

# The Architect's Newspaper

March/April 2023

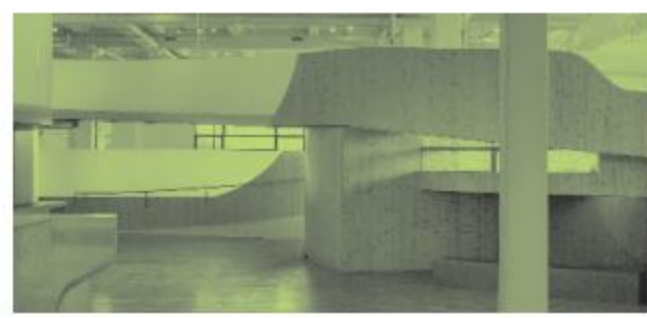
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**1100 Architect** redoes a modernist German gymnasium with a light touch [page 14](#)

**O'Neill McVoy Architects** curves CLT for Bronx Children's Museum [page 26](#)



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## Triumph of the Quiet Style

David Chipperfield is the 2023 Pritzker Prize laureate. [Read on page 11.](#)



COURTESY SIMON MENGES

## Spatializing Reproductive Justice

Abortion in the U.S. has a significant spatial component. Let's start with the obvious: Abortions, both surgical and medical, have historically happened primarily at dedicated clinics, separately from other procedures. Clinics became the primary place for abortions after *Roe v. Wade* because they didn't pose the same challenges as hospitals, which, in addition to burdensome maintenance costs and code requirements, are often religiously affiliated and can refuse to provide abortions. Additionally, and crucially, clinics can hire exclusively pro-abortion staff, making the experience more comfortable for patients and the internal working dynamics more manageable.

Despite these advantages, separating clinics from other healthcare spaces has had the long-term effect of making them targets of antiabortion [continued on page 15](#)

Three projects take on creative and recreational programs with serious results. [Read on page 34.](#)

## EXTENDED PLAY



WINDSTAR STUDIOS

## Du Bois and Art Nouveau

It has been almost five years already since Princeton Architectural Press published W. E. B. Du Bois's 1900 Paris Exposition data portraits as a visually riveting paperback. After public release in digitized form by the Library of Congress and in various printed color formats in a number of magazines, it would seem that the data portraits had been given their due. Graphic designers oohed and aahed over the cutting-edge modernity of the data portraits and their prescience in terms of data visualization. Important social science labs even commissioned Du Bois-styled presentations of 21st-century data.

*Deconstructing Power: W. E. B. Du Bois at the 1900 World's Fair*, currently on view at Cooper Hewitt, invites us to consider the data portraits in the material context of the 1900 world's fair in Paris. This exhibit highlights the role of the data portraits, even though they formed only a part of *The Exhibit of American Negroes* in Paris. The full *American Negroes* exhibit was a collaboration of [continued on page 65](#)

## A Printed-Porcelain Memorial

David Hotson Architect realizes an intricate facade for St. Sarkis Armenian Orthodox Church in Carrollton, Texas. [Read on page 20.](#)



DROR BALDINGER, FAIA

## Feud at Kogen-Miller Studios

Edgar Miller's Kogen-Miller Studios is one of Chicago's most idiosyncratic and astonishing architectural sites. Lately, though, it has been ensnared in a disagreement that has shut down public access and programming, as one set of owners of the condo complex in the Near North Side Old Town neighborhood are pushing for landmarking as a way to protect its historic integrity.

Founded in 1914, Edgar Miller Legacy (EML) for years hosted tours, residency programs for artists, and other public programming at the Kogen-Miller Studios, one of the best works of Chicago artist and architect Edgar Miller. Designed and built by a rotating cast of early-20th-century bohemian designers, artist, and craftspeople, the Kogen-Miller Studios showcase Miller's virtuosity across nearly every design medium: stained glass, painting, sculpture, architecture, interior design, and more. The *mélange* is indicative of a richly representational and often overlooked countercurrent to the dictates of the [continued on page 16](#)

AN FOCUS

## Wellness

Healthcare plus self-care. [Read on page 45.](#)



COREY GAFFER

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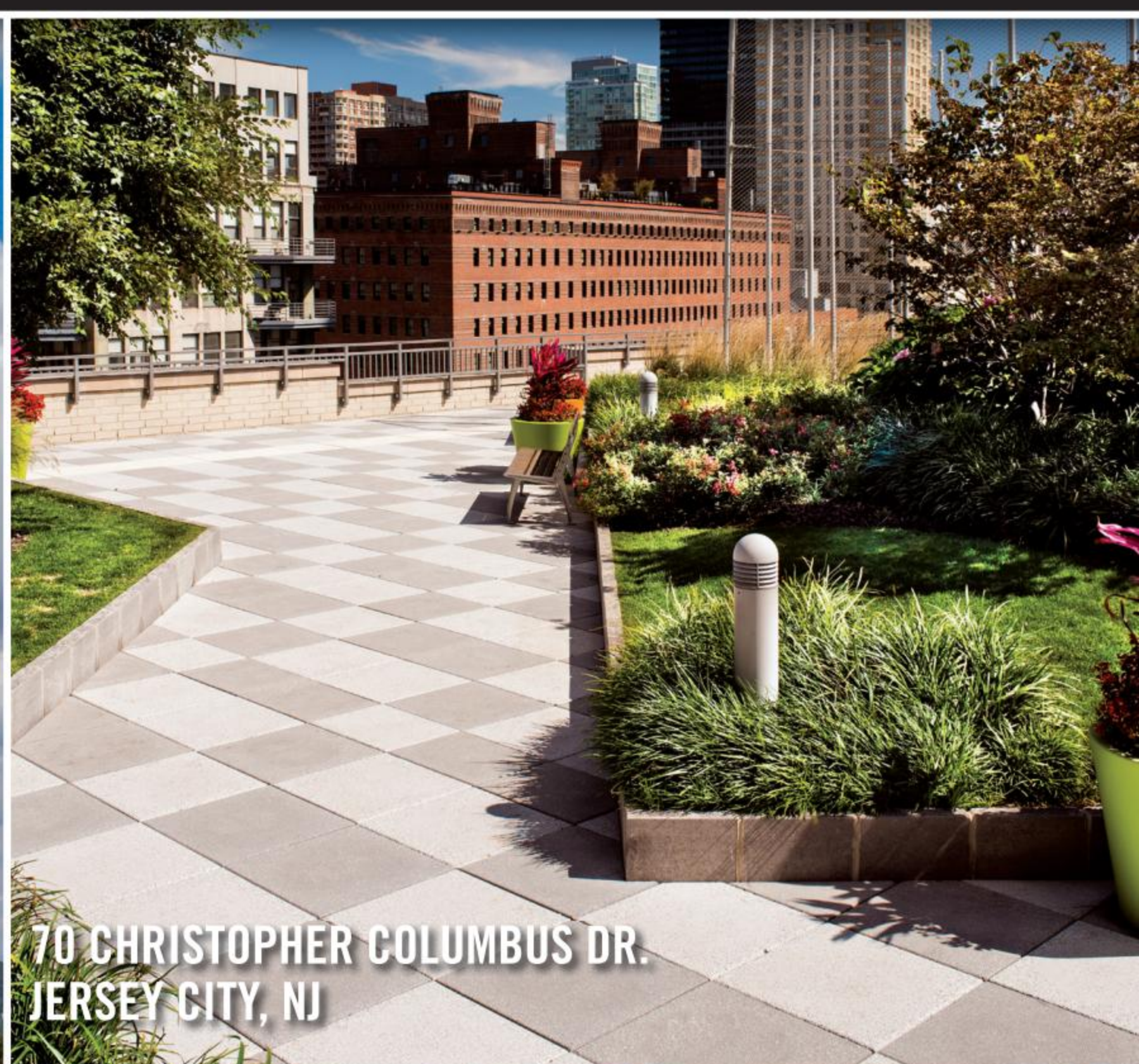


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# Wall Talk



*A few trailers, a church, an abandoned school—All that's left of this freed-slave community.*

—Matthew Graham, “Lyles Station, Indiana”

I was in Columbus, Indiana, at the end of February to see the public presentations hosted by Exhibit Columbus (p. 12) when I remembered that for a time when I was a child, I became convinced that my house was trying to talk to me. It wasn't just my house; it was all houses, all buildings. I never understood what exactly they were trying to say, but they all spoke in a muffled voice that rambled on, just barely audible behind the hum and hiss of the air conditioning. I mentioned it to my parents at dinner one night when we had company, and they took it seriously enough to speculate about what the house might be saying. They were hippies. Later, my dad's friend Paul pulled me aside and told me that it probably wasn't the house talking. It was a ghost, or ghosts.

This memory came back to me in Columbus for a few reasons. The first was that if buildings could talk, Columbus would be a good place to go for a group conversation. The sheer quantity of monuments designed by some of the greatest 20th-century architects is astonishing. More remarkable is that they're almost all public and institutional buildings: churches, schools, fire stations, the post office, the Cummins HQ, the newspaper building, etc. One local resident compared Columbus to Palm Springs, except in reverse: In Palm Springs the architectural sites are all private houses, while in Columbus it's for everyone. Of course, J. Irwin Miller, the Cummins director who commissioned most of this work, had a nice house in town designed by Eliel Saarinen. It's one of the nicest modernist residential renditions of an ancient Greek temple that I've ever seen, aided in no small part by Alexander Girard's interior decor. It's now a museum, though, so it landed as public after all.

The second reason was because of Deborah Garcia's presentation. A University Design Research Fellow chosen to create an installation for this cycle of Exhibit Columbus, Garcia is a Belluschi Fellow at MIT in whose work, as she says, “the tools of architecture are put to the task of creating interfaces for listening and, sometimes, speaking.” Her project for Columbus, titled *Recorder*, is a collection of mysterious, murmuring black towers that will stand in the

sunken courtyard of the I. M. Pei-designed public library. What will they say? Garcia was still trying to puzzle this out herself, but she had some inkling: The selections will vary “from the intimate sounds of our own voices to the haunting echoes of modernism to the grinding of tectonic plates.”

That sounded right to me, as though Garcia were tuning in to the same building-talk I'd heard as a child. Something else stood out to me about her installation. Most of the invited designers' projects attempted to make architecture and the urban landscape more accessible, turning something object-oriented and hard into lounge or play space with brightly colored furniture or playground equipment. I see this as a larger current in contemporary architecture, which I call “tenderizing modernism.” (For a good example, read about the recent renovation of Boston City Hall Plaza on p. 17.) Garcia's project, however, sails against this current. It takes a high-modernist sunken courtyard and makes it more mysterious and harder to understand, but, as such, all the more alluring.

The third reason was the result of even more mysterious building-talk in Columbus. After the presentations, we toured the dilapidated Crump Theatre, which is undergoing a slow and steady restoration. Originally constructed in 1889, it was renovated many times over the years, most recently in 1941. In peeling back the layers, the volunteer restoration team has uncovered quite a bit of history, not all of it so tender, including a stash of old movie promotional material mostly from slasher and porno flicks. The theater is also notoriously haunted. Many of the restorers have heard old music playing from uncertain quarters of the building, or boot-shod feet clomping across the stage or balcony. The legend of the haunting is promising enough that it has attracted paranormal activity researchers who trekked here to film their investigation of the space. In their night at the Crump they didn't encounter much activity until they entered the segregated room, up a flight of stairs above the balcony. This is where Black people used to have to sit in the days before the civil rights movement, separated from the whites who occupied the choice seats below. In this room, the researchers' spirit box recorded voices, those of a child and an older man. They were not friendly but also not menacing. They had a clear message for this curious gang of ghost hunters: “Go home.” **Aaron Seward**

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## Corrections

The photo of the Hiss Studio that appeared on page 11 of the January/February 2023 issue was taken by Greg Wilson.



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# 6 Eavesdrop

## A Public Debate

An open letter about planning for a U.S. embassy in Jerusalem sparks a useful exchange about architecture's ethical responsibilities.

On March 1, an open letter was published that calls on Chicago-based architecture firm Krueck Sexton Partners (KSP) to disengage from the effort to build a new U.S. embassy in Jerusalem.

The letter responds to the proposed plan from former president Donald Trump to build the structure in occupied Jerusalem, potentially on a site referred to as the "Allenby Barracks"—property that was "illegally confiscated from its original Palestinian owners." (Allenby Barracks was used by the British army in the early 20th century, and its name refers to the British general Edmund Allenby.) Since taking office, President Biden has not called off the contentious plan.

The letter denounces the proposed embassy location as a violation of international law, argues that it goes against the obligations of several signed diplomatic conventions, and even claims that the effort violates the "statement of our values" put forth by the AIA.

If the desired site is selected, the U.S. embassy and the Israel Land Authority would situate the new embassy building on a 7.7-acre plot in Jerusalem. Since 1989, the United States has leased this land from Israel for an annual rate of \$1. The lease has a 99-year term and is renewable.

This land was obtained by Israel under the Absentees' Property Law-1950, a piece of legislation concerning property once owned by Palestinians who were forced to flee following conflict in 1948. The current open letter denounces the law as "discriminatory," a sentiment echoing that of an objection the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights sent to The Jerusalem Local District Planning and Building Committee, U.S. ambassador to Israel Thomas R. Nides, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken earlier this year.

At press time, over 400 individuals, mostly architects and academics from around the globe, had signed the letter in support of the initiative. Notable signatories include **Nader Tehrani**, NADAAA; **Emanuel Admassu**, AD-WO; **Tei Carpenter**, Agency-Agency; **Tiziana Baldenebro**, SPACES and cocurator of the American Pavilion at the upcoming Venice Architecture Biennale; **Sumayya Vally**, Counterspace Studio; **Jaffer Kolb**, New Affiliates; **Ivi Diamantopoulou**, New Affiliates; **Keller Easterling**, Yale School of Architecture; **David Gissen**; **Cruz Garcia** and **Nathalie Frankowski**, WAI Architecture Think Tank; **Eva Franchi Gilibert**; **Anne Holtrop**, Studio Anne Holtrop; **Charlotte Malterre-Barthes**, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne; **Felicity Scott**, Columbia University; **Eyal Weizman**, Forensic Architecture; **Michael Young**, The Cooper Union; and Wolff Architects.

AN reached out to both KSP and the open-letter writers for more information.

Via a written statement, KSP commented that the letter and AN's coverage were "inaccurately reported" and stated that it "has not been selected to design a new U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem." Both the letter and AN's prior article described KSP's role as one of participation and planning, not design.

KSP clarified that it is "working to support overall planning and decision-making for the U.S. diplomatic presence that includes opportunities for an expanded office and programmatic operations. This planning effort includes multiple sites."

KSP confirmed that these locations include the Allenby Barracks site.

The open letter was written by "architecture practitioners, academics, and writers concerned about the ethical implications" of this activity, the authors told AN. They declined to provide the number of contributors or their identities.

"Once architects agree to participate in the design and implementation of this plan on illegally confiscated land, they become not only complicit but active participants in the systematic dispossession of Palestinians in Jerusalem," the writers stated.

They continue: "There is an assumption that only those involved in direct policy-making can weigh in on the situation in Palestine-Israel, but those who determine policy rely on support from architects, planners, and others to operationalize policy. By questioning why we target architects, we are supposing that architects are engaged in a neutral or apolitical endeavor which is, of course, untrue."

KSP stated that "informed architectural practice requires research, diligence, and exploration, precisely the work the U.S. Department of State has requested of KSP." Contractual agreements between KSP and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations were updated as recently as December 1, 2022, with a description of "Additional Project Development Services for Jerusalem NEC Phase 3," according to public government records. KSP has a ten-year engagement with the State Department and has teamed with the agency on over 20 projects worldwide.

KSP has "engaged in public work since [its] founding over 32 years ago," the company's response declared. "Public work is inherently complicated and KSP respects the opinions and perspectives of our community of professional peers and colleagues. We, above all, welcome and encourage public dialogue and debate about our work—especially related to projects that represent this country and, in particular, the planning efforts underway for the U.S. diplomatic presence in Jerusalem." KSP is aware of the situation's contentious predicament: "We acknowledge the challenging nature of our assignment but refute references to missteps in our ethical approach to work."

The open-letter writers stated that "there is no ethical way to simultaneously know that land is illegally and discriminatorily appropriated and work to entrench that appropriation through architectural design and construction. The ethical approach is to pull out of the project and refuse to participate in the ongoing systematic dispossession of Palestinians in Jerusalem."

They also shared that their "hope—and the demand of the Palestinian property owners—is that the U.S. State Department does not proceed with the plan. But if it does, KSP should not be a part of it. We believe that KSP can and should take an ethical stance by refraining from participating in this plan, not least since it presents itself as a firm aware of the ethical imperatives in architecture, ostensibly championing 'social innovation, equity, and dignity for all.'"

KSP's letter, which is reproduced in full on AN's website, closed with the following sentences: "We support the U.S. Department of State's mission and believe in their due process. We will continue to support them as they work to find solutions to a historic challenge."

# Open

## B-Side Beaut

50 Norman, designed by Schemata Architects to showcase three Japanese brands, opens in Greenpoint.



**50 Norman**  
50 Norman Street  
Brooklyn, New York  
50norman.com

When Dashi Okume opened in Tokyo's Tsukiji Fish Market in 1871, across the planet the New York neighborhood of Greenpoint was experiencing an industrial boom. The next year, Eberhard Faber would move his pencil-making factory there after a fire in his Manhattan facility, and by 1875 the area was home to 50 oil refineries. Today, the area, served by the crosstown G subway and a ferry stop, is a hipster haven, so the locally preferred petroleum product is not gasoline but vinyl records.

Just west of the main drag of Manhattan Avenue, a block where the building stock flips from three-story apartment stacks to commercial sheds is the perfect spot for 50 Norman, an outpost that hosts the New York debut of three businesses offering high-end Japanese home goods, culinary items, and cuisine: Cibone, Dashi Okume, and House Brooklyn, respectively.

You wouldn't know it from the street, as the 3,500-square-foot building, formerly an auto repair shop, is discreet. It's marked by a new coat of paint, a steel window and door system that replaces the roll-up doors, and a linear tube light set above graphics carved into the layered finishes of the facade.

Inside, the space is airy and relaxed; its mini mall-like setup is defined by the furniture of each vendor. The ducting and linear lighting overhead are kept minimal, and the store names are inscribed in the walls, part of the

graphics designed by Rikako Nagashima of village®. Dashi Okume's broth emporium is up front, with an array of ingredients set within a kiosk. (Customers can make their own ratios for the stock mixes, following recommendations from the staff.) Behind, House Brooklyn, an eight-seat Japanese French restaurant, offers a nine-course omakase tasting menu. Cibone's display tables fill the rest of the floor, showcasing lifestyle and artisanal goods like kettles, mugs, towels, tatami mats, and more.

The design is by Jo Nagasaka, who leads the Tokyo-based Schemata Architects. 50 Norman is one of the company's first built works in the U.S. (It also recently completed a ski chalet in Utah.) Schemata's specialty is retail interiors, and the work—diligently chronicled on its website—is inventive, casual, and pleasantly junky. The furniture here was made from wood salvaged from a house in Kyoto by TANK, a skilled set of Japanese fabricators who often collaborate with Schemata. They parachuted into Brooklyn and worked with BLANK, a local team that specializes in Japanese interiors.

Nagasaka's loose-fit approach for Schemata was explored in his 2016 book *When B-Side Becomes A-Side*, which showcased early projects like Sayama Flat (2008). The method values the unfinished, unpolished, and overlooked, and it slaps, even overseas: 50 Norman is a sleeper hit. **Jack Murphy**

# 7 Open

## The Grand Tour

Magic Architecture converts a historic home into a beer hall for the Stay Put Brewery.



**Stay Put Brewery**  
73 Rainey Street  
Austin  
stayputbrewery.com

Austin's Rainey Street Historic District was created in 1985 to safeguard a crop of run-down bungalows along Lady Bird Lake. The protection's ability to stave off development was kneecapped when the area was rezoned as part of the city's Central Business District in 2004, opening it to a wider array of uses. The cocktail bars pounced, and—writing from lived experience—by the early 2010s, it was a hotbed of conviviality.

For most of the decade, one shack was the first brick-and-mortar home of G'Raj Mahal, but the restaurant closed in 2021, leaving behind a site shorn of protected trees and with several questionable patios. A city staffer told architect Scott Magic of Magic Architecture, who renovated the building to become the Stay Put Brewery, that "this property [was] site plan exempted out," resulting in an 18-month review process for just 900 square feet of new construction.

The handsome result will, true to its name, hopefully stick around for a while. The project has three parts: a beer hall in the historic 1923 house, a linear brewery box along one side of the backyard, and a restroom building that takes the place of a carriage house.

The exterior of the existing structure was restored, with the original window openings, trim profiles, columns, and roofline reconstructed from historic imagery. A teardrop profile milled from western red cedar was

specified; left unfinished, it will silver in time.

The house's interior was cleaned out and reset with a long wood bar divided into framed panels and edged in an expressive scroll profile. Plaster walls cozy up the room, which is capped by a dark ceiling. Seating options include grabbing a picnic table or belling up to the bar. A new steel window system opens to the patio, where similar furniture is scattered across the back deck and mulched front and side yards. In the Cor-ten-clad brewery, seven beers are fermented for on-site consumption. Two operable windows let guests watch the brewers do their thing.

Magic Architecture's design takes cues from the great watering holes of the Hill Country: There is a rusty rocking lounge on the porch and, inside, pools of warm pendant lights under which one can drown in cold beer. But it's also a remnant of time gone by. 70 Rainey, a 34-story condo designed by Page, is across the street, and luxury apartments and hotels are rising nearby. More are to come: The Stay Put is surrounded by four construction cranes. It's evidence of a booming Austin recently (and unevenly) chronicled by Lawrence Wright in *The New Yorker*. If the city's Elon-pilled transformation proves overwhelming, the Stay Put seems a comfortable-enough respite. One can only hope it as George Jones on the jukebox. **JM**

# Open

## Hearth Life

Lovers Unite shapes an approachable interior to support the cuisine of a fire-powered restaurant.



**Dunsmoor**  
3501 Eagle Rock Boulevard  
Los Angeles  
323-686-6027  
dunsmoor.la

Eagle Rock Boulevard climbs up from the Los Angeles River between two rippling hills and bends next to the Glendale Freeway before terminating in its eponymous neighborhood. In Glassell Park, one encounters the typical diverse stock of roadside America: car lots, strip malls, thrift stores, lines of condos, self-storage facilities, and churches of every denomination, here under the watchful eye of palm-tree sentinels.

Along the way, one passes an eclectic vision, a restored 1929 Spanish Revival building that used to house a branch bank and, later, studios for artists. Its rounded corner is accented by an ornate entryway guarded by four spiraled, Solomonic columns; above the scrollwork, each is topped by a pineapple finial. Beyond, the mottled plaster exterior is capped by a roof surfaced in terra-cotta tiles.

The scene is an ideal place for chef Brian Dunsmoor to make his mark on Los Angeles's culinary landscape with his eponymous restaurant. Dunsmoor (the person) is schooled in the cooking of early America and built his expertise from collections of historic cookbooks, family recipes, and extensive personal writing about techniques like hand-milling grains, cooking over open flames, and pickling, among others. Previously he was the founding chef for Hatchet Hall in Culver City, an establishment that focuses on wood-fire cookery.

Dunsmoor (the restaurant) was designed by

Lovers Unite, an L.A.-based practice led by Karen Spector and Alan Koch. Its design prominently features the life of the kitchen, with an open hearth on view to guests who might feel as if they're at a big family gathering or Sunday supper. Lovers Unite told *AN* the overall feeling is "gracious and hardworking."

True to claim, the interior is warm, approachable, and textured. A background wall of new plaster and existing exposed brick is fronted by custom millwork and tables designed by Lovers Unite (and fabricated by Dusk, a local woodworking outfit). These pieces mingle with antique pieces like salvaged church chairs. Other touches establish a familiar, lived-in feeling, from custom light fixtures to paintings from the 1930s and '40s. A separate wine bar, finished with a walnut counter, redwood shelves, and rust-colored walls, offers a secluded second space.

The designers wanted to give the chef a "space that reflected his values of authenticity and community and also his passion." Like Dunsmoor's approach to cooking, Lovers Unite engaged with "the character of the historic building in an interpretative way." Spector and Koch likened this effort to their wider approach: They work "collaboratively with the client to unearth the personality of the project and marry materials to space and light," which, in the end, "creates something at once familiar and new." **JM**

# 8 News

## The Middle Way

An SOM-designed American Buddhist Cultural Society Temple is under construction in San Francisco.



COURTESY SOM

Construction is underway on a new building for the American Buddhist Cultural Society (ABCS) in San Francisco. Located midblock on Van Ness Avenue between Sacramento and Clay Streets and slotted between an apartment building and St. Luke's Episcopal Church, the new facility will provide an expanded presence for an institution that has been serving the San Francisco Buddhist community for more than 30 years.

Designed by the San Francisco office of SOM, the 41,000-square-foot, 6-story temple will include a community education center, a Buddhist shrine and meditation center on the upper levels, and three levels of private dormitories for visiting monastics and volunteers. At the heart of the project, a light-filled atrium will daylight an art gallery, a bookstore, and a teahouse, all of which will be open to the public.

According to the architects, the design process was inclusive and included input from the temple's community and city leaders as well as the project's neighbors. In a statement, venerable master Hui Zhi of the ABCS said that with this building he "hopes to teach the dharma through architecture. We need to go beyond words to transcendence."

During the groundbreaking in January, Craig Hartman, SOM's consulting design partner on the project, said: "Our aspiration is beauty. A beauty that follows the teaching of Buddha in its underlying modesty, its respect for its neighbors, and its welcome for all. The architecture's in-

ternal spaces will offer a quiet, contemplative respite—a step removed from our phones, screens, and hectic urban environment. These spaces will bring the outside in, through intimate gardens and landscaped courts. Nature and humanism will be united through the use of modest natural materials, tactility, and the poetics of light."

The design aims to be a good neighbor, as it maintains access to ventilation, daylight, and views within adjacent structures. The contemplative courtyard at the center of the building keeps the middle of the site clear, minimizing shadows on the stained-glass windows of St. Luke's and preserving the views of the north-facing apartments.

With the architecture, SOM endeavored to echo historical Buddhist elements in contemporary ways. The roofline features the wide, ridged eaves of a traditional temple roof, the entryway reinterprets the symbolic three-gate entrance, and the facade is clad in panels that mimic the vertical form of bamboo shafts. Shade screens on the western face resemble the rectangular patchwork of Buddhist *jiasha* robes, and their patterning resembles the tapered stacks of a pagoda. Meanwhile, in the shrine room, a large Buddha statue, illuminated by side windows and bamboo-formed concrete washed in daylight by high clerestories, seeks to create a deeply contemplative ambience.

SOM anticipates the temple will open in fall 2024. **AS**

# News

## In the Works

LEVER, FPBA, and James Corner Field Operations design first phase of SDSU innovation district for LPC West.



COURTESY LEVER

At San Diego State University (SDSU) a new innovation district will make way for laboratory and incubator spaces where students and faculty can study alongside and collaborate with businesses working on groundbreaking research projects. The innovation district is part of a larger scheme at the university, dubbed Mission Valley, that will add 80 acres of park space and up to 4,600 market-rate and affordable housing units in addition to a stadium, retail, and a hotel. Its construction will allow SDSU to "expand its academic and economic impact on the region." According to the university, it will serve as "a national hub for biotech, life sciences, technology, defense, and hospitality and tourism."

Earlier this month SDSU announced that the first phase of the forthcoming innovation district, a component of the larger Mission Valley scheme, will be developed by LPC West. Working alongside LPC West to realize the project are Swinerton in the role of general contractor, LEVER as the lead design architects with Ferguson Pape Baldwin Architects (FPBA) as associate architects, and James Corner Field Operations as the landscape architect.

This construction and design team will develop over 300,000 square feet of space for research, laboratory, and office use that will be realized as individual hubs with particular focus areas. When completed, the innovation district will house 1.6 million square feet of laboratory and research space.

"This is momentous for SDSU. The innovation district is the very heart of the Mission Valley project. It is the vital step in reaching our educational, research, and economic goals as a university, which is critically linked to the workforce needs of the region," said SDSU president Adela de la Torre in a statement. "Everything about the innovation district is about enhancing research activity and providing leading-edge educational experiences for our students so that we can accelerate the future economic growth of San Diego. For the first time since we moved to the Mesa, it will also give our campus the sheer space to grow. Every aspect of this project is de-

signed to support itself financially, and to strengthen our collaboration with the private sector so that we can turbocharge our contribution to the region's economy."

Included in these new spaces are laboratories and offices that can accommodate a range of programmatic needs, among them co-working incubator labs, midsize office suites, and space for larger anchor tenants. A number of health- and technology-oriented businesses have already signed on to set up operations in the innovation district, including QuidelOrtho, Naval Health Research, and Family Health Centers.

Mission Valley's innovation district is envisioned as a campus connected by landscaped pathways and sprawling grassy lawns to plazas with public art pieces interspersed throughout. Two parking structures on the site will support individuals working at or visiting the campus while also allowing capacity for sport and entertainment events at a new 35,000-seat stadium, a soccer and football arena designed by Gensler in an earlier phase of the overall Mission Valley project.

"LPC West is excited to leverage San Diego's incredible climate, active community, and innovative start-ups to attract the nation's best-in-class researchers and facilitate meaningful relationships between the university, students and alumni, and local businesses and entrepreneurs," added Scott Moffatt, executive vice president of the San Diego Region for LPC West.

LPC West and the design team are committed to realizing a project that meets sustainability standards. It will target Healthy Building Certifications and LEED Silver or higher. While design details have yet to be finalized, the plan for the campus will consider water conservation, energy efficiency, and carbon reduction. LPC West says it plans to use mass timber to design the district's facilities and is working with Timberlab, a Portland, Oregon-based construction company.

Construction on this first phase of the innovation district is planned to begin in 2024, with the hope for the campus to be completed in 2026. **Kristine Klein**

## Solidifying Shadows

A monument for Harriet Tubman, designed by Nina Cooke John, was unveiled in Newark.

Last week, Newark mayor Ras J. Baraka, New Jersey first lady Tammy Murphy, state senate majority leader M. Teresa Ruiz, and a slew of other dignitaries pulled back the curtain on a new monument honoring abolitionist and social activist Harriet Tubman. As previously reported by AN, the monument, which was designed by Jamaican-born architect Nina Cooke John and is titled *Shadow of a Face*, replaces a statue of Christopher Columbus that once stood in what was called Washington Park and is now, as of Juneteenth 2022, known as Harriet Tubman Square.

“In a time when so many cities are choosing to topple statues that limit the scope of their people’s story, we have chosen to erect a monument that spurs us into our future story of exemplary strength and solidity. In a country where the overwhelming majority of monuments are testaments to white males, Newark has chosen to erect a monument to a Black woman who was barely five feet tall, but had the visage and power of a giant,” Mayor Baraka said at the unveiling. “We have created a focal point in the heart of our city that expresses our participation in an ongoing living history of a people who have grappled through many conflicts to steadily lead our nation in its progress toward racial equality. Harriet Tubman Square and its interactive centerpiece sculpture, *Shadow of a Face*, represent our past, present, and future.”

The monument takes the form of a circular “learning wall” that guides visitors through a multisensory experience that includes educational text and audio stories about Tubman’s life and the city’s history of Black liberation. A carving of Tubman’s face graces the exterior of the wall, and her silhouette, towering above the wall, is shaped by steel frames at the center of the circle. The City of Newark commissioned local historians, led by Rutgers University professor Dr. James Amemasor, to provide research material for the wall text and audio stories. The wall also features a mosaic composed of ceramic tiles made by Newark residents during a dozen workshops led by Cooke John and Newark-based apprentice artist Adebunmi Gbadebo.

“*Shadow of a Face* celebrates both the legacy of Harriet Tubman and the lives of the people living in Newark today—connecting their story to Tubman’s story through a common bond of seekers of liberty in the past and in the present,” Cooke John said. “Her heroism is recognized, and space is claimed for her story in this historic park, while her humanity is made accessible so that we can all be empowered by her deeds both great and small.”

The monument’s audio experience was created by Audible, which is headquartered in Newark. It includes stories of Tubman’s life intertwined with narratives about the Underground Railroad and the history of



DREAMPLAY/CESAR MELGAR

free Black communities in New Jersey. Titled *Monumental: Harriet Tubman and Newark’s Liberation Movement*, the audio script was written by Pia Wilson and performed by Queen Latifah along with a talented cast. The audio experience will be made accessible to listeners around the world free of

charge on Audible.

According to the City of Newark, the unveiling of the monument also heralds the inception of the city’s new Arts & Education District and is the first major step toward a full park revitalization effort to be led by the Newark City Parks Foundation. **AS**

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# 10 News

## Linking Up

UNStudio, HKS, and Gehl selected to make improvements to Austin's transit network.

An expanded and improved metro system is coming to Austin. On March 6, the Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) announced the team of architects and planners bringing transportation infrastructure to the Texan city, which has seen significant growth in recent decades and is in need of a network that can provide transit access to even more residents and reduce the reliance on cars.

ATP, an independent organization started by the city and Capital Metro Transportation Authority in December 2020, is overseeing the financing and development of Project Connect. The organization has announced it will work with local architecture and planning firms HKS, UNStudio, and urban strategy and design firm Gehl to realize the project.

"We are thrilled to work with this visionary, interdisciplinary design team," said ATP executive vice president for architecture and urban design Peter Mullan in a statement. "The design team brings both broad international expertise delivering transit and public realm projects at the highest level of design and an acute sensitivity to Austin's specific culture and heritage. Project Connect gives us the opportunity to stitch our community together more closely and to adapt our core values to our continued growth and our increasingly urban future. To deliver on that promise, we need to bring a human-centered approach to the center of our design process, and this team brings that focus to our collective work."

Project Connect was approved by voters in November 2020. Among its anticipated initiatives are light rail systems and expanded bus routes that will present "a technologically advanced, human-centric transit experience true to Austin's culture and landscape."

The expanded routes would extend service to the airport, add an underground light rail system downtown, and create transfer and connection points between existing and new transit lines within the network. Other improvements include priority bus lanes, signal upgrades, new and remodeled stations and stops, new pickup locations, and more park-and-ride locations.

With architects and planners now engaged, design research and visioning on the project can begin. An upgraded transportation network across the city—from its bustling downtown to its suburban peripheries—will improve commutes and errand runs for residents. It will also provide equitable access to healthcare facilities, schools, and leisure destinations and reduce dependence on car use.

An investment in the project totaling \$300 million will be used to prevent the displacement of residents in areas and neighborhoods affected by the new development. Dollars from this sum will be put toward the construction of affordable housing.

"We are humbled by this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to demonstrate people-first design that prioritizes equity, well-being and resilience as we design stations for the future light rail program," added HKS principal and Austin office director Chi Lee. "Project Connect will transform Austin by making more neighborhoods accessible and affordable while promoting sustainable growth and development."

In the coming weeks, ATP and the design team will continue to host community engagement sessions where residents can weigh in on their transit needs and vision for the network. ATP said it plans to reveal an updated light rail implementation plan for the project this spring. **KK**

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# News

## Curtain Call

A design team led by Hariri Pontarini Architects will reimagine Toronto's St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts.

In early 2020 the City of Toronto and its arts community had to make a decision: repair the aging St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts (STLC) or rebuild it. The plan to rebuild the performance venue, one of three civic theaters in the city, went before the city council in 2022, and an international design competition ensued. This week TO Live, the agency operating the theater, announced the design team that will reimagine the building. Hariri Pontarini Architects (HPA) alongside LMN Architects, Tawaw Architecture Collective, Smoke Architecture, and SLA will invite Torontonians back to this public theater with a flexible design in which the audience and performances can occupy outdoor plazas and terraces.

The design team was chosen from an international design competition that was whittled down to five shortlisted teams. HPA and its collaborators bested Brook McIlroy, Trahan Architects, and Hood Design Studio; Diamond Schmitt, Smoke Architecture, and MVVA; RDHA, Mecanoo, Two Row Architect, and NAK Design Strategies; and Zeidler Architecture, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Two Row Architect, and PLANT Architect.

A jury composed of experts in planning, urban design, architecture, Indigenous design, and landscape architecture vetted the proposals and on March 14 picked the HPA-led design "Transparency" as the winning submission. (The submissions were also reviewed by the public from February 20 through March 7.)

"We sought a design that is radically accessible, radically open, so that it brings the city in and also pushes out to the city in a way that makes it highly visible, disarming, and welcoming—an emphatic embrace of openness between spaces of performance and the city," said Siamak Hariri, founding partner of HPA, in a press release.

The STLC opened in 1967 as part of the commemoration of the Canadian Centennial. The reimaged theater and arts center will rise on the same site, situated between Front Street and Scott Lane. In its latter form the arts venue housed two auditoriums: the 868-seat Bluma Appel Theatre and the 499-seat Jane Mallett Theatre.

The new STLC combines elements of the old complex with 21st-century upgrades. Like its predecessor, the new STLC will take on a hulking Brutalist form defined by rounded rectangular volumes. In a departure from the original structure, the new STLC will be wrapped in a high-performance transparent facade. Its pattern is informed by the design elements and emblematic qualities of wampum belts, woven accessories used by Indigenous peoples to represent treaties and covenants between themselves and others.

"We took the symbolic and figurative quality of the belt, which brings together diverse groups, to create one long, luminous line from end to end, gathering and unifying the complex in a single move envisioned as an embrace of culture and connection to community," Hariri added.

According to the design team's submission materials, the facade's vertical frit takes cues from the rippling appearance of stage curtains. The transparent nature of the glazing on the building's exterior permits views inside that invite public interaction from the street.

"By opening up the building and inviting the public with more accessible space, the energy of live performance will enrich the life of downtown Toronto," LMN Architects principal Cameron Irwin said. "The project will expand our understanding of the role of art spaces within our society and will provide an opportunity for organizations and activities that don't fit within the format of traditional performance spaces."

In the new St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts the orientation of the theaters will be altered: The main theater space will be rotated 90 degrees to allow it to face a new public plaza that will be realized on Scott Street. This space will serve as an extension of the theater and create another location for public programming. In its original configuration, the two theaters were situated side by side on ground level.

"We merge public space, city nature, and performance into a new STLC—expanding a 'building' project into a new beating urban heart, both inside and outside, for the arts, for quality of life, for nature, and for the city," said Rasmus Astrup, partner and design director at SLA, the landscape architect for the project.

Within the main theater, retractable seating and partitions will allow for flexibility, with a performance space that can accommodate anywhere from 600 to 1,000 seats. The second theater, Acoustic Hall, will accommodate 300 seats on the fourth floor. It will open out to a green terrace.

Along Front Street the lobby proposal takes on an L-shaped plan, wrapping around the main theater, connecting to the adjacent park and outdoor theater space. Studio spaces, rehearsal rooms, and smaller performance venues are planned for the two upper floors. Creating spaces where local artists could express their creativity was imperative to the redesign. During the preliminary feedback sessions, participants noted that Toronto lacks affordable and accessible spaces of this kind.

Within the building, the walls will be clad with wooden vertical fins. In the scheme, angular balconies form mezzanine levels overlooking the lobby atrium, a space the design team conceived as the "community's living room."

Supporting the architects and landscape designers are a number of consultants, including Fisher Dachs Associates for theater planning, Threshold Acoustics, Thornton Tomasetti for structural engineering work, Crossey Engineering on mechanical and electrical, ERA Architects for heritage work, HLB for lighting, Atelier Ten for sustainability, and Human Space for accessibility.

When it's complete, the building will be the first zero-carbon performing arts center in Canada. The design team's submission will be reviewed by the Toronto City Council later this year. **KK**



COURTESY HARIRI PONTARINI ARCHITECTS, LMN ARCHITECTS, TAWAW ARCHITECTURE COLLECTIVE, SMOKE ARCHITECTURE, SLA

## Chipperfield Gets the Nod

The architect—with completed projects in Venice; Seoul; Des Moines, Iowa; and points in between—is the 2023 Pritzker Prize laureate.



COURTESY SIMON MENGES



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COURTESY SIMON MENGES

**Above, left:** Museo Jumex (2013) in Mexico City

**Far left:** The Neues Museum (2009) in Berlin

**Above, middle:** James-Simon-Galerie (2018) in Berlin

**Left:** The Saint Louis Art Museum (2013)

**Above, right:** The Turner Contemporary (2011) in Margate, United Kingdom

David Chipperfield, whose built work spans the globe, has been named the recipient of the 2023 Pritzker Architecture Prize. As an architect, urban planner, and activist, Chipperfield is recognized for his timeless designs and sensitivity to social and environmental issues. He is the 52nd recipient of the prize, following its awarding to Diébédo Francis Kéré in 2022.

Chipperfield grew up in Devon, England, surrounded by an idyllic farm landscape. After graduating from the Kingston School of Art in 1976 and the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London in 1977, he worked under several notable architects, including Douglas Stephen, Norman Foster (1999 Pritzker Prize laureate) and the late Richard Rogers (2007 Pritzker Prize laureate). In 1985 he opened his eponymous studio, David Chipperfield Architects, in London. Since its founding the firm has expanded across continental Europe and into Asia; it has offices in Berlin, Shanghai, Milan, and Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

His illustrious portfolio of completed projects ranges widely in scope and typology. One of his first projects was the design of a shop for the late designer Issey Miyake. Among his other works are civic, cultural, and academic buildings, as well as master plan schemes in cities across the world. His museum renovations—and perhaps his treatment of the Neues Museum in Berlin—are likely his best-known contributions to contemporary architecture.

“I am so overwhelmed to receive this extraordinary honour and to be associated with the previous recipients who have all given so much inspiration to the profession,” Chipperfield said in a press release. “I take this award as an encouragement to continue to direct my attention not only to the substance of architecture and its meaning but also to the contribution that we can make as architects to address the existential challenges of climate change and soci-

etal inequality. We know that, as architects, we can have a more prominent and engaged role in creating not only a more beautiful world but a fairer and more sustainable one too. We must rise to this challenge and help inspire the next generation to embrace this responsibility with vision and courage.”

Most recently Chipperfield’s Berlin office was tapped to expand the Archaeological Museum in Athens, Greece. Other recent projects include the restoration of the Procuratie Vecchie in Venice and a neighborhood plan in Paris known as the Morland Mixité Capitale, and the renovation of Mies’s Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin. Among his notable past projects are several museum projects, most notably the aforementioned reconstruction and reinvention of the Neues Museum in Berlin (2009); the new James-Simon-Galerie, also located in Berlin (2018); the Turner Contemporary in Margate, United Kingdom (2011); and Museo Jumex in Mexico City (2013).

In the jury citation the members heralded Chipperfield for his museum designs:

At once architectural and museological projects, in Chipperfield’s hands museums as institutions and buildings offer a transformation of the urban life of the cities where they are located. Generous outdoor spaces make them not fortresses but connectors, places for gathering and observing, such that the building itself is a gift to the city, a common ground even for those who never enter the galleries. In short, his buildings embody a commanding balance of the seemingly contradictory notions of being complete in and of themselves as architectural designs where every detail is conceived as a carefully studied part of a whole, and at the same time create interconnections to the city and to the society in such a way as to fundamentally transform a whole district.

While the type and location of his projects vary, the architect is praised for his timeless designs and his ability to interweave past with present while considering the pressing needs of the environment and society.

He is one of the few recent Pritzker Prize winners with a number of built projects in the U.S. Among these works are an expansion to the St. Louis Museum of Art (2013); the Anchorage Museum in Alaska (2009); the Des Moines Public Library in Iowa (2006); and the Figge Art Museum in Davenport, Iowa (2004). Additionally, Chipperfield has realized a number of buildings in New York, including The Bryant (2021), adjacent to Bryant Park; 11–19 Jane Street (2021) in the West Village; and a flagship store for Valentino (2014) on Fifth Avenue, now closed.

In 2015, Chipperfield was selected to design a new wing for the Met, only to see the initiative be put on hold for seven years. The architect and museum parted ways, and last spring the Met announced that Frida Escobedo would design the project. In a series titled *The Ones That Got Away* posted on Instagram shortly after the Met’s announcement, Chipperfield wrote that “[d]esigning this New York project [...] was hugely stimulating, and it was a privilege to work with such inspiring people within the institution. I hope that one day we will find out why we were replaced. In the meantime we can only lament that our project will remain unbuilt.”

Chipperfield also has a design in the works just across the street. As announced in 2021, the architect is at work on a 6-story townhouse at 1014 Fifth Avenue to become a “space for ideas.” The project, undertaken with KARO Architects and Paratus Group for the government of Germany, aims to remake the former location of the Goethe-Institut New York into a “new platform for trans-Atlantic dialogue and exchange,” according to a design update last year.

The jury continued its praise in its citation, adding:

In an era of excessive commercialization, over-designing, and over-exaggeration, he can always achieve balance: between a modern minimalistic architectural language and freedom of expression, between abstract statements and rigorous elegance never devoid of complexity. While preserving a meticulous yet consistent quality of design, David Chipperfield has continually worked across a wide array of building types from public civic buildings to commercial, residential and retail structures. But from early in his career, museums have been a particular focus. Ranging across small-scale works free standing in the landscape to large-scale monuments in prominent and often complex and delicate urban locations, his museum buildings have always defied the notion that a museum is a place for elite culture. Over and over, he has interpreted the demands of the museum program to create not only a showcase for art but also a place interwoven with its city, breaking down boundaries and inviting the public at large to engage.

