

# The Architect's Newspaper

March/April 2024

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**BIG unveils a mega-project next to the UN with a casino as its foundation** page 7

**L.E.FT Architects designs a multifaith spiritual center for all at Vassar College** page 8

**An in-construction look at Kengo Kuma & Associates work at CAM in Lisbon** page 10



**AN visits Interface Studio Architects in Philadelphia to see recent projects** page 12

- 9 Open
- 20 Tatiana Bilbao ESTUDIO
- 46 Marketplace
- 49 Review: Gannon on Scully
- 50 Q&A: JSA/MIXdesign

## TAKE TWO IN TAMPA

Weiss/Manfredi deploys sensitive yet surgical design thinking when renovating the Tampa Museum of Art. [Read on page 26.](#)



ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

## Emerging Voices

AN profiles this year's Emerging Voices winners from The Architectural League of New York. [Read on page 14.](#)

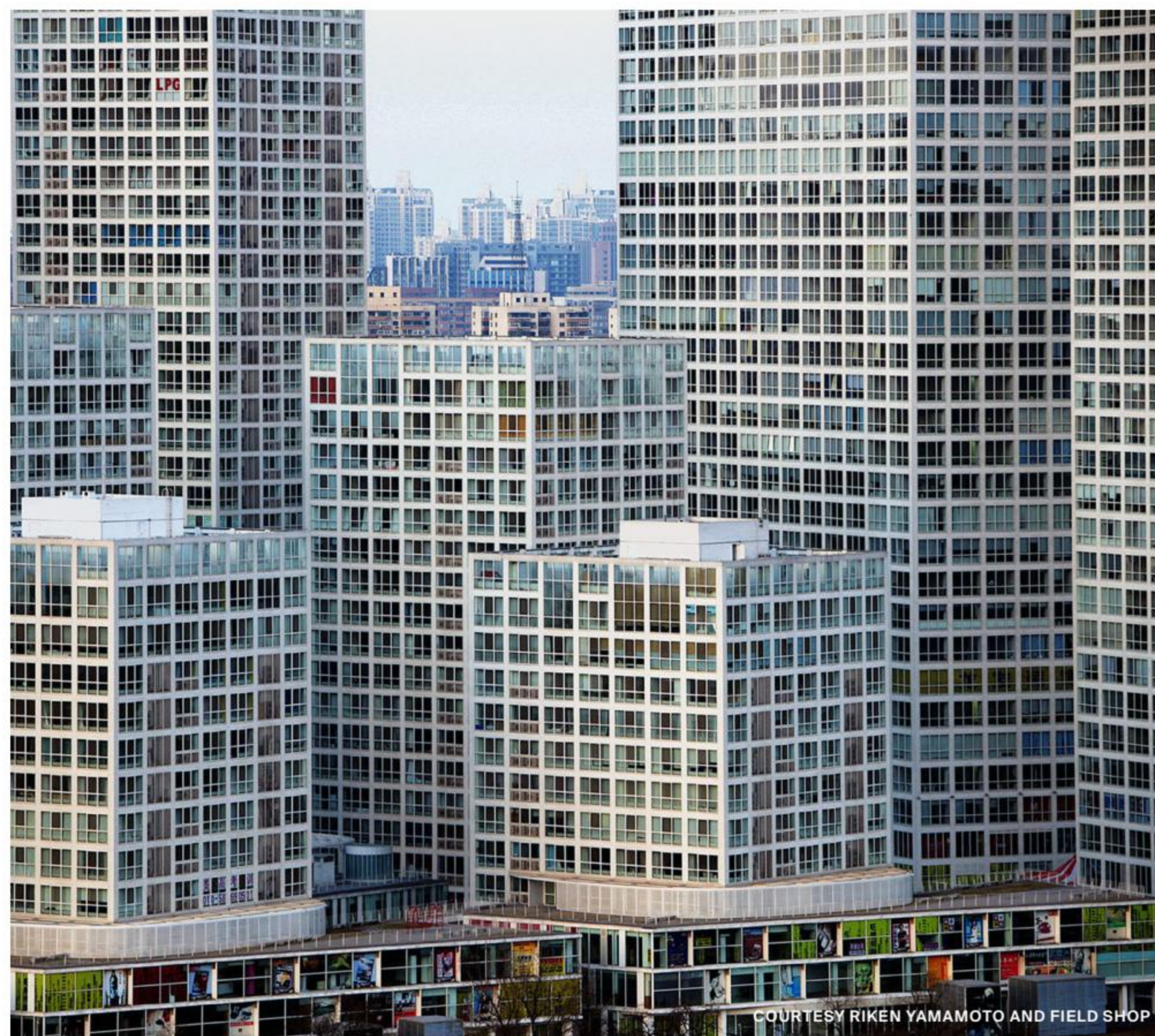
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## Who Is Riken Yamamoto?

An underappreciated Japanese architect won the 2024 Pritzker Architecture Prize.

Riken Yamamoto is the 53rd recipient of the annual prize and the ninth architect from Japan to be honored. The architect's portfolio spans a range of building typologies, from private residences and cultural projects to small-scale community contributions. His work is deeply rooted in community engagement. In a world where people often experience isolation and separation from community, Yamamoto defines this design philosophy as a "sense of sharing one space."

"For me, to recognize space is to recognize an entire community," Yamamoto said in a press release. "The current architectural approach emphasizes privacy, negating the necessity of societal relationships. However, we can still honor the freedom of each individual while living together in architectural space as a republic, fostering harmony across cultures and phases of life." [continued on page 6](#)



COURTESY RIKEN YAMAMOTO AND FIELD SHOP

## An Atlas of Es Devlin

The studio visit is one of the perks of being a museum curator. It's an opportunity to see what's preoccupying an artist—the books they're reading, the problems they're sketching out, the odds and ends that they've picked up. It offers a less-polished view into how a creative figure thinks, with the false starts and dead ends the public never sees displayed alongside recognizable successes. And because of this, it potentially reveals more honesty about who the artist is. "It's a curator's happy place to be surrounded by the aura of objects," said Andrea Lipps, one of the organizers of *An Atlas of Es Devlin*, on view at the Cooper Hewitt, which centers on the groundbreaking work of the British set designer. "There's an immediacy to drawings, sketches, and things that the artist's hand has touched."

Even though Devlin, now 52, isn't a household name, her clients certainly are: Beyoncé, Adele, Rihanna ... the list goes on. Though she is one of the most widely seen artists of her generation, [continued on page 48](#)

AN FOCUS

## Hospitality

Case studies and products. [Read on page 31.](#)



