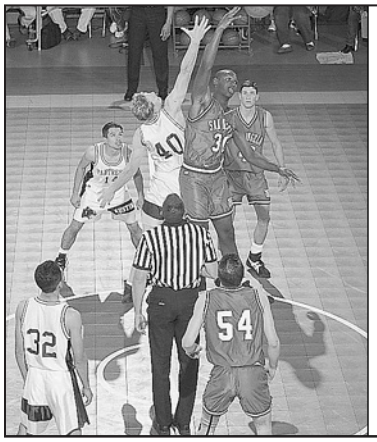

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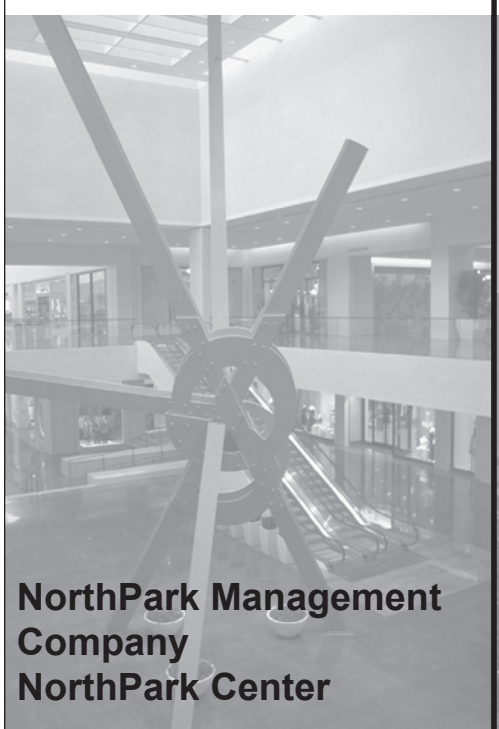

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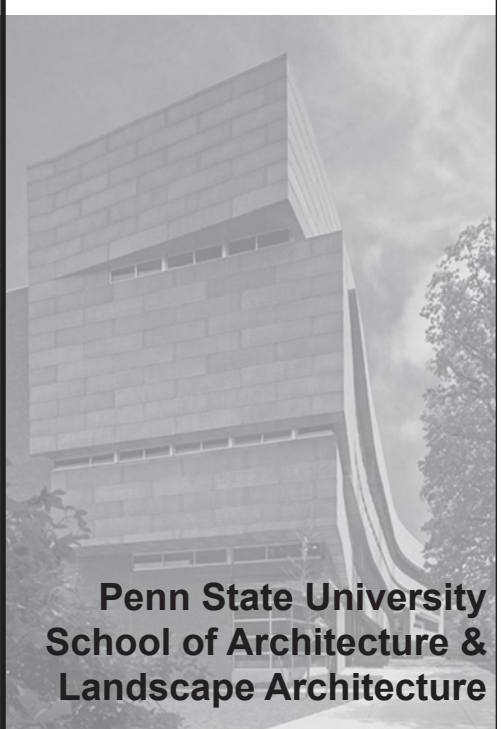

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continued from page 13

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The TSA Associate Member of the Year Award will go to **David "Jamie" Crawley, Assoc. AIA**, for his proactive ideas to involve young professionals with AIA at the state and local level. The award recognizes leadership and demonstrated commitment to the local or state component.

Thomas Diehl, associate professor at the University of Houston Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture, will be honored with the TSA Award for Excellence in the Promotion of Architecture Through Media in Honor of John G. Flowers Hon. AIA. Diehl established a radio broadcast series on Houston Public Radio's KUHF discussing architectural and urban design.

The TSA Associate Special Merit Award will go to **AIA Dallas Associates Committee** for it's members commitment to improved programs, study groups, and formal workshops. The award recognizes a TSA member or component for development of unique programming for the successful promotion and development of Associate members.

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- **Nasher Sculpture Center** for its presence as an example of the power of art and architecture to enhance the quality of urban life.
- **Trinity Commons Foundation** for its advocacy and leadership in planning and urban design for the largest public works project in the history of Dallas—the *Balanced Vision Plan* for the Trinity River.

TSA will grant honorary membership to the following individuals:

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Texas Towns & The Art of Architecture by Richard Payne, FAIA, was published in 2006 by the Texas State Historical Association. Images were reproduced with permission.

Thomas McKittrick, FAIA, lives in Houston.

g a green
e in my city.

sustainable design challenge.

I am planting a green roof on my apartment building.

into my first language.

carbon neutral.

way for federal legislation that supports sustainable development.

I am regis
a LEED wo

I am building my office building on a brownfield site.

I am starting a blog about green homes.

我在向人们介绍全球气候变暖这一现象。

I am installing a grey water recycling system in our factory.

I am using Nature as a model to improve my designs.

Mein pani garam karne ke liye suraj ki garmi ko prayog karta hoon.

I am lowering the resource burden of my products.

I am launching a global climate initiative.

Construyo aceras de materiales reciclados.

I am buying green power.

I am weanin

I am going solar.

I am advocating for a green school for my kids.