Members of the 2023 Pritzker Prize jury included chair Alejandro Aravena, Barry Bergdoll, Deborah Berke, André Aranha Corrêa do Lago, Kazuyo Sejima, Wang Shu, Benedetta Tagliabue, and retired United States Supreme Court justice Stephen Breyer.

A ceremony for the 2023 Pritzker Prize will be held in Athens this May. Chipperfield will receive a \$100,000 cash prize and bronze medallion. **KK**

## Feedback Loop

Exhibit Columbus's 2023 Winter Presentations offered the public a chance to comment on the upcoming round of installations.

On February 25, Exhibit Columbus invited the participants in its 2022–23 cycle to present initial designs for the temporary installations that will augment the small but architecturally outsize Indiana town come the opening of the festival in August. The proposals presented were the results of a previous public-engagement process in 2022, when the design teams first came to Columbus to select their sites and meet the locals. In keeping with this cycle's theme, Public by Design, local community members were invited yet again to hear out the presenters and weigh in on their proposals—and they came, and they weighed in. Hosted downtown at the Cesar Pelli–designed Commons, the crowd was lively, the presenters were articulate, and exchanges between the two gave a glimmer of what public participation in the design process could be.

The morning got started with comments from Exhibit Columbus executive director Richard McCoy; a poetry reading by Indiana poet laureate Matthew Graham; and a presentation from Signals founder Chris Grimley, who did this year's communication design. The first installation designer to speak was Vishaan Chakrabarti of New York City-based Practice for Architecture and Urbanism (PAU), one of four of this cycle's Miller Prize winners, the other three being Studio Zewde, PORT, and Tatiana Bilbao ESTUDIO. There were also presentations by seven University Design Research Fellows and one by the local High School Design Team, which also had the opportunity to design a pavilion.

PAU's proposal, titled *Interlocus*, is a canopy with an oculus that piggybacks on existing light poles at the intersection of 4th and Washington streets. Inspired by "the Pantheon in Rome, carnival vernacular, ice cream sundaes from local establishment Zaharakos, and the wigwams of the Miami and Shawnee peoples," it seeks to create a center in the street grid of downtown Columbus to be activated by the public during festivals and events. Chakrabarti also referenced the omphalos at Delphi, the Latin American zocalo, and the belly button, which got the crowd to giggling.

Following, Molly Hunker and Greg Corso of Syracuse University presented *Side Effects*, a collection of brightly colored urban furniture that abuts the interior and exterior glass walls of The Commons. Inspired by the designs of Alexander Girard, the project embodies a "continuous" idea of public space that breaches the demarcation between inside and outside. Presented in solid colors, *Side Effects* prompted one audience member to suggest using many contrasting colors, as Girard would have done, to which Hunker and Corso said, "Yes, of course," pointing out that their images were just sketches.

Next up were Joseph Altshuler and Zack Morrison of Could Be Design, who presented *Carousel for Columbus*, a "locomotive love letter in the round" that will occupy an empty corner lot. The project combines bright colors, supergraphics, and an actual carousel outfitted with building silhouettes—parroting Chakrabarti, Altshuler called it their project's "belly button"—all sampled from local architecture. The installation promises to inject a good deal of fun into the festival come August, along with a good deal of dizziness, as one audience member pointed out apprehensively, which, come to think of it, is a good metaphor for Columbus: You really can

get spun around and dizzy looking this way and that to take in all the architectural marvels the town has to offer.

University of Arkansas professor Charles Sharpless (who arrived without his Somewhere Studio partner Jessica Colangelo) told us about *Ground Rules*, an intervention under the pergola of the Kevin Roche–designed Cummins HQ. Made of reclaimed waste material, potentially lumber from a multifamily project Somewhere Studio is building in Dallas, the installation will provide a play space, maybe a bocce ball court, and will be painted in bright colors. One attendee said it reminded him of Romantic paintings of barbarian tents strung up in the shelter of Roman ruins.

Halina Steiner, Tamika Baba, Forbes Lipschitz, and Shelby Doyle—a consortium of academics from various schools throughout the Midwest—presented *Pipe Up!*, an installation slated to rise on the lawn of the Hotel Indigo. Selected because the site is at the junction between city and countryside, the installation—composed of sewer pipe, drainpipe, and flagging tape—is meant to call attention to the Midwest's vast drainage infrastructure and the toxins it conveys down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. The community seemed to like it as a play space, though some worried about the robustness of the plastic materials, considering the beating local children will certainly give it.

Sarah Zewde of Studio Zewde showed *Echoes of the Hill*, a garden folly of sorts that will literally echo the hill of the auditorium in Mill Race Park, which was designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh and is now celebrating its 30th anniversary. Zewde's installation creates a ghost image of the croissant-shaped mound with red frames. The echoing form closes a circle with the existing mound—yet another "belly button" and attempt to create a center among the group—and the hollow volume can be occupied and activated in any way the community sees fit. One community member asked whether the frames would be strong enough to hang from.

Christopher Marcinkoski of PORT trotted out the *Plot Project*, an installation sited at the Mill Race Senior Center. The project extends the semicircular form of the building out into the lawn that surrounds it, forming a 1,250-foot segmented arch of varied indigenous plantings—12 garden (not funeral) plots in all, each delineated by 6-foot bands of wildflowers. Survey poles at 25-foot intervals make the arch legible from the ground, while three covered seating structures offer places to chill and take it all in. The audience gushed over the proposal, though they had pointed questions about what plantings would be used—Marcinkoski said they were figuring that out.

Purdue University professor Esteban García Bravo and his collaborator, Maria Clara Morales, laid it down with *Prisma*, an interactive and immersive light installation sited against a parking garage across from the Cummins HQ. The first of the installations to come alive at night, it forms an "open air tunnel" with several layers of light activity that grab attention, respond to human interaction, and animate according to programming prompts. Conceived as a venue for music, performances, and other art and culture, it very much gave the vibe of Indiana's best outdoor disco, though one audience member did ask whether there would be a roof for when it rained.



COURTESY PAU



COURTESY TATIANA BILBAO ESTUDIO

Top: *Interlocus* by PAUAbove: *Designed by the Public* by Tatiana Bilbao ESTUDIO

The High School Design Team stepped up next with *Machi* (Japanese for busy downtown area or main street), a hangout spot for teens, who don't currently have anything of the sort in Columbus. Composed of steel tube pergolas, colorful awnings, and movable furniture, the project offers a flexible and reconfigurable space for kicking it with your fam. The high schoolers also discussed their marketing strategy (social media) and presented their budget (they're under budget), which was a first for the presenters, a fact McCoy would go on to bring up again and again for the remainder of the day.

MIT professor Deborah Garcia, however, was not to be upstaged by the teens. Her project, *Recordar*, may have stolen the show. Sited in the courtyard of the I. M. Pei–designed library, *Recordar* is a gathering of mysterious black towers that emit strange noises, "from the intimate sounds of our own voices to the haunting echoes of Modernism to the grinding of tectonic plates." While the exact soundtrack is still being written, Garcia referenced as inspiration John Cage's *Organ2/As Slow as Possible*, which started in 2001 and is due to wrap up sometime in 2640. Garcia said her piece would be more on a three-month timeline to wrap up along with the festival. Rather than responding with shushing sounds, those in attendance applauded the notion of a library that speaks—or draws you into its silence with a loud-talking facade.

The After Architecture duo and University of Virginia professors Katie MacDonald and Kyle Schumann began the day's de-

nouement with *Sylvan Scrapple*. A reference to the mid-Atlantic dish of a loaf of pork scraps, cornmeal, wheat flour, and spices, *Sylvan Scrapple* combines materials from two waste streams. One is nonlinear wood milled in a purpose-built robotic sawmill in Virginia. The other is bricks from the Irwin Block, a local landmark that burned down, which will be packed into gabions. Arranged around a planter between the Columbus Visitors Center and the library, the timber elements will provide thresholds, overlooks, and furniture, while the gabions will form a boundary around the garden.

The final presentation of the day came from Tatiana Bilbao and her partner, Alba Cortés, who together told us about their proposal: *Designed by the Public*. Per the name, this installation was the most on-the-nose of those presented. Sited in the plaza that fronts the library, the project provides a collection of furniture and objects and equipment that the community can use or rearrange in any way it deems fit. It was by far the least "designed" of the proposals, leaning so far into the public engagement process that the architects themselves nearly vanished. That, of course, was the point, and the community loved it.

The next stop for Exhibit Columbus will be the Fall Exhibition, which should kick off in August, at which point we'll see just how much the public feedback from this round of engagement affected the results. Tune in then! **AS**

AN is a media partner for Exhibit Columbus.

# 13 News

# News

## Desert Dreaming

ICON, BIG, and hotelier Liz Lambert unveil plan for 3D-printed hotels in Marfa, Texas.



COURTESY ICON AND BIG



COURTESY ICON AND BIG

With a slew of in-process projects, ICON and Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) are making a name for themselves in the world of 3D-printed architecture. The team recently broke ground on the world's largest 3D-printed community and has plans to land 3D-printed habitations on the moon. In their latest collaboration, announced yesterday, they will work with hotelier Liz Lambert to reimagine El Cosmico, a campground in Marfa, Texas.

El Cosmico is a 21-acre campsite offering unique overnight experiences to guests, who stay in idiosyncratic accommodations like revamped trailers, safari tents, teepees modeled on those used by the Indigenous peoples of the Great Plains, and Mongolian yurts. In the new vision for the site, ICON, BIG, and Lambert will realize a series of 3D-printed hotels and houses that will fill an expanded 60-acre site in the desert.

"I have had a vision for the evolution of El Cosmico for many years that includes several spaces that add to the experience both for guests and locals—a pool, a hammam, and more space for art and skills-building workshops," Liz Lambert said in a press release. "In collaborating with the revolutionary thinkers at BIG and ICON, not only do I get to fulfill this dream, but we get to do it using this incredible 3D printing technology that marries the oldest principles of raw earth-based building with a futuristic technology that works more quickly, sustainably and efficiently than modern construction. What's more, the

innovation and beauty of the types of structures we can build extend far beyond the box."

The proposed designs are rounded, domed structures that are holistically connected to the desert landscape through their form and materiality. In addition to guest units, the site will house spaces where guests can lounge and gather, including a pool and spa.

"Liz Lambert's legacy for reimagining hospitality and her pioneering of a contemporary Texan aesthetic combined with the minimalist nature and culture, art and landscape of Marfa has been the perfect fit to pursue a new architectural vernacular language for El Cosmico in Marfa," Bjarke Ingels added. "Organic shapes, Euclidian circular geometries and a color palette born from the local terroir make El Cosmico feel as if literally erected from the site it stands on."

With the project, ICON is pushing the limit of 3D printing, delivering domes, arches, vaults, and parabolic forms that can be realized only through that technology.

"The truly unique and divergent architectures made possible by 3D printing are really just beginning," said ICON cofounder and CEO Jason Ballard. "One of the great joys of ICON is putting our technology into the hands of great creatives and seeing what possibilities emerge."

El Cosmico's groundbreaking is planned for 2024. The design team is also looking into designing and constructing affordable housing in Marfa. **KK**

## A Night-Light for Lower Manhattan

REX's Perelman Performing Arts Center will open in September.



COURTESY REX

REX's marble-and-glass Ronald O. Perelman Performing Arts Center is nearly complete. The effort, nearly 20 years in the making, will add a venue for music, theater, dance, chamber opera, film, and other events next to the World Trade Center campus.

Below the reconfigurable theater, a Public Level will feature interiors designed by Rockwell Group, including the John C. Whitehead Lobby, the Clare and Vartan Gregorian Lobby Stage

(with free events), a bar, a restaurant, and the Dalio Family Terrace.

Via a press release, Ramus shared: "Responding to the sanctity of the World Trade Center site and the humanistic aspirations of the PAC's mission, our design empowers artistic teams to imagine and create a vast range of performances and audience experiences, within a building that addresses its setting with respect and warmth." **JM**

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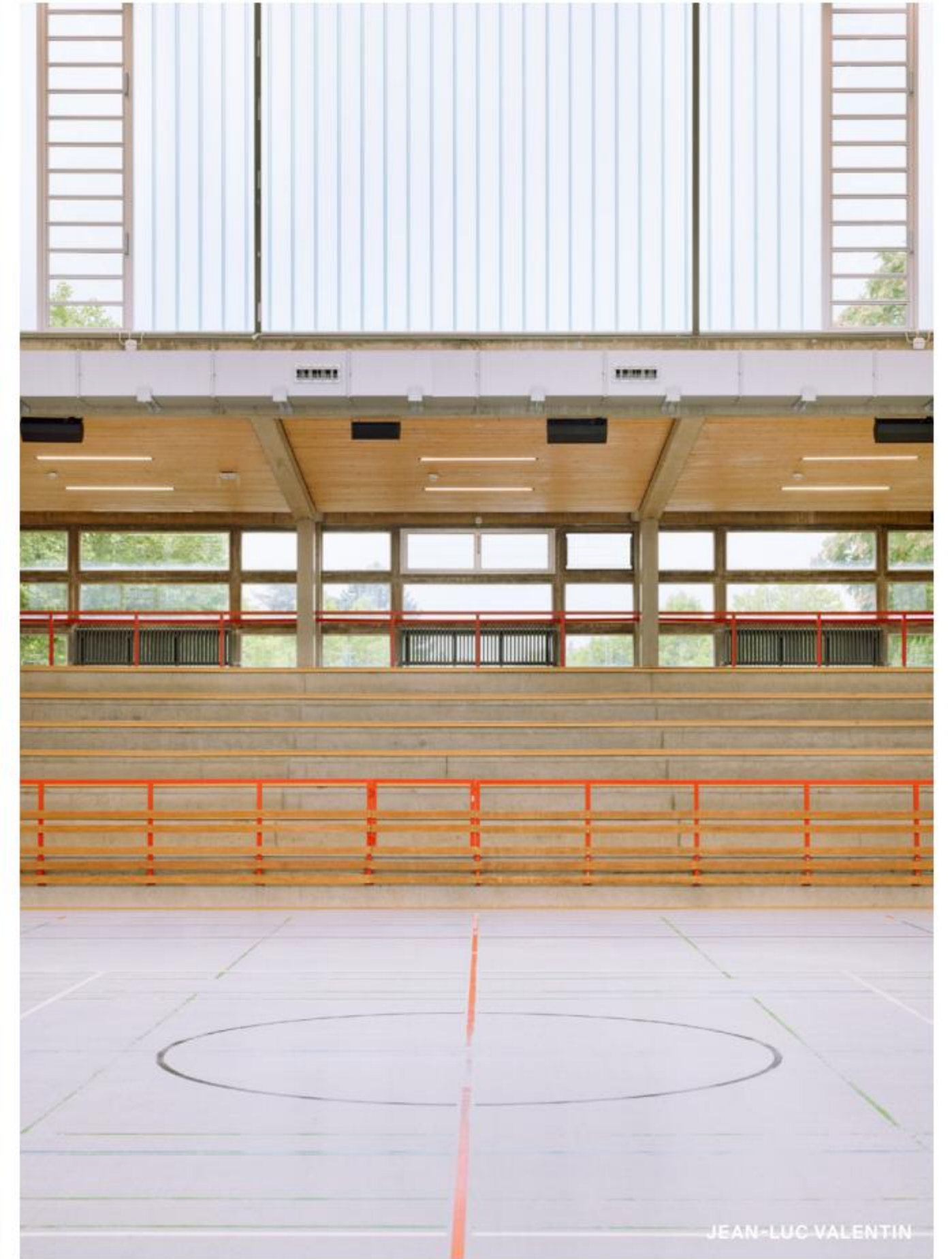
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## Recreation Restoration

With a light and precise touch, 1100 Architect breathes new life into a landmarked gymnasium in Darmstadt.



**Above, left:** The architects brought the gym up to code while preserving its historic architectural character.

**Above, right:** Ventilation ducting was integrated in the soffit, and new channel set in the clerestories.

**Far left:** Acoustic baffling was added behind the wood for improved noise control.

**Left:** The existing seating was cleaned and preserved, and old fixtures were replaced by LED lighting.

The Böllenfalltorhalle is a gymnasium and recreation center in Darmstadt, Germany. It sits at the southwestern edge of town, across from the stadium where SV Darmstadt 98, the local soccer club, plays. Built in 1964, the concrete and wood structure is defined by its impressive long-span arched roof, hemmed by channel-glass clerestories, arcing cleanly above a broad playing surface and seating for about 2,100 people. Throughout its history it has been used by local schools, teams, and community groups for sporting events and fairs—even concerts. SV Darmstadt 98 has also used it as a VIP catering area during game days (there wasn't one in the stadium) where fans can mingle and chat about the last goal.

Designed by local architect Ernst Samesreuther, the Böllenfalltorhalle began construction in 1964, and the first game was held there in early 1966. After many years of service, the building, which is landmarked, was very much worse for wear. The old lighting and grimy clerestory glass left the interior dark and murky. The ventilation, never entirely sufficient, was incapable of moving fresh air to the center of the

voluminous space. The acoustics left a lot to be desired. The electrical system was so old it could no longer pass inspection, and the fire protection and smoke detection systems could not meet current standards.

Meanwhile, SV Darmstadt 98, a club with a varied record, went on a fairy-tale run of wins that launched it briefly into the Bundesliga, Germany's top tier of professional soccer teams. The spate of victories galvanized enough support behind the team for the City of Darmstadt to fund a major renovation and expansion of the stadium, upgrading facilities and adding a new grandstand, among other improvements. It hired 1100 Architect, a New York-based company with an office in Frankfurt, Germany, to complete the job. While the City was at it, it also hired the firm to renovate the Böllenfalltorhalle and bring the whole sports and entertainment complex into the 21st century.

As the building is a listed landmark, 1100 had the challenge of upgrading systems while maintaining as much of the 1964 appearance as possible. Fortunately, it was working with a diamond in the rough. "It's a very clever structure, nice materials,

pretty minimal, with a lot of atmosphere," Gunter Weyrich, 1100's lead architect on the project, told *AN*. "We are able to do a lot of great stuff with new building, but we are always respecting if something old is beautiful—we are happy to polish it."

The design team studied historic documentation and original drawings of the building to understand what they were working with. As construction began, existing building materials were catalogued, refurbished, and reused. One of the most challenging features of the existing building was its astonishing wood ceiling. The building code said that wood could not be used in that application, owing to combustibility concerns. However, there it was. Working with a fire protection specialist, 1100 produced a digital model showing that in the event of a fire, 2,200 people would have plenty of time to evacuate before there was any structural damage. Thus, the wood was allowed to remain. First, however, each board was removed, numbered, and stored while the team replaced every light in the ceiling with new LED luminaires that match the profiles of the original fixtures. New acoustic baffling was also added behind the

wood before it was put back in place.

The channel-glass clerestories had to be replaced, as they were too damaged for refurbishment. However, the same look was achieved, and in addition, smoke evacuation openings were integrated into the glass for improved fire protection. The team also updated each of the building's support spaces, including locker rooms, bathrooms, and offices. Along with the new lighting, the rest of the building's mechanical systems were upgraded with new energy-efficient systems that meet Germany's stringent requirements. As a result of these life-safety and performance-based upgrades, the building can now be used as an official emergency shelter, adding to the roles it can play for the community.

With construction on the nearby stadium recently finished—1100 refurbished an old grandstand, added a new one, and also designed new training-facility and administrative-office buildings—this improved sports campus shows how a mix of careful renovation and ground-up additions can revitalize an important community hub for the future while keeping residents connected to their history. **AS**

# Spatializing Reproductive Justice

After *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, a network of women architects studies abortion architecturally.

continued from cover actions from extremists who perpetrate all kinds of violence against both the facilities themselves and the people who seek care there, as well as from legislators.

In 2013, via House Bill 2 (HB2), the State of Texas passed a set of laws that increased restrictions on abortion clinics. One such restriction stipulated that clinics comply with standards for ambulatory surgery centers (ASC). As compared with regular abortion clinics, ASCs require, among other provisions, wider corridors and doors, larger exam rooms, a dedicated operating room, and finishes that are easy to clean. The changes can turn clinics from warm, welcoming spaces to something more akin to an operating room. Then Texas governor Rick Perry claimed that HB2 would help “support the health of Texas women,” furnishing a higher standard of care, but in practice, it dramatically reduced abortion access across the state. The bill also mandated that clinics have hospital affiliation, required that medical abortions follow outdated FDA labeling, and banned abortions after 20 weeks. Five months after the law was passed, the number of abortion clinics in Texas dropped from 41 to 22.

Laws like HB2 have become known as targeted restrictions on abortion providers, or TRAP laws, and they often have a significant spatial and architectural component. While these laws will likely become less commonplace now that *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* has deemed that the Constitution does not grant the right to an abortion, the architectural dimension of abortion access and reproductive healthcare remains a serious concern.

Last summer, after the *Dobbs* decision, Lori Brown, founder of the gender equity nonprofit ArchiteXX and a professor at Syracuse University School of Architecture, and Jordan Kravitz, a healthcare architect, began compiling a list of architects interested in ameliorating the new conditions of abortion access. The nascent network seeks to help clinics expand in states where abortion remains legal, anticipating increased demand, as well as build new clinics near the border in states that have legal abortion and sit adjacent to states that don't.

Relatedly, last fall, three studios at three universities across New York State sought to explore the architectural dimension of reproductive healthcare. Motivated by the Supreme Court decision and their larger commitments to abortion access and women's rights, Brown at Syracuse, Lindsay Harkema at CCNY, and Bryony Roberts at Columbia GSAPP each taught a studio that dealt with questions of reproductive justice and architecture. (Harkema and Roberts practice together in the seven-member WIP Collaborative, a “shared feminist practice of independent design professionals working together on projects that engage community and the public realm.”) The work from the studios is being compiled into a research project about reproductive healthcare, abortion access, and the built environment coordinated by FLUFFFFF Studio, a design practice headed by Natalya Dikhanov and Sadie Imae that “explores the intersection of human-derived architecture with its non-human counterparts.”

Though the studios differed slightly in focus—Harkema's, for example, explored



Studios taught by Lori Brown at Syracuse, Lindsay Harkema at CUNY, and Bryony Roberts at Columbia GSAPP researched the design implications of last year's ruling that upended the precedent of *Roe v. Wade*.

the open question of placing abortion clinics on federal land—they generally followed a similar structure: The courses began with students' own reflections on their experiences with care, then moved into research about the state of reproductive and sexual healthcare in the U.S., and culminated in a design intervention.

Reviewing final projects from the three studios reveals students' broad-ranging concerns, from the experience of the person receiving care and designing spaces that foster individual comfort to working around state restrictions via mobile clinics and providing supportive programming like therapy and child care. These interests are no doubt a product of the studios' intensive research component. Brown told *AN* that this aspect was central to all three courses: “As architects, we engage the civic realm all the time, and the research required is going to be wide-ranging.”

An example of this range is the work produced in Harkema's studio, where students created highly detailed maps and graphics that break down the state of abortion access across the country by examining aspects like cross-border travel for an abortion in the Midwest, reviews of clinics across the Northeast, travel routes to clinics in the Northwest, and county-by-county reduction of abortion access in the Southeast.

“There were some slides that we showed in our research that people said should be PSAs,” Roberts told *AN*, remarking on the extent of the research done by students in her studio and the necessity to fully understand the practicalities of the issue before designing potential interventions. For example, “a medication abortion has archi-

tectural implications and different programmatic requirements” from a surgical abortion, she said.

Medication abortions have become more commonplace in the U.S. since 2021, when the FDA temporarily allowed the pills, usually a combination of mifepristone and misoprostol, to be mailed to patients. In December 2021, the FDA made the approval permanent, and today the majority of abortions in the country happen with pills. Although Texas federal judge Matthew Kacsmaryk is currently set to make a decision in a federal lawsuit that could ban mifepristone nationwide, for the time being the increased use of medication abortion has spatial implications. “You need a video visit,” Roberts stated. “Is there a space at home to recover? [The procedure] needs multiple types of spaces to make it happen.”

The architectural dimension of access to abortion and reproductive care might not be readily apparent to most people, so FLUFFFFF's efforts in documenting the research and making it publicly available will be crucial to the group's ongoing work. “Since the AIA hasn't said or acknowledged anything, we want to get it out in the public space and get some eyes looking in this direction,” Imae offered. “More architects need to recognize that architecture is political.”

The collective effort will be made public soon: A traveling exhibition, cocurated by Brown, Harkema, Roberts, and FLUFFFFF, will originate at the Spitzer School of Architecture at the City College of New York during the next academic year. Building on the structure of the studios, the show will expand on the intersectional and in-

ter-institutional approach to reach a broader audience, both within architecture and outside of it. The show will feature student research and design work, as well as exchanges with guest experts from the fields of public health, reproductive justice, healthcare administration, law, political science, architectural history, and creative practice. At each venue that hosts the show, there will also be supportive programming that will include participation from local students, scholars, practitioners, and care providers.

All three instructors conveyed to *AN* the exceptional interest from students in the studios' subject matter and their desire for curricula that engage with issues affecting their lives outside of design education. Dikhanov even mentioned that “student groups are self-organizing to push for this within their curricula.” While this sort of politically engaged architecture studio is rare, Harkema insisted that part of their goal is to “remove the novelty from this in the discipline.”

As the abortion access crisis escalates, this is perhaps the studios' most urgent contribution: In working through solutions via abortion's architectural dimension, they also clarify and elucidate the political dimension of architecture. And, in so doing, they fill a gap in students' civic education, equipping them with the skills necessary for engagement with political issues, not just inside the classroom but outside of it as well.

**Marianela D'Aprile is a writer in Brooklyn. She is the deputy editor of *New York Review of Architecture*.**

## Let the Right One In

Public access to Edgar Miller's Kogen-Miller Studios is on pause as dueling lawsuits play out.

**continued from cover** International Style that were seeping across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe in the 1920s and '30s.

The Kogen-Miller Studios feature nine units arranged around an internal courtyard. One, the Glasner Studio (restored in late-1920s period-appropriate detail and the main focus of EML's past programming), is owned by Zac Bleicher, executive director of Edgar Miller Legacy, and his mother, Julie Bleicher. Julie inherited the unit from her brother, Mark Mamolen, who was a close friend of Edgar Miller. Two units are owned by Ronald Cieslak (who declined to comment for this story), and six units are owned by Glenn Aldinger.

"[Edgar Miller Legacy's] goal was, first, to try to secure the building like my uncle had hoped from these other people and, if it were under one ownership, convert it to a cultural site, like a museum or artist residency," Zac Bleicher told *AN*. But much of this has been on hold since 2020, when Zac filed suit against Cieslak and Aldinger for ignoring maintenance needs at the condo complex. Cieslak and Aldinger made the counterclaim that Zac was illegally operating a business from his unit after having soured on the public access offered by EML.

Zac initially felt that his co-owners were allies in EML's mission. A letter of intent signed by Aldinger and Zac in late 2017 laid out a process and timetable for a sale of Aldinger's units to EML. The years of tours and events EML hosted seemed to indicate that the complex's other owners had waived the prohibition against running a business in the condo bylaws. At times, they seemed supportive and even enthusiastic about the public programming. In 2017, Aldinger arranged for the condo association to be added to EML's insurance policy as an additionally insured party. Also in 2017, emails reviewed by *AN* show Aldinger telling Zac that he would be willing to forgo a rent hike for one tenant (who had concerns about tours and public programming) to keep that person onboard with public access.

But over time, Aldinger said, he objected to the tours because of their "intrusion, frequency, [and] volume."

Zac told *AN* that Aldinger's support of EML diminished after a 2018 appraisal of the condos by Property Valuation Services. The estimate returned was \$3.1 million, which Aldinger said was "so low it was laughable," and the appraisal couldn't accurately judge the value of the complex because the appraiser never entered any of Aldinger's units, since "I was never asked," said Aldinger. However, in emails from January 2018, a personal assistant to Aldinger told Zac and Aldinger that they could show Aldinger's units to the appraiser, and Aldinger told Zac that he had informed tenants about the upcoming appraisal.

A sale to EML never materialized. By July 2018, Zac said the organization had moved its offices out of the Glasner Studio (where he still lives), and the final tour of the Kogen-Miller Studios was in February 2020. Meanwhile, Zac grew concerned about the lack of maintenance at the complex.

Zac points to a long list of upkeep needs (tuckpointing the brick, leaks, the condition of balconies and roof decks, boilers) that he said jeopardizes the safety of occupants and the historical integrity of the complex. In late 2019, Speaker of the House Property Inspec-

tions issued a 59-page inspection largely consistent with Zac's concerns, pointing out "serious" rusting of elevated walkways and water damage to the rear of the complex. "They just sat on it," said Zac. "Then it became a matter of 'How do we protect the building from itself and its owners?'"

His answer was to sue Cieslak and Aldinger (who have a two-thirds controlling majority in the Kogen-Miller Studios' condo association) in June 2020 to make them personally liable for damages resulting from a lack of maintenance, force their removal as directors of the condo association, and transfer control of the building to a court-appointed receiver.

Aldinger said the 2019 inspection was "coached by Julie and Zac" and it overestimated the work that needs to be done. He saw it as an attempt by the Bleichers to avoid paying for a majority of maintenance updates before they, potentially, might assume ownership of the entire building. (In January of this year, Aldinger did receive a court order to repair a structural support on a rear balcony.)

Zac acknowledges that the condo association has spent approximately \$200,000 on some of the repairs, but said that this figure covers less than half of what needs to be done and that almost none of the work began until after the lawsuit was filed. "We believed that if we didn't pursue the lawsuit, the needed repairs wouldn't have been done in a timely or reasonable fashion," he said.

This ongoing uncertainty caused by years of legal wrangling has Zac looking toward local historic landmarking (which, in Chicago, obligates building owners to receive approval by the landmark commission before making exterior changes to a building) to preserve its historical integrity. It would "allow the city to have more scrutiny over what's going on in the building and just generally raise the profile of [it]," he said.

Aldinger said that's what he wants, too—one day: "Everybody agrees, including us, that eventually the place has got to be landmarked—not now." According to Aldinger, it would be inappropriate to landmark the building before more repairs are completed.

Another Edgar Miller masterwork, Carl Street Studios, is landmarked because of its location in a wider historic district, but the Kogen-Miller Studios remain unprotected because Zac said he's spent much of his energy on unifying ownership of the complex, since that could make the landmarking process easier.

Historic preservationist Elizabeth Blasius of Preservation Futures said it can be challenging and potentially detrimental to landmark private residences over the objections of owners. "When you get into people's homes and preservationists choose to mount an advocacy campaign against the wishes of those residential private property owners, it sometimes erodes the public's trust in preservation," she said. Resistance to landmarking, said Blasius, is often based on the incorrect assumption that this process totally prohibits making any changes to the exteriors and interiors of buildings. It is also rather rare for interiors to be landmarked at all.

But in Chicago, landmarking residences over owner objections does happen on occasion. "With the exception of certain religious properties, owner's consent is not

a deciding factor regarding the timing of a landmark designation," said Peter Strazzabosco, deputy commissioner at the Chicago Department of Planning and Development. One example is the John Nuveen House, which the landmark commission voted to landmark without consent in 2019.

Echoing Zac and Aldinger, Blasius told *AN* that the Kogen-Miller Studios should be landmarked and praised its material detailing, woodwork, and leaded glass. Given Miller's intensely collaborative nature, she said that landmarking research could uncover the role of other artisans who affected his work at the Kogen-Miller Studios, like Mexican artist Jesús Torres, who influenced Miller immensely.

"Edgar Miller was so unique and is so important to American architecture. He also seemed to know how to work with and for fellow creatives and to uplift the work of other designers and makers," Blasius said. "You can really tease out these histories that maybe don't attribute all of the work directly to Edgar Miller. I think a National Register of Historic Places or local designation would put the authors in a situation where they would uncover a lot of new information on Torres specifically that should be known."

For Zac, an acceptable end to this legal drama would be for the Kogen-Miller Studios to "be preserved and shared with the public," he said. Aldinger has a different take: "The building's lost its joy," he said. "I'm ready to sell now. I just want to make sure I sell at market rate."

But EML and Zac may be the only interested buyer until the dueling lawsuits are resolved. "The building has a ton of deferred maintenance, hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not more," Zac said. "It's totally dysfunctional. I'm not sure who would want to buy into a condo association in the middle of litigation."

And while Aldinger said that it's unlikely anyone would buy into the Kogen-Miller Studios with a mortgage, he still thinks an all-cash deal could be made with "high-net-worth folks," he said. He's had a bit of interest so far. "I took [philanthropist, investor, and classical architecture enthusiast Richard] Driehaus out for a dinner and showed him the building. He was kind of interested, but never pursued [it]," Aldinger recalled. "He's dead now, of course."

**Zach Mortice is a Chicago-based design journalist and critic focused on the intersection of design in architecture and landscape architecture and policy.**



The material detailing, woodwork, and leaded glass are some of the reasons why the Kogen-Miller Studios should be landmarked, according to Elizabeth Blasius.

## An Improved Front Yard

Sasaki transforms Boston's City Hall Plaza from a "vast wasteland" into a friendly, accessible landscape.

When Boston's controversial Brutalist concrete city hall opened in 1968, *New York Times* architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable called the barren brick plaza in front of it "one of the great urban spaces of the 20th century." She gushed further: "With the plaza, and specifically because of it, the Boston Government Center can now take its place among the world's great city spaces."

Architects Gerhard Kallmann and Michael McKinnell, whose firm Kallmann McKinnell & Knowles had won an early-1960s competition to design the complex, pointed to the Piazza del Campo in Siena, Italy, as one of their chief inspirations. Indeed, from the air the large, fan-shaped brick expanses make the two quite similar in appearance.

"They were trying to achieve what modernists were thinking at the time," said Boston University professor of American & European architecture Daniel Abramson. "It was about activating the civic core. It was about allowing the maximum opportunity for people to mix and circulate. The activity would be at the edges, and the center would be a completely open space."

But most Bostonians loathed this Americanized piazza. They complained it was 7 acres of windswept space with no shade. The late mayor Thomas M. Menino called it a "vast wasteland" and even floated the idea of razing the entire complex and moving city hall to the South Boston waterfront.

Fifty-five years after its opening, something has finally "been done" about City Hall Plaza. Boston-based Sasaki, a multidisciplinary design firm, completed a \$95 million revamping of the outdoor venue. Opened last November, the expanse now has 250 new trees and 3,000 linear feet of new seating. It even has a playground.

"It's been turned into a neighborhood park," Abramson said. "When they asked Bostonians what they wanted, they said a neighborhood park, and that's what they got."

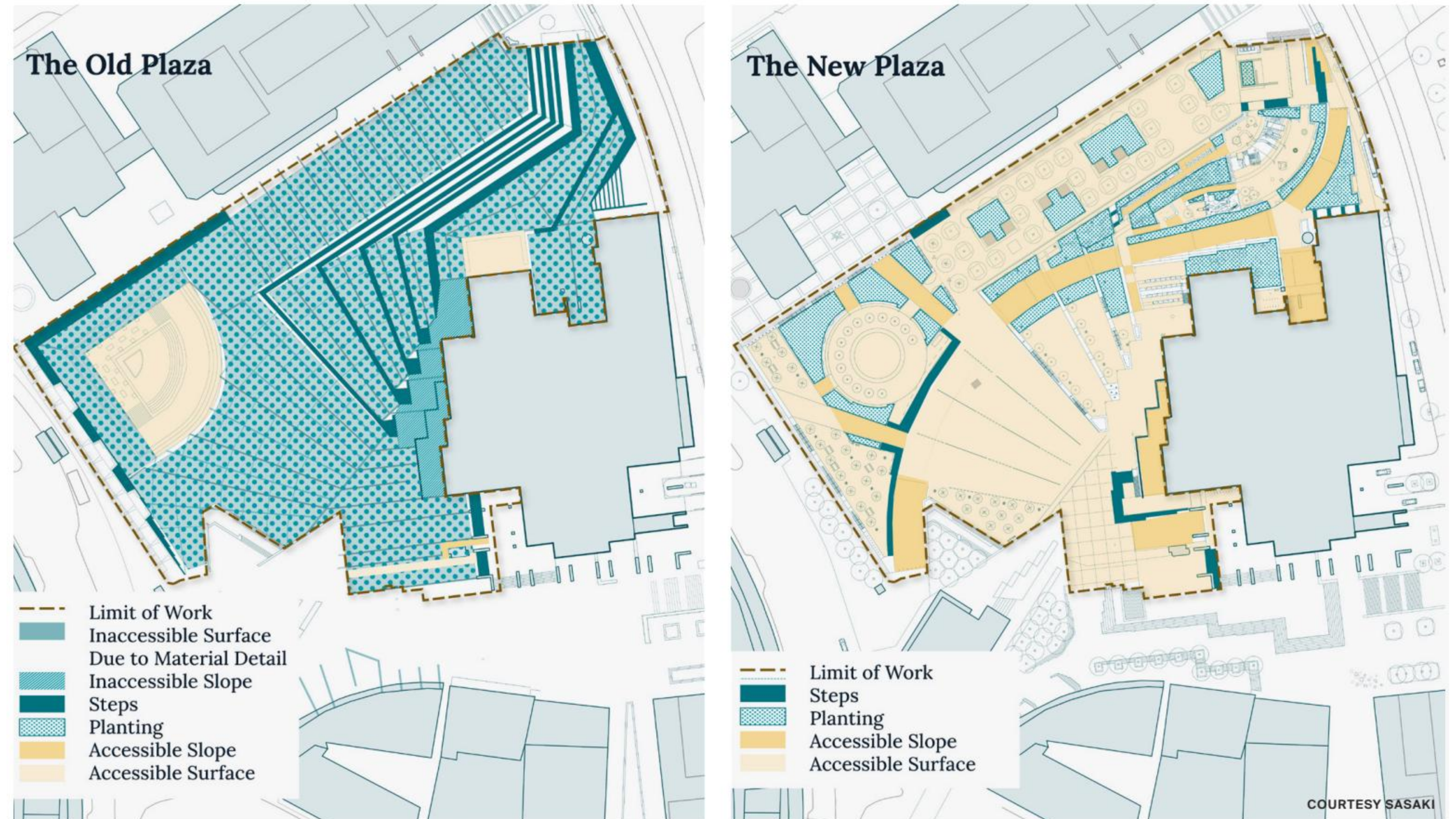
The process of this metamorphosis began in 2015, when Utile and Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architects, two other Boston design firms, did a master plan that called for "renovations to the plaza to encourage a wider range of activities at all times of the year and the creation of stronger connections between City Hall, the plaza, and the surrounding urban fabric."

"The master plan didn't have a clear implementation strategy," Fiske Crowell, Sasaki's principal in charge of the project, told *AN*. Nonetheless, in 2017 Sasaki won the commission to do the first phase. A second phase is now a bit up in the air as the city tries to form a scope for it. "The second phase could involve going into the building itself and making changes to the open fourth-floor plaza," he said.

Crowell has a deep personal stake in the project: He worked for Kallmann and McKinnell for 25 years, when it had changed its name to Kallmann McKinnell & Wood.

"I really wanted to go after this project," Crowell related. "In the interview I brought sketches that Gerhard and Michael had done. Then when we won the job we were able to meet with Michael shortly before he died. He said, 'I had always intended the building and the plaza to transition and change. I wanted them to evolve.'"

The new scheme is striking for its gentle, S-shaped meander that deftly negotiates the 25-foot grade change across the site. The



Above: Diagrams show how the surface of the plaza was reworked to become more accessible and better defined.

Left: Children and adults using the plaza's new playgrounds on opening day

previous fan-shaped brick expanses were a nightmare for the handicapped; now the park is fully accessible. At the park's center is a Fountain Terrace, with a waterfall inspired by an ancient spring that once flowed on-site. The playground anchors the northeast corner that fronts on Congress Street, terminating in the Civic Pavilion with community meeting rooms and bathroom facilities.

"Everywhere we have trees is permeable," said Garrett Craig-Lucas, an associate and landscape architect at Sasaki, pointing to the sustainability aspects of the work. He added that Sasaki established four overarching goals: a welcoming and civic front yard for the city; a flexible and accommodating event venue; a model for sustainability and resilience; and, finally, a

renewed cultural and architectural legacy. He thinks they achieved all four.

Like any great civic space, there is the matter of how many people it can handle, especially during victory celebrations in a sports-crazed city. "It now can accommodate 12,000 to 15,000 people," Craig-Lucas said. Crowell added: "The city was scared to death of 30,000-people events because they are dangerous."

On a recent mild winter weekday, office workers enjoyed their lunches on new wood benches; the playground was chock-full of happily screaming kids; and the Sasaki designers pointed proudly to the trees, even if they were barren. "Give them a few months, and they will be spectacular," Crowell said.

City hall itself remains tall and aloof in all its Brutalist glory. Crowell is matter-of-fact about how the people of Boston generally don't like the building while architects regularly sing its Corbusian praises. Mayor Michelle Wu likes the building, though: In 2021, she said she would "fight anyone who says it's not a beautiful building" while acknowledging she is in the minority with this opinion.

"We have to realize that there's a cultural gap here that may be difficult to bridge," Crowell said. "But the renovation of the plaza, making it a more inviting place, sets the building in a different context."

James McCown is a Boston-based writer specializing in architecture and design.

## Thomas Hacker, 1941–2023

One of Oregon's most influential architects died at 81.



REED HARKNESS

Thomas Hacker, founder of Portland, Oregon-based Hacker Architects, died on February 27. Hacker designed some of Oregon's most prominent and beloved civic, museum, library, and educational buildings, including the High Desert Museum, Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, Portland State University's Urban Center, Beaverton City Library, and Multnomah County's Woodstock branch library. He was also a teacher at the University of Oregon for 14 years and inspired and mentored two generations of architects at the school and later through his practice.

"Thom couldn't have been more charismatic if he tried," recalled Brad Cloepfil, one of his most accomplished students, whose practice, Allied Works Architecture, has become one of the nation's leading design firms. "He had a complete intensity and belief in what he was doing. Every discussion had an ethical foundation and bigger aspiration. To this day, it's rare that people talk about architecture in that way."

Born in Dayton, Ohio, Hacker earned a bachelor of arts from the University of Pennsylvania and went on to earn a graduate degree in the master of architecture program at the university's Graduate School of Fine Arts in 1963. In 1967 he won the Paul Cret Gold Medal for Best Graduate Thesis Project and the Alfred Brooks Gold Medal for Best Design Student. His talent caught the eye of Louis Kahn, who hired Hacker as a draftsman, swiftly elevating him to personal design assistant. With his mentor, Hacker worked on such 20th-century architectural icons as the Capitol Complex in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas.

"Thom Hacker has the natural gifts of the artist," wrote Kahn in a 1970 recommendation letter. "His intuitive sense of validity leads him to Truth.... This gift makes his work full of humanity and his reaction to the works of others responsive and constructive no matter how simple or complex.... The smallest detail is never, in him, detached from the whole."

A pacifist, Hacker earned conscientious objector status during the American war in Vietnam. With Richard Garfield, a fel-

low student and colleague in Kahn's office, Hacker trekked to the University of Oregon to teach. In the late 1970s he designed and built a house for himself and his wife, Margaret, employing his family members and students as builders. The home became a

kind of educational annex where he taught studios and his own free-form courses in "visual thinking."

In 1986, Hacker and Garfield left full-time academia to start Garfield Hacker Architects in Portland. The Biomedical Information Communication Center at Oregon Health & Science University became the firm's first important commission. In 1992 Hacker split from Garfield to found Thomas Hacker Architects. Distinct from other offices, the firm worked almost solely on civic, cultural, and educational buildings and steadily expanded to do work beyond Oregon, most prominently the Yellowstone Art Museum, Spokane Public Library, Pacific Highway's U.S. Port of Entry, and the Bend Public Library.

Hacker continued to practice architecture until his retirement in 2018. Always an artist, he reinvested himself in sculpture and painting postretirement. Hacker died owing to complications from an abdominal surgery in September. He is survived by Margaret, son Jacob, daughters Sarah and Alice, and grandchildren Noah, Ava, Owen, Gibson, Leon, and Moss.

While Hacker leaves many fine buildings to his credit, his legacy is also continued by those with whom he worked, who remember him fondly.

"Thom instilled people around him with the sense that everything we did was

part of something bigger than ourselves," said Hacker principal David Keltner. "One of the most profound expressions of this was when he stepped away from the firm that bore his name while he still had so much to give in order for others to have space to make it their own. Not for their sake, but for the legacy of the work to continue beyond himself."

"When I think of Thom, I reflect on the fact that he literally laid the foundation on which many of the most renowned firms in our region have built their design language," Corey Martin, principal at Hacker, recalled. "The way that he created dynamic space with structure, the way he related form to landscape, and the way he integrated art in the process and the design have inspired many of the best buildings in our region. There are aspects of his designs embedded in all of our buildings, and I think we all assess the quality of our work in some way in relation to the buildings he created."

