

Texas Architect

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May/June 2017



**Agriculture & Business Multipurpose Building
Prairie View A&M University**

architect Overland Partners, San Antonio

general contractor Linbeck, Houston

masonry contractor Camarata Masonry Systems, Houston

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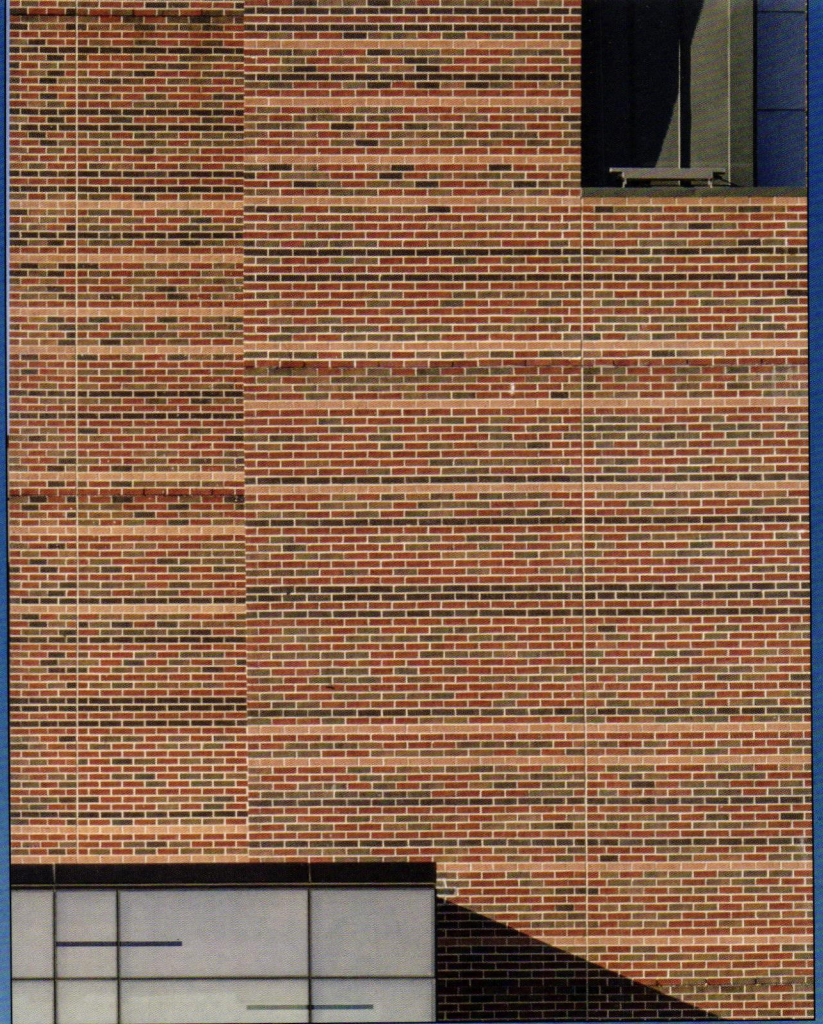
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At Prairie View A&M University's historical gathering place, a clock tower now marks a center of academic as well as social convergence. The new Agriculture & Business Multipurpose Building connects two colleges under one roof, with walls carefully designed from a collection of Acme Brick blends that contain brick colors from other structures on campus.

Overland Partners created a dynamic and flexible campus anchor on what students call "The Hill," an unstructured outdoor gathering place for communal events. The building takes its form as a horseshoe around the long-standing oaks at its center. Four stories of Acme Brick join these two colleges physically and embody other colleges symbolically through variegated striations of modular brick. The resulting colorful layers may appear to be strata of earth or lines of history in the life of the university, yet they reflect every corner of campus in a tangible way.



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"We worked with Prairie View A&M to design a central campus connector that creates an appealing and desirable place for students to collaborate outside the classroom. The existing grove of oak trees gave shape to the building and created a courtyard. We incorporated a bell tower that displays the time and phases of the moon, highlighting the integral role of time in business and agriculture. For the facade, we interweaved multiple brick blends that tie the existing buildings on campus together. Achieving a unifying pattern that remained cohesive from a distance was an exercise in restraint."

– James Lancaster, AIA, Project Architect, Overland Partners

"The project presented quite a few challenges, particularly the creative use of four colors of brick; three are used alone in horizontal bands, and a mingle of three is used on other bands. The bands are located at specific elevations on the building, requiring us to create shop drawings showing the exact positioning of each band. The result is stunning."

*– Kevin M. Camarata, President,
Camarata Masonry Systems*

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GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Stalco Construction, Inc.
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—Ed Wilds, Senior Project Manager, Alliance Residential

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Departments

- 7**
Editor's Note
- 8**
Contributors/
Letters
- 11**
Of Note
- 28**
Calendar
- 31**
Products:
Healthcare
- 91**
Recognition:
Preservation Texas
Honor Awards
- 96**
Backpage

Feature and Portfolio

- 36**
Traditionally
Christian
*Jason John Paul
Haskins, Assoc. AIA*
- 44**
Geography and
Sacred Spaces
Antonio Petrov
- 50**
Thanks-Giving
Square
*Michael Friebele,
Assoc. AIA*
- 56**
The Sense of Awe
*Anastasia Calhoun,
Assoc. AIA*
- 62**
Moody Center
Ben Koush, AIA
- 70**
White Oak Music
Hall
Aaron Seward
- 82**
University Health
Systems
Margaret Sledge, AIA
- 86**
Adara
Aaron Seward

More Online

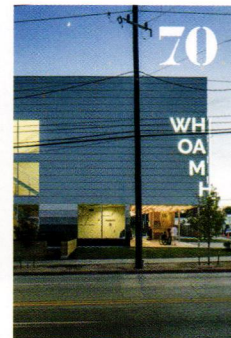
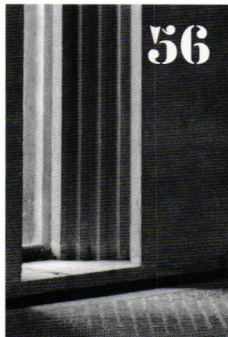
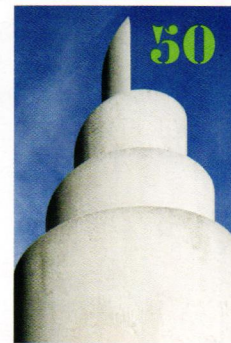
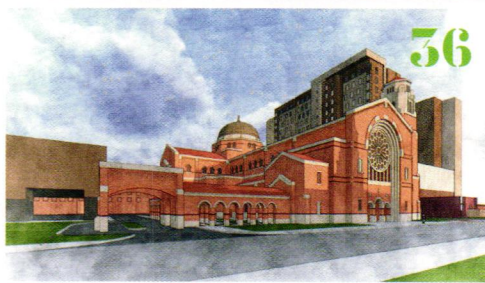
▣ txamagazine.org
Architecture at 2017 SXSW Interactive, plus comments on the festival's new HQ (to be designed by Pei Cobb Freed!!). Announcement of TxA Design Award winners. And, more legislative updates from the Society's tireless senior advocate, David Lancaster.

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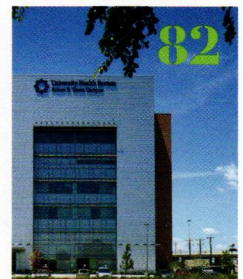
On the Cover

The White Oak Music Hall in Houston, designed by SCHAUM/SHIEH.

Sacred/Profane



Portfolio



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Second Street in Downtown Austin is the one completed section of the Great Streets Master Plan, the project for which Sinclair Black would like to be remembered.

In the Black

by Aaron Seward

“I f I ever write a book,” says Sinclair Black, FAIA, “it’s going to be called, ‘Austin Texas: Lost Opportunity National Park.’ So many of the good ideas people have had — sometimes they’ve been mine — haven’t happened. By the time you put a good idea through a political and bureaucratic filter, nothing good is left, or nothing happens.”

If that sounds cynical, it’s meant to. For the past 50-plus years, Black has practiced architecture and urban design in Austin with his firm, Black + Vernooy. In that span, he has assiduously championed a more urbane and civilized tenor for the Capital City’s built fabric. It’s been, at times, a brutally heartbreaking endeavor. For the architect — who grew up in San Antonio (“one of those authentic places”) and has traveled extensively in Europe and Mexico, studying and appreciating those locales’ organic urbanism and grand public spaces — the prevailing attitudes that have shaped the modern Texas city reverberate with all the sense and subtlety of a monster truck’s dyspeptic exhaust pipe. “Why are we so auto-centric?” Black queries, rhetorically. “It’s because we’re kind of dumb.”

Of course, *some* good things have happened. Many of the highlights of Black’s career, including several of the compromises, were on display for the last two months at The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, in an exhibition called “101 Semesters Beyond the Studio.” (Black has taught at the school since Alan Taniguchi hired him in 1962, the same year he opened his firm.) The show surveyed the breadth of the architect’s output, which has included everything from private residences and retail spaces to corporate headquarters and urban plans — even a doghouse, which, for some reason, the curators appropriated for the exhibit’s branding. (“Eat your heart out, Aldo Rossi,” was Black’s tagline for that project.)

In all his work, Black evinces an affinity for daylight, natural materials, and human-scaled spaces. While generally considered a Texas regionalist, he doesn’t profess an adherence to any style. “I think in terms of space, light, and siting,” Black says. “The only thing I do well is site buildings. Some of that comes from growing up in Alamo Heights and trying to save every tree I ever met. It could be called an obsession, but not a style.”

He is most proud, however, not of any building he ever designed, but of the Great Streets Master Plan, which was a collaboration between

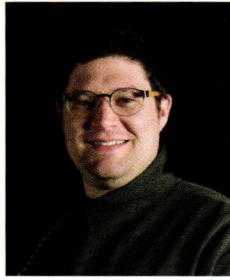
Black’s firm and Donna Carter, FAIA, Lars Stanley, FAIA, Eleanor McKinney, Jose Martinez, and Charles Thompson, FAIA. According to Black + Vernooy’s website, Great Streets is “a comprehensive and integrated urban design strategy for re-making 306 blocks of public right-of-way in Downtown Austin.” The plan reorders the priorities of the street, putting pedestrians first, transit second, bicycles third, and cars last.

So far, Great Streets has only been implemented on the few blocks of rejuvenated Second Street, where it has been successful in both upping the tax base for the city (“We’re talking about billions of dollars for the investment of a few million”) and creating a convivial bustle in that part of downtown. The rollout of the rest of the plan, however, is in limbo, awaiting the approval of funding by the city’s political establishment — Black’s favorite target for scorn. “No-brainers are exactly what the city bureaucrats are not interested in,” he says. “If it benefits everybody and lowers your taxes, they don’t want it.”

Contributors



Anastasia Calhoun, Assoc. AIA is the manager of research and innovation at Overland Partners in San Antonio. She studies connections between seemingly unrelated topics to gain a deeper understanding of the human condition. In this issue she reports on current neurological research studying why certain architectures inspire awe (p. 58).



Jason John Paul Haskins, Assoc. AIA practices with Bercy Chen Studio in Austin. He is a church-building researcher, design consultant, and photographer who writes about liturgy, architecture, and history on the blog “Locus Iste” (*locusiste.org*). His Sacred/Profane feature article examines the return of traditional forms in Christian worship spaces (p. 38).



Antonio Petrov received his doctoral degree in the history and theory of architecture, urbanism, and cultural studies from Harvard University. He is currently assistant professor at The University of Texas at San Antonio. One of his recent classes investigated the relationship between geography and worship as indicated by religious buildings (p. 46).



Michael Friebele, Assoc. AIA is a senior associate with FTA Design Studio in Dallas, and is currently a member of the TxA Publication Committee. He serves as a guest lecturer for the Master of Arts in Design and Innovation program at SMU. Read his article on Philip Johnson’s Thanks-Giving Square on p. 52.

Letters



The following comments appeared on txamagazine.org in response to a March/April 2017 story entitled “Vision for Downtown Austin Buries I-35 and Caps it with a Boulevard”

Reconnect Austin takes on a menacing aspect when one considers how vulnerable it will make East Austin neighborhoods. Gentrification takes no prisoners. To cite just one example, look at how SoCo raped the 78704 area — I speak as one who sold out to escape the carnage, but I’m white and thus less vulnerable to the worst of it. Far from preserving “a collage of distinct zones and districts,” Austin’s transformation into a city with the soul and conscience of a developer is creating economic refugees at a frightening rate, and this project can only streamline the systematic displacement of commoners in favor of the privileged.

Don Taylor

Don Taylor, but what is the alternative? I’ve seen studies that show that normally it is continuous neighborhood decline. Investment is expensive and to cover the costs you have to charge a certain amount, that’s just economics. The key is to make sure that people are treated fairly during the process and to put in incentives to make sure that subsequent developments feature a variety of housing modes and pricing.

Brian Boland

Sounds great but I have to wonder if the state would even help fund this in such a contentious political climate.

JB

The following comment appeared on txamagazine.org in response to a March/April 2017 review of Wendy Lesser’s book “You Say Brick: The Life of Louis Kahn”

I’m very pleased that the noted Kahn scholar Mark Gunderson has responded to my book so thoughtfully and at such length. Just a few factual corrections: Kahn’s high school architect teacher was William, not Walter, Gray; his birth name was Leiser-Itze, not Itze-Leib (I am going by the actual rabbinical record of his birth); Marie Kuo married in 1964, but left Kahn’s office in 1966 to stay home with her and her husband’s child; and I certainly did not mean to imply anything untoward about Kahn’s relationship with his sister-in-law. In general. But these are minor points, and the review as a whole stands as an excellent example of its kind, full of the reviewer’s own knowledge about and affection for Louis Kahn.

Wendy Lesser

Berkeley, CA

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**Verses on Clarity:
The 2017 TxA Design
Conference**

The movie begins
in West Texas
on a rusty deck
overlooking the boggling
beige immensity
of the Chihuahuan Desert
lavender mountains
dissolving
into the blue sky

“Are those cliffs two
miles away, or twenty?”
an architect says. “It’s
so hard to get a sense of
scale out here.”

Everyone nods
heads on swivels
like prairie dogs
agog
puzzling the distance
traveled
to reach this place
which seems like no place
but the wind’s own

“The horny toads are all
gone,” the typographer
says. “The fire ants got
them. Ate the babies.”

He steps from sun
into shade cast
by the building
five steel containers
with glass fronts
and sloped roofs
the line between
sun and shade
like that separating
two worlds
having nothing
to do with each other

“If I lived out here,” the
poet says, “I’d want a
helicopter.”

O, Marfa
you’re so high and dry
the view goes on

for miles beneath the sky
In the dim interior
of the Crowley Theater
we hear
Carlos Jiménez

Behind a wall
reaching out
to the city
a quiet prayer
to forgo formal
fantasies and
consumerist excesses
an architecture
of simple forms that
reveals its complexities
and its intentions
over time

“What we are really doing
as architects is construct-
ing time,” Jiménez says.

His buildings dot
that high desert town
Hotel St. George
St. George Hall
Crowley Theater
the Crowley House
now Ranch 2810
each an essay
in restraint
the product
of careful observation

“The most important
tool for an architect is
observation,” Jiménez
paraphrases Rossi.
“Observations become
memories that can be
drawn from again and
again.”

Tesnus
at Ranch 2810
once a dream isolated
in the oceanic domain
now made plain
by vanity and pain
the books on the shelves
bought in bulk
the lion skin on the floor
dead to the view



of the limpid mountains
but the filmic sequence
still in place
the passage
from room to room
a revelation
of the landscape
its terrifying sweep
and the cozy
comforts of home

“There were originally
native grasses here,
but the new owners are
afraid of snakes so they
planted a lawn,” Jiménez
says. “Otherwise, it looks
as it did when it was
finished, except the tree
is bigger.”

O, Marfa
you were once nowhere
the water broke
and now your name is
blare

In the dim interior
of the Crowley Theater
we hear
Christine Ten Eyck

Landscape architect
of an arid land
Architect’s Sister
opens with an apology
then quotes Craig Childs

“There are two easy ways
to die in the desert: thirst
and drowning.”

She begins
by observing the movement
of water across the site

“That’s clarity,” Ten Eyck
says.

On a mission
to rip up asphalt
and corny dog trees
that don’t so much as
move in the wind
replacing them
with a paradise
of harsh beauty

“Big-Time Nature,” Ten
Eyck says.

The memory of
arroyos and washes

tough native plants
that speak the
immutable language
of the desert
creosote and lechuguilla
yucca and mesquite
appealing to the senses
through myriad
textures to connect
the urban dweller
with nature
without shame
regardless of
consequences

Rodney the Roadrunner
killed by feral cats

“There are problems with
wildlife in the city,” Ten
Eyck says. “I’m not a very
firm person.”

Earth Wind Water Fire
The Capri at night
Orion the mighty hunter
alight in the sky
a bachelorette party
from Illinois
high-heel walking
toward the flashing

Pure Joy gallery, Marfa.



yellow light
at Highland

“We didn’t think it would
be so desolate here,” one
girl says.

The mournful horn
of the muffled train
dividing the town
the impassive
adobe face
of Judd’s Block
like the walls of
Spanish Missions
among hostile Indians

O, Marfa
the fire burns all night
the drums tum-tum
the sparks become a kite

In the dim interior
of the Crowley Theater
we hear
Rick Joy

Sunlight dancing
against a wall
the ground edges
of broken sidewalks
the patterns of
trampled dust
on a gallery floor
little emotional moments
so important for
making architecture
that is as much
a lifestyle proposition
as a building

“They live beautifully in
the house,” Joy says.

Comprehensively
observant
conceptually insightful
moving around
like animals do
for the sun

“Light the life, not the
building,” Joy says.

The details supporting
the concept
cherishing the spirit
of the site
the building culture
of the place
part of an evolution
striving for endurance
not tied to
archaic forms
but made like ruins
nonetheless

“Learn the tradition, but
use your brain,” Joy says.
“Our brains are the big-
gest file. Remember that
architecture is hard. But
it’s also a blast.”

It’s a who’s who
around the bar
at Stellina
the names from New York
and Los Angeles
their laughter

like laughter
gulping wine
enjoying the Marfan time
the hazy light
radiating from
high white walls
when a guy
an artist a filmmaker
a musician poet
mystic thinker tinker
falls off his stool

They can’t wake him
can’t get him to
stand again
he hangs in their arms
like jelly in a bag
eyes shut tight
big glasses
and flat-brimmed
baseball cap
knocked askew

Marfa’s one ambulance
comes to take him away
blue and red lights

flashing through
the storefront

“There’s a saying here,”
the local says. “It’s a long
drive to Alpine.”

O, Marfa
you won’t die today
your saving grace
is you’re so far away



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Thom Mayne, seated at center, acted as a consultant for UH studios that focused on urban issues, taught by Peter Zweig, Matt Johnson, and Jason Logan.

**Studios at UH with Thom Mayne
Envision Futures of Houston**

What does the near future of Houston hold? Will driverless cars crisscross the highways functioning as mobile offices, hotels, and cafes? Will migration patterns of drones dot the sky delivering packages based on peak consumer seasons and online flash sales? How can sustainable energy and its infrastructure gain momentum to coexist in tandem with oil production? Can we imagine a city where zoning overlaps and interweaves?

Houston, infamously the only American city without zoning, a large petrochemical industry, downtown interstitial spaces, and a delicate bayou network prone to flooding, was intensely and ambitiously studied, mapped, and reimagined in studio courses spanning three semesters and a summer in Los Angeles with pin-ups at Morphosis, the office of Pritzker-prize winning architect Thom Mayne, FAIA. He acted

as a consultant to the studios taught by three University of Houston College of Architecture faculty members — Peter Zweig, FAIA, Matt Johnson, and Jason Logan.

“The Hines College of Architecture and Design has long declared the city as our laboratory,” says Dean Patricia Oliver, FAIA. “In a sense, we have a responsibility to study the challenges our city faces. We anticipate that there are insights, or moments of inspiration, that might shine a light on a potential issue and its solution, that might inspire Houstonians to act to make our city better.”

The professors worked with a cast of almost 30 rotating students who began by tackling complex issues: vacancies in the central business district and patterns of occupancy and development; the growth of concentric, sprawl, satellite, and genetic cities creating their own centers; innovative green energy sources, research, and remediation; democratic housing; repurposing parking spots; consumer logistics; flooding and post-disaster

urbanism; natural and manmade ecological solutions; the future of the ship channel and ports; regional transport and mobility; and the implications and opportunities of a lack of zoning.

As Mayne said in a speech to the students: “Luckily, architects have massively different roles in the real world. There is no clear notion of what architecture is at this point in time, and you’re going to have to decide at some point what you believe it is. You’re going to be moving through this maze and I’m going to show you my maze, as I keep asking you questions about yours.”

In addition to founding Morphosis, Mayne was the executive founding director of the Now Institute, a think tank for urban research, strategy, and speculation at the University of California, Los Angeles, which is Oliver’s alma mater. He flew into Houston for various crit sessions and also invited the students out for a summer studio in LA, where they toured LA architecture studios, including Frank

Gehry's, and the construction site of Mayne's personal house.

Eui-Sung Yi, a principal at Morphosis and Now Institute director, also worked with the students in LA and Houston as their projects developed.

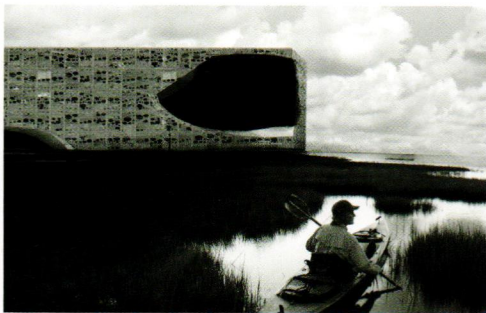
Johnson's studio dissected Houston into three phases: protection, remediation, and activation. "We engaged with the urban through the notion of energy networks and spatial configuration," Johnson says. "There's a balancing act between the conceptual and social issues."

In Logan's studio, the focus was on the lack of zoning and how it could generate exceptional forms of urbanism and architecture.

Zweig's studio examined downtown vacancies and how emerging technologies, such as drone release stations and driverless cars, could create a new tower typology.

Oliver worked to procure Mayne as consultant to the school and, with Zweig, flew to LA to make the initial meetings.

"I thought Thom would be interested in Houston since he has been very focused on urbanism," Oliver says. "In our college, we had just finished a project with Buenos Aires, Delft,



Top Students in Matt Johnson's studios studied coastal flooding mitigation and sustainable energy sources and infrastructure in the Houston-Galveston area. Above and left Katrina Winsko's "Energy Island" and Grant Lewis' "Wetline" are among the projects that will be exhibited at the Aedes Architecture Forum in Berlin this summer. Mayne, Gerald D. Hines, and Wolf Prix are slated to speak at a symposium there.

RENDERINGS BY GRANT LEWIS AND KATRINA WINSKO



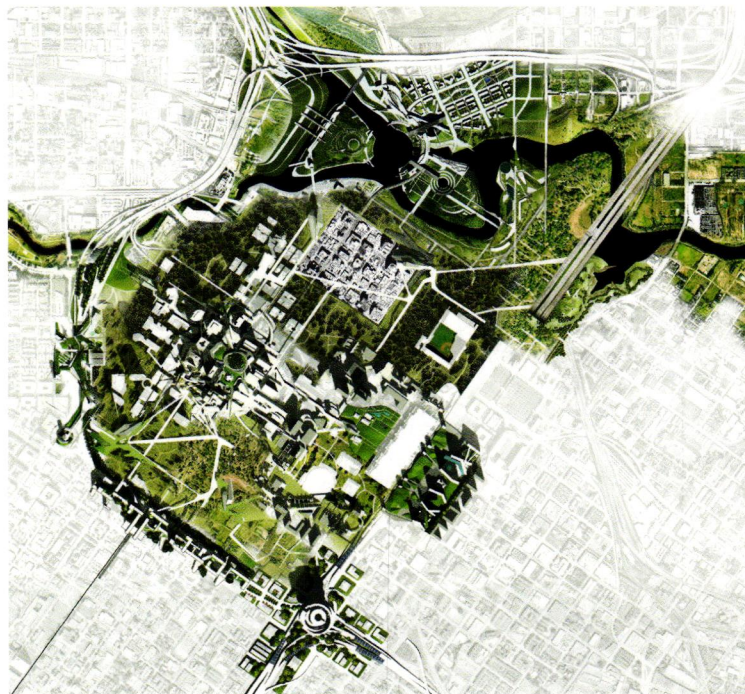
and Tulane University where we investigated the impact of living on a delta.”

Oliver and Zweig brought Mayne the books they published on the delta project, “Risky Habit[at]: Dynamic Living on Buffalo Bayou,” which won the Global Art Affairs Foundation Prize at the Venice Biennale in 2014, besting 100 architects, two Pritzker Prize winners, and 40 countries.

“With the rising seas and climate changes, we are entering a new age,” Zweig says. “Humans must learn to live with the natural environment in a sustainable way.”

The student work will be exhibited at the Aedes Architecture Forum in Berlin from June–July 2017. Mayne, Gerald D. Hines, and Wolf Prix will participate in a symposium there on June 24. A studio book is forthcoming in the fall.

Florence Tang, Assoc. AIA, is an architectural designer, manager, and journalist based in Houston.



Above “Thick Infrastructure” by Clark Reed, a student in Jason Logan’s studio, which reconsidered and reimagined what Houston could be if zoning was overlapped and interwoven, instead of its current flat condition.

Left “PHASE 5: Re-imagining downtown Houston” by Munjer Hashim and Hicham Ghoulam, from Peter Zweig’s studio, which considered vacancy and occupancy rates in downtown.

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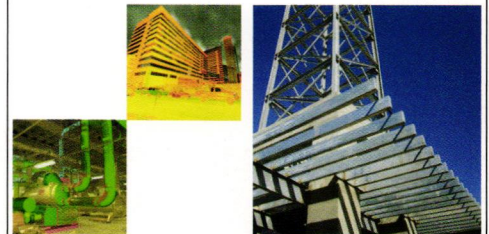
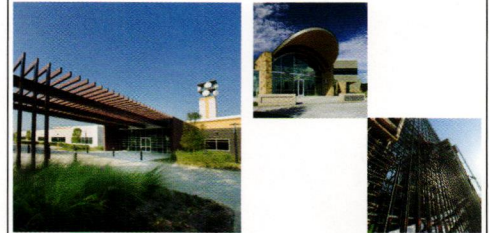
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2017 Studio Awards Call for Entries

These awards recognize unbuilt projects demonstrating innovation and excellence in design. Real or theoretical projects that go beyond the boundaries of architecture by addressing current critical issues are encouraged.