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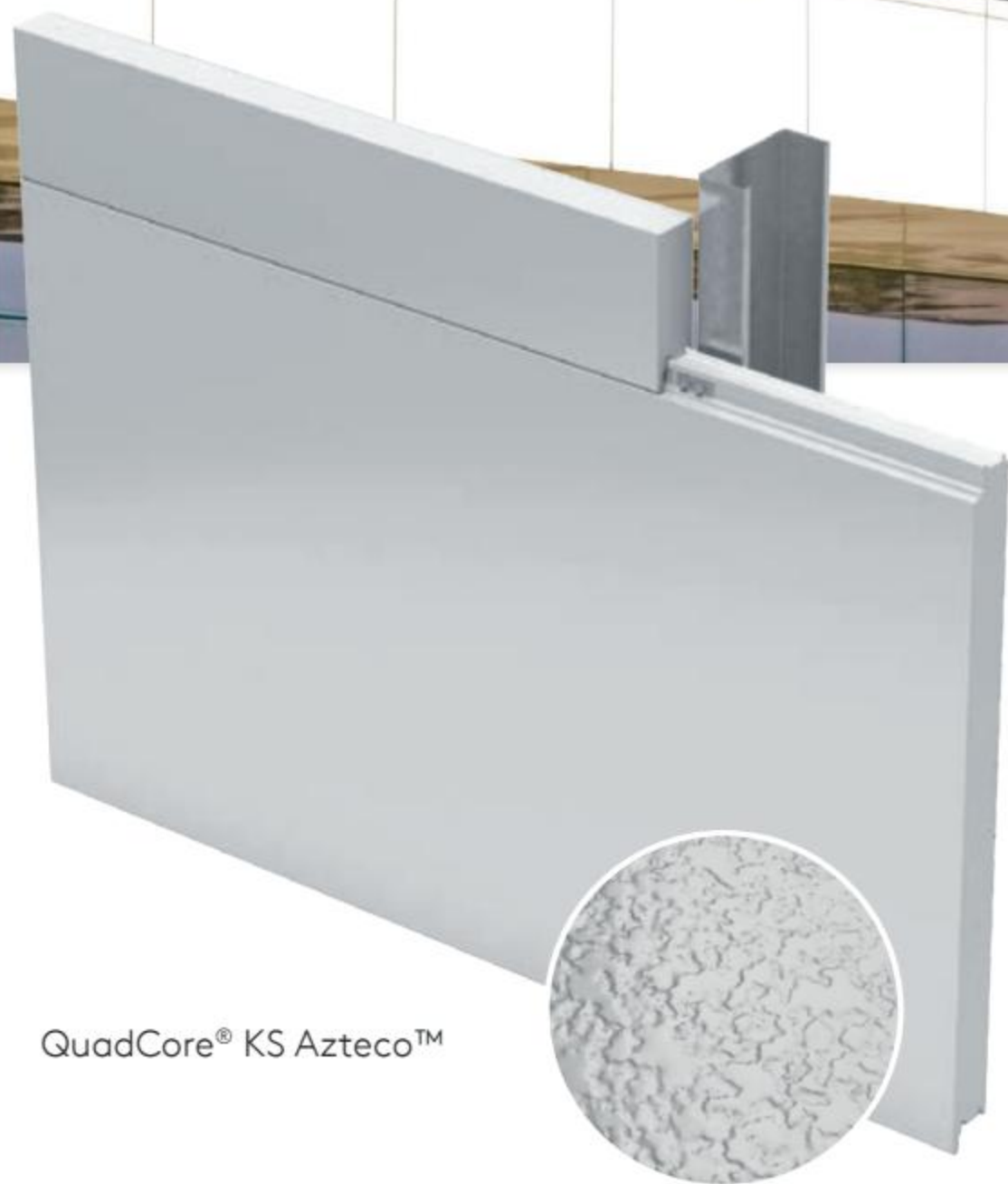


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# The Politics of Cozy



JOHANNES ROMPPANEN, RISTO MUSTA /  
© PAIMIO SANATORIUM FOUNDATION

*Hospitality* arrives from the French *hospitalité*, which is also the source of the now-medical *hospital* and terms like *hostel*, *hotel*, and *hospice*. The origin is the Latin noun *hospes*, which can mean both a *visitor* or one who *hosts*. The double meaning suggests the rotational nature of hospitality: One could be the traveler one day and the entertainer the next.

For architects, *hospitality* indicates a project type that begins with hotels and restaurants but can be broadly expanded to include any space where a guest can have a pleasant stay, for one hour or one week. Lately, the key aspects of this enjoyable encounter—relaxation, considered materials, and an overall interest in creating an *aesthetic experience*—seem to have seeped into adjacent project types: Homes are designed with entertaining or long-term stays in mind, and offices are residentializing through hot-desking, breakout spaces, and amped-up amenities in an effort to lure workers back into IRL encounters (or at least make mandated schedules more tolerable). But institutions of all types are reworking their square footage to make it more *hospitable*, whether it's a routine trip to your local city hall or an outing at an art museum.

A prevailing concern for comfort links these examples, which has real implications. Building on language established by Sarah Hearne during her recent show, *Print Ready Drawings*, at L.A.'s MAK, such spaces try to succeed both for the "body eye" of lived experience and the "camera eye" of architectural photography, which today is mostly consumed via Instagram's endless scroll. It's useful to link this trend of seeking shelter to the wider destabilization and destruction we see in the world, a place that offers less certainty than it used to. (Cue the #bunkerchic trend alert.) Given today's layered crises, a turn toward coziness makes sense—perhaps more so than the resurgence of conservatism we see worldwide.

Despite mixed messages about the overall state of the U.S. economy, hotels are booming. According to *Lodging Econometrics*, "the global hotel construction pipeline hit an all-time high," in terms of project counts, at the end of 2023: a total of 15,196 projects and 2,367,727 rooms are in development. The U.S. is leading the charge, with 39 percent of this pipeline (5,964 projects, with 693,963 rooms). While a hotel room offers

both respite and intrigue when you are voyaging out to faraway places, new projects have major implications for streets, neighborhoods, and entire cities.

Hospitality takes center stage in this issue's Focus section, in which *AN* considers three small, thoughtful projects. While the MOLLIE Aspen, delivered by CCY Architects and Post Company, offers a contextually sensitive new building for a Colorado ski town (page 32), the other two efforts—a grocery and restaurant in Austin by Side Angle Side within a shell renovation by Thoughtbarn (page 38) and a winery in Oregon by Linden, Brown Architecture (page 39)—work with existing buildings to create new spaces for gathering and commerce. Additionally, products selected by contributing products editor Rita Catinella Orrell offer a range of options for architects at work on stylish, comfy commissions.

Cultural projects often involve making visitors feel welcome. In this issue's features, Suleman Anaya visits Tatiana Bilbao ESTUDIO's aquarium in Mazatlán, Mexico (page 20); Ian Volner inspects a new performing arts complex in Maine by Susan T. Rodriguez (page 24); and *AN*'s managing editor, Emily Conklin, checks in with Weiss/Manfredi about its work on the Tampa Museum of Art (page 26). Up front, Will Jennings shares a preview of Kengo Kuma's work for Centro de Arte Moderna within Lisbon's Gulbenkian Foundation, set to open to the public in September (page 10), and this year's Pritzker Architecture Prize winner, Riken Yamamoto, prizes community awareness. Also, see my interview with Joel Sanders and Seb Choe on page 50 about JSA/MIXdesign's work to make art museums more accessible.

Recently, some ambitious improvements anticipated for Alvar Aalto's Paimio Sanatorium in Finland have been announced (page 6). The project, seen in the photograph above, was built as a treatment center for tuberculosis patients more than 90 years ago; today, its boosters are seeking UNESCO recognition while proposing to renovate some of its floors into more contemporary lodgings suitable for hosting conferences or extended stays. The wheel of history keeps on turning: True to its etymological origins, the hospital will become a hotel. **Jack Murphy**

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## Correction

An article about Alafia stated that the project has the ambition to become a "blue zone." While inspired by the concept, its developers will not seek Blue Zones™ certification.



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## What is the future of Aalto's landmark Paimio Sanitorium?