"Thom had a way of seeing people that inspired them to be their best," remembered his daughter and Hacker principal Sarah Hacker. "He did this by listening, locking into your passions, and connecting purpose to every task. He made even the most mundane activities feel important and part of something bigger. It was a powerful tool." **The Editors**



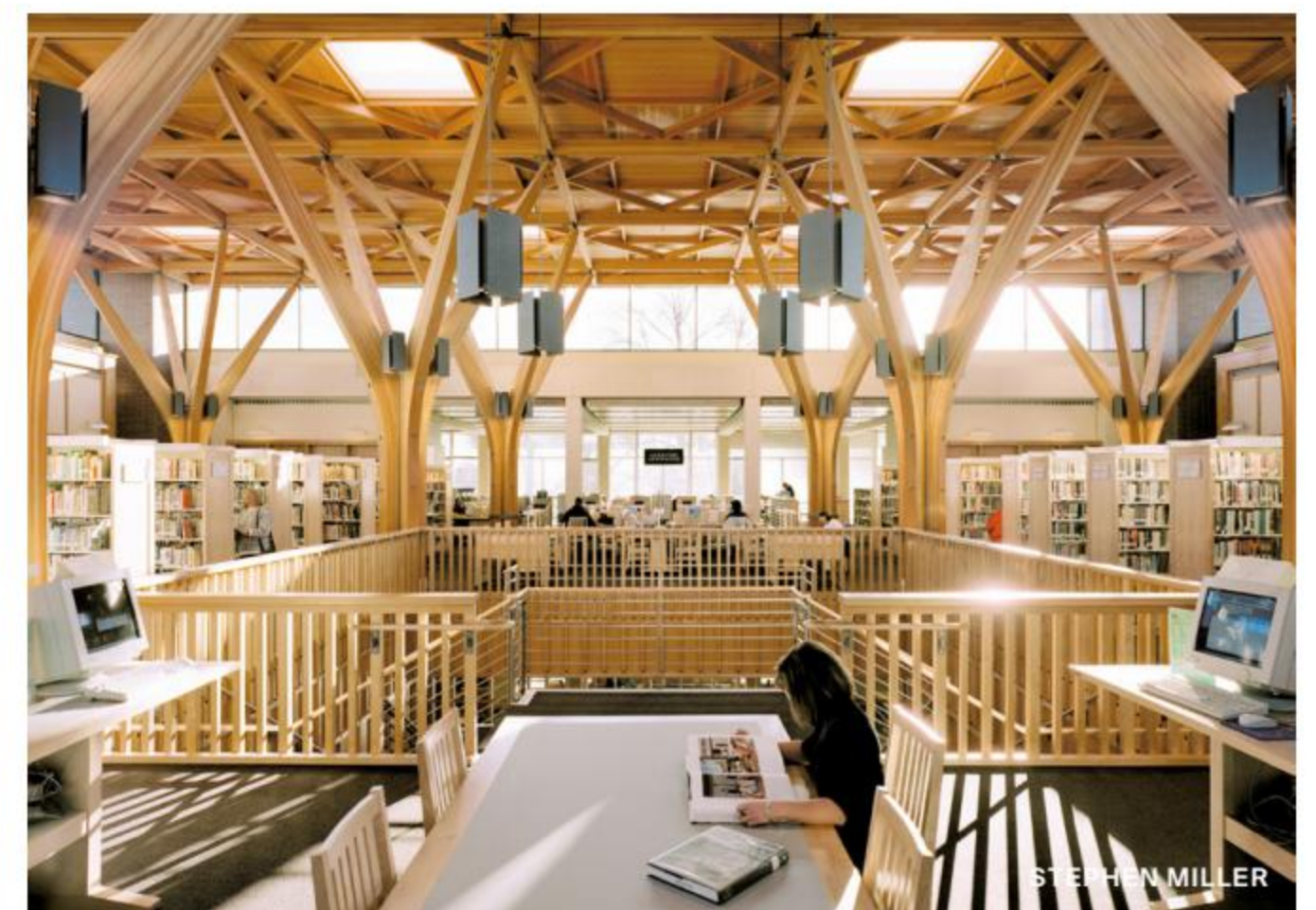
LARA SWIMMER



STRODE ECKERT



TIM HURSLEY



STEPHEN MILLER

Far top left: Thomas Hacker at work

Top, right: Woodstock Branch Library

Top, left: Discovery Hall, University of Washington, Bothell

Left: High Desert Museum

Above: Beaverton City Library

# 19 In Construction

## Not Skipping Leg Day

LIFTbuild's novel floor-lifting technology turns construction sites into fabrication factories.

The Exchange will be a regular mixed-use building when it is completed later this year. The 16-story structure—one of the tallest in Greektown, a vibrant historic neighborhood near downtown Detroit—will provide 165 living units atop a two-floor podium containing retail and office spaces. Most of Exchange's facade is clad in alternating vertical stripes of glass and metal paneling.

During most of its construction phase, however, its top-heavy design was reminiscent of the horizontal skyscrapers proposed by the avant-garde Russian architect El Lissitzky nearly a century ago. Fabrication became a spectacle as each floor of the building was assembled on the ground before being hoisted into place along the two concrete cores.

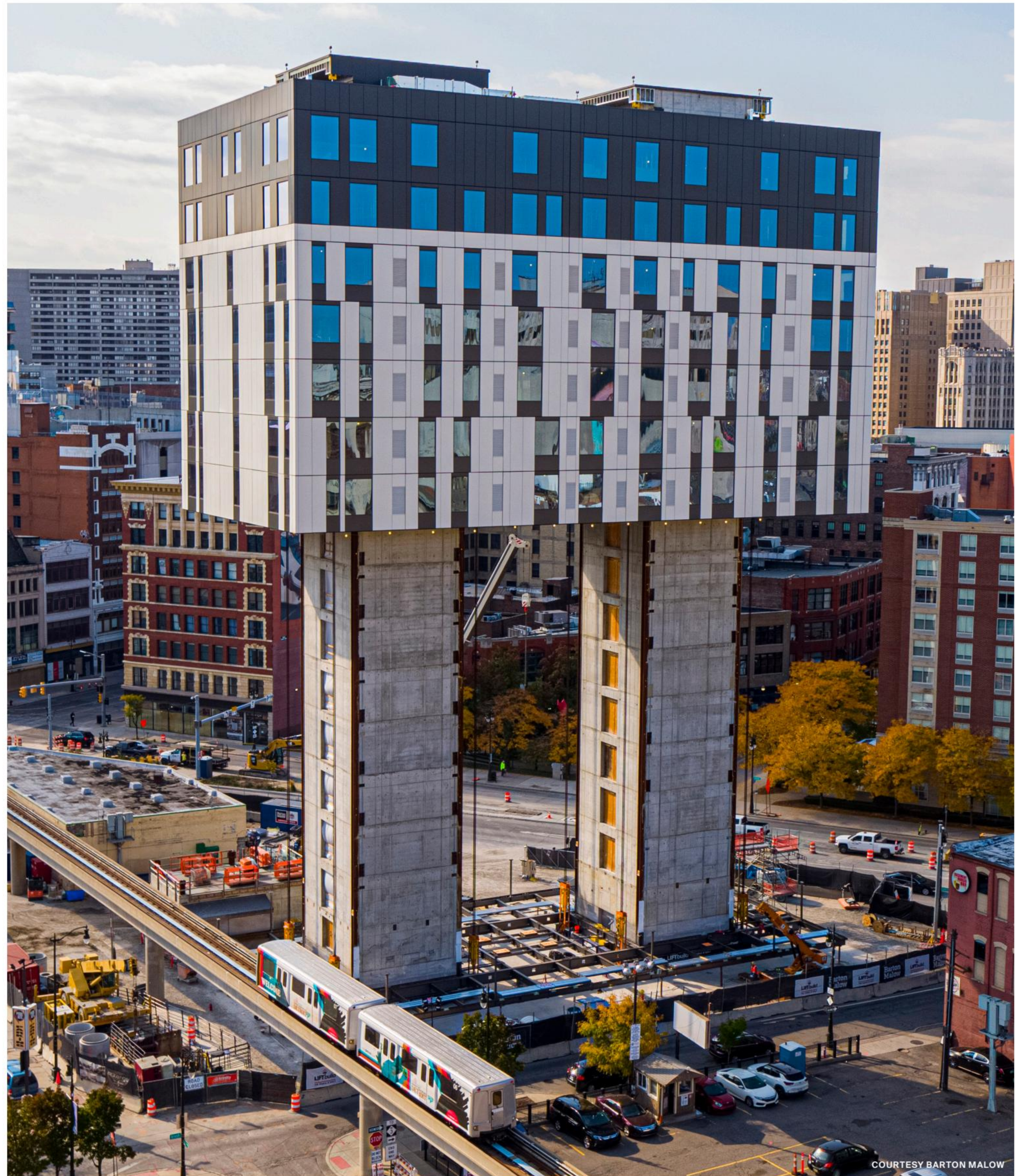
The eye-catching construction technique applied to the \$64 million project, however, is impressive technology. In collaboration with the Dearborn, Michigan-based architecture firm Ghafari Associates, Exchange is the first such structure developed by LIFTbuild, a technology and construction services provider and subsidiary wholly owned by Barton Malow, a general contracting company founded nearly a century ago in the nearby town of Southfield; it now has several offices across the country.

After nearly four years of research and development, which resulted in the awarding of 15 different patents, LIFTbuild was launched in 2017 to improve worker safety, construction timelines, and other long-standing issues commonplace in the American construction industry. Its technology operates through an integrated fabrication system that stands to reduce timelines, much like the radical visions for prefabricated skyscrapers that popped up throughout the 20th century. One such example is the Japanese Metabolist movement of the 1960s.

"We're taking a sequence of work that had traditionally been done in a serial manner and identifying where we could pull all of those activities in parallel," Steve Houston, senior director of LIFTbuild, told *AN*. Initial logistical challenges were overcome by working closely alongside local contractors and subcontractors who joined the project early in development "to help with the learning curve of completing the work on the ground rather than at height," according to Houston.

The result is a 207-foot-tall building that has been realized at a rapid pace: Work began in April of last year and is slated to be completed this June. "Unlike with conventional methods, in which the building footprint is consumed with the ground-floor construction," Houston explained, "the LIFTbuild system allows us to continually use this area, effectively creating 'more space' on our tight site."

Through its novel, top-down approach, LIFTbuild is able to efficiently sequence work around the structural cores while coordinating with material suppliers to create unitized assemblies for everything from the building's walls to its mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems. Each component is installed per floor when ready. After completing the structure of each floor plate, the assembly team lifts it six to eight feet to install MEP systems—much like mechanics working on the underside of a car—before using a jacking system to lift and lock each fully enclosed and weathertight floor into place. For Exchange, the process took nine or



The Exchange, the first structure built using LIFTbuild's technology, will be completed in June.

ten days per floor. "These levels are also environmentally controlled, which provides a higher quality control for installed finishes," Houston added. A snowstorm in early January posed little threat to Exchange's progress, as painters and other workers involved with building finishes were able to complete the interiors in a regulated setting.

LIFTbuild is one of many construction companies to offer new solutions for turning the construction site into a safer and more efficient work environment. The introduction of augmented reality (AR) devices to provide construction workers with "live" assembly instructions, for instance, has been

proposed by smart-technology start-ups including Alpin Innovation Labs and GAMMA AR, while the use of 3D-printing technology, such as by the Texas-based ICON, carries the potential to allow construction to occur at the push of a button.

Few others offer the ability to go impressively vertical, though. LIFTBuild claims its reimaged use of the construction site as a prefabrication space has significantly expedited the construction process relative to typical American methods for multistory projects. And because most of the hands-on construction takes place on the ground, the risk of on-site accidents is drastically

reduced. With virtually zero height limits, the methods developed by LIFTbuild could therefore reasonably be employed on a wide range of building types. It could even be used to address the urgent American housing shortage, which experts suggest can be alleviated by the construction of two to six million living units across the nation. "Now that Exchange is winding down," Houston concluded, "we're focusing on other projects across the Midwest."

Shane Reiner-Roth is a lecturer at the University of Southern California.

## Pixels of Memory

David Hotson Architect uses printed porcelain to create a memorial as part of its design for St. Sarkis Armenian Orthodox Church in Texas.

An impressive new complex for the St. Sarkis Armenian Orthodox Church in Carrollton, Texas, opened last year. The facility was designed by David Hotson Architect, a practice based in New York.

Hotson's office came to work on the project through Stepan Terzyan, an Armenian architect who had worked for him on projects in New York and Armenia. Terzyan's family, with sponsorship from Hotson, immigrated from Armenia to Texas, where they joined a local Armenian church which was worshipping in a converted residence. Seeking a permanent home, the congregation began work on a new-construction complex. Terzyan worked with the effort's lead donor and philanthropist Elie Akilian on early stages before subsequently inviting Hotson to head the design team.

The church's site, in a suburb north of Dallas, spans 5 acres. In addition to the church itself, the campus includes an athletic building, a community center, a courtyard, and an event hall (with seating for up to 400 people), all designed by Hotson's office.

The church's design was inspired by Saint Hripsime, an Armenian church completed in 618. David Hotson told *AN* that the church's inspiration included many designs characteristic of Armenian ecclesiastical architecture, including a monolithic character and sculptural feel.

The cornerstone for the church was laid in 2018. Reinterpreting Saint Hripsime's structural masonry and diagonal piers with contemporary materials, Hotson sought to achieve the modern look Akilian had requested while remaining respectful to the history of the church. Inside, the worship area is a bright, minimal space defined by vaults, domes, and the play of light and sound. Outside, Hotson also skillfully handled the design of a memorial that took shape on the facade: A cross made of 1.5 million pixels, one for each victim of the Armenian genocide, defines the facade's primary ornament.

Hotson had met representatives from the Italian porcelain manufacturer Fiandre, who had developed a system in which designs could be printed on facade slabs. The ventilated rain-screen system, developed by Fiandre's sister company, Granitech, could support a "very high resolution" image on a thin slab, Hotson said. The design team incorporated "geometrical and botanical strands" into an Armenian cross to develop a pattern for the facade and took care to frame its major apertures.

The pixelated cross was generated with a Grasshopper script. The pattern appears to be a cross from a distance, but at close range, ornamental motifs traditional in Armenian decorative arts become visible, creating a "nested" pattern, as Hotson described it. This was achieved by alternating the densities of the pixels that the script produced and then arranging the pixels by density, allowing for both the larger architectural-scaled design and intermediate layers.

Samples of the printed panels, 1 square meter in size, were shipped to the site to ensure that the color and contrast were precise, as this was crucial to honoring the monolithic aspect of the church. Other aspects of the facade also had to be color matched to make certain the effect continued across the entirety of the exterior.

Equipped with the desire to see to it that the project was delivered with a high degree of precision, Akilian worked as his own general contractor. Fiandre manufactured the panels with a 1-centimeter gap between each unit—the same width as each pixel—ensuring alignment

across the entirety of the west-facing facade. The pixel-level layout of each panel was mapped out by Hotson's office and shared with Fiandre, which began fabrication in early 2020. Production was paused as factory output was brought to a halt by the pandemic, and manufacturing was completed later that year. A local subsidiary installed the facades, which were shipped without breakage from the factory in Italy and put in place with extremely minimal adjustments required.

The patterned facade is west-facing and as such receives intense sunlight in Texas's climate. Considering this, the choice of an ultraviolet-resistant material was crucial to the project's longevity.

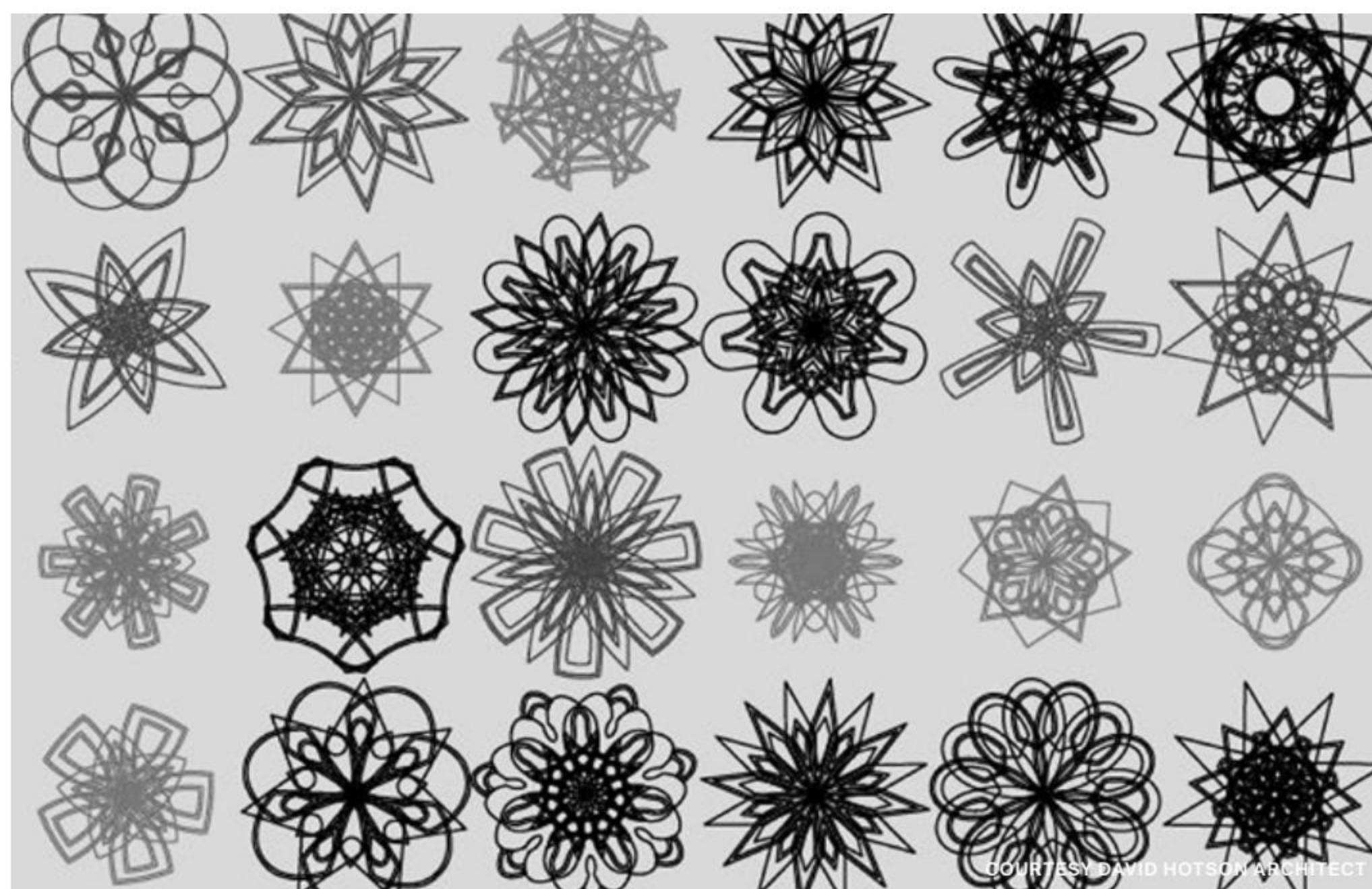
At the same time, the design team wanted to create a "luminous, ethereal interior lighting condition ... entirely illuminated by natural light during the day," Hotson told *AN*. Natural light enters the interior through glazing in the dome, in addition to limited glazing on the patterned facade, creating a "present luminous environment" in which color-temperature shifts and cloud coverage are perceivable in the interior.

Hotson said that this move complements the acoustics of the interior, which are shaped to support up to 250 worshippers. The air-conditioning units were located east of the church, and conditioned air was brought into the church at a low velocity through registers under the pews, "eliminating any mechanical vibration ... with reverberant vibration acoustics very close to those of traditional Armenian churches," Hotson shared. This limited energy use, with conditioned air being directed only into occupied volumes of the church. While this approach was aesthetically complementary to the daylighting, it was also designed in respect to Armenian church services, which are conducted as a conversation chanted between the priest, located on the altar, and the choir, located in a loft. The church requires no artificial acoustics and is left acoustically uninterrupted by MEP systems.

As the church's capacity did not require sprinklers, the vaults were designed as "scaleless, billowing volumes of illuminated space without any contemporary details that would distract from the simplicity of the composition," Hotson said. The design team worked with Formglas, a Canadian manufacturer, to realize the glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC) vaults, which were shaped with double-curved glass. The vaults were shipped and assembled as a kit of parts and set in precast concrete, with their mix carefully color-matched to the gray porcelain and precast facade elements.

The GFRC and precast elements could not use the same mix owing to differences in their manufacturing processes, so a methodical process of color-matching samples had to be completed to ensure uniformity in the facade. Exterior pavers and soffit finishes in the church's entry courtyard were also realized with porcelain.

Hotson's design was recognized with an honorable mention in the Religious category in *AN*'s Best of Design Awards last year. The church represents a respectful interpretation of ecclesiastical architecture that advances the use of contemporary materials and fabrication methods. It does not seek to incorporate a memorial in an additive way but retains it as an integral element. St. Sarkis has quickly established itself as a home for the local Armenian community. **Chris Walton**



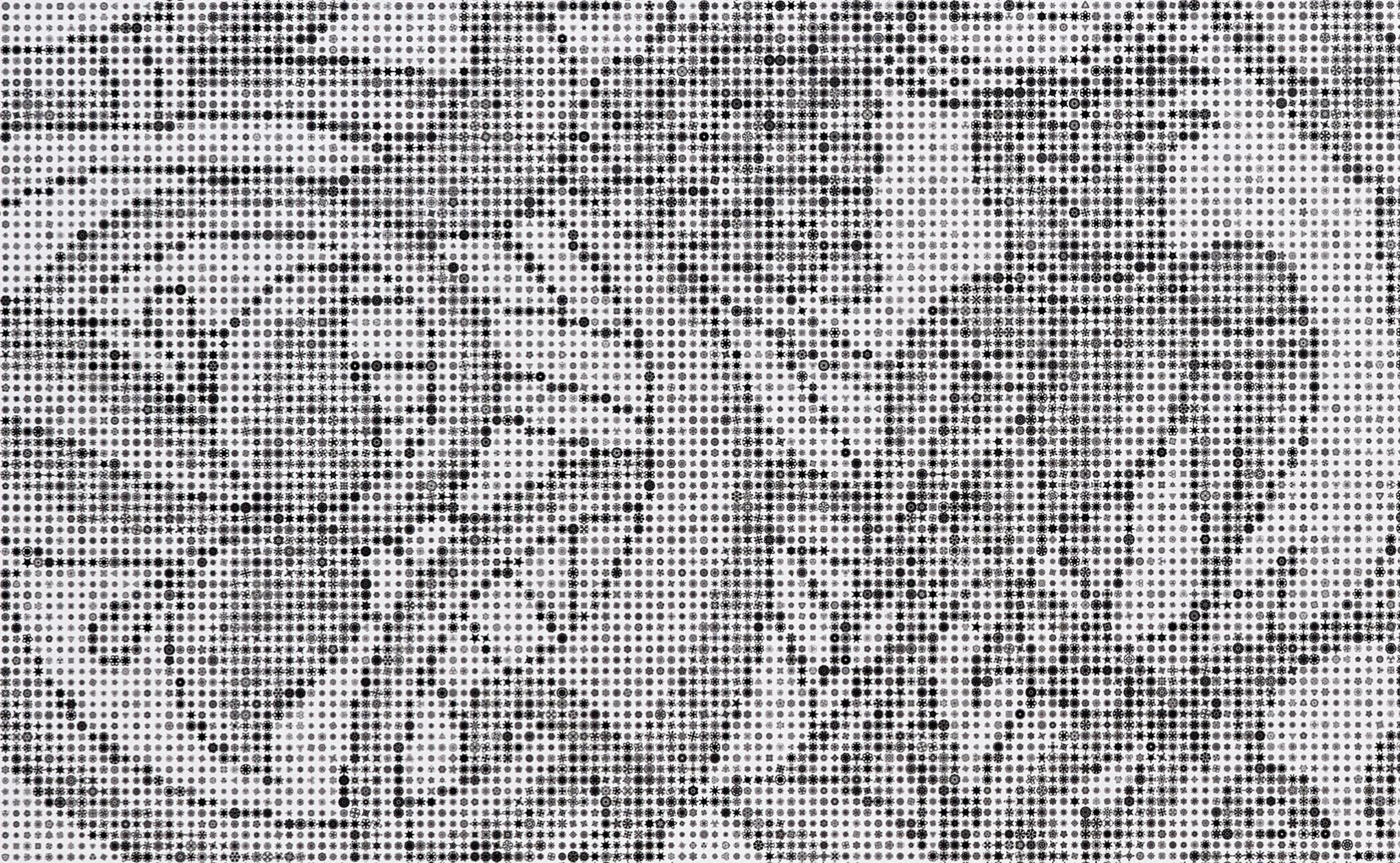
**Top:** The campus's exterior elevations were clad in porcelain panels.

**Middle:** The 1.5 million icons were generated using a Grasshopper script.

**Above:** Panels during the printing process



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# 22 Dispatch

## Never Going Back to My Old School

OFFPOLINN's Reggio School in Madrid echoes the golden era of innovative education design without repeating it.

*"We built the walls of this school together, men and women, because we wanted it to be new and different for our children."*

—the people of Villa Cella, Reggio Emilia, May 1945

After weaving through the streets of Madrid's El Encinar de los Reyes neighborhood, learners arrive at the Highlands Colegio, a private Catholic academy in a nondescript orthogonal brick building. Students are called over a loudspeaker and run to class in their blue uniforms: suits for the boys and skirts for the girls. Just beyond the school, however, is something completely different: A yellow, spaceship-like tower with a variety of windows, arches, sawtooth roofs, and concrete platforms rises in the distance. That building is the Reggio School, designed by the Office for Political Innovation (OFFPOLINN), a practice led by Andrés Jaque, with offices in Madrid and New York.

This contrast couldn't be any clearer. The architectural difference highlights Reggio's place in the long history of progressive school design and the quest to provide better learning environments through architecture.

Madrid's Reggio School program is based on the Reggio Emilia philosophy, a nonhierarchical, cooperative learning style born in 1945 in the wake of the destruction of Italy during World War II. In the region of Emilia-Romagna, the radical leftist Italian Women's Union built its own cooperative schools in bombed-out buildings. The Reggio Emilia pedagogy—a fresh start after Fascism destroyed the education system—eschews hierarchical information transfer in favor of self-development, communication, and encounters.

As part of this philosophy, the school environment is considered the "third teacher," in addition to human instructors and other children. Like its modernist predecessors, the architecture of the Reggio School is meant to give children a better learning environment to "arouse in children a desire for exploration and inquiry," according to a project description by OFFPOLINN.

The Reggio School in Madrid seeks to foster this interaction through its near elimination of hallways, a move that results in students of all ages wandering through different classrooms or entering rooms directly from communal spaces such as the cafeteria. The scheme follows in the lineage of early modernist and Functionalist plans that were less formally rigid and more functionally expressive than the strict plans of their Beaux Arts predecessors. Both Wright's Hillside Home School II at Taliesin (1901) and Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer's German Trade Union School (1930) are examples of this impulse, as they reorganized the school with carefully designed arrangements of classrooms, connections to nature, and specialized common areas such as cafes, gymnasiums, and auditoriums.

This modernist idea of freeing schools (in plan) from institutional rigidity would continue through the 1960s and 1970s with later progressive movements such as Hertzberger's eclectic, flexible designs for the Montessori

system of interactive, self-directed learning, or the open-school concept, which attempted to almost completely eliminate walls to foster communication and interaction among students of all levels. Open-concept school buildings are exemplified by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer's Mt. Healthy Elementary School (1972) in Columbus, Indiana, which to this day has retained its open classroom clusters with most of the original architecture intact.

At Reggio, the question "Is having another class of students walking through a science lab a good idea?" is an important part of an ongoing experiment in which the plan acts as a social organizer within the pedagogical ambitions of a given school.

In section, the Reggio's programmatic reorganization is heightened in the central atrium space, "a more-than-human assembly at the school's heart," Jaque told *AN* on a visit to the school in January. Here the architects employ a vertical organization system they describe as "the stacking of diversity as an environment for self-education." Younger students are located on the ground floor, with older students on floors above, a strategy that recalls the Indian Community School (2007) in Milwaukee by Antoine Predock with collaborating designer Chris Cornelius. At Reggio, water and soil tanks are placed alongside circulation paths, and an indoor garden acts as a gathering space as well as a natural ecosystem within the building—a nonhuman classmate.

Fostering a connection to nature via outdoor courtyards, walkways, and play areas has long been a theme in modern school design, especially in the work of California architects like Richard Neutra and John Carl Warnecke. Madrid's Reggio school brings the outside in to create a triple-height indoor landscape that acts as a central community space; it's a combination courtyard-atrium, and, notably, both were common elements in modernist school design.

It is not all fun and games. One of the biggest challenges in school design is cost. Reggio was built cheaply at an overall cost of about \$9 million. While the average price per square foot for schools in Spain is about \$162 per square foot, Reggio landed at about \$120 per square foot. In the 21st century, environmental challenges can further complicate school budgets, but Jaque and OFFPOLINN took it as an opportunity for clever experimentation. At Reggio, they call their strategy "thinning, skinning, and make fluffy."

Using less material ("thinning") meant reducing the amount of concrete through close collaboration with the structural engineer, eliminating 33 percent of the embodied energy in the structure. Taking off cosmetic materials ("skinning") such as wallcoverings, drop ceilings, and raised flooring, OFFPOLINN created a new aesthetic of "nakedness," exposing systems as much as possible. On the exterior, a special cork insulation developed by OFFPOLINN was sprayed on ("make fluffy"). It gives the building its unique coloring, as well as double the R-value required by local code, and saves money both pre- and postoccupancy. And the rough surface of the cork insulation is expected to grow its own



JOSÉ HEVIA

ecosystem with fungi, plants, and animals.

Clever use—or nonuse—of materials has long been a tenet of modernist school design, often to exciting ends. The Architects Collaborative, led by Walter Gropius and Norman Fletcher, designed its "Universal School" in 1954 as a thought experiment for *Collier's* magazine. Composed of any number of square pavilions made of prefabricated materials, the modular system could be economically built and endlessly customized. The colorful metal tubes at John Johansen's Smith Elementary School (1969) in Columbus are made of painted metal farm sheds. Similarly, at Reggio, the building's aesthetic—both the "naked" interior and the "fluffy" exterior—comes from solutions required by economy. OFFPOLINN also employed several cheap materials that are not "fashionable," yet give the school its distinctive aesthetics. Glass blocks, stone sinks from artisans in a nearby village, and circular windows used in camper van conversions are all off-the-beaten-path materials that break from the everyday school building palette.

The design decisions are part of a holistic strategy: Expose and express systems to give students awareness of those systems and their relationships to them. This includes learning about mechanical and structural systems, but also ecological systems and even social and political systems. The classrooms' adjacencies to nature and common spaces are more intertwined than in a typical school, forcing students to take part in the "public" aspects of the school's community and teaching them lifelong skills about societal participation.

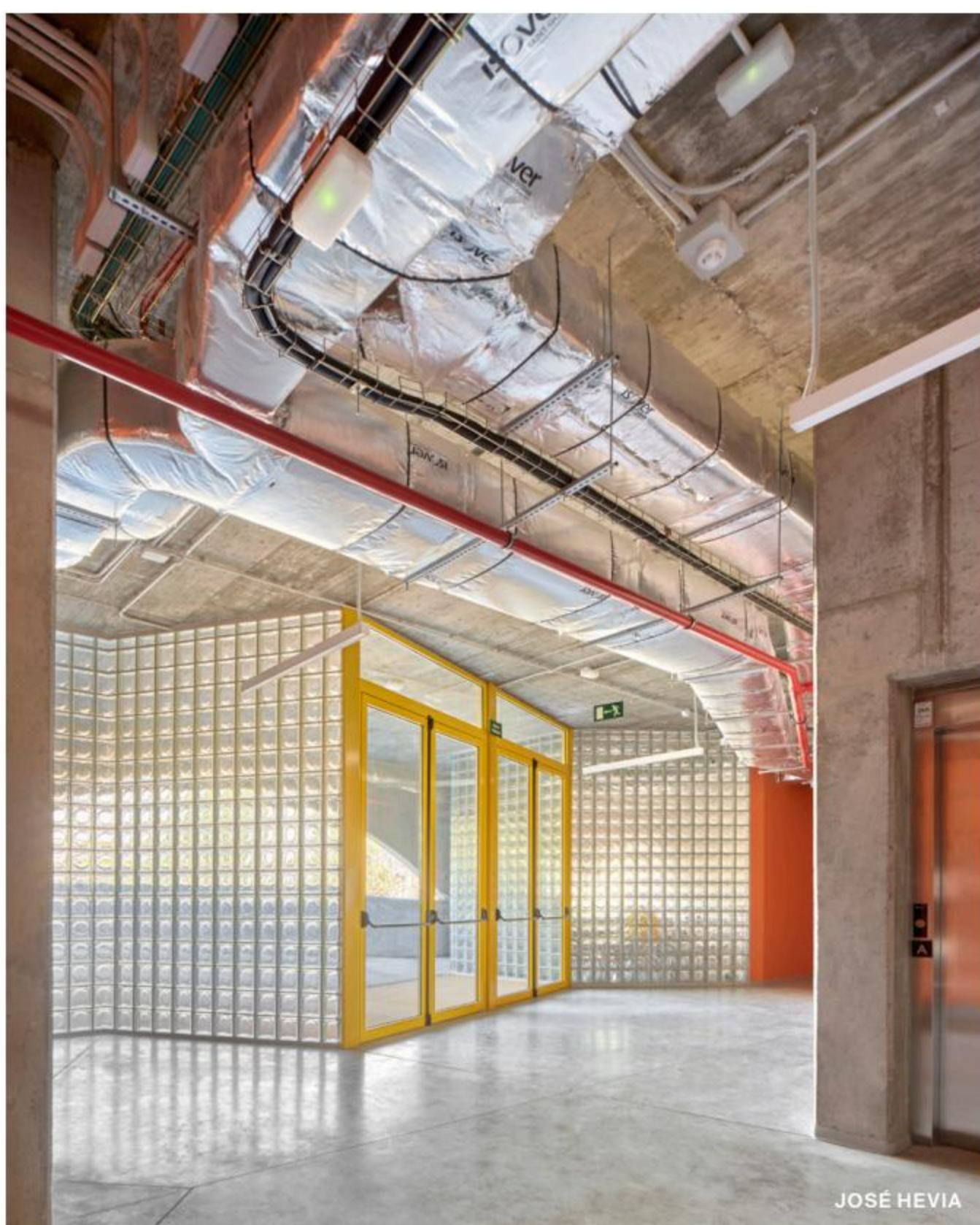
Jaque's conceptualization of the school building as "naked" resonates with the over-articulation of program in what critic R. Thomas Hille called the "associational" schools of German architect Hans Scharoun,

who developed several designs for schools that would simulate a democratic society by grouping classrooms in levels, or neighborhoods, along a public "street" corridor. For Jaque, however, this over-articulation is not only programmatic but also used to expose building systems and integrate nature in an almost mannerist way. The end goal is the same: to foster a sense of connection between students and the outside world, both natural and social.

This idea of school as a model society isn't fully formed in its site plan and relationship to the neighborhood. The connection to the adjacent linear park is not yet clear, as the park is currently being planned by OFFPOLINN's team, and the school's landscaping is not fully grown. A large concrete slab will likely be augmented with some more hospitable plantings, furniture, or paint that will invite the community in. OFFPOLINN's hypnotic, almost dizzying rhetoric might seem needlessly academic, but it ultimately checks out when touring the work it generates. In fact, the ideas become part of the building's lore, adding a layer of inspiration and enchantment to the school itself.

In 2023, it is rare to see a building that actually innovates in program, material, or ecological strategy, let alone all three. The Madrid Reggio School does this in a way that aligns with the best intentions and examples of modernism. Schools are often the first place that impressionable students encounter architecture, and these environments can be formative when embracing a life of learning, exploration, and self-education. If that's the role of a school building, then the Reggio School in Madrid stands to play it beautifully.

**Matt Shaw is a New York-based columnist and author of the forthcoming book *American Modern: Architecture Community Columbus Indiana*.**



JOSE HEVIA



JOSE HEVIA



JOSE HEVIA



JOSE HEVIA



JOSE HEVIA

**Facing page:** The school's "fluffy" facade is a sprayed-on cork insulation.

**Top, left:** Systems are left exposed across the building.

**Top, middle:** Classrooms are spare and reconfigurable.

**Top, right:** Paint accentuates an open-air stair.

**Above:** Bathroom finishes rise above the work's tight budget.

**Right:** The triple-height, planted, combination courtyard and atrium

# 24 Studio Visit

## On Balance

In the work of Robert Hutchison Architecture, design and experimentation find equal footing.

In 2009, Hutchison & Maul Architecture was honored by the Architectural League of New York as one of its annual Emerging Voices. But having “emerged,” the Seattle office began receding from partners Robert Hutchison and Tom Maul’s career horizons, and the two parted ways in 2013. That same year, Hutchison, a structural engineer turned architect and an alum of Miller + Hull Partnership, established his namesake studio. In retrospect, he cited a desire to find a “better life balance between work and travel and a better professional balance between what you could call ‘conventional’ architecture and architectural ‘investigations.’”

An early “Gordon Matta-Clark-inspired intervention” at a pair of condemned buildings

initiated with Maul revealed the value, and relevance, of speculation to design. Teaching studio at the University of Washington underscored that insight. “I loved doing buildings and working with clients, but I also enjoyed doing *other things*,” Hutchison told *AN*. “Teaching and exhibitions and installations.” In 2010, he landed a Japan/US Friendship Creative Artists Fellowship. The conferment, which entailed a five-month stay in Japan, emboldened him “to seek out other ‘extracurricular’ opportunities” like the Rome Prize, which he won in 2017, and the MacDowell and Loghaven fellowships, awarded to him in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Hearing Hutchison discuss his pace and style of practice suggests an architect who

is conscious of limits. His staff of five work in an annex he built behind his Fremont home. (“I’m very happy with the size that we are. Also, we can’t fit any more people in a 430-square-foot studio.”) The projects they take on often carry tight budgets, with little in their outlays to support the sumptuous joinery that has come to define the work of larger Pacific Northwest firms. (“We don’t have the ability to do a bunch of detailing. We typically have one moment per project.”) Designs are arrived at through tried-and-true methods, with hand sketches and scale models gradually superseded by matrices in AutoCAD. (“We aren’t a BIM office. We haven’t had a project that’s been appropriate for it.”) Stained wood siding routinely makes

an appearance in those designs. (“Yeah, we do that a lot.”)

It’s a truism that limits may channel creativity toward productive ends. For Hutchison, impositions can have a clarifying effect by isolating certain determinative factors, be they budgetary, programmatic, or spatial. This allows him to set aspects of site, material, and as often is the case in his studio’s work, section in relation to one other. Ideally, the discrete moments produced during this interplay—for instance, “carefully articulated apertures that frame a cypress tree here or a patch of moss there”—settle into a meaningful equipoise. It’s the balance to which Hutchison frequently returns, in work and, increasingly, in life.



## 1 Casa Temascaltepec 2022

This off-the-grid retreat in Temascaltepec, Mexico, a couple of hours east of Mexico City, is Hutchison's best-known work so far. (It also earned the office a Best of Design Award from *AN* last year.) Not only are all of the constitutive shelters—a small dwelling, studio, and bathhouse—stick-framed and clad in darkly stained wood siding like many of his residential projects in Seattle, but they also exert their autonomy through oddly pitched geometries, peaked dormers, and wayward apertures, trademarks of Hutchison's that effect something like personality. A collaboration with friend and peer Javier Sanchez of JSa Arquitectura (the two were introduced in 2007 by architect Marlon Blackwell), the Casa Temascaltepec is internally known as the Rain Harvest House for its capacity to collect and treat water on-site. Hutchison and Sanchez were intent on preserving the natural feel of the surrounds, which lie about 7,000 feet above sea level in a mountain valley. "We thought of them less as buildings than lightweight pavilions," Hutchison said, "that then disappeared in head-high vegetation and shrubs. And that's exactly what they do."

## 2 House O 2022

Built for Ken Tadashi Oshima, a professor of architectural history and Hutchison's colleague at the University of Washington, House O follows on intense research into detached auxiliary dwelling units (DADUs) in Seattle, even as it presents an anomalous condition of sorts. "Typically, houses here are completely pushed to the front of the lot and then you have a big backyard where the DADU goes," Hutchison explained. "But in this case, the existing 1920s house was pushed all the way to the back of the property, so there's really no room behind it to put a DADU. This became a way of adding a new house in front, which completely changed the face of the property." Hutchison's studio, which completed a series of DADU designs for a developer before being stalled by COVID-19, first dipped its toe into the increasingly popular typology in 2018 with Alley House #1. Located 10 feet away from Hutchison's office in the family backyard, that project is about 200 square feet smaller than House O's 1,000; both are spatially complex for their small size, though the latter's butterfly roof (which clears the way for a loft) offers a tad more excitement.

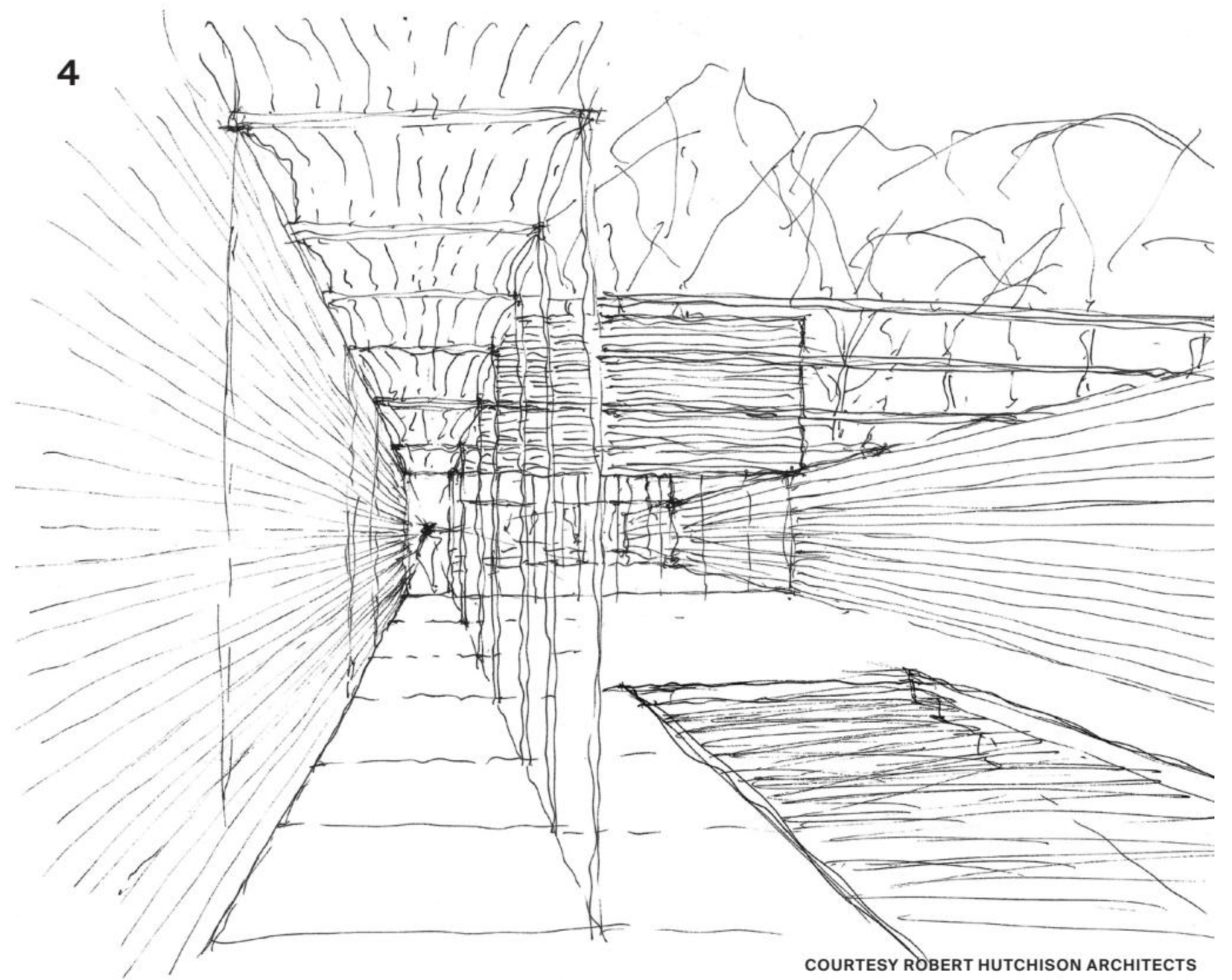
## 3 Memory Houses 2010– & Memory Landscapes, 2023–

A fictional grouping of eight small dwellings on the Chesapeake Bay, *Memory Houses* is in the mold of projects by serial draftsmen such as Douglas Darden and John Hejduk. Hutchison initiated the series in 2010 during a studiosojoir in Japan as a Japan/US Friendship Creative Artists fellow. Personal recollections of architectural form are refracted in the recombinant elements (steeply pitched roofs, solitary towers in a landscape) that bestow an identity on each house. Though it was a conceptual project, Hutchison had his team develop their designs as though they would be built. "In the Pacific Northwest, there is a pretty strong emphasis on structural tectonics—something we haven't historically been interested in. But *Memory Houses* actually allowed me to start to think about the role of structure in the architectural resolution. So maybe we're coming around to the other side." A 2023 Loghaven fellowship allowed Hutchison to apply the project's framing to an entirely different context: eastern coastal Japan. *Memory Landscapes*, which will benefit from another Japan/US Friendship Creative Artists Fellowship, looks to find future uses for the region's obstructive tsunami-grade infrastructure.

