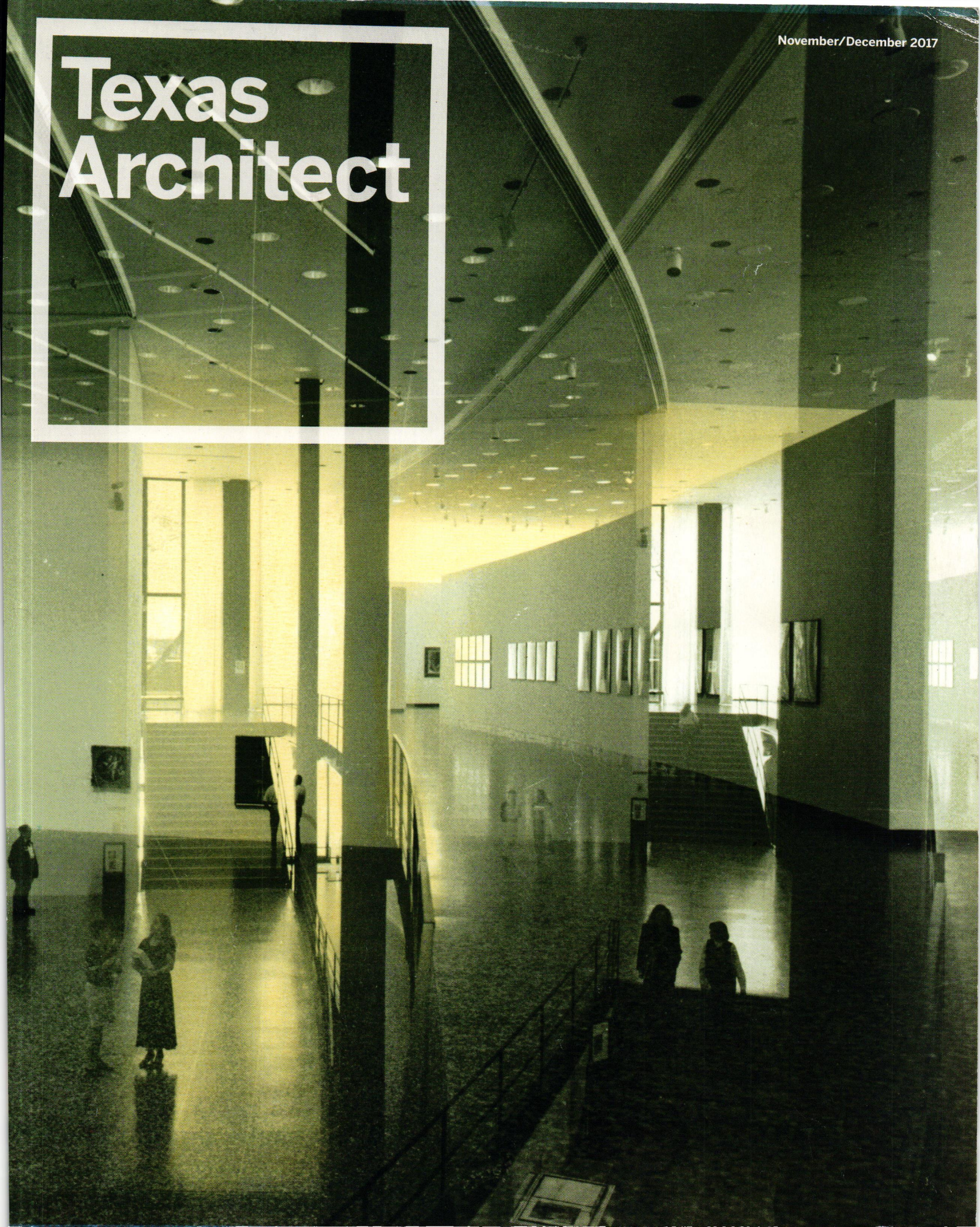
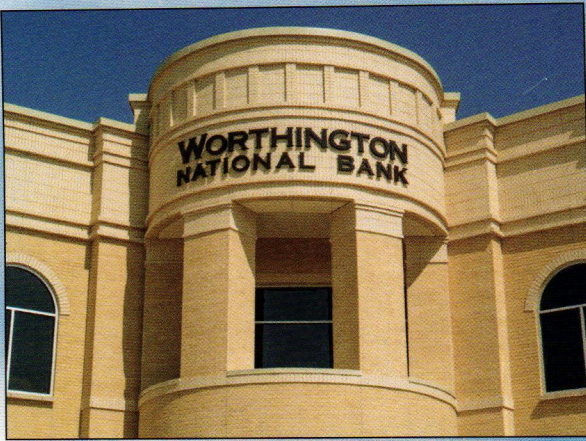


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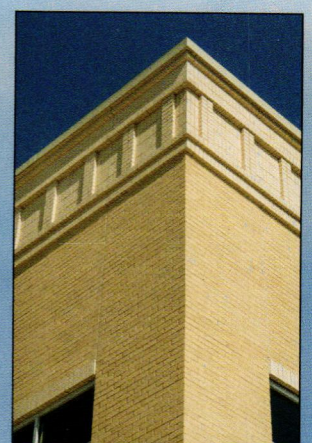
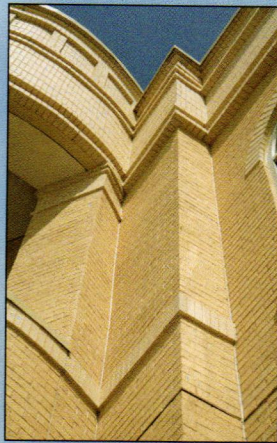


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Modular Brick

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reason to consider anyone else. Acme's reps worked with our construction team to value-engineer up front and ensure we could live up to our renderings with a material superior to stucco or metal panels. We enjoyed good teamwork. The client was pleased to add a sculpture garden and impressive artwork to complete the design."

– Moji Haddad, AIA, President, CHS Architects

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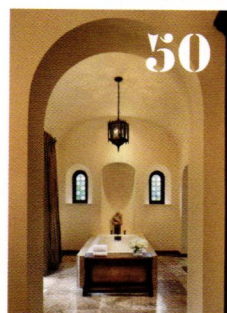
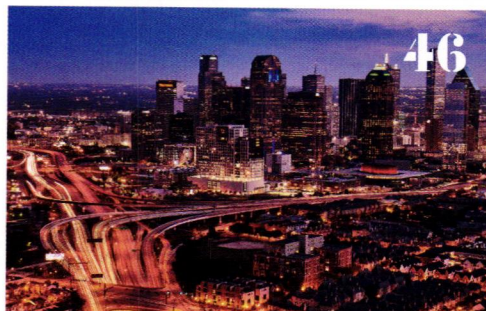
▣ txamagazine.org
Senior Advocate David Lancaster, Hon. AIA, provides a timeline of TxA's Harvey relief efforts and a blueprint for the future. Plus, our latest film, about Pliny Fisk III, Gail Vittori, and the Center for Maximum Building Potential Systems.

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On the Cover

Caroline Weiss Law Building, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. "I have made photographs over which I have had very little control." – Richard Payne, FAIA (p. 34).

Money



Portfolio



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Burning in a Lake

by Aaron Seward

There is a small crack in the flashing around one of the pipe vents that protrudes from my house's metal roof. It's not a problem unless the rain is *really* torrential. In the two-plus years I've lived in Austin, there have been quite a few frog-chokers, but the flashing has only leaked once — during Hurricane Harvey. The water came in at a trickle, ran horizontally across the attic ceiling, and dripped down into the blown cellulose insulation. Once saturating a 2-ft-diameter area, the water ran horizontally again, this time across the interior ceiling, and found a seam above one of the kitchen cabinets. From there it dripped down into my heirloom Wedgewood teacups, overflowing one and spilling out of the cabinet in drops onto the countertop's chunky, painted Mexican tile. A singing bird on one of the tiles got its beak wet.

My cousin in Houston sent me a video she took of Shepherd Drive near I-59. It was a lake, the water lapping at the grass. She was freaking out. Her dad was inside, making omelets — unconcerned, so far. It was just another hurricane, after all. They'd been through it many times. And he *had* been to the liquor store before the rain started, leading my cousin to quip that it is the family way to “make cocktails while the house is on fire.” Of course, Harvey wasn't just another hurricane. The rain kept coming. Over the next few days it dumped, by some counts, 11 trillion gallons on the area. By Shepherd and 59 the water kept rising. It came up nearly to my uncle's doorstep before stopping and eventually draining away. He and my cousin were not there for that part. Earlier, they'd gone out in the SUV to relieve a bout of cabin fever, got cut off from home by the flood, and fled to Dallas.

Elsewhere in the Houston area, things got much worse. Nearly 50,000 homes were flooded. Many residents were displaced into shelters. Some buildings caught fire and burned, creating one of the uncanniest sights of the storm: a house burning in a lake. The destruction of property in Houston alone is estimated at \$50 billion (accounting for the entire region raises that number to \$180 billion). People — more than 70 — were killed, directly or indirectly, by the hurricane. The number of storm dead could increase in the years to come, because the flood waters carried pollutants that are dangerous

The offices of Lone Star Legal Aid in downtown Houston caught fire during Harvey.



to human life: Toxic chemicals were unleashed from petrochemical plants, and dioxins from an old paper mill were uncovered from a previously capped superfund site. The water distributed these killing agents among the people, spreading the wealth like a post-apocalyptic Robin Hood who hates humankind in general.

Of all the horrifying Harvey stories, perhaps none is more disturbing, just downright blood-curdlingly sinister, than what occurred in the Addicks and Barker reservoirs in far-west Houston. As the storm revealed, land that lies within the flood pools of these reservoirs was developed in the late 1990s — more subdivisions, part of the great impervious carpet of exurban sprawl that now paves the Katy prairie nearly to Fulshear. As the Army Corps of Engineers intended to happen during a severe rain event, this land flooded during Harvey, inundating some 4,000 homes. (Perhaps feeling bad about this fact, the Corps opened the floodgates, which then inundated homes along Buffalo Bayou to the east — homes that were supposed to be protected by the dams.)

The homeowners themselves were quite surprised to discover that their neighborhood

was built on land *designed* to flood. Nobody ever told them that: not the county, not the municipal utility districts that make up these neighborhoods' de facto governments, and certainly not the real estate brokers who sold them the properties. These residents have expressed anger at the county. They've pointed fingers at the Corps for not buying up the land in the first place (the funds were not made available, the Corps explained). But shouldn't accountability also be placed on the people who developed the land to begin with? Certainly they knew it was flood-prone. And since we clearly can't trust developers to act in the public's best interest, shouldn't the government intervene? Boosters brag about the affordability that has come from Houston's deregulated development practices, but what is an affordable home worth when it is set up from the start to fail?

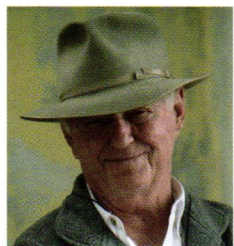
Contributors



Jen Weaver, AIA is an architect-turned-developer who until very recently lived and worked in Austin. She is currently attending the University of Southern California's Price School of Public Policy. See her take on development policy in San Antonio and Austin on p. 66.



Eric J. Cesal is an author, designer, and post-disaster expert based in Berkeley, Calif. He currently serves as the special projects director for the Curry Stone Foundation and is a visiting lecturer on disaster and resiliency at UC Berkeley. For the Money feature, he contributed an essay about real estate finance (p. 46).

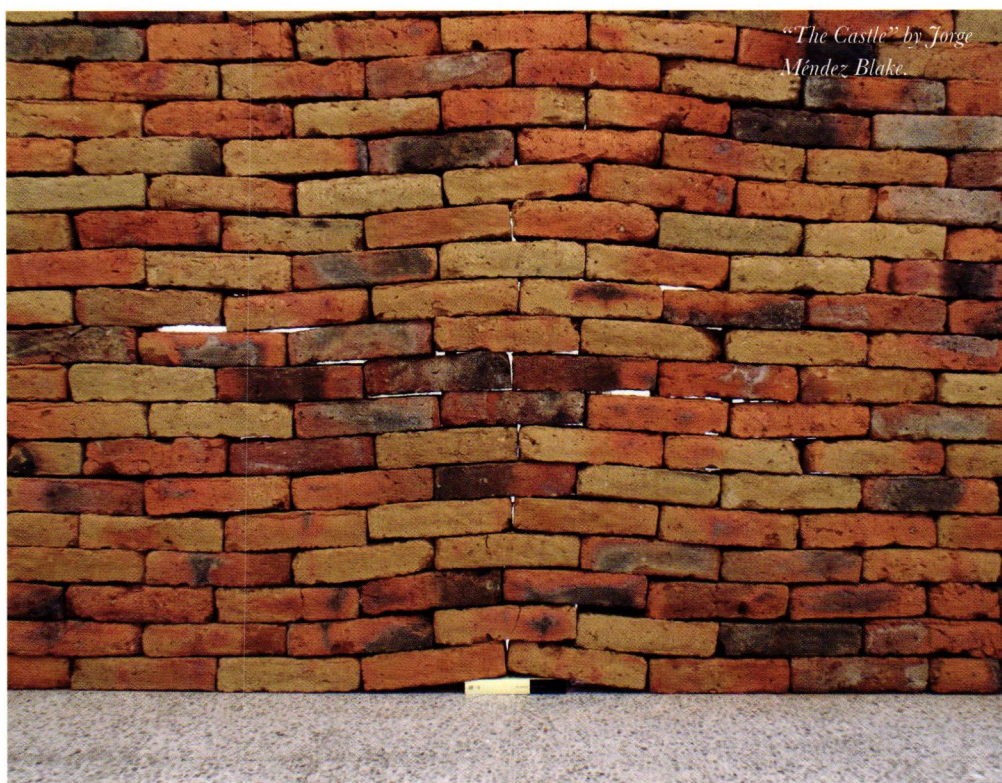


Richard Payne, FAIA is one of the most experienced and widely published architectural photographers in the U.S. In addition to lectures, exhibitions, and seminars on architecture and fine art photography, he has served as adjunct professor at the University of Houston and at Texas A&M University. See his photo essay on p. 34.



Robert L. Meckfessel, FAIA is president of DSGN Design in Dallas and currently serves on the boards of Trinity Park Conservancy and the Trinity Commons Foundation, and on the AIA Dallas Public Policy Committee. In this issue, he updates us with the latest developments in the decades-long Trinity River project (p. 13).

Letters



The following comments are two of many that appeared on txamagazine.org in response to the TxA Border Wall Position Statement.

As an Architect in Texas and a Member [of TxA] I object to [TxA] issuing a statement of position on the Border Wall. It is using a forum for business and promotion of the profession to make a purely political point that many members do not share. The members of [TxA] are diverse in all aspects including politics and opinions. That is one of the strengths of the profession. [TxA] should stick to advocating for the profession and let its members based on their own convictions be involved in politics.

Marc Tolson, AIA

*Arrive Architecture Group
Bedford*

I applaud [TxA] for taking a principled stand on this completely misguided project. The fact is that it will be ineffective, will wreak havoc on the environment, and it will be an aesthetic abomination. Not to mention the damage this misguided gesture will do to the myriad economic and cultural connections between Texas and our neighbor Mexico. The funds allotted to this project should instead be directed to

the many infrastructure needs of our state and nation. Kudos to our leadership for opposing this ridiculous campaign promise masquerading as a solution to a national security problem.

Gregory Ibañez, FAIA

*Ibañez Shaw Studio
Fort Worth*

The following comment appeared on txamagazine.org in response to TxA's Hurricane Harvey Relief effort.

The architects from the Jersey Shore Chapter of the AIA are with you, Texas. If there is anything we can do to assist you, let us know. We know what you are going through. Hope your state can learn from the mistakes made in the Sandy Recovery. Don't believe the press. The amount of funds that went to oversight and bureaucracy was shameful. So many are still struggling. Architects need to lead the recovery, not giant CM firms who don't know what they're doing. Praying for you all.

Richard Tokarski, AIA

*Tokarski + Millemann Architects
Wall Township, New Jersey*



MONUMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT

Houston's latest skyline addition, Market Square Tower, stands as a towering testament to concrete masonry's durability and flexibility.

Guy Jackson, AIA, founding principal of Jackson & Ryan Architects, says after evaluating other options, oversized CMUs were chosen for the exterior skin of this striking structure. "Our client wanted to build a big important building and we suggested after lots of study that we use unit masonry for the project. We chose architectural concrete masonry in a 16" by 24" configuration with square edges. Those CMUs, combined with other special shapes, bring a period look to this modern building."

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Looking west toward downtown across the flooded Buffalo Bayou, with Travis Street on the left side of the photo.

Will Hurricane Harvey Spur Houston into an Era of Urban Planning?

In late August, Hurricane Harvey camped out over southeast Texas. In some places, it dumped, over the span of a few days, more rain than the historic annual averages. The storm broke the record for rainfall in the contiguous United States. In this brief waterworld, where streets became canals, an army of rescuers arrived to help. City of Houston first responders, the Texas National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Cajun Navy, and boat owners from across the state converged to pluck people from the waters. The efforts of these brave men and women saved thousands of lives. Harvey was a serious disaster, and as of this writing, 70 people have died from the storm and its aftereffects. But it could have been much worse.

Jim Blackburn, a lecturer in civil and environmental engineering at Rice University and co-director of its Severe Storm Prediction, Education, and Evacuation from Disaster program (SSPEED), says the emergency response

was “the best that we have to offer, in so many respects.” But Blackburn goes on to connect this success to a larger failure: “If we can plan as well as we can respond, then it would be a different day in Houston. We’ve never wanted serious planning, we’ve never demanded serious planning, and we don’t have it. We’re now at the point that if we don’t get it, we’re going to decline economically. I think the future of Houston is squarely in the crosshairs in getting this right.”

With waters now receded and most of the muck torn out of houses, the hard work ahead is to plan for the inevitable next flood event. We’ve heard this “thoughts and prayers” attitude before, as it is pronounced after every major incident, before people return to business as usual. Harvey’s flooding — and prior Houston floods — make us existentially aware of how Houston’s (lack of) urbanism is dangerous. And the response to this flood crisis will set a precedent for how the region solves other big issues. “In a larger sense, it’s a failure to roll up our sleeves and solve the hard problems,” Blackburn says. “The future of all of us is almost dictated by hard choices. We’re facing climate change,

and an economy that’s changing. There are a lot of difficult bumps ahead. If we can’t navigate this bump, it doesn’t give people hope about the others.” In short, the way forward determines nothing less than Houston’s long-term existence.

A recent count estimates FEMA payouts, via the National Flood Insurance Program, at \$11 billion, second in history only to Katrina’s \$16 billion cost. But this is misleading, as many homeowners — thinking they were safe, well outside established floodplains — were not carrying flood insurance at the time. Our flood terminology requires renovation: the terms “100-year floodplain” and “500-year floodplain” are simply outdated.

But what would the new levels be? What storm should we prepare for? New climates require new safety metrics. For years, Blackburn has said that the 500-year floodplain should replace the 100-year levels as a starting point, until a better standard can be established. This interim metric would mean that about one third of Harris County falls in the updated — though still inadequate — floodplain area, illustrating the systemic nature of the issue. What are other next steps? As a start, Blackburn’s report

for Rice's Baker Institute, which is available online, offers 15 initiatives. At a minimum, new construction should be limited in the new floodplain, and a major buyout program should be instituted for those willing to move to higher ground. (This position was voiced by Rice architecture professor Albert Pope in an op-ed for *The Houston Chronicle* on September 24.) Imagining this effort brings to mind a phrase from the conceptual artist Robert Montgomery: "All palaces are temporary palaces." Houston, to avoid becoming a prematurely temporary palace, must address these issues.

In addition to the "storm surge" of national editorial commentary on the situation in Houston, local voices have been sounding the alarm in productive ways. *The Houston Chronicle* has covered the disaster admirably, both in terms of its individual human miracles and its larger existential questions. Cite, the magazine of the Rice Design Alliance, issued an optimistic editorial statement that concluded: "We should be able to look back 30 years from now and say that, out of all the pain and suffering this storm has caused, Houston became a more resilient, beautiful, and equitable region." (I am a recent addition to the editorial committee that issued that statement.) The publication, in its 35-year history, has consistently addressed flooding: Its first cover was a City of Houston manhole cover, presented with the same gravitas as one would employ to showcase the Aztec Sun Stone.

The resources exist to radically remake Houston, but such change requires political will. "If we pick and choose from the best we have in our past, and go forward in a different direction, I think that would tell you a lot about this community," Blackburn says. "And, frankly, I think Houston has the capacity to do that." Blackburn considers situations like these to be crucibles, in which change is forged: Harvey was a flood event, but it is also a "change event." He adds that 20th-century solutions relied too much on engineering and "not enough on a variety of talents and disciplines." Design and planning at a metropolitan scale is required to accommodate floodwaters. "In the future, we'll have green-space corridors through the city that are turned over to the water," Blackburn ventures. Designwise, it would be a very interesting future for Houston, and designers of the built environment — architects, landscape architects, urban planners — are the ones to proactively lead the way. Imagine a new Houston where wide bayou swaths are re-wilded to become the green



Floodwaters inundated many public areas along Buffalo Bayou and downtown. A month later, crews are still removing the silt and muck deposited throughout the city.

infrastructural cores of this horizontal city. There could even be golf courses.

To Texanize a Dutch saying: God made Texas, but Texans made Houston. The city has built itself up on the muddy banks of the bayous, and this effort at self-realization remains a psychic cornerstone of Houston's can-do attitude. The city is not afraid to demolish what is deemed past its expiration date, and, historically, has made big plans to build what it wants: freeways, lakes, reservoirs, concretized bayous, ports, refineries, pipelines, hospitals, malls — and the Astrodome. Houston is America's id, where our material desires are sated in a deregulated landscape of consumption. (If the superego awareness of impending environmental doom is too much to handle, then we'll need some intervening ego in order to get something done!) Now the chance arrives to use this characteristic survivalist attitude to solve the region's biggest

problem. The solution might not be to jettison the city's collective impulses, but, instead, to indulge them — becoming in the process not less Houstonian, but more.

In early September 1900, a hurricane decimated Galveston, resulting in a natural disaster that remains the deadliest in U.S. history. Afterwards, the city built a sea wall 17 ft tall and 10 miles long, and elevated thousands of homes. What will Houston's 21st-century response be? The city is known as both "Bayou City" and "Space City." How about "Bayou Space City?" It has a certain ring to it. If there is to be any Houston left in the centuries to come, this is its future.

Jack Murphy, Assoc. AIA, is a regular contributor to *Texas Architect* and a master of architecture candidate at Rice University. He recently moved to Houston.



“Trapped, A Consequence of Forced Implementations” by Munjer Hashim, a former University of Houston architecture student currently working for Sage and Coombe Architects in New York, graphically represents the collision of two hyperobjects: The City of Houston and a piece of Global Warming known as Hurricane Harvey. The numbers were drawn from Reuters, The Washington Post, and The New York Times.

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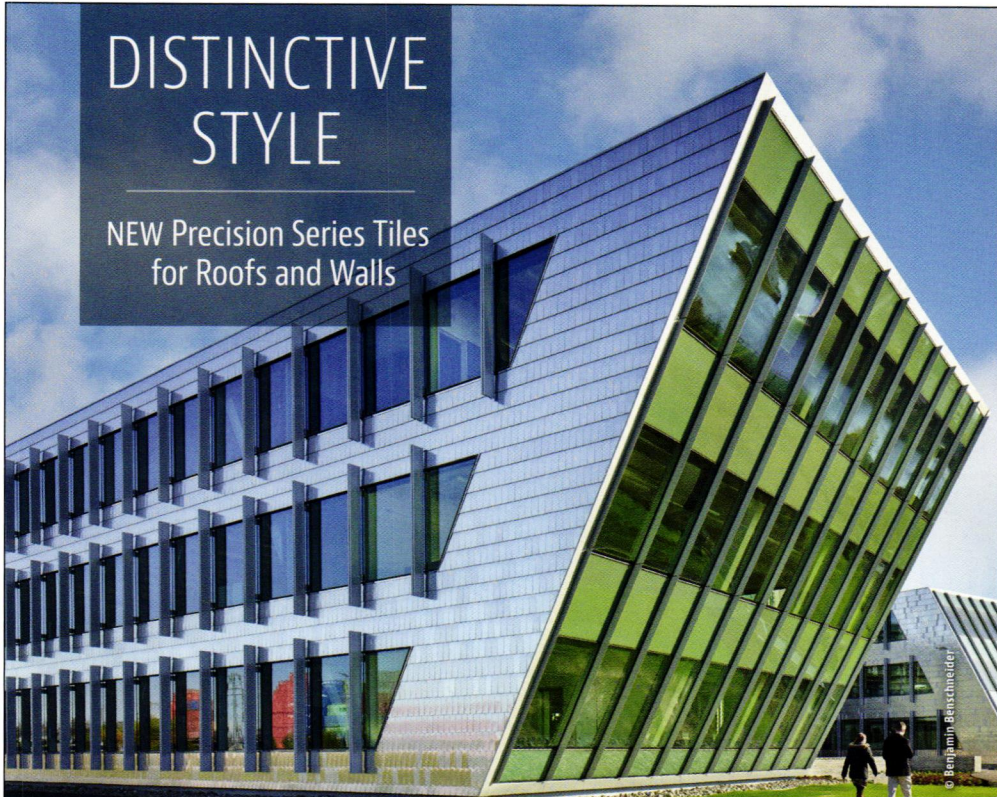
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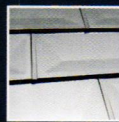
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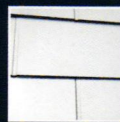


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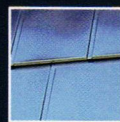
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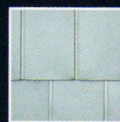
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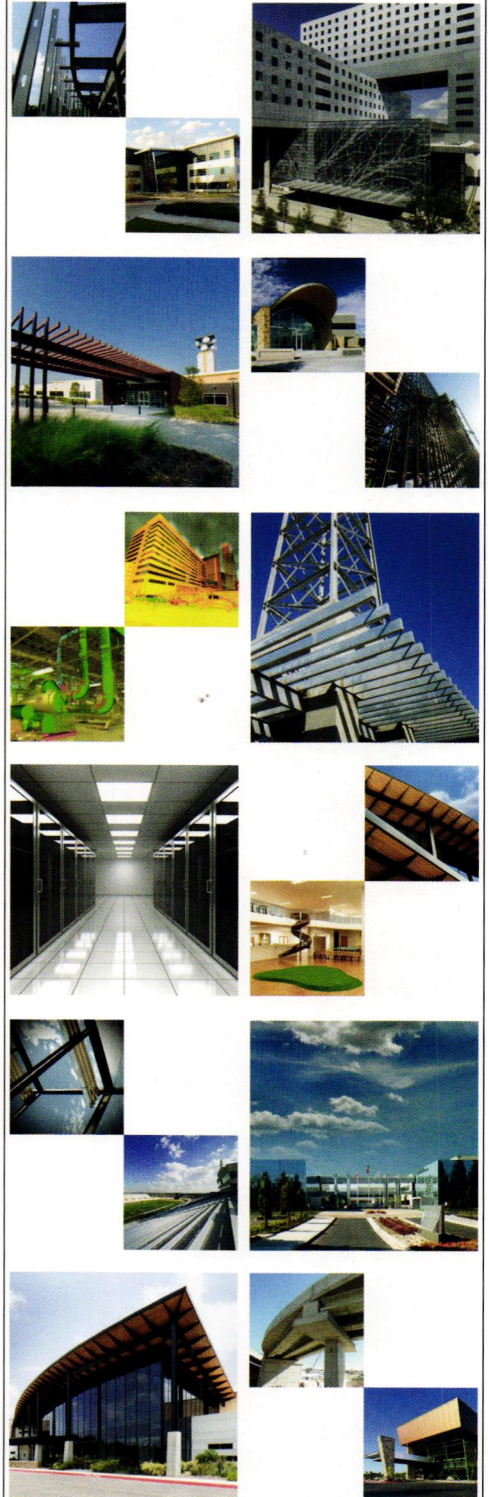
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The Trinity Saga Reaches a Turning Point

Dallas' decades-long saga of its Trinity River project reached a turning point on August 9, when the Dallas City Council voted formally to kill Alternative 3C, also known as the Trinity Parkway — or, in some circles, as the Zombie Toll Road. The death of 3C is a critical milestone in the future development of the Trinity, allowing design of the long-sought Trinity Park to move ahead, unencumbered by concerns over the noise, pollution, traffic, and physical encroachment of the proposed high-speed tollway.