Alvar Aalto's Paimio Sanitorium is facing an uncertain future, but its foundation has reinvigorated its mission to recast the complex as a center for culture, education, and wellness. Mirkku Kullberg, the foundation's CEO, and curator Joseph Grima convened a conference in October to think about what it might mean to continue Paimio's legacy as a "manifesto for an architecture of empathy, care, and human dignity." **Matt Shaw**

## José Oubrierie, French architect, professor, and Le Corbusier protégé, dies at 91

José Oubrierie, a world-renowned French architect and professor, died on March 10 at age 91. Oubrierie was one of Le Corbusier's closest protégés. Together, they designed notable buildings like the Église Saint-Pierre. Oubrierie held a bevy of teaching appointments, among them at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Columbia GSAPP, and the Cooper Union. **Daniel Jonas Roche**

## Sara Zewde unveils eight acres of new green space at Dia Beacon in Hudson Valley

Since 2003, curators at Dia Beacon have leveraged the institution's verdant 32-acre site in Beacon, New York, by commissioning outdoor installations for its grounds from world-famous artists. Now, Studio Zewde, a Harlem-based office founded by Sara Zewde, is designing a major new landscape project at Dia Beacon, giving the museum an additional eight acres of nature access. **DJR**

## In the Berkshires, SO - IL unveils a new home for the Williams College Museum of Art

At Williams College in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, SO - IL has designed a new home for the Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA). Today, WCMA is located in a 1986 building by Charles Moore, Lawrence Hall. After the new building by SO - IL is finished in 2027, WCMA will relocate to its first purpose-built home on campus. Renderings show a low-lying structure that mimics the nearby Berkshire Mountains. **DJR**

## Riken Yamamoto is awarded the 2024 Pritzker Architecture Prize

**continued from cover** This move away from privacy is adopted in a number of works, including the design of his own home GAZEBO, which features a series of terraces and rooftops to promote interaction among neighbors. This connection to the outdoors and the blending of private and public space is also visible in his larger housing projects, namely Hotakubo Housing. **Kristine Klein**



COURTESY TOM WELSH

## Arup and PAU to redesign New York City's unsightly sidewalk scaffolding

Sidewalk sheds are ubiquitous (and unsightly) additions to the New York City streetscape. A request for proposals issued by the city garnered over a dozen applications to redesign the scaffolding that lines city streets. Arup and Practice for Architecture & Urbanism have been named by the city to iterate new equipment for buildings to sport while they undergo renovation and inspection work. **KK**

## Hood Design Studio, Weiss/Manfredi, and Moody Nolan are reimagining Lincoln Center's Amsterdam Avenue side

When tourists visit Lincoln Center, they typically raise their selfie sticks in Josie Robertson Plaza, where the iconic Revson Fountain is sited. Rarely do newcomers venture to Lincoln Center's Amsterdam Avenue side, where an imposing fortresslike wall ominously divides the complex from its community. Today, Hood Design Studio, Weiss/Manfredi, and Moody Nolan are working on an urban design project with Lincoln Center officials to better integrate Lincoln Center with its neighbors. **DJR**

## At Friends Seminary, James Turrell's new installation, *Leading*, introduces students to their "inner light"

Perched above historic Stuyvesant Square Park in Manhattan is Friends Seminary, one of New York's most prestigious K-12 schools, founded in 1786 by Quakers. There, artist James Turrell has completed his newest architectural intervention, *Leading*. The art piece is a deeply

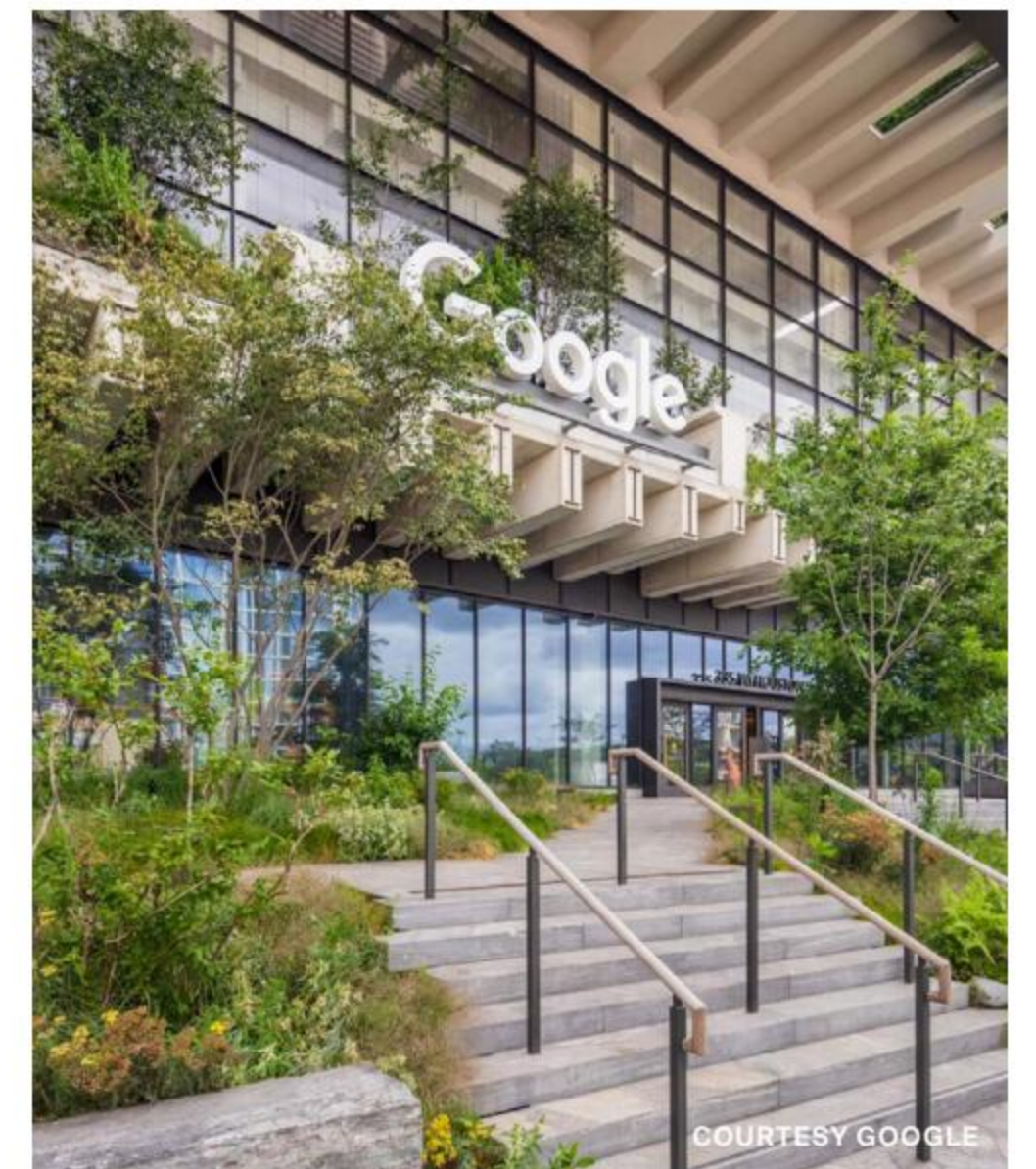
personal one for Turrell, a fellow Quaker, and marks a full-circle moment in his long career. Frances Halsband, founder of Kliment Halsband Architects, a Perkins Eastman Studio, was the design architect. **DJR**



COURTESY FRIENDS SEMINARY

## COOKFOX and Gensler design Google's new workspace in St. John's Terminal to be authentically New York

In Manhattan's Hudson Square neighborhood, tech giant Google has opened a new office in the St. John's Terminal building, previously the end point of the New York Central Railroad. The adaptive reuse project was led by COOKFOX and Gensler. It adds a 9-story tower to an existing 3-story structure. Throughout, the architects have woven in legacies and historic moments that are quintessentially New York. **KK**



COURTESY GOOGLE

## Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation names Tiziana Baldenebro as its executive director