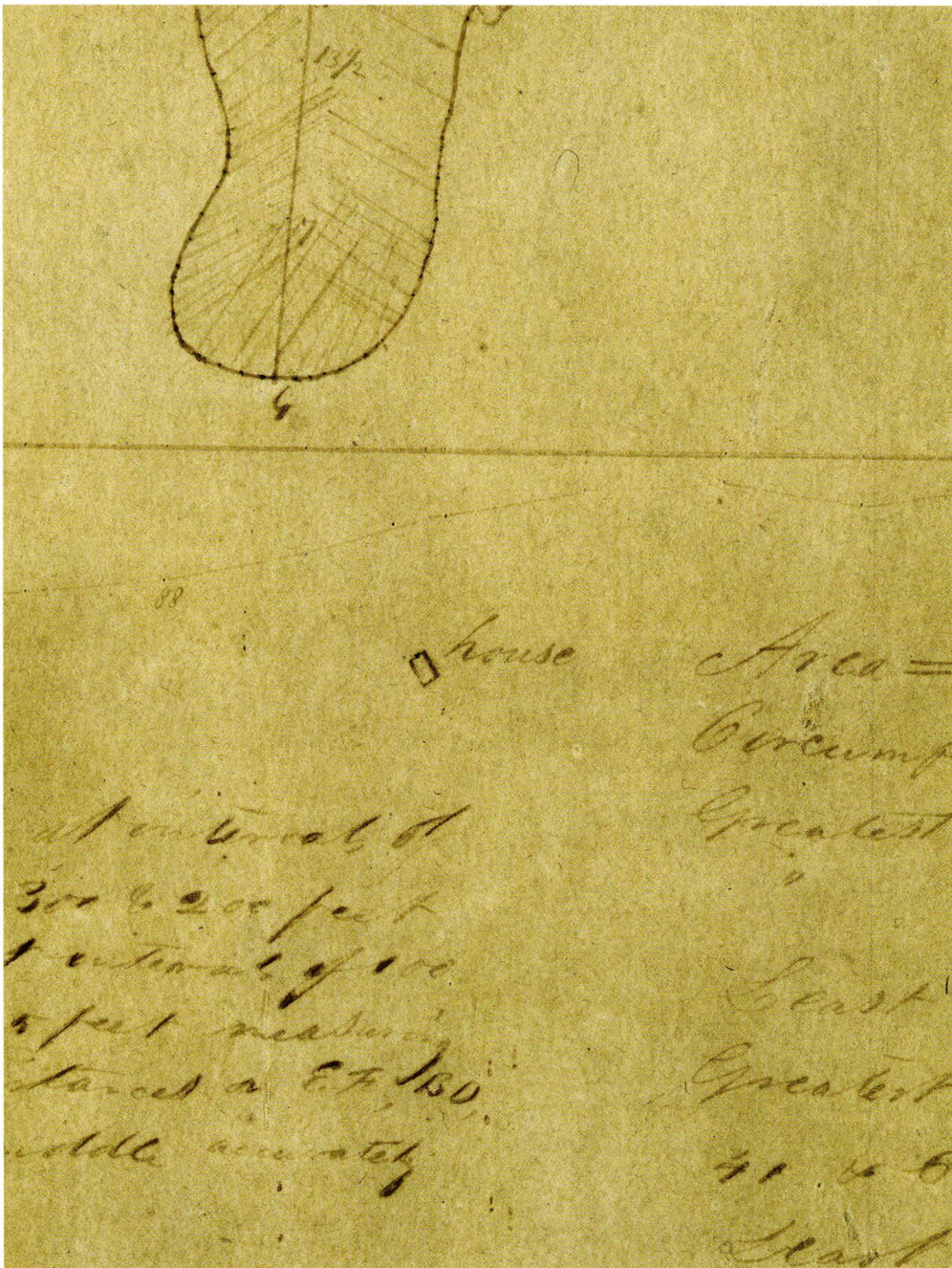
Entry Deadline
8 June 2017

www.texasarchitects.org/studioawards



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Detail from the 1846 Thoreau survey of Walden Pond showing the location of the house and the edge of the pond.

Book Review

Rooms for Thought

How Much House? Thoreau, Le Corbusier and the Sustainable Cabin
 by Urs Peter Flueckiger
 Birkhauser, \$34.95

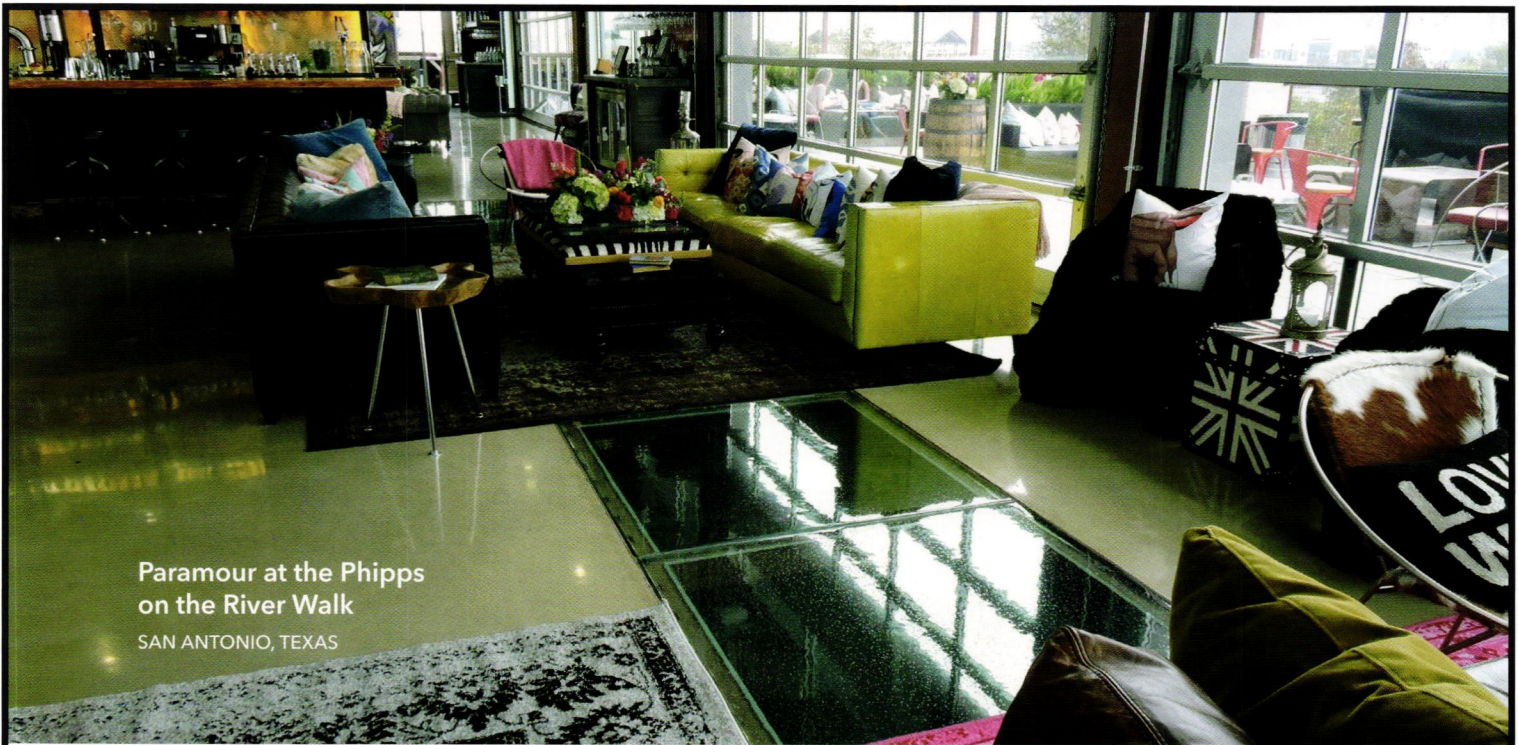
*“You want room for your thoughts...
 Our sentences want room to unfold.”*
 — Henry David Thoreau, *On Walden Pond*, 1854

This simple, small, linen-bound volume addresses the perceived ‘need’ for vast amounts of space in the typical American house and questions the actual motivations by telling the story of three ‘one-room’ cabins built over a span of over 160 years and two continents – Henry David Thoreau’s cabin at Walden Pond (no longer extant, though a reconstruction is nearby to the original site); Le Corbusier’s *Mod-ulator*-based *Cabanon* near the Cote d’Azur beach in France where he drowned while swimming in 1965; and a Texas Tech student project on the plains near Crowell, Texas, built in the semesters between 2008 and 2010. It attempts to bring the concerns of the earlier cabins to the present day.

While each, in its own way, could function as a ‘house,’ their primary idea was that of a place to repair; to retreat from others, to refrain and offer a place to think quietly. The Texas Tech cabin was designed to this program even if its first ‘use’ was academic. The freedom from distraction offers the ability to consider more deeply. In two examples, a waterfront site adds to this capacity for reflection. The third sits in the Staked Plains of the Panhandle, a landscape frequently described (by Coronado, Olmsted, and others) as an ‘ocean’ in its planar vastness.

Reduced to an inflected box, two of the cabins profiled were basically the size of a one-car garage. Thoreau’s cabin was 10 ft by 15 ft, a 2-to-3 proportion. Le Corbusier’s cabin was 12 ft by 12 ft, excluding a narrow 2-ft and 4-in-by-12-ft strip of entry hall and toilet, which he preferred not to acknowledge in published square footage, making the primary space a perfect square in plan. The Tech “Sustainable Cabin” derives its dimensions in part from the use of a “doublewide” trailer platform as base; it is 12 ft by 24 ft. A double square. A 10-ft span, in the case of Thoreau, and two 12-ft spans, in architectural terms, in the latter. “To live life simply,” in the words of Thoreau.

While this is an issue of size (quantity of space), it is also one of quality and the essential. In paring down size and complications — Donald Judd made very clear the distinction between *complicated* and *complex*: “complicated” means something has too many parts for the idea — each space acquires, it could be argued, a depth, richness, and complexity that transcend immediate use. ‘Generic’ form is timeless and open to unknown usage. It could also be argued that the more vast the context, the simpler the form ‘required’



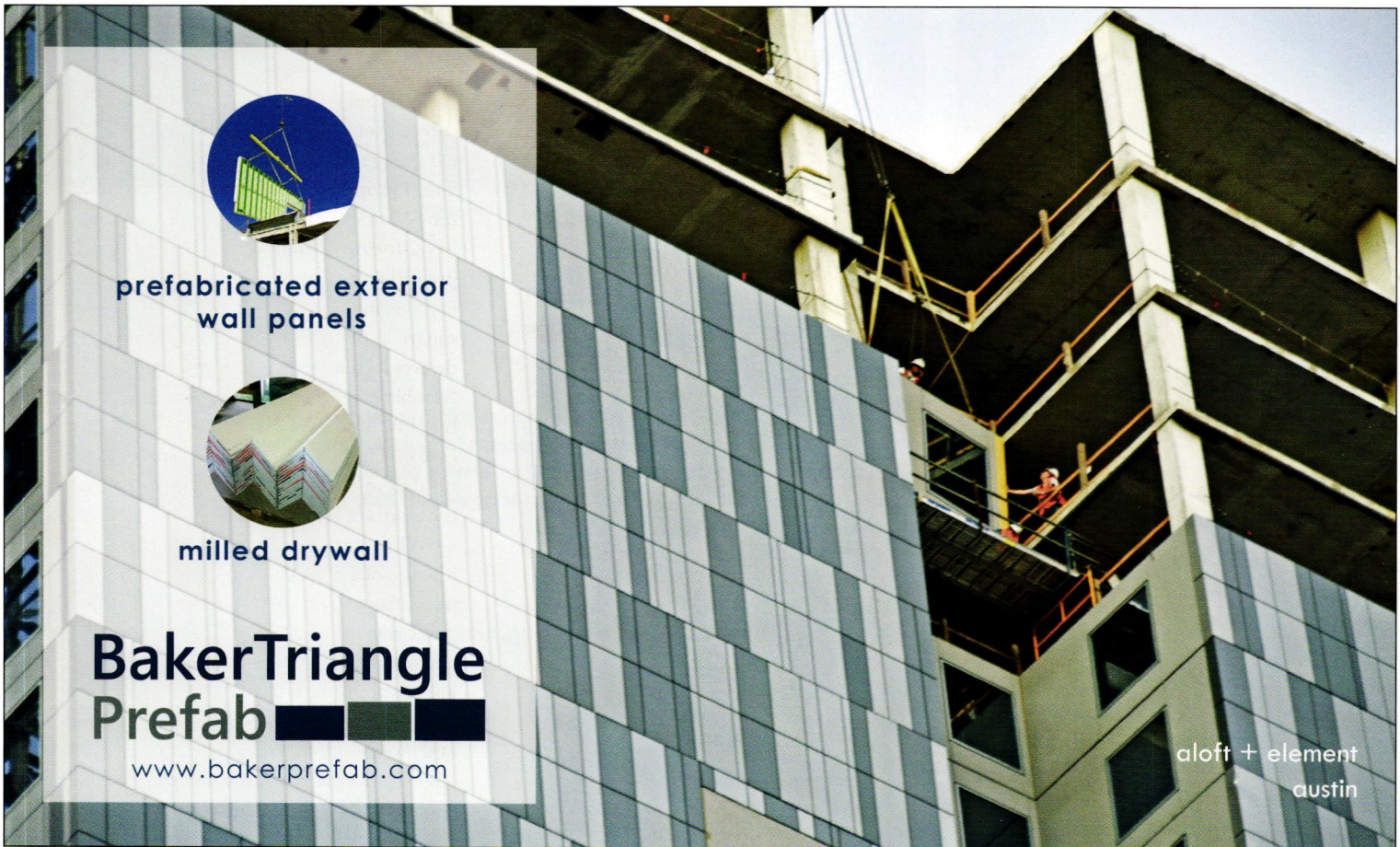
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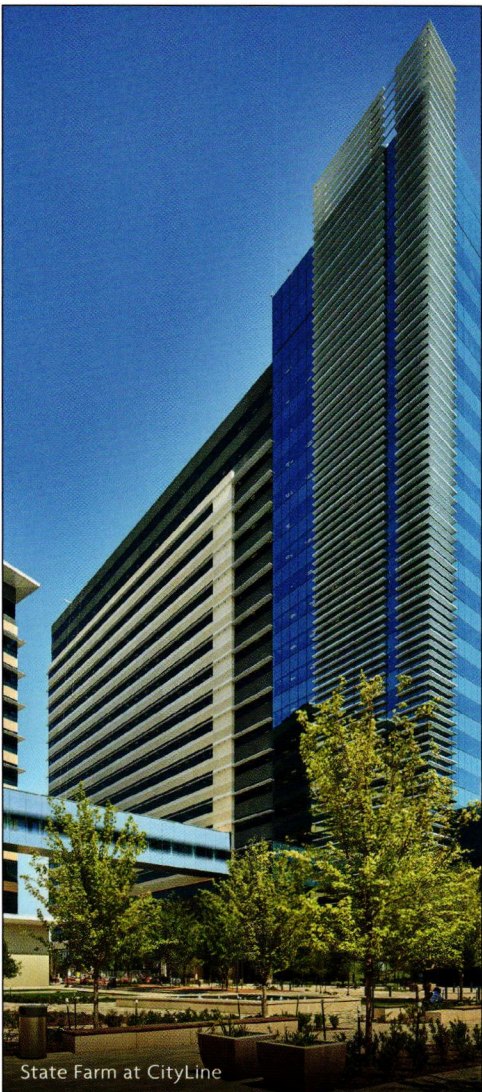


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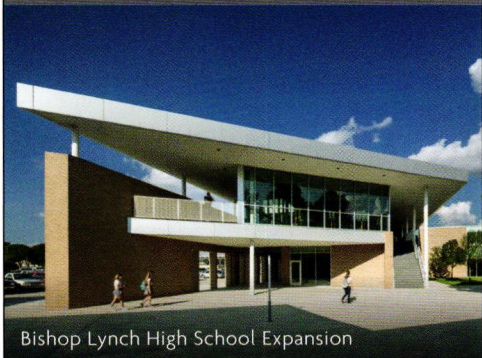
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photo by Thomas McConnell

LBJ Presidential Library, recipient of TxA's 25-Year Award in 2016.

2017 Honor Awards Call for Nominations

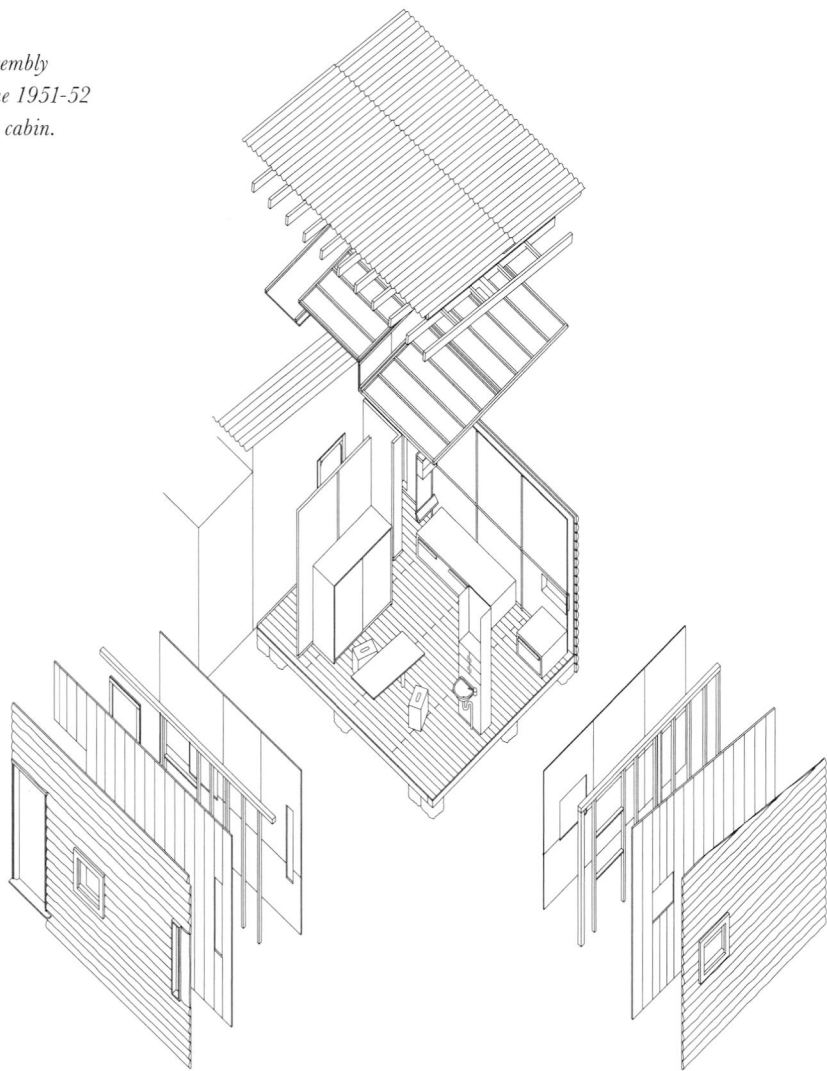
The Honor Awards recognize exceptional members, firms, individuals, and organizations for outstanding achievements in support of the profession of architecture, the built environment, and the quality of life in Texas.

Submission Deadline
19 June 2017

www.texasarchitects.org/honorawards

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Society of
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Exploded assembly
drawing of the 1951-52
Le Corbusier cabin.



to stand in the landscape. A reciprocity of the manmade with the natural. The book outlines the need and desire for withdrawal from overstimulation by noting many of the host of distractions that attend to us today – especially digital forms.

The author, Urs Peter ‘Upe’ Flueckiger, is a professor of architecture at the Texas Tech College of Architecture since 1998, and a practicing architect. He is from Switzerland, originally, where he worked for Mario Botta, and is most well known for his 2007 book “Donald Judd Architecture,” which provided concisely-measured drawings of Judd’s constructed works in Marfa, Texas. As he knows well, mensuration is a form of description; perhaps the only one with any true integrity. The book is out of print and much desired on the market.

Flueckiger quotes Tolstoy’s 1886 short story, “How Much Land Does a Man Need?” in his excellent introductory essay to the new book.

The story serves as parable, noting the human propensity for greed and its consequences in one brilliant, brief lesson.

Elaborating on the post-WWII American prosperity and current manifestations of excess, the book makes evident a kind of voracious acquisitional aggressiveness on the part of the American people: non-sustainable — even immoral, perhaps, in an extreme view.

Flueckiger carefully delineates the *de facto* use of most residential garages today as storage space and observes perceptively the purging of accumulations in ‘garage sales’; a kind of private ‘flea market’ in the United States.

Thoreau’s construction made liberal and deliberate use of recycled materials. Le Corbusier’s structure was pre-fabricated off-site and then shipped and reassembled in place. One could argue both were acts of a moral frugality in the idea of human habitat and not

an insatiable need to compete or give evidence of social standing.

Le Corbusier famously designed *le Cabanon* in 45 minutes as a birthday gift for his wife Yvonne. He was 64 years old and called it a “holiday house or cabin.” It used the “little snack bar on the Cote d’Azur” where he sketched his conception as the appended cabin’s ‘kitchen.’ The owners were friends, and so, in somewhat parasitic manner, a door connects the two and allows the affable mixed use.

A chair. A table. A window. Much of our existence could in some poetic way be narrowed down to these three constructions. Even if, for much of our existence as human beings, these rudimentary ‘instruments’ were not common. In 1922, Le Corbusier had designed an earlier house for his mother that included an exterior entry court composed with these three elements and a large tree; and in 1962, Alison and Peter Smithson designed a small house in Fonthill that quoted the same exterior assemblage. Both were simply garden ‘prefaces’ to the actual small house, a kind of evocation of the idea of a house as entry *tableau*. Attempts to capture the poetic essence of human life.

Other excellent precedents for one-room retreats exist. Ludwig Wittgenstein, for example, working on the draft of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, built a small cabin for himself on a bluff overlooking a lake in Fiordo Skjolden, Norway. Only the stone foundation plinth remains. A few photos of it, perched high on a point overlooking the lake, show it to be somewhat larger, perhaps, with shuttered windows in Scandinavian style.

Interestingly, each of the earlier cabins had a second structure closely related although seldom discussed. Thoreau had a small woodshed, and Le Corbusier built an even more simple 6-ft-wide plywood box to serve as a drafting room with window — a retreat even from the vacation retreat. The short walk to the tiny second structure (the *baroque de chantier*) past a large Carob tree no doubt increased the sense of solitude.

“How Much House?” is an excellent synopsis of the issues involved and gives a coherent overview of the three cabins as well as details of their design and construction. The distillation of images provided — both drawings and photos, historic and contemporary — is the perfect accompaniment to the text in setting tone and providing explanation.

W. Mark Gunderson, AIA, is an architect in Fort Worth.

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Student Design Competition at Texas A&M Explores a Museum of Waste

The Texas A&M University College of Architecture organized a student design contest in Fall 2016, seeking uses for the standardized waste products produced by the auto manufacturing industry. The competition brief tasked students with putting scrap sheet metal to use in designing a Houston-based Museum of Waste. The museum would be small, less than 30,000 sf, and dedicated to explaining how design can help reduce waste.

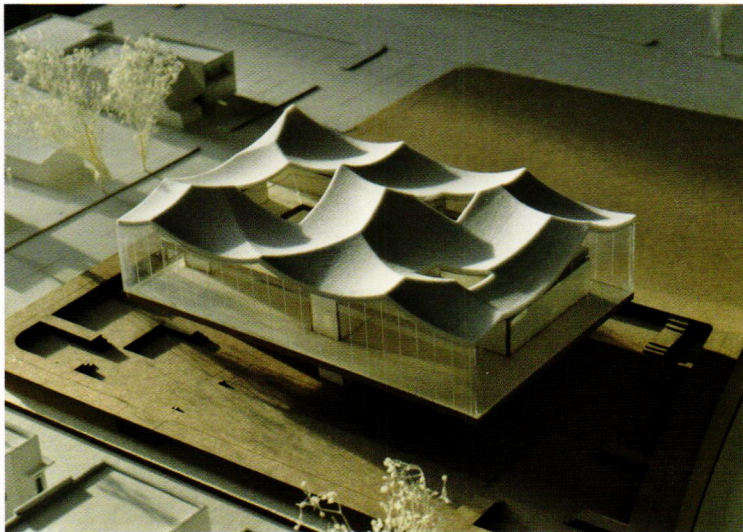
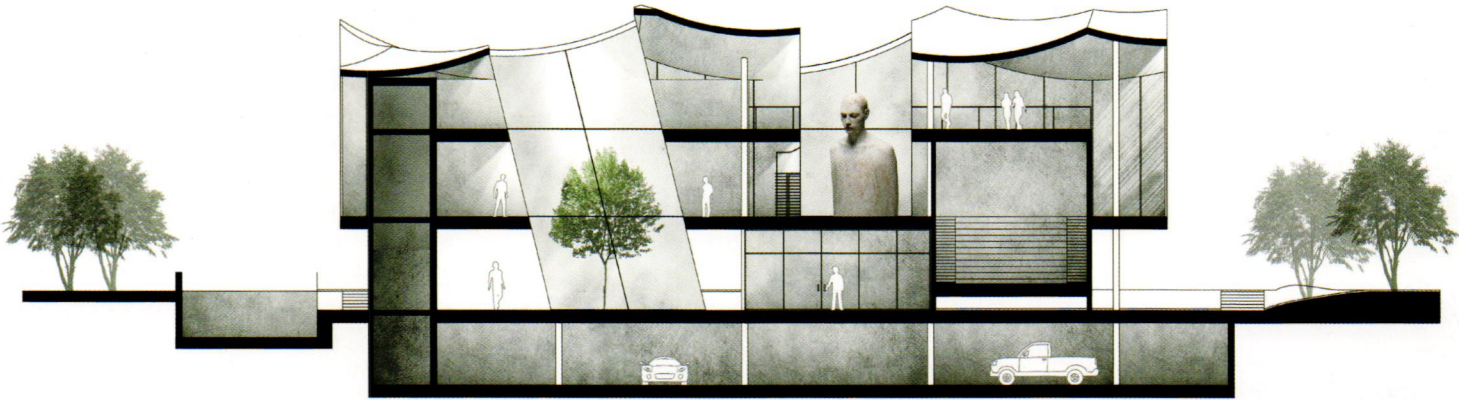
Working in partnership with General Motors, the students were provided with information about the tremendous amount of scrap sheet metal — known as offal — that is produced from stamping out car parts. John Bradburn, GM’s Global Waste Reduction Manager, served as one of the members of the jury,

along with chair Ryan Jones, AIA, an associate partner at Lake|Flato Architects; co-chair Kendall Clarke, an intern at Corgan; Gary Davis, director of marketing at Zahner; and Andrew Mangan, executive director of the U.S. Business Council for Sustainable Development.