The notion of a highway along the Trinity has roots well back into the middle of the 20th century, as does the idea of a great Trinity Park adjacent to downtown. Its most recent revival occurred with a 1998 bond election, when Dallas voters narrowly approved \$246 million for the Trinity project, in a multifaceted ballot item that funded five key components: transportation (including a vaguely defined Trinity Parkway); flood protection; economic development; recreation; and environmental restoration. AIA Dallas, along with most other professional and business groups, supported the measure, as they

believed this would lead to the creation of the desired Trinity Park.

In 2002, however, many community leaders and activists, including those of AIA Dallas, grew concerned over designs for the Trinity Parkway as they were released by the city, the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA), and their engineers. It became clear that the multifaceted Trinity project was morphing into a high-speed highway project, with other components — including the Trinity Park — clearly secondary to the “needs” of the road. Responding to a vocal and broad outcry, then-Mayor Laura Miller led an effort to create an integrated approach to the project that would balance the various components, so that no single element (like a toll road) would overwhelm the others (like a park). The result was the 2003 Balanced Vision Plan (BVP), developed by Alex Krieger, FAIA (then of Chan Krieger Sieniewicz of Boston), and highly praised by community and professional organizations, including AIA — the BVP received an AIA national award for Regional & Urban Design.

The Dallas City Council formally adopted the BVP, and the project moved ahead, supposedly based on the principles outlined within.

Delays inevitably occurred (including the impact of increased flood standards prompted by Hurricane Katrina) but, finally, in 2014, NTTA revealed specific designs for the toll road (by then known as Alternative 3C). To be blunt, all hell broke loose, as the proposed design did not resemble the Balanced Vision Plan in almost any regard, and it was clear to many, including AIA Dallas, that the highway advocates were back in charge of the project.

A semi-organized resistance immediately sprang up that spanned all parts of the community. Numerous individuals and organizations spoke out against 3C, including former Mayor Laura Miller, AIA Dallas, the Dallas Morning News, D Magazine, the Dallas Observer, the Greater Dallas Planning Council, former and current city council members, and even Krieger himself. To be sure, there were still many die-hard 3C supporters, including other former mayors and council members, current Mayor Mike Rawlings, and the Trinity Commons Foundation (a civic booster group for the Trinity).

The Trinity toll road became a primary topic of civil (and not-so-civil) discourse on editorial pages, on public radio call-in programs, at numerous town hall meetings, at city council



Preliminary concept rendering by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates of the proposed Harold Simmons Park and city-side access overlooks.

RENDERING BY MVVB

Kevin Sloan Studio's re-wilding concept for the park is inspired by the original Blackland Prairie.



briefings, and at professional and civic symposia. A relentless effort by 3C opponents, including AIA Dallas, countered and refuted argument after argument put forth in support of the toll road. These efforts were greatly assisted by: studies released by transportation authorities that indicated that the mobility benefits of the toll road were minimal and dubious; by soaring construction cost estimates; and by a complete lack of credible sources to pay for it.

The final spike was driven through the heart of the (zombie?) toll road by the outcome of the city council elections of May 2017, when enough anti-3C candidates were elected or re-elected to create a council majority (for the first time). The writing was on the wall, and in their first meeting after their July break, the new city council voted to formally kill Alternative 3C. The final vote was 13-2, reflecting the community-wide sea change of opinion that developed over the past three years. A great sigh of relief washed through the anti-roadsters as almost 20 years of opposition to the Trinity toll road finally came to an end.

The death of 3C — while a turning point — is not the end of the controversy in the Trinity saga. At the same meeting, the city council authorized creation of a Local Government Corporation (LGC) to oversee the design and construction of the Trinity Park, moving

primary responsibility for the park outside of City Hall for the first time. This structure is modeled in part on other cities' approaches to park creation, including Houston and New York. It is expected that the new LGC will work closely with the Trinity Park Conservancy (TPC) to raise needed funds, hire consultants, and develop designs for the Trinity Park.

That effort is already underway, to some degree, and preliminary concepts have been previously released by the TRC, developed by the noted landscape firm Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA). These new concepts are based on a more natural approach to the river, eschewing formal park designs and amenities (like ball fields). Nevertheless, extensive design intervention in the Trinity floodway is anticipated, with early cost estimates at \$150-250 million. TPC has already secured \$50 million of this as a donation from the estate of the late billionaire Harold Simmons, subject to certain conditions, including naming the park for Mr. Simmons. The city still has approximately \$47 million remaining from the 1998 bond election as well.

Another view has surfaced that counters the MVVA approach. This latter view was proposed by former council member Angela Hunt, Wick Allison, publisher of D Magazine, and others, including some current council members. Based

largely on the “re-wilding” concepts of landscape architect Kevin Sloan (see *Texas Architect* March/April 2017), this view proposes a more modest design approach that would work within a budget aligned with the city's remaining \$47 million, with claimed benefits of earlier delivery and lower operation and maintenance costs.

Subtexts to this controversy will be many, including accusations of economic and racial elitism, perceived lack of public input, an upcoming 2019 mayoral race, and gentrification challenges already affecting neighborhoods south and west of the river.

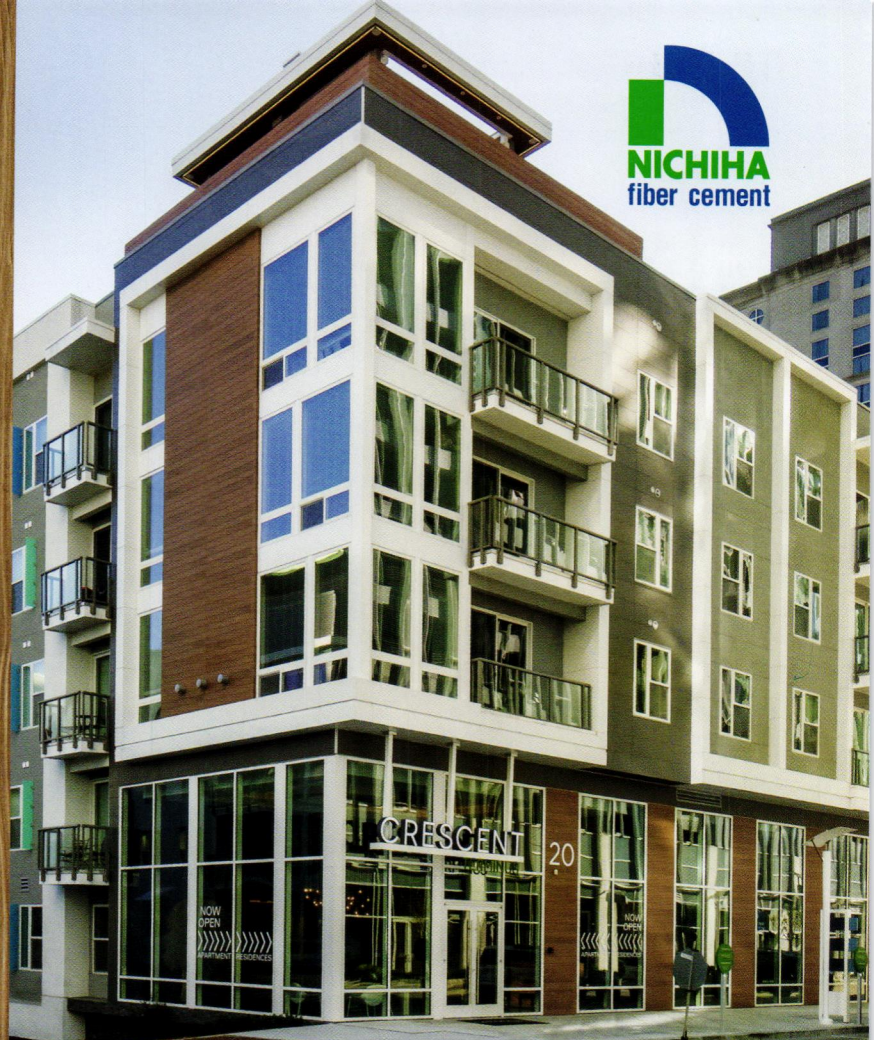
Nevertheless, many in Dallas (including the author) believe that there is more in common than not between the two approaches, and that ultimately, an inspiring park design can and will be attained, now that the specter of a toll road no longer looms. Dallas is closer than ever to achieving its decades-old goal of a great Trinity Park — a green oasis that connects neighborhoods, drives economic development, and provides sorely needed recreational space in the heart of a thriving urban setting.

Stay tuned.

Robert L. Meckfessel, FAIA, is president of DSGN Design and currently serves on the boards of the Trinity Park Conservancy and the Trinity Commons Foundation, and on the AIA Dallas Public Policy Committee.

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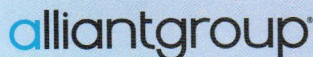
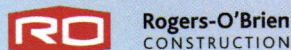
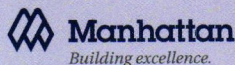
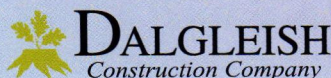
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San Antonio Removes Confederate Monument from Travis Park

In 1942, my grandfather joined the Army Air Corps and was sent to San Antonio for his preflight training. He was newly married, and during one of his leaves, his young bride took the train down from Fort Worth to visit him. Unfortunately, she neglected to bring her marriage license, and as a result, the Saint Anthony Hotel refused to give her a room.

As she liked to tell us grandkids, “They thought I was a hooker!”

In the hotel’s defense, it had a reputation to maintain. The Saint Anthony was San Antonio’s first luxury hotel, and by the 1940s it was where presidents and celebrities sought accommodations when visiting the Alamo City. The 11-story building faced Travis Park, a verdant public square within the city’s bustling downtown.

Sixty years after my grandparents’ failed tryst, I started working at Lake|Flato, whose office sits just a few blocks west of Travis Park.

When I walked through it, I would sometimes look up at the Saint Anthony, think of my grandmother, and smile. But the hotel was not the only structure casting a shadow over the park. Sitting at its center was a 30-ft-tall memorial that was dedicated — not to World War II veterans like my grandfather — but to soldiers who died fighting against the United States during the Civil War.

For years, my personal relationship to this monument was one of benign indifference. As Confederate monuments go, the one in Travis Park was fairly innocuous. It consisted of a bronze statue of a soldier standing, right arm raised, atop a slender granite base. There were no inscriptions glorifying the “Lost Cause” or the righteousness of defending state rights: a simple “Lest We Forget” was carved into the shaft of the monument, and on its base was engraved “Our Civil War Dead.”

As far as I was concerned, the Civil War was something far off in our nation’s past. Of course that feeling was an artifact of my particular background. I am a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant male. The Civil War was started by people

who looked like me to preserve a social and economic order that favored people who looked like me. I also grew up in a place and time where people who looked like me told a version of the Civil War story that was not entirely factual. I remember learning Texas “didn’t have that many slaves.” In fact, as a percentage of overall population, about 30 percent of Texans were slaves in 1860 — the same percent as in Virginia. I was told Texas joined the Confederacy not because of slavery but “out of solidarity with the South.” In fact, the Declaration of Causes that accompanied Texas’ secession referenced “negro slavery” 21 times and argued explicitly for its preservation and the supremacy of the “white race.”

The fact of the matter is this: Texas was a slave state that seceded from the Union and fought against it in order to preserve human bondage. Although that might not be chiseled into the granite, the memorial in Travis Park commemorated that, too.

On August 31, the San Antonio City Council voted to remove the Confederate memorial from Travis Park. By the following morning, the



Travis Park is a verdant public square within San Antonio’s bustling downtown.

Of Note

statue had been dismantled and trucked away. A few weeks earlier the statues of Robert E. Lee and other Confederate leaders were removed from the campus of The University of Texas at Austin. In September, another statue of Lee was removed from a park in Dallas. Other communities across the South are considering similar actions.

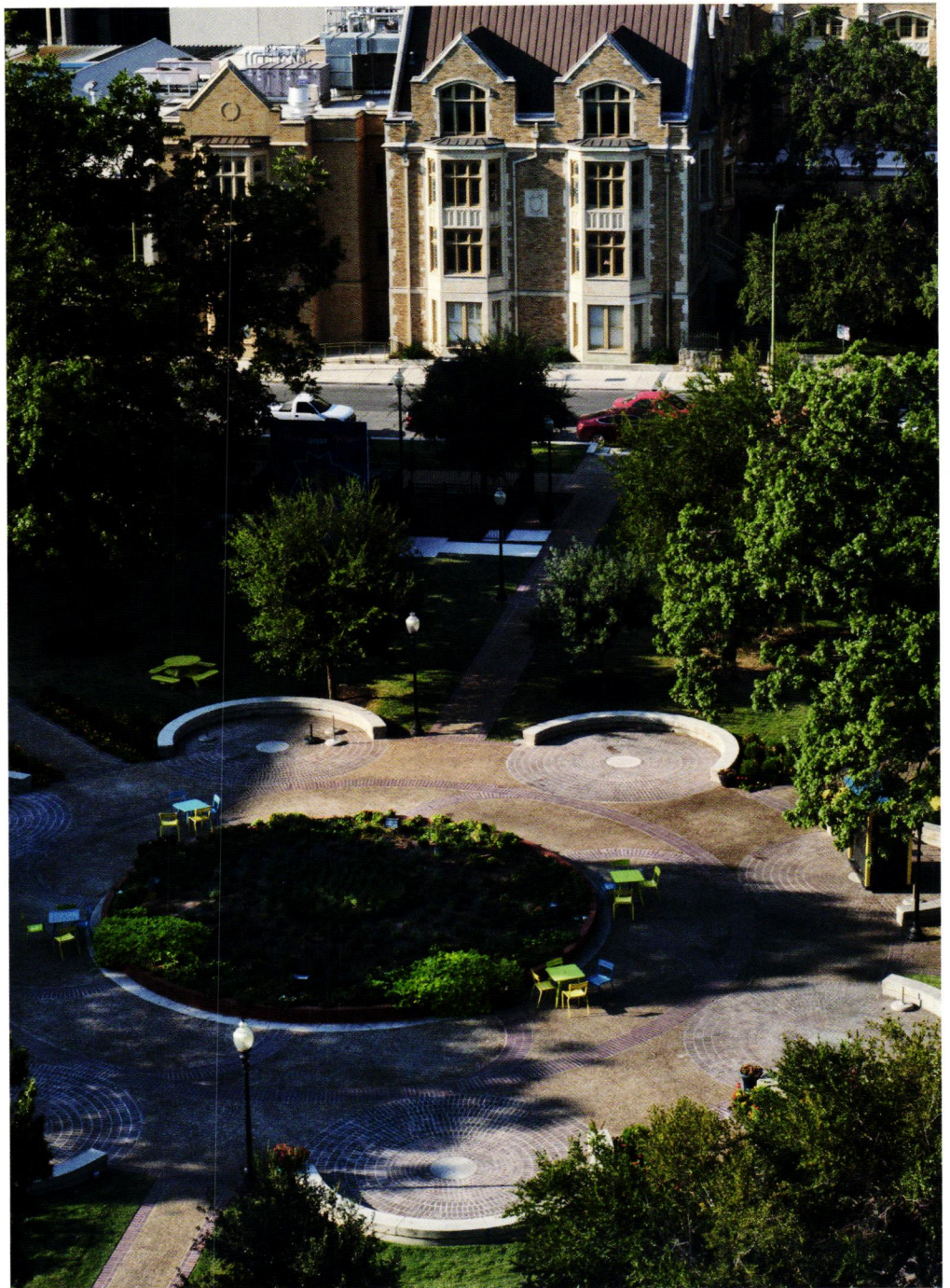
Any ambivalence I might have felt about the removal of these memorials evaporated in mid-August when a group of white nationalists and neo-Nazis descended on Charlottesville, Virginia, to protest the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee. I make it a general policy to review any opinion I have when I discover it is shared by Nazis. That is usually a good indication that I am on the wrong side of that particular argument.

As an architect, I understand how powerful the built environment is. Even though I will never fully comprehend what it is like to be an African American and walk in the shadow of these monuments, I can appreciate how their existence changes the public spaces they inhabit in a way that undermines their civic role.

The removal of these Confederate memorials will not erase the history of the Civil War any more than the destruction of Nazi monuments in Germany have prevented people from remembering the Second World War. History is stronger than that. The only thing that is in danger of being expunged by the removal of monuments like the one in Travis Park is the undisputable proof that there was a time when we thought it was acceptable to celebrate those who fought to defend slavery and destroy our country.

The downside to removing the darker artifacts of our history is that it makes it easier to remember a rosier version of the past. When you walk into a county courthouse today, you do not see drinking fountains labeled “white only,” or arrows directing certain people to the “colored balcony.” And yet, there was a time when public buildings had segregation literally built into their walls. Over the years, the physical evidence of these injustices has been removed, and so today it is easy to forget that Jim Crow was once so perversely architectural.

And so, while I do not mourn the removal of memorials like the one in San Antonio, I do worry that someday my grandkids will walk through Travis Park and assume it was always just a quiet urban oasis. With no evidence to the contrary, I fear they will not realize there was once a time when those who crafted the



built environment thought it was acceptable to disenfranchise their fellow citizens by building monuments to those who fought to deny them their humanity.

Moving past our history is not the same as erasing it. Seeing the evil behind you helps move you toward the light. These are things we must always remember — lest we forget.

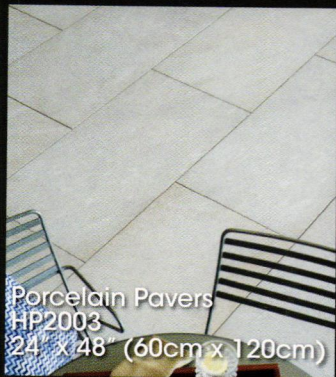
Brantley Hightower, AIA, is founding partner of HiWorks in San Antonio and the author of “The Courthouses of Central Texas.”

A circular planting bed sits where San Antonio's Confederate Memorial once stood.

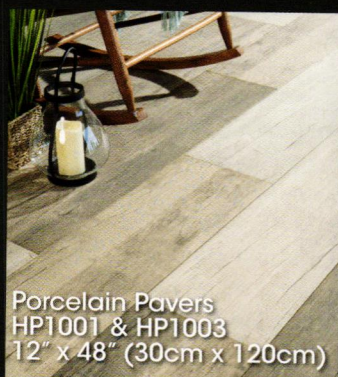
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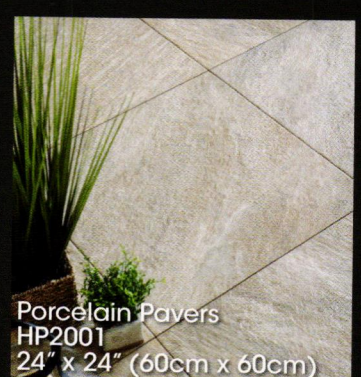
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Dick Clark, FAIA, 1944–2017

Though I've practiced for 33 years and have been enriched by a plethora of unique clients and colleagues, I never thought that I would be a part of someone who was larger than life.

Dick Clark, FAIA, and I shared a mutual passion for design, beauty, and cuisine. These enthusiasms were propelled and nourished by travel, which provided us an endless variety of opportunities to experience life to the fullest.

I recall sharing conversations with my colleagues at Lake|Flato in the 1980s regarding our fascination with an outlandish, yet clever, restaurant designed by Dick Clark Architects (DCA). It had unique signage that embraced an alien, atomic-like modernism in our neighborhood. It was a refreshing change for our community — yet at the same time was steeped in the local traditions of socializing, food, and

libations. Dick had shaken and stirred the social norm in a very conservative town in a way that was intriguing. He had this effect everywhere he went, yet no place felt his influence more than Austin.

I enjoyed returning to downtown Austin to experience the numerous DCA commercial projects. They pushed the envelope and effortlessly burst through the decades-old mentality of rough-sawn cedar facade retrofits that had smothered the life out of the downtown fabric. In compassionate contrast, west of Lamar Boulevard I noticed DCA's wonderful modern American bungalow cottages that respected the roots of the neighborhood, yet soared with abandon, fueled by simple and beautiful gabled/shed geometries. These compositions infused new life and vitality, shaking up the neighborhood in a gentle way.

Dick was all over the place, jumping from renovation/additions to new stand-alone structures. A clear evolution for each project slowly

Lake Travis Retreat is one of the key residences in DCA's oeuvre. The client's programmatic desires pushed the office into a new realm.

breached away from the shackles of tradition and yet became clearer in the ways that honored the place and the region.

We were all young and fearless, but Dick stood out as this mythical Falstaff character that commanded attention with his fabulous stories and knowledge base that consistently made everyone feel engaged, entertained, and special. There was no denying when you posse with Dick, the journey was kinetic and overserved with innumerable friendly conversations.

Dick practiced the art of being large and in charge. He did not believe in merely entering a room, but rather arriving, embracing — everyone and everything — engaging, and creating a cinematic experience. His rambunctious personality was refreshing and exuberantly accepted by all.

He never hesitated to let you know if he disapproved of something — an important lesson I quickly learned while dining. My suggestion to take a table with a window view was instantly overruled by his booming voice asserting that the restaurant's best seat in the house was always at the bar overlooking the kitchen, as it provided the opportunity to converse and interact with the staff. He was an expert at talking shop, whether it was cooking techniques, the menu, or the origin and process of the food served.

Once while visiting Vancouver for four days, we became regulars at a French-Canadian restaurant and befriended the staff, which was composed of young Europeans on summer work visas who always had another point of view to share. I recall Dick's numerous conversations concerning the fresh oysters, which came from some obscure Canadian bay. He concluded that, of all varieties, it was the smallest of oysters that had the biggest taste. We would laugh about the "bigger is better" concept, referencing the Persona of Dick Clark, but in the end, it was the little things, like the smaller oysters, that possessed a greater worth.

The dynamics of pushing against each other were always the best part of our relationship, especially when Mell Lawrence, FAIA, joined our wrestling team — stepping up the pace with no quarter bestowed. Particularly if one lingered on their recent successes, Dick would shift his keen focus to the future, asserting the importance of crafting the next project to greater magnitudes!

Dick would constantly interrogate us on our office team management — adamant that the most important aspect of this relationship was

to nurture employees' inherent abilities and talents and to compensate them well, so that they would have a fair chance in life. Mell would comment that everyone in the profession, and the world, really, was Dick's family — validating his passion for this attribute.

When the smoke cleared, Mell and I began to push hard on Dick to step up and be recognized in the AIA College of Fellows — to tap into the confidence that fueled his thoughtful design with a spirit of adventure. We did our best to act against his hesitancy to submit, as we felt no one was more deserving of elevation to this honor.

Serving as his sponsor for Fellowship in collaboration with Canan Yetmen, who lent her brilliantly insightful submission skills, we began to excavate and sift through Dick's copious output, searching for data to submit. At times, we felt challenged by Dick's demure attitude to his great accomplishments. Despite these obstacles, our journey with him was special. Uncovering one story at a time would, in turn, lead to another, and we found ourselves mesmerized by the diversity and depth of his design adventures!

Upon learning that he was to be indoctrinated as a Fellow, my enthusiasm overflowed with a phone call every five minutes until successfully connecting two hours later. I was touched by his response, which was selfless: All he wanted to do was to let his deceased mother know of this accomplishment. It was a tender and proud moment for him, who so loved his mother, to be able to posthumously present her with something that he valued dearly. Heather McKinney, FAIA, was right when, upon achieving her Fellowship, she said that you "could never be too old to make your parents proud!"

Lessons learned on the Vancouver trip were to live life large and always remember the best oysters are the ones the size of your thumbnail! Dick Clark had a huge hand that held us all so close. His role as everyone's parent may be the defining aspect of his legacy. He was truly larger than life. Dick clearly understood that architecture is never about self-gratification. It is a life-long endeavor about empathy and mentorship.

John Grable, FAIA, is founder of John Grable Architects in San Antonio. Mell Lawrence, FAIA, is principal of Mell Lawrence Architects in Austin.



Kenichi Dallas. Clark was immensely proud of this project. On opening night, he invited those in the DCA office who had worked on the project. They dressed their finest and partied like rock stars.

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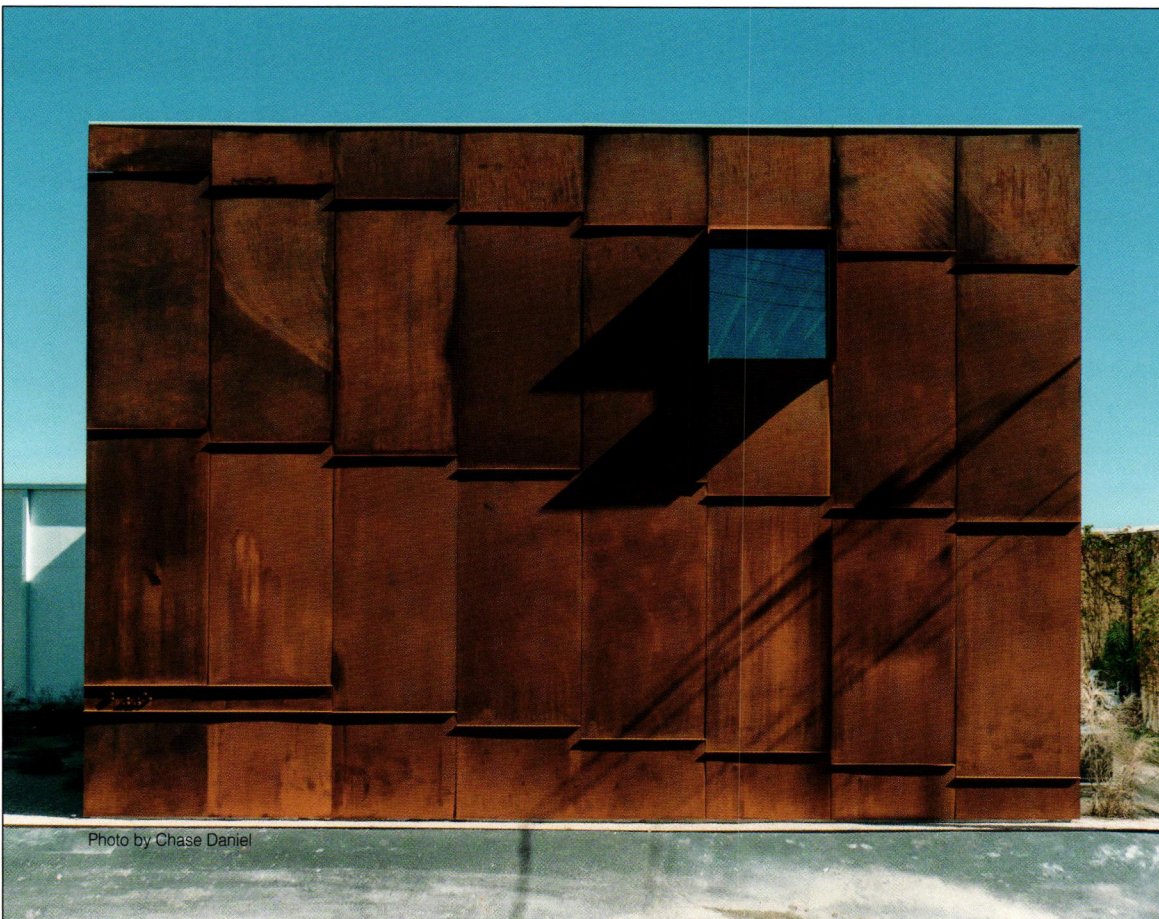


Photo by Chase Daniel



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NOVEMBER

Saturday 4

EVENTS
Texas Book Festival
1100 Congress Ave.