After curating the U.S. Pavilion at the 18th Venice Architecture Biennale, Tiziana Baldenebro now has another momentous career move to celebrate: executive director of the Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation. Baldenebro's work and background have long intersected and aligned with the foundation's mission. For Baldenebro, the appointment was also a personal one: Her mother was Willis's caregiver. **KK**

## In Chicago, Gensler is leading Chase Tower's first major renovation in decades

Chase Tower is well known in Chicago: The 60-story building by C. F. Murphy Associates and Perkins&Will, completed in 1969, has a ceramic wall mural by Marc Chagall. Now, Gensler is renovating Chase Tower for its anchor tenant, JPMorgan Chase. Gensler, a firm with a long history focused on workplace design, has been tasked with upgrading the 20th-century building into a 21st-century workplace with flexible, collaborative spaces that can be adapted over time. **DJR**

## Sasaki completes the 9-acre Wilmington Waterfront Promenade amid heavy industry

In Los Angeles's Wilmington neighborhood, 9 acres of underused property owned by the Port of Los Angeles have been transferred to the people. The recently opened Wilmington Waterfront Promenade designed by Sasaki and Studio MLA spans 1,300 linear feet and comprises a "picnic pier," playground, and walking paths—all anchored by green space planted with mature trees. **Shane Reiner-Roth**

## Snøhetta's new Beijing City Library is the world's largest climatized reading space

In Beijing's Tongzhou District, a new public library by Snøhetta has opened its doors. Snøhetta's design features a forest of 52-foot-tall columns upholding a playful, nebulous roof slab enveloped by a multistory curtain wall. Snøhetta has called the new Beijing City Library the world's largest climatized reading space. The open hangar area is reminiscent of past libraries by the firm—namely Bibliotheca Alexandria in Egypt, the office's inaugural project, from 1989. **DJR**

## BIG unveils a mega-project next to the UN, replete with condos, hotels, a casino, and the Museum of Freedom and Democracy

Since Con Edison decommissioned its Waterside Power Plant in the early 2000s, the swath of land on the East River where it once stood—known colloquially as the "First Avenue Mud Pit"—has beckoned architects to build something as great as its neighbor, the United Nations Headquarters. In 2003, Fumihiko Maki won a competition to design a new tower for the UN between 41st and 42nd streets on Robert Moses Playground—a project marred by a long series of complications that never broke ground. In 2008, SOM and Richard Meier & Partners (now Meier Partners) prepared a master plan for the contiguous land parcel between 38th and 41st streets, but that project had its plug pulled when the recession hit.

Now, Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) is next in line to reimagine the skyline on 1st Avenue, alongside Soloviev Group, the landowner, and Mohegan, formerly known as Mohegan Gaming & Entertainment. Adamson Associates Architects, OJB Landscape Architecture, The Friedmutter Group, HBA, Thornton Tomasetti, WSP, Langan, Rizzo-Brookbridge, Herrick Feinstein, and Kilograph are all collaborators on the megaproject. **DJR**



BUCHAREST STUDIO/COURTESY BIG

## Following the passing of the famous Central Park owl, legislators have renamed the Bird Safe Buildings Act the "FLACO Act"

Flaco, the escaped Central Park Zoo Eurasian eagle owl that captured the hearts of New Yorkers last year passed away in February after hitting an Upper West Side building midflight. Legislation to prevent bird strikes has been in the works in New York since June 2021. Following Flaco's passing, the Bird Safe Buildings Act was renamed the FLACO Act ("Feathered Lives Also Count"). **Moses Jeanfrancois**

## In Philadelphia, new 76ers arena could cost Pennsylvanians \$1 billion in lost tax revenue, study finds

After 76 Place officials unveiled a new basketball arena in Philadelphia's Chinatown neighborhood last summer, they said the new stadium could generate \$1 billion in taxes for the city and \$472 million for the state of Pennsylvania over a 30-year period. But in a new report, economics professor Dr. Arthur Acolin painted an alternative picture. Acolin said that the new arena may cost Pennsylvanians \$1 billion in lost tax revenue by the sheer number of small businesses it disrupts. **DJR**

## Joslyn Art Museum expansion by Snøhetta and Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture readies for its September debut

The Rhonda and Howard Hawks pavilion is set to open this September, designed by Snøhetta and Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture. The new 42,000-square-foot pavilion will add 40 percent more gallery space. Renderings of the design look to connect the original 1931 Memorial building and the glass atrium by Norman Foster. **Emily Conklin**

## Politicians and housing advocates respond to Vornado's plan to bring tennis courts to former Hotel Pennsylvania site

After COVID-19 capsized demand for commercial real estate and plans for the PENN15 tower by Foster + Partners were scrapped, Vornado went back to the drawing board to envision the empty site where the Hotel Pennsylvania once stood. At "Penn Platform," Vornado is interested in building tennis courts and a concert venue to host red-carpet galas. For some, the proposal was perplexing: Couldn't the former hotel have been repurposed for housing, given New York City's debilitating shortage? **DJR**

## Heatherwick Studio is transforming London's BT Tower into a hotel

Since 1964, the BT Tower has cast thin shadows over Fitzrovia, London. The 620-foot-tall space needle has relayed phone calls, messages, and television signals for consumers in the U.K. with 20th-century technology. Thanks to recent innovations in communications tech, BT is downsizing, and Heatherwick Studio is slated to repurpose the tower into a swanky hotel with MCR, the third-largest hotel owner-operator in the U.S. **DJR**

## The Cultural Landscape Foundation highlights African American history in a new digital guide

To coincide with Black History Month, the Cultural Landscape Foundation released a guide titled "What's Out There Guide to African American Cultural Landscapes." The guide serves as a reference log for 140 sites dedicated to historic moments or figures that highlight the work of Black architects and call attention to histories centering on free and enslaved African Americans. **MJ**

Read more news at [archpaper.com](http://archpaper.com).

## A Place to Gather

L.E.FT Architects reworks Pratt House at Vassar College into a multifaith spiritual center.



COURTESY L.E.FT ARCHITECTS

Vassar College has changed dramatically since it was established in 1861. The prestigious liberal arts school, originally built for the progeny of aristocrats, now touts one of the most diverse and progressive student bodies in the U.S. James Renwick, Jr. was the campus's original architect—he also designed the National Mall's Smithsonian Castle and St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan. But other luminaries like Eero Saarinen added to the campus in Poughkeepsie, New York, making it a hodgepodge of old and new.

L.E.FT Architects is the most recent studio to make a mark at Vassar. The studio was founded in 2005 by Ziad Jamaledine and Makram el Kadi, with offices in New York City and Beirut. L.E.FT repurposed one of Vassar's oldest structures, Pratt House, into a multifaith spiritual center. The historic building's evolution into the Vassar College Center for Religious Life is emblematic of the institution's transformation since the 19th century into a multicultural locus for higher learning predicated on pluralism.

Pratt House is a three-story masonry building gifted by Charles M. Pratt, a wealthy industrialist and Vassar trustee. It was completed in 1915 to function as the warden's house, designed by York & Sawyer Architects. Thanks to the renovation by L.E.FT Architects, Pratt House has been transformed from a bourgeois residence

A multifaith prayer room serves as a calm space for reflection or intimate gathering, welcoming students across a whole spectrum of beliefs.



MICHAEL VAHRENWALD/ESTO

into a haven for students of all faiths to worship, reflect, and respectfully debate one another. "As a multifaith center, we really did not want to turn the building into the type of interfaith spaces we see at airports," Jamaledine told *AN*. "You know? Like a generic, gray room with a carpet, lacking in identity, that tries to be for everybody, but inevitably alienates everyone," he continued. "Instead, our idea was not to eliminate differences but to find the common ground; the acceptable overlaps and layering between religious groups, as opposed to trying to find some sort of neutral ground."