I am joining my local chapter.

I am running an energy model before I size the HVAC system.

I am working to make affordable housing green, and green houses affordable.

I am encouraging my employees to become LEED APs.

I am making the business case for biodiversity.

I am replacing my conventional light bulbs with compact fluorescents.

I am spe
green bu
material

I am xeriscaping my front yard.

I am installing low-flow appliances in my house.

I am designing a net zero energy building.

I am choosing native plants for my landscapes.

I am using my green school as a teaching tool for the next generation of leaders.

I am going to buy CO_2 offsets for my travel to Greenbuild.

I am offering
environment
responsible
mutual funds

I am riding my bike to work.

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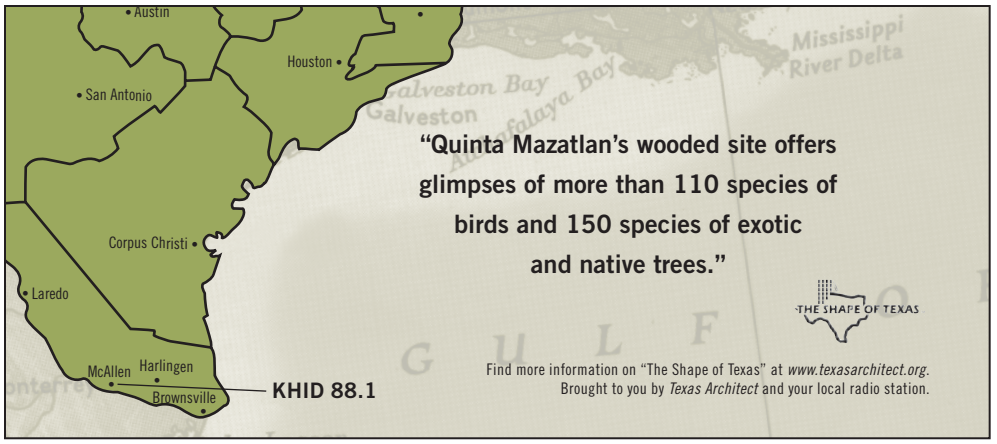

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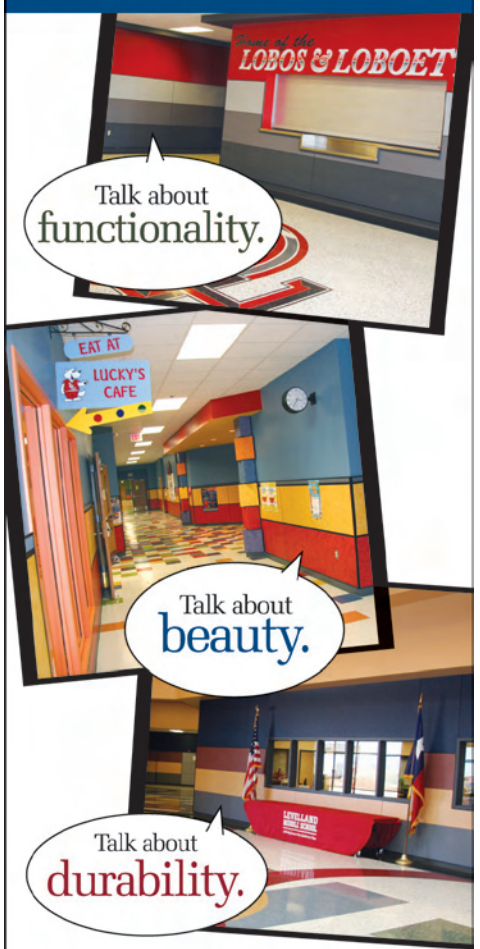

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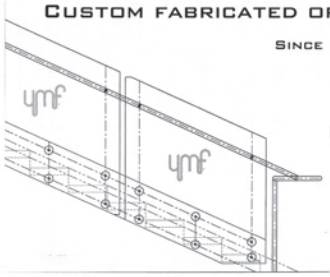