Austin
texasbookfestival.org

Christmas at the Mansion
Giddings Stone Mansion
2203 Century Cir.

Brenham
giddingsstonemansion.com

Sunday 5

LECTURE
Redefining Space for Art:
Chinati and Mass MOCA
Nasher Sculpture Center
2001 Flora St.

Dallas
dallasarchitectureforum.org

Thursday 9

CONVENTION
TxA 78th Annual Convention and Design Expo
Austin Convention Center
500 E. Cesar Chavez St.

Austin
texasarchitects.org

Friday 10

EXHIBITION OPENING
Creek Show
Waller Creek

Austin
creekshow.com

LECTURE

Friday Lunch Forum:
Michael Holleran
Battle Hall, UT-Austin
302 Inner Campus Dr.

Austin
soa.utexas.edu

Saturday 11

EVENT
East Austin Studio Tour

Austin
east.bigmedium.org

Sunday 12

EXHIBITION CLOSING
Family Album: Photographs by Pierre Tartoue
The Bullock Museum
1800 Congress Ave.

Austin
thetoryoftexas.com

Saturday 18

EXHIBITION OPENING
Carol Bove
Laguna Gloria
3809 W. 35th St.

Austin
thecontemporaryaustin.org

Saturday 25

EXHIBITION OPENING
The Open Road:
Photography and the American Road Trip
The Blanton Museum of Art
200 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Austin
blantonmuseum.org

Sunday 26

EXHIBITIONS CLOSING
Misty Keasler: Haunt
The Modern
3200 Darnell St.

Fort Worth
themodern.org

Of Texas Rivers and Texas Art

Witte Museum
3801 Broadway
San Antonio
wittemuseum.org

Thursday 30

LECTURE
William Dupont: An American Working as a Professional Architect in Cuba – Politics and Practice
AIA Houston

Houston
aiahouston.org

DECEMBER

Wednesday 6

EXHIBITION OPENING
Murillo at the Meadows: A 400th Anniversary Celebration
Meadows Museum
5900 Bishop Blvd.

Dallas
meadowsmuseumdallas.org

Saturday 9

EVENT
AIA Houston Gingerbread Build-Off
Hermann Square

Houston
aiahouston.org

Saturday 16

EXHIBITION OPENING
Christopher Knowles: In a Word
Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
5216 Montrose Blvd.

Houston
camh.org

Sunday 31

EXHIBITIONS CLOSING
Transnational: Migration, Memory, Home
The McNay
6000 N. New Braunfels Ave.

San Antonio
mcnayart.org

Neighborhoods We Called Home
Dallas Heritage Village
1515 S. Harwood St.

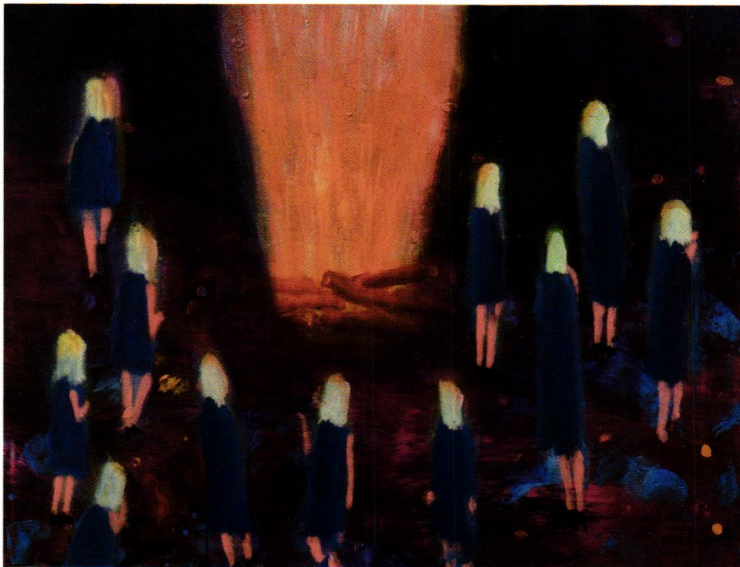
Dallas
dallasheritagevillage.org

FEATURED



HOME—So Different, So Appealing
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
NOVEMBER 17 TO JANUARY 21, 2018

This exhibition features U.S. Latino and Latin American artists reflecting on the idea of home. Featuring media including painting, sculpture, installation, performance, and video, the works span seven decades. Altogether, it “offers an alternative narrative of postwar and contemporary art.” Presented in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



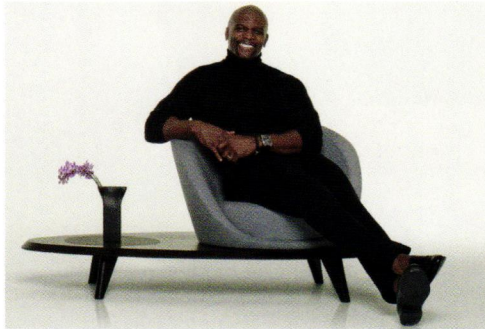
FOCUS: Katherine Bradford
The Modern Fort Worth
NOVEMBER 4 TO JANUARY 14, 2018

Katherine Bradford’s vibrant paintings feature familiar motifs such as ships and swimmers depicted in fresh, ominous ways. The solo exhibition is the artist’s first in Texas and showcases new and recent paintings. While often illuminated by a dayglow palette, Bradford’s work “suggests humanity humbled by the vastness of nature.”

Products

by Rita Catinella Orrell

These new furnishing options for the modern office respond to the needs of the worker, rather than the other way around.



Terry Crews Collection
Bernhardt Design
bernhardt.com

While he is best known for his television and movie roles, it might surprise some that Terry Crews also has a passion for art and design. For his inaugural collection for Bernhardt Design, Crews envisioned what modern contemporary furniture would look like through the lens of ancient Egypt. Inspired by the wildlife and landscape surrounding the Nile, the collection includes the wing-shaped Ibis sofa, Float coffee and end tables, 16-inch-high Aire Benches, and Lillypad and Lily lounge chairs, which may be specified in Bernhardt Textiles leather and fabrics or the customer's own material.



Studio Table
HBF
hbf.com

Oregon-based Studio Gorm has collaborated with HBF to create the Studio Table series of solid wood standing-height tables. Inspired by Shaker furniture, Studio's tabletop features a split down the center that works as a design element while giving users an easy and discreet place to access power on the second, lower shelf, where they can also store bags or other items. The standing-height table allows for informal standing meetings or laptop working and can be paired with stools for dining or longer work sessions.



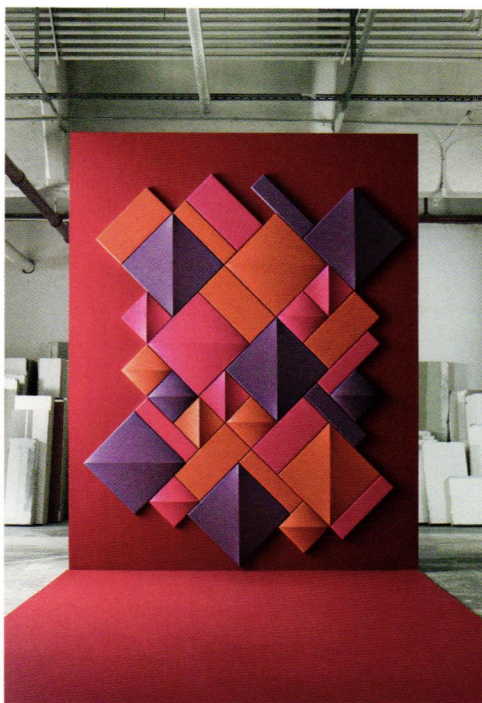
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jabrrbox.com

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Creative Spaces
Steelcase
steelcase.com

Steelcase and Microsoft have unveiled five new “Creative Spaces” designed to support the needs of individuals and teams as they move through the different stages of the creative process. The spaces include: Maker Commons, designed to support conversation, experimentation, and concentration; Duo Studio for working in pairs (includes a lounge area); Focus Studio for individual creative work; Respite, a truly private room with a relaxed, residential feeling; and Ideation Hub, a high-tech space that encourages collaboration with on-site or remote teammates via the Microsoft Surface Hub.



Xorel Artform
Carnegie
carnegiefabrics.com

Carnegie has added three new panel shapes — Diamond, Square, and Plank — to its Xorel Artform acoustical panel system for dimensional wall or ceiling installations. Also available in a 3-D option in certain shapes, the panels are made of Cradle to Cradle Certified Xorel high-performance textiles that include a bio-based option. Xorel Artform now comprises seven shapes in 19 sizes and more than 300 standard Xorel patterns and colors.



Prospect
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2017 Studio Awards

The Texas Society of Architects Studio Awards recognize real or theoretical unbuilt projects that demonstrate excellence in design. Submissions from students and practitioners are judged on equal footing, and projects of all types are considered together. Each year, the jury sifts through the entries looking for standouts that embody strong ideas critical to contemporary practice, resolve them thoroughly, and present them clearly.

The 2017 Studio Awards jurors met on Thursday, August 3, at the Chicago office of Studio Gang to deliberate 70 entries that ran the gamut from art installations and small pavilions to major healthcare facilities and regional infrastructure.

The Jury



From left to right

Thomas Kelley
Norman Kelley

“Texas feels rich with ideas. As an outside juror, the biggest trick is to sidestep one’s own agenda and thinking and inhabit the mind of that architecture for a brief set of spreads. It’s so important for submissions to be precise and deliberate and convincing, with everything from the text, to the title, to the decisions about what kinds of drawings to show. We chose projects that considered the award format as being more akin to a trailer than a feature-length film. You need to draw attention quickly.”

Margaret McCurry, FAIA
Tigerman McCurry

“Considering that we come from different areas of expertise and ages, we all came together quickly and happily. It speaks to the strength of what we selected, and how for each of us, these projects touch a chord. Entrants should think back to when they were in school, making presentations to other architects, and document things more carefully from beginning to end so juries can really understand the what and why of it. There were a lot of projects that didn’t have a why. I think it would be good for a few that we looked at and dismissed to go back and submit again.”

Jeanne Gang, FAIA
Studio Gang

“What you see through these projects is a place — Texas — that’s discovering who it is. Some of the projects are really sophisticated responses to older structures, or artifacts, or the culture, but there’s also architecture that’s working on a global scale: considering the effects of climate change, or housing in Germany. I would like to see projects at this stage problematized to the point that you can see what the stakes are and not just the brief. I would like to see more speculative thinking. How does it impact architecture, or push the boundaries, or rethink the typologies?”

Studio Awards

Face the Mist, Waller Creek, 7th Street Bridge, Austin

DO.GROUP DESIGN, Austin

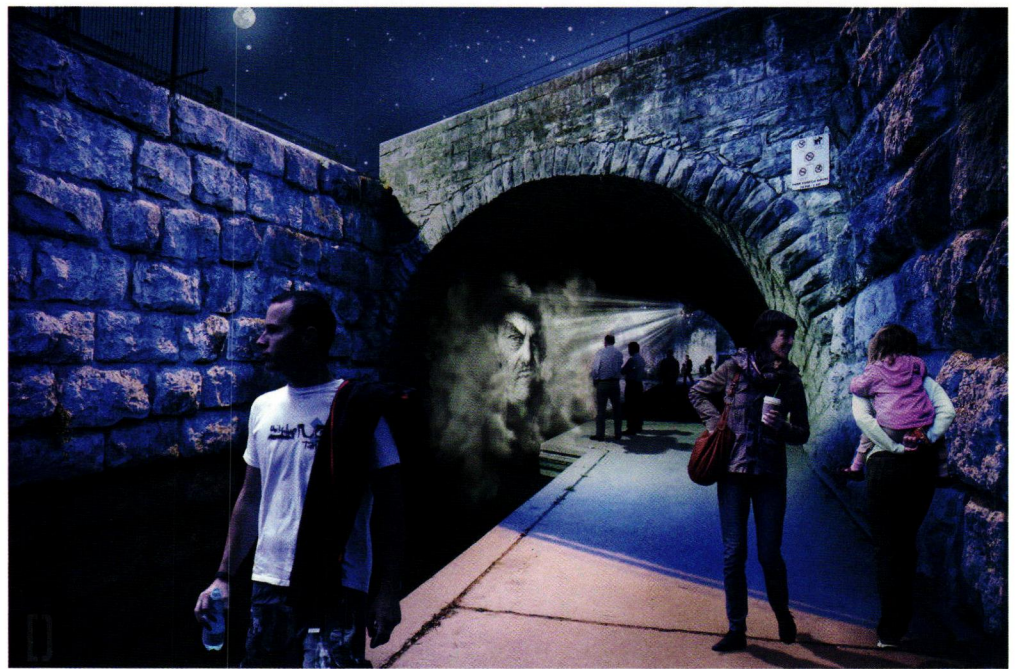
From the Jury:

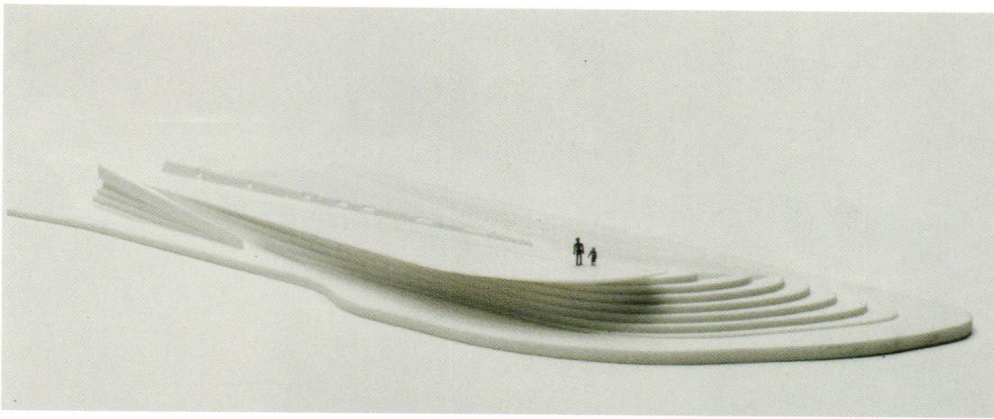
There's a social purpose to this project that embodies an idea about bringing awareness to a situation, but also raising money to benefit the people they're documenting. Architecture has a tendency to be discussed anthropomorphically, and so the fact that they're using portraits and actually projecting faces onto existing architecture starts to splice known vocabulary with a more socially conscious direction.

This work is a documentary project and temporary installation intended to foster an understanding of issues facing Austin's underserved populations. In partnership with the C.D. Doyle Clinic — a student-run free clinic located less than three blocks west of Waller Creek in downtown Austin — patients will be given an opportunity to anonymously or publicly speak to the issues directly affecting their health and well-being. Throughout the year, a series of interviews and portraits will be compiled in both online and print formats.

The resulting collection is featured during Austin's 4th annual "Creek Show," encouraging mindfulness, empathy, and respect for the mission of the clinic and those it serves. The Creek Show, an outreach of the Waller Creek Conservancy, seeks to bring awareness about the importance and impact of the Waller Creek area of Austin and its transformation to the communities and people of Austin. The portraits collected during the year will be projected onto an ephemeral cloud of foggy mist beneath the 7th Street Bridge during the 10-day show.

Rolled steel armatures connected by a long section of unistrut pipe will rest on the creek bed, incorporating counterweights for stability but requiring no drilling or ecological disruption. A subsurface pump and filter will channel creek water through flexible tubing running up the armatures and across the unistrut pipe. A commercial-grade misting system will create the billowing fog from nozzles within the pipe. Two battery-powered projectors, mounted from the armature above, supply the imagery that will appear within the mist.





Palm Street Aircraft Observation Park, San Diego International Airport, San Diego

Legge Lewis Legge, Austin

From the Jury:

Most, if not all, architecture tends to be guided by constructing views, so it's exciting to see a project that can quite literally focus on just that as its agenda, while also producing a beautiful combination of form and land. It's historically one of the most informal kinds of programs associated with airports: pulling your car up to the edge of the runway with a date and just lying on the hood and staring at the planes. It reminds me of that scene in "Top Gun."



Located at the end of the runway, this aircraft observation park is designed to be a dynamic and engaging spatial experience — serving as both gateway and destination. As gateway, the park serves as the northeastern entrance to the airport used by travelers coming by public transit. As destination, the park allows visitors a fresh and inviting perspective from which to watch planes land at the San Diego Airport.

The project began by exploring how the park itself could elevate people off the ground. A gradual slope across the width of the site creates a gentle rise, allowing people a view over the security fencing to the airfield beyond. The rise culminates in a ridgeline running the length of the park. A lawn cantilevered over the roadway on the airport side extends past the ridgeline to create an area where people can lounge and picnic on the grass.

Straight, sloped walkways pointing to the sky provide an accessible path through the park. The site was designed to meet SITES certification, and its plantings bring a piece of the native coastal Chaparral landscape vegetation to this urban site.



Studio Awards

Karl Marx Allee 3.0 – Interrelational Communities, East Berlin, Germany

Connie Chang, The University of Texas at Austin
School of Architecture

From the Jury:

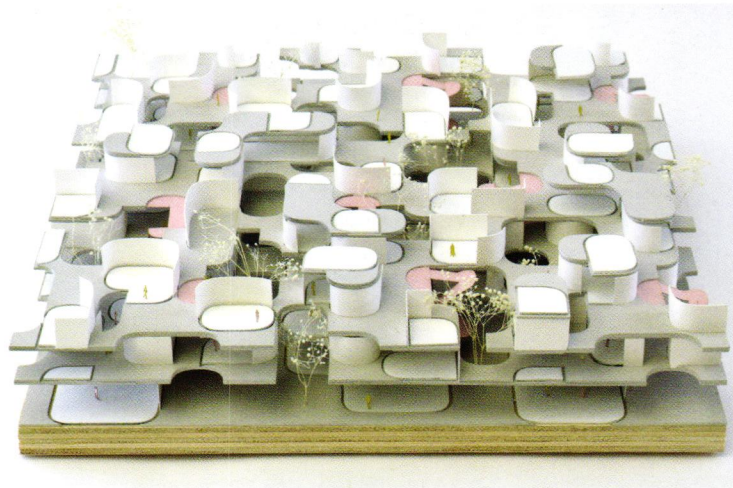
There's a strong structural diagram to the project, which really looks viable, and it has enough perforations that it could really be an exciting place to be. It presents a critique of tower-in-a-park housing by showing a fabric that has the potential to reanimate the in-between spaces that are underutilized. The presentation is fantastic because there's everything you need to draw you into the project and see the depth of it.

As architects, how can we both spatially and socially integrate new communities into an existing urban fabric?

Berlin is a dynamic city whose urban fabric is the manifestation of its discordant past. The neighborhoods adjacent to Karl-Marx-Allee are large-scale embodiments of the modernist urban design concept of "Towers in a Park." Within this context, however, the "park" is left undeveloped. The combination of typological "towers" and lack of ownership of the "park" generates a dissonance that is felt throughout the neighborhood.

Our urban intervention introduces an alternative system of densification specific to this neighborhood of East Berlin. The system is antithetical to the ideology of the existing Modernist blocks and shies away from singular architectural and urban forms. By utilizing diverse, smaller-scale components, this methodology creates cohesive communities that layer within the existing context and reclaim underutilized open space.

The design is organized by a tessellation in which the unit comprises enclosed mass, inhabitable surfaces, and voids. This proposed system of housing seeks to promote new methods of urban living. By rejecting the singular apartment building, the aggregation of units and shared spaces instigates a more cohesive urban community. Visual porosity across levels and interstitial conditions generates opportunities for spontaneous community interaction.



Filtered Frame Dock, Private Residence, Lady Bird Lake, Austin

Matt Fajkus Architecture /
The University of Texas at Austin

From the Jury:

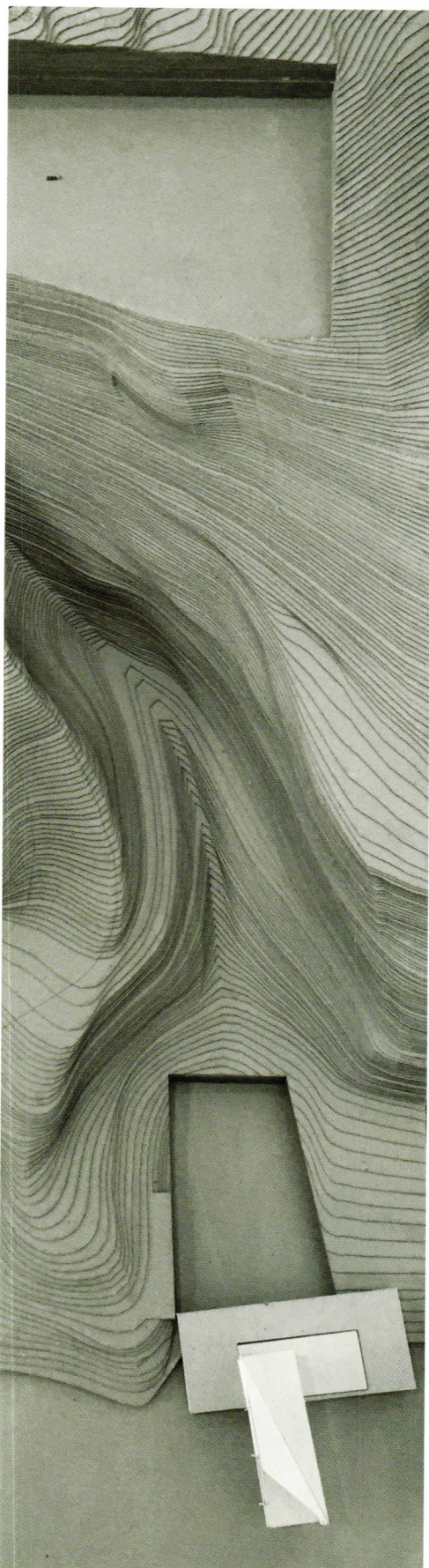
It's an elegant sculpture made of simple materials. It treads as lightly as the zoning would allow on this site, which has a certain — for a private residence — social quality to it. There's just a joy in looking at it. It really stands up as architecture: the way it filters the light, the way it provides viewing areas, indoor-outdoor space, hovering above the water.

In addition to its role as nautical landing apparatus, the dock is a calibrated instrument for light and ventilation. The structure provides varied experiences across the ecotone — above the water, along the water, in the water, and immersed in a rehabilitated designed landscape.

A stainless steel roof composed of two triangulated planes is optimized for articulating

views to and from the site, as well as modulating sunlight exposure to establish a comfortable and functional year-round space in sun and shade. The roof's solar orientation influenced the overall structural frame to shift within the maximum 14-ft-by-30-ft buildable area. Durable materials like the steel structure are accentuated and refined deliberately, to provide sensory experiences beyond their inherent duty of making a strong and reliable structural system.

The structural frame is clad with a parametric perforated steel screen. Thousands of unique, laser-cut perforations are shaped and distributed along the surfaces based on desired sight lines, direct solar exposure, and shade, and they register the rise and run of the stairs and roof slope while providing structural reinforcement for the overall frame. Intentionally crafted as an integrated component of the overall site conditions, the dock transitions to and from the designed landscape and lake, as well as from existing to new vegetation along the ravine.



Studio Awards

H-GAPS, Houston-Galveston Area Protection System

Rogers Partners Architects + Urban Designers, Houston

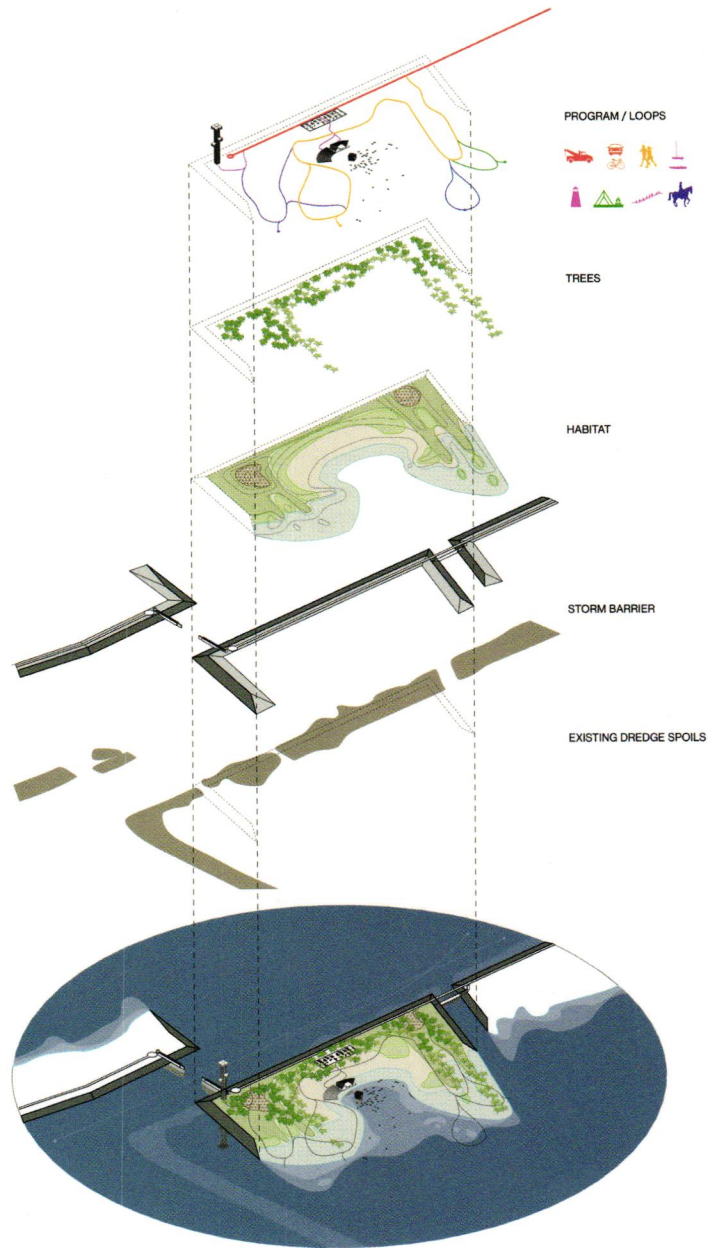
From the Jury:

The project was not just about infrastructure, but about bringing to life an idea of public space, recreation, and habitat creation combined with infrastructure. It shows how architects can bring ideas to a much bigger regional scale, adding value to projects like this so that tax dollars go to creating a better quality of life for people.

H-GAPS is a potential surge protection system where the Mid-Bay Barrier Islands and Mid-Bay Gate are envisioned as a cost-effective system that will protect both the vital industrial infrastructure of the Houston Ship Channel and the communities that line the western shore of Galveston Bay.

Given the substantial investment that any storm protection system represents, the elements of that system must perform multiple functions at all times. During storm events, the primary function as a protective barrier is clear, but what happens the rest of the time? The islands will be programmed as active recreational amenities for the Houston and Galveston Bay communities.