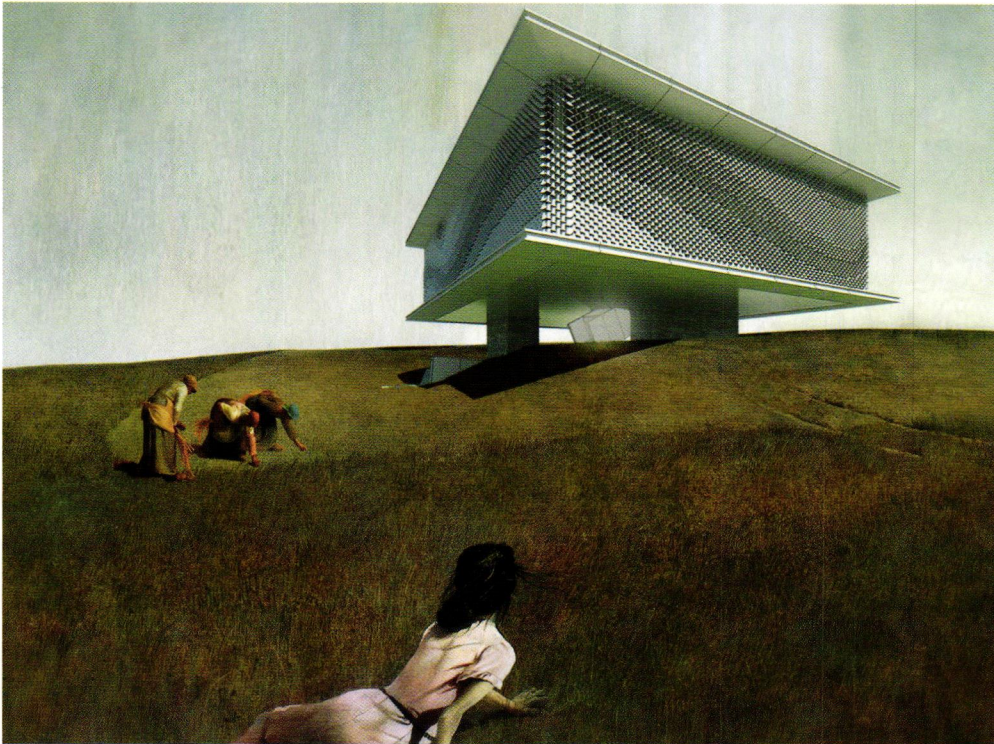
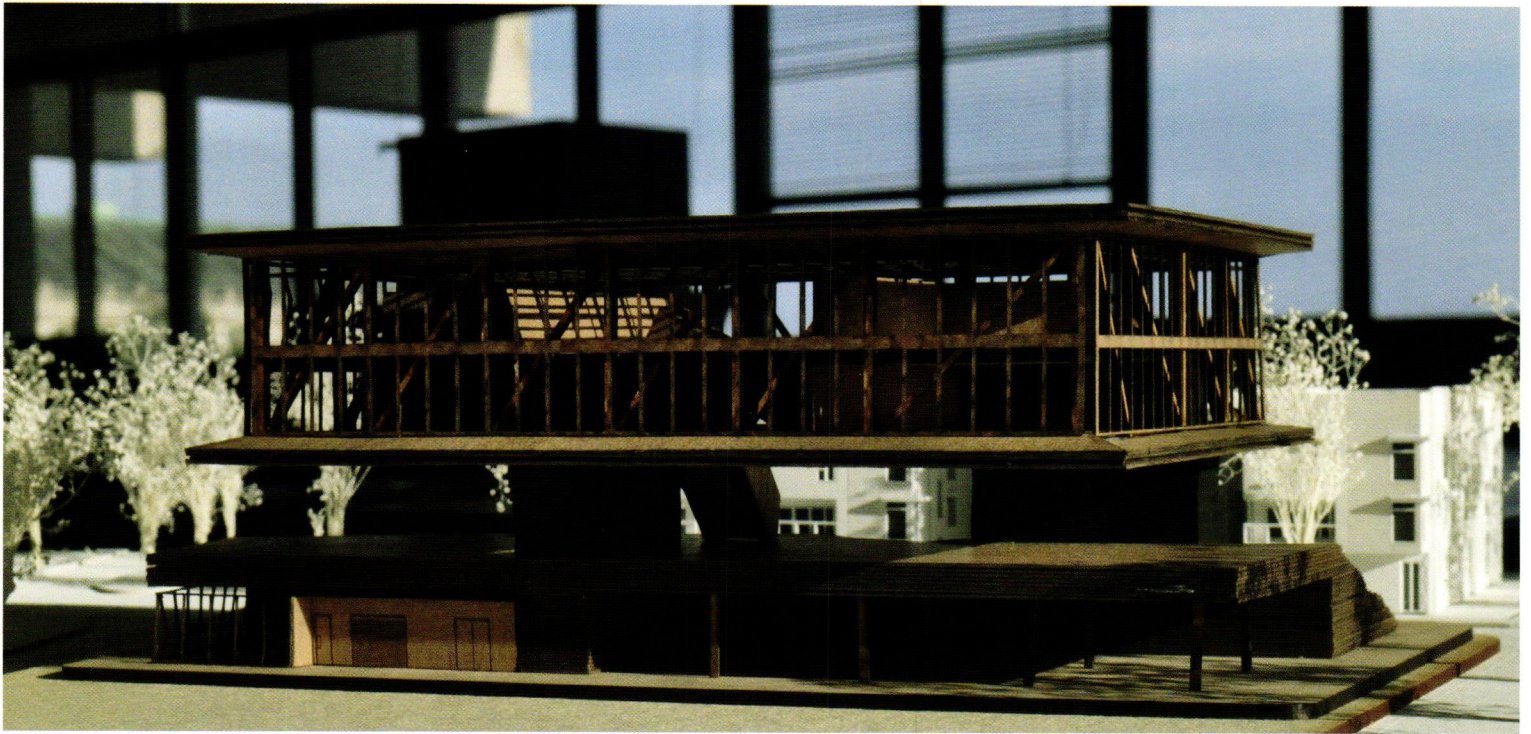
“There was a lot of elegant work produced as part of this competition, and for that, all the students should be commended,” said Jones. “Many projects showed extensive abilities in areas outside of the primary interests of this competition, and we want to assure those students that their ideas were noticed and appreciated. The winners were those who embraced the brief, integrating the sheet metal appropriately and efficiently.”

Yingzhe Duan was awarded first place for a project that was functional, practical, and replicable. Jones notes, “We were excited about the ability of this concept to be uniquely studied for

The first place winning proposal, by Yingzhe Duan, uses offal — sheet metal left over from car manufacturing — in its perforated skin system. The swooping forms of the roof are reinforced concrete.



IMAGES BY YINGZHE DUAN



The competition's runner up, by Panwang Huo, is described as "a serious attempt at making poetry from trash." It uses the offal to create a screen on the facade that opens and closes to modulate light and air on the interior.

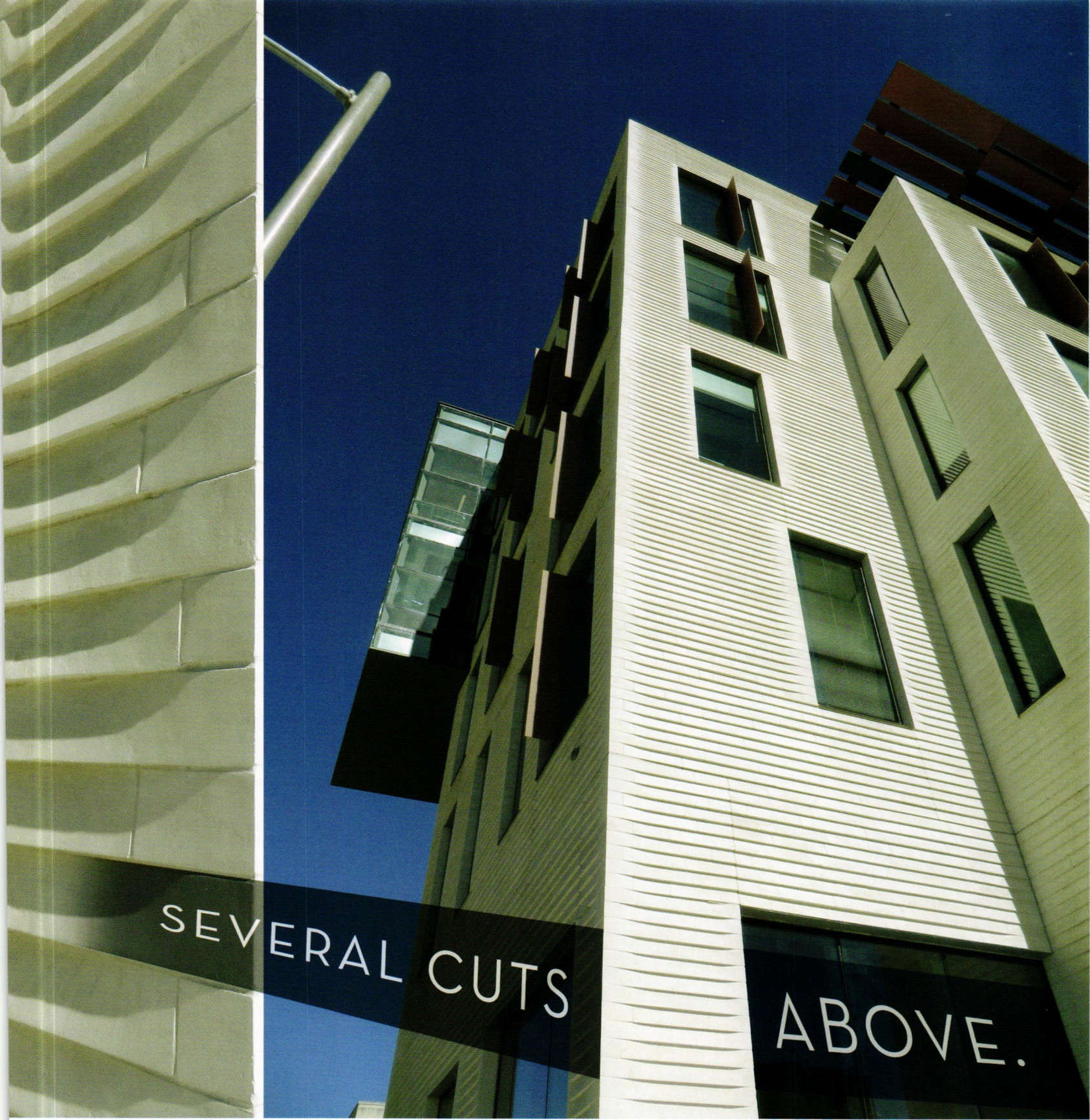
each of the offal patterns available and felt that its ability to be mass-customized and fabricated was not just possible, but very likely."

Panwang Huo, the contest's runner-up, integrated the material while creating a well-designed museum experience. The jury commented that they "appreciated the elaborated design of structural and daylighting systems within the building and their ability to showcase sustainable systems design while also creating wonderful programmatic experiences."

TAMU Assistant Professor of Architecture Ahmed Ali organized the competition and has plans for many more. "I think there is a lot of benefit to the profession and also to the students to raise their independent thinking through an annual competition," he says.

The brief created challenges, forcing students to bring together a wide array of different skillsets to create successful designs. "They learned to think unconventionally, now that the design is tied to a real problem and in particular the problem of waste," Ali says. "The other thing is to come up with a solution that's not theoretical but practical. It's actually addressing a major environmental issue, and at the same time they are exploring the opportunities that we call synergy between two different industries. Business opportunities might emerge out of the power of design."

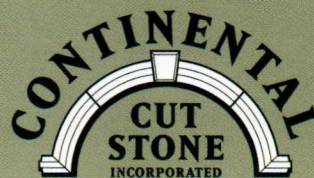
Alyssa Morris is web editor of *Texas Architect*.



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Q&A with Michelle Addington

After an exhaustive hunt turned up four finalists, The University of Texas at Austin has selected Michelle Addington as the School of Architecture's new dean. Addington replaces Interim Dean Elizabeth Danze, FAIA, who had served in the role since July 2016 following the departure of Fritz Steiner. Addington is currently the Hines Professor of Sustainable Architectural Design at the Yale School of Architecture. Educated in architecture and as an engineer, she worked at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and as a manager at DuPont before teaching at Harvard and Yale. She holds degrees from Tulane and Temple universities, as well as a doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. *TA* Web Editor Alyssa Morris recently spoke to Addington about the move to Texas and the future of architectural education.

Alyssa Morris: You're trained as an engineer as well as an architect and worked for NASA and DuPont. Can you tell us about what you did for those institutions and how that has influenced your thinking on architecture?

Michelle Addington: I'd say that if you could sum up the way that I am as an engineer, it's that I really love to understand how things work. That ends up becoming quite formational for me. At NASA, I worked on unmanned crafts — satellites and small rockets — at the Goddard Space Flight Center. I had a really rare opportunity when I was there in my last year to be part of a think tank. I think that working with some of the most imaginative people in the world and the way that they asked questions was incredibly transformational for me.

I was trained as a mechanical nuclear engineer. I did more of that at DuPont. I did everything from process design to power plant design, and then I was promoted up through the ranks of management, ran both quality assurance and engineering research, and then became a manufacturing manager and the manager of nylon operations for a particular kind of nylon that was manufactured in Delaware. I worked at a lot of different plants and a lot of different jobs. It was an incredible experience.

At DuPont, that's where I saw the value of seeing problems from multiple viewpoints and where I learned most of my managerial skills.

DuPont had an incredible culture of respect that was necessary in order to get a job done. I don't know if it's still like that, but that's what it was like when I was there.

Have you ever practiced architecture?

I did. I practiced some after I got my B. Arch. in Philadelphia. I practiced in a very small firm that specialized in working with composite materials. At the time, I had given up on engineering. It was in working at that firm, in doing this work in composite materials, that I realized that I still loved my engineering half. That's what encouraged me to go to Harvard.

What is the value of an interdisciplinary approach to architectural education?

The School of Architecture has the whole sweep of design disciplines. All of these design disciplines, and architecture more than any of them, we consider to be inherently interdisciplinary. We may not be experts in any of these disciplines, but we're always having to negotiate the different types of context and content. If there is any way of thinking that for the future is incredibly important to the world at large, it's the ability to see things from multiple points of view and be comfortable with content that's coming from radically different places. There are so many different things that we have got to negotiate and be familiar with. What a great model, not just for how we are as designers or architects, but how we should be looking at some of the world's most important problems.

Where do you see the state of sustainable architecture today and where do you think it will be headed in the future?

I think it's at an incredible crossroads. One of the reasons I'm so excited about coming to UT is that they have one of the very first programs in sustainable design. For many years, much of the approach to sustainable design was on best practices — trying to codify best practices and teach others. What we're seeing now is that we need to make much more aggressive moves and also think beyond the idea that we deal with a sustainable product. If we're addressing sustainability, we're addressing it over much larger territories. We can't think that making net zero buildings adds up to make a difference — they won't.

“If we’re going to be in this world, then we’re going to have to start having the world be in us as well.”

How will your background influence your approach to steering UTSOA?

Well I think this is where the DuPont background was really valuable. I was very well trained there and had an opportunity to be fully mentored as I worked my way up through the ranks. They had an approach there that was very much one I admire in terms of increasing graciousness and a level of respect as you moved up. I learned which things had to be about consensus and which things had to be top down, as well as how to provide direction as opposed to imprinting your set of values and desires on the place. You lead for the greater good, not your own interest. Most managerial roles in academia are people who promote up from the faculty and have never had the opportunity to experience management from any other point of view.

What do you think architecture schools could be doing better?

I think that architecture schools in general have not fully come to grips with the concerns of a really rapidly changing world. I think we're uniquely positioned. Look at the shift that has taken place in what is considered to be the domain of architecture. The 20th century was focused on delivering the final product at the end. With the digital turn, it became as much about the method of design as the product of design. We haven't fully embraced what the incredible power of the method of design is going to be. It's our methods, not as a peripheral spinoff of what we do, but the ability to map all of this different information coming in to look at boundaries that are different from domain to domain to domain and understand what those intersections are. I think fully taking responsibility for the fact that in this age of big data, we really are going to be the ones that are able to understand.

You will be UTSOA's first female dean. How do you intend to approach the continuing lack of diversity in the profession?

Elizabeth Danze is the one who should be honored with that title and not me. This is an issue, not just the issue of women, but very much the issue of underrepresented minorities in the field as well, which is unfortunate. I was really inspired by comments that Deborah Berke made when she became dean at Yale. Those that practice architecture should be representative of those that consume it. I certainly agree with her on that. If we're going to be in this world, then we're going to have to start having the world be in us as well. How we do it is a much more complex array, whether one begins by working with the K-12 schools or how outreach begins to happen.

Two weeks ago, I was lecturing at New Jersey Tech. They have a program for high school girls to come in every Friday to the materials lab at the school of architecture where they're working on robotics. What a great idea. We have a lot to do. Part of it is who we are and how we bring in the next generation, but part of it is in the types of issues and questions we choose to be involved with.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I am incredibly excited about coming to Texas. For me, it's a place that's like home. I'm incredibly excited after having been at Yale School of Architecture for 11 years, which is only architecture and corporate architecture. We do a very good job of educating students who do quite well and are immensely employable. I feel as though that should be a minimum criteria. We have an obligation to every student to make sure that they can be productive, employable and — what's beyond that — what they contribute to society at large.

I'm incredibly excited about being immersed in the full set of design disciplines. The issues that the university and the school are grappling with in terms of climate change and globalization — it's the right place to be asking those questions.

Calendar

MAY

Saturday 6

TOUR
Galveston Historic
Homes Tour
Galveston Historical
Foundation
galvestonhistory.org

Sunday 7

EXHIBITION CLOSING
Revelations: Masterworks
by African American
Artists
McNay Art Museum
6000 N. New Braunfels Ave.
San Antonio
mcnayart.org

Sunday 7

EXHIBITION CLOSING
Spring 2017 Interna-
tional Artist-in-Residence
Program
Artpace
San Antonio
artpace.org

Monday 8

EVENT
AIA San Antonio Scholar-
ship Golf Classic
Republic Golf Course
4226 SE Military Dr.
San Antonio
aiasa.org

Wednesday 10

EVENT
Acme Brick Golf Tourna-
ment
Waterchase Golf Club
8951 Creek Run Rd.
Fort Worth
aiafw.org

Friday 12

EVENT
AIA Austin Awards
Celebration
Details TBD
aiaaustin.org

Sunday 14

EXHIBITION CLOSING
Lionel Maunz: Discovery
of Honey / Work of the
Family
The Contemporary Austin
700 Congress Ave.
Austin
thecontemporaryaustin.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

A Modern Vision: European
Masterworks from the
Phillips Collection
Kimbell Art Museum
3333 Camp Bowie Blvd.
Fort Worth
kimbellart.org

Saturday 20

EXHIBITION OPENING
Roni Horn
Nasher Sculpture Center
2001 Flora St.
Dallas
nashersculpture.org

Thursday 25

EXHIBITION CLOSING
Brian Piana's Blocks
Wright Gallery
3137 TAMU
College Station
tamu.edu

Monday 29

EXHIBITION CLOSING
Texas Art of Early Days
to Now
Witte Museum
3801 Broadway
San Antonio
wittemuseum.org

Sunday 28

EXHIBITION OPENING
Doug Aitken: Electric Earth
The Modern Fort Worth
3200 Darnell St.
Fort Worth
themodern.org

EXHIBITION CLOSING

The Wittgenstein Vitrine
Dallas Museum of Art
1717 N. Harwood
Dallas
dma.org

JUNE

Saturday 3

EVENT
AIA Sandcastle Competition
East Beach
Galveston
aiahouston.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Andy Warhol: Prints and
Polaroids
The Old Jail Art Center
201 S. 2nd St.
Albany
theojac.org

Friday 16

EVENT
"Lost Neighborhood"
Tours
Eisenhower Birthplace
State Historic Site
609 S. Lamar Ave.
Denison
thc.texas.gov

Sunday 18

FILM SCREENING
My Architect: A Son's
Journey
Kimbell Art Museum
3333 Camp Bowie Blvd.
Fort Worth
kimbellart.org

Thursday 22

EVENT
Bark and Build Kickoff
Party
SPCA
2400 Lone Star Dr.
Dallas
aiadallas.org

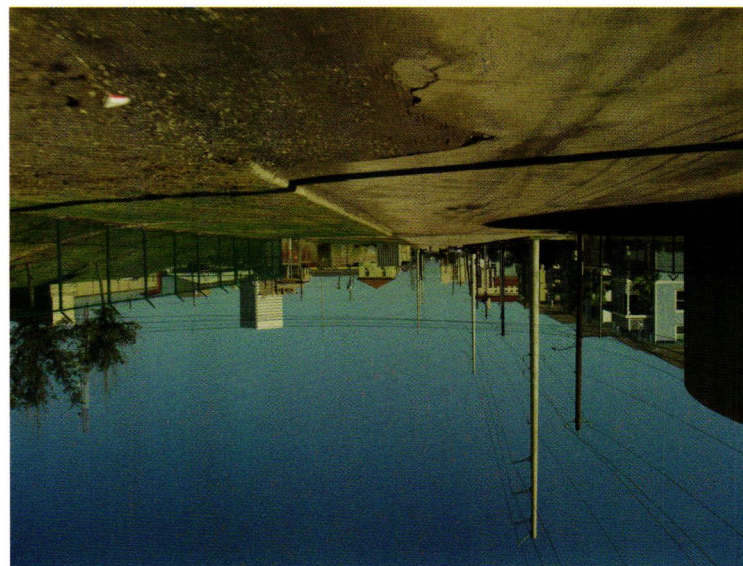
FEATURED



teamLab: Flowers & People, Cannot be Controlled but Live Together
Moody Center for the Arts
moody.rice.edu

THROUGH AUGUST 13

Tokyo-based collective teamLab presents this interactive installation at the cross-section of art and technology. As visitors interact with the work, sensors cause flowers to sprout and bloom. "Neither a pre-recorded animation nor a continuous loop, the work is created in real time by a computer program and highlights the complex relationships between art, science, nature, and technology."



Mark Lewis: Galveston
The Contemporary Austin
thecontemporaryaustin.org
THROUGH AUGUST 27

The Contemporary Austin commissioned this short, non-narrative film by London-based artist Mark Lewis. Having turned his lens on cities such as Paris, Sao Paulo, and Toronto, Lewis now explores the urban architecture and infrastructure of Galveston. Centered on One Moody Tower, the film explores the contrast between modern architecture and the streets that interact with it. What starts as a "seemingly simple tour of the city is turned upside down, destabilized, and, through Lewis's torqued lens, rendered timely and new." ■



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Vinita Health Center, Vinita, OK

Owner: Cherokee Nation
Architect: Childers Architect, Fort Smith, AR
General contractor: Flintco Constructive Solutions, Tulsa, OK
Installing contractor: Harness Roofing, Tulsa, OK
Profile: Snap-Clad
Color: Granite

"We added the metal roof because of its durability.
We selected the lighter PAC-CLAD color to help us
go after LEED Silver Certification."

Breck Childers, project architect, Childers Architects

SNAP-CLAD

Granite - Energy Star - Cool Color



CASE STUDY



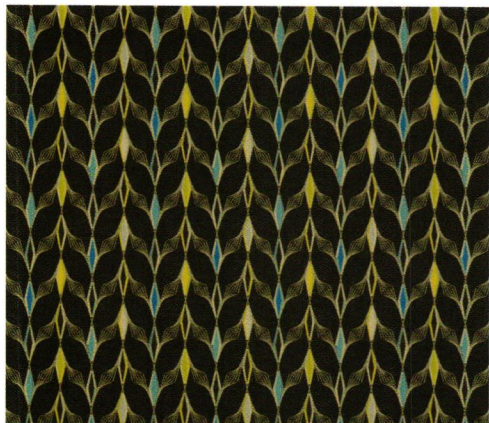
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PAC-CLAD
P E T E R S E N

by Rita Catinella Orrell

These products combine aesthetics, cleanability, patient and caretaker comfort, and durability to help promote wellness in healthcare environments.



Believing Fabric Collection

Architex
architex-ljh.com

This new collection of Crypton contract upholstery fabrics by Architex includes 69 options for hospitality, office, and healthcare interiors. Woven in a polyester-acrylic blend, the Believing Collection includes nine patterns inspired by places and objects including the famous Imagine Circle at the Strawberry Fields Memorial in Central Park, antique watches from the Museum for Islamic Art, and the structure of a Santiago Calatrava bridge. The GreenGuard Gold certified fabrics are stain-resistant, bleach-cleanable, antimicrobial, and feature a moisture barrier.



Ready-Made Sinks

DuPont Corian
dupont.com

DuPont Corian has expanded its range to include 35 ready-made sinks for homes, health care, food service spaces, and other public areas. Introductions for the commercial market include a round sink ideal for dental procedure rooms, a baby bath for neonatal hospital settings, an ADA-compliant rectangular sink, and two square sinks with offset drain placement to minimize splashing. The nonporous Corian sinks feature seamless integration into surface tops and promote a hygienic environment critical in healthcare settings.



Ava Recliner

Nemschoff
Nemschoff.com

Designers David Ritch and Mark Saffell of 5D Studio studied the workflow in different care environments and incorporated input from nurses and clinicians to create this compact recliner for Nemschoff. A departure from typical recliners, Ava's reduced footprint is designed to operate easily, even in small patient rooms. Ava features dual arm controls, pivoting arms to facilitate side transfers, central brake-and-steer, and a lay-flat recline. An open design and enclosed casters are included for easier cleanability in healthcare settings.