During schematic design, L.E.FT Architects found precedents in religious buildings from around the world that have been able to accommodate varied religious groups over time, notably Istanbul's Hagia Sophia and the Great Mosque of Damascus. The next step was applying the lessons learned from both case studies to a much smaller building—and budget. "It was interesting for us to work on such a domestic, intimate scale," Jamaledine said, "as opposed to the religious, celebratory, monumental scale. We believe that the domestic is a much more appropriate scale for the religious student community—and spiritual community, for that matter, in the 21st century. They don't need a big, monumental, symbolic statement, just spaces that work for their needs."

Renovating the structure from 1915 into a modern, energy-conscious, ADA-compliant building was challenging. But most of the original materials were preserved or repurposed: For example, wood planks and stones were upcycled throughout in doors, walls, floors, and exterior landscaping.

Within Pratt House, L.E.FT kept the building's existing kitchen intact and inserted a second "ritual kitchen" into the envelope, fitted with all accoutrements necessary to provide adequate dining space for diverse religious practitioners. Solutions ranged from an extralong Iftar dining table to a kitchen that works as both a kosher and a halal cooking area. The ground level has offices for staff, a *wadu* station (or ablution sink) for religious groups that perform ritual washings before prayer, and a conference room. A second-floor ceiling slab was removed to create a light-filled, multistory prayer space crowned by wooden rafters.

The ablution sink where worshippers wash themselves before prayer required a custom design, but the ADA Codebook from the Department of Justice is "secular," meaning it doesn't prescribe how to design compliant religious fixtures. Therefore, Jamaledine looked at countries around the world, namely Malaysia, for design inspiration. The result is a beautiful, custom-made *wadu* easily



MICHAEL VAHRENWALD/ESTO



MICHAEL VAHRENWALD/ESTO

Top: A communal dining space accommodates feasts and gatherings for many types of holidays and rituals but can also act as a space just to enjoy a meal together.

Above: An ablution sink serves a variety of religions with practices of washing and is also intentionally ADA-accessible.

accessible to individuals in wheelchairs and painted a warm powder blue.

Just outside, a labyrinth codesigned by L.E.FT and faculty members at Vassar who specialize in ancient ritual sites is nestled in the ground. The labyrinth is made of surplus building materials that general contractors working for Vassar accrued over the years, contained in a part of campus known colloquially as "the Boneyard." With his team,

Jamaledine cataloged every piece of material there, and the resulting labyrinth is a beautiful new form made from Vassar ephemera.

"It's a very iterative process," Jamaledine said. "We often talk with the director about new possible pieces, and changing the space, and how to adapt the space for student needs." **DJR**

# 9 Open



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**Atoma**  
1411 N 45th St, Seattle, WA 98103  
Design: Jeunesse Architects



**Ometeo**  
1640 Capital One Dr, Tysons, VA 22102  
Design: GrizForm Design Architects



**Gair**  
41 Washington St, Brooklyn, NY 11201  
Design: Jeshua Paone Architecture Studio and Kevin Cimini

Donald Glover, aka the rapper and musician Childish Gambino, is getting into the restaurant business. His boba tea cafe opened in the Silver Lake area of Los Angeles, and there's been a constant queue. Not only are the drinks beautiful but the playful shop was designed by Bestor Architecture. A generous front window welcomes you in to sit at casual bench seating. Within, there's a tension between the cool blue hues of the counter and floors and the warmth from wood paneling and boba-like Mexican tiles by Ceramico Suro. Now this is America.

Tucked into Wallingford, one of Seattle's most historic neighborhoods, a new restaurant by Jeunesse Architects makes you feel like you're dining in the home of a chef. Accented with cozy, colorful flourishes like brass fixtures, textured wallpaper, and tasteful table lamps, the intimate dining experience extends from the warm hearth to the open-concept kitchen. The restaurant is called Atoma, the Greek word for invisible. It tracks: Jeunesse wanted to uplift all the small details of dining we often miss or take for granted, which is a welcome addition to the contemporary dining scene.

Tex-Mex cuisine and the cultures that book-end the genre's hyphen are uplifted at a new restaurant in Washington, D.C., by local studio GrizForm Design Architects. The name Ometeo is derived from Nahuatl, an Indigenous language from Central Mexico spoken by the Aztecs. But the name is just one element signifying the connection between Texas and Mexican culture. Decor, furnishings, and finishes all honor local craft and makers: The bright, tiled space is decorated with handmade and vintage objects and features a cozy upper mezzanine for private dining.

On the quiet corner of a cobblestone street in Brooklyn's DUMBO neighborhood one can find Gair by Jeshua Paone Architecture Studio and Kevin Cimini. It's housed in a 19th century warehouse constructed by a young Henry Turner, and this history inspired the designers to sand away accretions to reveal Turner's original concrete shell. Other interventions continue the industrial presence like a scalloped bar that resembles an Ionic column topped with richly textured marble. Built-in banquettes soften the space with wood seating and curved backrests, resulting in a serene dining room. EC

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# 10 In Construction

## Building New Relationships

Kengo Kuma & Associates activates a landscape-focused expansion at CAM in Lisbon.

A Kengo Kuma & Associates–designed expansion and reorganization of CAM (Centro de Arte Moderna) opens to the public this September. The project modernizes and expands the exhibition spaces dedicated to the contemporary art of Lisbon's Gulbenkian Foundation, held within Leslie Martin's 1983 stepped concrete building. But Kuma also reconfigures CAM within the Gulbenkian landscape, opening it up to new southern gardens and forging links to surrounding streets and communities.

The Gulbenkian Foundation, founded in 1969, is located north of Lisbon's historic city center. The modernist complex houses a museum, art library, and offices designed around strong visual connections between interior and garden. The CAM arrived later, acting as a bookend to the southern portion of the site: Martin's Brutalist architecture steps up from the park and ornamental lake before turning its back to the south.

When the foundation recently acquired the large section of southern gardens directly behind CAM, which were previously privately owned and walled off, a competition was launched to reimagine the museum and resolve the predicament of it acting as a barrier between the historic north campus and the new southern expansion. Kuma's winning scheme proposed a vast curved roof running along the entire southern facade to soften the north campus's stark relationship to the new gardens, creating a sheltered space under which CAM visitors can experience the expanded landscape.

The sweeping roof is not simply a gestural form, though. It's a contemporary take on the traditional Japanese *engawa*—a narrow, covered veranda acting as a transitory space between interior and exterior. As CAM neared completion, Kengo Kuma and Rita Topa, partner at Kengo Kuma & Associates and lead architect for the project, led a hard-hat preview of the museum. Kuma told me he has

incorporated *engawas* into previous projects, but "this project is maybe the biggest." He then paused, as if contemplating the scale. "Yes, this is the biggest *engawa*."

At 330 feet in length, the form feels vast when seen from a distance. But when walking under its low-slung sloop, the new veranda has a feeling of lightness akin to a canvas awning. The top of the structure is an array of white ceramic tiles—a material both Portugal and Japan share a historic love for and which Kuma feels reflects a "sympathy between the two countries."

From the inside, instead of simply offering a picture-window framing of future gardens, Kuma hopes that the new roof structure "creates a new experience to concentrate the texture of the garden." This is a panoramic proposition that landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic compared to the horizontality of Japanese scroll painting, though the function of the *engawa* isn't solely aesthetic: An indent in the roof channels rainwater into a dry stream below, connected to the estate's irrigation system. "The architecture is shaping the design of the garden, and the landscape is shaping the architecture," the Lebanese landscape designer said, "so the relationships are becoming a lot more holistic."