From marinas for sailboats and sport craft, to sandy bay-front campsites, to an expansive network of bike, hike, horse, and running trails, the islands will offer new ground and amenities for the enjoyment of the bay by visitors and residents alike. In the way that great infrastructure projects like the Golden Gate Bridge and Chicago's Navy Pier have contributed to the cultural quality of a region and become celebrated icons of their cities, H-GAPS provides protection while embracing the opportunity to do more for the region.





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Photo Essay



Architecture Seen

Texas' most famous architectural photographer, with a career spanning nearly 50 years, offers an alternative to traditional photography of architecture with pictures made moving through the cities of Texas. In this new series, working with a variety of film cameras and now-historic darkroom techniques, he leaves calculation aside in favor of the serendipity of multiple exposures that capture the way we experience the city over time.

Text and Photography by Richard Payne, FAIA

The professional photography of architecture has not changed fundamentally since dry sensitized photographic plates were introduced in the mid-19th century. Photographers could then travel the world and teach us what we know about architecture. They were interested in architecture and photography as a tool, and they understood the difference between a beautiful picture of a building and a building photographed beautifully. One is interpretive fine art and the application of personal style; the other is the avoidance of egocentric style in the search for design clarity, in which the photographer produces a beautiful social document, but hides his hand.

Digital technology has made all this easier and represents a seismic jolt in the evolution of

photography. It has changed everything except that which is most important. What has not changed was perhaps best expressed by John Szarkowski, the former director of photography at the Museum of Modern Art, who wrote that “the photographer is tied to the facts of things, and it is his problem to force the facts to tell the truth.” And since architecture, as opposed to building construction, is the most important fine art in the world and primarily a thing for the eyes, the truth is simply what photographers have shown us of the past, what we will see today, and what we will remember tomorrow.

We accept traditional architectural photography as truthful, but we must recognize the limitations of marketing photography commissioned by architects and other building professionals that typically results in buildings photographed as “products” sitting majestically alone without contextual or human reference. These pictures are effective in boardroom presentations or on the architect’s website, but less effective in the public arena, where beautiful photographs of those luxurious “things” often seem simplistic, perfectly pristine, perfectly staged, and too good to be true.

We should recognize that public awareness of the goals and the life-affirming promises of a better architecture is diminished, not only by the limitations of architectural photography, but by both the reluctance of our profession to commit time and treasure to public outreach programs and the lack of effective journalistic criticism of those who design, develop, and build. Architects and others, including photographers who work on the periphery of architectural practice, live with the frustration and the reluctant acceptance of the gap between architects and the public, described years ago by the legendary critic Ada Louise Huxtable. That gap still exists. The processes of architectural design are unknown to the

public. To put it simply, people do not know what architects do. All architects want more freedom. One might ask: If the fascinating conceptual processes of design were more a part of the public’s knowledge, would it affect the conceptual processes of architectural design?

Photography has given us a world of architecture and proven that there are no rules, nor is there stylistic guidance, in either architecture or photography. Architects and their photographers need not change proven and effective presentation techniques, but perhaps there are alternative ways to photograph architecture that symbolize our visual experience within the chaotic complexity of cities.

The photographs presented here employ interpretive methods common to the optimistic nature of all the arts. Multiple exposures are stacked, staggered, and layered. Color and darkroom techniques have been selectively applied in ways that are investigative, experimental, and provocative.

The photographs are about the mechanics of sight. They are not pictures of an instant, but of a span of time in multiple locations. They are impressions, urban imagery, pictures of memories, and symbols of what we know to be true of urban life. Emphasis is placed on producing images symbolic of how we see — not in a series of carefully composed, fixed images with edges or glances that start and stop, but rather in overlapping layers of ambiguous, continuous streams of imagery that flow through our eyes to our brains as we keep looking. What we see now will merge with what we will see, and what we have seen will be stored in memory. And since we cannot know what we will see in the next minute, I have made photographs over which I have had very little control.

Richard Payne, FAIA, is a former practicing architect and photographer in Houston.

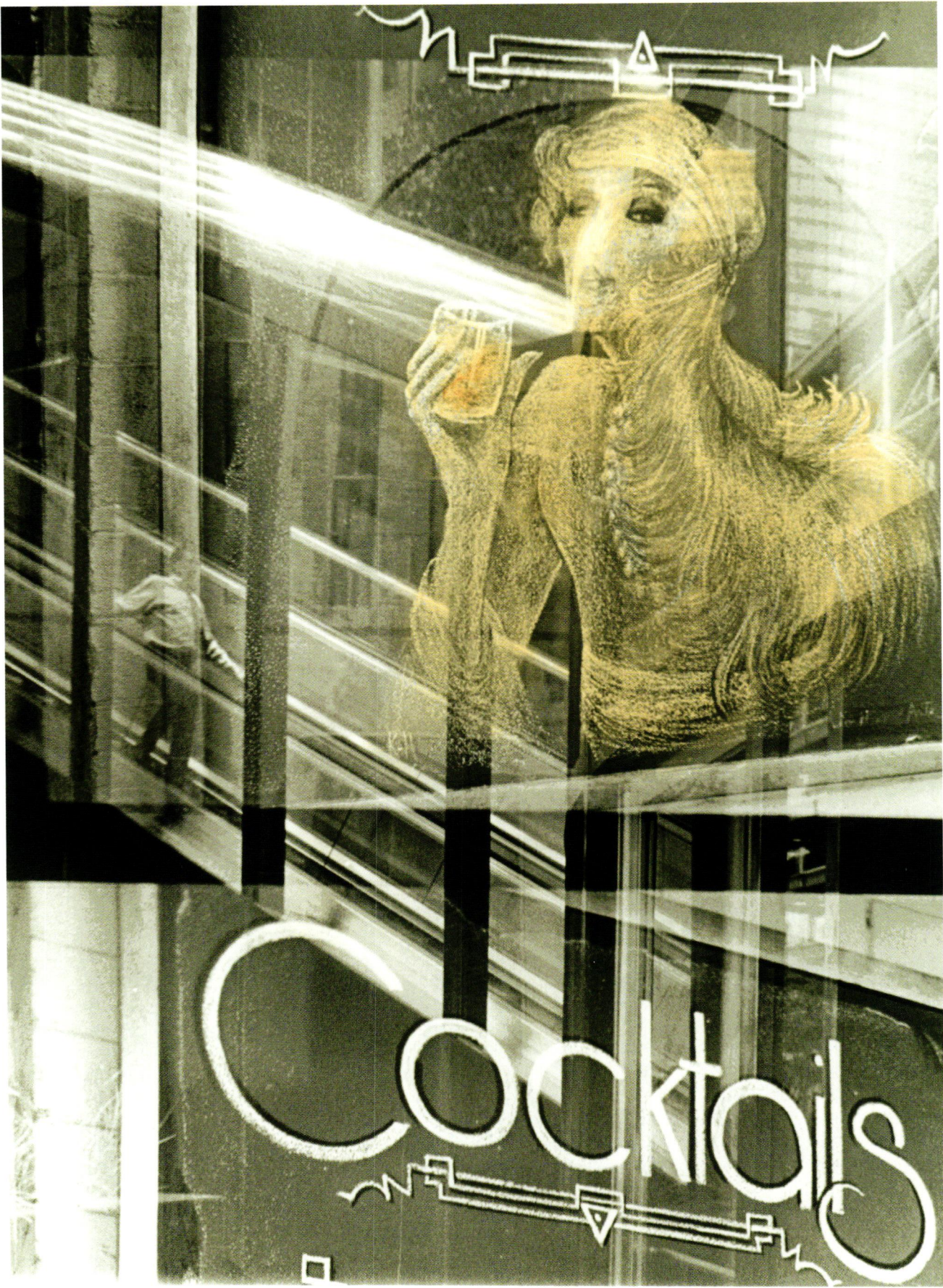




Photo Essay



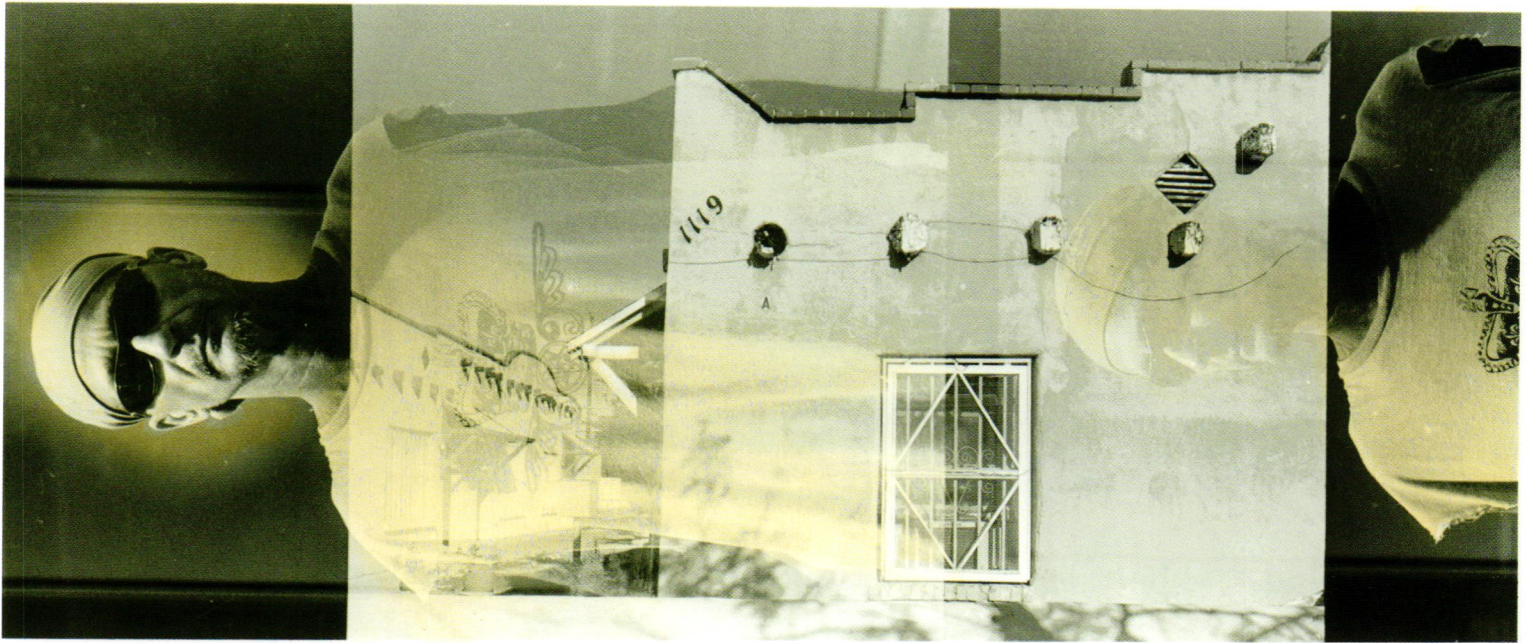
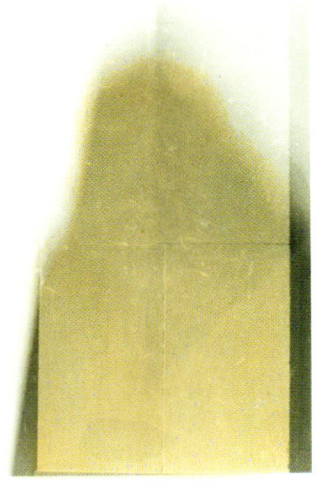
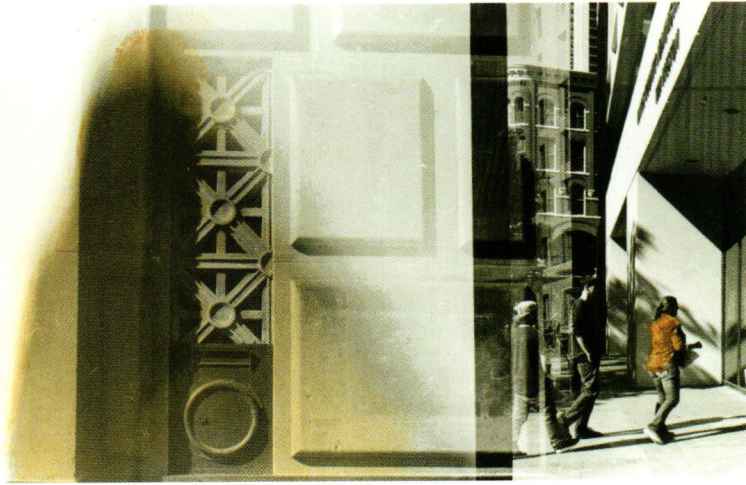
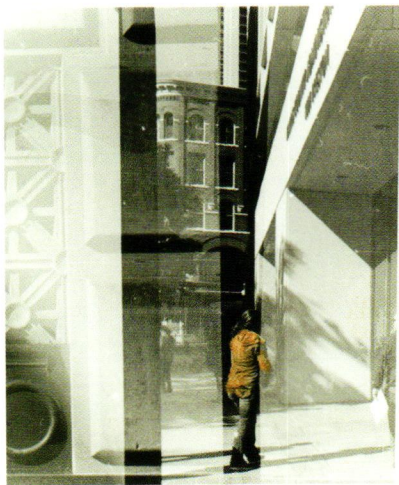
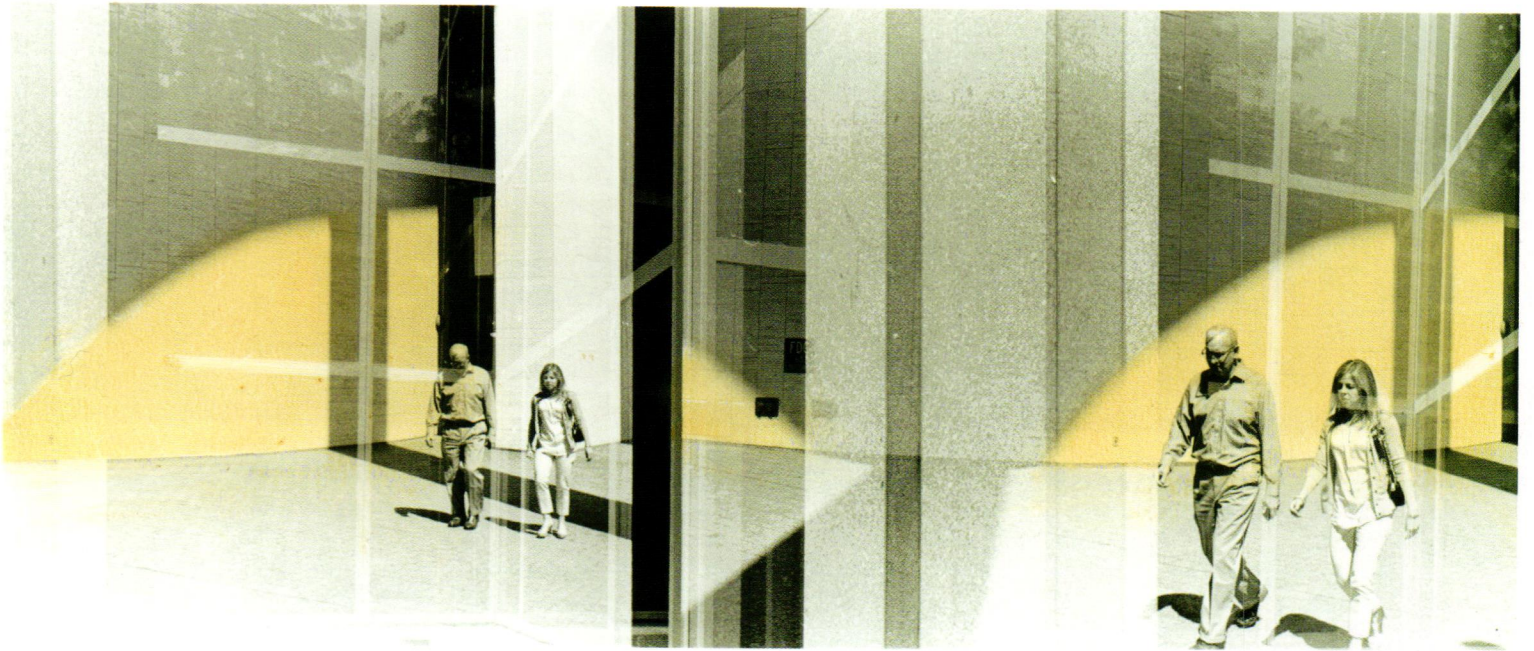


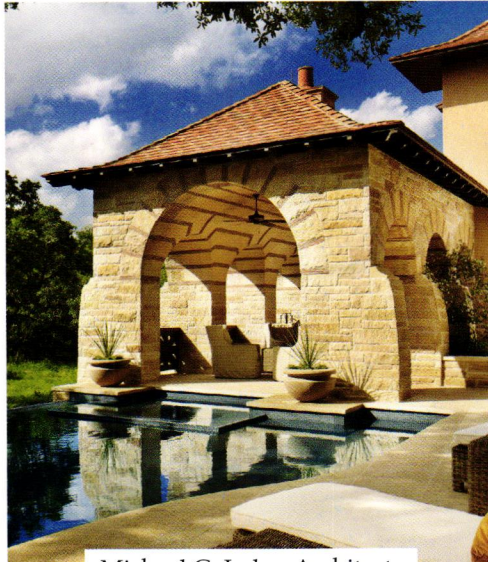
Photo Essay







Malone Maxwell Borson Architects



Michael G. Imber Architects



Black + Vernoooy Architecture



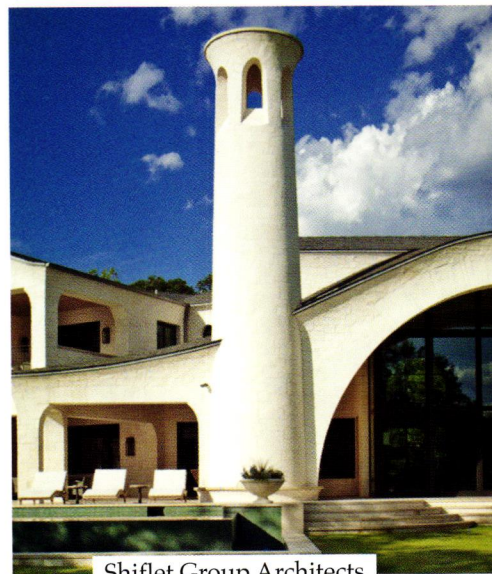
Furman + Keil Architects



Jessica Stewart Lendvay Architects



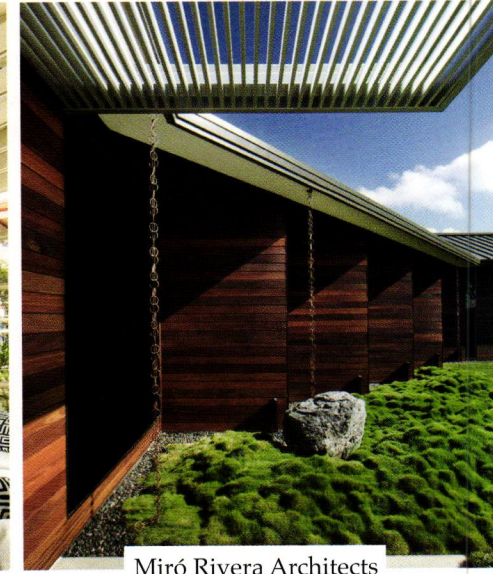
Ryan Street & Associates



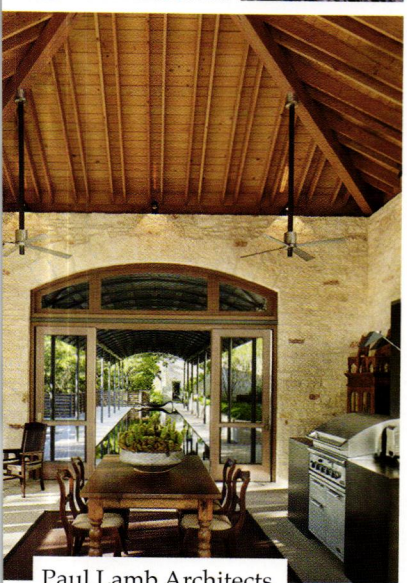
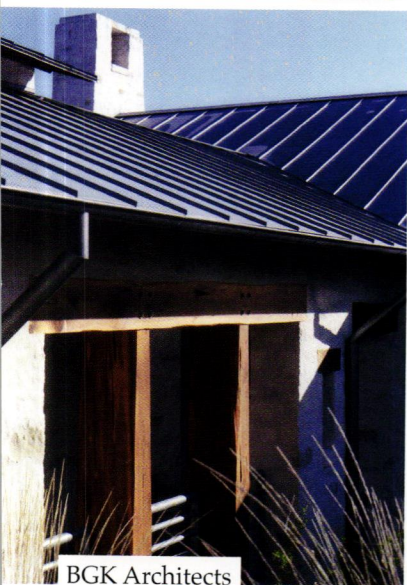
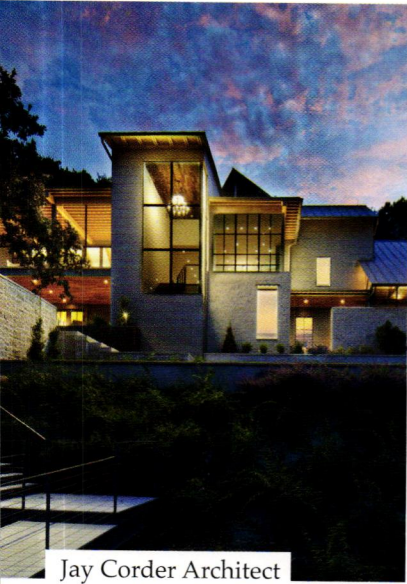
Shiflet Group Architects



Lake Flato Architects



Miró Rivera Architects



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Jay Corder, Architect
Jessica Stewart Lendvay Architects
John Grable Architects
J.W. Wood, Architect
Lake Flato Architects
Lou Kimball, Architect
Malone Maxwell Borson Architects
Mark Eubank, Architect
Michael G. Imber Architects
Miró Rivera Architects
Nic Holland Architects
Paul Lamb Architects
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Ryan Street & Associates
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*I listen to money singing. It's like looking down
From long french windows at a provincial town,
The slums, the canal, the churches ornate and mad
In the evening sun. It is intensely sad.*

— From “Money” by Philip Larkin

Money takes many forms. It can be physical or intangible, visible or invisible. In both solid and abstract manifestations it exudes a strange power.

Take for example the above excerpt from Philip Larkin's poem “Money.” He listens to “money singing” — intangible money — and likens the song to a provincial town — in short, architecture, one of money's more pervasively visible and easily identifiable materializations. It's sad because Larkin projects on the scene a sort of socialist buyer's remorse. The slums are where the poor working-class huddles in abject poverty, the canal the machinery of industry that employs/exploits them, and the churches where the capital is pooled in “ornate and mad” fashion. Why isn't this song of money more evenly distributed, he seems to ask. The fact that he looks down on it all also suggests more than a modicum of guilt arising from the poet's distance from the scene, and hence the dissonance he feels.

Where do architects fit in? Unfortunately, the profession is poorly positioned to affect a meaningful redistribution of capital. But architects are custodians of their clients' money, whether those clients are petrochemical tycoons or the local housing authority, and are in a unique position to reduce any potential buyer's remorse that may result from their production.

In this feature on money, *Texas Architect* explores two residential projects that show architecture functioning admirably at vastly opposed budget scales. We also examine a disturbing trend in the contemporary real estate market that may be leading us into the next Great Recession, and compare how policy in San Antonio and Austin is shaping investment along those cities' waterways.

Money

46

The Little Flip

What happens when real estate becomes more important as investment product than habitation?

Eric J. Cesal

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The Hills

Casa de las Lomas
Michael G. Imber,
Architects

Christopher Ferguson,
Assoc. AIA

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The Elephant

Elephant House
Faye and Walker
Architecture

Aaron Seward

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Park Life

Austin and San Antonio have contrasting policies for shaping investment along key urban waterways.

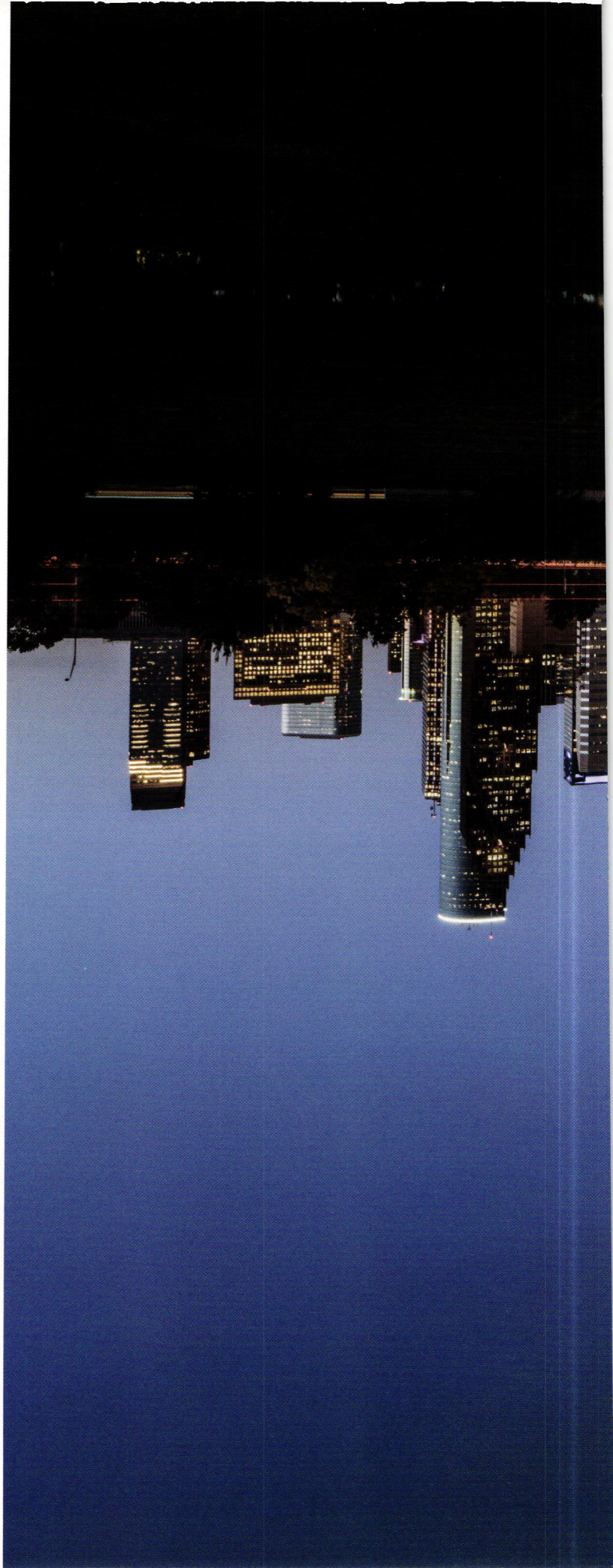
Jen Weaver, AIA



by Eric J. Cesal

EVEN A CURSORY GLANCE AT RECENT REAL ESTATE TRENDS WILL REVEAL THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE BUILDING MARKET. EVERYWHERE THERE ARE CRANES ERECTING LUXURY CONDOS AND CLASS A OFFICE BUILDINGS. YET WHEN THEY ARE COMPLETED, THESE EDIFICES ARE OFTEN BUT THINLY USED AND OCCUPIED. MEANWHILE, CITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE FACING HOUSING SHORTAGES AND AFFORDABILITY CRISES. WHAT IS HAPPENING? AND WHAT CAN ARCHITECTS DO ABOUT IT?

The Little Flip





In the years leading up to the last Great Recession, a funny thing happened. A thing unprecedented in the 20,000 years in which humans have been building buildings. This little flip occurred without much fanfare. It would forever change the landscape of architecture, the architecture of landscape, the form of our cities, and, not insignificantly, our employment possibilities.