## 4 Casa La Plata 2022–

With this low-slung courtyard house outside Buenos Aires, Argentina, Hutchison's studio continues to expand its geographic reach. The design of the residential commission also breaks with the time-tested use of stained-timber cladding over stick framing and opts instead for a masonry-and-steel construction. "Most of our projects tend to have tight budgets, which has made us good at economy and creating economical buildings, but it's also meant that we've never had the opportunity to do a brick building," Hutchison said. "In Argentina, it's the cheapest thing you can do. They also have no seismic conditions, so the scheme is going to have a lot of brick-and-steel vaults." The commission comes from a two-time client, for whom Hutchison built a house in Seattle. "It's not like we're trying to seek out this stuff—it's just the way things develop," he said. "Marlon [Blackwell] has this great line, 'There's no bad projects, only bad clients.' You need a good client in the end to make a good project."

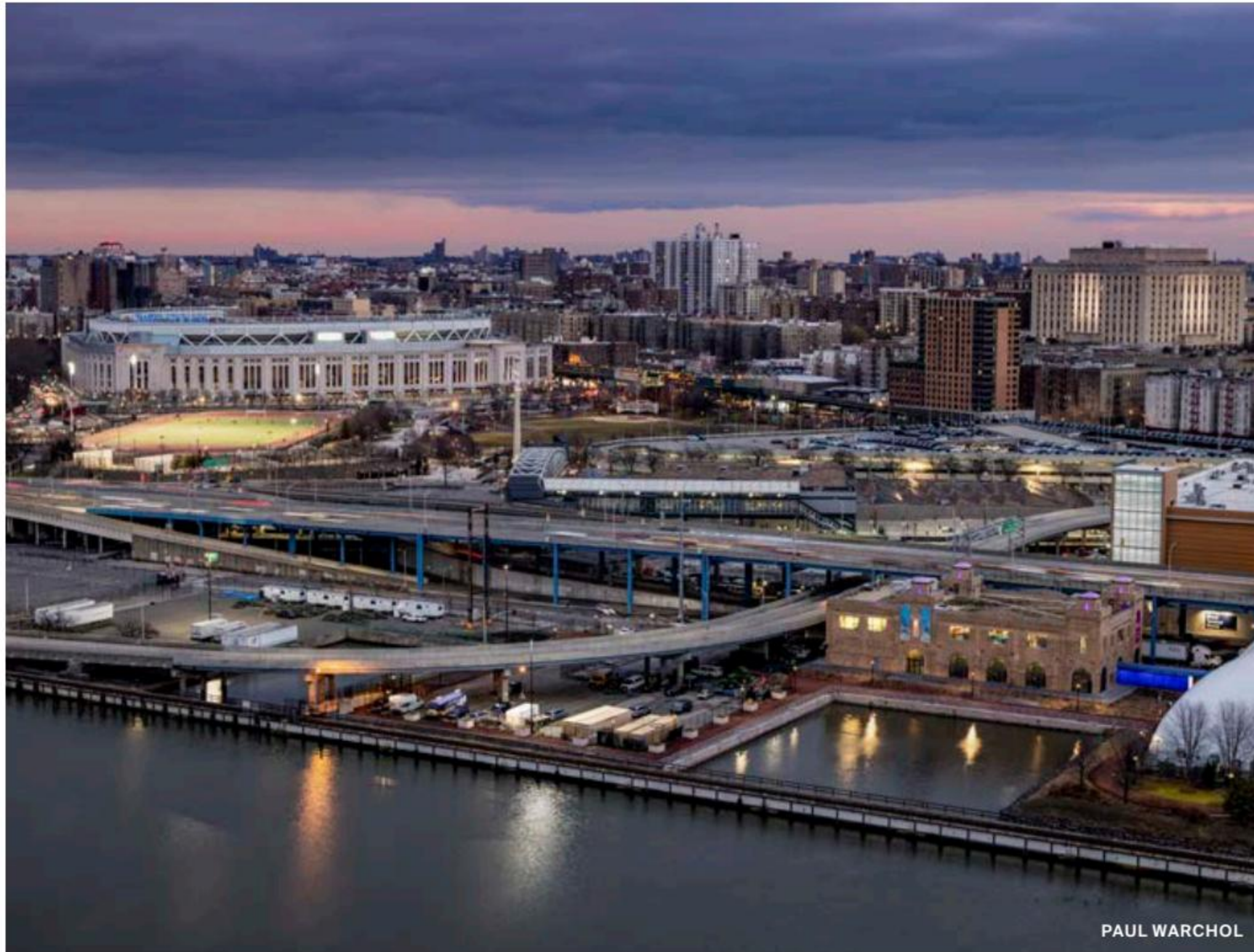
Samuel Medina is a writer and the editor of *New York Review of Architecture*.



# 26 Anthology

## Playful, Flowing, Light

O'Neill McVoy Architects uses curving CLT to shape a fun interior for the Bronx Children's Museum.



PAUL WARCHOL



PAUL WARCHOL



PAUL WARCHOL

**Architect:** O'Neill McVoy Architects

**Location:** The Bronx, New York

**Lighting design:** Tillotson Design Associates

**Structural engineer:** Silman

**MEP engineer:** Plus Group Consulting Engineering

**Code consultant:** CODE

**LEED consultant:** ADS Engineers

**AV/IT/security consultant:** TM Technology Partners

For the past 18 years, the Bronx Children's Museum has served its mission with an on-the-go, "with or without walls" attitude. Infamously known to locals as a museum on wheels, it began with a big purple bus that engaged more than 103 educational institutions and 125,000 children across the New York borough.

Today, with the help of its design team, led by Brooklyn-based O'Neill McVoy Architects, the mobile museum has found a permanent location on Exterior Street in the Bronx, in addition to its beloved traveling venue. The permanent museum now occupies 13,650 square feet on the second floor of the old

Bronx Terminal Market power station. Lodged between the Harlem River and the elevated I-87 freeway, the site benefits from multiple means of access, including two subway stops and the Yankee Stadium Metro-North station.

O'Neill McVoy Architects took on the project with the goal of making sure kids felt comfortable and engaged inside the museum while always feeling connected to The Bronx. If you've ever met a person from The Bronx, you'll know it: There is a lot of pride in the community. The inclusion of Bronx-based artists throughout the museum and scenic exhibits that notate specific locations in the borough helps the design of the museum to showcase community pride in a way that's completely accessible for children.

Inside the powerhouse, the second floor's 22-foot floor-to-ceiling height is split into three levels that are connected via ramps. These curved and suspended platforms constitute the museum's three areas: early learner, community arts, and natural sciences. "The use of curves is very important," Chris McVoy, of O'Neill McVoy Architects, told *AN* during a recent visit. "All of the structural aesthetics follow the philosophy of a child's

spatial perception." There are no corners: Each wall in the space reads as one continuous mass. The architecture leads children to wander through the space and interact with moments of spatial nesting. One example is the Cove, a small space that is carved from underneath one of the higher platforms offers a rabbit hole for little explorers.

A true sense of togetherness integrates the exhibits with the architecture. One key location is the Casita, located on the left-hand side of the second tier, a straight shot from the museum entrance. The Casita is a partially open, simple framed construction of a tiny house and serves as the site of afternoon story time, in addition to hosting an array of interactive play stations and high-lighting literature focused on agriculture, food, and culture in The Bronx.

Throughout, small windows are shaped organically to mimic the geometry of rocks. These apertures are cut into a technological feat: The curvy, flowing structure is realized in black-spruce cross-laminated timber (CLT) and constitutes the first use of curved CLT in the U.S. Joining the playful scheme with CLT was a smart move. McVoy observed that

union "innovated materials along with the space to do things that you couldn't do spatially without that material." Here, the CLT is valuable as structure, as a curved form, and for its warmth.

Beth O'Neill, principal architect at O'Neill McVoy Architects, said that a "connection to nature was important in selecting materials." Natural materials were selected to help children identify the connections between nature and the built environment. One of the themes for the project as established by Carla Precht, founding executive director of the museum, was "[w]ater connects us all." O'Neill and McVoy incorporated this idea into the design by giving emphasis to spatial forms that help visualize the Harlem River and through subtler, more environmental moves.

Looking up, the lighting, handled by Tillotson Design Associates, is truly fantastic. Aesthetically, the old factory window frames broadcast the history of the site and provide ample light that bounces off the river water outside into the museum. Additionally, directional lights clustered in a triangulated grid distribute lighting onto the artwork and scenic experiential exhibits.



PAUL WARCHOL



PAUL WARCHOL



PAUL WARCHOL

**Facing page, left above:** The Bronx Children's Museum seen within its urban context

**Facing page, right:** CLT assemblies define walkways and incorporate exhibits.

**Left:** The ceilings and ductwork are painted light blue to mimic the sky.

**Facing page, left below:** The former power plant of Bronx Terminal Market along the Harlem River is the site of the museum.

**Above, left:** Translucent acrylic guards further lighten the wood arcs.

**Below:** For O'Neill McVoy Architects, the curving forms relate to how children perceive and organize space.

**Above, right:** Ramps connect the three museum levels.

The coordinated ceiling evinces the detailing involved in making children feel comfortable in the space. Instead of hard ductwork, soft runs of DuctSox are used, and the mechanical equipment and acoustic plaster have been custom tinted a light blue hue to mimic the sky. This treatment reflects skylight onto the surfaces below. It's particularly striking when the light meets the acrylic guardrails that usher movement up and down the ramps.

Precht remembered that originally she was "afraid of working with an architect, or at least one that had modern sensibilities, because of how they see space." But she was convinced by the architects' scheme: "This plan was perfect, and it all came together!"

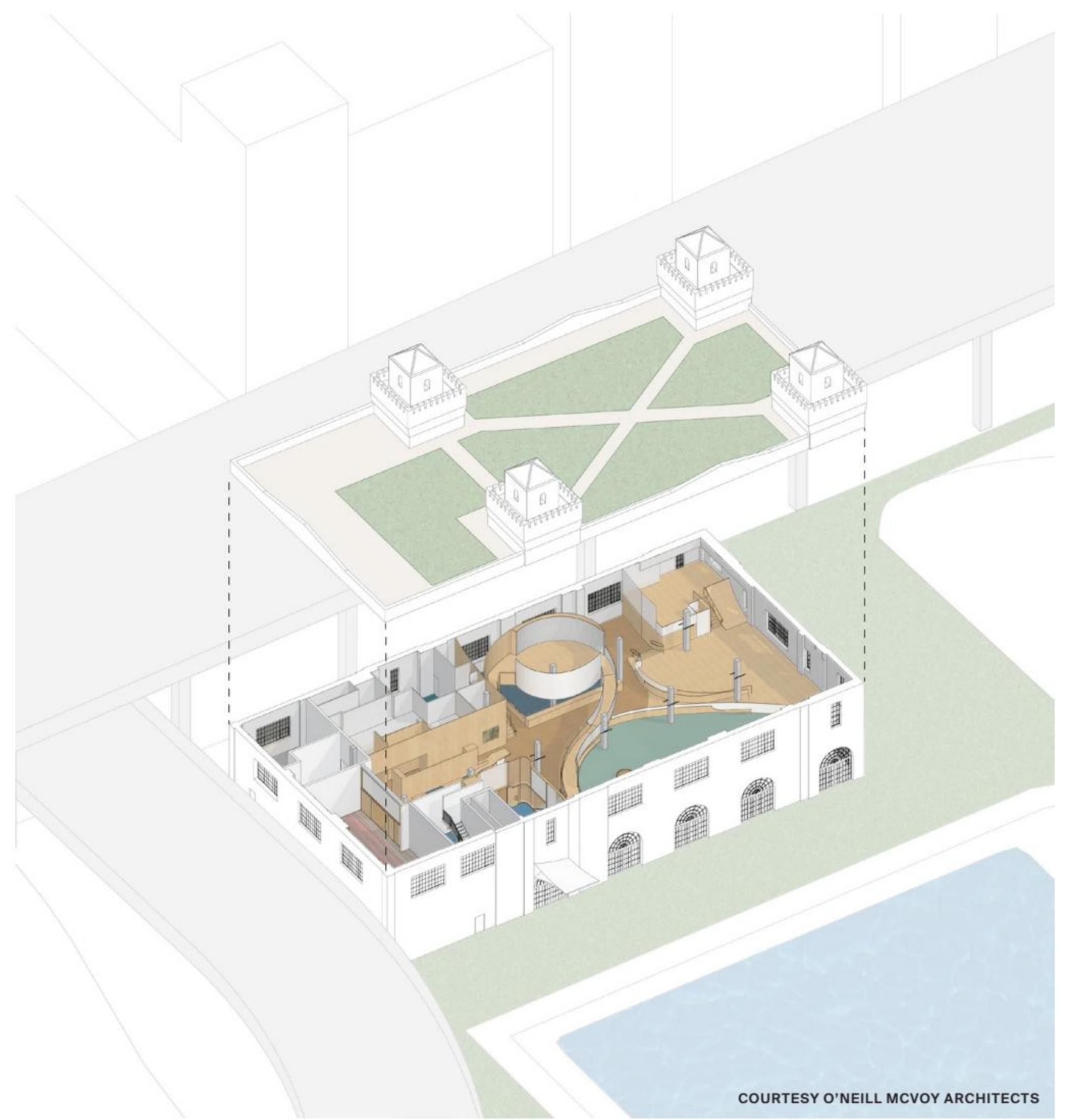
"We started with no preconceptions," McVoy said. "But we also begin every project as a fresh start and not with thinking about style. All of the ideas come from the specifics of that project—in this case, it was ideas from the children and Carla—and then connecting them with the sensibility of how kids understand space."

In addition to its formal qualities, the museum is well equipped for all the supportive measures that a children's museum needs.

A washroom is hidden in the "back of house" under the platforms; here, all the toys and physical play items are washed during the midday break, during afternoon closing, and again at the end of the day. Additionally, the enclosure of the early learners play space, tailored to children ranging from newborns to tiny tots, functions as storage for switching out toys and books used by museum staff.

Precht recalled early moments of speaking with parents and community members about what they might want to see in a children's museum for kids raised in The Bronx. "I remember some people saying, 'We need a space where kids can retreat that is different than where they are from,' you know? In The Bronx, like in many cities, everything is orthogonal. You live in a cellular room that is in a rectangular building." She said the goal was to make "a space that didn't feel quite like a school. Organic shapes and nature were a way to create that kind of space—one that was totally different."

**Keren Dillard is a designer, writer, and researcher currently pursuing her master's in architecture at Princeton University.**



COURTESY O'NEILL MCVOY ARCHITECTS

COMMON WORKS  
ARCHITECTS

*Emerging*  
DREAM THE  
COMBINE

*Voices*  
JANETTE KIM

KATHERINE HOGAN  
ARCHITECTS

LANZA ATELIER



N H D M  
ARCHITECTS

ORU — OFICINA  
DE RESILIENCIA  
URBANA 2023

TERREMOTO

The Architectural League of New York  
announces the winners of its annual  
competition for young practices.



LEONID FURMANSKY



CAYLON HACKWITH



COURTESY COMMON WORKS ARCHITECTS



CAYLON HACKWITH

# COMMON WORKS ARCHITECTS

Located in Oklahoma City, Common Works Architects is currently a team of three led by Asa Highsmith, who grew up in Tishomingo, a small, three-stoplight town near the state's border with Texas. He later studied architecture at The University of Oklahoma in Norman. Common Works is a small practice, and that's the point. "We're always going to be a small firm," Highsmith told AN. "I turn things down simply for my own happiness. I have limitations. It's hard to come up with new ideas when you're inundated by the firehose that is modern media."

When one thinks of architecture and Oklahoma, the first thought is of the American School as defined by Bruce Goff and later practitioners like Rand Elliott—an adventurous, zany strand of "organic" modernism indebted to Frank Lloyd Wright, but much more twisted. However, the vast majority of buildings in the state are rather banal, defined by strip malls and tract housing. Common Works engages with this bland context to develop an architecture that is quiet, connected to place, and accessible to normal people, while being elevated enough to appear in the upper echelon of design publications.

"In America in general, especially in the middle and the West, we haven't been around enough to develop a vernacular," Highsmith said. "You're in the parking lot

of a Best Buy, looking around, and there's nothing worth caring about. For me it was figuring out where can a vernacular come from. The things that interest me the most, though they're simulations of simulations, are our Sears, Roebuck housing and all these British/French Tudor-inspired pre-war buildings. To me they speak from an era of more hope and positivity than we live in today. Some of the detailing and thoughtfulness that's there has always resonated with me more than other things I see in our local context."

One of the most surprising successes of Common Works' portfolio is the many strong multifamily projects the firm has to its credit—a notoriously difficult typology to do well, especially in this region, but one that is greatly needed. "Oklahoma is affected by the housing crisis. There's just not enough," Highsmith said. "We need to ensure that the homes that are here will increase in value and ensure that we create the economic conditions that will enable people to build social connections and capital in the city." To pull these projects off, Highsmith has teamed with young, first-time developers. "The missing middle is interesting to me," he said, "and they're looking to do smaller multifamily development. It's been perfect to find those people." **AS**

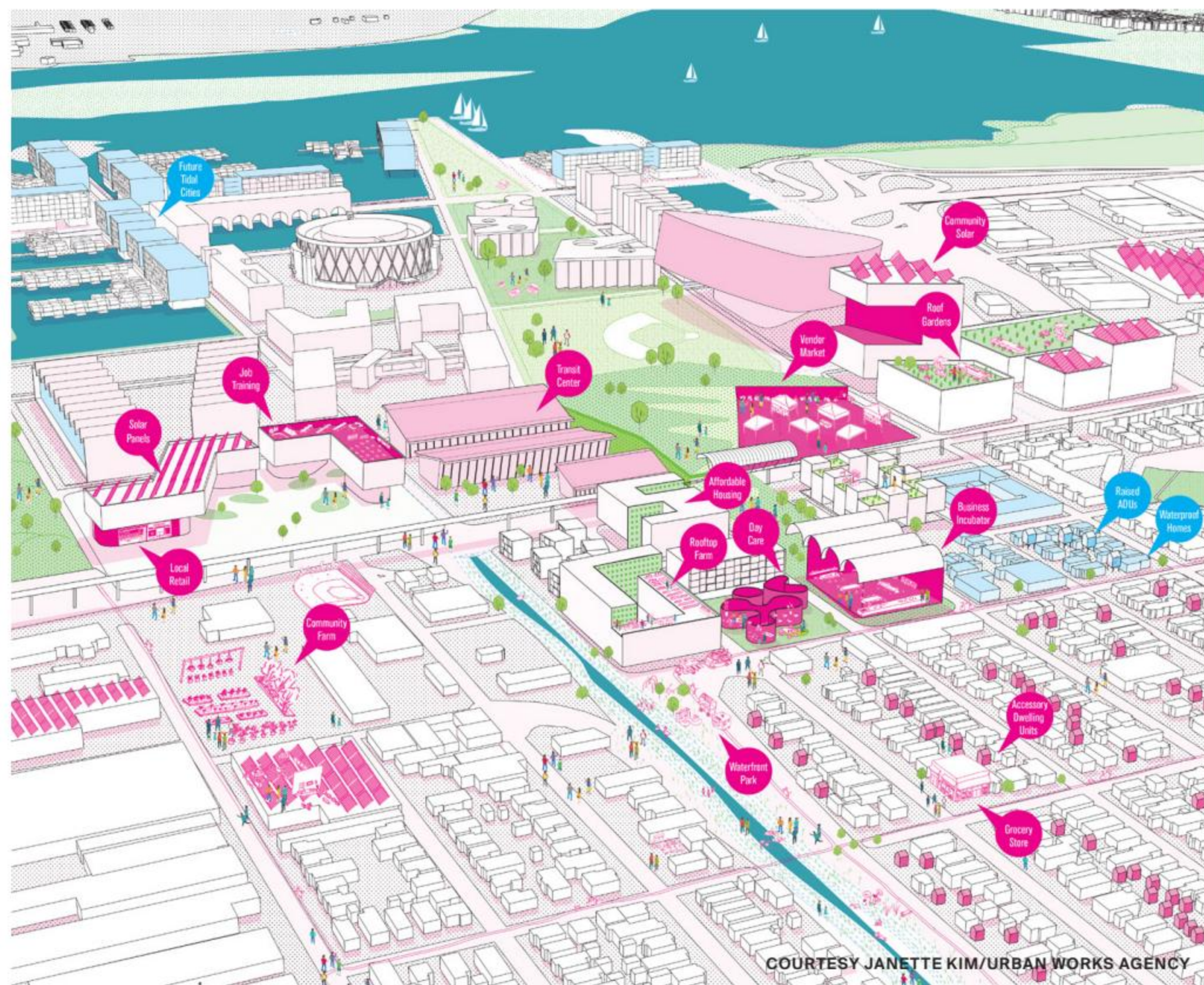
# DREAM THE COMBINE

Dream The Combine creates immersive public installations that provoke viewers to think critically about their individual and collective relationships to space and mainstream historical narratives.

A 2021 installation in Columbus, Indiana, realized as part of Exhibit Columbus's *New Middles* exhibition, demonstrates how firm cofounders Jennifer Newsom and Tom Carruthers merge art, architecture, and (re)education. (The duo are also educators: Both teach at Cornell University's College of Architecture, Art, and Planning.) In Indiana, the pair and their team dived into the colonialist subtext of "Discover Columbus!"—a seemingly anodyne roadside sign that welcomes visitors to the city. They link the message to Christopher Columbus's exploration of the "new world" and Europeans' subsequent violent colonization of the Americas. To do this, the designers imagined "Columbus" and its associations as nodes in a global network of places named after Columbus. They mapped a sloping lawn using the Mercator projection, positioning empty flagpoles at locations named Columbus, Columbia, Colombo, or Colón. Spiraling text on each pole shares information about each place, prompting visitors to circumnavigate dozens of poles embedded in the hillside.

In Columbus, Indiana—and, largely, in all its projects—Dream The Combine uses hefty materials like steel, glass, and construction textiles to tie its work to infrastructure. But rather than opt for fixity, these elements are animated with movement. For *Longing* (2015), Newsom and Carruthers installed a mirror within a scrapped piece of Minneapolis's enclosed skyway pedestrian bridge network to honor the old infrastructure and forge a new network that extends outward and inward. The designers installed movable mirrors on both ends of the skyway that move with only 35 pounds of wind pressure to reflect horizons beyond the desolate surroundings. A short film about the project by regular collaborator Isaac Gale captured the eeriness and the beauty of the skybridge and its surroundings.

A similar technique was in the office's 2018 installation for *Hide & Seek* for MoMA PS1's Young Architects Program. Within the museum's courtyard, mobile mirrored surfaces were set in and among long lines of steel-framed bays, distorting the space's dimensions. A netted lounging area allowed visitors to see themselves reflected into the distance. The apparatus also extended atop the institution's boundaries. The architects declare: "We can't get rid of the infrastructure of these walls, but we can refuse their hold and introduce new conceptualizations of space and occupation." **Audrey Wachs**



## JANETTE KIM

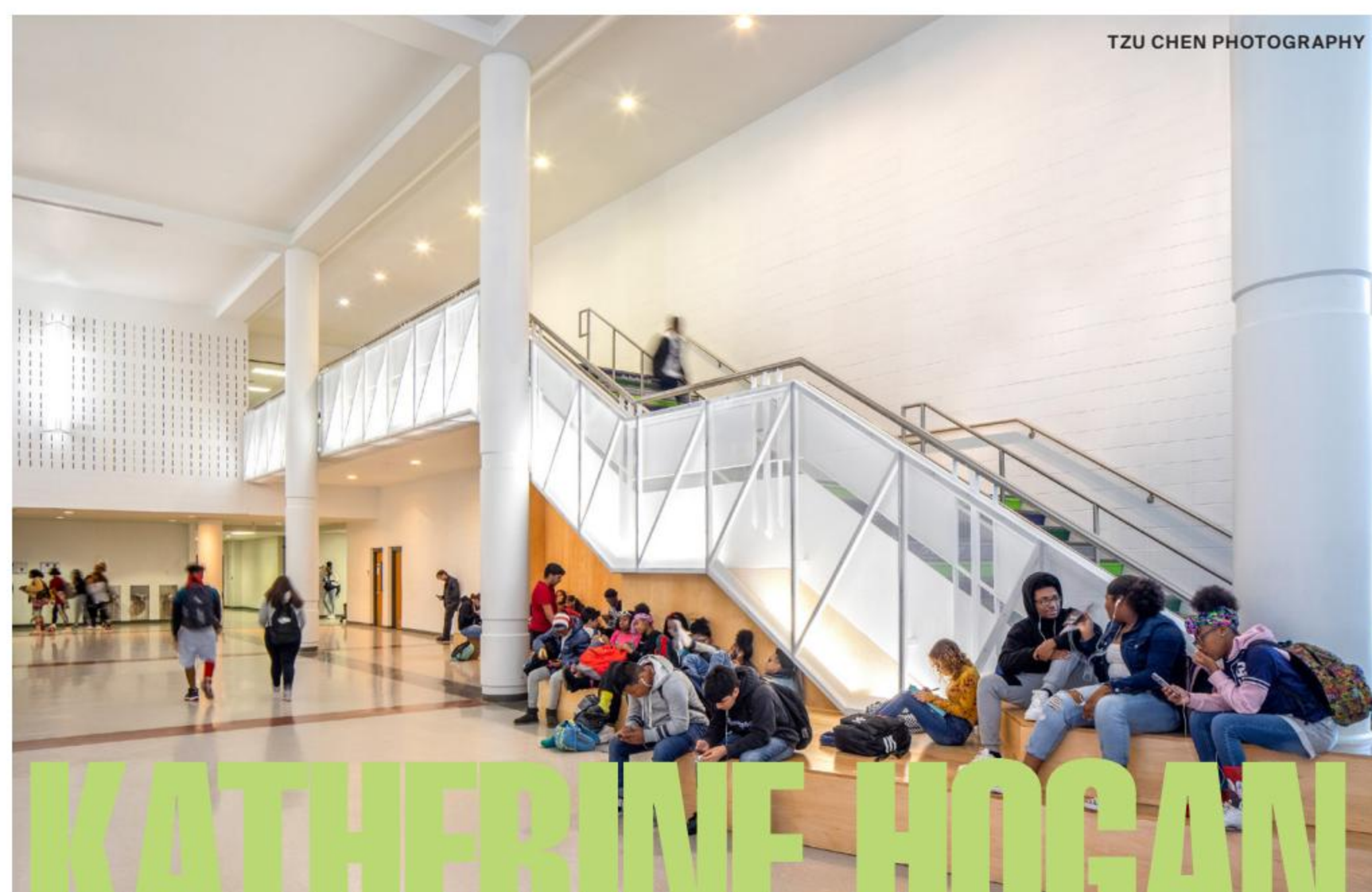
Besides working as the founding principal of design firm All of the Above, Janette Kim codirects Urban Works Agency, a research laboratory at the California College of the Arts, where she is also an assistant professor in the school's architecture program. Trained as an architect, Kim has interpreted "practicing" architecture as an action that includes advocacy, in addition to traditional design methods. This is reflected through her range of work, which includes both a proposal for Resilient by Design Challenge, a collaborative design challenge that sought to address flood risks in the Bay Area, and Pengzhou Longmen Mountain Suji, a hotel in Sichuan, China.

Kim's independent and academic practices weave common threads of interests in political ecology through an understanding of architecture focused on questioning power relationships within the built environment. Kim told *AN* that "I never saw my goal, or purpose, as creating buildings only." She said that while "political ecology" as a term can feel quite academic, "the more architects acknowledge the complexity of practice, the more political ecology is inevitable." To seriously address concerns about major crises like sea-level rise or wildfires, Kim said, you have to address questions of "who can afford to rebuild, who can afford to stay... [and then you arrive] at political ecology."

While the questions that motivate Kim address overarching structural issues, they manifest in specific ways in individual projects. Speaking about the hotel in Sichuan, which is currently under construction, Kim said that "the project was motivated by the site, program, and client. But in other ways, it was for us a chance to say, 'Well, if people are going to go to this landscape to enjoy it, we should talk about what it means to, first of all, be a tourist in a landscape. What's the responsibility of a tourist?'"

Questions of spatial ownership, long-term maintenance, and decision-making have continually influenced her practice's approaches. Considering "people who have historic rights to land" in addition to current owners, and a given space's occupants, further shapes her approaches to design and advocacy. Noting the often-contested status of decisions on land use, particularly in response to immediate concerns about climate change, Kim retains an optimism surrounding the challenges of working with stakeholders with whom she disagrees. In summarizing her approach, she prizes the value of conversation: "I'm very committed to the idea of bringing all those people to the table and allowing debate to happen. We leave out opportunities to have influence if we don't engage them." **CW**

**Top:** Estuary Commons, a 2017–18 proposal for the Resilient by Design Challenge in Oakland, California **Above:** In It Together, a board game for the Resilient by Design Challenge, 2017–18



## KATHERINE HOGAN ARCHITECTS

Working from Raleigh, North Carolina, Katherine Hogan Architects (KHA) is led by Katherine Hogan and Vincent "Vinny" Petrarca. The duo began working together in 2003 under the name Tonic; they led both a design practice and a construction company, which often worked together as a design-build entity. Today KHA is an eight-person architecture office that enjoys growing recognition of its work: Last year the outfit was recognized by *AN* in its *AN Interior* Top 50 Architects and Designers of 2022 listings and received a 2022 Best of Practice Award for small architecture offices in the Southeast. Hogan shared with *AN* that "the intention was always to have an architecture practice, but in our place, it was important to also be able to build our projects to make them happen."

"We are in Raleigh, and we have learned to kind of morph and expand in different ways and realize projects for the architecture that we love," Hogan continued. She added that it is necessary to be "resourceful in the service of architecture." That effort has paid off, as the office's portfolio is now stocked with many striking (and award-winning) projects. KHA's origins are in single-family residential work, and early efforts like the modern, steel-framed Chiles Residence demonstrate the practice's talent.

In recent years KHA has also realized public projects for clients like the Wake County Public School System and North Carolina State University. Its Art as Shelter pavilion for the North Carolina Museum of Art combined design ambition with construction expertise when making a versatile outdoor classroom structured in steel and clad in perforated aluminum. The move connects the interior to the surrounding landscape while offering a space for the local community.

Petrarca shared that while the office is small, the intention is to operate at a high level: "We want to have impact in our place." He said that KHA is "not doing the same project types all the time," but instead is "looking for those projects that fall in the cracks." As the office states on its website, "We have been shaped by our place."

In conversation, Hogan and Petrarca related how they develop empathy with their clients and communities. The sensibility is seen in their renovation of Brassfield Elementary in Raleigh; the architects couldn't change the building's plan, but they sculpted its section to introduce light (via rooftop monitors) and color into the interior. The result is a powerful reminder that design is a useful tool that can elevate the spaces of everyday life. **Paige Davidson**

**Top:** Art as Shelter at North Carolina Museum of Art Park in Raleigh, 2008 **Above:** The Great Hall at Southeast Raleigh High School in Raleigh, completed in 2020



JOSEMA CUTILLAS



FRANCIS DZIKOWSKI



COURTESY N H D M ARCHITECTS



COURTESY NAM JUNE PAIK ART CENTER

## LANZA ATELIER

Isabel Abascal and Alessandro Arienzo founded LANZA Atelier in 2015 for the express purpose of contributing to the beauty of the world. While that's an admirable aspiration, it's rare to see the B word used these days in architecture unless by a Neoclassicist. Contemporary architects tend to see beauty as being too subjective to claim, but Abascal has a simple definition for it: "Beauty is the opposite of inequality, cruelty, and injustice."

Based in Mexico City, LANZA works on a wide range of typologies, from exhibitions and books to houses and public facilities, large and small. For Abascal and Arienzo, scale is less important than the strength of the idea and dedication to process—both partners teach and work on curatorial projects as well as build. "We think concepts don't have scale," Abascal told *AN*. "An idea can be tested at an object's or a city's scale." "We think that everything is full of architecture," Arienzo added. "Size doesn't matter. The question is always, how do we start drawing them?"

Whatever the project, time is a central consideration for LANZA, inseparable from architecture itself. The duo conceive of their work as "contemporary space whose energy can last forever." As such, the work itself strives for flexibility, designed with the notion that uses may and probably will change over time. "We like to think that

we are designing a ruin," they like to say. This focus on time is twinned with a strong sense of place. Local materials, whether industrial or artisanal, are preferred, with the goal of instilling their work with geographic identity.

While more than 25 collaborators have passed through LANZA's office, the practice remains small and personal. It demands the trust of its clients and doesn't work quickly, but rather slowly moves toward its final designs through multiple permutations. Abascal and Arienzo also monitor construction closely, modifying details throughout the process as site conditions and the facts of labor present themselves. "Architecture deals with time and needs time," Abascal said.

It's not a maxim that would fly very far with the hard-bitten capitalists north of the border, but at the same time LANZA has seen its own work mired in a time vortex that has transcended even its deliberate approach. Two of its large projects for Mexico City are stalled seemingly without end in the administrative labyrinths of the municipal bureaucracy. Faced with this, and feeling the pressure of the global environmental crisis bearing down upon them, Abascal and Arienzo now find themselves asking, "Do we still believe in the beauty of the world?" **AS**

**Top:** 1973–2021, an installation for the Concéntrico Festival in Logroño, Spain in 2021  
**Above:** *Re-Source* Exhibition Design, Storefront for Art and Architecture, New York, 2020

## N H D M ARCHITECTS

It is hard to pinpoint a single defining typology for N H D M's work. This variety is a testament to the interests and backgrounds of the firm's founders, Nahyun Hwang and David Eugin Moon.

Moon, the son of immigrant parents, studied at the University of Michigan and the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD). Hwang began her career in South Korea after studying architecture at Yonsei University. She came to the United States for graduate school (also at the GSD, where the duo met) and was "surprised" by the disciplinary compartmentalization. In South Korea, "urbanism, architecture, and larger territorial thinking was always one," she explained to *AN*. This way of thinking is deeply integrated into N H D M's ethos.

Before starting their own practice, Hwang and Moon designed for internationally renowned offices: Hwang for OMA, Herzog & de Meuron, and James Corner Field Operations, and Moon for Shigeru Ban and OMA, though the two didn't overlap there. These roles were formative, as they were able to work on projects of varying scales worldwide.

"We joked that we spent maybe too long working in other offices before we founded our practice. But at the same time, that meant that we worked on many different types of projects," Moon said.

Hwang and Moon's first commission

came over a decade ago while they were still working for other practices. They designed the Nam June Paik library, a small project in Yongin-si, South Korea that houses the archives of the Nam June Paik Art Center.

Among the practice's current work is the *Librería Barco de Papel*. Located in New York City's Jackson Heights neighborhood, the storefront is the last Spanish-language bookstore in the state. To improve the "accessibility and visibility" of the shop, garage-door windows will define the street-facing facade, alongside of which display tables, shelving, and seating will be brought out to the sidewalk. Furniture will be rearranged both inside and outside the shop to accommodate programming.

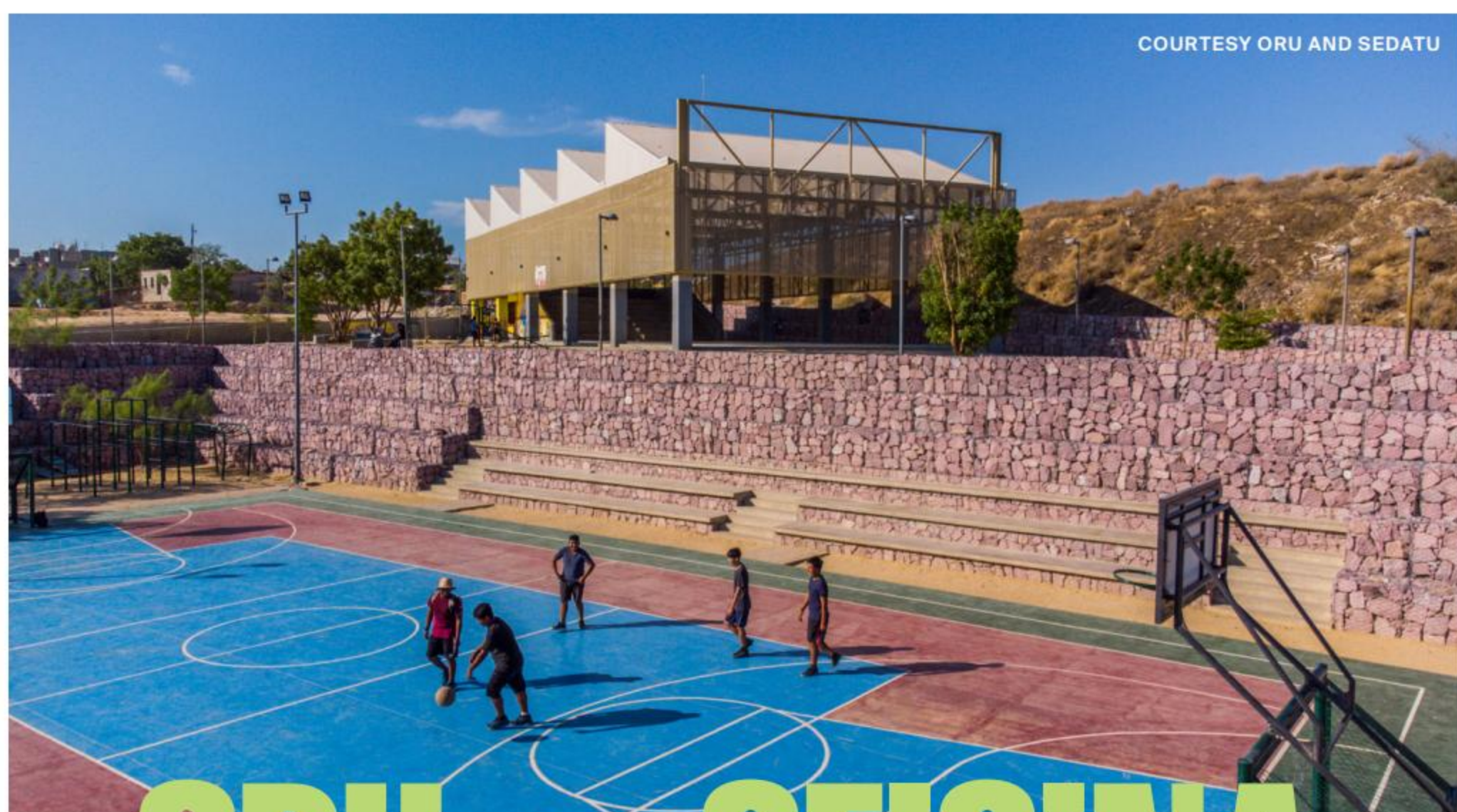
N H D M has worked on prototypes for housing, and redesigned parks. It previously presented work at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2021 and will exhibit again this year.

Speculating about what projects are most intriguing, Hwang offered that the office is excited about "any project that gives us a way to explore new potentials in existing typologies." She continued: "We're interested in [the] public and collective realm, always. We're also interested in private lives and domesticity and personhood and intimacy, and then how that relates to the collective realm and bigger pictures of the public." **KK**

**Top:** *Interim Urbanism: Youth, Dwelling, City* at the Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism in Seoul in 2019 **Above:** *Open Ground*, Nam June Paik Art Center, Yongin, Korea, 2017



COURTESY ORU, ANITA BERRIZBEITIA, AND MONICA ARZOZ



COURTESY ORU AND SEDATU

# ORU — OFICINA DE RESILIENCIA URBANA

Adriana Chávez, Victor Rico, and Elena Tudela lead Oficina de Resiliencia Urbana (ORU), a Mexico City-based design practice that pursues a deeply research-based approach to what architecture is and could be. Although all three had attended universities in Mexico City, the trio—along with their fourth cofounder, Guillermo Chávez—met at Harvard GSD when they worked together to submit an application for Mexico City to the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities initiative.

The group went on to establish ORU in Mexico City with the intent to pursue intellectual projects in addition to realizing built efforts. The latter are certainly underway—ORU has work under construction in Tultitlán, north of Mexico City, and two public infrastructure projects in Cabo San Lucas, both realized with collaborators—but the office is more comfortable with being speculative. Pushing against the pessimism that it sees many architects respond to when it comes to issues like climate change, the group questions the role of “the architect in the 21st or 22nd century,” Tudela told *AN*.

The firm works collectively and prioritizes efforts that provide a public benefit. Contrasting ORU with more traditional approaches to practice in Mexico, Rico said that many architects in the country fear that not all their projects will be built.

Meanwhile, ORU is content to be deeply research-based. Rico added that ORU is “not comfortable with authorship” and hopes that other designers appropriate the practice's work as the needs and potential of architecture evolve in the future.

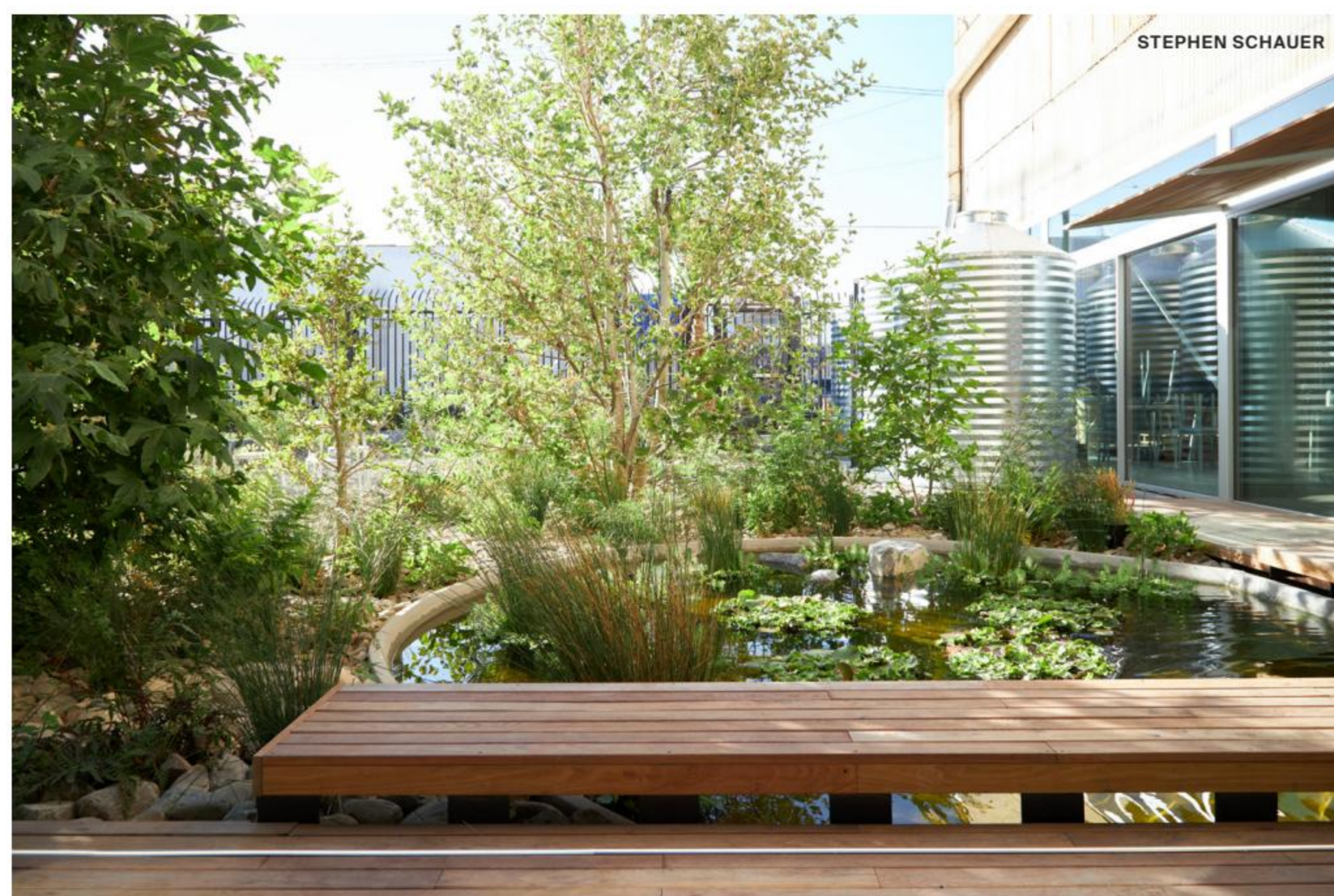
This willingness to consider architecture as a changing, evolving thing affects how ORU engages with building-centered projects. Tudela emphasized the importance of understanding not only a project's “financing and implementation but also how to operate and maintain them over time.” This has led the firm to approach architecture with a focus on process rather than an interest in creating objects “frozen in time.”

ORU maintains a small full-time staff that works closely with a disciplinarily diverse set of collaborators as projects necessitate. These have ranged from biologists to geologists and, of course, the workers who construct the built work. ORU maintains architectural supervision on-site while also engaging larger project teams on solutions to design and technical problems.