Kuma has located CAM's cavernous new galleries and a network of ancillary spaces underground. "We didn't want to make a new building," Kuma told me of the decision to retain most of Martin's original massing and dig down, not build out into the gardens. "We just wanted to add relationships to the building." This means Djurovic has been able to plan a large garden, carefully designed to fuse with the existing Gulbenkian landscape, and build upon the topology of the inherited site. "All the pathways are defined by the existing trees," he said, "and we're slowly transitioning an ornamental garden into a fully native habitat that amplifies the native species as much as possible."



COURTESY KENGO KUMA ARCHITECTS



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A new pedestrian entrance leads to CAM and the Gulbenkian, radically changing the relationship of the cultural complex to the city. "You will feel as if you're moving through a forest," Djurovic said. The walk's final visual reveal will be the sun reflecting from the *engawa*'s stark white tiles.

**Will Jennings** is a London-based art and architecture writer, editor of *recessed*, space, director of arts charity Hypha Studios, and educator at UCL and the University of Greenwich.

**Top:** A rendering depicting the roof structure's finished form, enmeshed with the surrounding landscape.

**Left:** The sweeping *engawa* roof's curved concrete panels being installed on-site.

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## Making the Missing Middle

**Interface Studio Architects connects good architecture to good citizens.**

Interface Studio Architects, also known as ISA, is a Philadelphia-based research and design office led by founding principal and creative director Brian Phillips and principals Deb Katz and Alex Gauzza. From its studio in Kensington's Crane Arts building, the practice has garnered a reputation for delivering what planners today call the "missing middle," a typology that's recently resurfaced as a tentative panacea to the nation's housing crisis.

The "missing middle" typically connotes a three- to seven-family buildings contained within a midrise envelope that's situated in a dense urban context. They often work at a scale between row house and a 5-over-1. Your run-of-the-mill brownstone in Brooklyn, triple-decker in Boston, or "Bayonne Box" in Chicago all fit the bill.

"We are concerned as much with being good citizens, supporting our home city of Philadelphia, as we are with being good architects," Phillips told *AN*. "We often find ourselves at the table with our clients very early, helping to shape a project brief prior to land acquisition," added Gauzza. "We begin thinking about cost, constructability, and marketability with developers and contractors at the beginning of a new project as a means to shape buildings, not just for owner profit but in service of the broader community."

For ISA, Philadelphia has been a superb testing bed. At the University of Pennsylvania's Stuart Weitzman School of Design, Phillips has taught a series of studios that deal with timely housing issues. ISA also has a research "lab" section of its new website, which Katz described as "a way to make public a side of the practice that has historically been harder to see, but has always been a part of our way of working." Some of the work includes exploratory projects like reinventing the concrete traffic barrier into a positive streetscape element. "ISA has, from the beginning, operated both from the perspective of building and research, with ideas generated from our grant-funded initiatives feeding back into our built work and vice versa," said Katz.





## 1 XS House 2019

The Vine Street Expressway is a sunken thoroughfare built in Philadelphia's Chinatown neighborhood during the era of urban renewal. Perched above the highway is XS House, an ISA project completed in 2019. Previously, the parcel was used as informal surface parking that could barely fit two cars. ISA managed to build seven apartments in a building there that rises 63 feet above grade, on an 11-foot-wide site. The units at XS House feel large

thanks to their creative use of vertical space, as they deploy bays, mezzanines, and double-height ceilings. A city zoning code override allowed XS House to have facade protrusions that cantilever three feet over the sidewalk, adding 30 percent more floor area to several flats. The units at XS House are replete with storage space, breakfast bars, double-height living rooms, lofted bedrooms, and large, operable windows.



## 2 Signal House 2023

One block away from Girard Station in Fishtown is Signal House, a new 6-story apartment building renovated with three split-level rentals. The building is wrapped in industrial black cladding and rises almost 70 feet above the sidewalk. Part of Signal House's novelty occurs in section: It's a walk-up infill building with a single stair that creates generous flats on a very tight lot vis-à-vis unique interior arrangements. There, ISA

managed to fit spacious apartments in a parcel designated for a single-family row house. To maximize user comfort, ISA came up with an interlocking system where each unit has mezzanines. This, the architects said, allows for expansive floor-to-ceiling heights and rooms filled with natural light.



## 3 Midtown Midrise 2023

The Willis-Selden Local Historic District in Detroit is your average residential quarter built in the Midwest during the Second Industrial Revolution (1870-1914). It's home to myriad housing types with lush front yards, ranging from handsome single-family homes to compact prewar apartments. At 655 Willis Street in the historic district, ISA recently completed Midtown Midrise, a 37,000-square-foot, 4-story, mixed-use

building. In total, ISA was able to provide 35 apartments, a ground-floor cafe and lobby, and parking on-site. The design pays homage to Detroit's proud metal fabrication tradition by wrapping Midtown Midrise with textured metal cladding. The elevation folds and, at certain intervals, the undulations unlock great views for residents and unique outdoor balconies that a more orthogonal elevation simply couldn't offer.



## 4 Meantime Ongoing

Philadelphia's commercial real estate sector took a hit during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdowns shuttered ground-level commercial storefronts around the city, while local business owners struggled to stay afloat. To help buck these trends, the nonprofit Meantime began at ISA and grew into a coalition between real estate industry leaders, city government, landowners, and community

stakeholders. The nonprofit's goal is to activate underutilized storefronts in communities throughout Philly by connecting local entrepreneurs with space. To date, Meantime has supported pop-up restaurants, flea markets, and other spontaneous happenings in and around Philadelphia's vacant spaces. The initiative is backed by the Sachs Program for Arts Innovation and D3 Real Estate Development. **DJR**