In a way, the Little Flip caused the Great Recession. It will cause the next one too. It festers apolitically at the heart of #russiagate. It's probably touched every architect you know in some way.

I'll explain. But first, a little history:

For all of human history, humans built useful buildings because they needed them. If they needed shelter, they built a house. If they needed to house some animals, they built a barn. There are, of course, varying ways to understand "need." Did the pharaohs "need" to build the pyramids as personal mausoleums? It seems excessive. But I'm sure if you asked them they would be quite clear about the fact that they needed a massive burial chamber so that they could be buried with all their stuff. I am certain that the ultra-wealthy were then allowed to be eccentric, same as they are now.

This system persisted until the mid-1930s, when the modern mortgage system came into being. Prior to that, lending was very sparse and very expensive, so if you built something, it meant you probably already had the money, or most of it. It also meant that whatever you were building was very, very necessary. For perspective, the typical mortgage in the 1920s would require a 50% down payment, have a term of five years, and interest rates north of 20 percent. It was like buying a house on a really terrible credit card.

At some point, the finance community saw the coming pitchforks and decided that it was probably okay to lend non-wealthy people

money, so long as those loans were secured by the government. Washington thought that growing prosperity was a good idea, so kicked in with the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government. This led to all sorts of cool new toys, like Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac, and the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the full canon of our national lending laws.

In the sum of all these changes, we enjoyed a progressive shift: Instead of worrying about the building you needed today, you could worry about the building you needed tomorrow. And thus, modern real estate development was born. One could go into a bank and claim that five years from now, or 10 years from now, there would be an increased need for housing, or grocery stores, or whatever. You would need to back up your claim with research or demographic data, but assuming that that was convincing, you could get a loan (mortgage). Such a loan would be granted based on the anticipated future needs of a community, and a developer could begin (obviously, with an architect). Occasionally, people would misjudge the market, but the nature of Keynesian capitalism kept everyone fairly honest. The postwar boom is the convincing evidence of the efficacy of this system: lots of work for developers, contractors, engineers, and architects, and cities tended to get the buildings they needed (or would need).

The financial deregulation of the 1980s allowed an entirely new form of capital to arise out of our built environment through the miracle of securitization. The Great Recession brought into view a particular phenomenon: Once one had built a building, one needed to sell it.

The buyer would need a mortgage, and mortgages could subsequently be bundled into securities that traded extremely well. The desire for these securities was so strong that it altered our entire culture of lending and home-buying. Banks got in the business of pushing sub-

prime loans to people who couldn't afford them, and we all know how that turned out.

While subsequent financial reform eliminated the problem of sub-prime residential mortgages, the wider phenomenon of asset-backed securities is larger than ever. Commercial mortgage-backed securities (CMBS) operate in essentially the same fashion. They bundle together commercial mortgages to create securities that can then be sold to investors. In fact, just about anything can now be "securitized" and resold. Same as the mortgage crisis, the securities eventually prove more desirable than the stuff they're made of. So they trade better.

How's that work? Historically, the number of buildings we produce has to do with need and utility and, ultimately, demographics. As populations grow, move, or concentrate in a particular area, we need more buildings, or newer buildings. Since we can't have a mortgage without a building, one would think that the market for securities is indirectly limited by demographics. We can't build a building if there's no market to support its use, right? That is, assuming the housing/commercial market is functioning properly.

Since the Little Flip, evidence is all around us that the "market" is failing to address the needs of the market. The issue of "affordable" housing has now become even a middle class discussion. While we seem to have a glut of luxury properties that Americans are unable to afford, last year, California only built one new home for every 3.78 new residents. In pure economic terms, the "market" is over-supplying luxury homes and under-supplying everything else.

A quick drive through any American city will see multiple new condo tomorrows being erected, absent the schools, parks, grocery stores, and other dimensions of community. What changed? The Little Flip. In the simplest terms: Mortgages became more desirable than buildings. Before, in order to have a building, one needed a mortgage. Now, in order to have a mortgage, one needs a building. And so we build.

These buildings may be designed under the auspices of "luxury housing" or "commercial office space," but fundamentally they're not generated for that purpose.

Rich people need places to live too, and personally I've never objected to the fact that some architects will serve that portion of the market; buildings are expensive, and architects need fees. We should believe, however, that forces of the market would act to employ architects across the socioeconomic spectrum. There is a market for middle-class housing, same as there is a market for the housing of rich people. The problem here is that neither of those markets is being served. What is being served is the market for investment securities. Buildings are just a means to an end.

In order to motivate the building of a building, one no longer needs to need a building, or even justify the future need for a building. The endless need for more investment securities trumps both.

The profession of architecture needs to consider its role in all of this. As stewards and champions of the built environment, we must consider that space has always been a type of capital. In recent times, it has become two forms of capital: Two forms of capital that we had previously believed were inextricably linked have now become separated.

Real estate has always been considered an asset. Architects help create the value of that asset through the thoughtfulness and the appropriateness of their designs. But fundamentally, the value of that

asset is tied to a building's usefulness — meaning, if people want to use it, it retains (and grows) its value. But what if there's no market for use? What if it's not valuable as housing, or office space, or retail, because no market exists for any of those things? What if there's no possible use for a building, other than to exist on the balance sheet of a foreign corporation? Certainly we can still get paid to design these sorts of buildings, but there are two reasons we shouldn't do it.

The moral imperative: For all the crowing about "health, safety, and public welfare," architects need to eschew any design process that will ultimately be antagonistic to those purposes. Any building designed to be uninhabited degrades neighborhoods' public safety, culture, and social welfare.

For any architect who needs a "business" reason to get out of this business, here's one: It's completely unsustainable. When a market for buildings is based on population, or human need, or social need, it's sustainable as long as the species continues to grow. As people reproduce and get wealthier, we need buildings. Buildings need designing, and so architects have work.

Money tends to go where it's optimized. So money flows into this market because the other options are worse. If the yield in the international bond market rises, for instance, the international investing community will drive its funds toward bonds, instead of real estate, leaving our cities with forests of hulking, unfinished, ultra-luxury towers, occupied by no one. The possibility should seem familiar to any veteran of the 2008 crash; Forbes magazine went so far as to call it "The Rich Man's Sub-Prime."

When we design cities for people, the cities fill themselves up with people. Rich people, poor people, middle class people. The educated, the ignorant, the selfish, and the altruistic. This diversity eventually leads to a shared experience that everyone is invested in. It promotes conflict, but also reconciliation. That is how cities grow, and prosper.

When we design cities exclusively for investment purposes, they die slowly. The various forms of "capital" that buildings can produce eventually fall away. What's left is a purely monetary form of capital only really relevant to a tiny clique of wealthy investors — the ones who don't live there.

The recent destruction in Houston and Miami points to an even more desperate consequence: Cities of capital won't protect themselves. Losses are insured — often for more than they're worth. The destruction of a \$3 million condo by a Harvey or an Irma isn't necessarily considered a loss, if it's not your city. You may even turn a profit.

The Little Flip has already had profound consequences for our cities and our future, all the while allowing architects to continue working and the Architecture Billings Index to keep rising. But a devil's bargain always comes to an end, and never a good one. We will see further housing shortages, further disasters, and the eventual collapse of the architectural economy, along with the firm closures and layoffs we have just begun to forget. For our economic health, and the moral soul of architecture, we must resist.

Eric J. Cesal is a designer, writer, and noted post-disaster expert, having led on-the-ground reconstruction programs after the Haiti earthquake, the Great East Japan Tsunami, and Superstorm Sandy. Cesal's formal training is as an architect, with international development, economics and foreign policy among his areas of expertise.



The Hills

CASA DE LAS LOMAS IS NOT A CHEAP HOUSE. WHILE IT COULD BE DERIDED AS AN EXAMPLE OF CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION, MUCH OF WHAT IT COST WAS SPENT ON LOCAL MATERIALS AND CRAFTSMEN, MAKING THE PROJECT A VESSEL FOR THE PATRONAGE OF A CADRE OF MASTER BUILDERS WHOSE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ONE MIGHT FEAR WOULD HAVE VANISHED FROM THIS LAND.

by Christopher Ferguson, Assoc. AIA

Project Casa de las Lomas, West Lake Hills

Owners Jason and Emma Andrew

Architects Michael G. Imber, Architects

Design Team Sally Joachim, AIA; Greg Smith, AIA; Michael G. Imber, FAIA

Photographers Casey Dunn, Jon McDonald, Michael G. Imber



Nestled into the side of a hill and buried deep within an upscale, sprawling, and generally uninteresting suburban Austin neighborhood lies Casa de las Lomas, a showstopper of a home, at once exotic and profoundly Texan.

Its architect, Michael G. Imber, FAIA, is visiting the residence for the first time since its completion in 2008, and as he begins the tour, his pride is nearly as palpable as the blanket of muggy humidity that is typical of the city in late summer. “This limestone was hand carved in Florence,” he says with a glint in his eye as he gestures to an ornate tympanum over the front door. “Florence, Texas,” he adds after a beat.

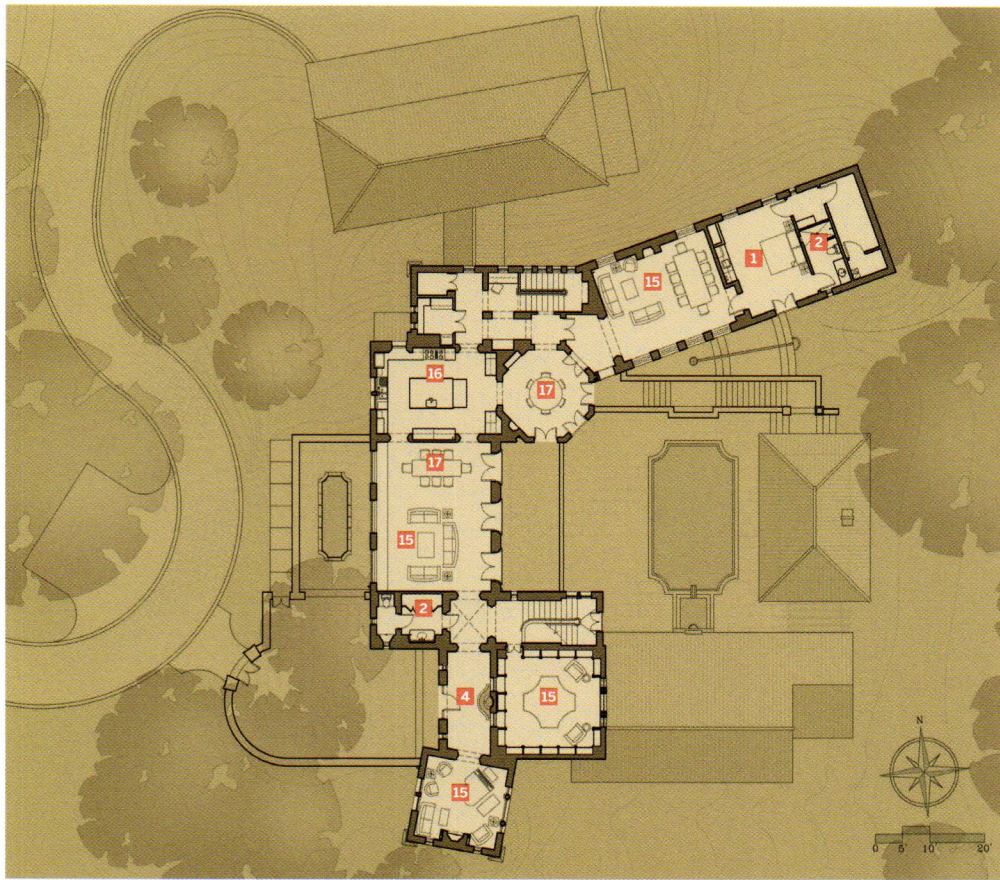
The door itself is from Guatemala, set within a dark cedar panel and styled after the elaborate zaguán entry passages of colonial Spain and Latin America. The inset block grille above it came from India. The roof tiles are antique — sourced from the south of France — and carefully arranged, the assortment of earthy red pastels complementing the deep blues and greens of the surrounding Texas landscape. A setback concrete dome, clad in colorful ceramic tiles from Portland, peeks out from certain vantage points — a Moorish flourish that plays well alongside the traditional Spanish details that adorn the property.

And then there’s the stone, perhaps the defining feature of a home with an abundance of defining features. Five different Texas quarries provided as many types of rough-hewn sandstone, limestone, and schist that aggregate between deliberately varied grout thicknesses. The resulting tapestry of stonework accomplishes an expressiveness, texture, and depth that invoke the romance of traditional craftsmanship as much as the heritage of its locality.

In this way, the masonry itself serves as a metaphor for the project as a whole. A home like this doesn’t happen by accident, or — at just shy of \$1,000 per sf — inexpensively. It takes a small army of local artisans, a design team with capability and vision, and a client who sees value not only in the aesthetics of the built work, but also in the patronage of craftsmen who devote a lifetime to their trade.

On this topic, Imber is quick to wax poetic: “People often don’t realize how lucky they are to have these craftsmen work on their homes. A guy coming onto the project will work on a handrail, and when he goes home he dreams about it. It’s his life. When he walks away from the project, he’s left a part of his spirit, and that stays for generations. To me, as an architect, that’s thrilling. Sometimes clients don’t appreciate it because they only see the cost. You’ve got to say to them, ‘Hey, you’re paying for spirit, buddy!’”

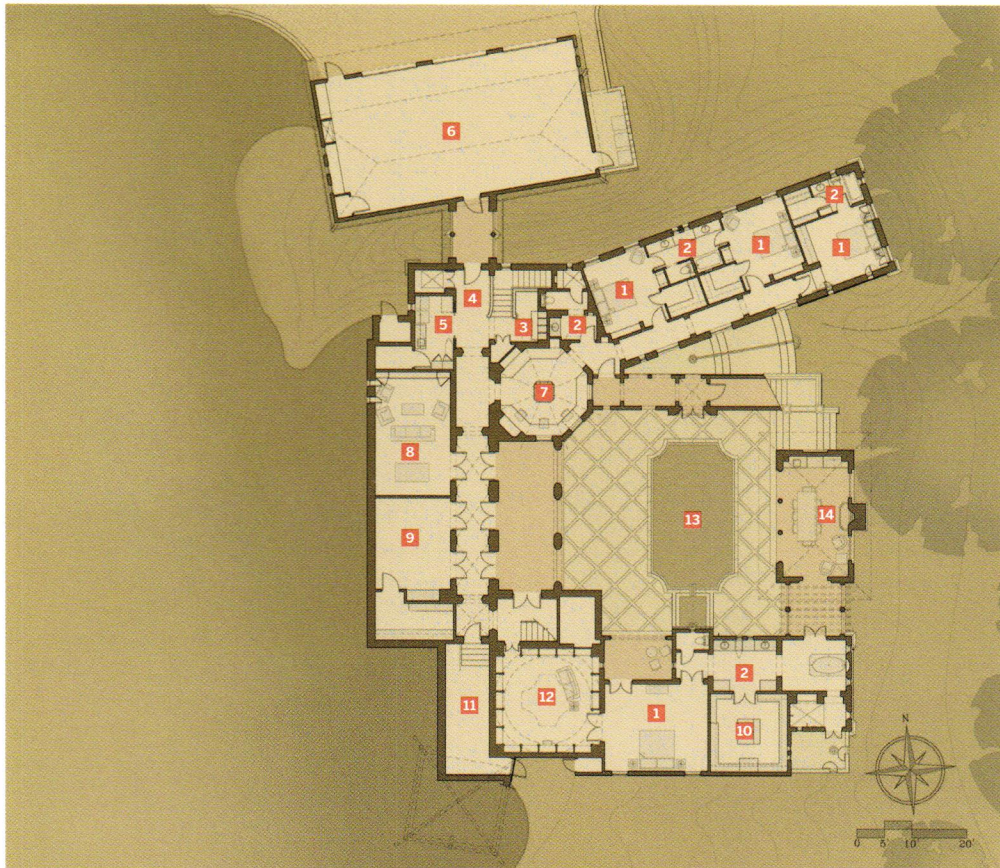
This commitment to craft has obvious implications for Imber’s design process. With respect to the stonework, in particular, the desired look begins with precedent imagery before moving toward sourcing samples, often from multiple quarries at once. Special attention is paid to the grout, which can either set each stone off individually or unify the palette as a whole. For this project, Imber called for a larger-gauge aggregate than is typical, in order to achieve a textured appearance that lends itself to a robust and rustic character. Eventually, a full-scale mock-up is constructed and, once approved, religiously referenced by the mason’s crews. Daily supervision is required to ensure that the design intent is carefully met, and stonework that veers too close to formal over vernacular is demolished and rebuilt.



SECOND FLOOR

Previous Taking advantage of the site's steep slope, the second story entrance floor is a piano nobile with high ceilings and axial views.

Facing Stone from five Texas quarries was carefully composed by the project's masons to lend the facade depth and richness.



FIRST FLOOR

- 
FLOOR PLANS
 1 BEDROOM
 2 BATHROOM
 3 MUDROOM
 4 ENTRY
 5 LAUNDRY
 6 GARAGE
 7 SEWING ROOM
 8 MEDIA ROOM
 9 GYM
 10 CLOSET
 11 MECHANICAL
 12 LIBRARY
 13 POOL
 14 PAVILION
 15 LIVING SPACE
 16 KITCHEN
 17 DINING

Stepping inside the home, visitors are immediately greeted by a wall fountain that meets the floor, a gesture inspired by the client's interest in the principles of feng shui. As the sound of dancing water reverberates up the immaculate plaster walls and around the foyer, the addition of yet another cultural reference that might otherwise seem disparate feels decidedly in step within the eclectic, traditional charm of the residence.

“People often don’t realize how lucky they are to have these craftsmen work on their homes. A guy coming onto the project will work on a handrail, and when he goes home, he dreams about it. It’s his life.”

From here, guests have a choice: Pivot to the right and find a cozy, vaulted music room anchored by a handsome stone fireplace; or turn left and peer through a series of four axially aligned, chamfered portals leading through the heart of the home — a generous living space, a kitchen with an island the size of some dinner tables, and an adjacent, airy octagonal dining room. Natural light spills into each well-proportioned space from multiple sources. “Human beings are like moths,” Imber quips; “we’re drawn to the light.”

Moving along the main axis affords guests a wonderful discovery: an unobstructed view of the lush Texas hillside and, in the distance, a clump of tiny skyscrapers locating downtown Austin. The unexpected revelation that the entrance floor is actually a piano nobile is especially gratifying when considered within the context of the project’s careful siting.

Embedding the home into the existing hillside not only allows for unobstructed first-floor views, but the grade change accommodates a sunken courtyard that is flanked by two double-height, splayed arms — each wing of the residence — angled to maximize exposure to prevailing breezes. A modestly sized pool placed at the center of the outdoor area makes the space a natural gathering spot, and sitting poolside feels surprisingly intimate, as the home seems to embrace the plaza.

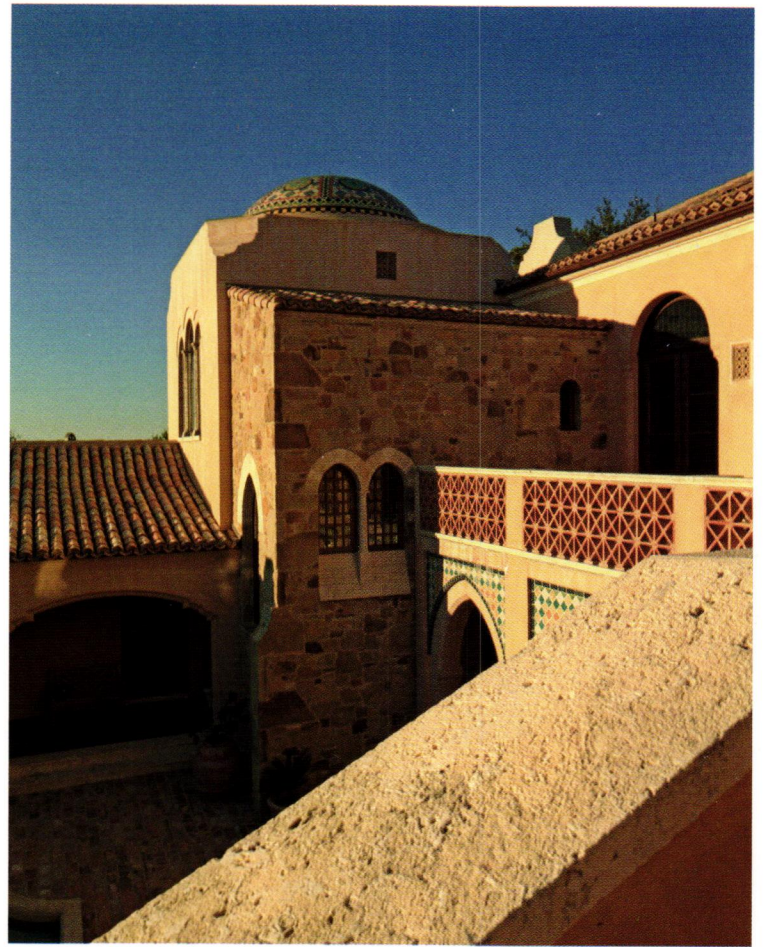
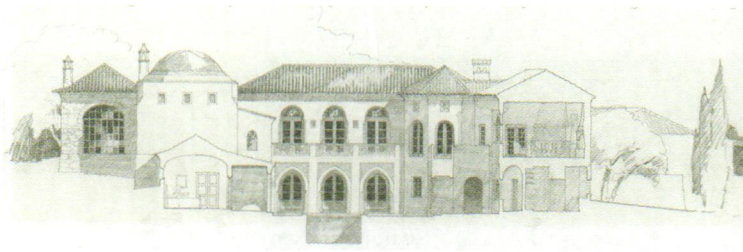
Glancing upward, the rear facade is every bit as interesting as the home’s presence from the street. Varying the size and position of openings introduces a layer of controlled disorder that obscures the location of floor levels and rejects notions of standardization and predictability. There is a whimsical, mysterious, and downright enjoyable quality to scanning the building without being quite certain where each of the spaces within begins and ends.

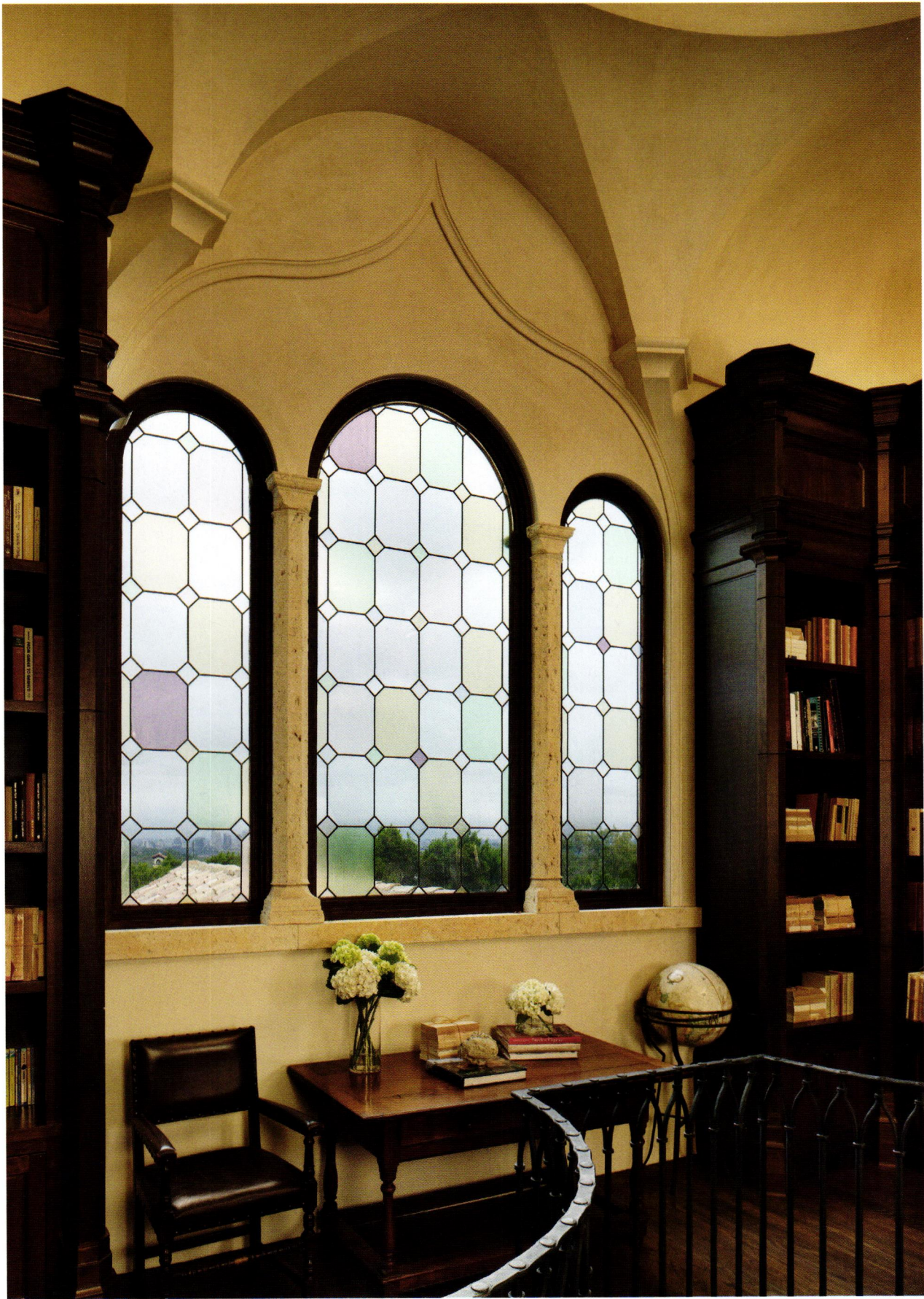
A grand, outdoor stair bookends the north side of the courtyard, leading to a loggia that rests above a wing of bedrooms. Justifying the stair to the courtyard, rather than to the loggia, allows it to peel away from the canted wing of the home. This, in turn, creates a small side courtyard in the interstitial space. The simple gesture introduces another subtle element of complexity into the plan, hinting at a layering of spaces that never fully reveal themselves from any single vantage point.

The stair is one of three in the project, each distinct and integral to the experience of moving throughout the home, according to Imber: “A staircase isn’t just a staircase; it’s a way to interact with the architecture. You’re climbing up and through it. You’re feeling the hand of the plasterer against your own, the stroke of the ironsmith as you hold the rail.”