ORU's current work includes a hospitality complex in Jalisco that addresses regional ecological degradation, which has had an impact on the 13-hectare (32-acre) site, and a water resiliency plan for Monterrey that expands on prior work in both Mexico City and Bogotá. **CW**



PATRICK ATKINSON



STEPHEN SCHAUER

# TERREMOTO

As the firm's name implies, the landscape architects at TERREMOTO (Spanish for “earthquake”) aim to shake up the discipline.

Not content with creating beautiful and functional landscapes, the “respectfully inflammatory” Los Angeles- and San Francisco-based office rejects design and construction conventions to create distinctive landscapes that honor a site's users, history, and future.

“TERREMOTO is presently navigating a transitional period within its practice towards making omni-positive gardens and landscapes that are fair, just and generous in their relationships to labor, materials and ecology,” Cofounding Principal David Godshall told *AN*. “We believe that we are at a cultural, environmental + civilizational fork in the road, and through deep internal self-interrogation of landscape history and practice (including our own), we are creating a constantly evolving set of metrics that will allow us (and you!) to create gardens that can lock horns with the BIGNESS of this moment.”

This self-aware, iconoclastic philosophy appears in 7th Avenue Garden, a collaboration with artist David Horvitz. Rather than wait out a byzantine permitting process that can take months, the team worked guerrilla style to transform a vacant lot next to Horvitz's studio. They used rebar and concrete from demolished buildings at LACMA and seeded the garden with dozens of

native plants, trees, and wildflowers. The previously formal but now overgrown landscaping elements stayed while the collage elements of the new garden grew around them. Given that the team transgressed traditional approvals, TERREMOTO described the landscape as a “DMZ [demilitarized zone] between realms public and private.”

The firm delivered a more traditional but still surprising design for KX LAB, a high-tech knitwear company. Here TERREMOTO built an intentionally unruly outdoor break room that contrasts with the facility's precise work. First the team installed wide benches around a small pond filled with native aquatic plants. Then TERREMOTO enlisted the help of a gray-water recycling firm to install 1,500-gallon rooftop tanks that irrigate stands of sycamore trees. The rest of the area, modeled on a creek bed, is packed with gravel, peppered with tables, and lined with stones and concrete seating. Even in the driest months, the lush landscape is a foil to nearby factory production.

TERREMOTO's design philosophy is too expansive to be condensed into a single tagline. Instead, it “mines the omnipotence of intentional inexactitude and flirts openly with illegibility,” Godshall said. “We strive, in many cases, to do as little as possible. It is our goal to build gardens and landscapes not for this civilization, but rather, the next.” **AW**

Top: A rendering of the Tacubaya Hydric District in Mexico City  
Above: A water garden in Los Cabos, Mexico, completed in 2020

Top: Varda Landing in Sausalito, California, completed in 2021  
Above: KX Lab, Los Angeles, finished in 2022



GARRETT ROWLAND



NIC LEHOUX

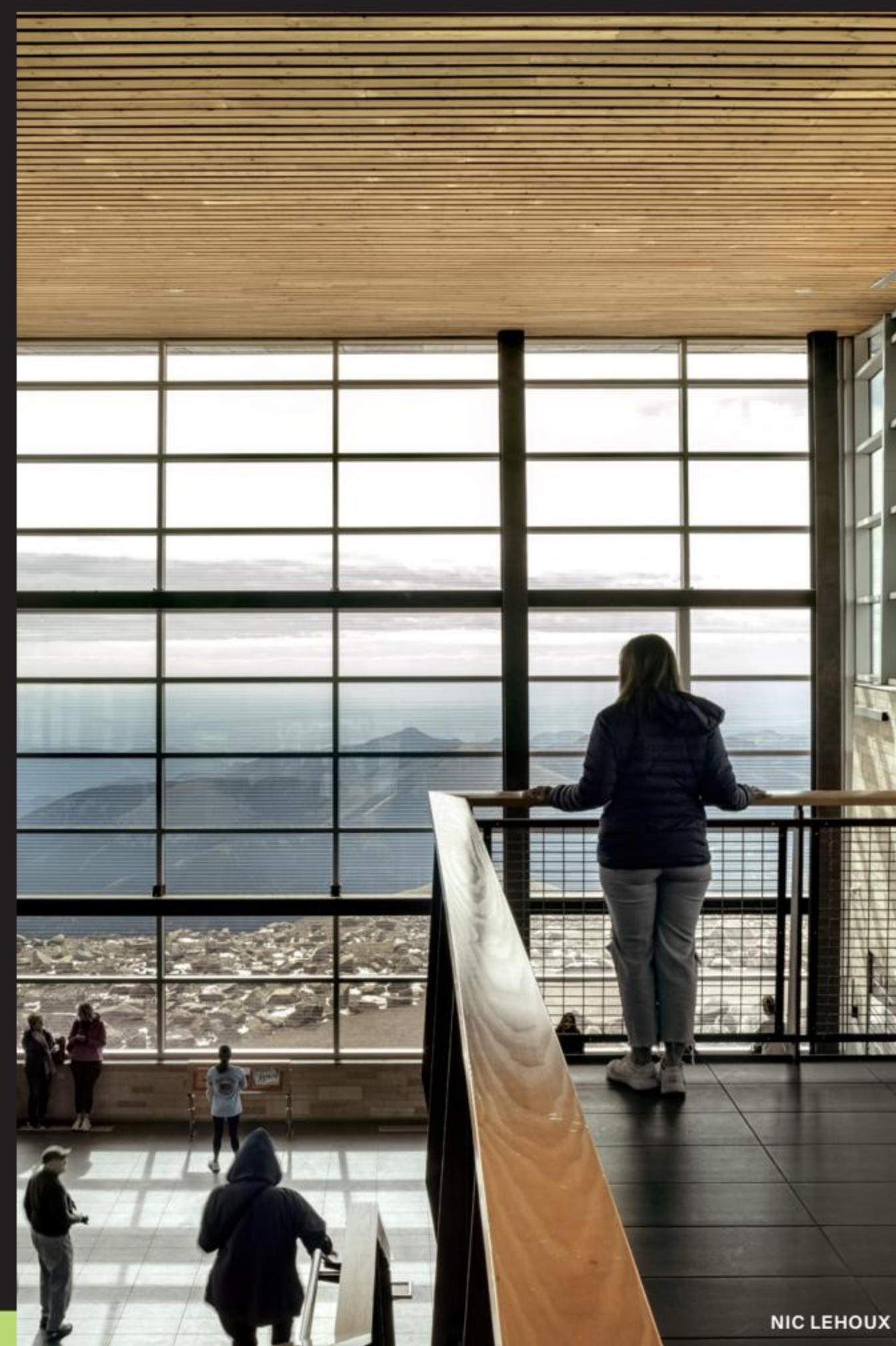
# EXTENDED



PAUL WARCHOL/COURTESY STUDIO V ARCHITECTURE



PAUL WARCHOL/COURTESY STUDIO V ARCHITECTURE



NIC LEHOUX

# PLAY

Play is rarely as frivolous as it may seem. Take, for example, the relationship between sports and combat: Many writers saw the football pitch as an allegory for England's performance in World War I, and today it's not uncommon to hear metaphors that connect professional football in America to the gladiatorial games of the Roman Empire. A single game can connote entire histories of violence and much more.

Architecture's engagement with spaces for play is no less serious. In this feature section, we set sports aside to investigate other realms of playfulness and their consequences. We look into the growing momentum behind urban casinos in cities like New York and Chicago. In Nashville, we explore the reimagination of two buildings along the city's legendary Music Row as ideal spaces for songwriting. And, at last, we embrace America's love of outdoor recreation to catch the view from the new Summit Visitors Center atop Pike's Peak.

# CASINOS IN THE CITY

AFTER  
LEGISLATIVE  
CHANGES,  
MORE  
GAMBLING  
OPERATIONS  
ARE BEING  
PROPOSED  
FOR DENSE  
URBAN  
LOCATIONS.  
IS THIS  
A GOOD  
THING?

Casino gambling, a potent engine of wealth redistribution from the hopeful to the fortunate, is moving from a handful of dedicated sites into America's larger cities. With more states legalizing more forms of gambling and the casino sector responding robustly to competition from online betting, this type of entertainment has outgrown its traditional localized base culturally, economically, and physically. As New York joins Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other cities as sites of urban casinos, residents will soon discover how much the industry can change a neighborhood and perhaps how urban settings can change the industry.

The mainstreaming of these pastimes affects their architectural and urbanistic aspects. Two familiar models of the casino as a building typology—the decorated sheds from which readers of Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour have been learning since 1972 and the Native American-owned complexes that have appeared since the 1980s, often large-scale and at a distance from major cities—are now joined by a third variant: the urban casino, potentially as upscale as certain overseas models (Monaco or Macau) and situated where they are far from being the only game in town.

Saratoga Casino Holdings/Chickasaw Nation/Legends), a 6.7-acre lot near the United Nations (Soloviev Group/Mohegan), Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Uniondale (Las Vegas Sands), and the upper floors of Saks Fifth Avenue's midtown flagship (Hudson's Bay Company).

Additionally, Vornado Realty is reportedly considering seeking a casino license as part of its controversial plan to demolish the Hotel Pennsylvania, and in January Mets owner Steven Cohen invited Queens residents for a community discussion about a possible casino for Willets Point. The longest shot may be the bruited replacement of a Bronx golf clubhouse by a Bally's casino, contingent on removing from the property the name of a locally unpopular figure (and former White House occupant) with well-publicized ties to organized crime.

New York City's embrace of casinos is part of a sustained national trend. Texas legislators are considering whether to give voters a chance to legalize casinos this November, and Chicago's city council and alderpeople have approved a riverfront Bally's project, designed by SCB, as part of a multiphase, multipurpose development. (State licensure is still pending.) Montana, Louisiana, and Oklahoma each



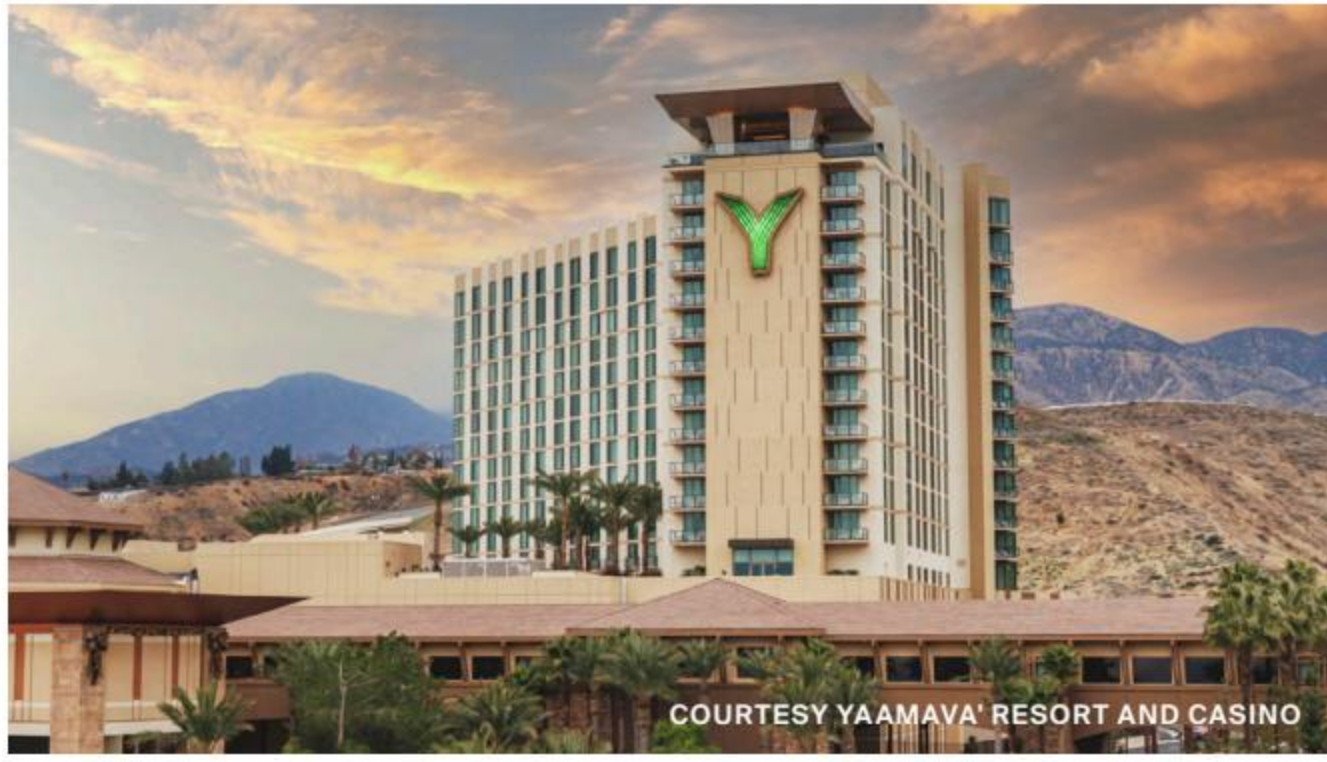
## LEGAL PARIAS NO MORE

The spread of legal sports betting after 2018, when the Supreme Court struck down the federal Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act, has accelerated the industry's expansion. New York's state legislature raised the stakes in 2022 by authorizing licenses for up to three full (Class III) casinos in the downstate region, which includes metropolitan New York City and Long Island. (Four upstate casinos have been operating since legalization in 2013.) A three-person Gaming Facility Location Board is overseeing the selection process and consulting community committees formed to assess local support for each application; a request for applications went out in early January with no deadline but with a \$500 million licensing fee and an expectation that a proprietor will invest at least that amount in the project.

Under post-COVID conditions where work and play have remained in a hybrid format, new casinos need to expand beyond the thrill of the action per se and offer patrons reasons to congregate at specific places, while also offering communities reasons to welcome them. Competition is becoming fierce over which places these will be. Local sites under consideration include the established racinos in Queens (Genting Group's Resorts World NYC) and Yonkers (MGM Resorts International's Empire City), believed to be front-runners for two of the full-casino licenses. For the third, proposals to date, ranging from announced partnerships to media speculation, include the undeveloped western segment of Hudson Yards (Related Companies/Wynn Resorts), 1515 Broadway in Times Square (SL Green/Caesars Entertainment), Coney Island (Thor Equities/

have over 100 casinos; casinos began opening in the four largest cities in Ohio (Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Toledo) in 2012, after a 2009 state constitutional amendment; and six have opened across Maryland during the same period. The American Gaming Association (AGA) reports that all but six states have commercial gambling (in a total of 466 casinos), tribal gambling (515 casinos), or both, and commercial casinos have broken gross revenue records for the past two years, crossing the \$60 billion threshold in 2022. Tribal revenues, tracked separately, are not far behind, at \$39 billion for 2021.

Casinos' prodigious influence can bleed an area's economy dry, as historians have argued happened to Atlantic City. Backlashes have happened: In 2000 South Carolina ended its experiment with video poker ("hard-core, grab-the-paycheck gambling" associated with graft and widespread addiction but lacking the offsetting benefits of casino construction and hotel employment, according to an activist quoted in both *Harper's* and *Slate* the previous year) and reverted to a near-total gambling ban, allowing it only on offshore cruises. An extensive social-science literature correlates high rates of problem gambling with proximity to casinos, and as Stephen Marche put it in a 2021 *Atlantic* overview of gambling's expansion into sports and the economy at large, "Gambling produces corruption the way salt water produces rust. You can fight it for a while, but it wins in the end." Yet casinos and governments can also redirect the resources more constructively, and acceptance within competitive environments arguably compels them to do so. Proponents point to the public revenues and private-sector jobs they generate, potentially offsetting the social problems cited by detractors.



COURTESY YAAMAVA' RESORT AND CASINO



COURTESY YAAMAVA' RESORT AND CASINO

## FROM THE MANIPULATIVE SPACE TO THE INTEGRATED RESORT

The gambling industry, rebranded as *gaming* at least since the AGA's founding in 1994, has been evolving from stigmatization toward a family-friendlier image with broader entertainment options. Architects with experience in casino design have observed a corresponding shift in priorities and forms. Mark Yoshizaki, senior vice president at the global hospitality design firm WATG (formerly Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo), described to *AN* a shift from old-school spaces exemplifying hostile design—short on windows, clocks, intuitive circulation, and signage, built to maximize players' time at the tables—toward more of a playground model, the integrated resort (IR), conducive to longer stays (three or four days) by broader populations. In IRs, distinct pathways allow underage people and other nongamblers to bypass casino floors, and amenities include hotels, restaurants, retail, live performances, pocket parks, and youth-oriented attractions. As in a city, betting in an IR is only one draw among many.

"I did start my game experience in Las Vegas, in the heart of where all the gaming is; it has a certain vibe to it," Yoshizaki recalled. "There [are] no beaches; there's nothing to be said of as far as the surrounding areas.... In Vegas, everything drives traffic through the casino floor for every nickel you can get. But in these urban IRs, it's more important to make sure you're respecting the community as a whole." In one new IR, the Yaamava' Resort in suburban Highland, California, east of Los Angeles, WATG added a 17-story, 432-room hotel, a 2,800-seat theater, and other luxury features to the former San Manuel Casino, once a small bingo hall, taking steps to broaden its appeal and control effects on nearby residences and schools. The casino and tribe (the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians) have committed gaming-floor earnings to a local tax program, Yoshizaki says, funding access roads, streetlights, and emergency services.

"When you get into urban areas for casinos, there has to be a very careful consideration of where those gamblers are coming from," Yoshizaki continued. When local residents are the main customer base, "you're not really drawing any new money into the cities," but in a project designed, scaled, and located to attract out-of-state and international travelers, outside a central city or in a tourism district, "that's where you can really benefit from getting the tax revenues, because it's new money; it's outside money." (This is where designers can learn from overseas casinos with private spaces dedicated to the "whales," or wealthy, high-stakes players.) Planners must also consider *how* the gamblers are coming: a transit-accessible site, perhaps on a city's perimeter, "is seen more as an underutilized entertainment zone that has potential to add to its already fairly reputable amenity base, so we see that as a good draw to reduce the amount that happens in the heart of the cities. We're not adding car traffic or anything to the inner cities."

To compete with online games and "pull people out of their chairs," Yoshizaki recommended designing IRs with both positive attractors in the form of diverse experiences and operational features that can deter the inevitable "negative elements [that] are somehow attracted to these venues": well-lit sidewalks, video screening, satellite security

stations, and open spaces. "At least to tribes and the gaming operators that I've worked with," he summarized, "I've always felt like I'm helping to create a more positive environment, to help eliminate those negatives that come along with it with great design. Having a blend of hospitality interlaced into the gaming environment creates a better offering than just gaming for gaming's sake."

## A RACINO GREW IN YONKERS

Jay Valgora, founder and principal of STUDIO V, worked on the Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway, where a 45-foot glass wall and a porte cochere of curving, latticed steel covered with ethylene tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE) foil give the casino area a rare level of transparency. The shed/box model for gambling spaces, he said, "is completely cut off from its surroundings, has no relationship to its community, no relationship to time or space, and basically is decorated to try to create a theme or an idea to distract you from reality." Rather than isolate patrons, he preferred to connect them to the site and its history: the garden elements of the surroundings, the cable-stayed canopies of an earlier iteration of the building, and a sculptural form that "leaps out of the hillside and actually grows out of the topography of the site.... It's not an alien intervention; it really grows from the nature of the place, and I think that if we do a new casino for New York, it should have the same effect."

"The urban casino should be a spectacle," Valgora contended. "I think New York City is deserving of a better casino. We need something from a design point of view that absolutely cannot be the straight-out-of-the-box Las Vegas." Instead, the city's casinos should present "an urban spectacle that's all about the arrival of people, the enjoyment of the activities, people gaming, people dining, people eating, people arriving, coming and going, creating the choreography and the drama of arrival.... I think these are all elements of the new urban casino." He continued: "I love how we could update *Learning from Las Vegas*, where instead of being inspired by roadside architecture and using that

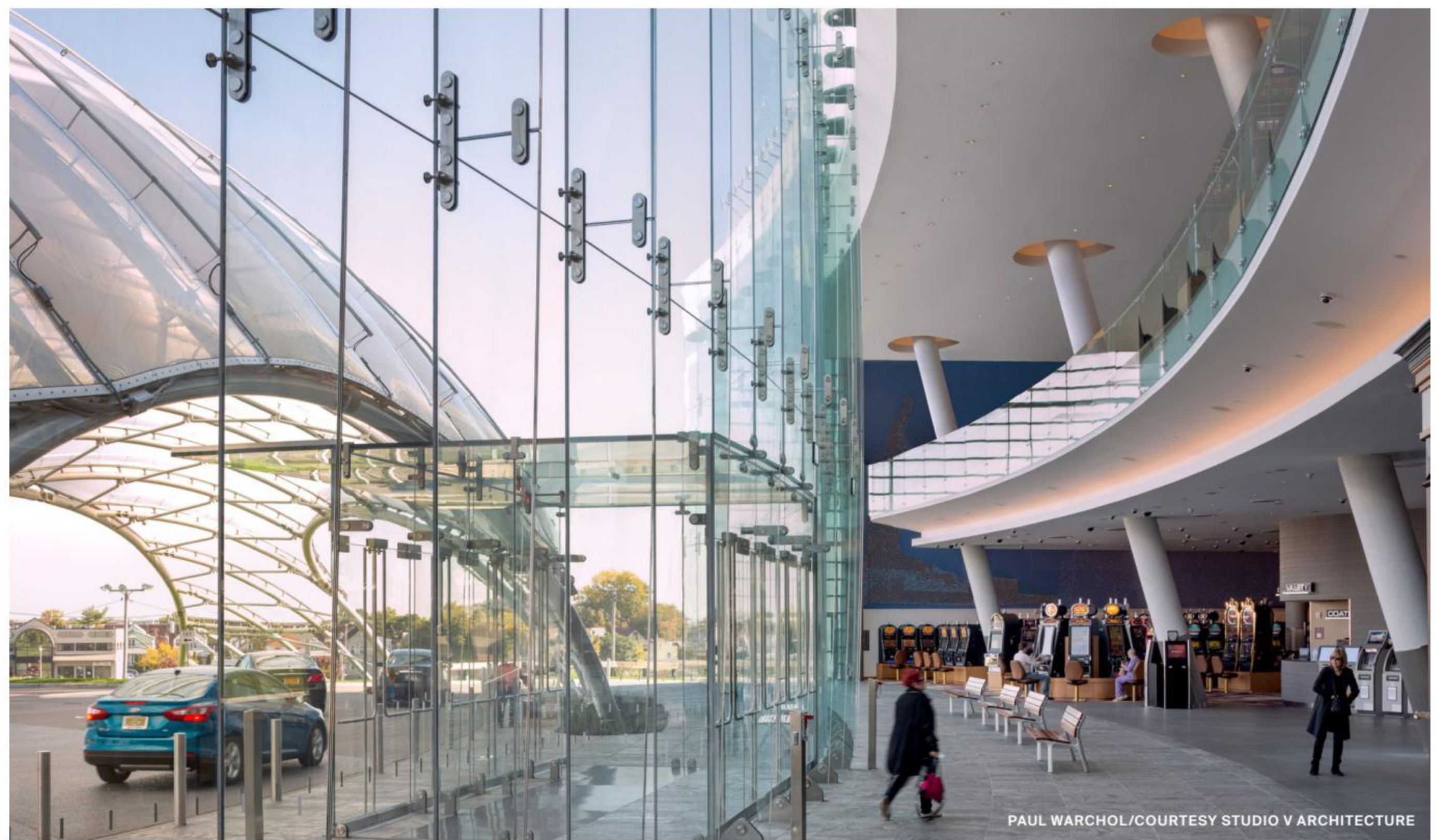
as a design tool, we're now inspired by the nature of the city itself." In this example, the inspiration translates into broad glazing rather than artificially lit black-box enclosures; vertical stacks of activities rather than a single horizontal gaming floor; and site-specific artwork like Empire City's "80,000 polycarbonate panels, [an] abstraction of the skyline of New York City" rather than replicas "trying to make it look like Paris or Polynesia or Rome."

The city's best entertainment venues, Valgora noted, "have very little lobby space; they always project their energy onto the exterior through marquees," using streets themselves as lobbies and functioning as a "machine for interaction of people." At Yonkers or at other local sites, he would like to see casinos respect the grid, "the one element of New York that must survive above all else." Valgora offered that "the opportunity of a casino or an entertainment complex [is] to address the edges of the city, and if it can actually connect them together and unite them, then I think it would succeed.... The cityness of New York is completely inescapable, and the urban casino must embrace that."

Developing an urbane, neighborly, connected casino model, Valgora suggested, is a logical next step in the city's long-running dialectic between order and energy. "The notion of modern architecture originally tried to destroy the city," he said. "Modern architecture now is making our cities more sustainable, more green, more resilient. I wonder if there is a way that modern architecture, through gardens, light, glass, relating to time and place, can actually even tame the casino."

The policy component of that effort involves ensuring that the wealth these businesses channel becomes more solution than problem, directing revenue to housing, social services, and transit, not simply from players to profiteers. The design component can address the post-pandemic hunger for social contact, 24-hour edginess, and "this essential idea of New York, which combines these two ideas: perfect control and perfect random chance." Perhaps urbanity and casinos are a natural fit after all.

Bill Millard is a regular contributor to *AN*.



PAUL WARCHOL/COURTESY STUDIO V ARCHITECTURE



PAUL WARCHOL/COURTESY STUDIO V ARCHITECTURE

**Facing page:** SCB designed a casino for Bally's in downtown Chicago; the complex is budgeted to cost \$1.7 billion.

**Top:** WATG delivered a \$760 million expansion that transformed San Manuel Indian Casino and Bingo Hall into Yaamava' Resort and Casino in Highland, California.

**Above and right:** STUDIO V Architecture improved the Yonkers Raceway in 2014, adding a porte cochere and interior updates at a cost of \$50 million.

# HELLO WALLS

## ALONG MUSIC ROW IN NASHVILLE, HASTINGS GIVES TWO EXISTING BUILDINGS A NEW TUNE.



GARRETT ROWLAND

Nathan Chapman used to write songs in an office building. The spaces, he said, “weren’t inspiring at all.” A Nashville native and songwriter with Warner Chappell Music, a publishing company, the three-time Grammy Award winner has produced and written with Darius Rucker, Keith Urban, and Taylor Swift, among many others. (Maybe he was able to find some inspiration.) But in an L-shaped building with hospital-like hallways and only a kitchen for a community space, he didn’t know what to do with himself when he was waiting on a cowriter, he says, and he couldn’t always tune out “the sound pollution of other songs” through too-thin walls.

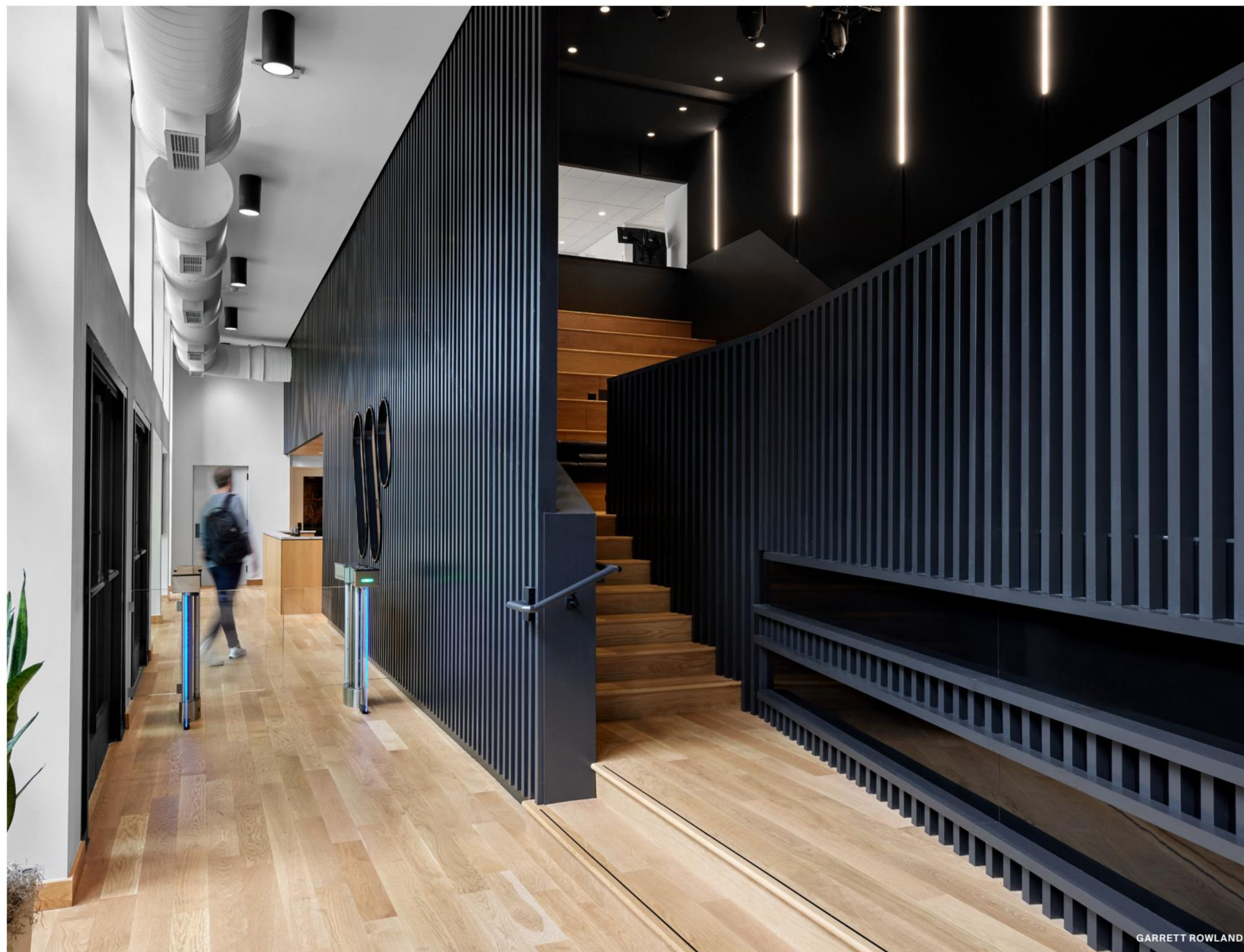
A project nearly 12 years in the making on Nashville’s famed Music Row has changed that. Music Row is a cluster of recording studios, publishing houses, old bungalows, radio stations, and restaurants where deals were made; stars came and went in its alleyways, out of sight. “It has always been a place where you could write, publish, and record within a few blocks,” Ben Kline, the co-president and cochair of Warner Music Nashville, told *AN* recently. Over time, though, in the decades after Bob Dylan made *Blonde on Blonde* and Patsy Cline recorded “Walkin’ After Midnight” here, the spaces had begun to deteriorate and disappear.

The Nashville-based firm HASTINGS was engaged to reimagine and reorganize Warner’s two existing buildings on Music Row for the next generation. (To clarify, Warner Chappell publishes music. Warner Music Nashville comprises ten record labels and develops artists. Both are owned by Warner, one of the music industry’s big three companies, with Sony and Universal.) The buildings needed it. With a design led by David Powell, owner and principal of HASTINGS, with Claudia Lofton, an associate at the office, HASTINGS consolidated Warner Chappell’s songwriters in the one from the 1970s, and the Warner Music Nashville label in the one from the ‘90s. Chapman now writes in one of the 12 dedicated soundproofed rooms in what used to be moribund administrative space. These rooms are among the most vital parts of the revival of buildings whose fate in a dramatically changing city wasn’t always clear.

Stretching south from Interstate 40, Music Row is divided from splashier parts of Nashville like The Gulch and SoBro, which are being redeveloped as quickly as the capital stacks can be arranged. As an architect, Powell said, he thinks of himself as a storyteller. The story he wanted to tell with this project was about Warner’s role in the city’s history and the company’s support of the people who continue to make it. The project spans a period when Nashville has changed demonstrably. With the advent of streaming platforms and other ways to get and make music, Powell said there was a kind of exodus from Music Row to downtown, with new glass towers mixing with sports stadiums,



GARRETT ROWLAND



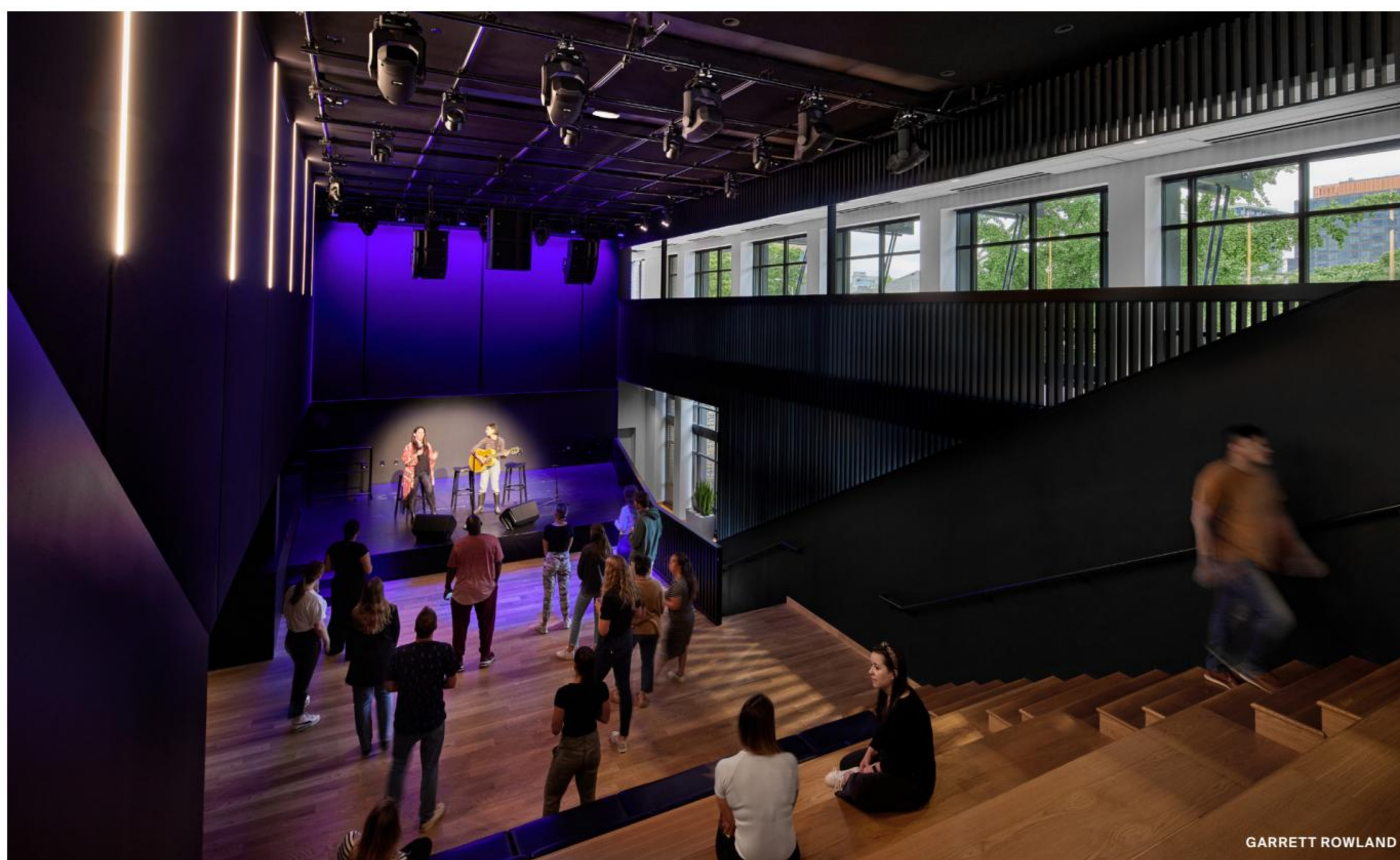
the Country Music Hall of Fame, the Ryman Auditorium, a food hall, and the low-slung, scuzzy buildings always buzzing with tipsy tourists on Broadway.

At first, Warner thought it might want to scrape the sites and start over. But it was important, Powell emphasized, to stay on Music Row. “Why leave?” asked Warner Music Nashville’s longtime CEO, John Esposito. The City of Nashville’s planning department had also created the code-based Vision Plan to encourage the preservation of the fabric of Music Row. The concept for the project moved in this direction, befitting a city in transition whose most interesting spaces—Attaboy, Pinewood Social, the remade Ryman—bring the old and the new together.

The 14,000-square-foot Warner Chappell building, where Chapman now writes, is a workspace that feels like “a third space,” what the sociologist Ray Oldenburg called the bars or coffee shops where we spend free time. Inside, the first floor was stripped back and reimaged as a kind of low-key lounge. Copies of the writers’ favorite books are scattered on shelves. The first floor connects to a patio where Chapman often eats lunch and a second, living room-like space where a well-stocked bar and a small stage provide for impromptu performances. The writers’ rooms are on the second floor. They open to a third lounge reminiscent of an East Nashville bar, with vintage rugs and a Led Zeppelin pinball machine. With these spaces, Chapman said, “you get a sense of community, and then you get to go off in your own little world and work.”

Warner Music Nashville’s 35,900-square-foot building, where Chapman used to write, sits across Music Row to the east. Now the company’s leadership and A&R teams are concentrated here in refreshed offices. A recording studio has been added on the second floor to replace the dated one that had been across the street. HASTINGS’s most dramatic move was undoing the building’s original entrance, with an uncomfortable lobby greeting everyone with a wall and forcing them to climb rhyming staircases in either direction. Now a screen of wooden beams obscures and reveals a performance space for label showcases. HASTINGS cut down into the parking garage to create a double-height cavern of a black box with a stage, lighting, and stadium seats that function during the day as a social stairway.

The story HASTINGS tells with these buildings, which were completed last year, is a quiet one in the end. The buildings have a well-developed interiority, but the exteriors are subtle. If you didn’t know better, you’d mistake the flat black paint on the Chappell building for a sign of



gentrification. (There is a similar building, an old motel that’s been souped up into luxury rentals, near downtown.) But here, as it turns out, the treatment is an expression of the company’s brand, whose color scheme also includes a brassy gold.

It’s a harder story to tell, a story of the choices not made. A new tower or a void and a historic marker are blunt in a way these buildings refuse to be. They know why they’re here. Powell was in a band when he first moved to Nashville. He’s a drummer. He still has that energy; his right knee bounces at times as though he were playing an invisible kick drum. This project is an expression of these two talents: knowing how to set things up and then getting out of the way. “All you need to write a song,” Powell said, quoting the country legend Harlan Howard from the 1950s, “is three chords and the truth.”

**Allyn West is a writer based in Houston and rural Kentucky. You can find them on Twitter @allynwest.**

#### Warner Chappell Music

**Facing page, top:** A warm, residential vibe is inspired by Music Row’s original bungalows. A pub-like room serves as a listening room, performance platform, and meeting space.

**Facing page, left:** In a shared public area, polished concrete floors, rugs, velvet furniture, walnut millwork, green walls, and coffered ceilings support informal gatherings among songwriters and staff.

#### Warner Music Nashville

**Top:** The building’s reconfigured lobby is faced in a slatted wood wall and includes direct access to the new theater.

**Above:** The central, double-height performance space can host up to 200 attendees. HASTINGS also designed new recording studio, listening rooms, green rooms, and artist lounges.

GARRETT ROWLAND

GARRETT ROWLAND

# A MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCE

## GWWO DESIGNS A DURABLE YET DEFERENTIAL VISITOR CENTER FOR PIKES PEAK.

In late November 1806, while in Colorado on an expedition to map the length of the Arkansas River, U.S. Army lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike wrote in his journal, “The Grand Peak now appeared at the distance of 15 or 16 miles from us, and as high again as what we had ascended, and would have taken a whole day’s march to have arrived at its base.... I believe no human being could have ascended to its pinical [*sic*].”

The Grand Peak to which Pike referred was, nonetheless, later named for him. (To the Ute it is known as *Tavá kaa-vi*, or Sun Mountain.) The irony of Pike’s pronouncement is that today Pikes Peak in Colorado is one of the most visited mountains in the United States, accessible by foot, car, or cog railway. Attracting half a million visitors each year, the peak has become known as “America’s mountain.”

By the mid-2010s, the popularity of Pikes Peak had taken its toll on the existing summit visitor center, a low-slung building with a plastic sign that wouldn’t have been out of place in a Colorado Springs strip mall. “Everything was all mushed together. The line for the restrooms would snake through the gift shop. It was hot, crowded. It was really not a very good experience,” Alan Reed, the president and design principal of GWWO Architects, told *AN*. More problematic—and costly—was the fact that the existing visitor center had been built on top of the permafrost. “Literally from day one, that building began to settle,” Reed adds. “It was an annual ritual to go in and shore the building back up and level it out.”

In 2015, GWWO Architects, working with Colorado Springs-based RTA Architects, was hired to design a new summit visitor center. Opened in a partially finished state in June 2021 to avoid an interruption in visitor services, the building had the final touches put on this past September.

The new \$65 million structure better organizes the visitor experience and provides a wide variety of activities and spaces from which to enjoy the mountain’s panoramic views, including new overlooks, dining terraces, and an exhibition gallery. GWWO’s “build your adventure” strategy stems in part from the need to manage the large “pulses” of visitors who arrive at regular intervals on the cog railway. The goal, Reed said, was this: “If there’s 300 people in the building, it feels comfortable. If there’s four people in the building, it feels comfortable.”

Architecturally, the visitor center takes its cues from its harsh yet breathtaking environment. Tucked into the southeast shoulder of the mountain, the 38,203-square-foot visitor center appears from the parking lot to be little more than a pavilion. Upon entry, the full height of the space materializes, with a prominent staircase that tumbles down the natural slope of the mountain to reveal a main lobby whose 30-foot-tall glazed facade frames views of Mount Rosa (a peak Pike did manage to ascend). Materials such as locally quarried quartzite sandstone evoke the stark beauty of the mountain,



while a new boardwalk system helps ensure the regeneration of the heavily degraded tundra ecosystem.

Designed to meet the standards of the Living Building Challenge in an environment where temperatures can reach minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit and winds up to 230 miles per hour, the structure features a super-high-performance building envelope—its precast concrete walls have an R-value of 60 and its roof an R-value of 120—and is powered almost completely by an off-site solar array. Previously, all potable water was trucked up the mountain, and all waste trucked down—requiring almost-daily trips. In the new visitor center, new technologies, such as vacuum flush toilets and Colorado’s first blackwater-to-gray water treatment system, reduce the frequency of those trips by half.

Siting the building on the south side of the peak wasn’t an obvious choice, according to Reed. Three of the architects’ four original schemes located the new visitor center on the opposite side. “The northwest side has the most dramatic views, and of course we were drawn to that,” Reed explained. But over the course of multiple meetings with stakeholder groups and the public, some of which were attended by several hundred people, the design team heard that community members wanted that vista unobscured. “They really wanted to maintain that northwest view out on-site so that you’re really in the elements,” Reed said.

Given the site’s remoteness and mercurial conditions, GWWO and RTA wanted as much of the building to be prefabricated as possible. Only the stone that clads the building’s precast concrete walls was installed on-site; the rest of the structure was trucked up in large, preassembled modules. Still, it took three and a half years to build the visitor center, in large part owing to weather delays.

To avoid the structural issues that plagued the last visitor center, the new building sits directly on bedrock; the excavated permafrost was reused on-site to create boulder fields and to provide the subbase for the newly paved road and parking lot. It may sound counterintuitive to *add* impermeable surfaces on a project committed to minimizing its environmental impact, but in this case, asphalt was more ecologically attuned than the alternative. In 1998, the Sierra Club sued the City of Colorado Springs and the U.S. Forest Service to force them to pave the road that winds its way up the mountain, primarily because of the impact that loose gravel was having on local water resources. “The gravel was choking streams down the mountain,” Reed said. (The road was finally paved in 2011.)

The large quantities of exposed small rocks and gravel on the summit also presented a serious problem for the architects. Picked up by 200-mile-per-hour winds, the material could quickly become a very real threat to the expanses of glass that were critical to the visitor center’s design. Early on, the design team conducted material tests at the summit, and the gravel “destroyed the glass,” Reed remembered. The team explored several solutions to the gravel problem, including an exterior net that would protect the glass, but ultimately added a deployable shutter system on three sides of the building.

“If the wind’s out of the east, say, they can drop those shutters, and it protects the glass from snow, gravel, anything [that] wants to blow, but they can leave the other sides open,” Reed explained, adding that the southern facade was left exposed because its orientation protects it from the prevailing winds and limits its exposure to gravel and other material.

Wrapped in glass and stone, the new Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center adopts a posture of deference and inclusivity that befits America’s mountain. The building is meant to be experienced both as an outgrowth of the mountain itself and as a viewfinder, with the architecture dissolving before visitors’ eyes until ultimately they feel that there is nothing between them and the horizon.

Timothy A. Schuler is an award-winning journalist and magazine writer whose work focuses on the built and natural environments.