Pro XL Series
Blueair
blueair.com

According to Blueair, the Pro XL series for commercial interiors can provide cleaner air than any other stand-alone air purifier. Available for rooms up to 1,180 sf, the purifier automatically tests particle and gas levels in indoor air and adjusts the fan speed to maintain the optimal clean-air environment. It is available with two HEPASilent filters: a standard Particle Filter for removing particle pollutants such as bacteria, viruses, pet dander, dust, and pollen; and the Blueair SmokeStop Filter to rid an area of gaseous pollutants such as VOCs (volatile organic compounds), tobacco smoke, and particles.



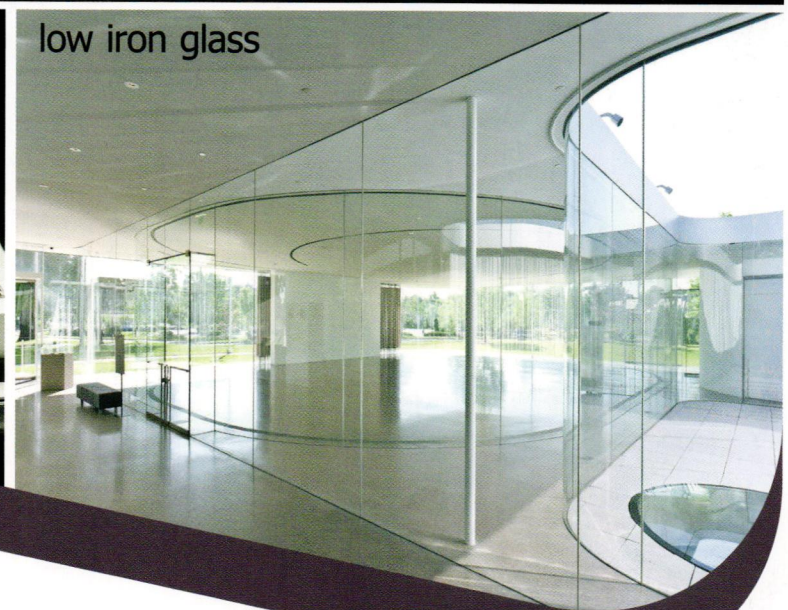
Southmead Hospital
Rockfon
Rockfon.com

For the Southmead Hospital project in Bristol, England, the architects at BDP wanted to avoid the square look of typical suspended ceilings by means of a high-performing system that would reflect light and reduce the energy needs of artificial lighting. The contractors at Carillion met both demands with Rockfon Medical stone wool ceiling tiles with concealed edges to create a uniform look and achieve an 86 percent light reflection. The Medical range fulfills the cleaning and hygienic demands of healthcare environments and does not contribute to the growth of MRSA.



Rampart
Wolf-Gordon
wolfgordon.com

Rampart is a collection of impact-resistant wall protection products for high-traffic commercial interiors. An alternative to rigid sheet goods, Rampart is engineered for medium- to heavy-traffic areas where protection against scratches, dents, and scrapes is a concern. Thicker and more durable than Type II wall coverings, Rampart features a heavy-duty construction and specially formulated finish that can be cleaned with soap and water or a variety of cleaning agents, disinfectants, and phenols. The 54-in-wide wall covering is offered in five original patterns in a range of colorways.



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That [authenticity] has become part of the moral slang of our day points to the peculiar nature of our fallen condition, our anxiety over the credibility of existence and of individual existences.

— Lionel Trilling, “Sincerity and Authenticity”

Trilling, one of America’s great literary critics in the 20th century, wrote the essay quoted above in 1970. In it, he traces the rise of this preoccupation with authenticity in Western culture from its emergence in the 19th century to his own day. According to Trilling’s observations, the destruction of ancient religious, social, and class structures by the forces of modernity foisted on the Western mind a condition in which it could no longer take for granted the truth or appropriateness of its own productions, let alone its very being. The bedrock of certitude, so to speak, had crumbled away, whipping everyone into a great lather to determine what was and was not an “authentic” expression of culture.

This question of authenticity seems all the more urgent and uncertain in the 21st century, where the modernity kicked off by the steam engine and the telegraph wire has only been accelerated by the internet. Two of the articles in this feature on the sacred and the profane speak directly to the quest for authenticity in architecture — from apparently opposite points of view. One, an essay on the return of historical forms in Christian worship spaces, finds many American congregations seeking authenticity through more accurate and durable evocations of the great cathedrals of Europe. The other, an article on a ground-up popular music venue in Houston, covers an architect’s attempt to create a “bottom-up” authenticity by means of an elementally simple and “chunky” building that people will mark over time.

We also study the effect of geography on worship spaces; investigate the neurological underpinnings of the sense of awe; visit Philip Johnson’s Thanksgiving Square in downtown Dallas; and look at the complex relationship of the Moody Center for the Arts and the rest of the Rice University campus.

Sacred/Profane

36

Traditionalism Resurgent

Archaic architectures are on the rise in contemporary Christian worship spaces

Jason John Paul Haskins, Assoc. AIA

44

New Sacred Geographies

What does architecture tell us about the relationship between worship and locale?

Antonio Petrov

50

Ascending Circle

Philip Johnson’s Thanksgiving Square in Dallas

Michael Friebele, Assoc. AIA

56

Awe

The neuroscience behind sublime architectural experiences

Anastasia Calhoun, Assoc. AIA

62

Moody Blues

Moody Center for the Arts

Michael Maltzan Architecture

Ben Koush, AIA

70

Come Together, Right Now

White Oak Music Hall

Schaum/Shieh

Aaron Seward





Traditionalism Resurgent

FOR MANY AMONG THE NEXT GENERATION OF ARCHITECTS, "TRADITION" IS NO LONGER A DIRTY WORD. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN WORSHIP SPACES, WHERE INCREASING INTEREST IN HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURES IS MOTIVATED BY COMPLEX CULTURAL LONGINGS AND A NEW DESCRIPTIVE APPROACH TO LIVING TRADITIONS.

by Jason John Paul Haskins, Assoc. AIA



The past half-century has seen sacred architecture stuck in the rut of a reductive dichotomy that pits Modernism against Traditionalism. Self-avowed Modernists saw the rejection of historical forms as a point of pride and a sign of progress. The current dominant generation of architects still cringes at the thought of being pigeonholed as traditional.

But a nascent resurgence of design proposals with more nuanced attitudes to architectures of the past suggests that it may well be time for a new discourse on the role of tradition in architecture, both sacred and secular. For the emerging generations of architects, canonical Modernism grows distant enough to be seen as but one among many historical moments and ultimately a distinct tradition in itself.

Appeal to tradition is now paradoxically a means of challenging the status quo. We need to reconsider our assumptions of what is forward-looking and what is backward-looking, and instead critically distinguish between what is substantively traditional and what is merely conventional. What in design carries meaning, and what is an outward status symbol of ideological tribes?

As so many of the particular bugbears and shibboleths of previous generations lose their potency, and as the now dubious Modern/Traditional dichotomy continues to lose its status as the first dialectic in the taxonomy of buildings, we have the opportunity to re-engage aspects of traditions in architecture that might have been too hastily rejected.

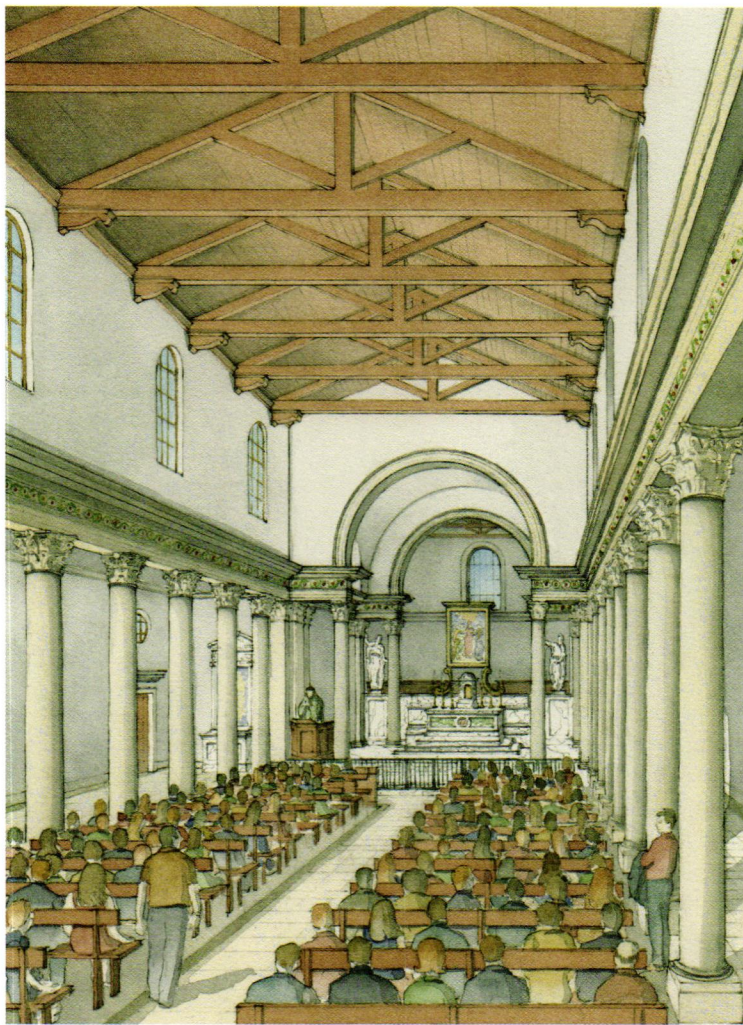
Disillusionment with Modernism's shortcomings began with the members of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne. As early as the

1950s, Aldo van Eyck proposed recovering discarded basic human values by examining the overlapping circles of multiple traditions. Subsequent developments have slowly whittled away at the initial scorched-earth tabula rasa ideology. With critical distance, young architects for whom "Complexity and Contradiction" and "Mathematics of the Ideal Villa" are standard texts realize the congruence of the underlying principles in what were supposed to be irreconcilable: The Modern/Traditional dichotomy seems to have more to do with method and language than with content.

+++

This new inclusive approach to tradition in architecture is analogous to the growing acceptance of descriptive linguistics. The previously dominant prescriptive linguistics attempted to determine the "correctness" of language according to pre-established rules. In contrast, the concern of descriptive linguistics is how language is used. This is not to say that anything goes: Language is communication and requires a community of speakers. Dialects overlap. Homogeneity is not a prerequisite to achieving meaningful dialogue.

We can consider Western classical architecture a language family with a rich assortment of dialects: It requires competence to understand, fluency to use, and artistry to use poetically. Neglect has brought it close to death, but we still have the great works to study and an increasing number of willing readers.



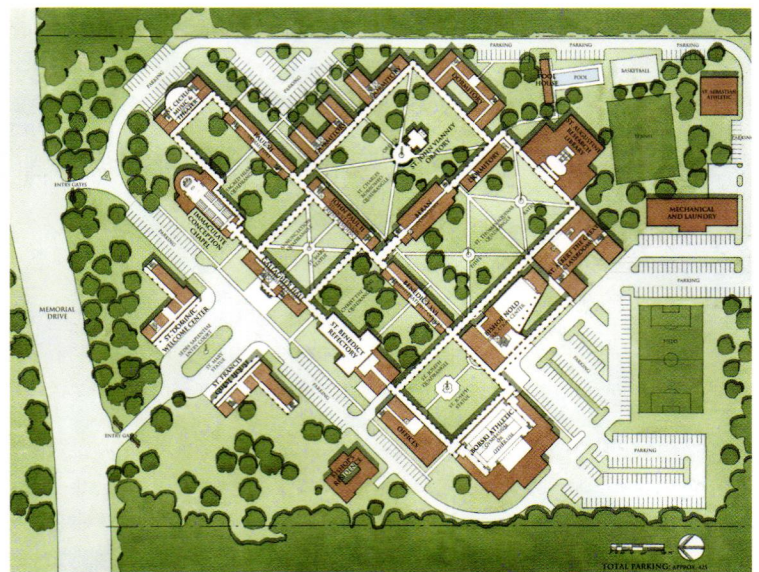
Kate Wagner's erudite blog, "McMansion Hell," is a highly popular example of the appreciation of good — and the ironic denigration of bad — traditional architecture. Its witty language may herald a new pidgin, one that combines lolspeak and memes with precise architectural terminology (and always makes the proper distinction between muntins and mullions).

+++

Perhaps much of the new openness to tradition can be attributed to a desire for authenticity, despite the fact that such an urge is easily mocked ironically. Authenticity does not require a formal language; the timeless, essential aspects of buildings become clear. The challenge is to ensure that buildings embody meaning rather than a vague sense of *meaningfulness*. Specificity is a potential antidote: Superficiality is a well-known, critical failure in Classical architecture. This specificity need not be a strict adherence to a universal ideal and can take many forms.

+++

Duncan Stroik at the University of Notre Dame is among the most precisely articulate practitioners of Classical architecture today. He has inspired much of the rise in explicitly traditional church designs — in particular, Roman Catholic Church designs — in large part by demonstrating that it is possible to build successfully in a faithful manner at a variety of scales. His work in Texas ranges from a small chapel for a community of



Previous Reverend Tim Frickenschmidt and the congregation of All Saints Presbyterian Church, Austin, dedicate the altar in their interim sanctuary, designed by Andersson-Wise Architects.

Facing The strong Anglo-Saxon tower of the Our Lady of Walsingham, Houston, designed by HDB/Cram and Ferguson, embodies the Anglican heritage of the Personal Ordinariate's liturgy.

Left and Above Two projects by Duncan Stroik: a new chapel for the Carmelite Hermitage in Christoval, Texas, is an eloquent rendition of a Renaissance interior; the master plan for the expansion of a Roman Catholic seminary in Houston is based on Neoclassical principles.

Carmelite hermits in Christoval to the master plans of massive suburban parishes and a seminary.

Stroik finds that his clients' primary concerns are for "churches that are set apart, sacred, and full of imagery." He says: "They see their buildings as sermons in brick and stone, in the sense that the churches can speak to people of eternal realities. They want buildings that are symbolic but also buildings that will last." His studied historical authenticity provides a transcendence (temporal and eternal) that clients often found lacking in their past experiences. Stroik's work is emblematic of the desire to recover the rich heritage of the Roman Catholic liturgy. Specificity to liturgy, which often entails specificity to regional culture, is critical.

Our Lady of Walsingham, in Houston, designed by HDB/Cram and Ferguson and completed in 2003, is a preeminently successful example of specificity to a particular form of worship. It is the principal church of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, which incorporates distinctive Anglican heritage within the Roman Catholic Church.

It is the proportion that distinguishes the design. It has the same broad tower and stark interior volume favored by the high-church revival architects in England and that Giles Gilbert Scott carried through to an industrial British Modern architecture. The building is unquestionably English: an amalgamation of an Anglo-Saxon tiered tower with later Norman features common to churches near the medieval shrine at Walsingham. While its models grew into the combina-

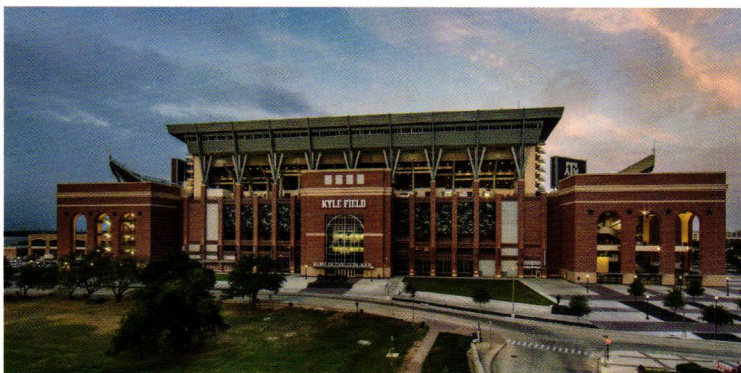
tion, the new church synthesizes them into a single expression. While this may be incorrect from a prescriptivist perspective, the language manages to be neither a direct historical reconstruction nor a capricious theme park knockoff.

Compare this to another Anglican-Use Church, Our Lady of the Atonement in San Antonio, which lacks this specificity. It is Gothic in only the broadest stereotypical sense, with no correlation between tectonics and ornament. It knows a few words, but has no recognizable grammar.

+++

Cultural motivations driving the renaissance of traditional buildings represent a confluence of cultural threads; our clients deserve to be imagined complexly. While it might be easy to dismiss a resurgence of interest in traditional architecture as merely the toxic nostalgia of the country club set, the impulses are increasingly nuanced. The desire for the appearance of culture as a status symbol is most consistently evident in residential architecture, where it suffers from the superficiality of peel-and-stick embellishments and a flood of listing features without the underlying hierarchy, order, or proportion of literate classicism. McMansions perpetuate the separation of ornament from structure that facilitated the excision of ornament. But shall we continue to allow such incompetence to rob us of the rich heritage of our craft?

Modernism limits some of architecture's ability to embody the metaphor and narrative that are key to arriving at the intentional placedness and relationships now so highly valued in the built environment.



Left *The tectonic elegance of Gothic architecture is lost in translation in the tilt-up concrete of Our Lady of the Atonement, San Antonio.*

Below left *The Comal County Courthouse, designed by J. Riley Gordon in 1898, renders the then-popular Romanesque Revival in native Texas limestone.*

Bottom left *Kyle Field's new facade evokes Roman architecture for ritual, spectacle, and competition.*

We see these desires play out in the expansion of less-purely-rational urban planning; organic models appear in biomimicry, but previous systems and even particular forms, which are often closely related, provide additional models modified to suit human inhabitation. Abandoned historic churches have become desirable as converted lofts. The appeal of large projects like the Pearl Brewery in San Antonio extends well beyond the sustainability of adaptive reuse; the existing fabric and patina are the heart of their character.

Nondenominational churches have also been increasingly creating more intimate worship spaces and even moving into existing traditional buildings, such as Mars Hill's restoration of a turn-of-the-century Gothic auditorium church in Portland, Oregon. (Where else? The dream of the 1890s is alive in Portland.)

+++

A significant rationale for the resurgent interest in traditional architecture is its ability to embody a communal character and a shared narrative. Texas has a treasured tradition of county courthouses and an accompanying town form. Many of these historic structures are explicitly Classical, but the later Art Deco and even Brutalist buildings retain aspects of an ordered hierarchy that seems fitting for edifices of their stature. Beyond formality, these buildings speak of community in a way that is made difficult by Modernism's individualistic manifestos with their narrow-minded efforts to recreate the world in one's own image.

The collegiate stadium is one building type that has unquestionably seen a revival of traditional architecture in Texas. From Rice University's Reckling Park baseball stadium to recent expansions of UT Austin's Darrel K Royal–Texas Memorial Stadium, the pattern of vaguely Classical brick facades that reveal the bare structure of the bleachers from behind has become standard for sports in Texas. The most dramatic transformation is Texas A&M's Kyle Field. What was the most uninspiringly utilitarian Brutalism now has a facade made up of discarded Roman parts. Even Baylor's new McLane Stadium exhibits a strong processional and ceremonial

quality. However superficial in tectonic execution, the motivation is clearly an appeal to “tradition/Tradition,” in a meta-metaphor where tradition is both the signifier and the signified. Beyond the celebration of a team’s history and fan customs, sporting events remain the dominant ritualized behavior in Texas: a hyper-important communal experience within a defined environment and with a shared set of rules that are assigned significance well beyond their actual action.

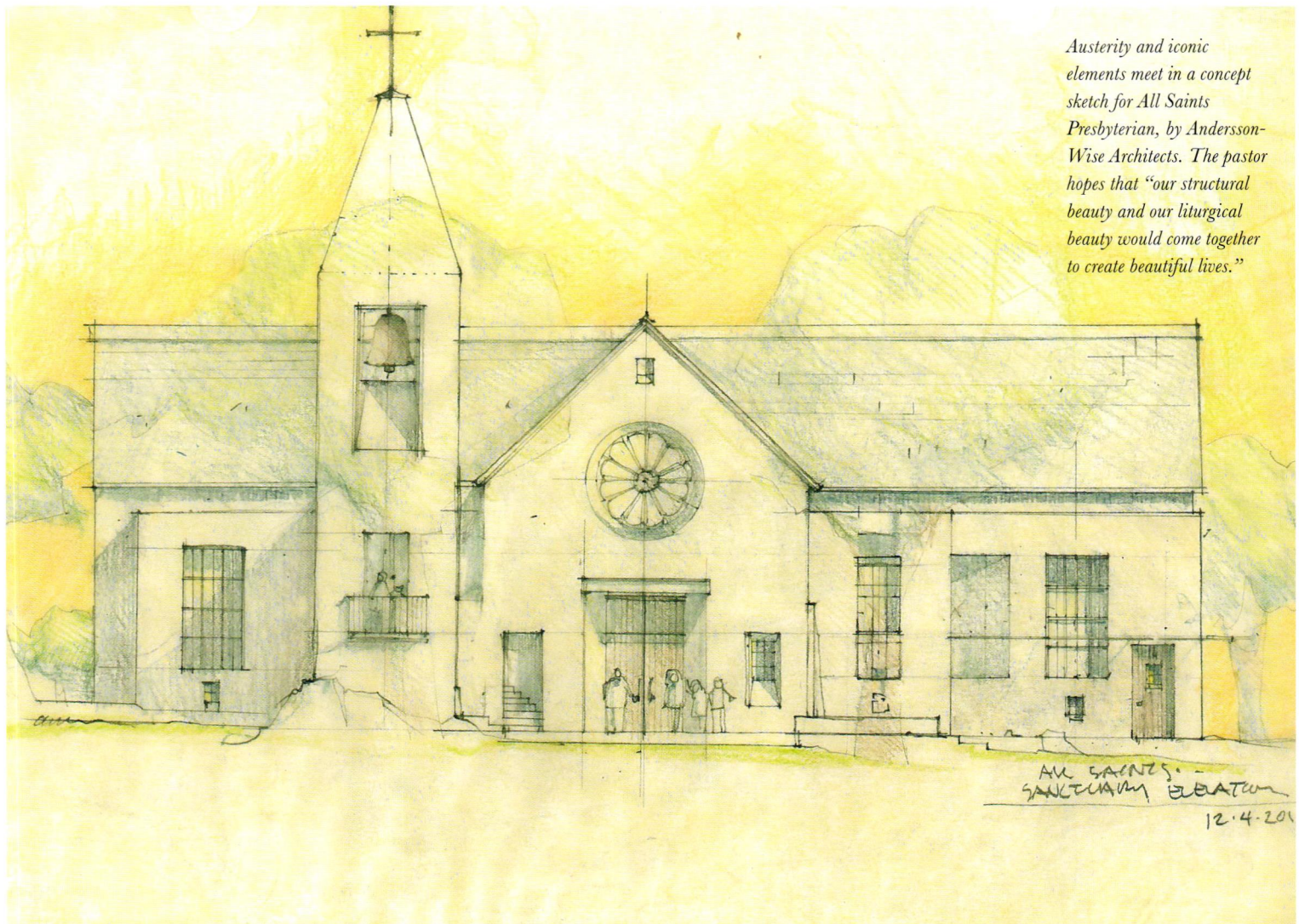
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The idea that ritual is a fundamental aspect of humanity seems to be regaining traction. The “nones” are rediscovering aspects of spiritual practice that do not involve canonical religious structures, and are discussing them as intentionality or mindfulness. (As with architectural influences, these seem somewhat more palatable if borrowed from “exotic” cultures.) Meanwhile, many are rediscovering their own religious heritages. Greater numbers of young adults seek out more “conservative” forms of worship, and many “low” Protestant churches incorporate aspects of “high” church worship. These trends do not always show up where we might expect, and they reflect a generation for whom the taboos of partisan divisions are shifting in some places.

The Barna Group’s 2014 study of millennials’ attitudes toward church environments reveal these changes. They report a strong preference for “straightforward, overtly Christian imagery” and “a rich context of church history.” At the same time, 60 percent of respondents prefer a church building to be “Modern” over “Traditional,” and 67 percent say they preferred a church to be “Classic” over “Trendy.” The apparent dissonance between Modern and Classical, or a “context of church history,” is only a paradox under assumptions that do not hold for this generation. Satisfying the desires of such a group requires multiple types of buildings that do not fall into the previously stereotypical conventions of Modernism and Traditionalism. At the same time, 77 percent of millennials state a preference for “Sanctuary” over “Auditorium” and “Quiet” over “Loud”; this represents a shift away from the higher-energy performance models of worship that have dominated many Gen-X churches. Here is a desire for timelessness that architecture grounded in tradition is well suited to answer.

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An understanding of these desires informed All Saints Presbyterian in Austin as the church planned its new campus, designed by Andersson-Wise Architects.



Austerity and iconic elements meet in a concept sketch for All Saints Presbyterian, by Andersson-Wise Architects. The pastor hopes that “our structural beauty and our liturgical beauty would come together to create beautiful lives.”

Architects. The congregation consecrated the first phase — comprising classrooms, offices, and an interim sanctuary — in August 2016. A proposed second phase will create a deliberate tension that reflects the tension in the Christian concept of incarnation and the importance of the fact that Christ came from an actual place. According to the Reverend Tim Frickenschmidt: “We need to be able to connect with sacred architecture throughout history, but we need to incarnate into this place in Austin, Texas. We want traditional elements, but set in a modern form that speaks to this time and place.”

For Rev. Frickenschmidt, thinking about the built environment is part of the larger project of consciously forming the congregation’s worship through a “return to sources.” Seeing the world sacramentally leads to a focus on the arrangement and interrelation of places, objects, and bodies as signs. Visitors to the interim sanctuary have been surprised by the intentionality and thoughtfulness of the integration of beautiful structure with beautiful structure. This sacramental worldview will find greater realization with the permanent sanctuary: The intent is to construct the church from true load-bearing local stone blocks that will rise out of the cloister walks, uniting the campus to form the sanctuary with an austere elegance that is timeless and authentic.

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The designs for All Saints Presbyterian also demonstrate specificity to the local natural and cultural context. Texas architects have well explored the indigenous building forms of the state and incorporated them into an inflected late Modernism. But there are also dialects of the Western Classical traditions that are emblematic of Texas, most notably the Spanish colonial missions and the Painted Churches created by European immigrants. By necessity, these imported models were

tempered by their locale — by the landscape and by local building materials and techniques — until they became distinct.