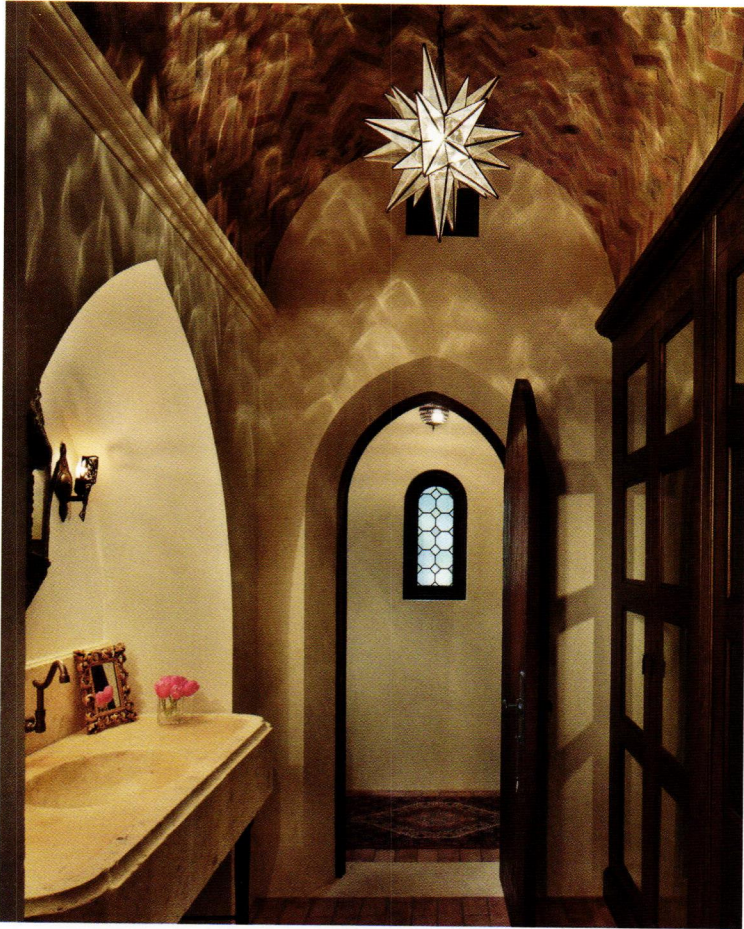
Clockwise from right *From the antique roof tiles, colorful ceramic accents, hammered iron rails, hand carved limestone, and countless other details, the home is imbued with the spirit of its many creators.*





Left *Pastel stained glass is featured throughout the home, adding another layer of composition, color, and light play to the home's many intimate spaces.*

Facing *Many of the light fixtures were designed specifically for the home by artists from across the globe.*



The ironwork, mainly thin handrails painstakingly shaped from long sections of one-inch-square stock, is also featured prominently in the mezzanine level of the double-height, domed library.

Every step through the home affords new discoveries of details that radiate with the spirit of their creators. Dazzling stained glass, myriad custom light fixtures, hardware from tradesmen near and far, bright ceramic tiles inlaid within the face of each stair riser, and more — all

“There is both what the material wants to be and the hand and heart of the craftsman who shapes it. We must turn the project over to those, at a certain point.”

combine to produce a symphony that ebbs and flows as composed by an architect charged by a patron with vision.

“I firmly believe that design doesn’t stop on paper,” Imber asserts as he steps out the front door and back into the soggy Texas afternoon. “There is both what the material wants to be and the hand and heart of the craftsman who shapes it. We must turn the project over to those, at a certain point.” He pauses before concluding: “That is what makes it human. That’s what makes it real.”

Christopher Ferguson, Assoc. AIA, is a designer at Clickspring Design and co-founder of DO.GROUP DESIGN.



The Elephant

AT THE TATTERED FRINGE OF EAST AUSTIN, WHERE A ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE NEIGHBORHOOD ENDS AT A BUSY HIGHWAY, STANDS AN ARCHITECTURAL GEM. MADE FROM A FEW SIMPLE MATERIALS ELEGANTLY HANDLED, DESIGNED AND BUILT BY THE ARCHITECT WHO LIVES AND WORKS THERE, THIS HOUSE IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT DESIGN CAN DO ON A BUDGET.

by Aaron Seward

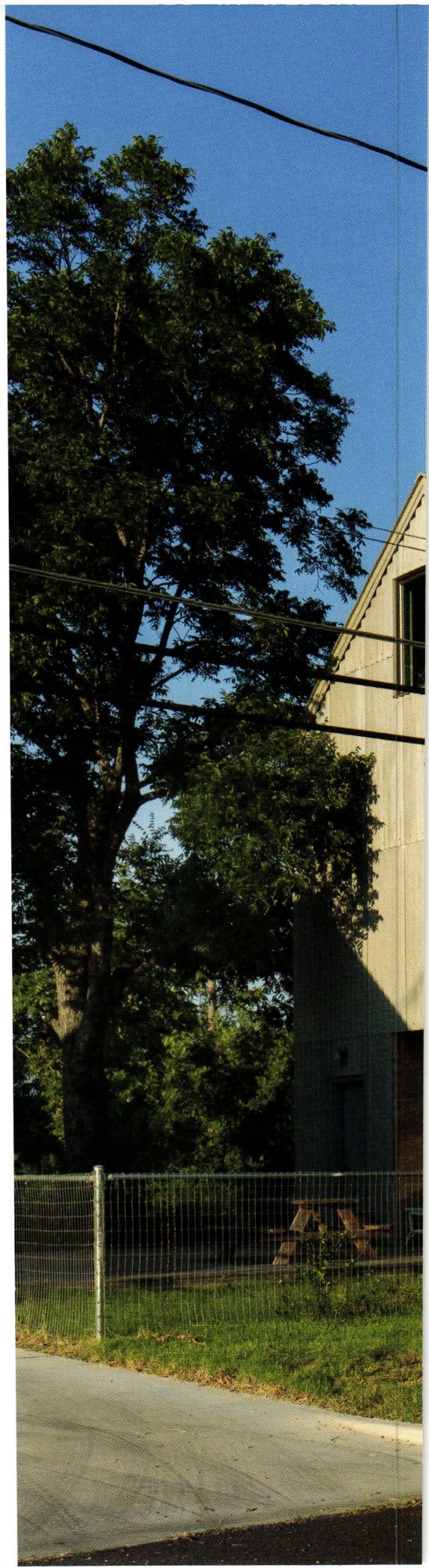
Project The Elephant House, Austin

Client Sean and Cybil Guess

Architect Faye and Walker Architecture

Design Team Sean Guess, AIA

Photographer Leonid Furmansky







“Love the one you’re with,” says Sean Guess, AIA, echoing a line from Steven Stills’ anthem from the ’60s. Guess is referring to the flooring on the upper two levels of the house he designed for himself and his family. It’s an engineered wood system whose oak veneer is so thin it can’t be sanded and refinished without exposing the MDF substrate. To have used a product that would allow such refurbishment, the sort he might spec for a well-heeled client, would have broken his budget. He’s stuck with the veneer, unless there comes a future when he’s flush enough that he can afford to rip it out and replace it wholesale, an eventuality the architect does not anticipate any time soon.

Guess bought the lot on which the house sits in 2011. For two years, he had been looking for something as close to central Austin as his \$50,000 budget would allow. That wound up being in this as-yet thinly developed corner of Montopolis, at the bitter end of East Austin, right where Montopolis Drive merges into highly trafficked Highway 183. It happens to be closer to the airport than to downtown. Austin’s real estate market being what it is, if he were looking at the same piece of land today, it would be well out of his price range.

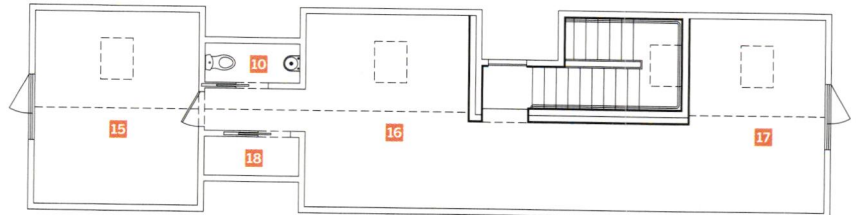
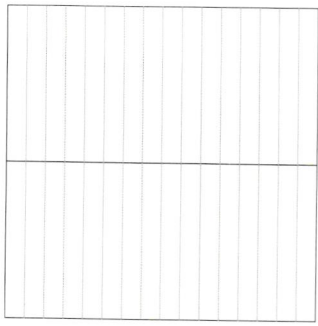
Rough though it may be, the site has a lot to recommend it. It’s on a bluff above the Colorado River, with almost direct access to the hike-and-

bike trails of the river’s greenway, which connects to downtown a mere four miles away. The bars and restaurants of East Austin are within a few minutes’ drive, as is the aforementioned airport. And from the new house’s third floor, looking west above the treetops, there is a fine view of the city skyline.

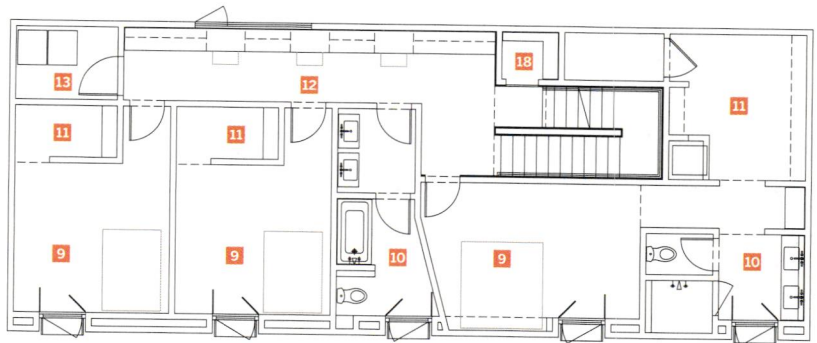
Guess started his own practice, Faye and Walker Architecture, in 2008. It consists of himself and, sometimes, when he needs it, an intern. Previous to going it alone he designed high-end homes for Ryan Street & Associates, where he was an associate. “I still feel like an associate,” Guess says. Before moving into the house he designed, which is also his studio, he officed in a 30-sf nook under the stair in the condo he and his family occupied on South Congress.

At roughly 3,000 sf, the house has a simple form — a rectangular box topped by a pitched roof. Guess set a construction budget goal of \$150-per-sf, a figure that did not include a builder’s fee. He did the construction administration himself, and managed to squeak the project through just under budget.

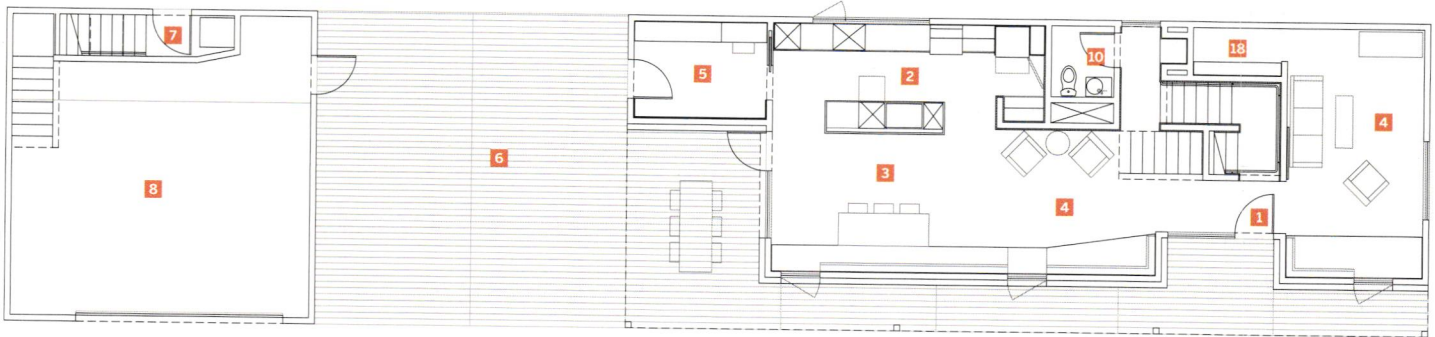
The main driving factor of the design was the exterior siding — in Guess’ words, “my complete obsession with wanting to use it.” It’s a corrugated fiber cement product from Denmark, which is most typically



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

Previous A cutout on the first floor creates a covered porch. Here the fiber cement siding gives way to handmade Mexican brick.

Facing Located at the far eastern boundary of Montopolis, the elevated site is nonetheless close to central Austin, with views of the skyline.



- FLOOR PLANS**
- 1 ENTRY
 - 2 KITCHEN
 - 3 DINING
 - 4 LIVING
 - 5 MUDROOM
 - 6 WOOD DECK
 - 7 APARTMENT ENTRY
 - 8 GARAGE
 - 9 BEDROOM
 - 10 BATHROOM
 - 11 CLOSET
 - 12 HALL/STUDY
 - 13 LAUNDRY
 - 14 STUDIO APARTMENT
 - 15 OFFICE
 - 16 FLEX SPACE
 - 17 PLAYROOM
 - 18 STORAGE





employed on the roofs of industrial and agricultural structures in Europe, but the company did have details for vertical siding installation. Guess selected what he wanted from the catalog and modified it to fit his needs.

“Once I found that material, it became about utilizing it in an elegant way that took advantage of its inherent qualities,” Guess says. “Then, it was just the fun of detailing edge conditions and window and door openings. The surrounds I made to capture the siding itself was designed to be an exterior corner board, but I took those and ripped them down on one side and created an L-piece that gets installed around every door and window. Otherwise, my windows and doors wouldn’t project beyond the face of the structure.”

One important aspect, for Guess, was not to have any corner trim. To accomplish this, he took advantage of the siding’s corrugations, orienting them vertically and rolling them over each other, allowing the undulating geometry to turn the corner. This simple move makes the building feel solid and monolithic, as opposed to resembling an assemblage of flimsy fields taped together at the corners.

The look of the fiber cement material — which is gray in color and sort of wrinkly when you examine it up close — along with the building’s ungainly, lumbering geometry, inspired its name: Elephant House.

Facing and above *The interiors are open, clean, and composed of a few basic materials; the architect nonetheless had fun with the detailing and edge conditions.*



The look of the fiber cement material — which is gray in color and sort of wrinkly when you examine it up close — along with the building's ungainly, lumbering geometry, inspired its name: Elephant House.

Facing Shutters inspired by Luis Barragán control daylight and views in the second floor bedrooms.

Right Perched on a bluff above the Colorado River where Montopolis Drive intersects 183, Elephant House is close in but so far out.



On the ground floor, Guess carved out an entry nook and covered porch. In this recessed area, the cladding material changes from the corrugated fiber cement panel to a tan colored, handmade Mexican brick. The change in material was meant to express the notion that in “cutting” through the skin, into the building, an inner reality is revealed: the pulpy insides of the elephant.

The interiors are open, clean, simple, and composed of just a few materials: plywood, gypsum, and a concrete floor on the first level, which transitions on the upper levels to the engineered oak veneer product mentioned previously. The ground floor has a mudroom and a large kitchen/dining/living area that flows along the length of the house, carried by a long built-in banquet, around the vertical circulation core, to the family room, where a picture window presents a view of the traffic streaming on 183. On the second story are the two children’s bedrooms and the master suite, all of which feature Luis Barragán-inspired window shutters. The third story houses the office and a flex space that is primarily used as the children’s playroom. In accordance with local FAR requirements, this floor could not add any mass to the building, and so it has no walls — the pitched roof beams bear directly on the second floor trusses. It’s a glorified attic, and Guess employed some fairly complex calculations to ensure that the head height averaged 7 ft.

As in so many projects, the architect really had fun with the stair. In this case, the interplay between form and materials — gypsum and plywood — is elevated to the level of poetry. As with the exterior cement-fiber/brick interaction, here a thin, grainy plywood membrane is “pierced,”

revealing the smooth, white gypsum interior. The intersection between the two materials at corners is particularly well handled: The plywood turns the corner, exposing its edge grain, and the gypsum finishes flush against it without any trim.

Throughout the interior, Guess used an exterior-grade plywood from Chile that has almost no pitting in the glue between the plies, making for a smooth, clean edge that stands up as a finish. In certain places, the plywood surfaces intersect with the ventilation system. Not wanting to apply standard registers to the plywood, and not really needing directional diffusers in these areas, the architect instead drilled holes directly in the material. “It speaks to the ethos of the house,” Guess says. “There’s a different way to do this, and we have everything on hand to do it: a drill and some plywood. We accomplish the function, but simplify and edit any additional sort of thing we would put up there.”

Maybe it’s not for everyone, this living on the edge of a gentrifying neighborhood next to a busy highway, but Guess embraces the location. “In my mind, I felt like I would take any leftover piece of property that 95 percent of people would think of as not desirable,” he says. And he had reasons for thinking this, other projects that inspired him: Rick and Cindy Black’s house on a thin sliver of land in north Austin; Ronnie Self’s house in Houston, perched above the freeway with its superb skyline view. The point is that good architecture can make even an ugly site an appealing place to be.

Aaron Seward is editor of *Texas Architect*.



With the only direct entry to the hike-and-bike trail, its truly Texan screened porches, its live oaks, and its six-story atrium, the New Central Library puts Austin's core values front and center.

The design and programming of these interstitial veins lucidly define a city's values today and their dreams for tomorrow.

Park Life

SIMILAR IN SIZE, GEOGRAPHY, AND CLIMATE, AUSTIN AND SAN ANTONIO MIGHT AS WELL BE SISTERS. HOWEVER, THEY TAKE NOTABLY DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING KEY URBAN RIVER-BASED PARKS. HOW IS EACH CITY BALANCING GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS AND LOCAL IDEATIONS IN THE QUEST FOR FUTURE PROSPERITY?

by Jen Weaver, AIA

Nationally, a socioeconomic reorganization is changing not only where we do business but how we live. Urban economist Enrico Moretti describes an ever-widening gap — what he calls the Great Divergence — between decaying manufacturing cities dependent on physical capital and growing “innovation cities” grounded in human capital. Moretti notes that over the past three decades, top innovation cities — Seattle, Austin, Raleigh, San Jose, Boston, and D.C. — experienced less painful recessions, faster recoveries, and consistent growth. They host the largest proportion of bachelor’s and master’s degree holders, attract wealth from outside city boundaries, and their productivity exceeds that of manufacturing cities by a factor of three. Service providers like architects, lawyers, doctors, teachers, and counselors depend on a city’s existing wealth. The average wage a high school graduate makes in innovation cities beats the average college graduate’s salary in manufacturing cities: In short, a rising tide lifts all boats. Not only is innovation leadership a critical driver of a city’s short-term prosperity; it also determines the city’s attractiveness to businesses of innovation in the future: Like attracts like. Throughout history, city developments centered on exchange. As exchange increasingly moves online, low vacancy rates and high housing prices in city centers indicate a critical demand to live and work within cities’ cores.

Urban parks weave together retail and natural features for unique experiential destinations. The design and programming of these interstitial veins lucidly define a city’s values today and their dreams for tomorrow. Strategic planning and partnerships place parks adjacent to commercial zones catering to affluent park users for targeted redevelopment. New York City’s Highline is a linear park-cum-business district: a place for shopping, people-watching, and sharing delicacies. Many retailers see their future in providing a dual community/commerce experience. Every city wants a self-policing, income-producing, tourist attraction icon. As parks and business districts merge into public-private partnerships, the next optimized vision for this typology and municipal growth becomes innovation-centric.

As central Texas continues to attract innovation companies, designing the experience of place and local identity are critical to success. How can cities inspire global-scale, innovation-focused growth while celebrating local culture, without resorting to kitsch? Austin and San Antonio provide

a useful contrast; though they are similar in size, geography, and climate, their public and private policies differ in key ways. Both cities strategically employ linear parks as business districts. With San Pedro Creek, San Antonio intends to draw tourists and locals alike through a business-lined paseo replete with history and local art. Austin’s Shoal Creek is a tech playground anchored by a few beloved historic structures.

San Pedro Creek Improvement Project, San Antonio

San Antonio promotes livability for locals and focuses on practical solutions with current players. Homegrown USAA employs approximately 18,000 people in the suburbs, and Cloud computing service Rackspace employs thousands in an abandoned mall. Both companies announced moves to downtown earlier this year. Hulu opened a call center in the suburbs — which provides great employment opportunities for the 75 percent of San Antonians who did not go to college — while their headquarters remain in Santa Monica, Calif. San Antonio does not have sophisticated angel investors, or as many college graduates as other innovation cities, but despite the lack of infrastructure for innovation, the 2016 2nd quarter report from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics says 4.9 percent of San Antonio’s salaried jobs are in computer and math occupations — double the nationwide average. Affordable housing prices, high quality of living with strong local identity, and a densifying downtown may make San Antonio a serious contender for growing companies as other cities struggle with affordable housing options.

Building on the success of its world-renowned Riverwalk, Bexar County initiated a planned expansion in partnership with the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) known as the San Pedro Creek Improvement Project, currently under construction. Part flood mitigation and part linear park as business district, the goal is to develop a tract of county- and city-owned land along a neglected creek — much of it weed-choked and fenced off from the public — transforming it into a “Highline-style” destination. A two-mile portion of the waterway is divided into four phases, each responding to the character of the creek as it flows through the downtown area. Entrances oriented toward the proposed high bank paseos, or walkways

are encouraged in existing and new buildings, as they will front the new river walk. Layouts consistent with the adjacent historic neighborhood are maintained.

Last spring, SARA hired Carrie Brown, formerly the project manager of Austin's Art in Public Places, as the full-time public art curator for the project. The creek walk will be lined with permanent art features; a series of rotating works; and audio, visual, and performing art that can be shared in a plaza amphitheater. The goal is to "engage with the local art community and to immerse visitors to the San Pedro Creek Culture Park in the culture of Bexar County through arts programming," Brown says. Individuals will have opportunities to donate pieces, which will be unveiled at the grand opening scheduled for San Antonio's 2018 tricentennial — an event featuring, we expect, a grand San Antonio river parade: San Antonio is a city that designs for celebration.

The master plan describes specific infrastructure improvements: Existing channels will be wider and deeper; 30 acres of land will be removed from the corrected floodplain through the deepening and widening of the creek channel. The plan provides for connections from existing neighborhood trails to future creek ways, linear trails, historic missions, and museums. Eight existing bridges are being replaced and six new pedestrian bridges are being constructed, along with one new railroad bridge.

The key players are the Bexar County, The City of San Antonio, San Antonio River Authority, HDR, Muñoz & Company, and Pape-Dawson Engineers. In 2013, Bexar County allocated \$125 million to the project and design work began in February 2014. In 2017, City of San Antonio voters approved \$19.5 million in bond funding toward the project. The estimated total project cost is \$175 million, and \$895 million to \$1.5 billion in economic return is expected. Eighty-one private parcels of land fall within the

master plan. SARA has contacted 31 owners for temporary and permanent acquisitions to accomplish the project.

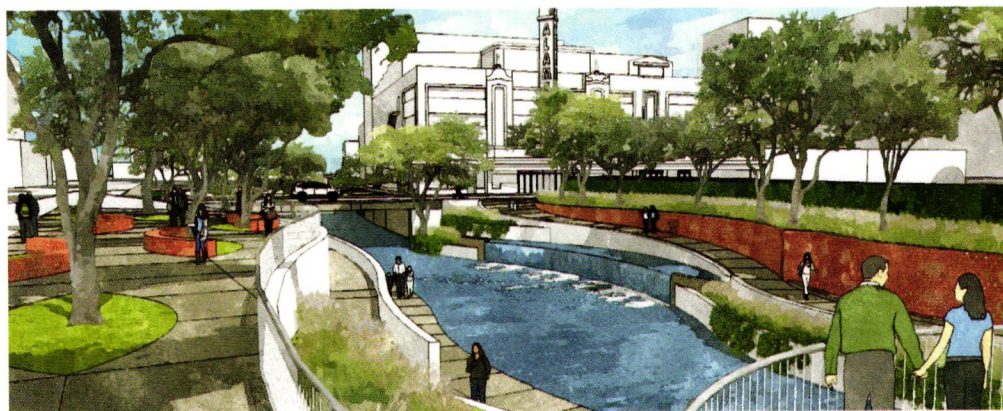
Penner's, a fine clothing retailer that has been in downtown for 100 years, expressed concerns about the impact of the project on his available customer parking. "Penner's, or any business, should not have to relocate because of the project," says Suzanne Scott, General Manager of SARA. "That would have been a failure. These local businesses are a part of the future. If the economics change and the highest and best uses cause them to want to move, that is their choice, but they should not be forced to move by the project. We altered the design to accommodate their business."

Creek improvements will be funded by the city and county, with budgetary constraints resulting in phased construction to complete the project. SARA will fund and perform operations and maintenance.

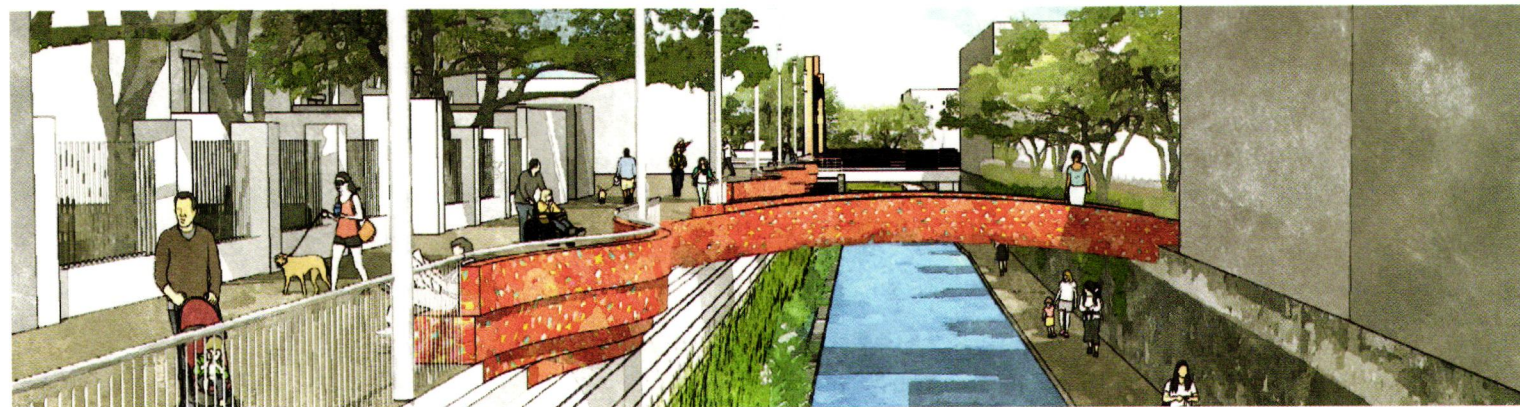
At this point, SARA is following the proven methods and best practices of the original Riverwalk and its two extensions, Mission Reach and Museum Reach. During grassroots design efforts, locals embraced the changes with few fights because they are familiar with the positive aspects of the Riverwalk. "When land does need to be purchased for right of way, the price of acquisition has sometimes turned into a bit of a debate," Scott says. Folks want to cash in on future appreciation of the developed land without the development in place — which ultimately drives up the cost of the entire project.

Shoal Creek and Seaholm Redevelopment, Austin

Austin's growth policies favor global innovation businesses. Incentive programs, established after the dot-com bust in 2003, are largely responsible for attracting them. From 2003 to 2014, Austin paid nearly \$44 million in



The creek walk will be lined with permanent art features; a series of rotating works; and audio, visual, and performing art that can be shared in an amphitheater.





incentives to 10 companies that created 4,000 local jobs and invested at least \$5.3 billion. However, some of the jobs moved, one company scaled down, and more than half of the incentives are no longer active due to lack of compliance. Most deals were for less than \$1 million, aside from Samsung's \$33 million incentive package. Samsung built a semiconductor plant in Austin — one of the largest in the U.S. — costing \$15 billion, employing 2,600 locally, and generating \$800 million a year for the Austin economy. The Samsung ripple effect may be \$1.4 billion in annual economic activity with 6,500 jobs and \$296 million in worker salaries.

Today, Google, Facebook, Apple, and HomeAway all have offices in downtown Austin. Co-working tech accelerator Capital Factory, sophisticated angel investors, and technology learning community Galvanize are all within blocks of each other. Tech Week and SXSW Interactive attract national attention, and long-standing IBM and Dell in the suburbs solidify a foundation of computer science as serious business. Nearly half of Austinites have college degrees. According to the 2016 2nd quarter report from

the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 6.4 percent of Austin's salaried jobs are in computer and math occupations, compared to a nationwide average of 2.49 percent.