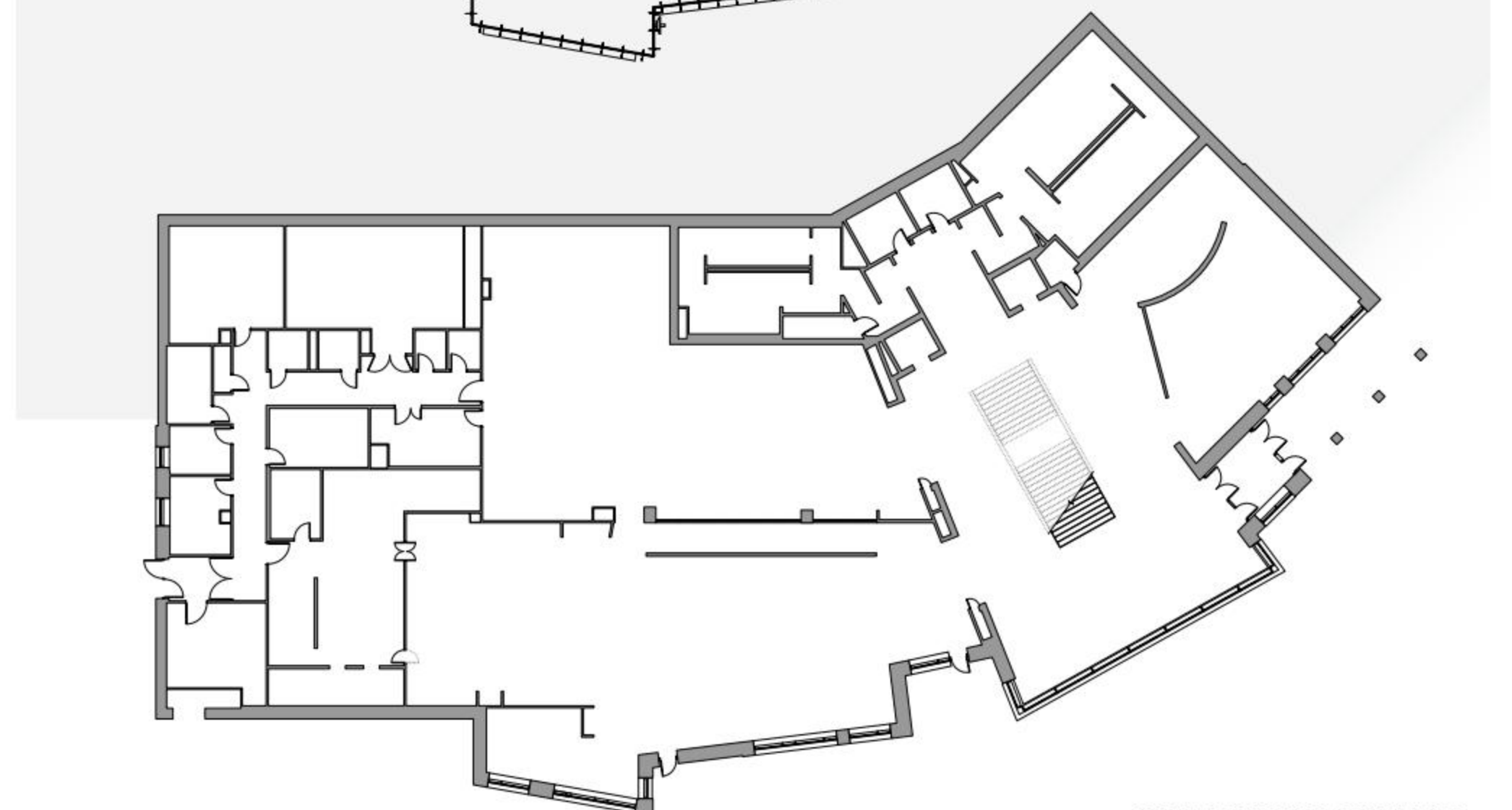
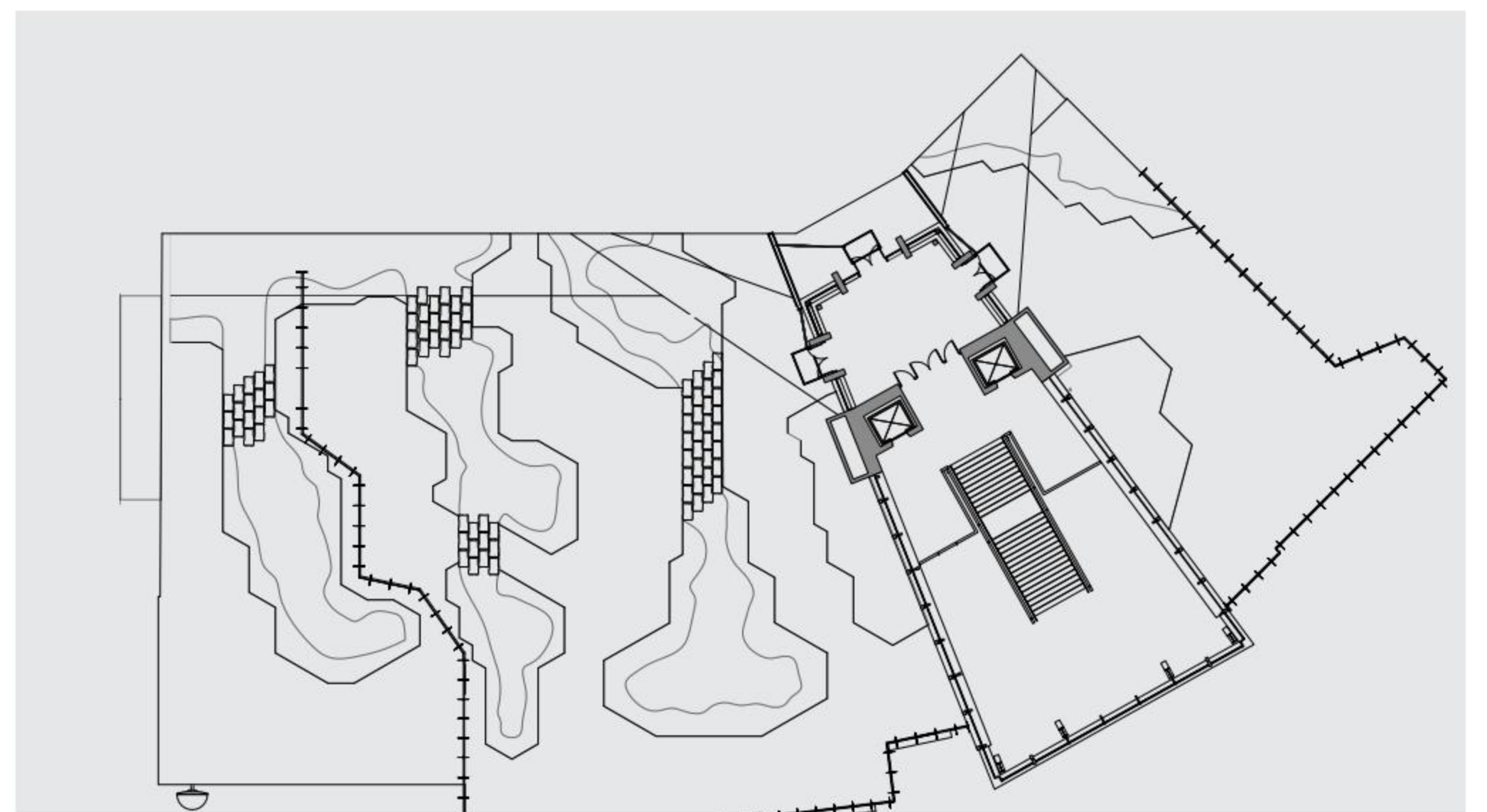




NIC LEHOUX



WINDSTAR STUDIOS



COURTESY GWWO ARCHITECTS

**Facing page, top:** The exterior North Overlook, with the tracks of the Broadmoor Pikes Peak Cog Railway in the foreground

**Facing page, left:** A network of new elevated walkways allow guests to cross the rocky tundra landscape.

**Top:** The double-height lobby offers a view of Mount Rosa.

**Above:** The project was the the highest altitude construction site in North America.

**Right:** All programmed areas are set into the terrain on a lower level beneath the entry.

# Building From Here



MARK WEINBERG

## Building From Here with Archicad

The award-winning Salt Lake City–based firm, Lloyd Architects recently played a major role in bringing new life to a property that sat dormant for decades. The buildings, dating to 1891 and located in the warehouse/railroad district of the city, were to be transformed into a 21st century destination, complete with retail offerings, activities, and recreation, as well as hospitality.

“The location tells a story of the history of Utah. Rail was a bigger part of the history 100 years ago,” explained Warren Lloyd, firm principal at Lloyd Architects. “As the community rediscovers the value of these locations, some of which were trolley repair barns or served as a space for warehousing, transforming it presented a challenge.”

Adaptive reuse projects generally involve hurdles in historic locations. Lloyd Architects embraces this type of project type and has been recognized for excellence doing so. The team at Lloyd Architects worked in Archicad to develop a design for the campus to later become home to retail shops, an indoor skatepark, a 50-room hotel, as well as a bar, and an indoor climbing facility. The renovated century-old building officially opened in June 2022.

It has received the 2022 Community Stewardship Award for Adaptive Reuse from Preservation Utah (PUT). PUT recognized the project for its representation of a major effort to revitalize what was once a busy manufacturing hub for heavy industry.

## What’s Old is New Again

Lloyd Architects worked closely with several entities to bring the project to life. Relying heavily on their software of choice, Archicad, to coordinate with all stakeholders, designers, and local public historic preservation committees. Lloyd said it was a first for the area in many ways, and a first for the firm.

“It was an atypical mashup of retail, climbing gym, and outdoor retail from what previously was just warehouse space,” Lloyd remembered. “Once you add in lodging—that made it the first hotel located in this part of town. So much of this project was a groundbreaking effort to change how these spaces had been used.”

## Small Team, Large Project

Lloyd Architects started using Graphisoft’s Archicad about a year before taking on the Granary Campus project. They switched from a 2D drafting environment after experience taught them that Archicad was the right platform for the Mac-based office.

“We had always wanted to provide graphic representation of our drawings,” Lloyd remarked. “When we started to use Archicad we realized we could use a BIM modeling software from beginning to end, which would help us work through all

the design phases, make presentations, and provide accurate construction documentation.”

BIMx, Graphisoft’s presentation tool in Archicad allowed the firm to share models with clients so they could see its evolution and be fully immersed in the design. BIMx provides 3D and 2D views, allows for cutaways of sections, and outputs animated walkthroughs of the design, which proved very helpful, given the project’s historic landmark status. Point cloud functionality and seamless interfacing in the Archicad model was a key factor as well.

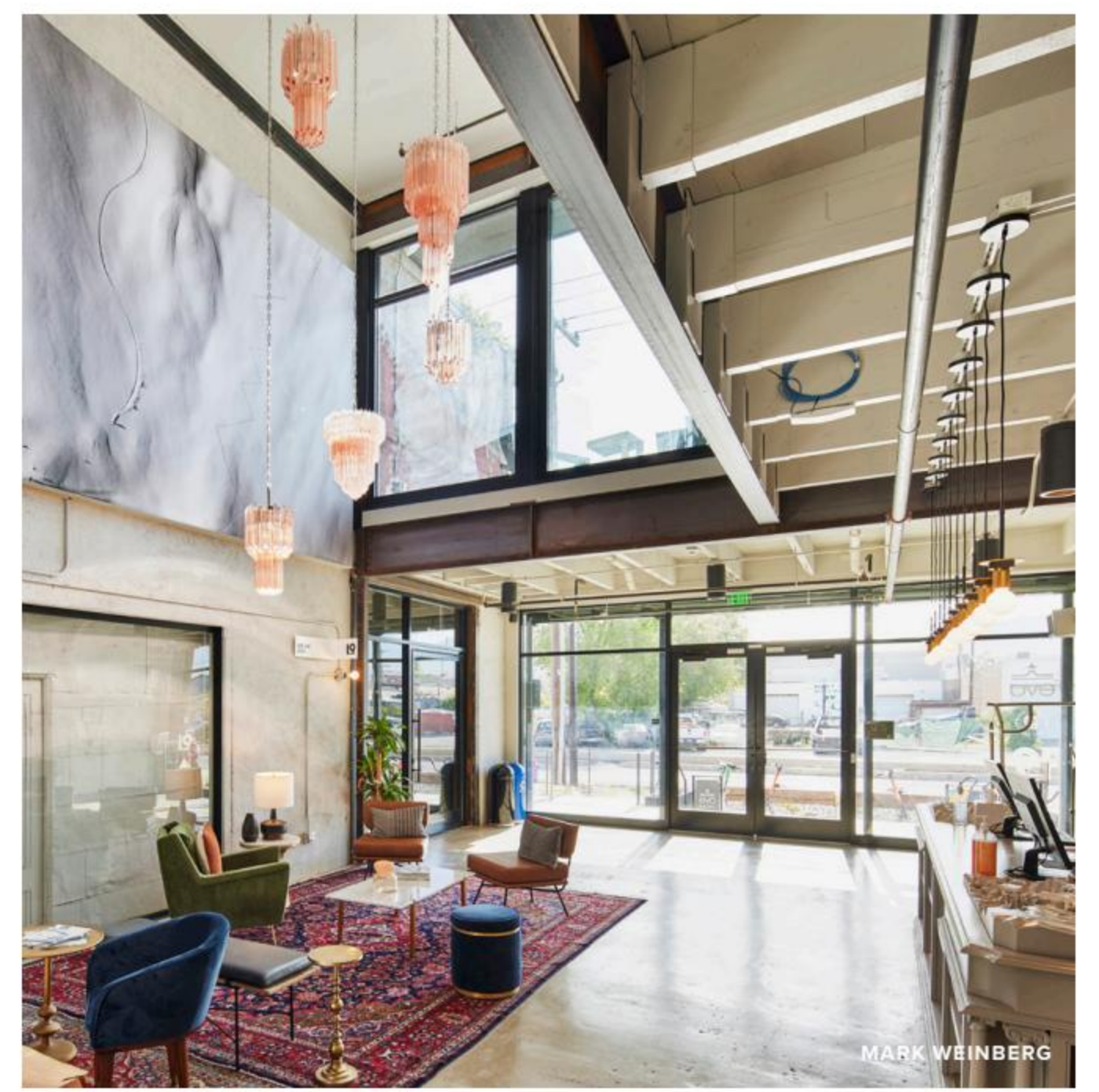
“The site measured more than 100,000 square feet of existing space—with kind of expanse, there’s no way to hand measure in 3D mode,” Lloyd stated. “Being able to take a 3D point cloud and import that into Archicad really is the Holy Grail. This was one of our largest completed projects to date. It required a lot of energy from the team—so you can imagine how helpful this part was.”

On the Granary project, the LiDAR point scan was by far the largest point cloud the team had worked with to date. Navigating that large of a learning curve took some effort.

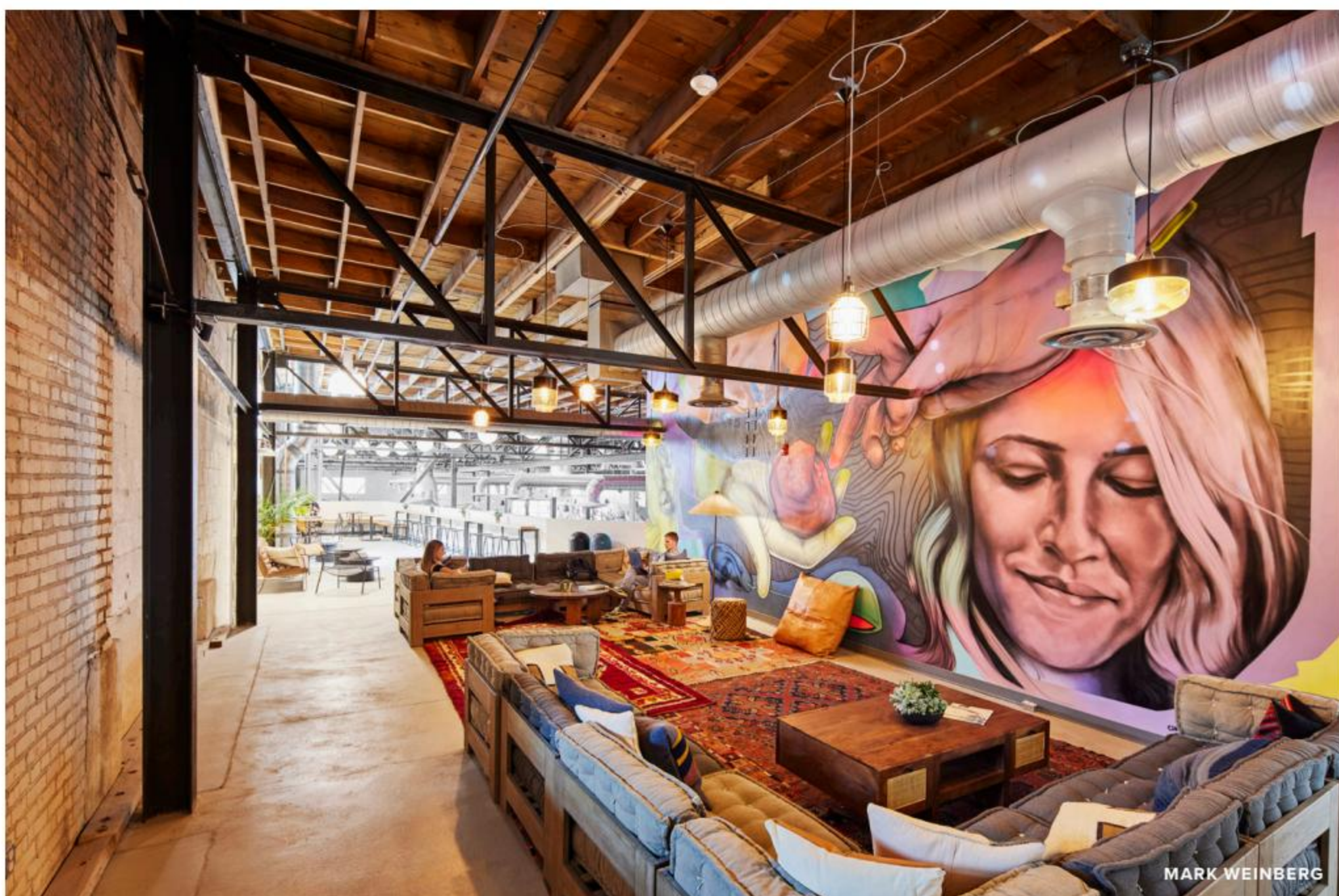
The resulting scan proved hugely valuable to the project. It helped the Lloyd Architects team begin to familiarize themselves with an introductory level of organizing objects. There could be improvements, as better coordination with the scanning team in setting up the object attributes and layers according to Archicad file standards to create a template can result in a “smarter” point cloud.

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BUILDING FROM HERE



Archicad software supported design choices and assisted the team with executing seismic upgrades to the building. The structural engineer working with Lloyd Architects was not working in Archicad, but team members did model structural elements that proved to be very useful during coordination. They shared the point cloud model to confirm existing structural capacity, member sizes, and configurations, which was more manageable than other options. IFC model exchange served both the structural elements and coordinating with the interior design firm on the project.

### Many Teams, One Model

Coordination was no small feat, given that Lloyd Architects handled several separate contracts. “We had separate contracts with the bouldering project, one of the tenants, and then the hotel,” Lloyd recalled. “We set up the core and shell of the project, and then there were additionally three or four other independent projects. Fortunately for us, we coordinated the same core and shell model and generated separate tenant improvement packages. Each tenant had independent budgets and could choose different contractors to do the work. It required a lot of coordination, so being able to control the Archicad model was an essential piece of that.”



**Facing page:** A building from the early 1980s within Salt Lake City's Historic Warehouse District is now The Granary Campus, home to an evo flagship store, indoor skateboard park, hotel, and restaurant spaces.

**This page:** The Granary Campus features outdoor retailers evo and Level Nine Sports, Salt Lake Bouldering Project, All Together Skatepark, and evo Hotel.

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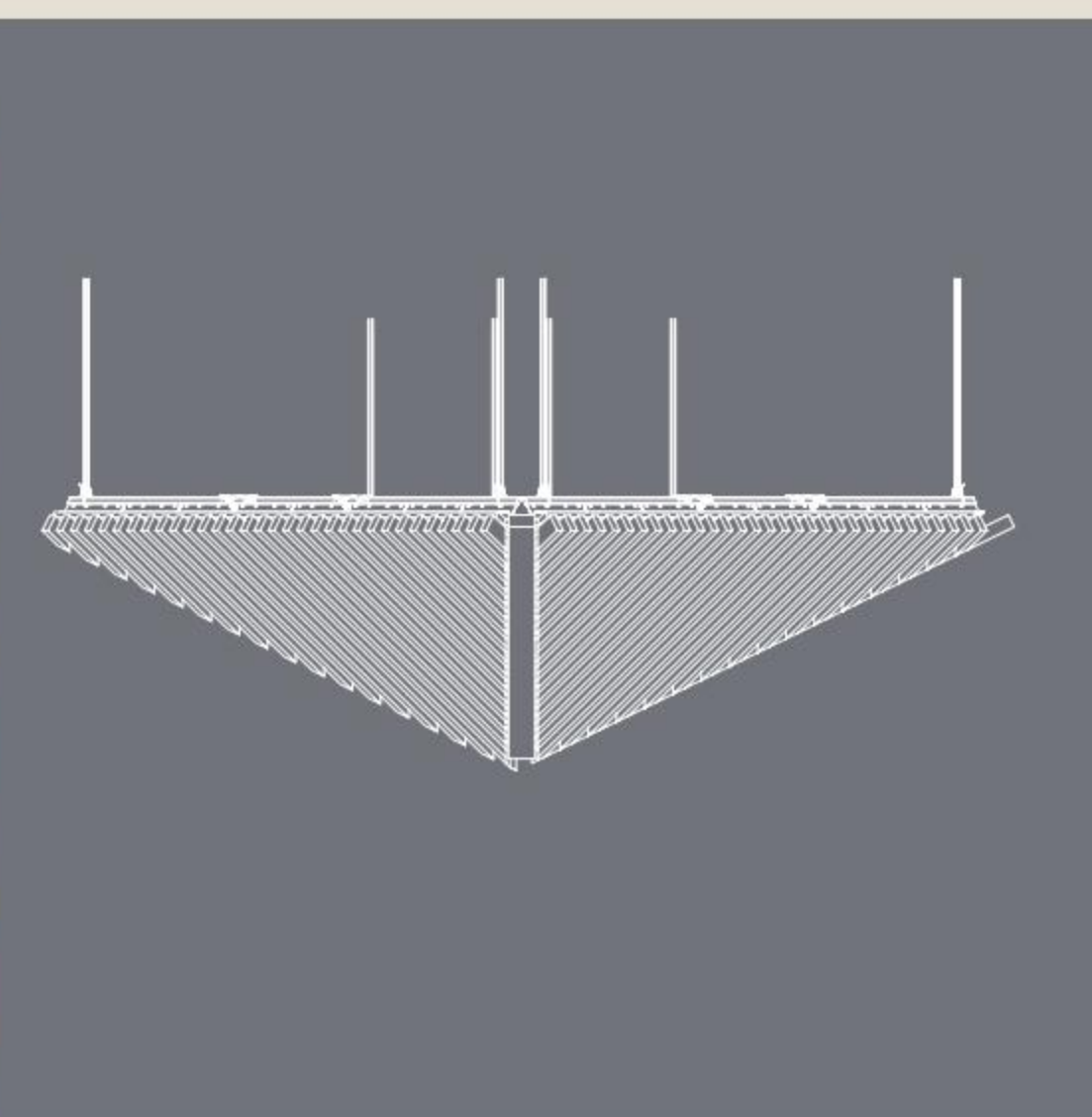
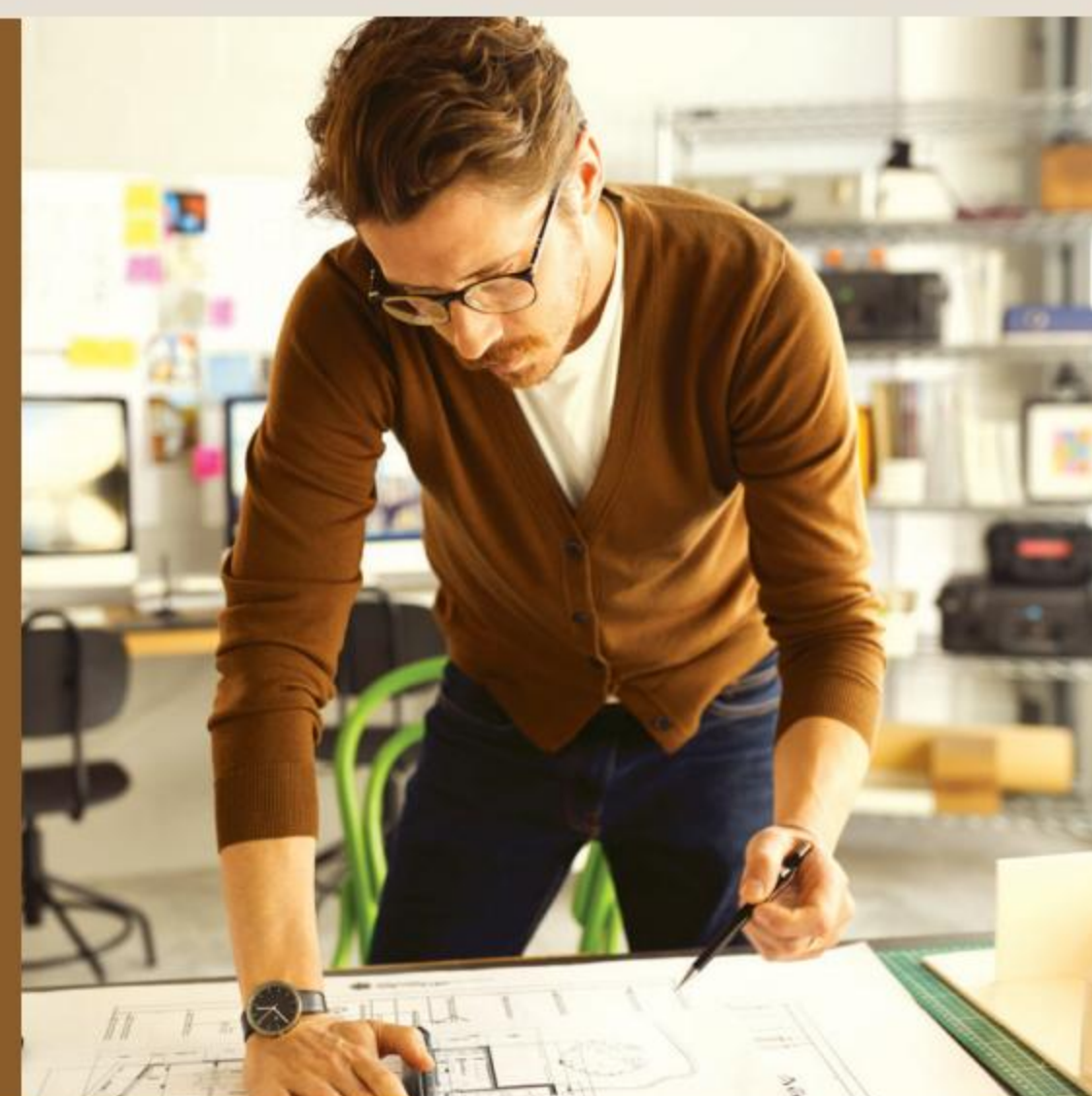
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# Wellness

WELLNESS STUDIO  
ENTRANCE

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# Treat Yourself

An interest in wellness inspires a range of architectural projects and products today.

Wellness is “the active pursuit of activities, choices, and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health,” as defined by the Global Wellness Institute (GWI). The term is one of activity, which differentiates it from an old idea of medical treatment as static, clinical, and reactive; wellness contains the process of seeking well-being. While many aspects—such as mental health, physical activity, and healthy eating—overlap with healthcare, the word “wellness” also encompasses decisions about lifestyle, including tourism, personal beauty, real estate, and workplace improvements.

Concerns about wellness are a key aspect of contemporary culture. Broadly, there is deep interest in fitness and food, and wellness seeps into a wide array of consumer products, from fashion to furniture to technology. The phrase is an important one for millennial interests and aesthetics. It is notable that self-care—“the practice of activities that are necessary to sustain life and health, normally initiated and carried out by the individual”—was added to *The Oxford English Dictionary* only in 2017.

Wellness is also big business. In 2020, the global wellness economy totaled \$4.4 trillion across a variety of sectors, representing about 5.1 percent of economic output worldwide, according to GWI. The figure was down from \$4.9 trillion in 2019, owing to the pandemic, but GWI anticipates significant growth, with spending expected to reach \$7.7 trillion by 2025.

Many architecture projects are now led with wellness in mind. Homes are designed to be oases of comfort that offer a respite from the trials of the outside world; hotels and resorts are organized to provide a variety of activities, alternately calm-inducing and strenuous; workplaces prioritize employee enjoyment to both retain talent and maintain productivity; and proper healthcare facilities in a range of scales are built with hospitality in mind.

In this Focus section, *AN*'s case studies focus on facilities that serve a diversity of publics. Four projects by three architecture offices showcase the skill that goes into the sequencing and materializing of work that establishes an environment of serenity. In rural Wisconsin, Salmela Architect expands a restaurant he designed decades ago into a retreat center overlooking Lake Superior. In New York, Alda Ly Architecture realizes two new locations for Tia, a healthcare company for women. In Chicago, Wheeler Kearns designs the first ground-up location for Howard Brown Health, an organization that cares for LGBTQ youth. Also: On the following pages, see product suggestions for furnishings, lighting, surfaces and textiles, acoustics, and air-purifying systems that help establish a place of vital refuge. **JM**



COREY GAFFER

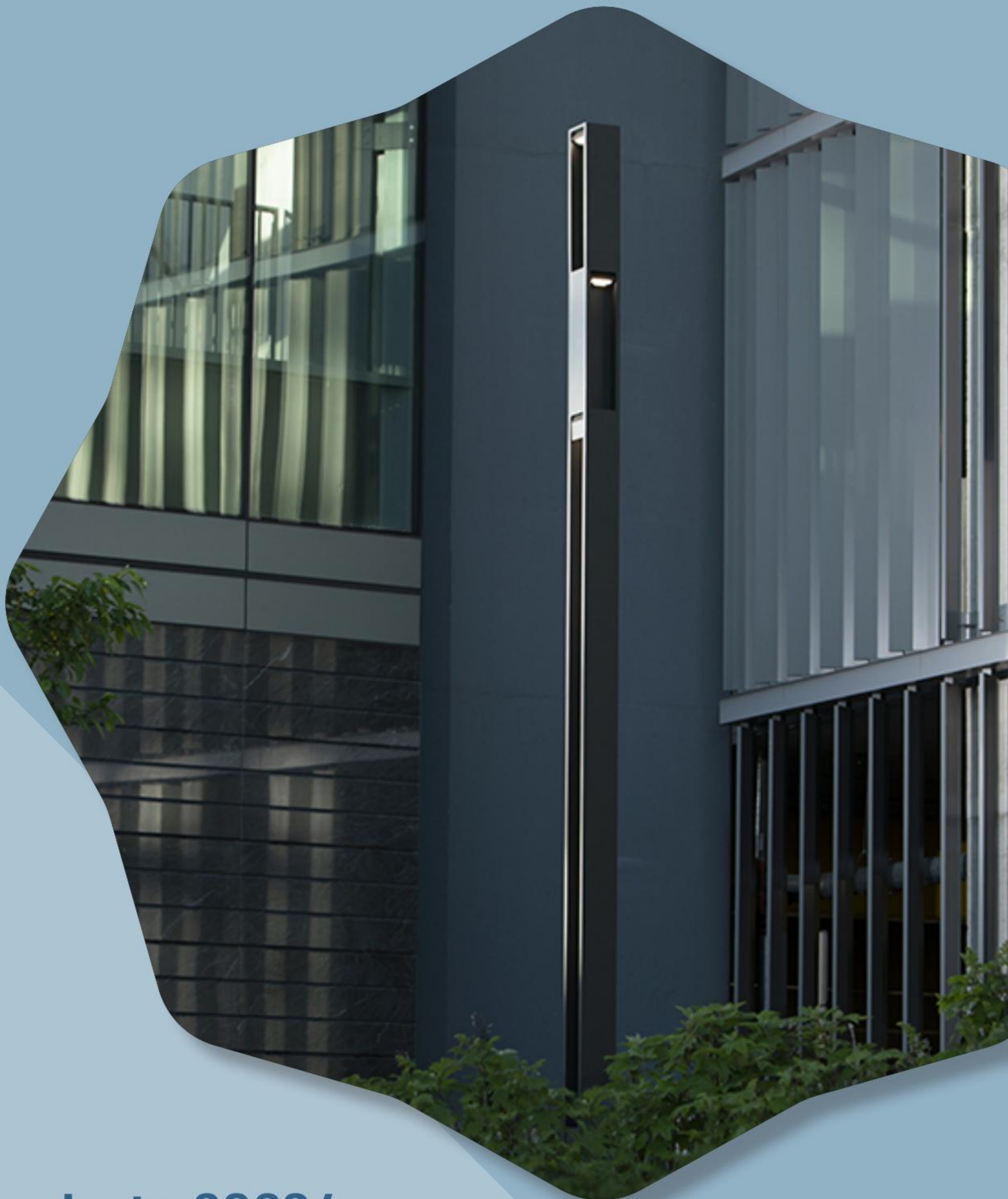


REID ROLLS



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# AN 2023 Products Awards



**Deadline: June 21, 2023**

[archpaperawards.com/bestofproducts-2023/](https://archpaperawards.com/bestofproducts-2023/)

# 48 Case Study

A'IN FOCUS

March/April 2023

## Into the Woods

Salmela Architect expands a restaurant of its own design to become Wild Rice Retreat, a center for arts and well-being.



**Architect:** Salmela Architect  
**Location:** Bayfield, Wisconsin

**Landscape architect:** Travis Van Liere Studio  
**Subcontractor/consultant:** BKV  
**Construction manager:** Kraus-Anderson  
**Developer:** Zimmer Development  
**Owner:** Heidi Zimmer

What are architects to do when asked to update a building they designed? Change nothing? Fiddle to fix past mistakes? Treat it as a palimpsest and go about what needs to be done? This was the challenge of Wild Rice Retreat for architect David Salmela.

Salmela originally designed Wild Rice as a destination restaurant on a wooded, sloped site overlooking Lake Superior in Wisconsin. The venue's patron was Mary Rice, part of the family that owns Andersen Windows; Salmela

remembered that the eatery's name came not from the grain but instead from her distinctive character. The four gabled forms, hollowed by an interior courtyard, run perpendicular to the grade. The final one, the dining room, is pulled away from the others, allowing light to enter from five directions, including the skylights. The trusses supporting the 12:12-pitched roof were—and are—painted red. The result won Salmela an Honor Award from AIA Minnesota in 2005.

Though it was a popular place during tourism season, in time the restaurant closed. In 2018, Heidi Zimmer, a developer from Minneapolis, bought the place and began to operate it as a retreat center; the dining hall became a yoga studio and classroom space. The issue was housing—there was none—and Salmela Architect was brought on to solve this need. Rather than building a compact dormitory, Salmela designed three types of individual cabins and placed the residences in groups across the terrain. Two additional shared buildings begin to turn what was once a single complex into a campus.

Salmela located a 960-square-foot “peace pod” next to the original building to be used for gatherings; it sports an overlook and garden beds. In a clearing off to the west, a wood-lined sauna offers another respite. A parking lot collects guests' cars so the expanse can be navigated on vehicle-free pathways.

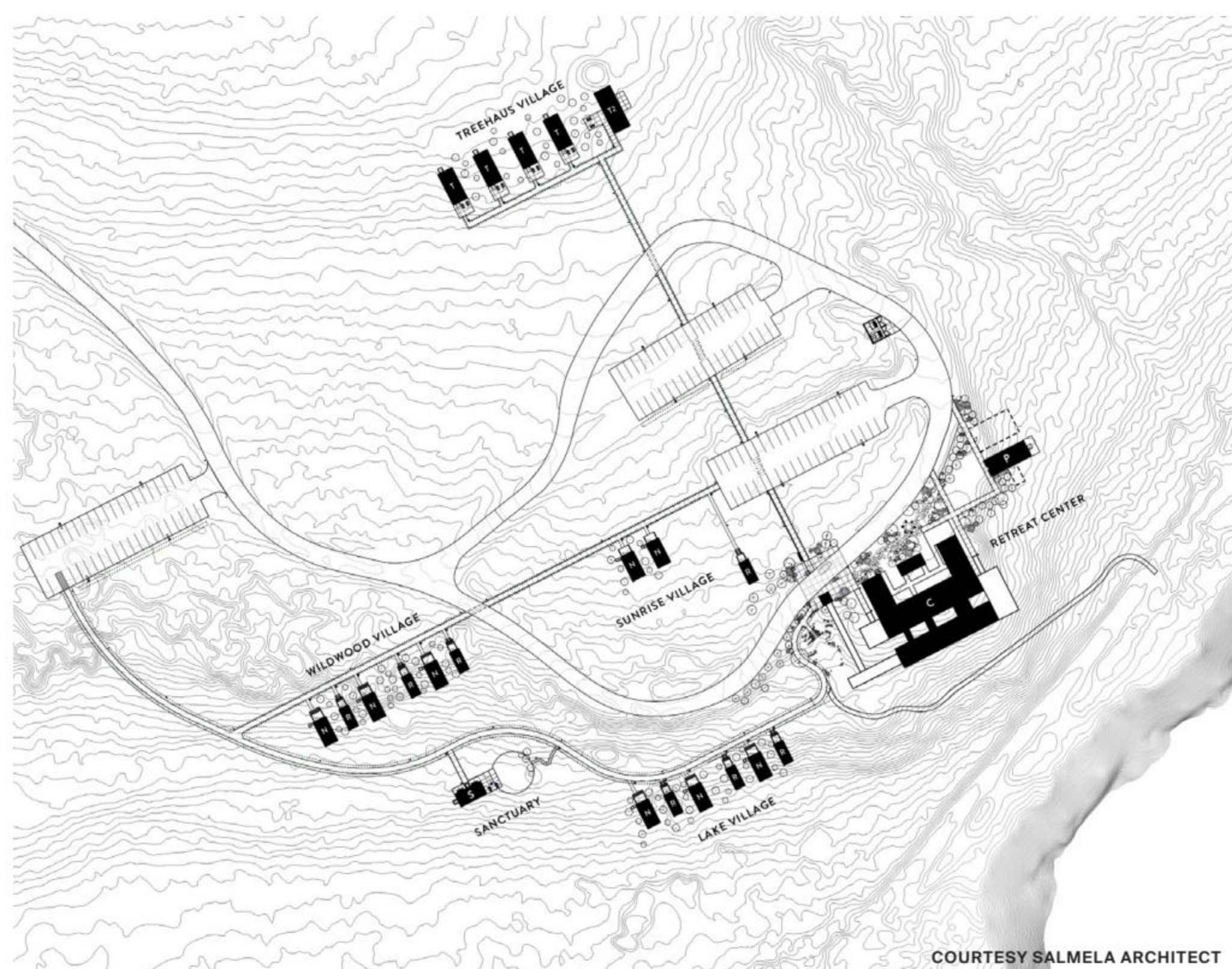
Wild Rice Retreat has 35 rooms across seven “Ricepods,” eight “Nests,” and five “Treehouses.” The Ricepods are compact 312-square-foot structures with an entry porch and two twin beds. The 480-square-foot Nests include a sitting area and a private bedroom. The two-story, 1,548-square-foot Treehouses offer four bedrooms, each with

its own bathroom. The smaller cabins are perched above the land on piers, while the Treehouses are set on cinder-block foundations. Their upper story is taller than the lower one and cantilevers out to make a covered porch; inside, the kitchen/living room has windows on three sides. All cabins are faced in cedar siding (unfinished and painted blue) and Richlite panels with interiors lined in drywall and basswood. Salmela, Zimmer, and TVL Studio are currently at work on a second phase that will add homes available for purchase to the retreat.

The realized improvements maintain a distinctive, open outdoor fireplace that Salmela designed for the original Wild Rice, an element seen in many of the architect's private homes. The shallow C-shaped structure, built in brick and painted white, is a vertical marker. “It's about this primitive idea of the beauty of sitting around a campfire at night,” Salmela said. But the morning after, things don't look so hot. With this shape, the smoke still runs up the inside surface; the resulting accreted soot looks like a Robert Motherwell painting, Salmela mused. It also reads like a ruin, as if a prior building set around the hearth had burned down, with only a column remaining.

Last year, Wild Rice Retreat won a Commendation for Excellence in Design for Well-Being from AIA Minnesota. Over the years, people have visited Wild Rice and, inspired, called Salmela to initiate their own projects. “The phone keeps ringing,” the architect noted. “I still can't figure out why these people come to us. But they appear.”

Wild Rice Retreat is one reason. Zimmer said, “It's hard not to feel anything but a big sigh of relief and joy when you arrive.” **JM**





COREY GAFFER



COREY GAFFER



COREY GAFFER



COREY GAFFER



COREY GAFFER

**Facing, above left:** The original restaurant building has been augmented by a campus of small outbuildings. Landscape design by Travis Van Liere Studio connects the structures.

**Facing, above right:** A Rice-pod cabin set into the woods

**Bottom, top left:** The site plan shows how guests accommodations are strung along walking paths. The Sanctuary building contains the sauna.

**Top, left:** Many smaller events, including yoga and meditation sessions, are held in the free-standing peace pod.

**Top, right:** Wild Rice's original walkways and structure continue to be put to use, including the standalone outdoor fireplace.

**Above, left:** The one-bedroom Nests sit above the terrain on heavy timber beams.

**Above, right:** The main dining space has been converted for classes and meetings. Its red ceiling remains.

**Left:** The Nest interiors, finished in basswood, include a kitchen, bathroom, table for two, seating area, and bedroom.