# EMERGING VOICES

**THE ARCHITECTURAL LEAGUE  
OF NEW YORK ANNOUNCES  
THE WINNERS OF ITS  
ANNUAL COMPETITION FOR  
YOUNG PRACTICES.**

# EMERGING VOICES

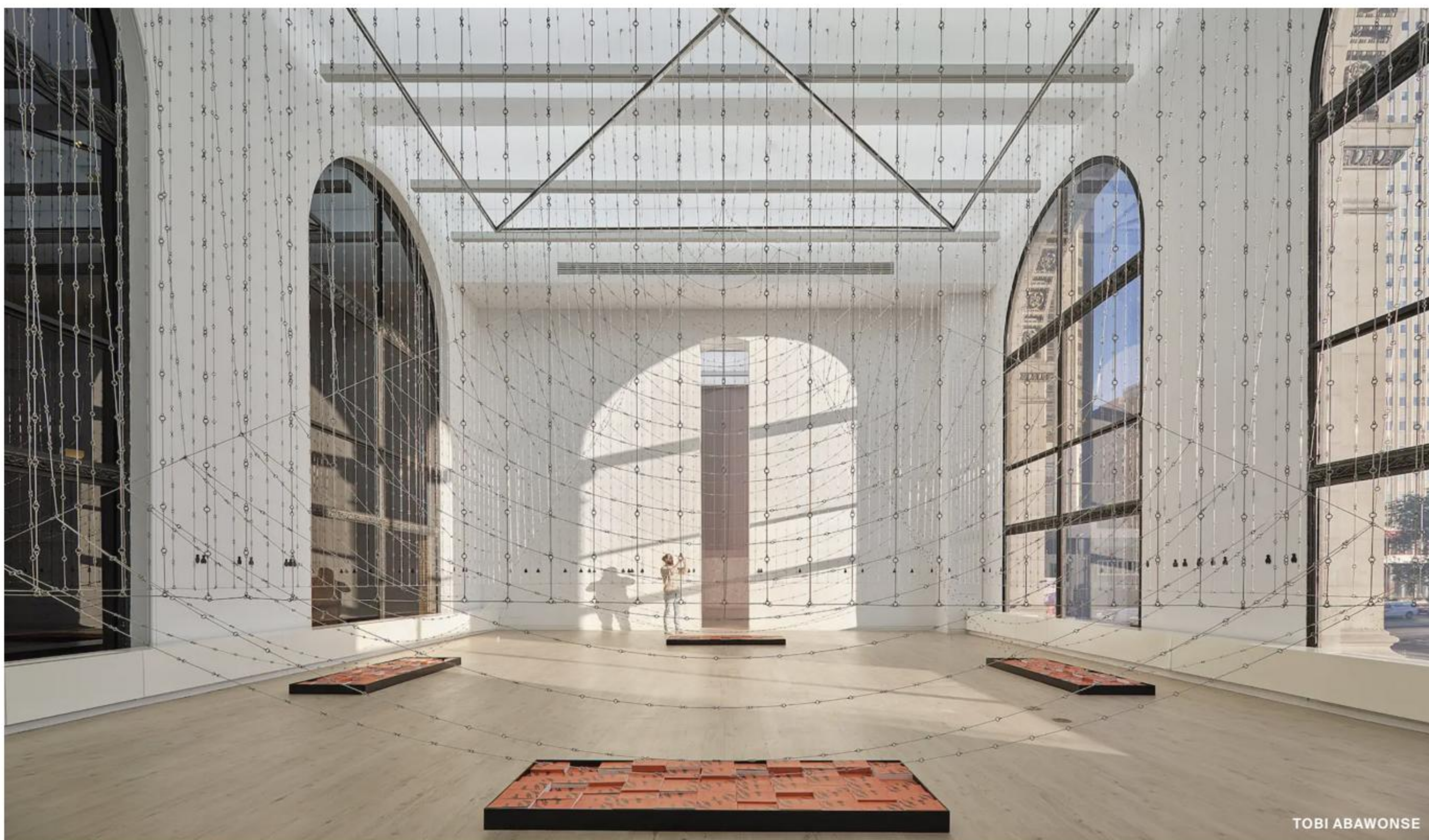
## AD—WO

Jen Wood and Emanuel Admassu founded AD—WO in 2015. The studio is based in New York, but its projects span the globe. Whether working in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Germany, Italy, or the United States, AD—WO seeks to challenge the discipline's ingrained approaches to image making and its value systems more broadly. The Emerging Voices award is a major milestone for the office. "We have a lot of respect for previous winners," Jen Wood told *AN*. "It feels great to be recognized in this way."

AD—WO recently completed *100 Links: Architecture and Land, in and out of the Americas*, an installation designed with the Buell Center at Columbia University for the fifth iteration of the Chicago Architecture Biennial. *100 Links* delivered a chilling critique of settler colonialism by repurposing Gunter's chain, a rudimentary measurement tool used by settlers to carve out the Jeffersonian Grid, for art. "For some time now we've been trying to figure out how to translate our experiments with image making into occupiable space. The installation in Chicago and some other projects underway demonstrate that," Admassu said. "We make images, sculpture, and architecture," Wood added. "For example, we create tapestries that explore value systems and rituals that are not typically centered by the discipline."

*Dear Mazie* is the name of AD—WO's next major exhibition design. At Virginia Commonwealth University's Institute of Contemporary Art, with support from the Graham Foundation, *Dear Mazie* centers Amaza Lee Meredith, a queer Black architect born in 1895 who established her practice in the Jim Crow South while living with her partner. In parallel to *Dear Mazie*, an apartment building in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is slated to open this year as well. "It's been really productive to have a porous border between the practice and teaching," Admassu offered. "This notion of 'emerging' for us is really interesting. We want to stay in that interstitial space by refusing the hierarchy between built form and built images, and continue to introduce new value systems." **DJR**

Gunter's chain was a historic device used to measure earth and delineate it into land. This device and its ripple effects inspired a reflective exhibition at the Chicago Architecture Biennial titled *100 Links*.



TOBI ABAWONSE

## CANO VERA

Cano Vera Arquitectura is a Mexico City-based studio led by Juan Carlos Cano, Paloma Vera, and Fermin Andrade where everyone wears multiple hats. During business hours, the firm designs social housing, infrastructure, and cultural projects throughout Mexico, with an emphasis on underserved neighborhoods. But interspersed throughout the day and into the night, Cano runs a publishing house, *MaNgOs de HaCHa*, that produces poetry, film criticism, and biographical works, while Vera helps edit *Arquine*, a world-renowned architecture publication located in CDMX.

Prior to practicing architecture, Cano earned a master's degree in literature theory, an accomplishment, he told *AN*, that he puts to use in his practice. "I try to incorporate poetry in the architectural work," Cano said, "not in a literal way, but rather we try to find certain essences of the architecture that create certain kinds of poetry, which is very difficult to do when you're doing corporate work."

Since 2007, designers at Cano Vera have been mentored by Oscar Hagerman, a famous architect and educator respected for his work with Mexico's Indigenous communities. Cano told *AN* that Hagerman has been an influential voice in a handful of Cano Vera's projects, including the University of the Environment campus in Acatitlán which teaches students about sustainable agricultural practices. In 2020, when Cano Vera was hired to transform Mexico's former presidential palace into a public building, Hagerman was also there to help the firm's leadership along the way.

Utopia Estrella is one of Cano Vera's ongoing projects that demonstrates the studio's commitment to weaving together themes of design excellence, nature, and poetry. In eastern Mexico City, Cano Vera transformed a former landfill into a wetland and also designed an adjacent community center. Today, the project serves one of the poorest quarters of Mexico City. "Designing public works in Mexico can be chaotic and quite tense," Cano said. "But we're very interested in this work. We're committed to doing public buildings." **DJR**

The University of the Environment is the preeminent ecological educational institution in Mexico. The design and construction of its campus in Acatitlán focused on regenerative processes.



RAFAEL GAMO

# DAVID T. FORTIN ARCHITECT

David T. Fortin is a tenured professor of architecture at the University of Waterloo in Cambridge, Ontario, and the founder of David T. Fortin Architect (DTFA), an Indigenous-owned office working across Canada. He has represented Canada twice at the Venice Architecture Biennale—curating 2023's *Not for Sale*, organized by Architects Against Housing Alienation, of which Fortin is an organizing committee member, and 2018's *UNCEDED: Voices of the Land*.

DTFA works directly with Metis, First Nations, and Cree communities, incorporating vernacular building practices through a design process based on listening and local engagement. Like many other Indigenous practitioners, Fortin is often put in the position of representing disparate groups at the behest of an institution. Fortin told *AN*: "When you're working with a specific Indigenous community, inspiration for your design work is much clearer. There is a specificity to what you want to express." His role can be especially valuable on larger institutional projects, which require negotiation among multiple voices and cultures that are just now getting a seat at the table.

Recently, DTFA has completed Horse Dance Lodge, an Indigenous transitional housing project, as well as three projects in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan for the Metis community: two office buildings for the Gabriel Dumont Institute and Ma Faami Family and Social Services, as well as Round Prairie Elders' Lodge, a modular housing project. The office is also at work on two proposed multifamily housing complexes in Kamloops, British Columbia, and Regina, Saskatchewan.