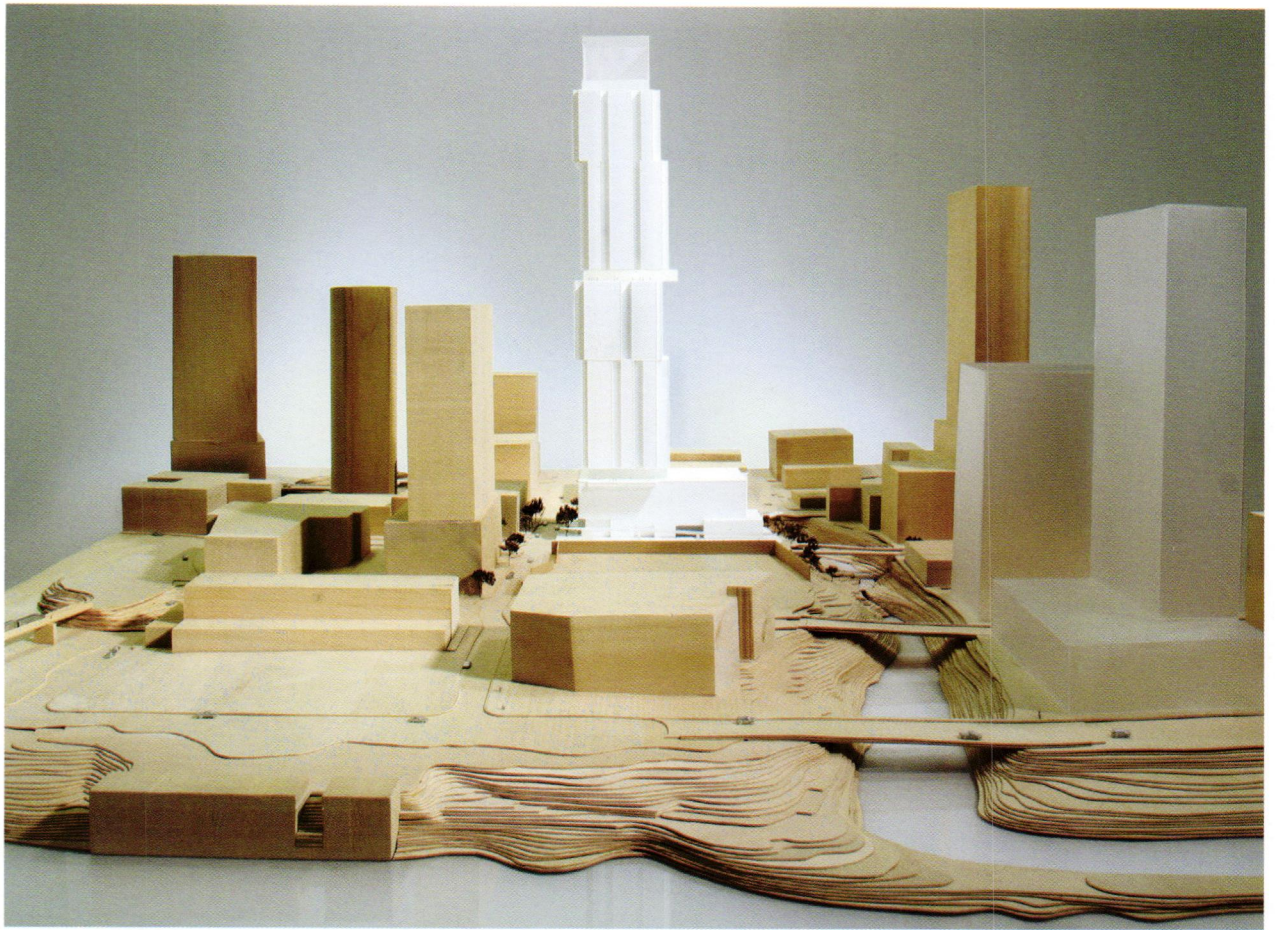
Austin is unquestionably a globally-focused tech hub, but its coolness is rooted in its spaced-out, hippie legacy captured in movies like Richard Linklater's "Slacker." The Seaholm District is the synthesis of three unique features: a new world-class library, a hike-and-bike trail, and an adaptive-reuse industrial Art Deco power plant at the center: brains, beauty, and cool wrapped in one USGBC-certified ecodistrict. The Shoal Creek Restoration Project (\$6.2 million) acts not only as a means of mitigating floodwaters, but also as a public amenity: east and west streets along the creek are lined with cafes and other destinations south of 6th Street. This linear park business district provides shaded, vehicle-free access for bikers and pedestrians alike after emerging from the trail.

The Seaholm Redevelopment project (\$130 million) initiated a sequence of city-funded developments in the past decade. Austin's original land



PHOTO BY CASEY DUNN

The Seaholm District is the synthesis of three unique features: a new world-class library, a hike-and-bike trail, and an adaptive reuse industrial Art Deco power plant. The Independent (right) will be Austin's tallest building when it is completed.



holdings for infrastructure allowed relocation of public works like the New Central Library (\$120 million). Further investment in infrastructure — the Butterfly Bridge (\$29 million), the Gap Project (\$5.4 million) connecting the creek walk, and the Seaholm Substation Art Wall designed by NADAAA (\$5.4 million) — collectively attracts private development that caters to urban luxury lifestyles that are keyed into the new tech demographic.

The City of Austin commissioned the Seaholm Power Plant in 1948, and the concrete structure has long been one of the city's most prominent landmarks. It hosted Beaux Arts Balls, concerts, and public events after being decommissioned in 1989. It was recently converted to a private corporate office. "The design features dynamic, multi-layered, open spaces, such as those in the Turbine Hall to accommodate a wide variety of activities both currently and in the future," says Jim Susman, AIA, of STG Design, the architect of the adaptive reuse project.

The New Central Library, the latest addition to the Seaholm District, is a joint venture between Lake|Flato Architects and Shepley Bulfinch. "Where previous tech startups began in garages, we hope the next generation of startups begins at the New Central Library," says Jonathan Smith, AIA, project architect at Lake|Flato. Recycled Reads' flagship bookstore will open in the library along 2nd Street. A bike valet for more than 150 bicycles is accessible from the creek, and, alongside the new Technology Petting Zoo, which showcases the latest in virtual reality, is space for more books than before. With the only direct entry to the hike-and-bike trail, its truly Texan screened porches, its live oaks, and its six-story atrium, the New Central Library puts Austin's core values front and center.

Conclusion

Whereas San Antonio creates special zoning districts to achieve cohesive walkability within specified business districts along its linear waterway parks, Austin missed that opportunity at Shoal Creek: The Independent, designed by Rhode Partners, which will be the largest residential tower west of the Mississippi River when completed, does not have a creek-front entry to access the trail. The 360 Tower, designed by Preston Partnership, which was the tallest residential building in Texas when it was completed in 2008, does not have creek access either. Further, Austin invested a substantial amount of money in a small area targeting innovation lifestyles, but does it feel like Austin? If you saw a picture, would you mistake it for Houston or Dallas? Moving forward, a greater effort to address affordability and displacement might also be considered. Inclusionary housing programs, common in states with affordability concerns, ensure a percentage of low or moderate-income units are included in all new housing projects, even luxury towers.

As we consider expanding our linear parks, how can we program, plan and stitch together economic ideals while also celebrating the vibrancy of our local pulse? More importantly, how can we bridge the gap at all scales between innovation cities and cities of decline for a united country? Failure results in warring factions in the midst of a debilitating political standoff.

Jen Weaver, AIA, is the principal of Weaver Buildings. She is currently pursuing a master of real estate development at the University of Southern California.



DURANGO DOORS



I think something ought to be put in here for posterity on the design of the CRS office building, which is now referred to as the White House. I was very busy when this all started.... Caudill and [Jack] DeBartolo figured out the right plan.... I think the results were wonderful, and when I left CRS to go to [S.I.] Morris, as much as the people, I missed the space. As an old Boy Scout, I was sort of a nature freak, and you were really sort of in communion with nature. We used to watch the bayou at lunch ... the gars frolicking in the bayou.

—James Thomas in “The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture”

In many ways, the CRS headquarters (1968) must be the most Houston building ever: Constructed like an elevated freeway of reinforced concrete, painted white, it required you to drive up a ramp and park on the roof. One visitor quipped, “Architects who’d let people drive on top of their building and drip oil couldn’t be all bad.” A simple elevator lobby from the parking deck took you one level down to the open-plan office floor, bound on all four sides by ribbon windows that looked out on the heavily wooded site and sluggish, brown Buffalo Bayou. There was no hierarchical structure to the plan. Partners, project managers, designers, and draftsmen shared one common workspace. The design embodied the democratic, collaborative nature of the office culture. If Walter Gropius initiated the idea of a non-hierarchical practice with The Architects Collaborative, CRS took the notion to its apotheosis.

The four architecture offices featured in this portfolio section are all, at least in part, heirs to this approach: Open within and connected to the outside, they show that collaborative environments remain key to the practice.

Architecture Offices

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Look-See

Dillon Kyle Architects
Aaron Seward

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Sense of Being

Alterstudio
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Office Hospitality

Michael Hsu Office of
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DSGN Design
Michael Friebele, Assoc.
AIA



Post-selfie, if one looks closer at the building, they'll see perhaps its most delightful element: the Accoya wood cladding, which is currently on its way to oxidizing to an appealing silver-gray color.

Look-See

The new office of Dillon Kyle Architects in Houston opens its grounds to the public, displays the materials library, and hangs the studio space in the tree canopy.

by Aaron Seward

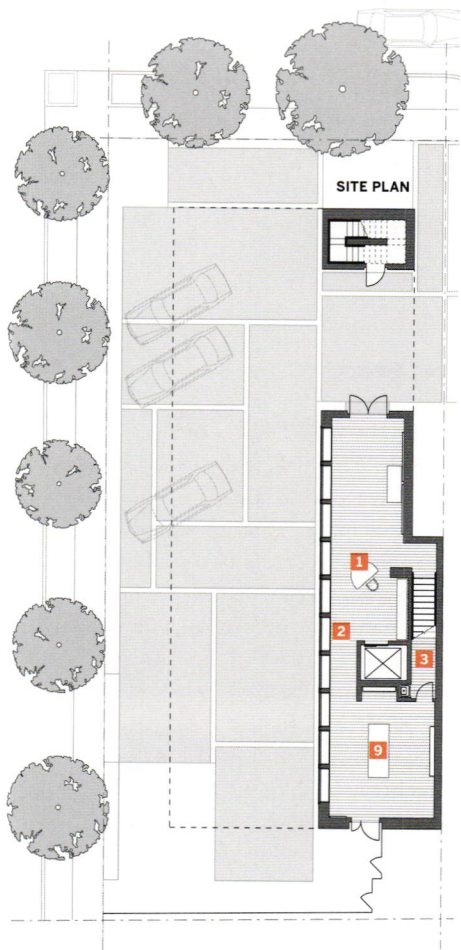
“Big room. Parking. Display element,” says Dillon Kyle, AIA, ticking the items off on his fingers. “That’s the building.”

The principal of Houston-based Dillon Kyle Architects is sitting in one of his new office’s two conference rooms. It’s on the second floor of the three-story building his firm designed for itself on the corner of West Alabama and Mulberry streets, just across from The Menil Collection. An antique Oriental rug covers the unfinished oak floorboards. The steel-truss ceiling is exposed, allowing a good look at the conduit and wiring, which were un-detailed by the architects, left to the whims of the contractors. This was intentional. Kyle wanted the interior to be raw — “not overly fancy,” in his words.

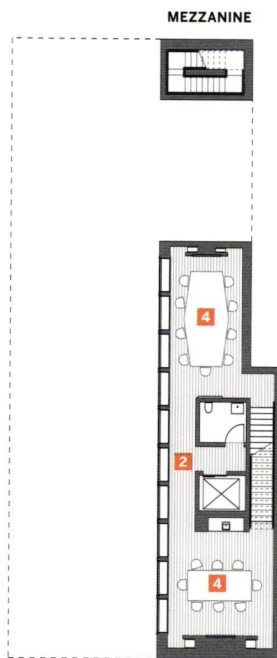
The walls are a pale green color — like a 1960s hospital, in a good way (actually soothing!) — except for one, which is glass and affords a view of the underside of the studio. That space — the “big room” — is about twice as wide as the two spaces below it. It sits up in the tree canopy and cantilevers 24 ft out above the site’s nine parking spaces and the somewhat-lively-for-Houston street corner. (Kyle has another lot nearby for his 22 employees.) Gray steel shelves supported on bright yellow pegs separate the room from the glass wall, and on these shelves is the architects’ materials library.

“It’s a walkable part of Houston,” Kyle continues. “Once the Menil completes its master plan, Mulberry will become a more prominent axis for the campus and the new Menil Drawing Institute. So this building becomes a signpost, pointing to increased public activity.”

Appreciating their prominent location, the architects were keen on the new building having a civic presence. The cantilever gives passersby a place to cut through on foot. It



SITE PLAN



MEZZANINE



SECOND FLOOR



- FLOOR PLANS**
- 1 RECEPTION
 - 2 MATERIALS LIBRARY
 - 3 CLOSET
 - 4 CONFERENCE ROOM
 - 5 PRINTING
 - 6 STUDIO
 - 7 BREAKROOM
 - 8 OFFICE
 - 9 WORKSPACE



Facing *The studio is cantilevered above the parking lot, opening up the ground plane for passersby in this increasingly pedestrian friendly part of Houston.*

Left *The cladding was CNC milled in an overlapping pattern of bur oak leaves.*

The architects' materials library fronts the glass wall in the reception area (right) and the conference room (below), telegraphing a message about the profession to the public.





Above *The studio space is open, nonhierarchical, perched up in the tree canopy.*

Right *The architects opened their site to the neighboring Sicardi Gallery.*



also links up with the neighboring Sicardi Gallery, and Kyle lets that institution use his parking spots after six in the evening. As the general public makes its way past and under this curiously looming, upside-down-L-shaped building, they get a glimpse of the materials library through the glass wall. The gesture is meant to communicate the job of the architect to people who notice the building, and people have been noticing.

“It’s become like the Biscuit paint wall in Montrose,” says Heather Kyle, AIA, DKA’s project director (no relation to Kyle himself). “People take their Instagram shots in front of it.”

Post-selfie, if one looks closer at the building, they’ll see perhaps its most delightful element: the Accoya wood cladding, which is currently on its way to oxidizing to an appealing silver-gray color. The material, unfinished in this application, is treated in a vinegar bath that makes it impenetrable to moisture and keeps it from warping in the weather. There are 144 panels, which have been CNC milled to form a shifting pattern of overlapping bur oak leaves. The effect is both abstract and referential, a great finish for a building that is both unabashedly modern (rectilinear) and curiously natural (randomized).

Aaron Seward is editor of *Texas Architect*.



The expansive western glass provides unobstructed views to and from Lavaca Street.

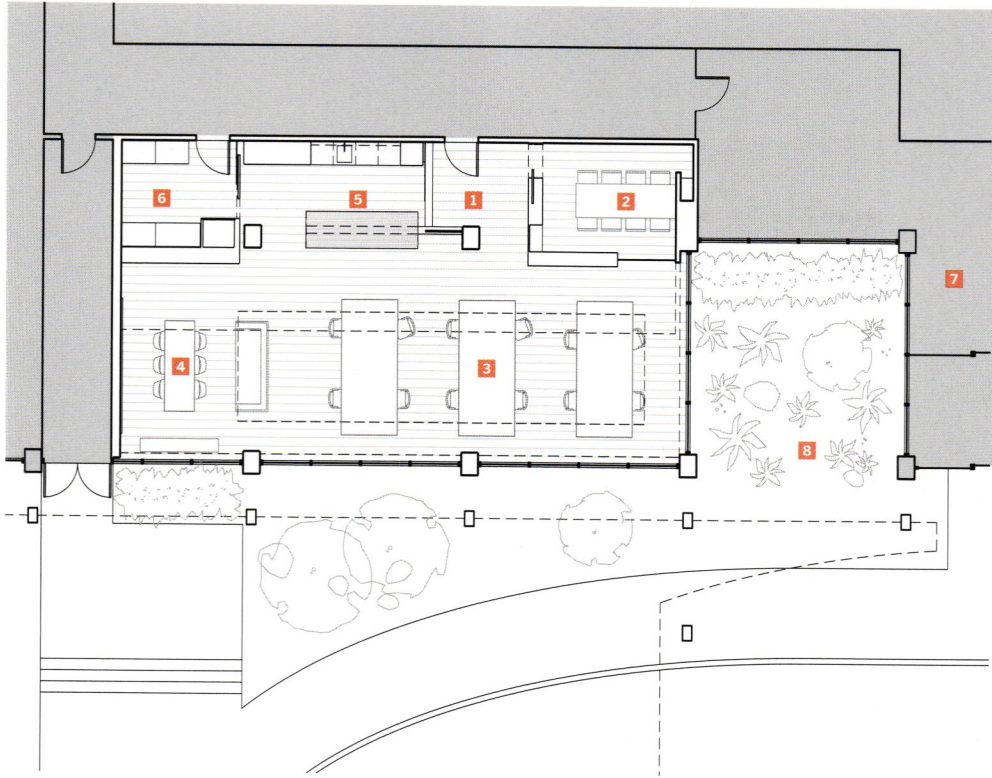
Sense of Being

Alterstudio transforms two out-of-date office spaces in Austin's Cambridge Tower into its new home. The renovation reveals the midcentury concrete structure, while creating a space of warmth and depth with a fresh material palette and careful detailing.

by Sarah Gamble, AIA

When their longtime home became unavailable, Alterstudio, an award-winning Austin-based architecture firm founded in 2005, looked to purchase a space within the urban core where they could invest long-term. Entering into the unique situation of architect as client, they set out to create a calming, collaborative environment reflective of their firm's culture and values. As founding principal and UT Austin Professor Kevin Alter, Assoc. AIA, describes, "We believe good spaces elevate our daily lives."

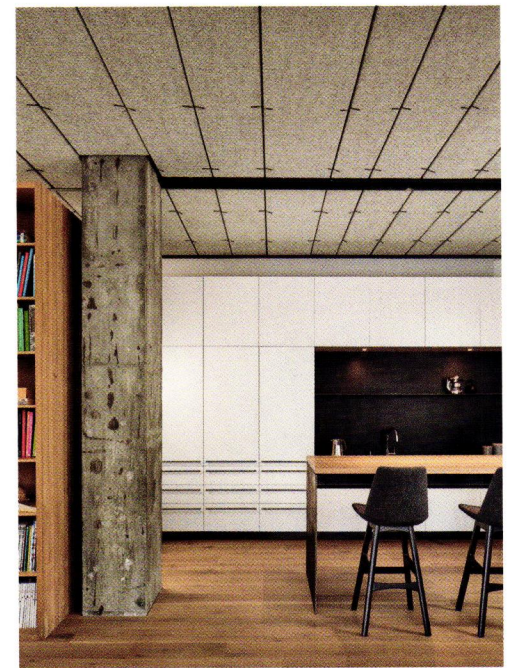
Alterstudio's three principals Ernesto Cragolino, FAIA, Tim Whitehill, and Alter were uniquely positioned to apply their design approach — "generous space-making, shrewd manipulation of daylighting, and meticulous attention to detail" — within the firm's new space. Appreciating the opportunity to push against existing conditions, Alterstudio pur-



- 
FLOOR PLAN
 1 ENTRY
 2 CONFERENCE ROOM
 3 OPEN OFFICE
 4 DISCUSSION/PIN-UP
 5 KITCHEN
 6 STORAGE
 7 BUILDING RECEPTION
 8 GARDEN

Infrastructure and service spaces are pulled to the inside edge, creating a singular open workspace.





Minimal partitions bring warmth and texture into the space, while providing privacy and masking storage.

An open meeting area fosters collaboration and impromptu conversations throughout the workday.



chased two adjacent offices totaling 1,500 sf of space within the base of Cambridge Tower, a rare-for-Austin residential and commercial condominium built in 1964 that is nestled between the State of Texas complex and UT Austin's 40 acres.

Looking past the dated interior of the previous owners, the designers recognized the beauty and potential of the structure to create an open scheme with ample natural light for their staff of 11 and visiting clients. At the start, the designers removed the applied materials and unneeded walls to reveal the rough, yet beautiful concrete shell. Taking advantage of the existing floor-to-ceiling glazing on the west and south, they pushed the service spaces and infrastructure against the interior edge to create a continuous workspace 25 ft wide with unobstructed views and high ceilings. The considered placement of open workstations with a conference table and couch area fosters collaboration and dialogue within the space.

The delicate balance of materials and carefully considered detailing creates an environment that is easy to occupy and appreciate. White oak partitions, flooring, and screens bring a warmth to the space, while contrasting

the concrete's patina with new steel elements. The multitasking yet minimal partitions with integrated pin-up surfaces, shelving, and other storage form a small copy room and conference room for privacy and masking. A Tectum panel ceiling with custom connectors remains continuous, as the partitions are pulled away from the ceiling plane to allow light to permeate throughout. A small entry space is screened from the work area and bleeds into an open kitchen — a space paramount for staff — that incorporates crisp cabinetry to hide the fridge and other necessities from view.

The result is a thoughtful composition that pays homage to the midcentury tower they inhabit while introducing a fresh material palette and careful detailing to make the space their own. "One of the nicest compliments we receive about our work is that it seems obvious, but I never would have thought of it," says Alter. Alterstudio has surely achieved this sense of being, having designed a space with great richness and depth for both the occasional visitor and daily inhabitant.

Sarah Gamble, AIA, is co-founder of GO collaborative and a lecturer at the UT Austin School of Architecture.

Office Hospitality

Michael Hsu Office of Architecture transformed a 1960s structure on Austin's Burnet Road for use as its headquarters. The airy space is clean and budget-conscious, with a few lavish moments that embody the ethos of the practice.

by Alyssa Morris

The 34-person Michael Hsu Office of Architecture sits on a busy stretch of Burnet Road, tucked away behind weathering steel and trees, camouflaged by the towering Technicolor dresser that sits atop Top Drawer Thrift. Before visiting to write this story, I had driven past it several times a week for years and never known it was there.

The firm moved to Burnet Road in 2012, after outgrowing a space that was little more than a glorified closet, windowless and grim, followed by an office above a restaurant on Guadalupe and 34th Street. At the time, Burnet was only just beginning to become the booming district it is today. When a real estate partner first approached him with the space, Hsu was skeptical about the location — a

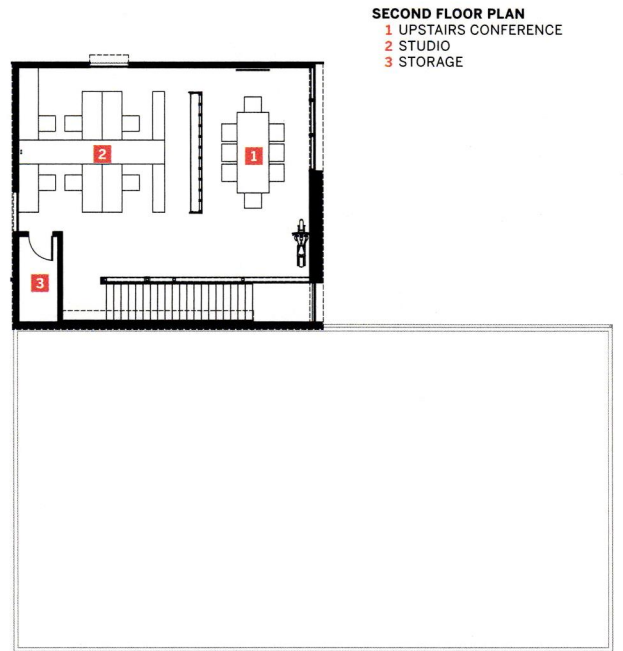
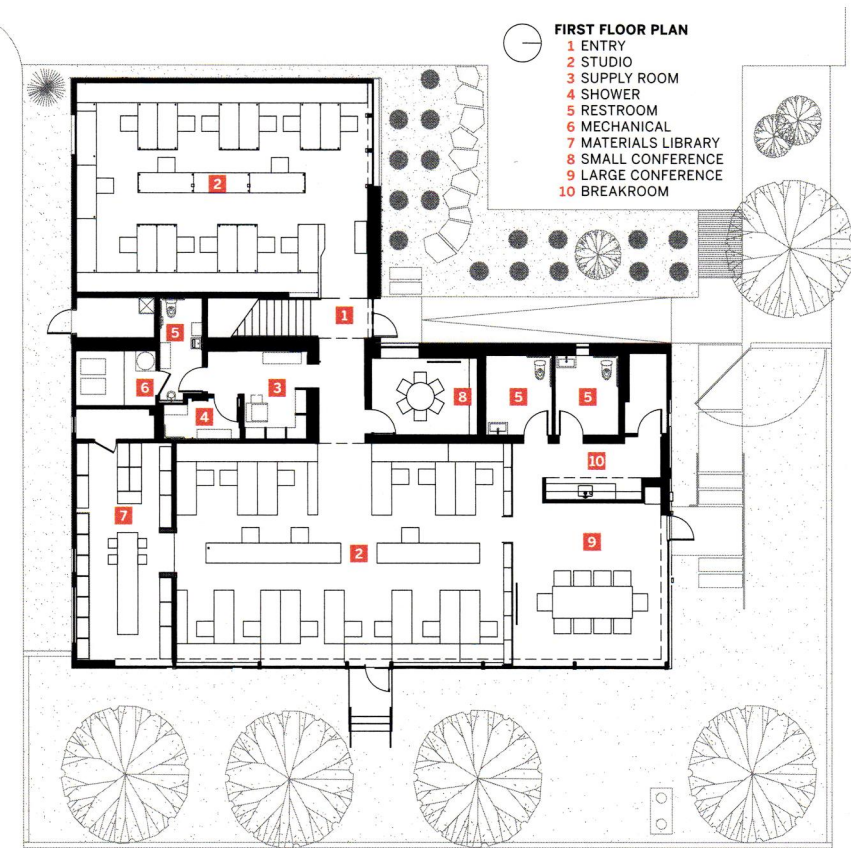
former wellness clinic. But his staff were starting to migrate away from downtown, closer to single family homes, so they took the leap. Now it feels like a natural fit. "It'd be awesome to be downtown, but once we understood costs and challenges and what we'd give up, it wasn't an option for us," he says.

The office is an adaptive reuse of a 1960s building. "There was nothing particularly special about it — it was economical and a blank slate to start working from," Hsu says. But the space has been transformed into something modern and airy. A series of trusses define the ceiling, shortened but otherwise unchanged. Windows and art dot the walls, much of it from collaborators like Big Medium or staff





Facing *The entrance is tucked away off the street, at the back of the building.*
Left *Existing trusses were exposed and painted white, giving the interior a loft-like feel.*



The upstairs conference room, where a Ducati motorcycle is on display, is one of the office's few private spaces.



No trace of the 1960s strip mall remains in the adapted building.

members. Other pops of personality, like Hsu's old Ducati motorcycle, enliven the space.

The floors are pecan and hickory, their boards different widths. The materials library, which is in the process of being digitized to make more space, features a table made of salvaged pine. All of the wood serves to warm up the crisp white walls.

The process of designing the office put the firm in an unfamiliar position — that of client. "As architects, we always debate, can we afford this? Is there a return?" Hsu says. "What non-monetary value does it add to our firm, our culture, and how we share our space with clients and collaborators?" Then, they had to take the project one step further, stretching every dollar instead of pushing to increase the budget. Off-the-shelf components and materials balance out a few big moments that serve to illustrate Hsu's

ethos. And in that way, the space was worth the investment, demonstrating to clients that the practice puts its money where its mouth is.

Much like the restaurants that Hsu is known for, the office feels stylish, with copious space to entertain as well as work. The space can be transformed to host social gatherings, like a movie night for employees' children in the parking lot, which they cover with carpet tiles.