## Furnishings

The high-traffic and highly sensitive nature of healthcare settings demands ultradurability, adaptability, and cleanability of furnishings. Fortunately, these manufacturers have been working in healthcare design for decades to produce furniture that not only meets these strict standards but also looks good while doing it. Whether you're a patient, staff member, or visitor, these functional furnishings ensure that your time in the healthcare space is both comfortable and efficient. *Sophie Aliece Hollis*



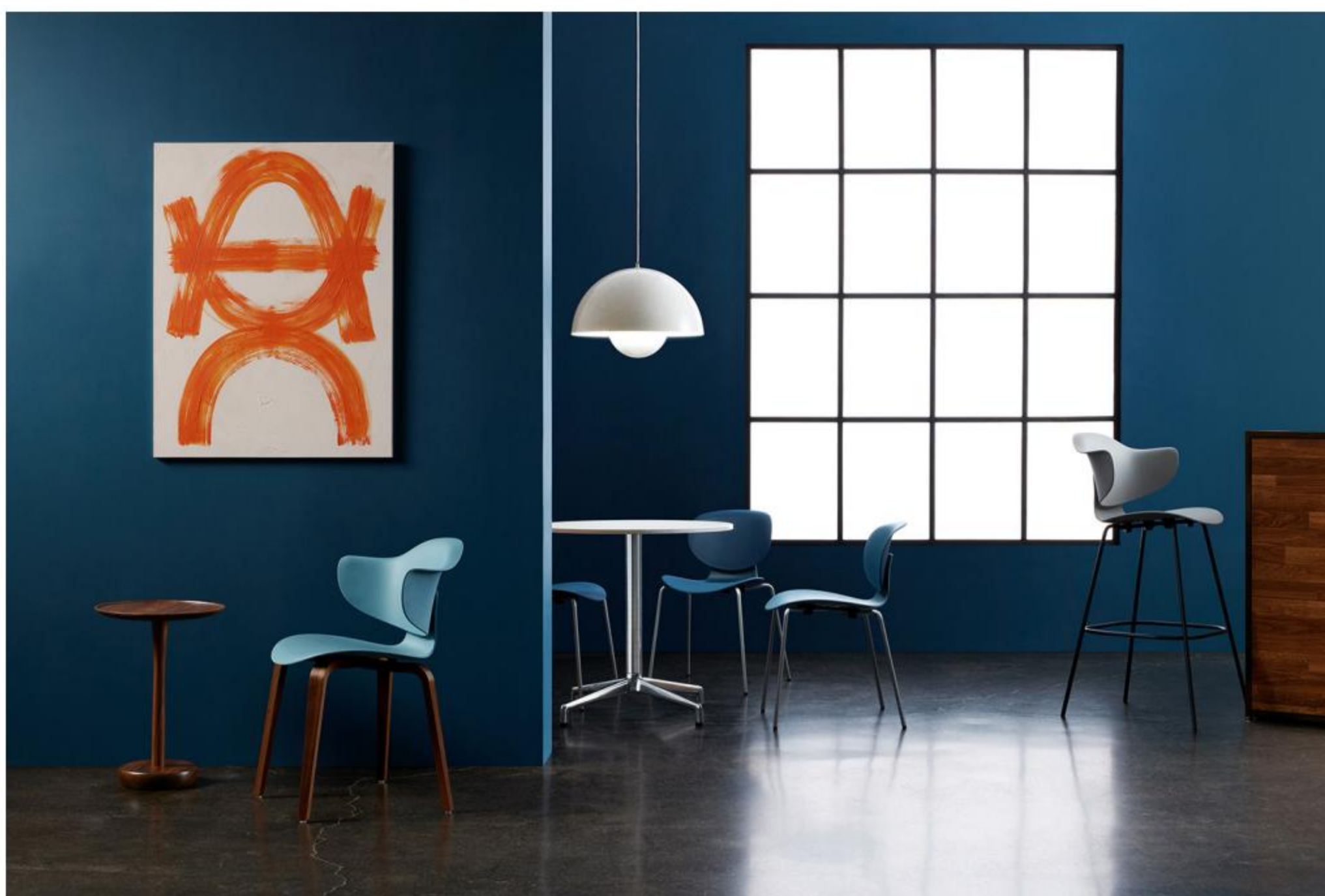
**Ruhe**  
Allseating  
allseating.com



**Sorta**  
Carolina  
carolina ofs.com



**Layer**  
Dekko  
dekko.com



**Melete Collection**  
Keilhauer  
keilhauer.com



**KwickScreen Duo**  
Steelcase Health x KwickScreen  
steelcase.com

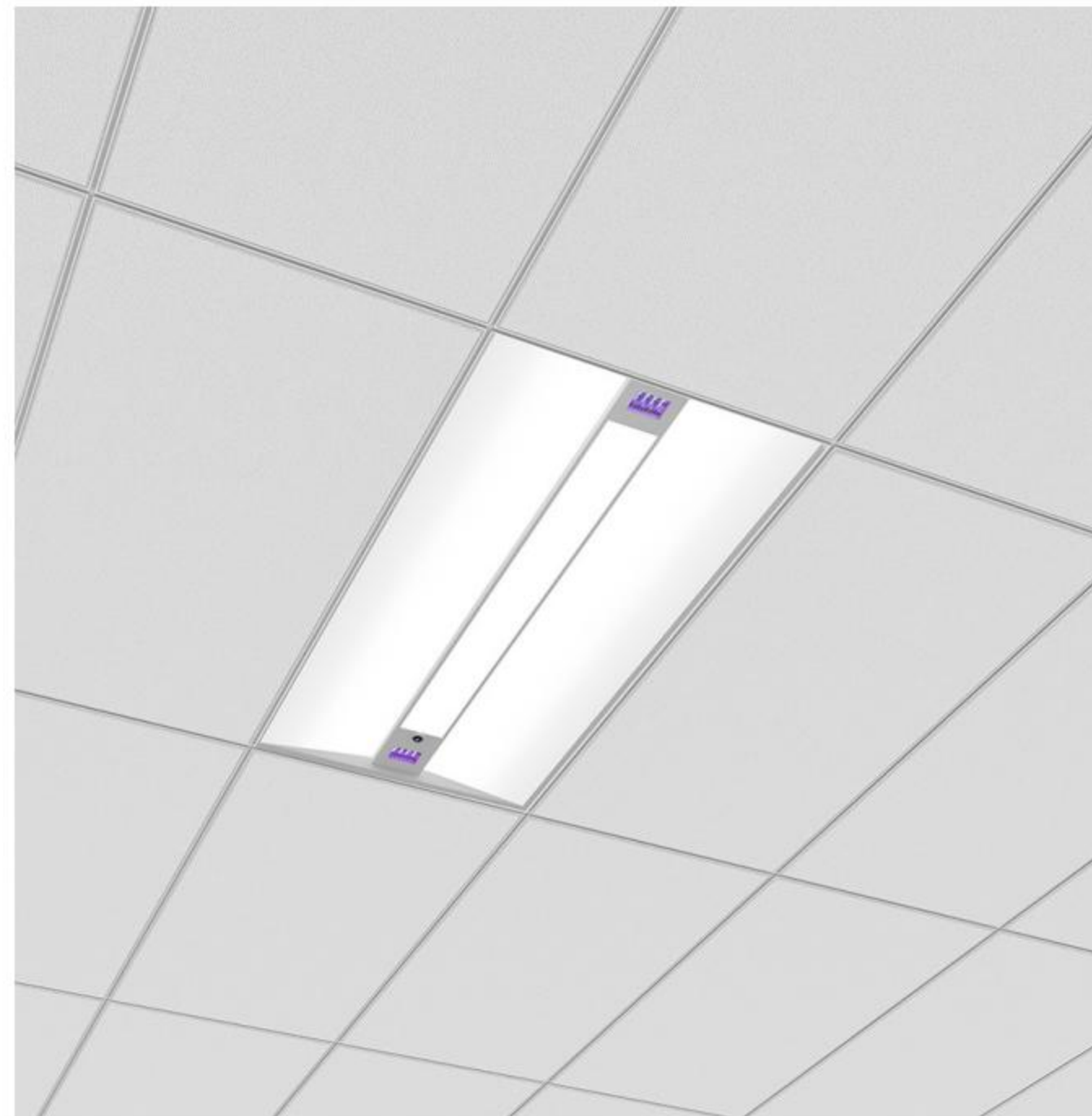
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## Lighting

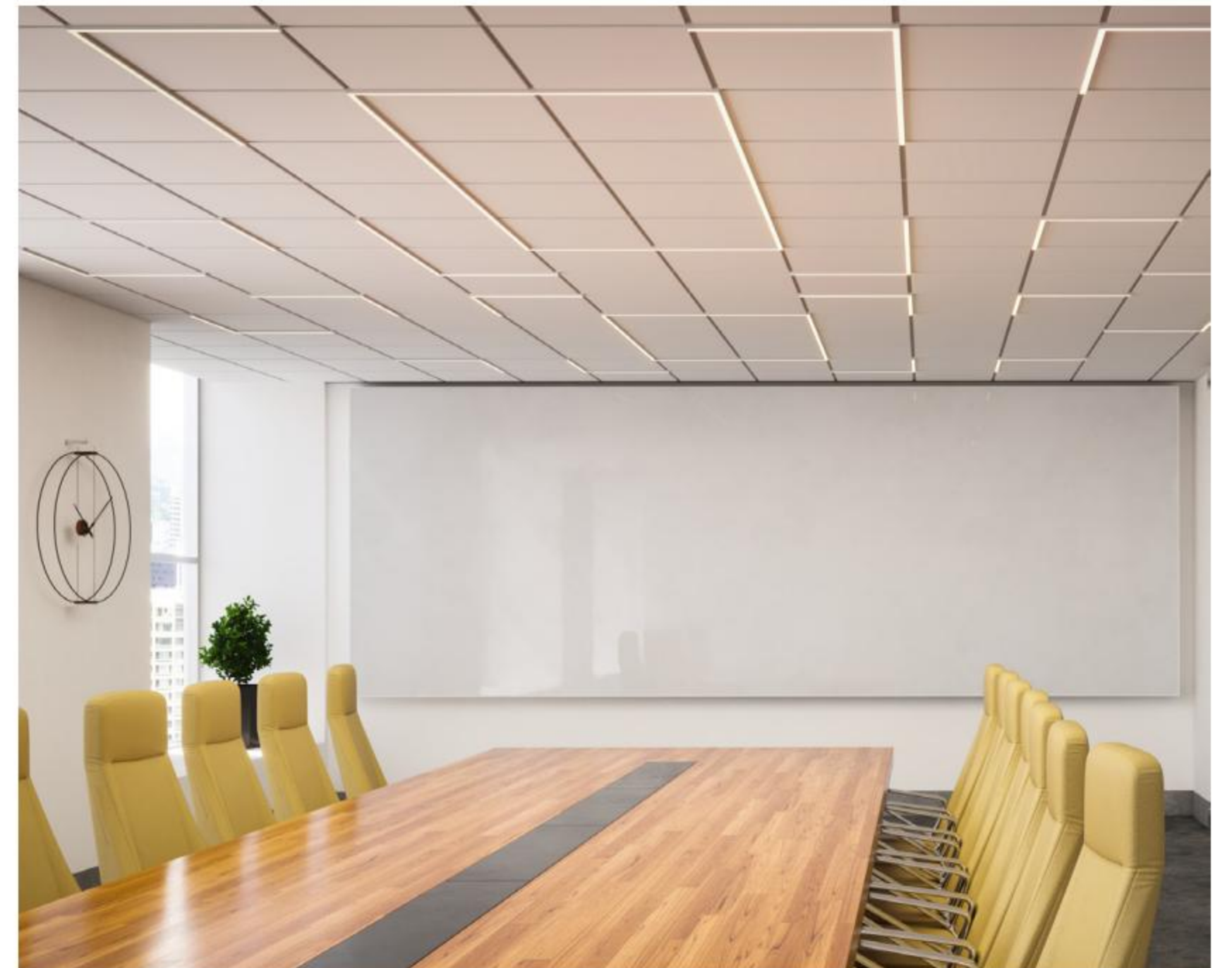
Adequate and appropriate lighting is paramount in the functionality of any healthcare space. Whether your aim is to improve aesthetics, dampen noise, disinfect, or not draw attention to the lighting at all, the following recently released luminaires have you covered. SAH



**Static Links**  
LightArt  
lightart.com



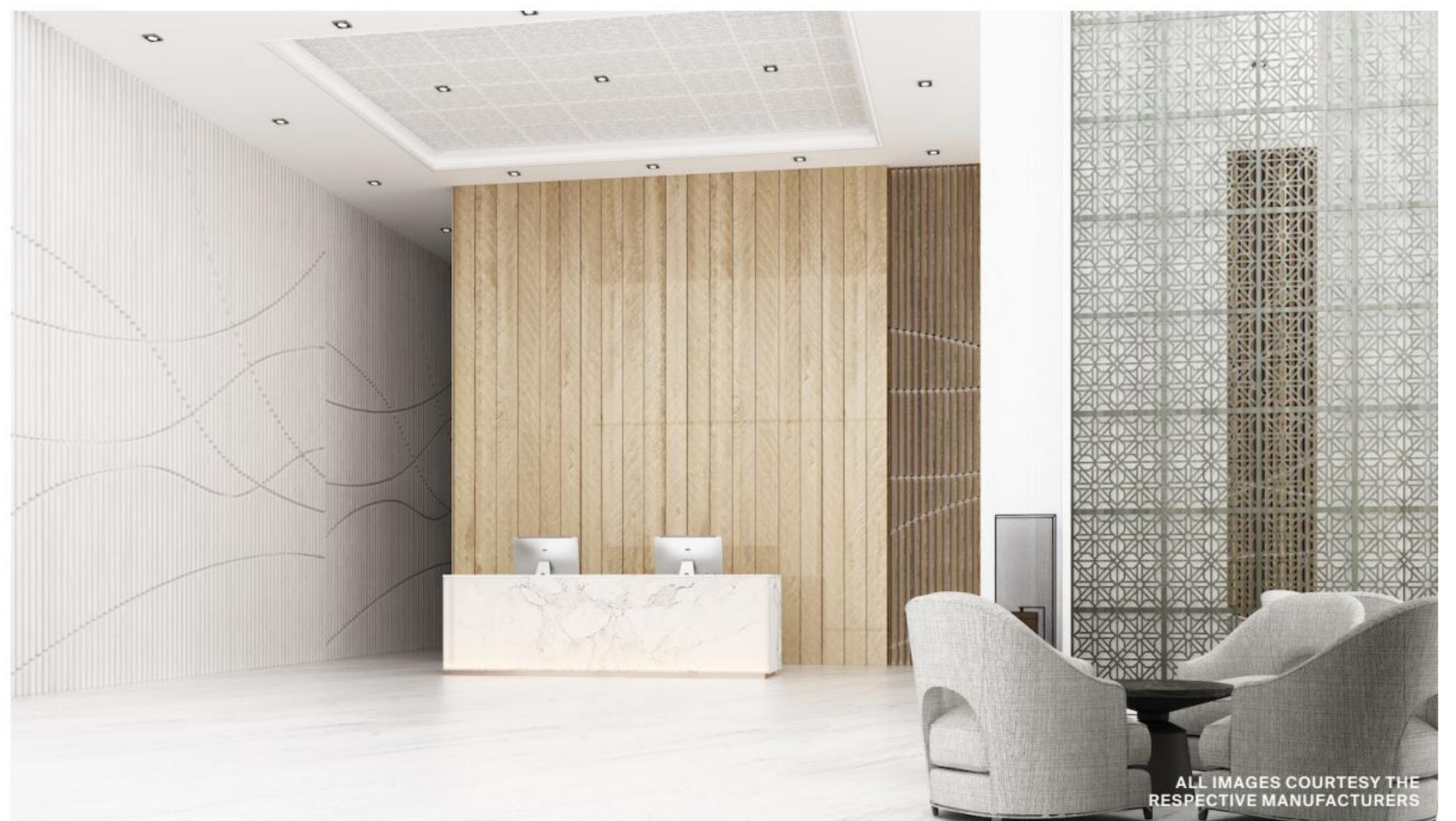
**Whisper with Care222 Technology**  
MARK Architectural Lighting  
marklighting.acuitybrands.com



**Cirrus T-Bar Geo Form System**  
Pure Edge Lighting  
pureedgelighting.com



**TruGroove Suspended Micro**  
Signify Lighting  
signify.com

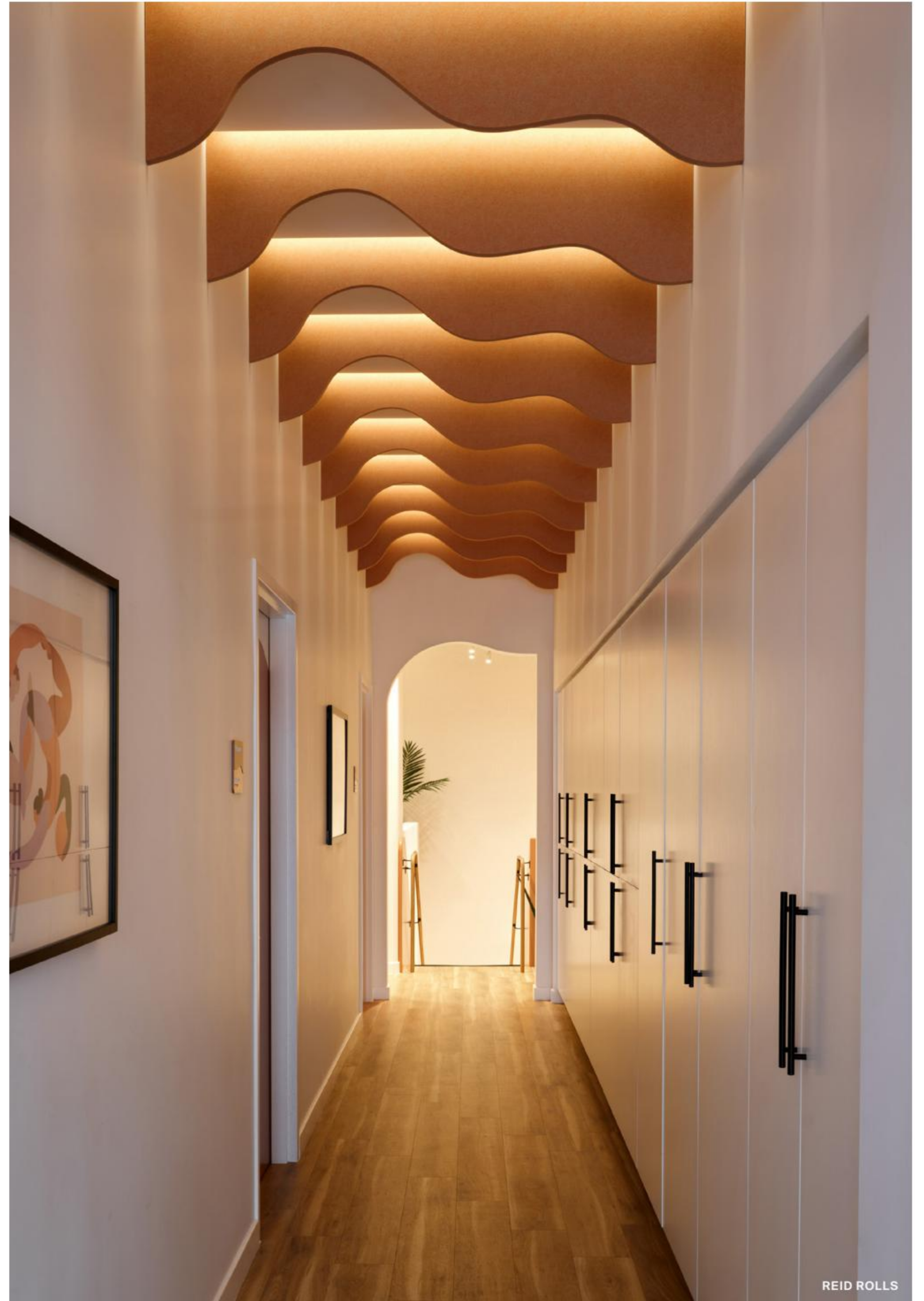


**TrueZero 360**  
USAI Lighting  
usallighting.com

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## Care for Curves

Alda Ly Architecture crafts two New York locations for Tia, a women's healthcare provider.



**Architect:** Alda Ly Architecture  
**Locations:** New York; Brooklyn, New York

**Engineering:** AVCON Engineering  
**Lighting:** Tarrant Lighting  
**AV/IT:** Sound Solutions  
**Millwork:** Visual Millwork  
**Contractor (Tia Soho):** EBS Builders  
**Contractor (Tia Williamsburg):** Spruce Contracting  
**Client:** Tia

A trip to the doctor's office often summons a waiting room cluttered with chairs, a reception desk screened off by a Plexiglas sheet, over-lit exam rooms, and vinyl surfaces galore. Using its experience designing retail and hospitality spaces, Alda Ly Architecture (ALA), an architecture and interior design practice in New York, has done away with this trope: It designs clinics that are hospitable, not hospital. The firm recently completed two interiors in Soho and Williamsburg for Tia, a health center providing gynecology, primary care, mental health, and wellness services for women and women-identifying individuals.

ALA began working with Tia in 2021, and the firm had previously designed several locations in California and a clinic in Phoenix. In short order since the office was founded in 2017, ALA has built up a considerable healthcare portfolio; its first project in this typology was for Parsley Health, a holistic medicine clinic in New York.

Founder and Principal Alda Ly told *AN*: "It was a huge learning curve for us to think through what do the providers need? What are the staff needs? How the patients feel, of course, we can relate to that and put ourselves in those patients' shoes, but how do you make it less stressful, less scary, more calming, inviting, more welcoming?"

These latest New York projects were particularly meaningful for ALA. Unlike past Tia projects, the office had the opportunity to provide all the design services the firm offers.

Marissa Feddema, architect and director at ALA, added: "The New York projects are special for us because we're local. We're licensed here in New York, so we got to take it from beginning to end. We designed the projects like we typically do, but we also got to be the architect of record, oversee the permitting phases, construction, and all the FFE procurement and installation. And now they are spaces in the neighborhoods we live in."

Tia Williamsburg occupies two levels of a brick-clad residential building, giving it a retail presence. A curving staircase with wood steps and railings that connect the floors is a focal point of the design.

Instead of working with a blank slate, ALA, was required, as with the Brooklyn project, to devise a different approach for the Soho location because the office is on the second floor of an old loft building. Historical details such as arched windows and fluted columns were not to be ignored. The windows run along the perimeter, so ALA decided to locate the exam rooms here, adding curtains for privacy.

Both locations pull from the brand identity

of Tia, which features skin tones and curved, body-inspired forms. Furnishings, cabinetry, and paint feature beige shades and clay-influenced colors. Architectural elements, including the reception desk, stairs, and doorways, take on curved shapes.

While services across Tia locations are relatively universal, with clinic appointments, wellness classes, and coaching, the classroom spaces cater to the local community. In New York they are primarily used for mental health.

ALA's experience designing retail and hospitality projects is evident in the small details, including wardrobes in exam rooms where patients can store their belongings, shelving for displaying products, and staff lounges imbued with a residential flair.

"With all of these projects, what we tried to do is learn from healthcare spaces in the past and carry in that knowledge to make sure the spaces still function but ask questions to see where we could think of new ways to bring in new materials and ideas," Feddema shared.

In swapping out vinyl surfaces for stone counters, replacing harsh overhead lighting with small fixtures secured to exam beds, and decorating with warm tones and attractive furnishings, ALA has made some medical visits less intimidating and more inviting. **KK**



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**Tia Williamsburg**

**Facing page, left:** A double-height stair is a focal point of the two-story location, which is blocks from the waterfront in Brooklyn.

**Facing page, right:** On the upper floor, ceiling baffles conceal lighting. Tia's New York locations tend towards deeper and richer hues while still incorporating the brand's signature pink.

**Tia Soho**

**Above, left:** A meeting room shows off the building shell's historic details.

**Above, right:** Warm cabinetry and countertops with terra-cotta-colored tiles make patient rooms feel less clinical.

**Left:** The waiting room is furnished with bright furniture and relevant literature.

## Surfaces & Textiles

Perhaps the next most important characteristic after cleanliness in a wellness space is durability. Hospitals, doctors' offices, gyms, you name it—each of these environments sees constant foot and equipment traffic. With wear and tear in mind, these manufacturers developed resistant surface and textile solutions available in numerous shades and patterns. SAH



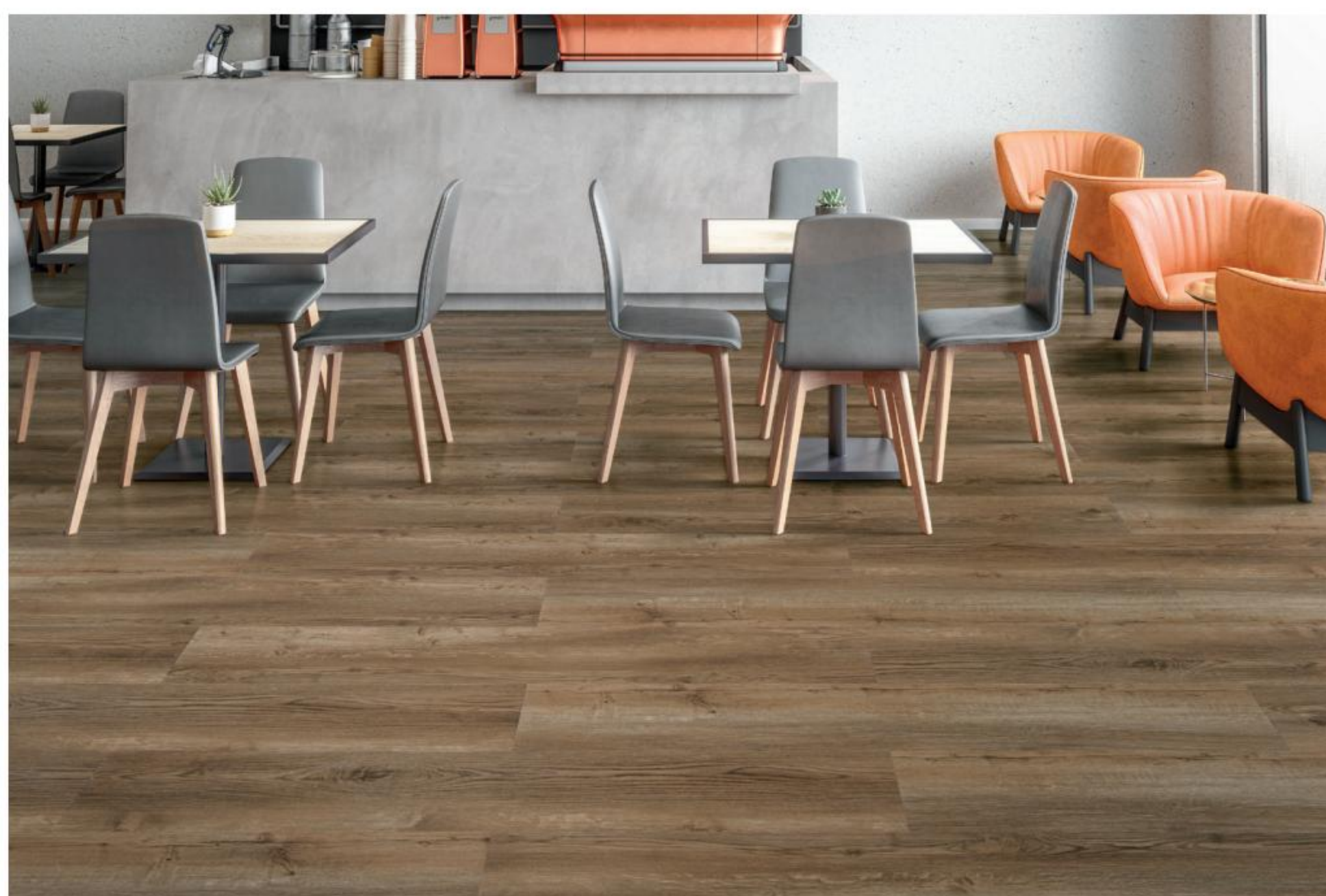
**Waterworld Collection**  
Chemetal  
chemetal.com



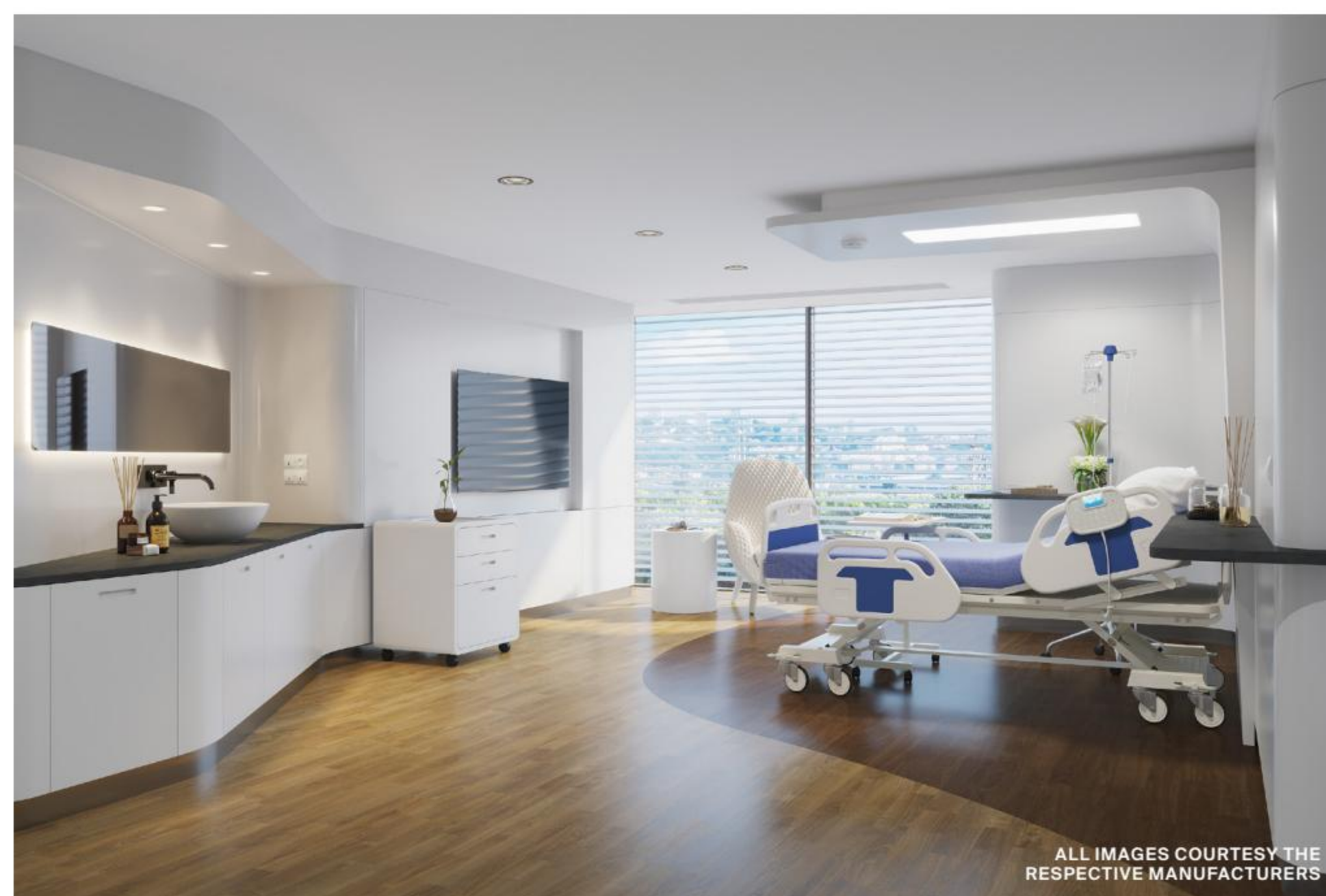
**Tekstur Panels**  
Eco Supply  
ecosupplycenter.com



**Pennant**  
EF Contract Flooring  
efcontractflooring.com



**Classics II**  
J+J Flooring  
jjflooringgroup.com



**Natural Selection Plus**  
HFLOR by LX Hausys  
lxhausys.com

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## Acoustics

Serenity is an essential facet of wellness. Unfortunately, healthcare spaces are often far from calm or peaceful. To combat the hustle and bustle, the following acoustic solutions leverage subtle and serene design to quiet a range of wellness environments. SAH



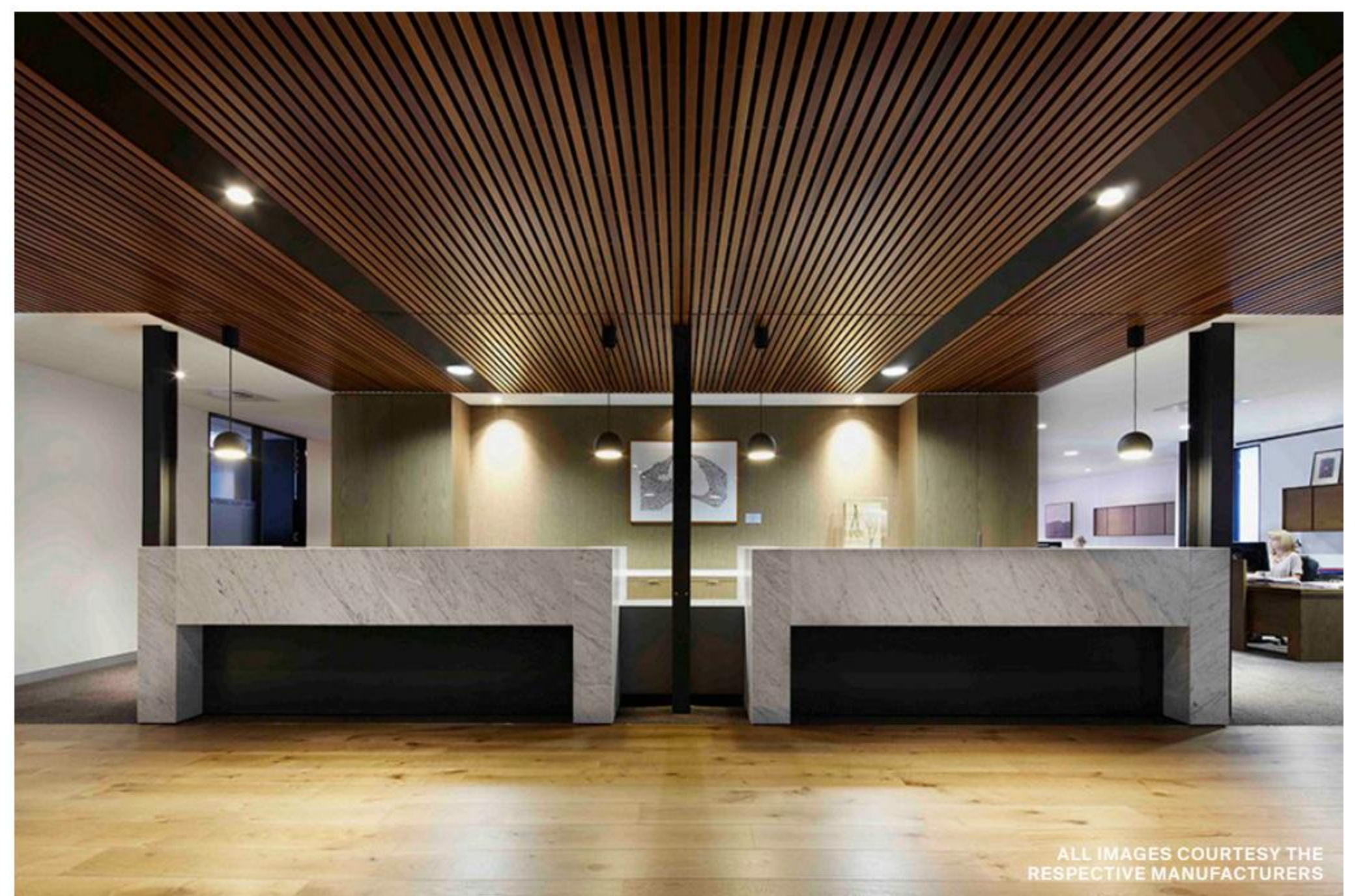
**Quietude**  
Carnegie  
carnegiefabrics.com



**Qwel Designer Acoustic Tiles**  
Genesis Products  
genesisproductsinc.com



**Biophilia Collection**  
Kirei  
kireiusa.com



**Blade FR + MR Panel**  
Unika Vaev  
unikavaev.com

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## Under One Roof

The Broadway Youth Center offers essential care to Chicago's LGBTQ youth.



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY/HALL + MERRICK PHOTOGRAPHERS

**Architect:** Wheeler Kearns  
**Location:** Chicago

**Healthcare architect:** Anderson Mikos Architects

**Landscape architect:** site design group

**Structural engineer:** Forefront Engineers

**MEP/FP engineer:** dbMHS

**Civil engineer:** Terra Engineering

**Acoustic consultant:** Kirkegaard

**Kitchen consultant:** Edge Associates

**Construction manager:** Bully & Andrews

**Client:** Howard Brown Health

**Owner's representative:** RLE Partners

Designed by Wheeler Kearns Architects, the Broadway Youth Center is a branch of Howard Brown Health, which provides accessible, welcoming, and state-of-the-art care for LGBTQ youth. As the first ground-up building in the Howard Brown network, the center has programming, warmth, and presence that represents its commitment to community and individual wellness in historically underserved populations.

Howard Brown Health was founded in the 1970s as a healthcare system serving the LGBTQ community with affordable care at inconspicuous facilities. Since its conception, the network has grown to accommodate a wide range of individuals across many neighborhoods in the city while maintaining a focus on holistic, affirming care that challenges institutional biases and costs. As such, the Broadway Youth Center integrates trauma-informed design to support its programs, which include clinics, a pharmacy, exam rooms, labs, sleeping rooms, and a dance and movement studio. The spaces are designed to welcome patients into a bright and open facility without feeling juvenile or clinical. Warm wood and bright accent colors mingle with streamlined surfaces and simple furniture to create comfortable, sensible settings, whether in an exam room or a lounge.

Located on a narrow lot in the Buena Park neighborhood of Chicago, the new clinic hosts five stories of services that address mental

and physical health and are further supported by facilities like a kitchen, a laundry room, and meditation spaces. The previous youth center occupied a one-story building, so part of the design imperative was to redistribute the programming vertically in a way that allows for privacy but still feels approachable and warm.

To encourage engagement, Wheeler Kearns placed the urgent-clinic exam rooms on the first floor but carefully designed the initial entry to avoid an intimidating, institutional atmosphere. Project architect Noah Luken told *AN* that "the initial impulse was to put all the healthcare facilities on the upper floors, but we thought sending everyone up an elevator would run counter to the 'low barrier of entry' approach." Thus, the waiting room to see a clinician doubles as a cafe, providing a low-stakes, casual, and comfortable setting for those seeking treatment. "This is not a clinic with a social services clubhouse tacked on," Luken told *AN*. "The two have equal footing."

The new building was an opportunity for Howard Brown to establish a more prominent presence. In decades past, the organization stuck to existing buildings with nondescript exteriors to protect the discretion that allowed potential patients to feel comfortable seeking medical care. Now the Broadway Youth Center is a five-story symbol of pride and security, with an exterior that is simultaneously familiar and eye-catching. (The success was enough to land

the project a win in the Healthcare category in *AN*'s Best of Design Awards last year.) Wheeler Kearns employed a standard brick-paneled facade that references the surrounding residential context but took the atypical approach of using different brick bonds and slight variations in color for each panel. The panels are organized around a window grid system that allows each exam room, office, and common area to receive an abundance of natural sunlight. The resulting patchwork quilt effect is unified while still unique.

The site's proximity to Chicago's L train also intensifies the need for strategic placement of services and trauma-informed design. The building's height makes it visible from the train platform, an attribute that potentially disrupts the privacy and tranquility, which are paramount to the facilities. Rather than shrinking away from the complication, Wheeler Kearns capitalized on the visibility and opened the rear facade to bystanders by placing a large window in the dance and movement space. The window is triple glazed to minimize sound, and the sill is raised to waist height, preventing a view of dancers from the train. Instead, the passengers are able to see a projected installation that broadcasts the mission and slogan of the Broadway Youth Center. The new facility connects the organization to the city and offers a respite to those who need care.

**Alaina Griffin is a regular contributor to *AN*.**



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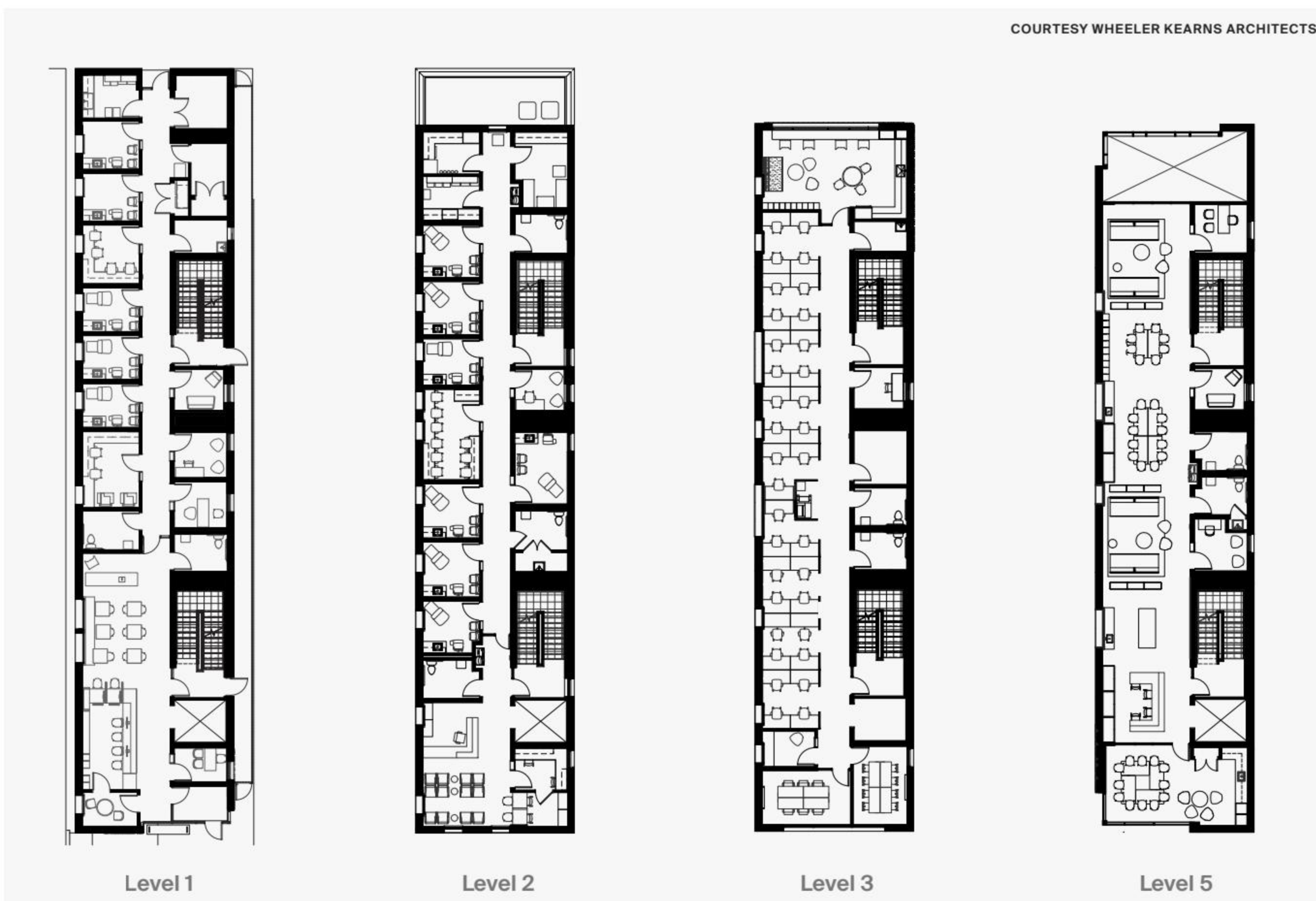
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**Facing page:** The Broadway Youth Center's facade uses a panelized system with a range of brick types and treatments.

**Top, left:** The ground-floor (first-floor) check-in desk

**Top, right:** An upper-level meeting room

**Above, left:** Transitioning from a meeting space to an individual office on the fourth floor

**Above, right:** A double-height dance and movement room on the fourth floor

**Left:** Vertical circulation is set against the exterior wall that faces a home next door, setting up a double-loaded corridor arrangement for the building's thin footprint.