McKinney York is not a firm that would self-identify as a group of traditional architects, and yet they designed one of the most articulate and contextual buildings with direct references to built history in recent memory: the Kent R. Hance Chapel at Texas Tech University. In stark contrast to Duncan Stroik’s work, Traditionalism is not the goal for McKinney York. That Hance Chapel engages with Classical architecture and with the particular lineage of Texas mission architecture is an artifact of McKinney York understanding the context and the program. It is the unprejudiced conclusion of a holistic Modernist process and a prime example of non-reductive abstraction.

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Texas religious architecture does suffer from some frivolous eclecticism, but one of the more compelling local dialects in Central and East Texas is an interpretation of the Byzantine-Romanesque. Examples of this expression range from the exquisite Beaux Arts Central Christian Church in Austin, to the German Benedictine St. Peter in Lindsay, to the elegant simplicity of St. Anthony in Bryan. Secular buildings such as UT’s Gregory Gym and many county courthouses throughout Texas share this heritage.

The Romanesque provides fertile ground for a middle way. The strong lines and volumetric massing lend themselves well to manipulation, allowing adaptation for changing programs while maintaining a regulating hierarchy and order which do not need to be rigidly static. The plasticity of its forms has resonance with some of the more sculptural 20th-century brick expressionism, from Dominikus Böhm to Edward Dart, FAIA.

Right *McKinney York carefully abstracted elements of Spanish Colonial architecture for the Hance Chapel at Texas Tech.*

The colonnade and tower share in the simplicity of frontier missions.

Facing *Jackson Galloway’s early concept of the new church for St. Mary’s Catholic Center in College Station is an architectural expression of the ideals enumerated in the church’s capital campaign slogan: “Beauty, Encounter, Tradition.”*





Compared to the narrow verticality of most Gothic spaces, its proportions can scale well to the larger congregations often required today — especially in Texas! As ecumenism continues to increase among Christian churches, it makes sense to appeal to a tradition that predates the Reformation and the Great Schism. It is the framework for most of the particular Christian styles that have developed since, and it is instantly recognizable as “straightforward, overtly Christian” and reflects the “rich context of church history.”

It should not be surprising that Jackson Galloway Architects’ early conceptual design for the new church at St. Mary’s Catholic Center in College Station participates in this continuity to engage the local heritage, honor the liturgical and denominational identity, and respond to the motivating desires of the generation it serves. During the design process, students consistently voiced a desire for the church to be authentic, durable, noble, and recognizably Roman Catholic. They sought a building with formal beauty, but one that was also warm, welcoming, and engaging — one that provided a powerful encounter with Christ. These are complex motivations that echo the apparent paradox seen in the Barna Group survey.

St. Anthony in Bryan and St. Mary in Brenham provided local models, and there is an echo of Central Christian and the Battle Hall library in the wooden heavy timber trusses. The interior arrangement reflects current movements in liturgy toward more nuanced and holistic understandings of their worship. It also participates in the development of the historic Northgate neighborhood toward urban density in an accelerated version of the traditional place of church buildings in forming town centers.

According to Michael Raia, Assoc. AIA, who is leading the design of the new church for Catholic Aggies, the design is an attempt to balance the tensions present in concretizing the transcendent by consciously submitting to a living tradition. For Raia, the keys to achieving a living tradition are the distinction between “doing” and merely “referencing,” and between understanding what is essential and knowing when to deviate in response to tectonic and cultural criteria. It also helps that this work is part of a diverse practice where a response to the client’s identity and motivations are the genesis, not identification with a restrictive style.

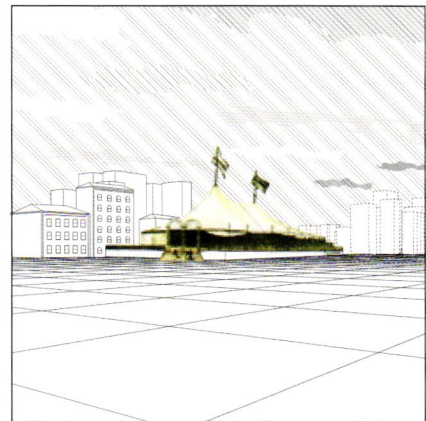
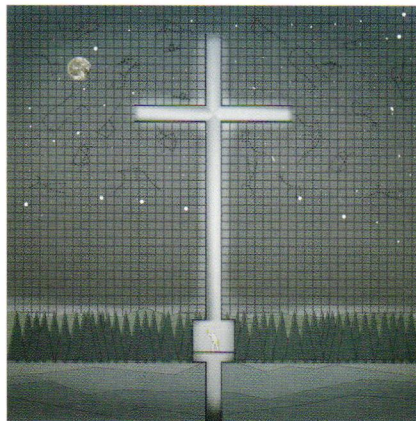
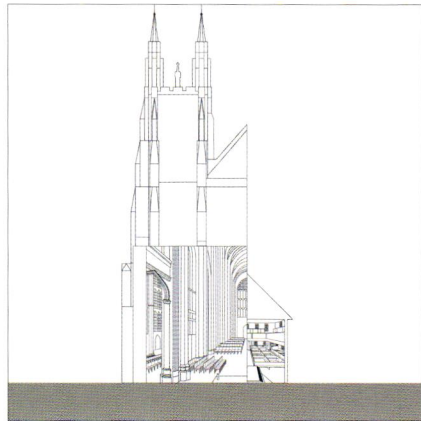
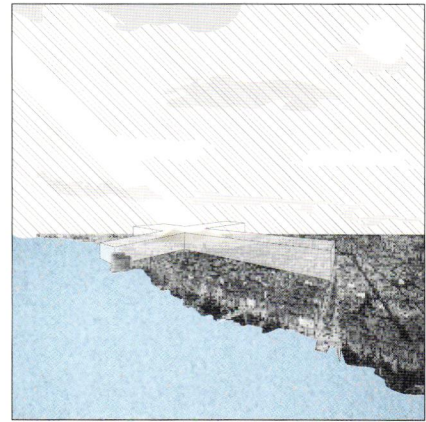
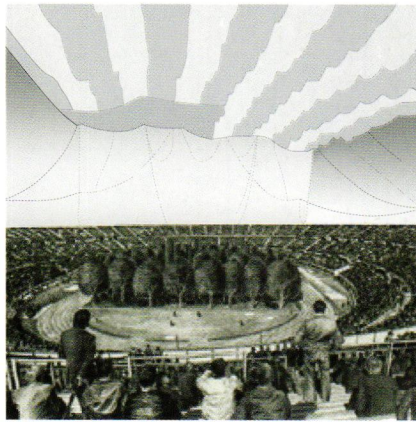
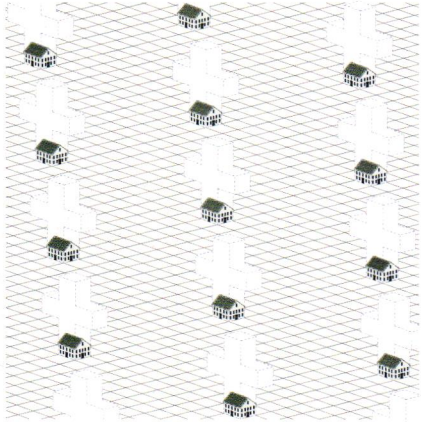
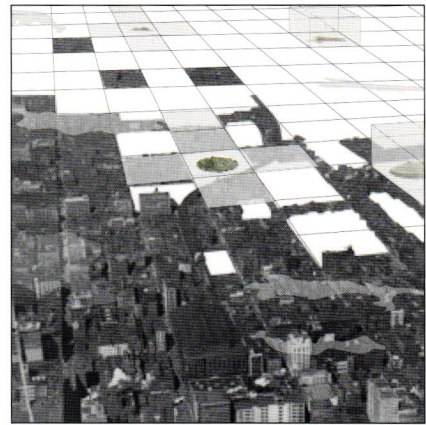
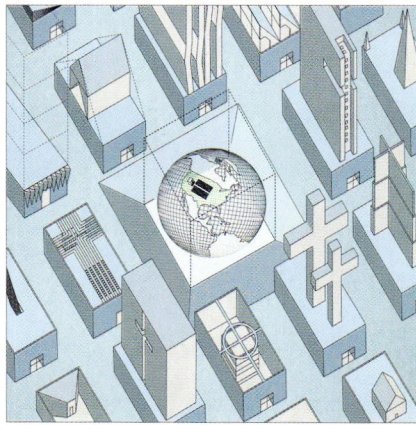
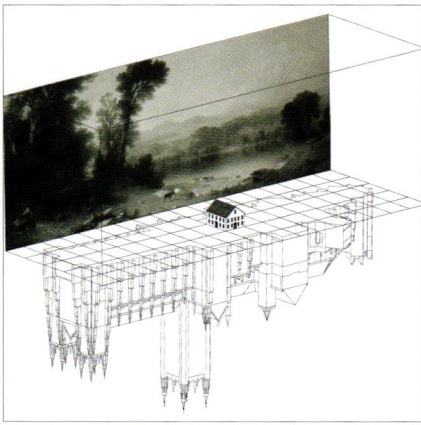
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Tradition in architecture no longer needs to be a dirty word. A new, descriptive approach to resurgent living traditions will further the trends of openness to historical forms and actions, resurgent ecumenism, and the leaving behind of the baggage of outdated polemics.

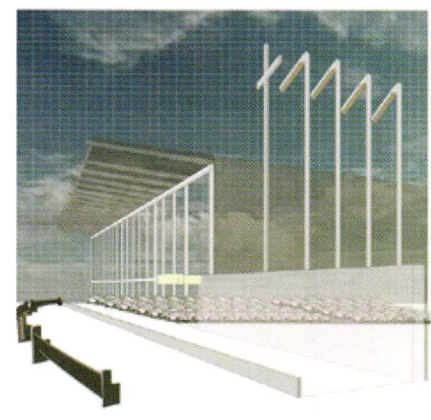
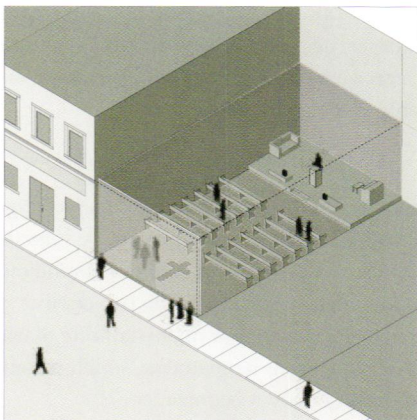
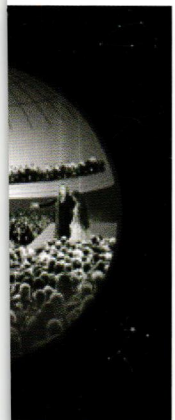
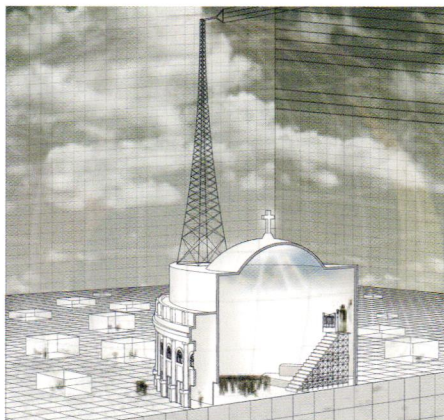
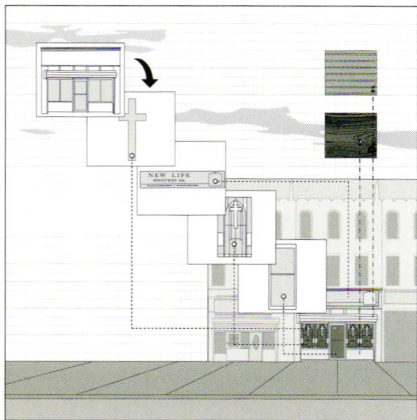
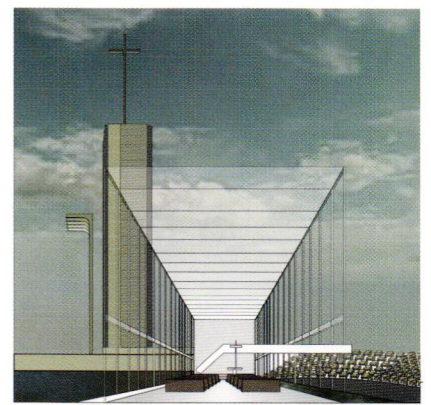
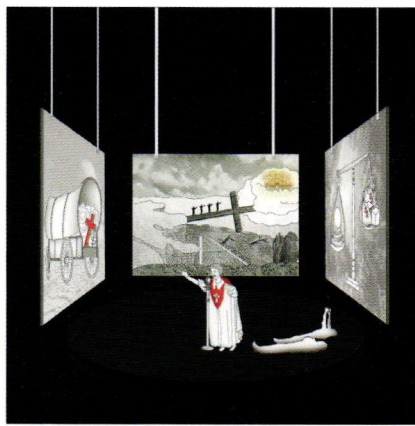
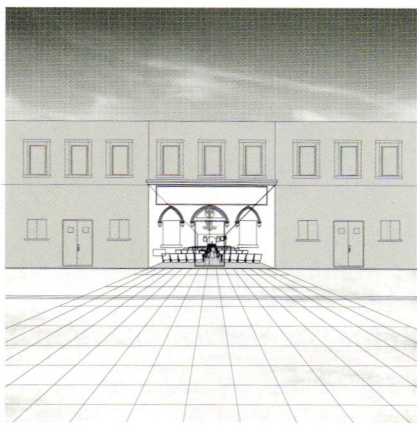
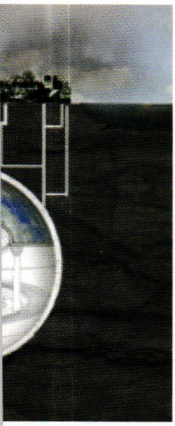
At the same time, we see evidence of contrary trends toward increasingly isolated partisan tribes with pillarized sects, medias, and, possibly, architectures. These prefer isolated models of absolute ideals that signal distinctions between in and out, us and them.

However, with the requisite sophistication to appreciate the specificity of contexts and multiple dialects, tradition need not lead to a universal model or prescriptivist exclusivity. Engaging the tensions in tradition and imagining complexly our clients’ motivations will lead to more nuanced sacred buildings and their mutual enrichment.

Jason John Paul Haskins, Assoc. AIA, is a church-building researcher and design consultant who writes about liturgy, architecture, and history at locusiste.org.



New Sacred Geographies



A UTSA ARCHITECTURE PROFESSOR AND HIS STUDENTS MAP THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WORSHIP AND THE ENVIRONMENT. WHAT THEY FIND IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE AND TO ARCHITECTURAL DISCOURSE IN GENERAL.

by Antonio Petrov

Students who contributed input and drawings to this article:

Abel Guajardo; Alejandro Luis Guerra; Annie Benavidez;
Clara Barba; Cyrus Melendez; Daniel Ivan García; Diego Hernandez;
Jesse Gonzalez; Laura Carolina Hernandez; Yoana Penelova

The geographic not only allows for a new understanding of where religion might be located, but it also questions its spatiality, which on one hand is about legibility, and on the other about cognizance.

We human beings are geographical beings transforming the earth and making it into a home, and that transformed world affects who we are. Our geographical nature shapes our world and ourselves. Being geographical is inescapable — we do not have to be conscious of it. Yet, realizing that we are geographical increases the effectiveness of our actions, the clarity of our awareness, and the inclusiveness and generosity of our moral concerns. It helps us see more clearly our world and our place in it.

— Robert David Sack, “Homo Geographicus”

In 2016, my undergraduate studio at The University of Texas at San Antonio explored how architecture — mostly acting as the physical embodiment of religiosity itself — can provide answers to questions regarding the relationship between geography and worship. How has this relationship stimulated new forms of worship on a geographic scale? Can architecture be the lens for novel figurations of religion and how religion has affected the aesthetic and discursive forms it has presumably taken?

With the historic and theoretical foundation developed by my (doctoral) research, in the studio we utilized different mapping and drawing techniques, not only to recover the relationships among worship, materiality, and representation, but to unearth the mechanics behind the operations and the way ritual, religious practice, and agency have defined and redefined the metrics necessary in designing novel representations of worship in American history.

In “America,” Jean Baudrillard framed secularism and its relationship to the environment as part of a set of critical cultural observations in which he juxtaposed Europe and the United States in a similar context. In his chapter “Utopia Achieved,” he affirms, “What in Europe had remained a critical and religious esotericism became transformed on the New Continent into a pragmatic exotericism.” His observations not only render religion a sphere or representation of reality, but relegate it to one in which the distance between the secular and the sacred — or, as I would argue, its ontological trajectory — becomes less about the space itself than about how visible and invisible systems eliminate divisions between the two. Rather

than to seek the essential understanding of religion in singular objects, we were interested in examining the amorphous placelessness — how it registers in new spaces, new rituals, new aesthetics, and new understandings of how the sacred and the secular are intertwined, inseparable, and sometimes invisible to the apathetic eye.

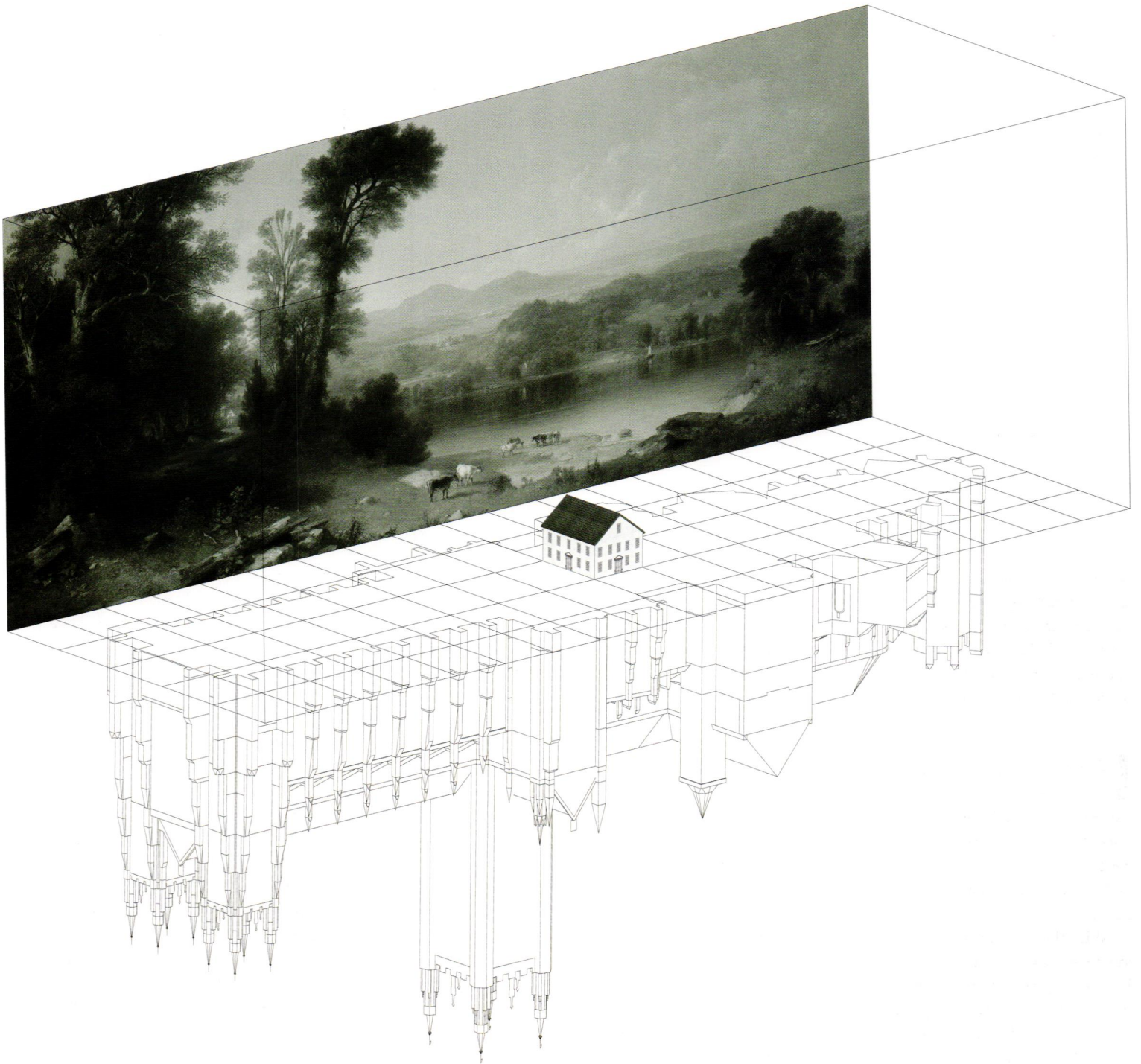
Geographic

We considered the so-called “geographic” design paradigm as a framework because it reveals the isolationism of religion to be something that happens exclusively *inside* — that is to say, traditional religious architecture separated *production* and *consumer culture* into two distinct spheres. The geographic not only allows for a new understanding of where religion might be located, but it also questions its spatiality, which on one hand is about legibility, and on the other about cognizance.

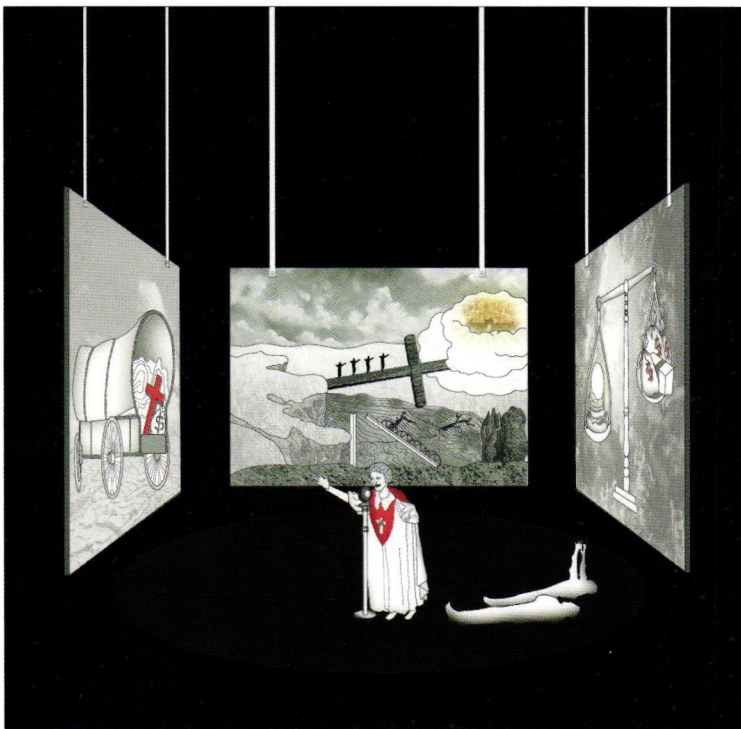
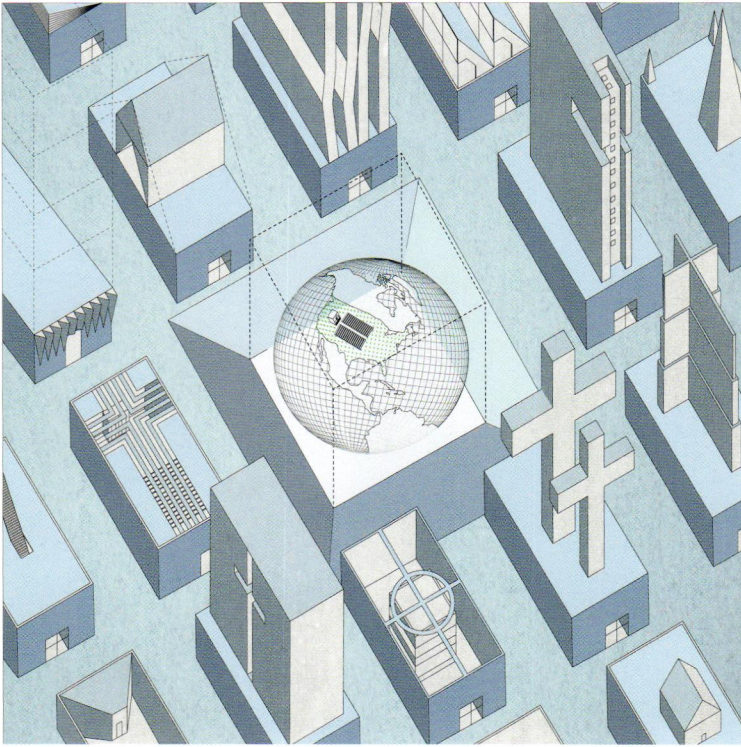
For instance, the geographies produced by the 17th- and 18th-century pastoral landscape not only shaped certain religious ideologies but also inspired the radical transformation from the cathedral to the meetinghouse. The role of camp meetings in the wilderness set the stage for revivals in urban environments, while industrialization, consumerism, and globalization all informed new religious typologies while shaping and transforming the geography they were part of. As a result, the foundation was set for new rituals, new practices, new aesthetics, and new worship spaces that expanded the traditional figuration of churches into geographies or geographic objects, or both.

Elements and Aesthetics

One might argue that architecture in general — and, more specifically, sacred architecture — has not only lost its ability to critically mediate among ethical positions, value systems, and the environment, but that it has also lost its aesthetic expressions. What I have called *superordinary* served as the framework for breaking down the heavily intellectualized and contested relationship between the theory of sacred architecture — in which “architecture” is subsumed by the “extraordinary” and extends itself through it —



This drawing on the spatiality of the meeting-house places the building, as a radical response to the cathedral, into the context of the pastoral landscape.



Upper left Based on Rem Koolhaas' "City of the Captive Globe," this drawing describes the object-oriented and mainly interiorized experience of traditional religious architecture.

Upper right The center point of Aimee Semple McPherson's "Angelus Temple" is the microphone through which thousands of people at home or at the church could be touched by the word of God.

Lower left This drawing on McPherson rituals exemplifies the way she utilizes the theater-like interiorized environment as a space to create different "worlds" through the use of props, lights, and her most important feature, her voice.

Lower right This drawing exemplifies how the electronic church evolved with technological inventions and became an alternative to traditional religious architecture.

and its physical manifestation. In a variety of drawing exercises, the students explored the aesthetics behind what Baudrillard and Alexis de Tocqueville characterized as the “utopianism” and “pragmatism” of American civilization. Characterized as an aesthetic expression, somewhere between extraordinary and ordinary, one idealizes the design of the environment and the places that house (extraordinary) representations, and the other fetishizes the absence of them. As a matter of fact, absence is what unfolded in scale and complexity, to the extent that it not only displaced previously established hierarchical orders and interventions, but it also dismantled what formerly lent it beauty, in the construction of new geographies of access, control, place, and relation. As a result, the way we represented worship — as a latent geographic influence, questioning the narrowly defined monumentalization of traditional churches — set the foundation for new religious ontologies and a new visual narrative in the American landscape.