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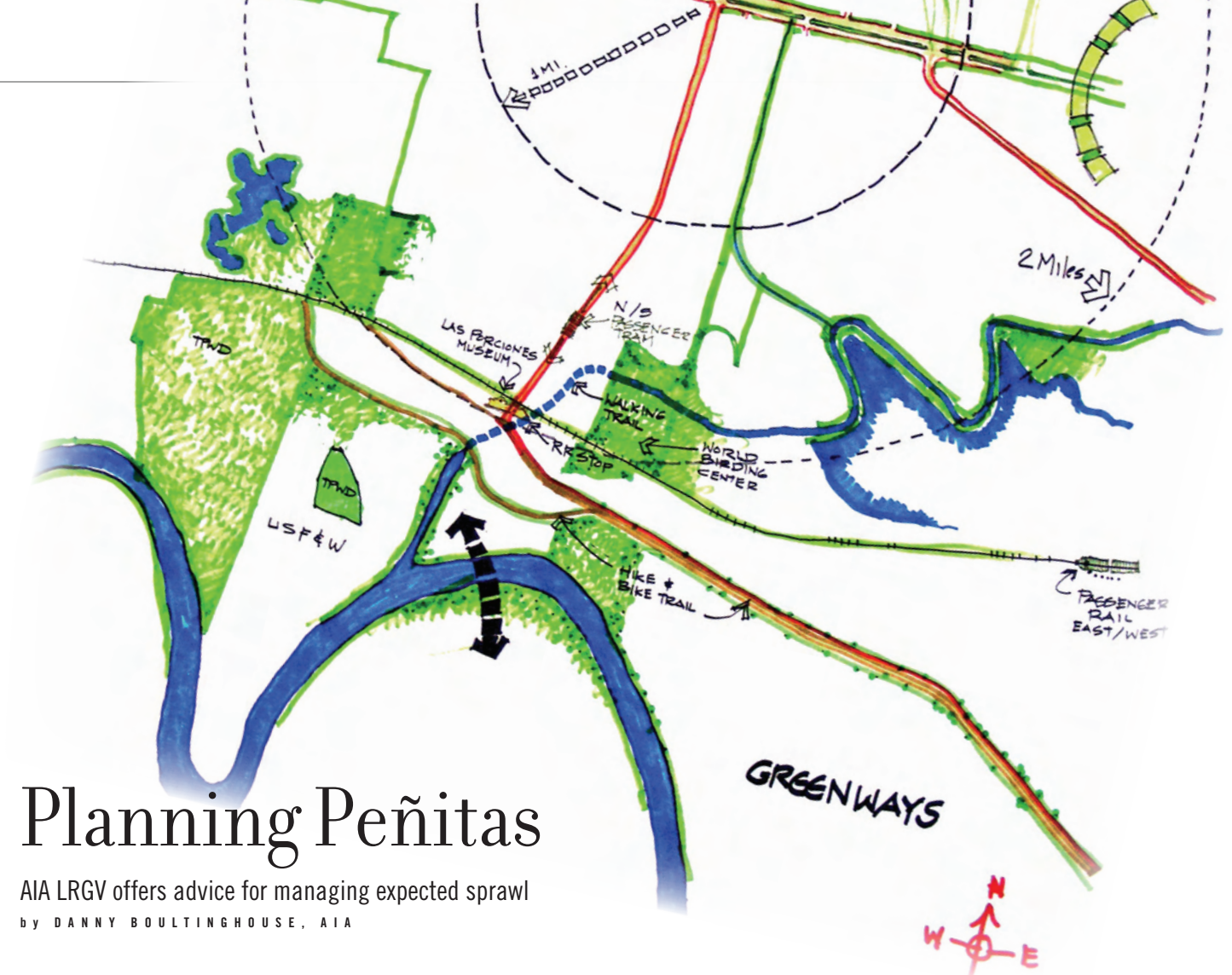

Planning Peñitas

AIA LRGV offers advice for managing expected sprawl

by DANNY BOULTINGHOUSE, AIA

THE SMALL TOWN OF PEÑITAS stands in the cross hairs of progress. Situated along the Río Grande and at the western edge of the uncontrolled sprawl known as the McAllen-Edinburg-Mission metroplex, this community of around 1,200 people faces tremendous pressures that will affect its well-being for generations. Those pressures include plans to extend the region's north-south expressway (U.S. 83) and the inevitable residential subdivisions and commercial development (construction has just begun on a Wal-Mart) that typically follow such major highway projects.

Clearly, with its municipal government underfinanced and understaffed, Peñitas is in need of support if it is to sustain itself through the extraordinary growth currently being experienced in this region. The AIA's Lower Rio Grande Valley chapter began efforts earlier this year to help Peñitas by sponsoring a Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team. Funded through a $10,000 AIA 150 grant to the chapter, the R/UDAT brought together local architects with key stakeholders to consider ideas for how Peñitas can turn its current challenges into opportunities for long-term benefit. Those ideas are detailed in *Vision 2007—Peñitas*, a report compiled by Urban Design Associates of Austin.

While the small community has few resources or infrastructure to meet the challenges it faces, Peñitas possesses several physical attributes that are significant assets. Chief among them are two wildlife management areas located in the city, as well as the Río Grande and large tracts of unspoiled open space. A pending outer loop that will intersect with the U.S. 83 expansion is expected to enhance regional access to these natural amenities and create another node of potential development.

Strategies recommended in *Vision 2007—Peñitas* include:

- negotiating with Wal-Mart to install a large canopy wrapping around its new store to accommodate an outdoor market;
- working with transportation officials to design the extension of U.S. 83 as a four-lane highway with intersections at grade (as well as other methods to slow the traffic);
- encouraging new residential subdivisions to create compact and walkable environments;
- establishing a system of boulevards and tree-lined streets to connect residential and commercial areas; and
- enacting city ordinances to manage zoning and landscape improvements.

Culminating from the many proposals studied during the R/UDAT, this report offers local officials an array of planning tools that will help the community take charge of its future *now* rather than after Peñitas has been overwhelmed by the march of progress.

The writer is the LRGV chapter's designated AIA 150 "champion."

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