## Air Purifying Systems

The quality of the air we breathe has come under considerable scrutiny (with good reason) since the onset of the pandemic. We realize now more than ever how air can act as a vehicle for germs, toxins, and pollutants. To combat this, the following manufacturers invested considerable R+D in the cutting edge of air filtration and purification. Their latest products combine technology with design to deliver solutions small and large that sanitize and protect your wellness space, wherever that may be. SAH



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Carrier  
carrier.com



PuriCare AeroTower Air Purifying Fan  
LG  
lg.com



Intelli-Balance 100 Mirror Energy Recovery Ventilator  
Panasonic  
na.panasonic.com/us



Puraclenz P3000 Surface & Air Purifier  
Puraclenz  
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Kühl Smart Room Air Conditioner with  
FreshAir MERV 13 Filtration  
Friedrich  
friedrich.com

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# 59 Resources

## Acoustics

- 3form**  
3-form.com
- Architex**  
architex-ljh.com
- Arktura**  
arktura.com
- Armstrong**  
armstrongceilings.com
- Carnegie**  
carnegiefabrics.com
- CF Stinson**  
cfstinson.com
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genesisproductsinc.com
- Kirei**  
kireiusa.com
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knoll.com
- pinta acoustic**  
pinta-acoustic.com
- Supreen**  
supreenfabric.com
- Turf**  
turf.design
- Unika Vaev**  
unikavaev.com
- Whisper Walls**  
whisperwalls.com

## Air Purifying Systems

- Carrier**  
carrier.com
- Friedrich**  
friedrich.com
- LG**  
lg.com
- Panasonic**  
na.panasonic.com/us
- Puraclenz**  
puraclenz.com

## Furnishings

- Allseating**  
allseating.com
- Carolina**  
carolina ofs.com
- Dekko**  
dekko.com
- ERG**  
erginternational.com

- Fellowes Brands**  
fellowesbrands.com
- Futrus**  
futrus.com
- Hastings Tile & Bath**  
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- HAT Collective**  
hatcollective.com
- Haworth**  
haworth.com
- HBF**  
hbf.com
- Herman Miller**  
hermanmiller.com
- Integra Seating**  
integraseating.com
- Keilhauer**  
keilhauer.com
- KI**  
ki.com
- Knoll**  
knoll.com
- OFS**  
ofs.com
- SitOnIt Seating**  
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- Versteel**  
versteel.com
- Via Seating**  
viaseating.com

## Hardware

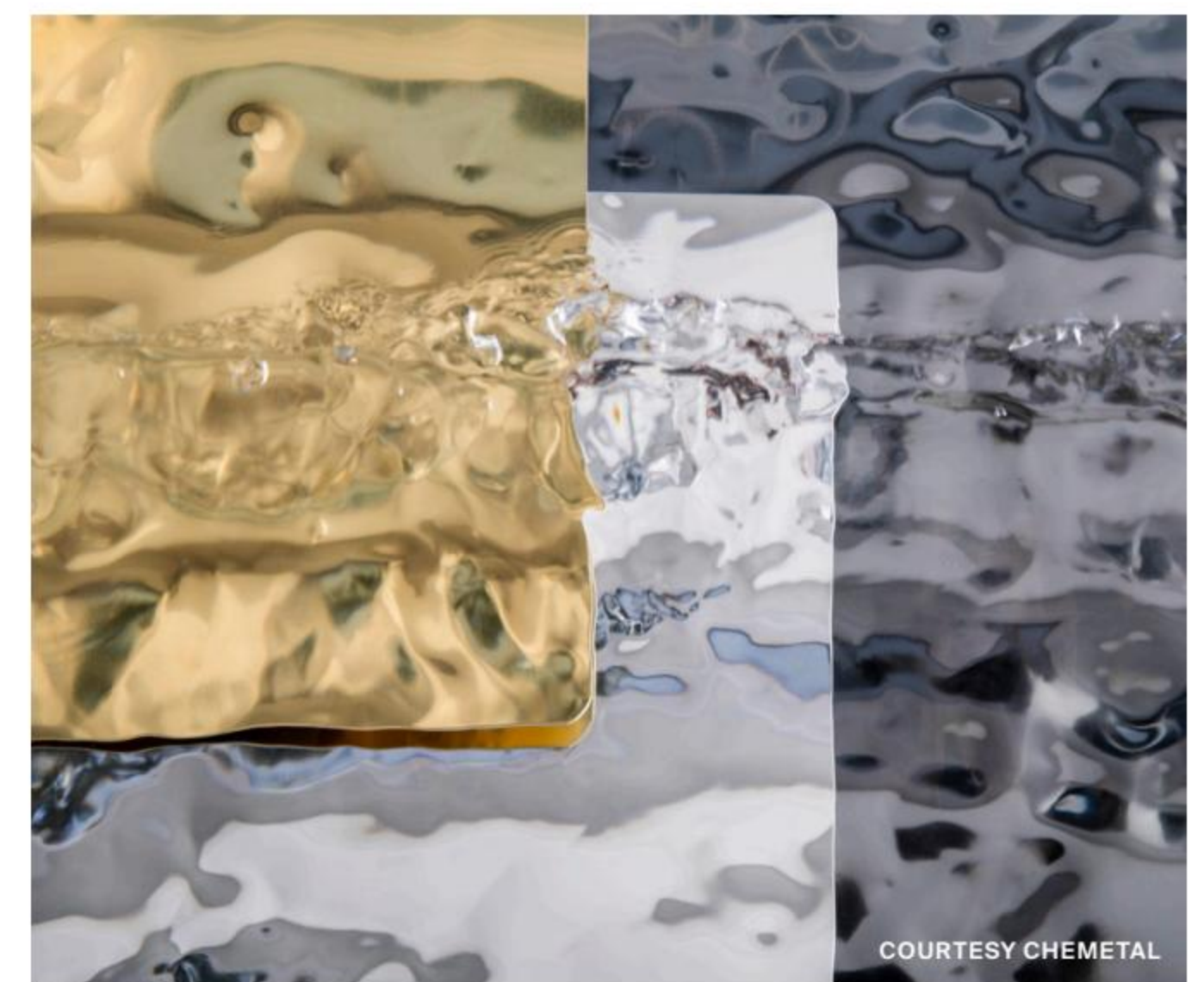
- Accurate Lock**  
accuratelockandhardware.com
- Allegion**  
us.allegion.com
- ASSA ABLOY**  
assaabloy.com
- Baldwin**  
baldwinhardware.com
- Construction Specialties**  
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sugatsune.com
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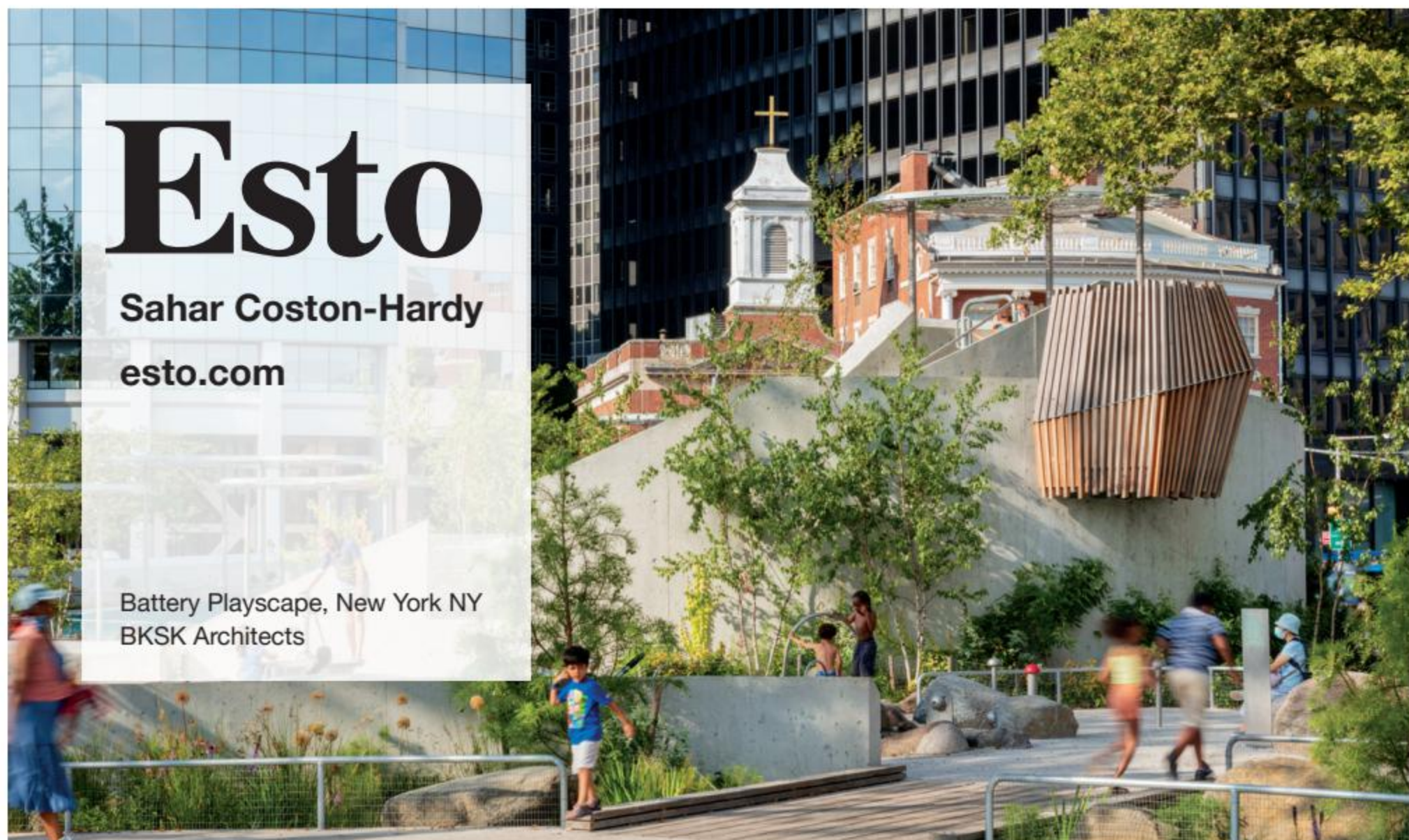
## Lighting

- Bartco Lighting**  
bartcolighting.com
- BEGA**  
bega-us.com
- Ecosense Lighting**  
ecosenselighting.com
- Feelux Lighting**  
feeluxlighting.com
- Juniper**  
juniper-design.com
- Ketra Lighting**  
ketra.com
- LED Linear**  
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- LIGHTBLOCKS**  
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- Lithonia Lighting**  
lithonia.acuitybrands.com
- Lumenpulse Lighting**  
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- MARK Architectural Lighting**  
marklighting.acuitybrands.com
- Pinnacle Architectural Lighting**  
pinnacle-ltg.com
- Pure Edge Lighting**  
pureedgelighting.com
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signify.com
- Soraa**  
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southernlightingsource.com
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usailighting.com
- Vode Lighting**  
vode.com
- Altro**  
altrofloors.com
- Armstrong Flooring**  
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ceramictechnics.com
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chemetal.com
- Corian**  
corian.com
- Daltile**  
daltile.com
- Eco Supply**  
ecosupplycenter.com
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efcontractflooring.com
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granitifiandre.com
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forbo.com
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formica.com
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- Interface**  
interface.com
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lxhausys.com
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portobelloamerica.com
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richlite.com
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shawcontract.com
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skydesign.com
- Stone Source**  
stonesource.com
- Tarkett**  
tarkett.com
- Wilsonart**  
wilsonart.com

## Surfaces & Textiles



# 60 Marketplace



## Esto

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Battery Playscape, New York NY  
BKSK Architects



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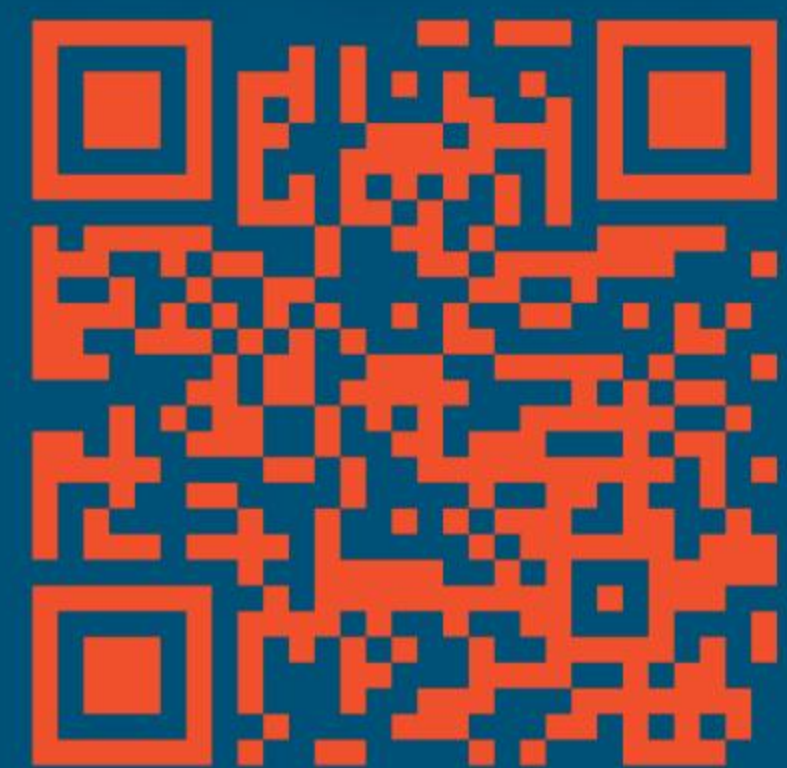
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# 63 Exhibition Highlights

East

## Portals: The Visionary Architecture of Paul Goesch

Clark Art Institute  
225 South Street  
Williamstown, MA 01267

Through June 11



CANADIAN CENTRE FOR ARCHITECTURE

Interest in the libidinal culture of Germany's Weimar Republic continues unabated. Rather than reflecting life in the tumultuous interwar period, the emergent *neue sachlichkeit* in visual art instead refracted the young republic's political death drive. This same tendency had earlier gained expression in the prewar utopian designs of Bruno Taut, Paul Scheerbart, and Paul Goesch, who in 1919 became the short-lived Crystal Chain group. Goesch got the shortest end of the historiographical stick. With help from the Paul Goesch collection at the Canadian

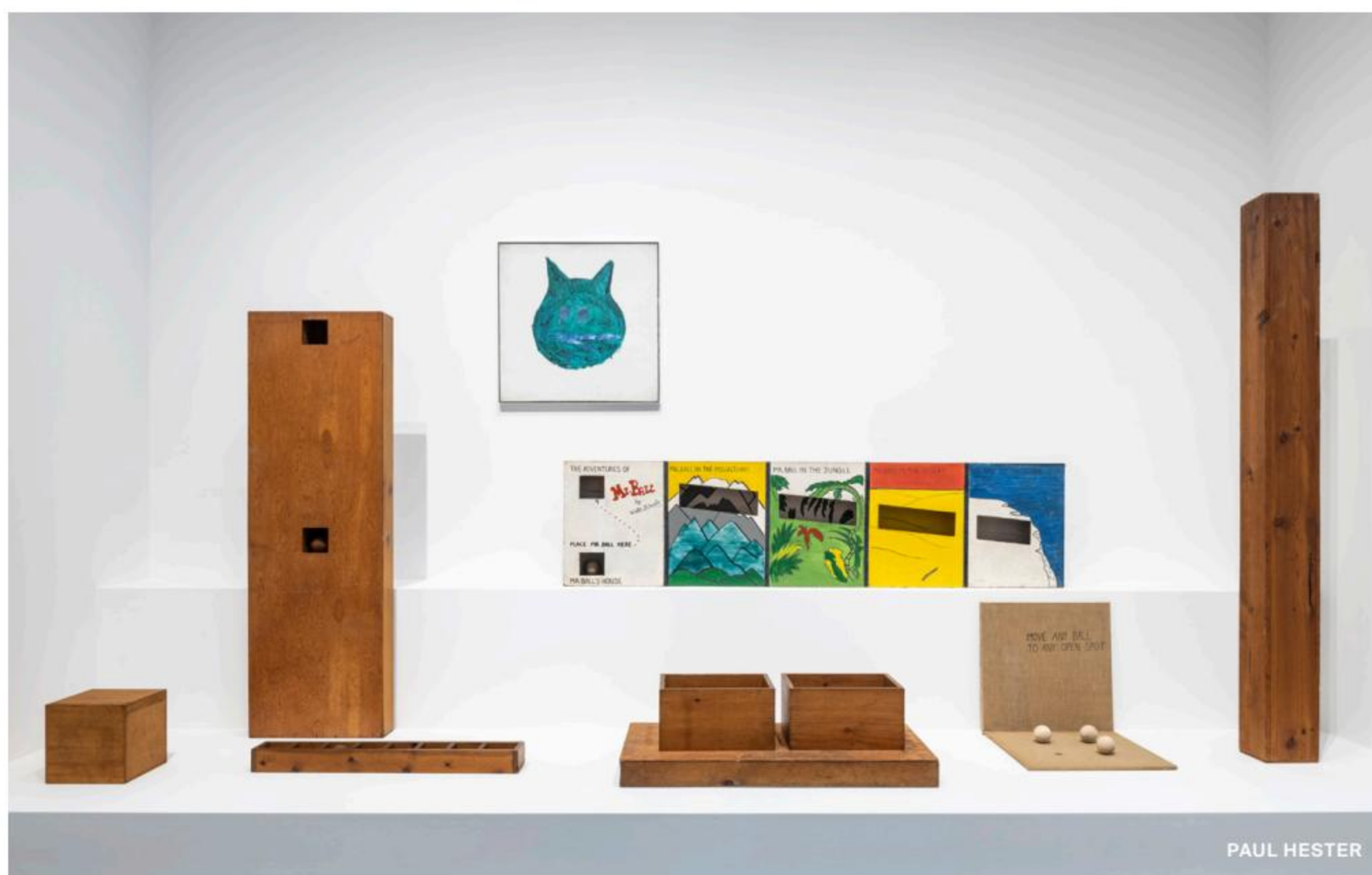
Centre for Architecture, this retrospective, curated by Robert Wiesenberger, foregrounds Goesch's Fantasy Architecture series, whose hallucinatory premonitions of a universal ecclesiasticism tend toward the agglutinative. The exhibition locates the paper architect in the Weimar milieu, a somewhat curious move given that he spent most of the '20s isolated (but artistically active) in a psychiatric clinic run by his brother. He was committed by the Nazis in the mid-1930s and murdered in 1940 as part of a euthanasia program. **SM**

Southeast

## Walter De Maria: Boxes for Meaningless Work

The Menil Collection  
1533 Sul Ross Street  
Houston, TX 77006

Through April 23



PAUL HESTER

Eulogizing Walter De Maria, who died in 2013, the curator Jeffrey Weiss described "a seeming disconnect" between two facets of the artist's self-representation. If De Maria, who is best known for his large installations, could be claimed by the land-art camp, his early work betrayed an allegiance to the Fluxus group, whose emptying ethos could be described as deadpan, minimalist, or, indeed, lobotomizing. *Boxes for Meaningless Work* alludes to the 1961 plywood sculpture of the same name, a variant on the archly flat-footed pieces De

Maria was making at the time, but it also fashions a telos for an entire career. As the first retrospective of its kind, the exhibition overlays De Maria's youthful formulation onto proto-Juddian receptacles and preparatory drawings for land-based interventions, as well as the late-stage stainless-steel sculptures. It's a capacious framing that ultimately aims to shed light on an artist who was prone to assuming an anonymous guise. But in our current moment of "bullshit jobs," it may end up saying a lot more. **SM**

Midwest

## A different kind of tender and the practice of overhealing

Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts  
4 West Burton Place  
Chicago, IL 60610

Through June 10



KATHERINE SIMONE REYNOLDS

Katherine Simone Reynolds's first solo show just opened at the Graham Foundation. Reynolds's Rust Belt vistas, particularly those of outer Brooklyn, Illinois, are sweeping yet also pointillist, evoking a landscape becalmed by history's, or progress's, arid neglect. "Lovejoy," as Brooklyn was formerly known, is the oldest town founded by Black Americans, an act that symbolically initiated the healing of a troubled land. The fortunes of the new town waned over time, and in Reynolds's photographs, loss is inscribed in the brittle banks

of the Mississippi River, turned-over growing fields, and a haunted copse. Yet humanity lingers in all these places, as seen by the phantom outline of a female body in sand or a roadside sign caught in an arboreal embrace. Conceptual embodiment is literalized in a lone wandering figure dressed in pink formal wear. These visual non sequiturs rise above easy juxtaposition. Reynolds, in maintaining a fidelity to place and elevating texture to a principle, images the Black experience, where hope and despair appear side by side. **SM**

West

## (a)way station

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  
151 3rd Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Through May 21



KATHERINE DU TIEL/COURTESY SFMOMA

Tall, plumb boxes proliferate in *(a)way station*, an ongoing series by architects Paul Kariouk and Mabel O. Wilson. Different from De Maria's meaningless vessels, these are like reliquaries or, indeed, suitcases. Some 10 wood towerlets occupy a single SFMOMA gallery, down from the 15 total produced for the project. This reduction, delineated in the wall text, is itself a statement on the exigencies of migration, which has its way with bodies and things. In the installation, domestic implements have been spliced and embedded in the sides of

the stelae. The arm of a leather sofa, set flush against timber, asks to be caressed, while kitchen utensils, tools, and other hardware, caught within glowing resin blocks, appear estranged not just from their contexts but also themselves. That the stuff that makes up a life comes to stand in for human lives is, of course, the point. As climate change causes the number of global migrants to grow, political backlash from the most affected countries takes the form of resentment. And we know what happens next. **SM**

# 64 Review

## Deserts Are Not Empty

Edited by Samia Henni | Columbia Books on Architecture and the City | \$23

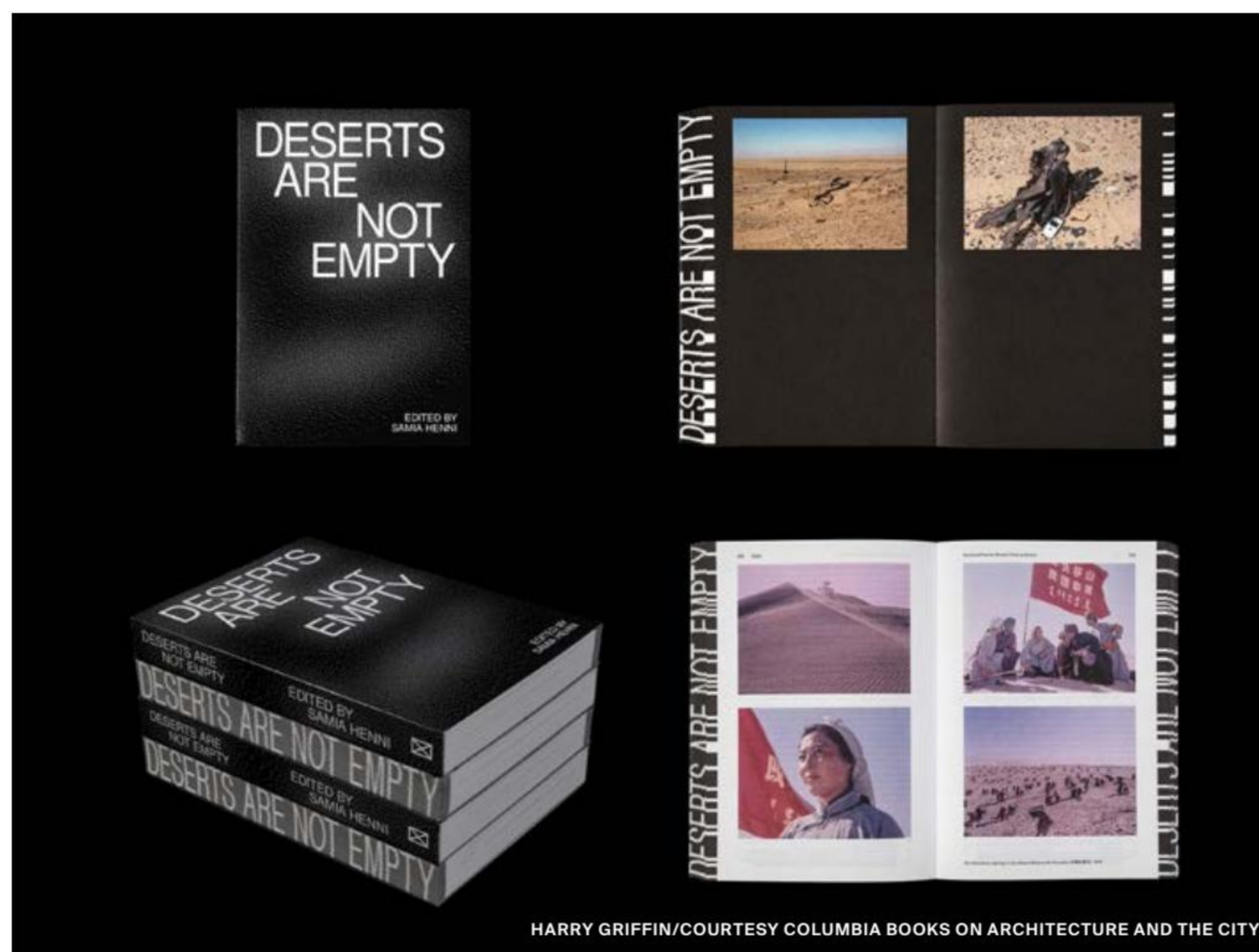
In December 2022 and January 2023, *Deserts Are Not Empty* accompanied me over the course of, and between, three road trips in Saudi Arabia. The first was a five-hour drive from the desert island of Bahrain to Riyadh to see *The Line Exhibition*. The drive is a straight shot westward through the desert along a sandy-gray asphalt road, a four-hour gradient moving gently upward from the Eastern Province's dusty white, trash- and tire-studded landscape to the orange sands that bound the Tuwaiq escarpment. The book remained in the car as we entered a giant warehouse in Diriyah converted into an expensive presentation of the NEOM project under construction in northwestern Saudi Arabia where the desert meets the Red Sea.

The second road trip was around 'Asir, a mountainous region where the Hijaz Mountains break into the younger peaks of the Sarawat and continue south into Yemen. "Mountain people are different from desert people," a native of Abha, the province's capital, explained as we drove around 'Asir's stepped terraces. Another passenger from the Arabian Gulf followed up, noting that when it rains over the Hijaz Mountains, the water slips through the fissures in the mountains and slowly trickles east beneath the desert, replenishing aquifers that sustain life in the cities of the Gulf. "Ah, so we both drink the same water; you just get it much later," the Abha native teased.

I finished the book on the third road trip, from Bahrain to Al Ahsa Oasis. The UNESCO site in Saudi Arabia is one of the world's largest oases. I was there to meet an Al Ahsa native, artist Mohammed Al Faraj, and to see the end of the annual rice harvest. Hassawi red rice is unique to Al Ahsa and requires temperatures over 100 degrees Fahrenheit to grow properly. I read Timothy Hyde's essay about Antarctica while we were driven out of the oasis nestled between palm groves and rice fields. Soon we were surrounded by desert in all directions. The dunes around us were desolate, empty of people, birds, and plants, but also full of truck tires, plastic bags, abandoned vehicles—the residue of an oil economy emanating from the oil fields nearby. On one hand it is not empty, but its fullness is also not particularly meaningful beyond the fallout of the oil boom.

I belabor the personal context of reading *Deserts Are Not Empty* not to legitimize this review as a text prepared by someone who lives in a city in a desert region or as someone who has been to deserts. Rather, it's worthwhile to articulate where, when, and to whom such a book might be operative by suggesting three of several possible points of entry into it, each seen from the perspective of one of the aforementioned trips: One was entering the book as someone curious about new and ongoing developments in the desert; the second, as perhaps a tourist looking to make sense of the encounter with deserts and what they may mean or how to think of them as conceptual sites first and physical sites second, where they begin and end; and the third, as someone looking to understand the desert as a body of personal and communal knowledge and to find frameworks for parsing that knowledge and locating it within a specific place and ecology.

Staging points of entry to *Deserts Are Not Empty* is not a way of suggesting an audience



*Deserts Are Not Empty* arrives in the midst of recent interest in deserts. The publication's design by Laura Coombs includes its title printed on its fore edge.

and thus evaluating the book's merits based on what an (imagined) public might think. Rather, the act is more a way of understanding the positions (and larger body of literature) the compendium sets itself against.

It is timely that *Deserts Are Not Empty*, a collection of contributions edited by architectural historian Samia Henni, comes amid a resurgent exploration of deserts in architectural discourse. This occurs both through a renewed interest in land art, site-specific works, extraction, and ecology in academia—and through a set of publications released or forthcoming in the U.S. and Europe: publications like *Manual for a Future Desert*, the "Notes on the Desert" section in *Log*, and the *JAE 77:2* Deserts issue, which have been released or will be released in the past or next year or two. Additionally, built and under-construction projects like The Line in Saudi Arabia, the Tesla Gigafactory in Nevada, and solar power stations in North Africa suggest an urgency to intellectualize the architectural efforts happening in deserts globally. Global climate change and desertification—crises that require the rethinking of food, farming, and growth—also make the desert an expanding and moving condition around the world.

Before one reads its contents, the book's layout sets the tone for what is to come. Designed by Laura Coombs, its black cover is speckled with pixels of varying density, mimicking desert sands, its map-fill equivalent, or particulate matter in the atmosphere. The use of printed edges is reminiscent of Irma Boom's designs for OMA's publications. The similarity distances it from academic journals and lands it among more speculative collections like AMO/Rem Koolhaas's *Countryside: A Report*, another recent publication exploring broader territorial questions and articulating stances through an assemblage of images and essays.

*Deserts Are Not Empty* begins with Henni introducing the larger themes at play in the various essays. The text doesn't tease

the essays to come but instead provides a case study that hints at the second theme (or a suitable subtitle) of the book. Titled "Against the Regime of 'Emptiness,'" the chapter narrates the designation of the desert as an empty space by the French colonial regime in the Sahara. While the chapter "invites the reader to subvert the analysis of the conceptualization of the desert," the chapter—and much of the book—doesn't reconceptualize the desert as a physical entity but actually dismantles the notion of emptiness as a colonial construct and thus the desert as a stand-in or designator for territory ripe for exploitation.

The publication is composed of interviews, poetry, mappings, and essays that range from the academic to the prosaic. Early essays and contributions by Ariella Azoulay on the Negev/Naqab and Paulo Tavares on the *sertões* of Brazil push back against the propagation of emptiness as a political exercise in controlling and exploiting new territories. Essays by the Desert Futures Collective and Menna Agha and an interview with the 2020 Venice Biennale Kuwait Pavilion team articulate the desert as a space of personal narratives and local histories, complementing mappings and drawings with stories, poems, and illustrations. Later, Danika Cooper, Dalal Alsayger, and XQSU reveal the desert as a space of intervention and planning, where tools are invented for the mapping, conquest, and design of a territory. Contributions by Tavares, Alla Vronskaya, and Timothy Hyde expand the notion of the desert, pushing it beyond a geological or climatic condition to include the rain forest, Mars, and Antarctica, respectively, ultimately pointing to the notion of the desert as a larger idea of emptiness and a lack of inhabitation separate from a strict climatic definition.

As a set, the contributions span a wide intellectual and geographic realm. At times, the volume risks venturing almost into a kind of geographic solipsism. The need to

decouple the desert from nothingness/emptiness while also repudiating the notion of emptiness shifts the focus from the desert as a place to the question of nothingness as a broader intellectual question. In its best moments the book uses deserts as case studies for understanding emptiness as an ideological, academic, and spatial narrative. In those moments *Deserts Are Not Empty* is a terrific compilation of essays that allow us to rethink how the desert has been transformed from an actual condition to an idea in service of extractive politics. It provides a sufficient range of desert conditions to be a body of arguments against a global condition and will prove useful to readers outside built-environment professions when they think through landscapes of colonialism and the possibilities of their decolonization.

*Deserts Are Not Empty* informs a reader that the desert is full of geological, historical, and ecological content. While it doesn't suggest possibilities for how one could fill the desert, it does intervene in the knowledge and political regimes that ascribe emptiness to underutilized and underexploited territory. Where it is less operative is in offering an alternative to the travel fictions and exploratory prose of figures like Reyner Banham or Robert Smithson. Henni's volume is not a substitute for those books, but a complementary addition; it points out their limitations. In a moment when those texts are experiencing a resurgence of interest, *Deserts Are Not Empty* reminds us of the shortcomings of that body of work and even land art more broadly. These places can no longer serve as abstracted intellectual landscapes approached with measured indifference to their particular histories. Henni's volume reminds us that there remains a need for methodologies to deal with the desert not as an idea but as a network of actual places to be dealt with in specific and individual ways.

In November 2022, Henni's office at the Cornell University College of Architecture, Art, and Planning was broken into and vandalized. An open letter written in support of Henni was circulated asking for the findings of the police investigation to be made public, as its authors believed the break-in was a response to the lecture "Palestine is There, Where it Has Always Been" that she convened at Cornell as part of the lecture series *Into the Desert: Questions of Coloniality and Toxicity*. Despite the open letter and petition's having over 1,000 signatures, the Cornell University Police Department did not share any information from its investigation. This incident is a reminder that the desert is not only decidedly not empty but still a subject of active and ongoing political attention. The topic is subject to the designs of political-colonial or capitalist-industrial regimes. The publication and Henni's teaching point to the reality that the desert is a contested and politicized space. Rethinking it is not without urgency, but the act is also not without the possibility of reprisal.

**Ali Ismail Karimi is an architect whose work explores public space, ecology, and the extractive landscapes of the Middle East. He is the co-founder of Civil Architecture, an architecture office based in Manama and Kuwait City.**

# 65 Review

## Deconstructing Power: W. E. B. Du Bois at the 1900 World's Fair

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum | New York | Through May 29

continued from cover W. E. B. Du Bois and journalist Thomas J. Calloway with the Library of Congress. Within that collaboration, archives credit the data portraits to Du Bois and his team of students. The focus at Cooper Hewitt is not Du Bois's techniques of abstracting complex information toward data visualization. Rather, the exhibit positions the data portraits as design artifacts, comparable in modernity to other technical and material artifacts exhibited in Paris, from a moving sidewalk to cabinets and tables.

I appreciate many aspects of this curatorial shift. It opens a way to consider the data portraits as co-inventors of modern design. The data portraits portray a national identity in data so expansively and precisely that they do warrant consideration as design—not only graphic design but interactive data design, exhibition design, and storytelling. This becomes one way of rescuing the data portraits from sheer visualization and the fetish of graphics. The precision and creativity of these data portraits do the work of depicting a people and, in doing so, counter the colonial, circuslike mode of representation at the world's fair.

Through this exhibition, we can see the Calloway–Du Bois works as a precursor to contemporary notions of structural racism. I am thinking especially of geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore's definition: She defines racism as the power to inflict premature death. Gilmore's definition complements the Du Boisian sociological obsession with statistics and lines. If the exhibit title implies that the Paris Expo both consolidated and distributed the power of nation-states and colonial economies of production, then Du Bois's works here would be the agents of deconstruction.

The deconstructing aspect of the curatorial narrative has some hairy moments, though.

In a didactic way—through wall texts and close juxtapositions—the exhibit attempts to imply a link between Du Bois's rendering of the color line and the spline curvature of art nouveau design. This “whiplash” spline, as the exhibit calls it, signals design's extraction of colonized labor in the form of luxuries consumed in the colonies. It is a bit of a tortuous line of association, almost as prone to bending and curling on itself as the wrought iron and graphics that the argument references.

The most cringe-inducing moment of this argument in the exhibit is a corner grouped together by what the wall text terms “visualizing violence.” Here two framed works on paper almost meet in a corner. On the left hangs a Du Bois data portrait titled *VALUATION OF TOWN AND CITY PROPERTY OWNED BY GEORGIA NEGROES*. On the right is a poster titled *Tropopon*, designed by graphic designer Henry Van de Velde in 1898. The poster is an advertisement for a diet supplement made from egg whites and historically significant as an instance of art nouveau graphic design. In the corner between these two works are two tiny mounted images, printed smaller than the foam-core rectangles that display the wall texts.

The curatorial associations here are attenuated, but they seem to rely heavily on the photo that the exhibit's wall text titles



In this corner, curators have staged Du Bois's work, two problematic images, and art nouveau's splines in close proximity.

*Escaped Slave Gordon*. The Gordon image comes from one of a set of daguerreotypes of enslaved African Americans taken at the behest of Harvard professor Louis Agassiz in 1850. This photo has been worked on extensively by Black artists and art historians, foremost by artist Carrie Mae Weems and Sarah Lewis. Weems repurposed a set of Louis Agassiz photographs, including especially this one of Gordon, to stage questions about photography, authorship, scientific knowledge, the gaze, and the Black body.

Agassiz's intention with the image series was to “prove” the inferiority and weakness of Black survivors of enslavement. This commitment to a scientific representation of the disposition of Black life toward death and extinction preceded Darwin's theory of natural selection. It is in Agassiz's set of images that one can see that the fundamentals of social Darwinism—the search for a scientific representation of Black inferiority—in many ways preceded Darwin's biological theory of natural selection.

This may seem like a tangent, but it is not. Installing the Agassiz daguerreotypes adjacent to Du Bois's data portrait counters and undoes the data portraits so intensely that it threatens to revoke and undo every other achievement the exhibit makes. Encountering this corner feels like bumping against the one convoluted lie that makes you doubt everything your dream lover has shared with you. It is jolting, but not in the way the curators seem to imply. It is through the scarred marks on Gordon's back that the curators want to imply a visual and material connection between the data portrait and the egg white poster.

Let me pause and unpack this:

Do the curators really think that Du Bois and his team fudged the data on lynching so that the line would look like a whip in midair?

Or:

In the midst of all these modern techniques of measurement and orthographic abstraction and color coding, do the curators want us to think that Du Bois planted the image of the whip for some kind of rhetorical or metaphorical purpose?

Or:

Are the curators positing that violence against the Black body was so pervasive in the era of early globalization and industrialization that the means of violence could be read into pretty much anything? Like a kind of semiotic haunting—a geometric ether that whips Black bodies?

Any of these possibilities leads toward a dead end. The curators ask us to either discount the realm of data integrity in the Du Bois project or invite such a level of abstraction about anti-Black violence that white supremacy can be presumed to be naturalized and absorbed into every mode of representation and design. This would make white supremacy naturalized and reified far beyond the potential to deconstruct it.

Part of what makes this so bizarre and disappointing is that the curators have collected incredibly poignant snippets of context about the preparation of *The Exhibit of American Negroes*. For instance, to highlight the 1899 lynching of Sam Hose as context for the 1900 exhibit creates powerful parallels with design activism today. *The Exhibit of American Negroes* in the curators' narrative needed to respond to both the violence of lynching and the “slanders” attempting to justify the violence.

Calloway and Du Bois collaborated to counter the recurrent material facts of premature death and the faux science circulating to justify such violence. Their data,

then, highlight Black life and Black thriving. They make legible the patterns that tie poverty to illiteracy or link violence to loss of property. The 1900 exhibit also included bound collections of photographs of Black social life and Black space, photographs that are noticeably absent from the Cooper Hewitt's exhibit.

The curatorial frame, however, seems to stage a dialogue between Du Bois's data research and commodity formalism that invites us to doubt the ethics of our own pleasure. The exhibit's juxtapositions and wall texts focus on the nexus of Europe, colonialism, and modernity, where the spline curve allows design to be fetishized and superficial, masking issues of labor and hoarded capital. This history of the spline is interesting, but it misses the mark for this exhibit. This ambitious curating around the “whiplash line” misses significantly in terms of who the presumed viewers are and what the role of formalism might be in circulating awareness of both premature Black death and the dignified beauty of Black lives. In juxtaposing the data portraits with colonial design pieces, the curators seem to want these data narratives to do pan-African work, without acknowledging Du Bois's own journey with pan-Africanism.

Some of what's oddly lacking is evident in the curators' summary text: “For the first time,” the show brings these data narratives “into dialogue with the manufacturers and decorative arts also on display, calling attention to how the progressive image of the fair was inequitable, and concealed the power mechanisms of nationalism and imperialism that drove this spectacle of progress.” I think they mean for the *second* time, since the first time would have been at the 1900 fair itself. Do the curators mean to imply that Du Bois himself was indifferent to the manufacturers and decorative arts on display? But the exhibit includes a fleeting photograph of Du Bois's 1900 exhibition design. Look at this intensely layered and haptic exhibition display system that Du Bois and his team designed. If this is not a predecessor to Microsoft Windows, hyperlinked browsers, and data compression, I do not know what would be.

Also consider the perfection of the line work in the data portraits, the absence of smudge, the precision of the curves. This drawing looks like a high-tech machine about to whirl off the page.

Despite these misalignments, there are snippets of archival brilliance that speak to the approach that an institution such as the Smithsonian can bring to this work. The color line is a kind of recursive double—both a justification for racism and an outcome of racism. The bending of the color line charts the inflection of events on the data path of Black lives. The care of researching and drafting those lines entangles with the infinite and even aesthetic ways that Black lives matter.

**Mitch McEwen is principal of Atelier Office, a cofounder of the Black Reconstruction Collective, and an assistant professor at Princeton School of Architecture, where she directs the architecture and technology research group Black Box.**

# 66 Comment

## Human Disaster

Why were we caught unprepared by the Kahramanmaraş earthquake?

In the aftermath of the disastrous Kahramanmaraş earthquake, Turkey is suffering indescribable pain. A relative or acquaintance of almost everyone in our country was left under the wreckage. This is a huge catastrophe, but it is us, human beings, who turned it into a disaster. Yes, the southeast of Turkey was rocked by two consecutive violent tremors of magnitudes 7.6 and 7.7, and aftershocks have continued in the region to this day. The reason these earthquakes, both centered in Kahramanmaraş, turned into a disaster is our failure to learn our lessons from previous earthquakes and prepare accordingly. We lost 17,509 residents in the 1999 Marmara earthquake, according to official figures. After the great devastation it caused, politicians declared that they considered this disaster a year zero, adding that they would never allow such pain to be repeated. The Marmara earthquake had a deep social and political impact. In fact, along with the economic crisis that followed, voters punished the political parties that formed the coalition government of the time, almost completely eliminating them from the political scene. From the earthquake until the year 2002—and after that date, under the AKP government—many regulatory changes were introduced. But it has emerged that those changes were not solutions in themselves—they remained on paper. If we had learned to live with earthquakes and provided the necessary circumstances, the Kahramanmaraş earthquake would not have turned into a disaster. There are many examples of this across the world: Japan, China, Chile, and the U.S. all learned their lessons from the great earthquakes they faced in their history, and today they prevent similar earthquakes from turning into disasters thanks to healthy cities and earthquake-resistant buildings.

So where did Turkey go wrong? The building code was improved after 2000. It had become obligatory to make buildings earthquake-resistant, and Law no. 6306 (Law on the Transformation of Areas under Disaster Risk) had been passed for the transformation of risky buildings and areas. However, these changes did not take place in practice. Although political change was promised after every earthquake in the past 24 years, we saw, after the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, that nothing has changed. It is, in fact, the government that has been in charge of the country for 20 years and its earthquake policies that have been left under the wreckage. We are talking about mistakes in the context of urban development and construction, but this earthquake has shown us that we are also absolutely unprepared in terms of earthquake-disaster management. The present government has also carried out many institutional and structural changes regarding disaster management throughout the long years it has been in power. As a result of these changes, all disaster management has been consolidated in a single center. Now we see that these changes have taken us backward rather than forward.

In terms of construction development and urbanization, the picture remains bleak as we continue to wait for the inevitable Istanbul earthquake. The situation is desperate, especially for buildings built before 1999. Construction amnesties have been issued for unlicensed buildings, and zoning plans have been designed without taking ground conditions into consideration. Also, construction licenses have been issued on their basis, and acts such as columncutting and removal



Earthquake damage in Iskenderun, a city along the Mediterranean Sea in Turkey's Hatay province

of load-bearing walls abound. No comprehensive intervention has been carried out to solve these problems. The government used public resources and powers not to face the reality of earthquakes and increase the strength of building stock but for large-scale infrastructure projects and real estate development projects in pursuit of urban profiteering. On the basis of such political preferences, the government dazzled voters with megaprojects and made sure public resources were transferred to allies who supported them. Meanwhile, the government has avoided the reality of the earthquake, since it wouldn't bring political advantage.

There are approximately 10 million buildings in Turkey, and 2 million of them were built since 1999. Seventy percent of the country's surface area is in the earthquake zone, and six to seven million of the remaining eight million buildings pose a risk; thus we are facing a gargantuan stock of risky buildings for which an intervention program must be prepared. This kind of work naturally requires huge resources. In the past week, the World Bank announced that this sum stands at around \$500 billion. In other words, we need half a trillion dollars to renew or strengthen our building stock. This figure could have been provided in the past 24 years through public resources, yet we consumed these resources by building huge bridges, many of which are underused, as well as tunnels, airports, roads, new cities, and imaginary channel projects.

Meanwhile, unfortunately, as we were thinking that it was only our old building stock that was the source of the problem, the Kahramanmaraş earthquake exposed another truth: Our new buildings pose a risk at least as big as the old ones. Expected to suffer less damage since they were built according to the post-1999 code with new building techniques, many of them collapsed completely. These apartment blocks were advertised as earthquake-safe housing, yet they became the coffins of our people. We faced this inevitable

outcome because of zoning plan decisions that did not take ground conditions into consideration, construction licenses given without adequate ground studies, problems in the increasingly commercialized building inspection process, inadequate engineering services, materials-based problems, and administrations that turned a blind eye to all this while also failing to fulfill their inspection duty. This outcome showed us that the problem was not the result of insufficient legislation or a lack of technical capacity, but a problem of ethics, and a systemic problem. It was construction unsuitable to ground conditions, old building stock, and blatant mistakes made in new buildings that brought us this disaster.

So what should we do now? First and foremost, we must listen to the voice of science while not postponing our public duties. We must carry out micro-zoning work in all earthquake areas in order to renew or revise zoning plans in line with ground conditions. We should get rid of Disaster Law no. 6306, which imposes profiteering-focused urban transformation, and make sure that we create durable cities that prioritize disaster preparation instead of producing new urban plots for real estate development that increase population density. In the light of our experiences so far, we should abandon the concept of urban transformation that is now universally identified with profiteering and develop the concept of disaster-focused transformation. We should establish a strong legal and technical framework for the contractor system, transforming it into a field of activity where contractors, not with a lot of money but competent expertise, produce value under public inspection. We should increase inspection by public institutions and professional organizations in engineering and architecture services and the building inspection system. We should remedy deficiencies in and comprehensively renew zoning legislation. Beginning with earthquake zones and old buildings, we should scan our

entire building stock, prioritize according to their earthquake responses, and prepare intervention programs. We should use public resources to realize structural interventions for citizens who are unsafe in the face of earthquakes due to economic problems. We should regulate tenants' rights to resilient and healthy housing. Through a progressive strengthening system, we should prevent buildings from collapsing even if they do suffer damage, to make sure people survive. Rather than the current pyramidal hierarchy in disaster management, we should redesign it in a network structure where all will take part in coordination, renewing all disaster plans. Disaster training should become an obligatory part of school curricula. Most importantly, we should protect the most basic human right—the right to life—which we lost in the mass deaths and devastation that are the unnatural outcome of natural catastrophes. We should make sure collective reason and science prevail over authoritarian rule to live in safe and healthy environments, and we should build a system of administration on the basis of democracy, justice, and freedom.

This is the only way in which we can be prepared for all possible disasters, including earthquakes. Yes, we have a long list in hand, and a tough task awaits us as a country. Yet if we do not want to experience the same pain at the next earthquake, we have no other option. We were caught unprepared by the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, but the same solidarity and collaboration that followed this earthquake will now be displayed in preparation for the next. We will make sure we never suffer the same pain again. Now we have to roll up our sleeves for a new start for Turkey.

**Tayfun Kahraman, PhD, was the executive board chairman of Turkey's Chamber of Urban Planners. He is currently serving an 18-year prison sentence for his opposition to construction and development plans as expressed in the 2013 Gezi Park protests.**



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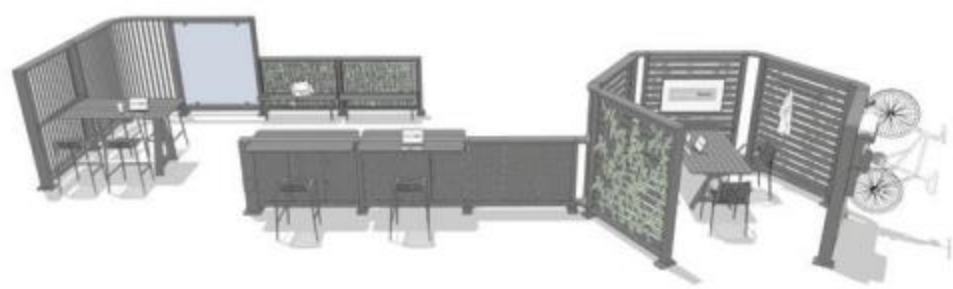
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