Spatiality and Materiality

Whether embedded in design traditions, in intellectualization, or instead concerned with surrounding environmental conditions, materiality is ascribed to cultural and ideological values and performative aspects in sacred architecture. Our drawings show how the examples of worship space we explored are transgressing the traditional understanding of materiality — or the overt phenomenologization of it — by transcending the earthly and the divine by means of the profane. In Robert Schuller’s drive-in walk-in church, for example, the parking lot became the center space between the service on the inside of the building and the American cultural landscape defining the larger framework. Extending from the three-dimensional pulpit through the glass facade of the church into the windshields of the cars, Schuller’s church completely reconceptualizes the relationship between religion and space, perception and representation, abstraction and reality, and the way the sacred is materialized (or, as a matter of fact, dematerialized) in architecture.

Other examples discuss material transformations and organizational frameworks. For example, Benjamin Latrobe’s camp revivalist meetings de-familiarized the seeker by completely obliterating any material boundaries between worship and the environment; Aimee Semple McPherson’s radio tower “Angelus Temple” expanded religion into unseen territory; Billy Graham’s “Man in the 5th Dimension” pavilion at the New York World’s Fair in 1964 radically dematerialized religion and worship into the moving images of a film; and, in Richard Neutra’s Garden Grove drive-in church, radio signals transmitted the service into cars parked outside. These examples, and many others we studied, not only questioned the material presence of religious services, but also expanded how religion and the geographic reimagined material boundaries between the inside and the outside, the sacred and the profane, the mass (consumerism, media) and the needs of the individual; all ascribed to materiality another form of spatiality, consumption, or even mobility, not only to render religion legible, knowable, and actionable, but also to offer new experiences.

Representation and Rituals

The management of currencies and rituals also plays a crucial role in setting the foundation for new metrics of religious spatiality. This is best understood through the characteristic adaptability that reverberated in a revolution of architectural forms, and a programmatic dexterity that radically redefined the roles of place, structure, spectator, interior, and exterior to create new forms of reality architecture, or super-reality: a space in which the exteriorization of the inside, as well as the interiorization of the outside, continuously

alters its borders, in the words of Andy Merrifield (“The New Urban Question”), “gobbling up everything and everywhere in order to increase (surplus) value and accumulate capital.” For example, the emphasis on physical characteristics such as accessibility and location was largely recognized. And churches, like businesses, needed to accommodate a steady flow of people, which required surplus parking. Robert Schuller commented: “With the development of shopping centers, Americans had become used to the convenience of easy parking. But a look at reality gave evidence that parking wasn’t always easy for churchgoers at ‘superchurches.’” Churches like Schuller’s staged parking and utilized the automobile, or other means of transportation, as critical aspects of their religious practice. In fact, automobiles were such an integral part of new religious philosophies of the 1950s and 1960s that they presented a direct analogy for the extension of religion into the geographic, connecting the larger cultural landscape with the collective and the self.

Agency

In conclusion, the studio did not exclusively focus on the accomplishments of the architect; rather, we were interested in how the idea of architecture grows with the client, custodians, culture, and the geography it is a part of. For example, the participatory spectacle of church services was not only determined by the charisma of the presenter; but it was also a collaborative product in a causal relationship between individuals and a collective agency. Creativity emerged from the audience,

Whether embedded in design traditions, or intellectualization, or concerned with surrounding environmental conditions, the notion of materiality is ascribed to cultural and ideological values, as well as performative aspects in sacred architecture.

and the ambiance of the performance merged with the stage, which expanded beyond the spatial boundaries of the church and was mediated by traditional images, location, labels, language, and signs. As a result, it transcended everything that had previously made architecture a source of architectural meaning, process, and probability, reclaiming new possibilities for physical manifestations for sacred or religious architecture in a secular world. It is about locating the geographic as the source of architectural meaning in the construction of relationships somewhere between spatiality and representation.

With the research we have conducted, we hope to challenge these positions in order to recast the geographic church as an element of transcendence that not only helps us to perceive and draw the finest realities (and immaterialities), but also inspires innovation and invention in the construction of new meanings and aesthetics. These religious leaders, or what they propagate, have contributed to a better understanding of geography and architecture. They have influenced the cultural and environmental landscape as clients, if not custodians, of God, and thus they have made tremendous contributions to the American landscape and, arguably, to architectural discourses.

Antonio Petrov is a professor at UTSA College of Architecture, Construction, and Planning.



Photographer Leonid Furmansky

by Michael Friebel, Assoc. AIA

THE PHILIP JOHNSON-DESIGNED THANKS-GIVING SQUARE AND CHAPEL WAS COMMISSIONED IN THE WAKE OF THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION, AS PART OF A MUNICIPAL INITIATIVE DESIGNED TO WORK AGAINST DALLAS' REPUTATION AS THE "CITY OF HATE." FORTY YEARS LATER, IN THE MIDST OF A RESTORATION, THE PUBLIC SPACE PLAYED A ROLE IN HEALING THE CITY FROM YET ANOTHER VIOLENT TRAGEDY.

Ascending Circle





On the night of July 7, 2016, shots rang out on the western edge of Downtown Dallas, taking the lives of five police officers during a peaceful protest. Marking the single most significant loss of law enforcement lives since the catastrophic events of September 11, Dallas was back in the national spotlight for the unfortunate act of one individual. The emotions, uncertainty, and anguish felt by those close to the situation eerily conjured up memories of the moments that followed the JFK assassination, which occurred just a short distance from the 2016 crime scene.

The following day, determined to heal and unite the city, Dallas residents held an interfaith vigil at Thanks-Giving Square — a public park and nondenominational chapel designed by Philip Johnson and completed in 1976. The plaza was filled to the brim with people, like a real-life depiction of the “Golden Rule” mosaic by Norman Rockwell that sits prominently within the western entrance to the square. Among the leaders in attendance, religious and political, Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings delivered an impassioned and powerful message to his city:

For 50 years, people around the world saw our city through the lens of the Kennedy assassination. Through that tragedy, modern-day Dallas was born. A great city. Those of us who love this city always knew there was so much more to Dallas than what happened on that day in 1963. Now, the year following that, this oasis, Thanks-Giving Square, began to come to life. This place is not really a park. It is a piece of the soul of our city. The idea was that we needed a gathering place. A place for unity of people of all backgrounds, of all religions, of all races. A place to say thank-you. A place of thankfulness.

Thanks-Giving Square was born out of a deep, universal spiritual intention. The project was also just as much about fulfilling the ambitions

set forth by the Goals for Dallas program, enacted under the leadership of Mayor J. Erik Jonsson. The collective vision behind the program, established in 1964, aimed to heal the morale and image of a city coming off the heels of the JFK assassination. In the spirit of thanksgiving, the project was an obvious fit for the program, infusing a growing downtown with humanity-driven initiative.

At 40 years (the square was completed in its entirety in 1977), Thanks-Giving Square still serves as a nexus for spiritual refuge and awareness. The Thanks-Giving Foundation’s programming has grown to encompass more involvement with a growing homeless population, concentrating on outreach and faith-centered connections. The chapel remains the focal point of the project, and often lines of people can be seen waiting to view the spiraling, stained glass masterpiece that is Gabriel Loire’s “Glorious Window.” A recent lighting adaptation to this piece adds further interest to the subtle tones cast from the glass above. Moreover, events shaping society in Dallas draw attention to the space anew, marking Thanks-Giving Square once again as a place for universal expression.

But what is one to make of Thanks-Giving Square as public space, now that the demographic is changing from a business district to a mixed-use neighborhood? The population in the city’s central business district has been on a steady increase since 2000, growing from a mere 200 residents to well over 7,000. The desire for public space is high and often causes spaces like Thanks-Giving Square to be used for unintended purposes.

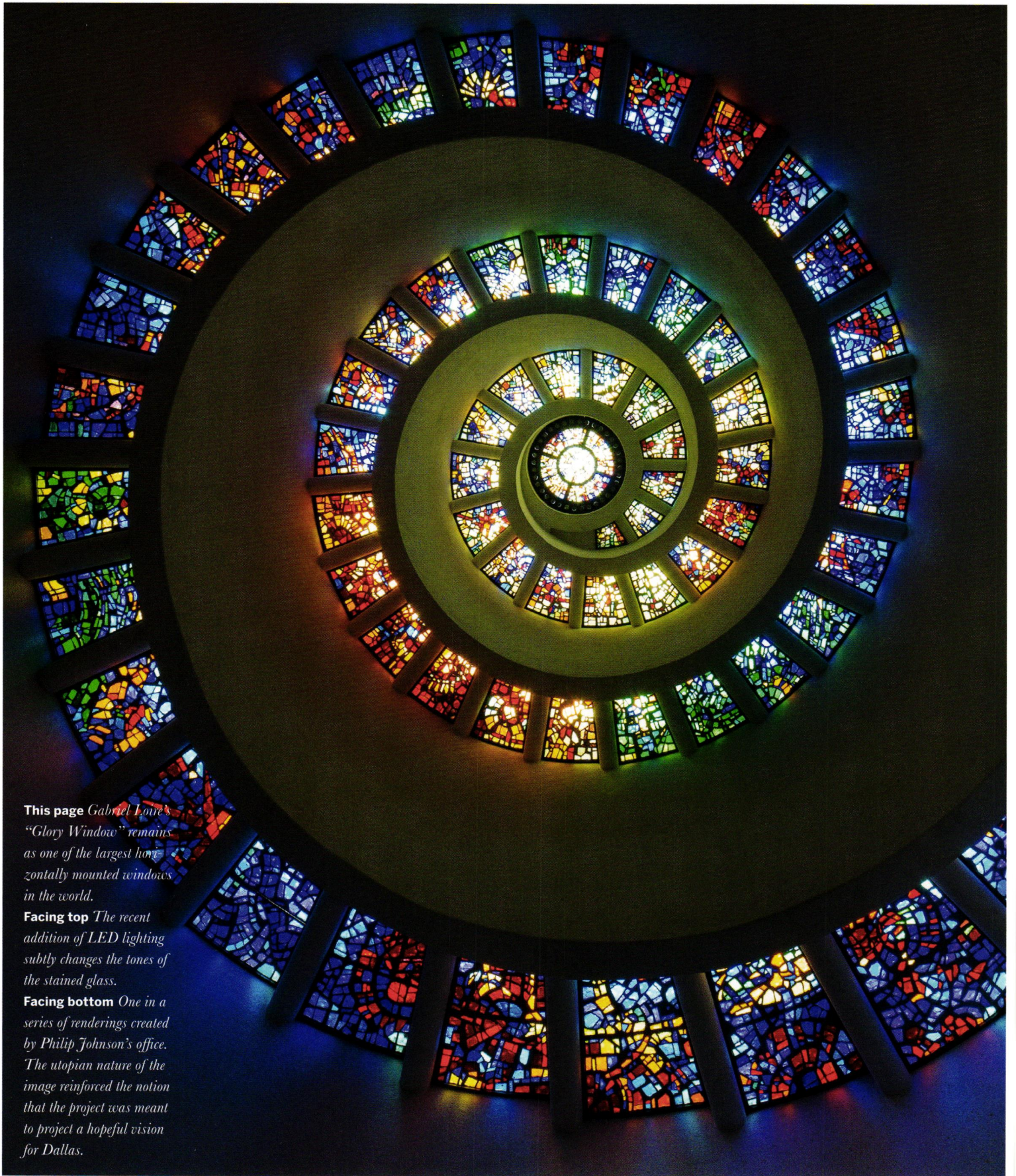
The foundation is in the process of implementing a plan to address the future needs of the square, with a thorough investigation of the archives as well as the needs of Downtown residents and visitors alike. “As part of Thanks-Giving Square’s 40th anniversary, efforts are being made to organize archival content, clean up original architectural models, and share



Previous *The chapel defines the prominence of the square along the urban edge at the corner of Ervay and Bryan.*

Facing *The simply articulated form of the spiral contrasts against the varying textures of the high-rises beyond. The purity in form furthers the universal meaning of the square.*

Left *The chapel is anchored by a series of fountains and pathways that approach the foundation’s internal program.*



This page Gabriel Loire's "Glory Window" remains as one of the largest horizontally mounted windows in the world.

Facing top The recent addition of LED lighting subtly changes the tones of the stained glass.

Facing bottom One in a series of renderings created by Philip Johnson's office. The utopian nature of the image reinforced the notion that the project was meant to project a hopeful vision for Dallas.



early stories that have not been displayed for decades,” says Noah Jeppson, an experiential graphic designer based in Seattle who is on the foundation’s board of directors. A regular advocate for the historical fabric of downtown Dallas, Jeppson has been combing through archival content as a means of informing the branding and graphic work he is doing for the square.

The chapel is the focal point of Johnson’s plan. It is sited at the highest point of the one-acre, pie-shaped site, at the corner of Ervay and Bryan. Its spiral form is based on a Benedictine monk’s interpretation of gratitude as being not a closed circle, but an ascending one. Its proportions are derived from the golden section.

While the chapel garners attention for connecting to the public, the landscape lags behind. With the recent attention and use of the space as a celebratory arena for humanity and gratitude, the desire for the park to evolve has never been more apparent. “The renovation does take into

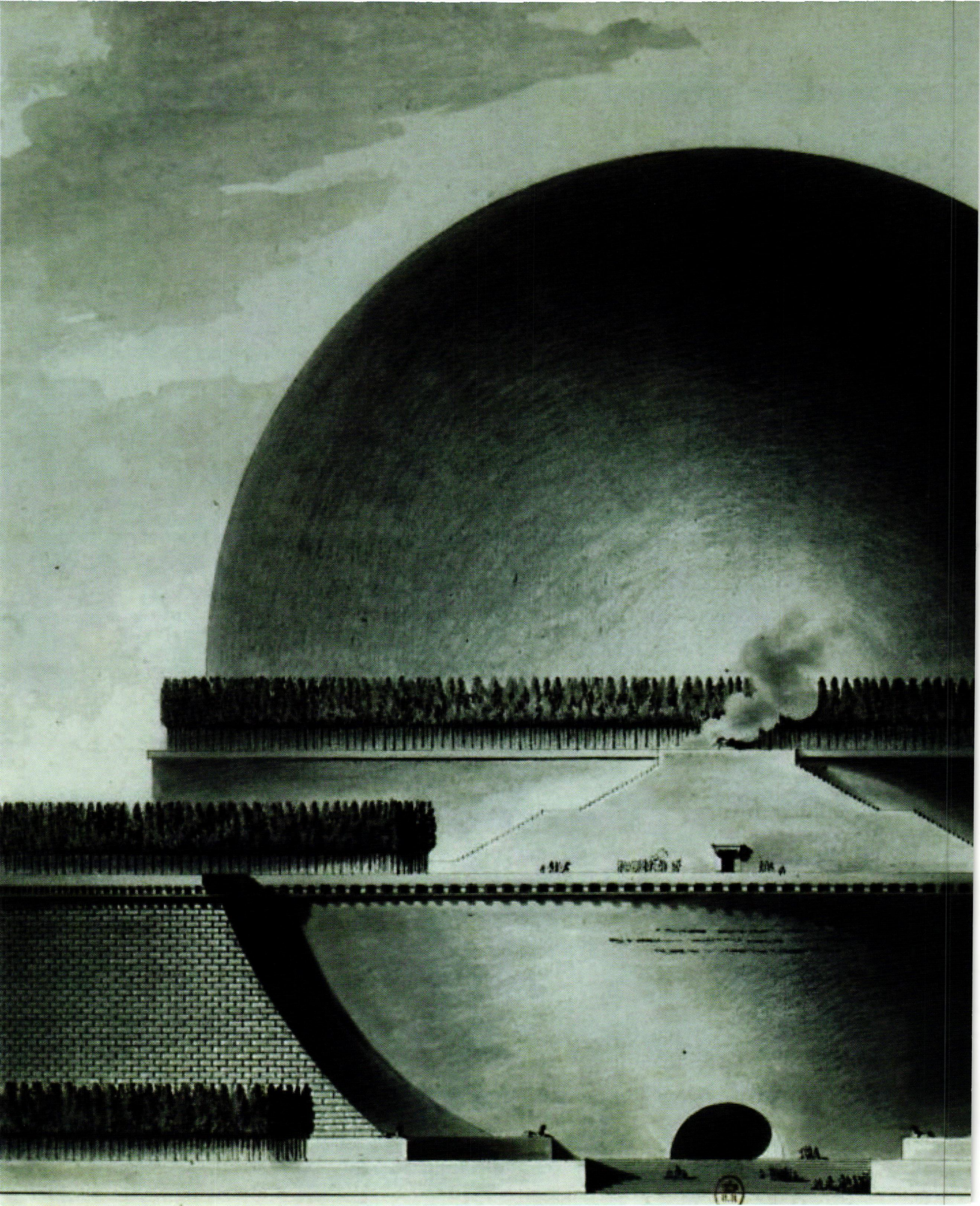
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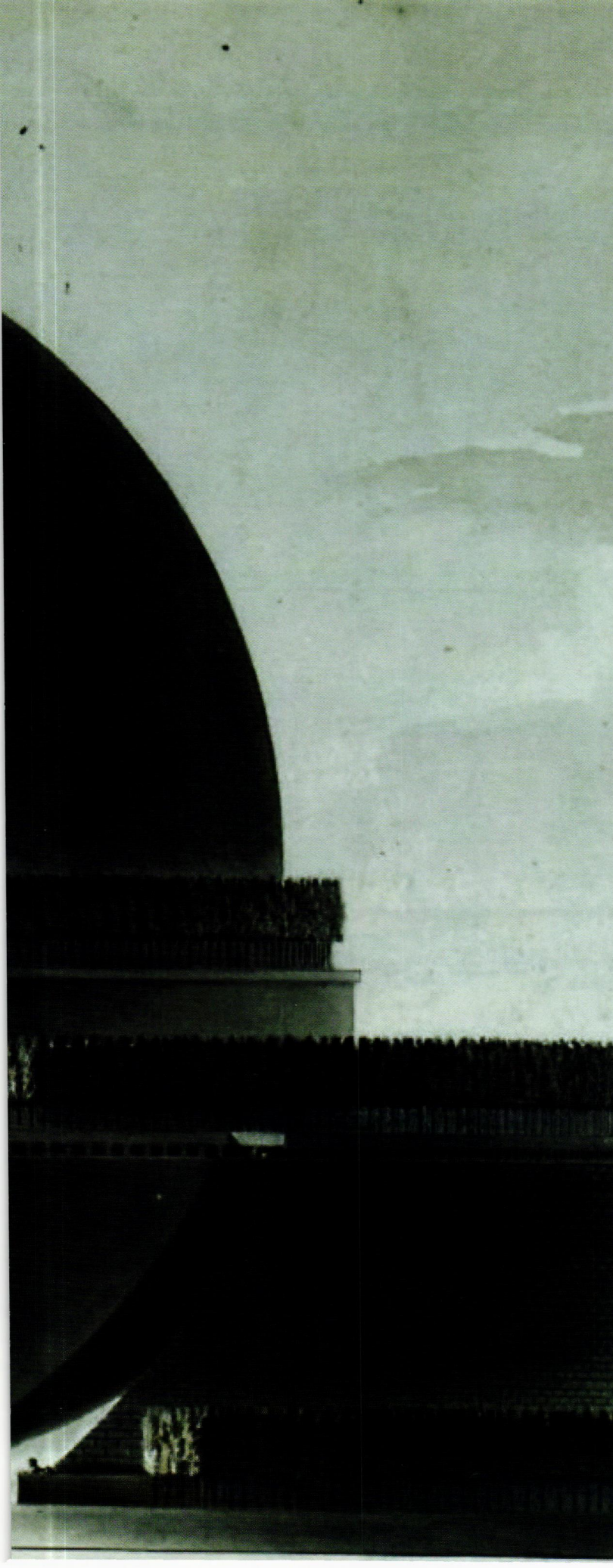
consideration the new neighborhood and advanced thinking on how parks and green space interact with the pedestrian and general streetscape,” says Jud Pankey, who is leading the facilities and renovation project — “working with Philip Johnson’s firm to maintain the integrity of space intent, while bringing the improvements and pathways into a contemporary and useful asset for the neighborhood.”

One early and noticeable change to the visitor experience is new exhibition and wayfinding signage designed by Jeppson. “Layers of signage over the years added confusion and were a target of frequent vandalism,” he says. His approach takes into account an understanding of the interests of the public and how they use the space, as well as the original intent of Johnson’s design. “These signs serve as a test bed to gain feedback from visitors and test the durability of materials in an urban setting, and will be improved upon during a larger landscape renovation that improves accessibility. They complement the architecture of the space, while reminding visitors that they have entered into a place that is unique from other public spaces in downtown Dallas.” Flexible and colorful seating will also be added as a way to make the space more inviting through a simple gesture. Ongoing plans will focus on neighborhood integration through addressing plaza areas and public space. The gardens will also be restored with landscaping that better suits the climatic conditions, and the fountains will be repaired.

The evolution of Thanks-Giving Square reveals a societal depth that no designer is able to foresee. The vigil following the police shooting serves as a testament to that depth. Events such as these remind us of the powerful role that spaces can play in shaping societies. Thanks-Giving Square is unique in that it is a monumental space that can shape the society on a neighborhood scale and redefine its relevance simultaneously. The Thanks-Giving Foundation’s efforts to preserve and uncover the past, displaying its contents to public view, will, it is to be hoped, aid the rehabilitation of similar humanist projects across the country.

Michael Friebele, Assoc. AIA, is a senior associate with FTA Design Studio in Dallas.





Awe

ARCHITECTS HAVE INTUITIVELY UNDERSTOOD AND DESIGNED AWE-INSPIRING SPACES FOR MILLENNIA. NOW, A NEW BODY OF RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF NEUROSCIENCE IS GIVING US A GLIMPSE INTO THE INTRICATE MENTAL PROCESSES THAT UNDERLIE SUBLIME EXPERIENCES INSPIRED BY ARCHITECTURE.

by **Anastasia Calhoun, Assoc. AIA**



Whereas the beautiful is limited, the sublime is limitless, so that the mind in the presence of the sublime, attempting to imagine what it cannot, has pain in the failure but pleasure in contemplating the immensity of the attempt.

— Immanuel Kant, “Critique of Pure Reason”

Our entire human experience — from the sacred to the profane, from the heart-wrenching to the awe-inspiring — is mediated by the interaction between the brain, body, and environment, or our “embodied experience.” Recent advancements in the field of neuroscience over the last two decades begin to allow us to glimpse the complex mechanisms at work that underlie our deepest emotions and experience of life. It is with this understanding that the Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture (ANFA) was established and has taken as its charge to understand the reciprocal relationship between the mind and the environment. Though still in its infancy, ANFA hosts a biannual conference where researchers share their cross-disciplinary work in the fields of neuroscience and architecture in an attempt to understand the science behind some of the most ineffable qualities of the human condition, including the experience of awe, spirituality, and contemplative states and their relationship to the built environment.

Awe is often described as a sense of awakening, an escape from the incessant hum of our minds. Time slows; we experience a deep feeling of interconnectedness; and perhaps, for a moment, it is as if we have touched the very essence of existence. Researchers define awe as cognitive neuroscience Ph.D.

student Hanna Negami does, as “an emotion encompassing both vastness, such as in physical size, power, or social standing, plus accommodation such that experiencing awe necessitates reappraisal of existing mental models.” That is, awe is an experience so powerful that it is literally “mind-blowing,” forcing an individual to adjust their existing mental paradigms in order to process it. The result is a complex emotional experience that lies somewhere on the spectrum between elation and fear. It is something so unexpected and so unprecedented that lived experience to that point is not sufficient to inform appropriate reaction or response: Awe describes an experience that transcends our understanding of the world.

Research presented at the ANFA conferences elucidates from numerous perspectives the biological and mental underpinnings of the experience of awe. Negami, graduate student at the University of Waterloo and presenter at ANFA 2016, began her research thesis asking whether it was possible to use an objective method to define emotionally relevant characteristics of architecture and whether this could then predict human behavior. Her work builds upon a 2013 study that argues that churches and other religious monumental architecture evoke a sense of awe, fostering religious openness and facilitating various social functions of religion. Part of Negami’s study focuses on the effect that interior church architecture has on cognition, looking at whether church interiors facilitate religious or spiritual feeling through awe-inducing architecture and whether such spaces affect the perception of time.

Selecting 60 photographs rated on 24 architectural properties such as religious symbolism, presence of water, and repeating elements, Negami organized these characteristics into four groups. The first component consisted of properties of immensity, such as ceiling height, size of the space, and contour. The second component — adornment — comprised the presence of art, images, and ornament. The third principle component included such qualities as natural lighting and repeating elements; and the fourth, the use of natural materials and seating. Images were selected that represented both high and low examples of each component. Study participants then viewed the photographs, imagining themselves in each of these spaces and ranking the extent to which they felt 10 emotions, such as anger, happiness, awe, fear, and boredom. Negami found that two components — immensity and adornment — did in fact significantly elicit a feeling of awe.