By creating a storyboard during the design process, the team thought about the different ways the space would be used, telling stories about sharing, collaboration, and meetings with craftspeople. Five years later, the office still tells these stories, a quiet hub at the center of Austin's booming hospitality industry.

Alyssa Morris is web editor of *Texas Architect*.



The existing structure and exterior were restored, keeping the building in scale and character with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Connective Tissue

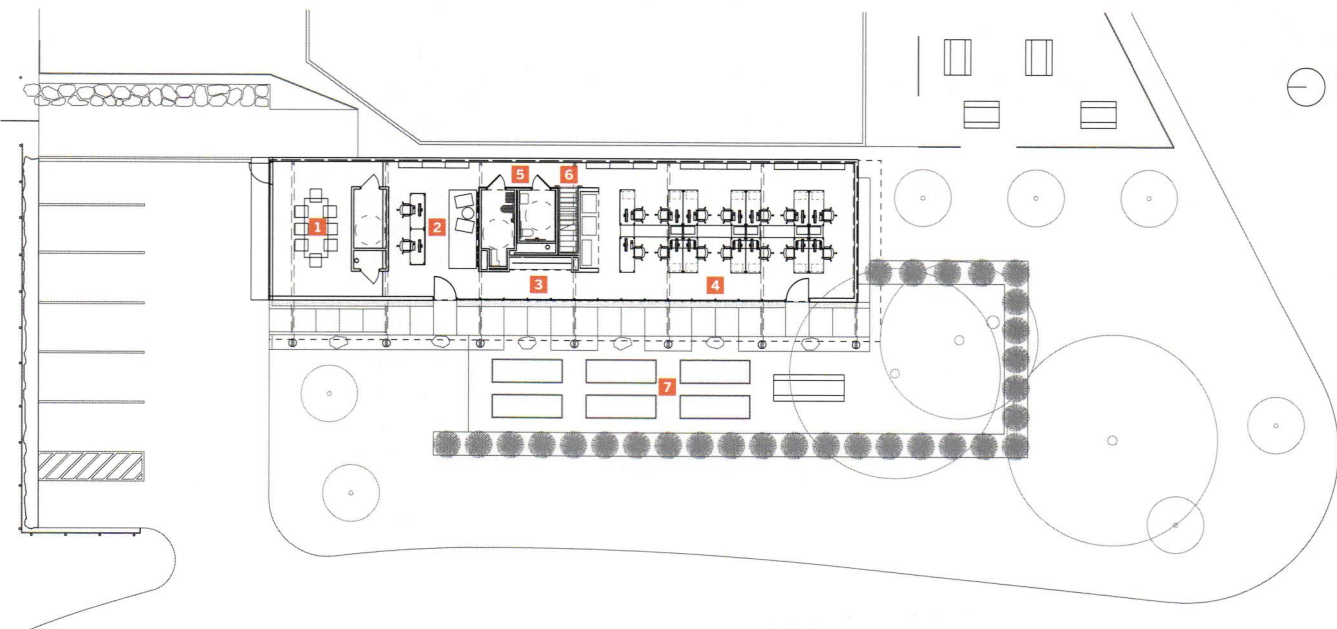
DSGN's reuse of a midcentury engineer's office glories in the building's rigid structural grid and flexible interior space. A slight alteration opened the interior to the site, which includes a vegetable garden.

by Michael Friebele, Assoc. AIA

The midcentury, characteristically systematic architecture of 115 West Greenbriar is a direct reflection of original client Darwin Renner. A prolific Dallas engineer, Renner developed the first Magnetic Anomaly Detector, a tool used to save countless vessels from being sunk by German U-Boats at the height of World War II. In the 1960s, Renner would found his own company, Geotronics. The office, a testament to precision and engineering, served as Geotronic's home until circa 2004. The space sat vacant for ten years before DSGN purchased the space in 2014.



A CMU screen wall was removed, opening the glazed interior to the garden.



- SITE PLAN**
- 1 CONFERENCE ROOM
 - 2 ENTRY/RECEPTION
 - 3 KITCHEN
 - 4 STUDIO
 - 5 HALLWAY/RESTROOM
 - 6 STAIR TO BASEMENT
 - 7 GARDEN



This page *The office is divided into three zones defined by the 16-ft structural bays.*

Facing *The exterior path acts as a connective threshold between the office and the garden.*



Dallas architects Prinz and Brooks designed 115 West Greenbriar on a 16-ft organizational grid. Attending to proportion — down to the details of the thinly articulated storefront and rigid structural system — created an open framework in which to fit a flexible program. The building's full basement, a feature rarely seen in Dallas, was rumored to have been Renner's own personal bomb shelter. An exterior CMU screen buffered the office space visually from its surrounding Kessler Park neighbors.

DSGN's renovation marked a return to the structure's roots. The interior was gutted, leaving only the shell. DSGN allowed the original grid to organize the spatial layout, allocating half the building to studio functions and reserving the other for entry, conference room, and support spaces. Color, fixtures, and industrial furnishings pay further respects to the existing exterior shell and subtly cue the company's brand identity. Removing the (dated) CMU screen highlighted refreshing views of the West Kessler neighborhood and the office garden, a change the staff celebrated by opening the doors to let in a cool cross-breeze.

"The primary reason for maintaining the integrity of the shell was rooted in our preservation ethic, which includes the reuse and recycling of whatever one can of the original building," says Robert Meckfessel, FAIA. "We also believe that preservation is viewed far too often as something limited to elaborate 'jewel box' buildings (think Old Red, Swiss Avenue, the Magnolia Building, etc.), but there is another layer in the urban fabric of overlooked buildings that were more humble when they were built, and don't necessarily catch the attention of a casual passerby. However, these buildings have real value in their own right, as the matrix that glues our city together in the spaces between the jewel boxes."

DSGN's renovation is a coming-together of architecture and preservation that successfully unlocks an existing structure's unrealized potential: The office environment becomes the connective tissue between studio and neighborhood, blurring workspace and site in a new way. It's a trait the studio is extremely proud of. The cucumbers, picked by Meckfessel from the office garden, are a testament to that.

Michael Friebele, Assoc. AIA, is a project designer at Perkins+Will Dallas.

Texas Society of Architects 2017 Honor Awards

On August 3, the Texas Society of Architects announced its 2017 Honor Award winners. These awards recognize exceptional members, firms, individuals, and organizations for outstanding achievements in support of the profession of architecture, the built environment, and quality of life in Texas. Recipients will be recognized at various events during TxA's 78th Annual Convention and Design Expo, happening on November 9–11 in Austin.



Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Honor of Llewellyn W. Pitts FAIA

Lawrence W. Speck, FAIA, Austin

Renowned design architect, esteemed academician, and legendary proponent of the power of architecture, Larry Speck has made an indelible mark on the profession and on the built environment of Texas and beyond. Speck is a senior principal at Page and a professor at The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture; he has also served as dean of the school, TxA president, and chair of the AIA Jury of Fellows. In these various roles, he has advanced the profession, worked to increase its prominence in American culture, and been as a generous mentor and an inspiration to other architects and emerging professionals — all while consistently designing thoughtful, elegant, enduring works of architecture.

Notable projects designed by Speck include the Austin Convention Center and Expansion, Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, the new Dell Medical School and master plan, and the architecture of Houston's Discovery Green and Buffalo Bayou Parks. He is also known for his iconic courses at UT, including "Architecture and Society" and "Creative Problem Solving," which have given thousands of students from across all disciplines an opportunity to develop an appreciation for the built environment and how architecture can transform lives.

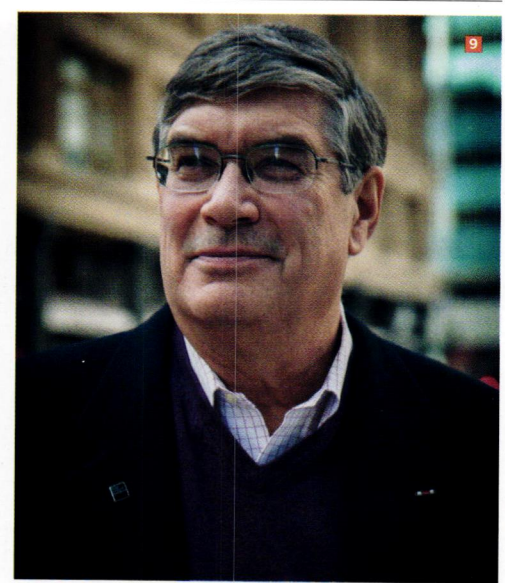
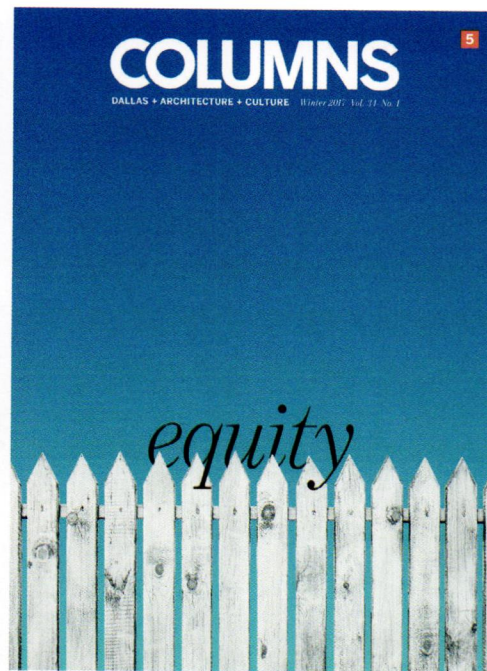
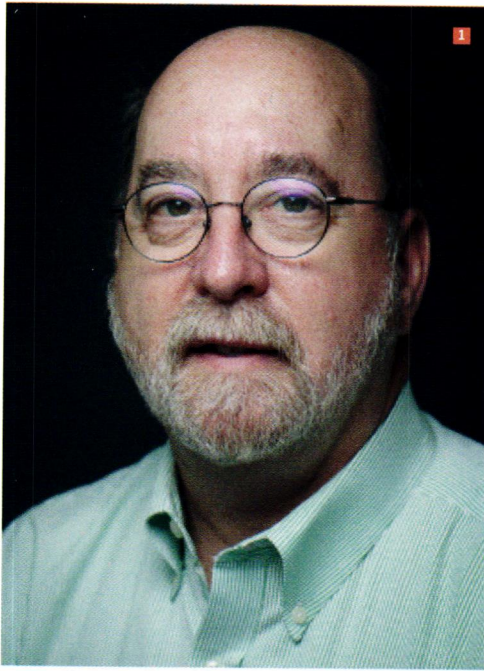


Architecture Firm Award

Corgan

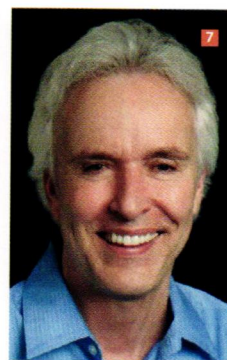
Corgan is a leading international design firm with a rich legacy of designing great buildings throughout Texas and internationally. A studio-based firm comprised of six award-winning studios — aviation, commercial, critical facilities, education, healthcare, and interiors — its designs are experienced by millions across the state every day. Corgan's reputation is one of deep technical expertise combined with great service to their clients, their people, and the community. The firm also has decades of supporting nonprofit organizations and a history of leadership and service to AIA.

Texas projects include Dallas Love Field, DFW International Airport Terminal D, Parkland Hospital, and Dallas City Performance Hall, as well as headquarters and operations centers for corporations like American Airlines, Toyota, State Farm, and Charles Schwab. Corgan is also a leader in sustainability, with a portfolio that includes the first net zero energy consuming school in Texas and the first greenfield data center awarded LEED Gold certification worldwide.



Award for Community Service in Honor of James D. Pfluger FAIA

1 Jim Susman, AIA, Principal and President, STG Design, Austin



Award for Outstanding Educational Contributions in Honor of Edward Romieniec FAIA

2 Nichole Wiedemann, AIA, Associate Professor, The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, Austin

Award for Young Professional Achievement in Honor of William W. Caudill FAIA

3 Jesse Hager, AIA, Founder/Architect, CONTENT Architecture, Houston

Associate Member of the Year

4 Jack Murphy, Assoc. AIA, Houston

Award for Excellence in the Promotion of Architecture through the Media in Honor of John G. Flowers Hon. AIA

5 Columns Magazine, A Publication of AIA Dallas

6 Luis Ayala, AIA, Design Director, Gensler Houston, Photographer

Artisan Award

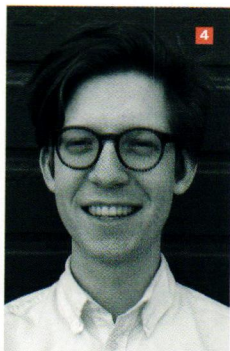
7 Don Crowell, Crowell Builders

Citation of Honor

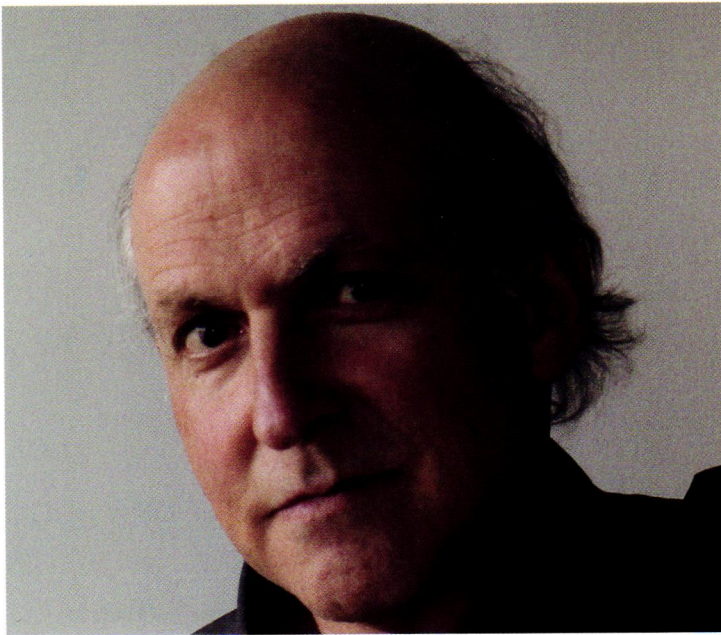
8 Dallas Arts District

Honorary Membership

9 Peter DeLisle, Hon. AIA Dallas ■



Recognition



Max Levy, FAIA, to Receive O'Neil Ford Medal

The 2017 jury for the Texas Society of Architects O'Neil Ford Medal for Design Achievement has named Max Levy, FAIA, as this year's honoree. Levy, whose most recent award-winning projects include Prospect House, a wedding and events center in Dripping Springs, House on Rainbo Lake, and the Saint Michael and All Angels Columbarium, is one of the leading residential architects in Dallas. The jury commented on the selection:

"Max Levy is an extraordinary practitioner who creates profound architecture of convincing authority from modest circumstances, most often at a domestic scale. In view of his long career proving that carefully crafted ideas, meticulously executed, can make places of distinction from humble materials, the award is both apt and appropriate.

"Working in a small studio, Levy and his collaborators make optimistic and cheerful buildings that are sensitive and exquisitely scaled to their settings. Frequently working with mundane residential sites within faceless suburbs, Levy finds ways to transcend the context and subversively turn it on its head, creating a new way to view and experience a house within a neighborhood.

"Often, his buildings project a sense of ease and simplicity that require examination and understanding to be fully appreciated. That study is rewarded by a recognition of the goodwill and wit with which Levy is working and the celebration of humanity that is palpable in all his projects."

"First among his tools is light, which he channels, shapes, and imbues with mystery. Second are the basic materials of simple construction: framing members, glass windows and panels, corrugated and standing seam metal, all used in traditional and familiar ways. Third is strong geometry and order, a sense of scale and proportion that is assured and has evolved and grown over time. Using this modest kit of parts and his own considerable brilliance, Levy has created an enviable body of built work that challenges and inspires every architect in Texas."

The O'Neil Ford medal will be presented to Levy at the 2017 Convention in Austin this November.



Austin's Melba Whatley Named TxA Cornerstone Honoree

Melba Whatley, president and founder of the Waller Creek Conservancy of Austin, has been named the Texas Society of Architects' 2017 Cornerstone Award recipient. This award recognizes outstanding contributions from leaders in our community that enhance the quality of life in Texas by elevating architecture and the arts, promoting the value of community, and preserving the natural environment.

Whatley's work in the Austin community exemplifies the goals of placemaking the Society promotes. As president of the Waller Creek Conservancy, she has undertaken the largest, most ambitious urban creek transformation in the nation: the removal of 28 acres from the 100-year flood plain in downtown Austin, which will allow for the creation of more than 37 acres of newly designed and connected urban parks and public open space. In her time as St. Edward's Facilities Committee chair, Whatley led a transformation of the campus through the construction or complete renovation of 15 buildings by notable local, national, and international architects, including Mell Lawrence Architects, Specht Harpman, Andersson-Wise, Moore Ruble Yudell, and 2016 Pritzker Prize winner Alejandro Aravena. Whatley was also instrumental in the creation of Arthouse at the Jones Center, now The Contemporary Austin.

TxA named Whatley an honorary member in 2013. In a letter of support for her nomination, John Ruble, FAIA, commented: "Melba brings a world-class sensibility to all she does for Saint Edward's, for Austin, and for the cause of progressive, sustainable architecture and planning. As architects, we could have no better friend and ally." Whatley's contributions continue to make Austin a better place to live and work.

The Cornerstone Award will be presented at TxA's 78th Annual Convention in Austin.

Moore/Andersson Compound Receives 25-Year Award

by Kevin Keim

The Moore/Andersson Compound has received the Texas Society of Architects 25-Year Award. Charles Moore, FAIA, would be touched to know that he shares this distinction with the Kimbell Museum by Louis Kahn, an architect who meant so much to him, and for whom he served as teaching assistant at Princeton. Moore would also be honored to join O'Neil Ford on this roster, as he came to Austin as the first occupant of the O'Neil Ford Centennial Chair in Architecture at The University of Texas.

Since Moore designed a new house — this would be his seventh — and started a new practice everywhere he moved, Moore asked Arthur Andersson to join him. (They had been working together on the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans.) Each one of Moore's houses was extraordinary; each one a further elaboration of a set of ideas and images that first took shape in his 650-sf Orinda House, built over the hill from Berkeley in 1962.

Moore and Andersson's compound of dwellings and studios is tightly planned but casual in feel. It is a metaphor of a village that has as much to do with Spanish courtyard precedents of 18th-century Texas as it does with middle European ranch cottages and shacks of the Hill Country.

"It amazes me," Will Bruder once said after descending through the entry gate into the courtyard, "that Charles could show up in a place like Texas and instantly know what to do, know how to capture the scale and spirit of a place."

The overall theme is how reticent, crisp shells can utterly thwart the expectations of those who step inside and discover spaces of dazzling complexity and invention. It is a place simultaneously prosaic and exotic, full of the most extraordinary layers made of the most ordinary materials.

On one side of the courtyard pool, there is Moore's house, with one encompassing space arranged along an interior, elliptical palisade, whose every surface is arrayed with colors, patterns, books, and folk art. On the pool's other side is Andersson's white house, with a library inhabiting a "cliff dwelling" and sharp, telescoping shifts in scale, from a monumental styrofoam model of Borromini's Oratorio dei Filippini down to a tiny antique doorframe. An architectural studio acts as the fulcrum for these two spaces. One roof somehow resolves all of the restless geometry within.

Paul Goldberger pointed out in *The New York Times* that there are oddly very few houses architects design for themselves that remain powerfully in the public consciousness. "The short list begins with Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and continues through Sir John Soane's 1812–13 house in London, now the Soane Museum, and on to Frank Lloyd Wright's two Taliesins, Philip Johnson's Glass House, and Frank Gehry's house in Santa Monica, Calif. — all buildings that carry an importance in the history of architecture that far outweighs their size."

Texans should be proud to have this national treasure in their midst. ■

Kevin Keim is director of the Charles Moore Foundation.



Elephant House, Austin

Contractor Faye and Walker

Consultants **STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Duffy Engineering; **LANDSCAPING:** Somos; **SURVEYOR:** Bowman Consulting; **GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER:** Holt Engineering; **FINANCING:** Horizon Bank

Resources **FIBRE CEMENT SIDING:** Cembrit (Foundry Service and Supplies); **MASONRY – HANDMADE BRICK:** MPI; **METAL ROOF:** McElroy Metal (Metal Mart); **GUTTERS:** Austin Gutter King; **CARPENTRY/TRIM WORK:** Karl Wilson Custom Trim; **FRAMING LUMBER:** Norman Building Materials; **CEDAR POSTS AND DECKING:** East Side Lumber and Decking; **WRB:** Tyvek (Norman Building Materials); **DOORS AND WINDOWS:** Lincoln Wood Products (Centex Sash and Door); **OVERHEAD DOOR:** CHI (Cowart Door); **NATURAL STONE AND QUARTZ:** Decorum; **MILLWORK (KITCHEN CABINETS):** River City Cabinets; **INTERIOR DOOR HARDWARE:** Emtek (Trinity Building Products); **APPLIANCES:** Wilson Appliance; **PLUMBING FIXTURES:** Hansgrohe (Moore Supply); **A/V:** Vox Integrations; **DINING ROOM PENDANTS:** Muuto; **SECURITY:** Cordon Security; **CAD SOFTWARE:** Autodesk

Casa de la Lomas, West Lake Hills

Consultants **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Bud Twilley; **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Dalgleish Construction Company; **STONE INSTALLER:** Clearman Masonry

Resources **(SCORED) CONCRETE:** Smith's Colored Floors; **MASONRY:** Clearman Masonry; **METAL:** Rehme Custom Iron ork, Skotz; **WOODS, PLASTICS, COMPOSITE:** Kingwood Fine Cabinetry, Artisan Hardwood Floors; **DOORS AND WINDOWS:** Caoba Doors; **GARAGE DOOR:** Cowart Door Systems; **FRAMER:** Allen Valliant; **STUCCO AND PLASTER:** Preslar Lath & Plaster; **LEADED/STAINED GLASS:** H&H Glass Design; **COUNTERTOPS:** Moe Freid Marble & Granite; **EQUIPMENT:** Alexander Marchant; **PLUMBING:** Mojica Plumbing; **HEATING, VENTILATING, AND AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC):** City Mechanical; **ELECTRICAL:** Fuc-cello-Smith Electrical; **LIGHTING:** Lantern Masters; **CUSTOM LIGHT FIXTURES:** Two Hills Studio; **ROOF TILE:** Province de France; **DOME TILE:** Quarry Tile

Dillon Kyle Architects' Office, Houston

Contractor Gallant Builders

Consultants **MEP:** Telios; **STRUCTURAL:** Insight Structures; **LEED:** Kirksey Architecture; **CIVIL:** Andrew Lonnie Sikes; **LANDSCAPE:** McDugald Steele; **MILLWORK/SIDING CNC:** S&S Constructors; **SIDING INSTALLATION:** Arista Construction

Resources **ACCOYA (SIDING):** Accsys (Mason's Mill); **ALL WINDOWS AND DOORS:** Duratherm; **WOOD FLOORS:** AR Floor Designs of Houston

Alterstudio Architecture, Austin

Contractor Risinger & Co.

Resources **METAL:** McNichols; **MILLWORK:** Austin Wood Works; **COUNTERTOPS:** AAA Countertops, Richlite; **FLOORING:** Ace Hardwood Flooring; **FINISHES:** Manton Industrial Cork Products, Armstrong Tectum Ceiling Solutions; **EQUIPMENT:** Miele, Liebherr (Harway Appliances); **FURNISHINGS:** Mark Macek Furniture Company, Herman Miller (Design Within Reach), Best Motorized Shades; **HVAC:** Air Rite By Design; **LIGHTING:** WAC, Juno

Michael Hsu Office of Architecture, Austin

Contractor Franklin Alan

Consultants **MEP:** AYS Engineering; **STRUCTURAL:** MJ Structures; **CIVIL:** UTE Consultants

Resources **CONCRETE - COUNTERTOPS:** Newbold Stone; **METAL:** drophouse; **WOOD TRUSSES:** Alpine; **MILLWORK:** drophouse, TRC Carpentry Services; **THERMAL & MOISTURE**

PROTECTION: Cosella-Dorken Products; **ROOFING:** Carlisle; **OPENINGS:** Durango Doors, Arrow Glass and Mirror; **SKYLIGHT:** Velux; **FINISHES:** Raesz Custom Floors, Cle Tile, Design and Direct Source; **EQUIPMENT:** GE appliances, LG appliances; **FURNISHINGS:** Shelton Keller; **CUSTOM FURNISHINGS:** drop-house; **PLUMBING:** Toto, Lacava, Kohler; **HEATING, VENTILATING, AND AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC):** Alpine Heating & Air Conditioning; **ELECTRICAL:** Warbach Lighting and Design, Lithonia, Bega, Allied Maker; **ELECTRONIC SAFETY AND SECURITY:** Dyezz Surveillance

The Geotronics Building/Offices of DSGN Associates, Dallas

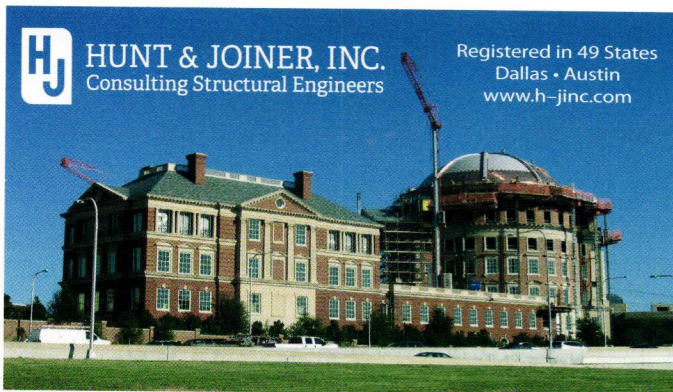
Contractor Constructive GC

Resources **OPENINGS:** Glasshouse; **TILE:** Mosa (Knoxite); **PAINT:** Conover Painting; **FURNISHINGS:** U-Line, Diamond Drapery, Maharam, Furniture Solutions Now, Wilkhahn; **PLUMBING:** Riddell Plumbing; **FIXTURES:** TKO Associates; **HEATING, VENTILATING, AND AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC):** Tempo Mechanical; **ELECTRICAL:** Prudential Lighting (TLA), Minter Electric

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World Walk by Legge Lewis Legge

The most memorable part of my childhood morning routine before grade school wasn't the bowl of cereal or the cartoons on TV; it was walking to school with my sister and my mother. My sister and I grew up in Brooklyn. The graffiti culture was big in the 1990s, and that's what we saw as we strolled along. The colors jumped out at me, and the characters the artists drew made me want to doodle in my notebook every day.

I had the same feeling when I photographed World Walk, a recent installation by Legge Lewis Legge on a pedestrian bridge that spans a freeway in San Antonio. What was once a severe, utilitarian crossing for young students is now a place of colors and education. Watching the kids run across in joy and laughter, skimming the bright tabs of steel with their hands, brought me right back to that special time in my childhood.

The sheet metal tabs are water jet cut and folded, creating an origami-like figure that snaps onto the bridge's chain-link enclosure. Each tab is CNC-etched with the names of places around the globe: Mt. Everest; Kauai, Hawaii; the Gulf of Oman; and so on.

Kids who look down find themselves walking from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, breezing past vast deserts and skipping across international boundaries. In middle school, we start to learn about the world, in class. The World Walk bridge reminds students of their geography lessons and encourages them to go home and tell their parents what they've learned. Legge Lewis Legge's installation transports these kids from the concrete slab, the chain-link fence, and the freeway — to what the wider world has to offer them, once they finish school.

Leonid Furmansky is a photographer based in Austin.