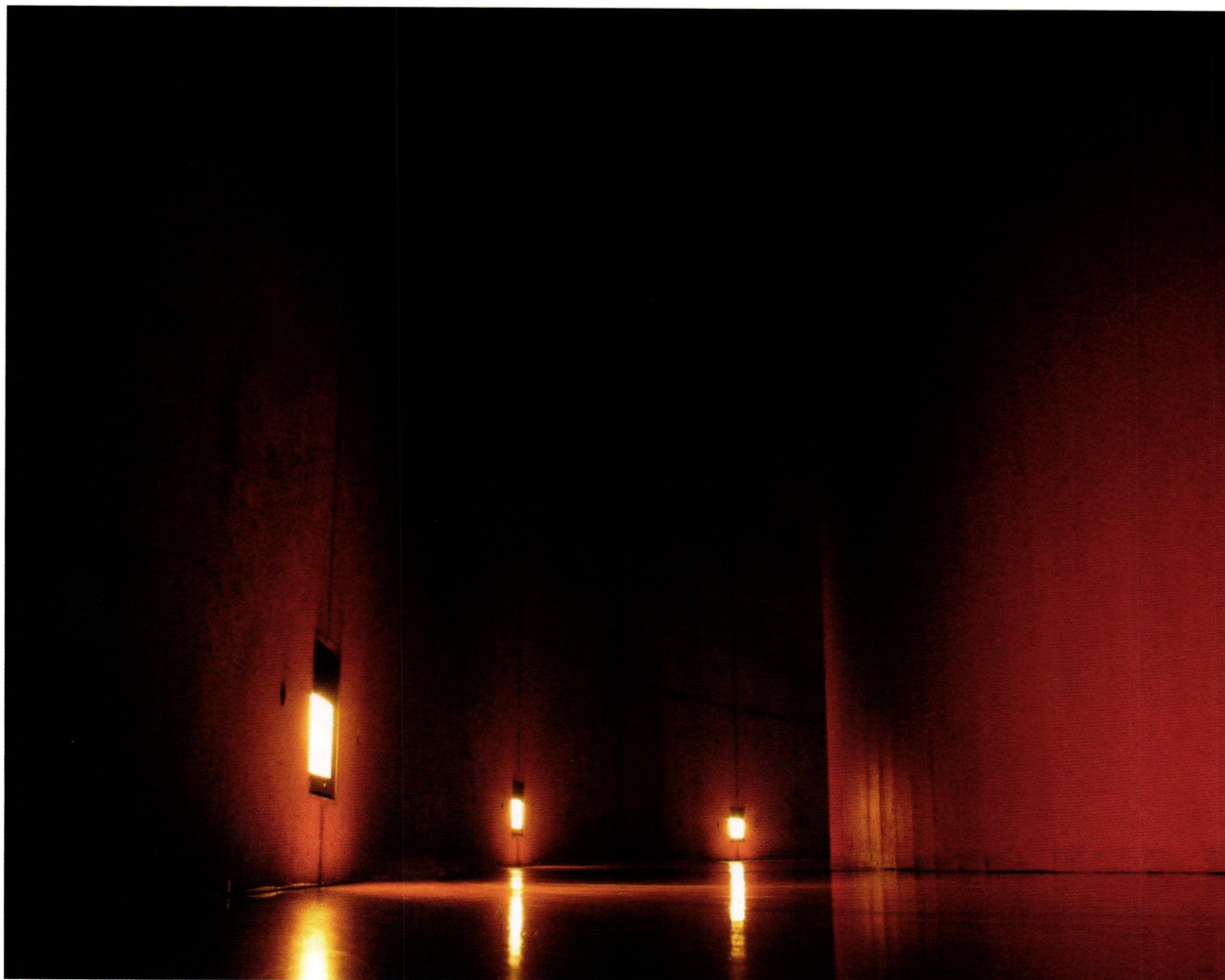
Participants were asked to view churches and nonreligious spaces that were predicted to evoke either a high or a low sense of awe. Time perception was measured, and the results showed that, subjectively, experiencing awe made time slow down.

In “CNN Style” (August 2015), Vittorio Gallese, professor of physiology at the University of Parma, explained this phenomenon as follows: “The way a space is architected is linked with sensual elevation. To feel closer to God, you have to create an environment where everything suggests this feeling of elevation.” The kinship between awe and vastness/elevation is rooted in the evolution of our ancestors: Their predilection for open space

— experiences such as looking into the immensity of the night sky or the expanse of a canyon — is echoed in the architecture of our monuments and places of worship. Perhaps no other philosophical and aesthetic movement embodies this phenomenon as completely as does Romanticism. With its emphasis on the emotional reaction to the sublime as the source of aesthetic experience, the period was a direct response to the hyper-rationalism of the Enlightenment, where reason had displaced the subjective, the emotional, and the religious.

The sublime, as described by Edmund Burke, involves power, vastness, and darkness and is capable of inspiring feelings of terror as well as awe. Nature was what people generally looked to in their quest for the sublime — as the ubiquity of landscape painting of the era shows — but the sublime also found its way into architectural representation. Étienne-Louis Boullée’s Cenotaph for Isaac Newton, though a tribute to Enlightenment ideals, is in many ways the epitome of the Romantic concept of the sublime, with its massive 500-ft-diameter spherical form and its dramatic contrasts in light and dark, delicately balancing immensity, beauty, and fear.

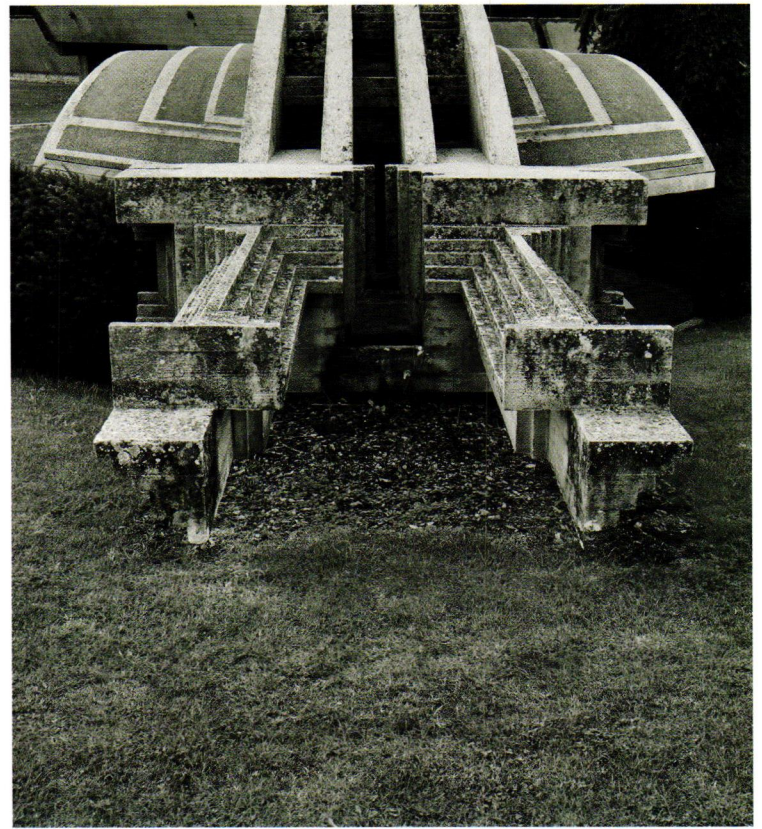
While architects have, for millennia, instinctively integrated in worship spaces design elements that evoke the sublime, this has been almost impossible to demonstrate empirically. However, with advances in brain imaging, researchers are beginning to do just that. Associate professor of the Catholic University of America and presenter at the most recent three ANFA conferences, Julio Bermudez is part of a research team that is studying the



Previous Étienne-Louis Boullée’s “Cenotaph for Isaac Newton” embodies the sense of the architectural sublime.

Facing A concrete staircase draws the pilgrim down beneath the water surface of Tadao Ando’s Water Temple.

Left Curved walls awash with a red-orange glow create a heightened sense of anticipation.



ability of architecture to induce contemplative states. His goal is to demonstrate that, if architecture is proven effective at facilitating contemplation through external methods, then it can enhance and extend the benefits of such internally driven contemplative practices as prayer and meditation.

Bermudez's pilot study involved 12 participants who were shown images of both ordinary buildings and contemplative buildings and asked to imagine that they were physically present in those spaces while their brains were scanned by a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) machine. All of the participants were architects, intentionally selected with the idea that they would be particularly attuned to the qualities of space and would produce stronger, and therefore more measurable, responses than the average person.

What Bermudez and his team found was that contemplative buildings stimulate different regions of the brain compared to ordinary buildings. The left and right parietal lobes — areas of the brain responsible for sensation, perception, and integrating sensory input — were activated, suggesting a heightened aesthetic experience. At the same time, contemplative buildings were found to significantly reduce anxiety and mind-wandering, a result consistent with moving from an ordinary state of mind to a state of meditation. In fact, during meditation, self-narrative activities like mind-wandering, evaluation, analysis, and judgment — activities that depend on the frontal lobe — slowed, or ceased entirely. Additionally, a deeper contemplative experience was associated with more profound architectural space, and this relationship was correlated with the deactivation of major regions of the brain, most noticeably the prefrontal cortex, the area responsible for executive functions and sense of self. These findings provide a neurological basis for the feelings of oneness and interconnectedness that often arise in association with the experience of awe. What was surprising, however, was that the prefrontal cortex was deactivated to an extent that

surpassed even internally induced meditation, meaning that the power of the stimulus — the architecture — induced the same cognitive effects related to maintaining focus and attention without demanding any effort on the part of the subject.

Architect, researcher, and 2016 ANFA presenter Andrea Jelic also studies the experience of awe and its ability to affect time perception in architecture, but through the lens of narrative architecture, or the dynamic experience of space in time. Jelic contends that “the sense of mystery and anticipation is slowly built as the person moves through the architectural setting, and culminates in intense feelings of sacredness and otherworldliness. The key aspect that contributes to these profound feelings lies in our subjective experience of time.”

Jelic illustrates this concept through two architectural works: Tadao Ando's Water Temple and Carlo Scarpa's Brion Cemetery. The journey through Ando's Water Temple begins as the visitor moves between diverging concrete walls. Two abrupt turns and in between a path that curves along a shield wall, and the walker confronts a glistening, circular body of water suspended in a concrete basin and reflecting distant trees. Bisecting this “O,” a cement staircase draws the pilgrim down into the worship space, water on either side and lily pads visible under its surface. Inside, as outside, a curving, narrow corridor screens what lies ahead, building the sense of anticipation before revealing a temple chamber flooded with a diffuse, red glow. A similar compression and expansion of space can be found in the transition between narthex and nave in the architecture of early basilicas and churches, where the sense of awe generated by the expansiveness of the nave is heightened by the contrast in scale of the narthex.

In the case of Carlo Scarpa's Brion Cemetery, the experience of space and time is directly based on the interaction between our physical existence as humans and various specially designed spaces. For example, the cem-



Facing left *Interlocking circular windows representing infinity begin the procession through Carlo Scarpa's Brion Cemetery.*
Facing right *Sarcophagi of the Brion Family*
Left *Stepping stones across a reflecting pool create a threshold between the chapel and hidden garden.*
Below *A narrow passage leads to an enclosed entry before opening onto the chapel.*



etry contains a set of atypical stairs that requires the individual to ascend in an unusual way. Habitual movement patterns are disrupted, forcing the brain out of its rote predictions. As a result, time expands, as the person becomes aware of him- or herself as an experiential subject. Research has shown that the same brain networks underlie body awareness, time perception, and attentional control. Specifically, the anterior insula is associated with the sentient self and also seems to play a fundamental role in our perception of time. The Brion Cemetery was designed to be a place of contemplation, and Scarpa intuitively and effectively integrated design elements that created novel experiences to force the brain into a different way of working. These altered states of consciousness, characterized by heightened bodily awareness, lead to the perception of a slowing of time and an increased presence, which can culminate in the feeling that time has stopped and that the self has become one with the world.

Although our ability to measure the complex activities of the brain as it reacts to environmental and spatial experiences is still limited by current brain-imaging technologies (for instance, the brain can only be measured within the confines of a machine), there is still much to be gained from the fields of cognitive and environmental psychology as we consider how our environment influences our emotions and perceptions and, in particular, our lived experience. We are sentient constructs, each bestowed with a wondrous living network of cognitive circuitry that contains 100 trillion synapses — at least 1,000 times the number of stars in our galaxy. We shape, and are shaped by, the world around us. It is in our best interest as designers, but more importantly as human beings, to acknowledge the power of intuition in our work and in our lives; to turn off the chatter in our minds; to pause, breathe, and marvel at the beauty that surrounds us.

Anastasia Calhoun, Assoc. AIA, works at Overland Partners in San Antonio.



The ground floor of the Moody Center is mostly glass, while the upper level is clad with dark gray bricks and has a reduced number of irregularly sized and spaced openings.

Moody Blues



THE MOODY CENTER FOR THE ARTS AT RICE IS PART OF A TREND TOWARD MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTS-FOCUSED BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY PRESTIGIOUS ARCHITECTS AT UNIVERSITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY. THE BUILDING'S SITING, FORM, AND MATERIALITY SET IT APART FROM THE REST OF THE CAMPUS.

by Ben Koush, AIA

Project Moody Center for the Arts

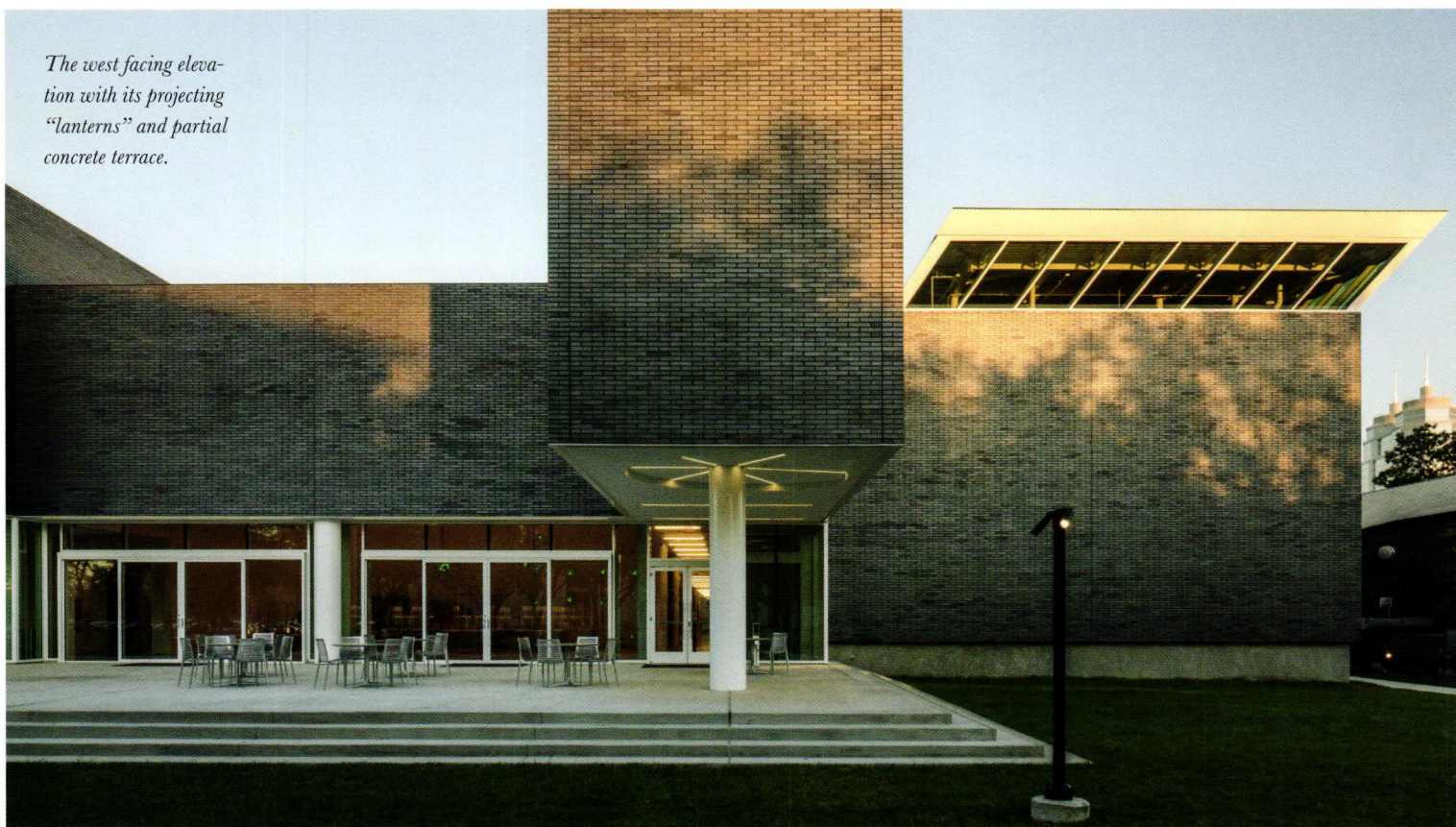
Client Rice University

Architect Michael Maltzan Architecture

Design Team Michael Maltzan, FAIA; Tim Williams; Jeanette Fabry; Andrea Manning; Matt Austin; Hiroshi Tokumaru; Peter Erni; James Tate; Ann Soo; Jen Lathrop; Gee-Ghid Tse; Pil Sun Ham; Alan Sillay; Peter Osborne; Collin Cobia; and Casey Benito

Photographer Peter Molick

The west facing elevation with its projecting “lanterns” and partial concrete terrace.



The Rice University campus, like its host city, Houston, has been transformed in spurts, with furious but sporadic building booms. Unlike Houston, Rice has mostly followed a formal plan. Its biggest boom lasted from the late 1940s through the early 1970s, during which time 30 new buildings appeared. The latest growth period began in the late 1990s under president Malcolm Gillis and has continued under current president David Leebron. With the latest new-building count at 30 (including the Rice Opera House, in the design phase), the postwar boom has been matched, and there are no signs that the current one is winding down. Indeed, a common quip at Rice is that there are more buildings than there are students. As with all construction booms, the results are mixed: There are some great buildings, some terrible ones, and a lot in between.

The newest facility to open at Rice is the Moody Center for the Arts, a two-story, 52,000-sf building on the southern edge of campus designed by Los Angeles architect Michael Maltzan. Its ground floor is largely glass, while the second floor hovering over it is mostly solid, clad with metallic gray brick and punctured by relatively few — but large — openings, irregularly shaped and spaced. The contrast between the two floors evokes the shapes of existing campus buildings — rectangular bars of varying dimensions — and the sensation of passing through Rice’s dense gray-green canopy of live oaks.

The Moody Center, committed to collaboration among the arts, sciences, and humanities, comprises the secured, museum-like, double-height Brown Foundation Gallery; the open, double-height Central Gallery (which has a sprung wood floor for dance); and three smaller art exhibition spaces: the Reception Gallery and two media arts galleries. Other dedicated areas include the Lois Chiles Studio Theater, (a black box theater), studios, labs, classrooms, a library, a slew of audiovisual editing rooms, different types of fabrication shops, and some unprogrammed open spaces.

The Moody’s multidisciplinary arts-focused program reflects a trend in institutions of higher learning toward having special facilities designed by prestigious architects. Examples include the Granoff Center for the Creative Arts (2011) by Diller Scofidio + Renfro at Brown; the Stanford Arts Institute, housed in the McMurtry Building (2016), also by Diller Scofidio + Renfro; and the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton, whose new mini-campus, by Steven Holl, is scheduled to open in October 2017. Closer to home, there is the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts at the University of Houston, which was remodeled in 2005 by Lake|Flato.

Rice already has two multidisciplinary programs: the Oshman Engineering Design Kitchen, remodeled in 2008 by Stern and Bucek, and the BioScience Research Collaborative, designed by SOM’s San Francisco office. In the Rice context, the Moody Center’s novelty is in its focus on the arts. Although arts and humanities have been integral to Rice’s curriculum since its foundation, the school remains best known for science and engineering. One of president Leebron’s stated goals has been to reduce this disparity.

About five years ago, the private Galveston-based Moody Foundation approached Rice University, intending to fund a brick-and-mortar project for the arts. It ultimately gave two thirds of the Moody Center’s \$30 million budget, with philanthropist and Rice alum Suzanne Deal Booth (who commissioned James Turrell’s “Twilight Epiphany” and its surrounding pavilion by Thomas Phifer) proposing architect Michael Maltzan for the new center and endowing the executive director’s position.

The Moody Center sits at Rice’s Stockton Street entrance, in the middle of an unplanned athletic sector that sprawls along the campus’s previously neglected southern edge. The university’s goal seems to be to reclaim this sector as a cultural center, making use of its proximity to the vast public parking lot that surrounds Rice Stadium. In 2014, a new



support it. Most people who supported this project just wanted a music venue here; they weren't just trying to double their money."

The architects were also new at this. Prior to White Oak, SCHAUM/SHEIH's focus had primarily been on research projects. Both of the partners teach and had worked on building projects at other firms — Schaum at OMA and Rosalyne Shieh, AIA, at Abalos&Herreros in Madrid, as well as ARO and Stan Allen Architect in New York — but they had yet to build anything under their own shingle. The goal for the architecture of White Oak was set at the start: "It's a modern project," Schaum says. "We wanted to make a public space that didn't refer to Texas' past. We wanted something that would represent the global, cosmopolitan ambitions of our little city."

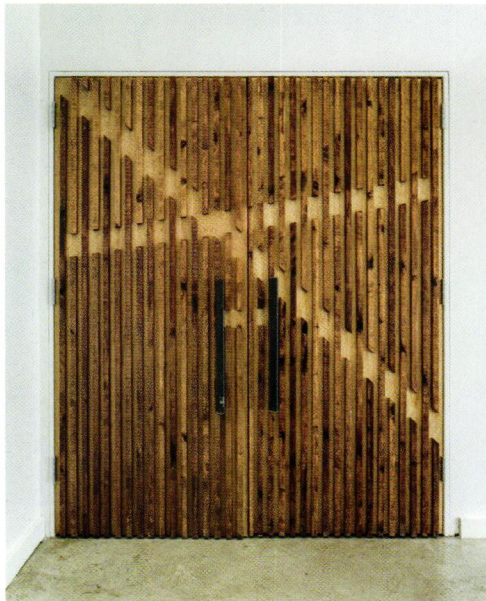
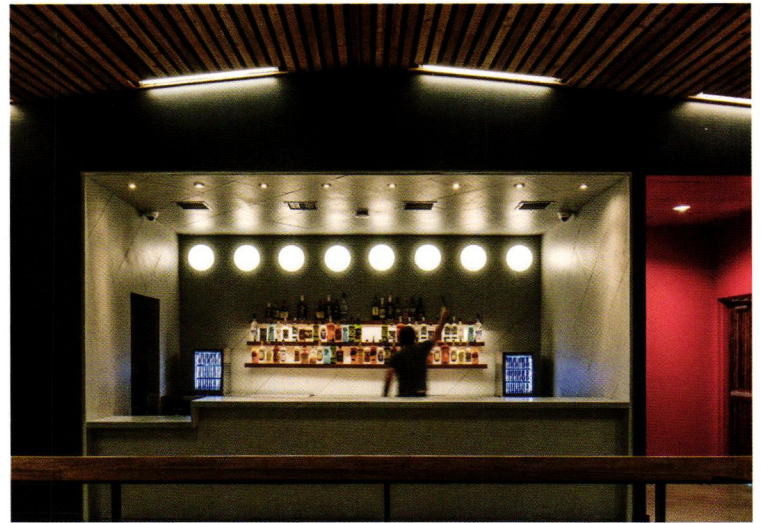
The five-acre site was assembled mostly from empty and abandoned lots. The only structures to be preserved and incorporated into the new venue included the former fabrication shop of R.W. Walker's Metal Enterprises and its attached Raven Tower — Walker's "bachelor pad in the sky" — a Houston landmark since it was completed in the 1970s. The team worked with the City of Houston to get a 380 Agreement — a state-sponsored economic development tool that allows cities to reimburse developers for public infrastructure improvements, using funds from the increased tax base the project generates. This helped cover the cost of putting in new streets, sidewalks, and a sewer system, not to mention 650 parking spaces.



The new building, which establishes an urban edge at the corner of North and North Main streets, encloses two venues. One accommodates 1,200 people; the other, 220. The building massing expresses these two entities. "It's bloody-minded, very simple," Schaum says. "It has a chunkiness to it, which is part of its authenticity. Over time, people will inhabit it, put marks on it, and it will develop a bottom-up aura."

The steel structure is clad in Hardie Board — the cheapest way to build in Houston, according to Schaum. The architects ripped the Hardie Board down the middle and laid it up the elevation like lap siding, setting up a 1-ft, 10-in dimension that became the module for the design. The Hardie Board is painted in a black-to-gray gradient at the base of the building, "to create a graphic identity that's not a cheesy sign," Schaum says. The architects did, however, also design a bold and graphic sign that wraps the main public corner. Lit up with white light at night, spelling out "WHITE OAK MUSIC HALL," it acts as a beacon on what is otherwise currently a quiet and dark stretch of North Main.

The rear of the building faces an outdoor stage with a capacity of 3,500. Two decks on the second level and a third on the roof (that was added during construction) provide perches for taking in a show or viewing the downtown skyline. The decks are topped by timber *brise-soleil*, as opposed to roofs, leaving inhabitants exposed to Houston's frequent rain showers. Angled cedar-plank siding is laid over rock



Top left The architects added shocks of color in certain circulation spaces.

Top right One of three bars in the main building. This one, on the mezzanine, is lined with concrete panels.

Middle left The architects designed the doors that open onto the venues.

Middle right The smaller venue, with its window behind the stage, looking out on Houston.

Bottom right The Raven Tower and Lounge, another venue on the site, housed in a reclaimed fabrication shop.





The outdoor venue has room for 3,500 people, and a great view of downtown. Some neighborhood residents want to shut it down, permanently.

wool insulation, dampening the sound reflected off the building during outdoor concerts. Raised weathered-steel boxes, platforms for wood box seating, ring the ridge of the grass amphitheater, which slopes down to the stage.

The layout of the large indoor venue is based on Fitzgerald's. It's a flat shoebox shape, which puts everyone in the crowd close to the stage. The oversized proscenium also gives the impression that you're very close to the band. Angled cedar planks line the walls, spaced 1/2-in to 1-1/2-in apart with rock wool insulation behind. The architects worked with Jaffe-Holden on the acoustical design and with Tim Nowicke and Generations AV on the production design.

The smaller indoor venue features a window behind the stage that looks out on the skyline. There are three bars — one serving the small stage, two the large, each punched into recesses, and each expressing a different elemental materiality: wood, stainless steel, concrete. The architects worked with Gin Braverman of ginsdesigngroup on some of the interior spaces, including the artist green rooms, which are well-appointed and include facilities for laundry and showering — rare and valued amenities for touring musicians.

R.W. Walker's old fabrication shop was turned into a separate venue. The architects sketched arched holes cut out of the metal building's siding to create an open-air pavilion. A bar and outdoor patio space — a place to bring your dog on Sunday and watch a football game — face the bayou. The Raven Tower was turned into a lounge (also finished by ginsdesigngroup), and the architects are currently working to add a fire stair to the space, to update the certificate of occupancy so it can be opened to the public.

Change can be hard to accept. The owners of White Oak are currently involved in a lawsuit with some nearby residents who object to the sound generated by the outdoor music venue. And yet, what the residents now have as a neighbor is an example of how Houston itself might change responsibly. "You see young people arriving by bicycle, coming off the light rail," Schaum says. "Metro uses this building in their brochures as an example of transit-oriented development. Other things are opening in the neighborhood. Hopefully they'll extend the bike trail up Little White Oak Bayou, connecting it and Moody Park. It's about urban continuity. It's more than a node. It doesn't fit in with the more typical mess of the city."

Aaron Seward is editor of *Texas Architect*.

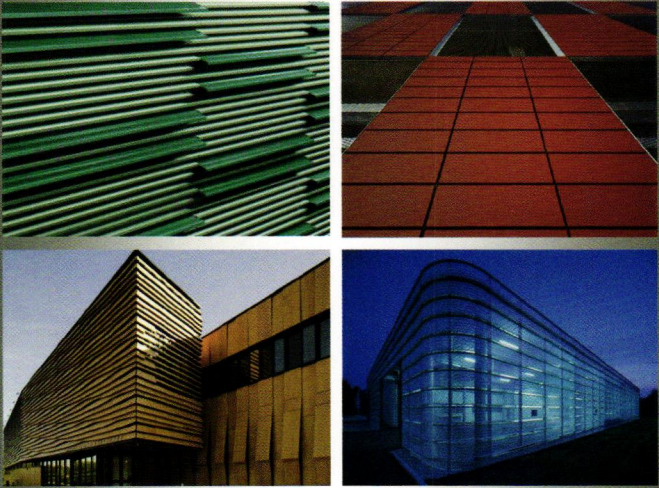


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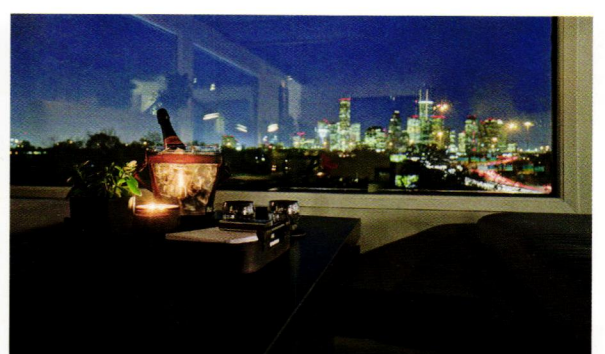


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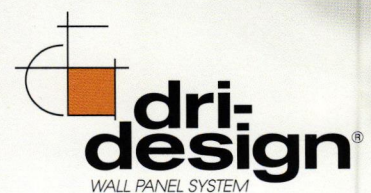


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As a result of unsustainable costs and an inordinate share of gross domestic product, the U.S. health care system has a new business model — one that is transforming the delivery system from hospital-centric sick care to a super outpatient model that will emphasize community-based care.

— Robert York, Kenneth Kaufman, and Mark Grube,
“Where Have All The Inpatients gone?”

Outpatient healthcare services have been on the rise since the 1980s. While the statistics vary from source to source, it seems safe to say that by 2012 approximately half of all surgeries were performed on an outpatient basis. In part, this is due to advancements in clinical treatments, which have reduced the intensity of surgery and improved recovery times. Hospitals have encouraged the trend in an attempt to lower overhead by reducing overnight stays. Patients are also in on the shift, acting more and more like consumers, shopping around for the best price and the least disruption to their routine.

Along with the drift toward outpatient services, there has been a rise in outpatient-specific facilities that are borrowing moves from other architectures. In this portfolio section, we look at two such clinics: one, a large facility in an underserved area of San Antonio that has incorporated hospitality-like spaces and art; the other, a cosmetic dermatology clinic, located in Houston’s Museum District, that resembles a high-end retail store.

Outpatient Clinics

82

Pretty Painless

University Health System
Robert B. Green Campus
RTKL Associates,
Overland Partners
Margaret Sledge, AIA

86

Fair Thou Ow'st

Adara Medical Spa
MC2 Architectural Studio
Aaron Seward



The new University Health System's outpatient care facility sits in a prominent location west of downtown and serves as a gateway to San Antonio's west side.

Pretty Painless

University Health System's new building at its Robert B. Green Campus near downtown San Antonio provides an underserved community with a one-stop outpatient healthcare facility, enlivened with art.

by Margaret Sledge, AIA

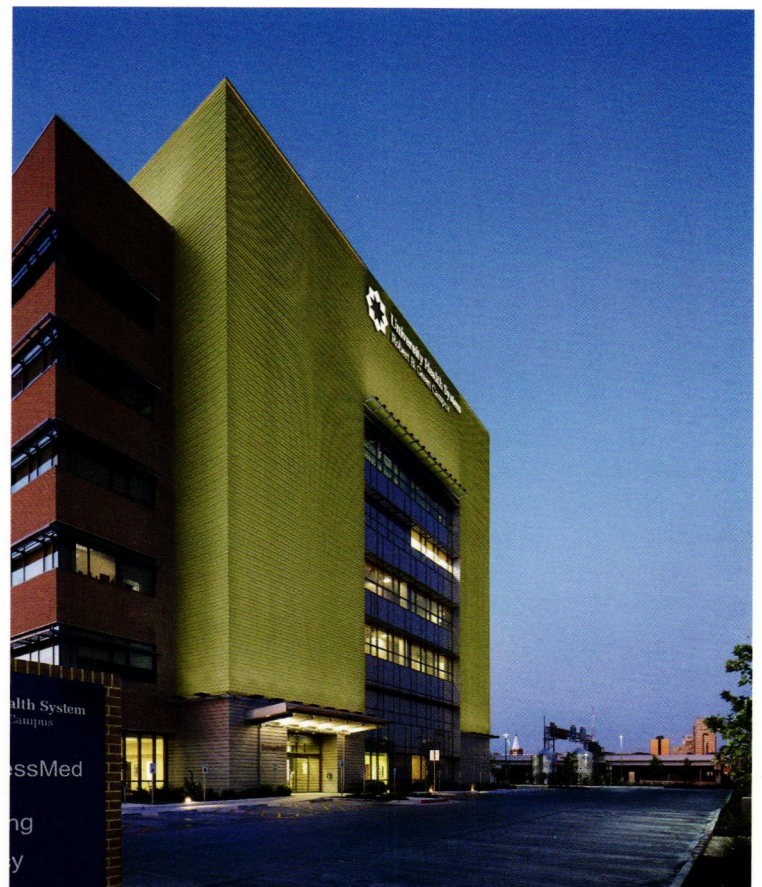
No one looks forward to going to the hospital or to a health clinic, whether for a routine exam or an unusual ailment. Worse is the experience of having to shuttle yourself from a doctor's office for an exam, to a clinic for blood work, to a pharmacy for medication, and then back again to the doctor's office. To ease the anxieties of their patients and customers, the University Health System of San Antonio redesigned their 100-year-old Robert B. Green campus in downtown San Antonio. To accomplish this goal, and at the same time to create a world-class facility on a limited budget, they assembled a team of architects, artists, and craftspeople to develop a project that would do more with less. With a few straightforward ideas about public art, hospitality, and site, they hoped to provide a building that would represent UHS as an institution.

The design team, led by RTKL Associates and Overland Partners, met with demolition, renovation, and new construction that resulted in the reorganization of the campus around a central space that will one day become a public park for the underserved west side. The campus now includes an urgent care center, a surgery suite, a medical clinic, medical offices, a pharmacy, dining facilities, and parking. It is a one-stop facility with everything but an emergency room and



Left and below *Public art is featured prominently at the clinic. Various pieces serve as wayfinding elements at the interior and exterior of the building. The simple exterior material palette is enhanced with two significant works of art. At left, a kinetic metal screen moves with the wind while providing sun shading to interior spaces. Below, colored LED lights illuminate the exterior facades and are visible at the larger urban scale.*

Following *Interior spaces borrow techniques from the hospitality industry to create respectful and welcoming spaces to reduce anxiety.*



- LEVEL 4 FLOOR PLAN**
- DIAGNOSTIC/TREATMENT
 - 1 FAMILY HEALTH MEDICINE LOBBY
 - 2 REGISTRATION
 - 3 DISMISSAL
 - 4 OB FAMILY LOUNGE
 - 5 RESIDENT WORK
 - 6 OFFICE
 - 7 CONFERENCE ROOM/LIBRARY
 - 8 STAFF LOUNGE
 - 9 PATIENT TRAINING
 - 10 RESTROOM



inpatient services. The majority of these services are housed in 235,000 sf of space in a LEED Gold-certified clinic building.

The design team and client immediately recognized the power of art to inspire visitors and ease patients' anxieties. Wanting to advance the healing process, UHS drew on a growing body of research connecting art in the healthcare environment to an improved quality of care for patients and better workplace satisfaction for staff. An art selection committee — led by consultant Allison Hays Lane and composed of representatives from UHS, the City of San Antonio, academia, the art world, the design team, and staff — prioritized the selection of local artists. Much of the artwork is site-specific and has a meaning relating to medicine or the human body. Mark Webb, CEO of Pediatric Services and

primary representative on the client side, noted that even the selection process proved therapeutic for staff and committee members.

UHS and the design team focused on artwork as a way of attracting and retaining customers and the best doctors and nurses. One installation celebrates those staff: Local artist Chuck Ramirez conceived a wall of photographs of UHS staff and patients that serves as a privacy screen between a waiting area and clinic spaces. In the lobby, a shimmering 48-ft-long sculpture by Cathy Cunningham Little reminds us of what connects us as humans: 4,000 tiny suspended square tiles take the shape of a DNA double helix. Artwork also acts as a wayfinding tool at the urban scale: Bill FitzGibbons's "Colorline" uses color-changing LEDs to illuminate the building

facades, attracting the attention of cars passing on the adjacent highway.

Most of the artwork is well-integrated into the architecture of the building. One of the best examples of this is a sculpture experienced from both the exterior and the interior. The new building had to take a North-South orientation, due to site constraints; this resulted in a long elevation facing west that is vulnerable to the harsh afternoon sun. The architecture team engaged artist Ned Kahn to develop a kinetic sculpture for this facade that could allow for light and views yet mitigate heat gain. The result is a mesmerizing series of approximately 5,000 steel louvers that gently turn with the wind.

The design team drew inspiration from the hospitality industry to enhance the patient's experience by minimizing wait times and creating



thoughtful, respectful, welcoming spaces to reduce anxiety. UHS wanted the arrival, parking, and movement through the building to be intuitive, and the architects responded by designing simplicity and consistency into the architecture from one floor to the next. The lobby reception desk is similar to a hotel reception where a customer is greeted by friendly staff. Throughout the structure, one finds gracious spaces for waiting, grabbing a snack, or for quiet reflection. The building is welcoming and comforting.

The design team, with RTKL leading the charge on interiors, successfully separated the front- and back-of-house spaces on this tight site. They went to great effort to right-size clinic spaces by designing each clinic to share exam rooms and other support spaces with adjacent clinics. To determine the scale of this space-sharing, at the beginning of the design process, the architecture team employed sensors to measure and track the flow of people through a typical UHS clinic over a period of two weeks. They analyzed the data to determine how big to make each clinic, and they developed plan diagrams to demonstrate to the client how the spaces would function. The result is that, when one operator is busy, it can grab space from its neighbor.

This efficiency of space is another example of the design team doing more with less. The entire site assumes this challenge — from the development of the massing of the buildings to create open space at the center of the campus, to the formal simplicity of the new building, to the economy of materials inside and out. The result is a building that doesn't distinguish itself as groundbreaking architecture or as a design award winner, but instead as a welcoming, comforting space for an underserved neighboring community. It is a firm commitment from UHS and the design team to the west side of San Antonio to say, "You are important to us."

Overland Partners architect Tim Blonkvist, FAIA, described one of his most satisfying moments: A customer who goes to the clinic frequently for her son's treatments told him that, despite the stress that brings her there, she feels comfortable; it is a space where she belongs and is welcome. This kind of ownership is what UHS hopes will set its Robert B. Green campus apart from other institutions and give its patients the ability to move through the healing process with dignity.

Margaret Sledge, AIA, is an architect with Lake|Flato in San Antonio.





The interior of Adara takes its cues from high-end retail spaces.

Fair Thou Ow'st

Adara, a medical spa in Houston's Museum District, was given a bright, white, pristine interior by MC2 Architects. The design combines elements of high-end retail environments and doctors' offices with subtle but profound references to art.

by Aaron Seward

Juvederm, Kybella, Restylane, Volbella, Voluma, Sculptra.

Coolsculpting, Microdermabrasion, Chemical Peel, Facial.

Laser Hair Reduction, Non-ablative Skin Rejuvenation, Stretch-Mark Trauma-Scar Leg-Vein Treatment.

Ultherapy, Miradry, Microneedling, Skin Pin, Intense Pulse Light Photofacial, Stem Cell Hair Restoration.

Clear and Brilliant.

Botox.

They all will tell you, those who make it there: "Don't get old." It's somewhere between a joke and a lament. The alternative is to die young; otherwise, you're going to grow old before you die. And, as time passes, your body will age. And, in ageing, your skin will dry out, wrinkle, and sag as the flesh beneath it atrophies. Spots and other discolorations will multiply. Spidery varicose veins will start to show through the parchment-thin surface of your ever-more-translucent epidermis. Fat will pool, unwanted, in odd places. Hair will sprout where hair has never grown before, and fall away in places where once it was lush. Scars — from car wrecks, fistfights, pratfalls, surgeries — will accumulate, as will



stretch marks (rippling across skin that once was smooth as drifted snow), thanks to growth spurts, baby bumps, or to the rise/fall that comes with vertical banded gastroplasty (stomach-stapling): It's gross.

This is nothing new, nor is it new for humans to attempt to counter the effects of aging on the body; that seems to be as old as civilization itself. The ancient Greeks coated themselves in olive oil and honey. Ancient Egyptian men rubbed crocodile fat on their balding heads to promote hair growth, while the women mixed natron and water to make a night cream. The peoples of ancient India were particularly elaborate in their development of anti-aging measures, creating a wide variety of creams for targeted purposes and practicing techniques still in vogue today, such as mud baths, herbal masks, and steam treatments.

Twenty-first-century life and longevity have made the quest to conserve youthful appearance all the more urgent, and medical science and the market have risen to the challenge. The series of words that opens this article is not an incantation, though it reads that way; it is a list of services provided by contemporary medical spas — “medical spa” being the preferred euphemism for a cosmetic dermatology clinic. They include

“injectables” that paralyze muscles, make hair grow, and fill in for lost collagen; “body contouring” techniques that kill fat cells through freezing or chemicals; and “laser treatments” that use photons to remove hair, smooth out damaged skin, and eliminate sweat and odor glands.

The machinery involved in providing many of these services, not to mention the needles and the recovery times, can be intimidating. So it is in businesses' best interest that a medical spa be framed by architecture that puts patients at their ease. The same could be said of any healthcare environment, but, in the case of the medical spa, while cleanliness is crucial, self-image is the driver: In short, what's called for is a cross between a doctor's office and a high-end retail establishment.

Adara, a medical spa in Houston's Museum District (on Binz Street, catty-corner from the Children's Museum), is just such a place. Designed by MC2 Architects, its interior is a light-filled, rejuvenating environment studded with subtle but profound references to art.

Adara occupies the second floor of a recently completed four-story mixed-use building, which was designed by Bailey Architects before Shepley Bulfinch bought the firm. The building is also home to related entities Dermatological

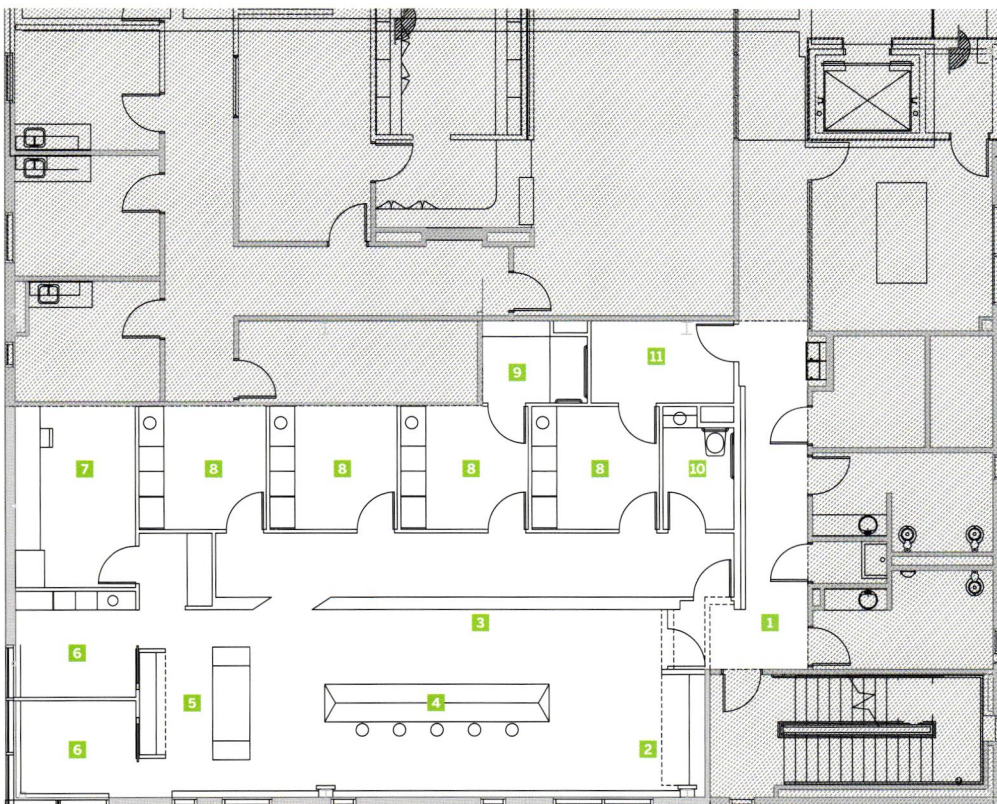
The all-white palette is only interrupted by a walnut “carpet” detail in the floor. String curtains diffuse incoming daylight, giving the interior an ethereal feel.

One of two consultation rooms. MC2 also designed the walnut boxes used to display some of the products sold at Adara.



LEVEL 4 FLOOR PLAN

- 1 ENTRANCE
- 2 WAITING
- 3 DISPLAY WALL
- 4 PRODUCT TESTING
- 5 RECEPTION
- 6 CONSULT ROOM
- 7 OFFICE/STORAGE
- 8 PROCEDURE ROOM
- 9 SHOWER
- 10 RESTROOM
- 11 ADDITIONAL STORAGE



Association of Texas and the Center for Clinical Studies. The first floor retail space is held by MF Sushi — also designed by MC2 — which specializes in an *omakase* dining experience, where the chef decides what guests will eat. The top floor, according to local real estate blog “Swamplot,” is a residence with a large garden terrace.

Adara is an experience that begins with the entry sequence. The gray tiles of the lobby floor transition piecemeal to the white glass tiles of the medical spa as one traverses the narrow corridor. On the wall to the right is a back-lit white Corian sign etched with stylized lotus flowers reminiscent of the work of Charley Harper.

Rounding a corner, visitors enter the main space: a long room with a waiting area; an 18-ft-long span product-testing table (custom-designed by MC2 and made of folded steel); recessed product display shelving; and the reception desk. Everything is white, with the exception of a walnut inlay in the tile floor upon which the table sits. Above the waiting area hangs a sculpture by local artist Bennie Flores Ansell. The windows are screened with white string curtains that diffuse incoming daylight, giving the interior an ethereal air. A reveal where the floor meets the window wall is filled with small white pebbles. Behind the reception desk are two consultation rooms, which have been given the same interior treatment.

Adara’s four procedure rooms are accessed off a hallway that runs parallel to the main room. The threshold between the two is acutely angled toward the entrance and screened with the same sort of string curtain that covers the windows. The hallway is lit by recessed light coves, inspired by James Turrell, that run across the ceiling and down one wall. More of the little white pebbles can be found in the recesses where the light coves meet the floor.

Inside, the treatment rooms themselves are fairly straightforward. There is a reclining chair, a closet for storing the machines, and a desk surface. Here, too, the interior is all white — with the exception of a black stripe running down one wall. According to MC2 co-founder Chung Nguyen, AIA, the stripe was inspired by the paintings of Richard Serra and is meant to serve as a backdrop for taking before-and-after photos of patients. But there seems to be more to those black portals in the all-white interior, situated as they are, directly beside the patient undergoing treatment. What is going on in those mysterious, inky wells? The black bands keep their counsel, as patrons come and go, attempting to postpone the inevitable.

Aaron Seward is the editor of *Texas Architect*.



Left *The other consultation room. The string curtains allow diffuse light to pass through, while giving the space the secluded sense of a sanctuary.*

Below left *The light coves in the hallway to the procedure rooms were inspired by the work of James Turrell.*

Below right *MC2 designed the sign in Adara's entryway; it was inspired by the work of Charley Harper.*

Bottom right *The architects also designed Adara's product testing table, which incorporates small wastebaskets for tissues. The hallway to the procedure rooms is demarcated by a string curtain.*



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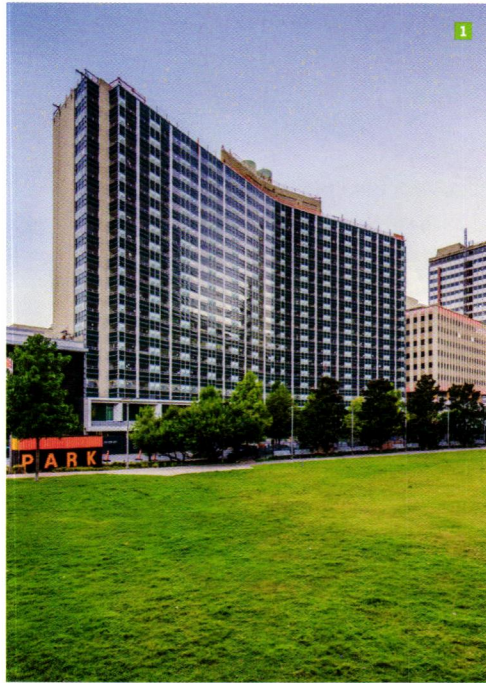
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Preservation Texas Honor Awards

On February 27, Preservation Texas presented its 2017 Honor Awards to 18 historic restoration and rehabilitation projects at a ceremony at the Grand Lodge of Texas in Waco. The awardees represent successful efforts to save irreplaceable and authentic endangered historic places in the state. Ten of the recipients (*) are buildings that were previously on the organization's Most Endangered Places list and have since been saved.



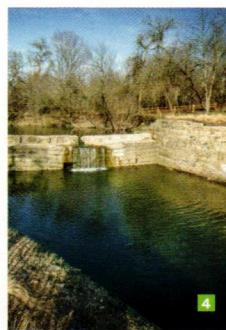
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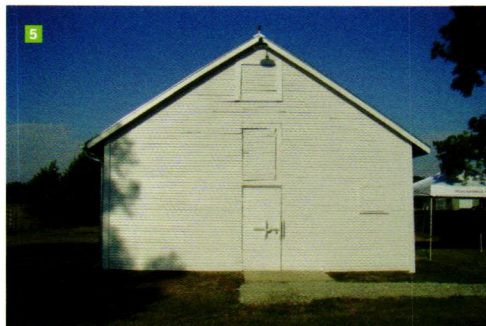
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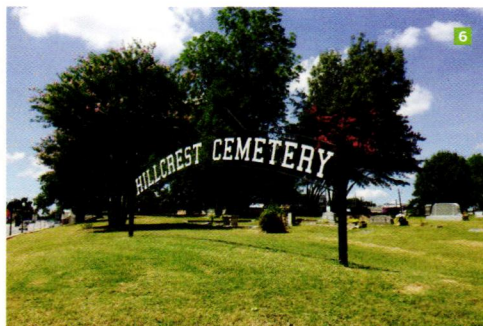
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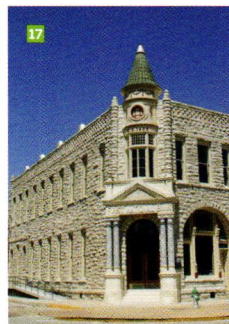
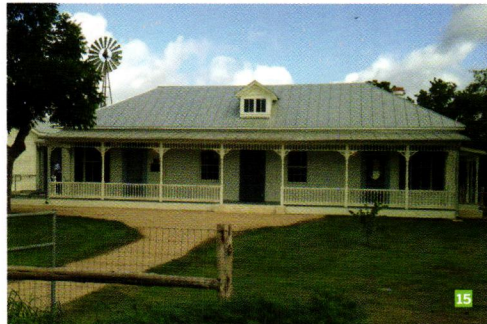
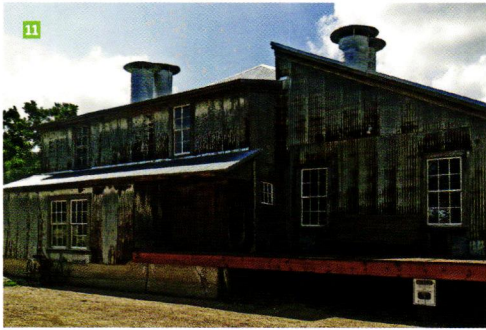


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Preservation Texas Honor Awards

- 1 Statler Hilton,* Dallas**
Merriman Associates
- 2 Hendley Building,* Galveston**
Robert Robinowitz
- 3 Texas Heroes Monument, Galveston**
- 4 Old Stone Dam at Allen Station Park, Allen**
Half Associates
- 5 Barn at Sam Rayburn House SHS, Bonham**
- 6 Hillcrest Cemetery, Canton**
- 7 Medina River Dam at Landmark Inn SHS, Castroville**
- 8 Mulkey Theatre,* Clarendon**
Playa Design Studio
- 9 Texan Theatre, Greenville**
- 10 Kyle Depot, Kyle**
Clayton&Little Architects

Recognition



- 11 Zedler's Mill,* Luling**
- 12 Seaquist House,* Mason**
John Klein
- 13 Donkey Barn in Brackenridge Park, San Antonio**
Speegle & KIM-Davis Architecture
- 14 Magnolia Hotel,* Seguin**
- 15 John S. Harrison House,* Selma**
Seventh Generation Design and Bender Wells Clark Design
- 16 Barker-Huebinger Rock House,* Sutherland Springs**
- 17 First National Bank, Stephenville**
Quimby McCoy Preservation Architecture
- 18 Unity Lodge No. 37,* Waxahachie ■**