Fortin's design ethos is also reflected in his pedagogy. He leads a design studio where students are tasked with reimagining Canadian embassies in the era of reconciliation, which prioritizes recognition of local Indigenous culture instead of the colony. Fortin reminds us that "the emphasis for all Indigenous people is always 'Whose land are you on?' and how to respect them as a host." **Trevor Schillaci**

David T. Fortin Architect specializes in work with First Nations throughout Canada, conceptualizing modern designs with inclusive functionality. This is a concept cabin for a family in the First Nation community of Lac de Milles Lacs, designed in 2019.



# ESTUDIO ALA

Mexican duo Luis Enrique Flores and Armida Fernandez founded the Guadalajara, Mexico-based Estudio ALA in 2012. "Our approach is to design less as a typology and more as a prototype—a collection of events rather than things," they said in a statement.

Together, the duo sees every project as a collection of layers, each formed of diverse cultural, social, traditional, and economic factors, coming together as a "cultural collage." To identify the layers, the studio's research process starts with Flores and Fernandez traveling to each project site. By talking to locals and taking note of materiality and cultural practices, they ensure the result is a unique and site-specific project.

The lineage of craft is tangible in Estudio ALA's work bridging industrial and rural contexts—an heirloom of the founders' upbringing in Guadalajara, a growing metropolis with traditional religious and Indigenous cultural influences, and a strong reputation of artisanal craftsmanship. The designers' work with tequila and mezcal factories in Jalisco and Michoacán are examples of cultural collage marrying this sensibility. "The industrial process has an ancestral tradition," Flores told *AN*. In the Tequila Centinela Chapel, the firm embraced the religious heritage of Jalisco, tying in inspiration from missionary spaces. The incorporation of a tequila by-product and humble local materials ties the structure to the site's heritage and elevates it.

Cultural collages are enlivened by the duo's appreciation of local and Indigenous materiality. Their projects catalog traditions across Mexico: the use of adobe bricks in the Centinela Chapel in Jalisco; the vernacular wooden architecture of distilleries in Michoacán; and the palm roofs in their Baja California hospitality project. Each material application honors ancestral roots to remake modern sensibilities.

"In this complicated world it is complicated to make a space for reflection," Fernandez said. "In this space we question who we are, what we have done, and where we want to go." **Maria José Gutiérrez Chavez**

Seeking to connect craft to tradition and new urban forms, Estudio ALA designed this mezcal production palenque in Jiquilpan, Michoacan, Mexico. Its construction, which began in 2020, is ongoing, blending traditional building in the new form.



# HILLWORKS

Spring is a crucial time to heal. For nature, spring heals by resurrecting plants, and when a flower starts to bloom, David Hill, founder of Alabama-based HILLWORKS, can sense it from miles away.

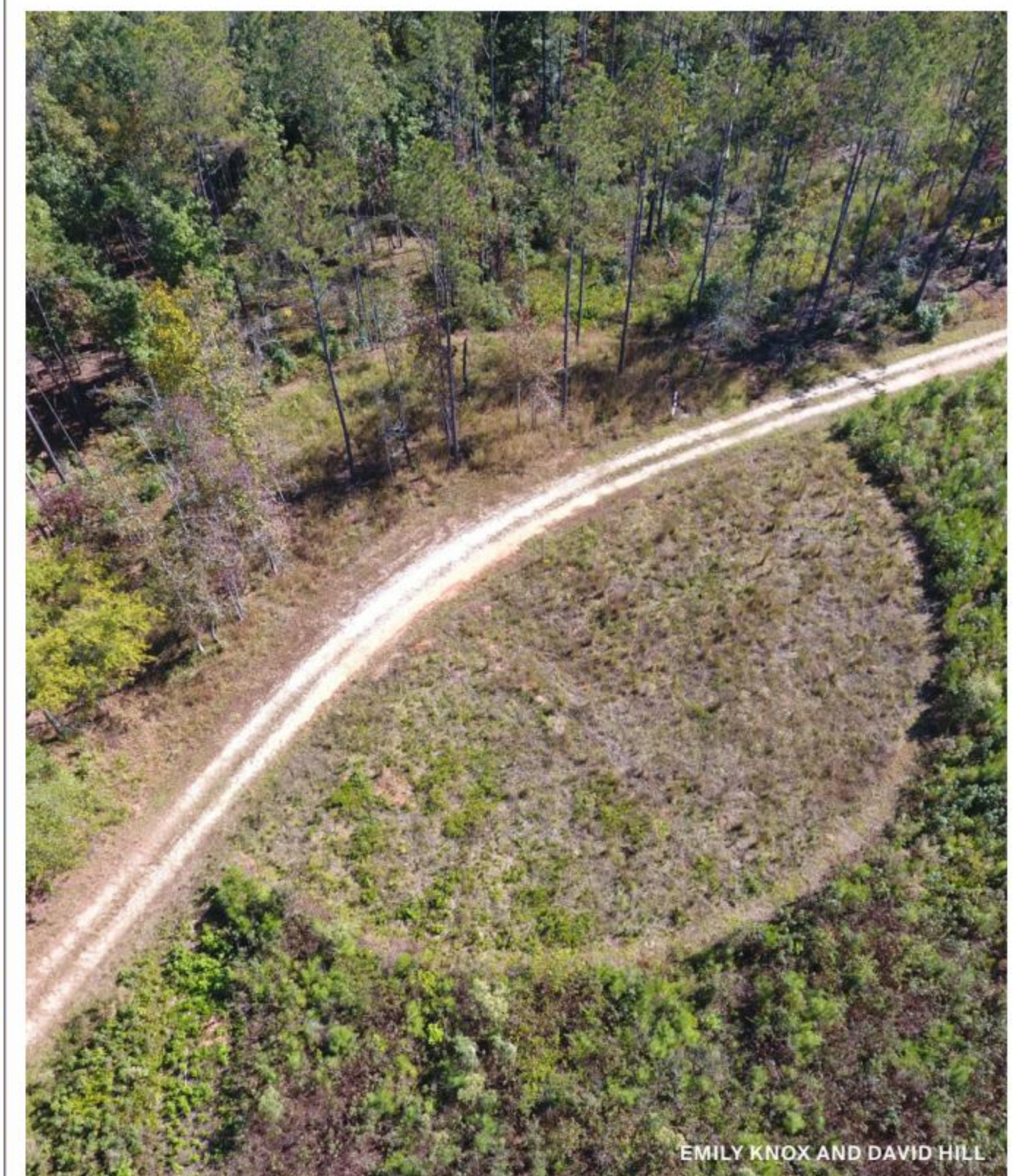
Hill has deep roots in the South, and perhaps it's the vast green spaces that keep him there. Born and raised in Georgia, Hill was first introduced to landscapes through his grandfather's flower nursery. Growing up within the Southern landscape and the spaces, histories, and cultures so inextricably tied to it, Hill's affinity for the natural world only grew stronger. "I went on to study architecture at Georgia Tech, but I constantly felt myself drawn back to the landscape, gardening, and the design of outdoor spaces," Hill shared. And this constant push and pull between academia, traditional architecture education, and his roots in the landscape led him to found HILLWORKS, a landscape and architecture studio, in 2009.

HILLWORKS's portfolio encapsulates the holistic shift in the design world toward environmental stewardship. In 2016, the studio collaborated on the impressive Puente Hills Park master plan, which will transform a landfill in California to create a public, sustainable setting. Visually, as well as formally, there is a seamlessness between people and landscape that previous generations neglected to see, let alone prioritize.

"I think [architects] need to be better at exploring alternatives that we wouldn't have assumed to be an option," Hill said. "Just like we approach a design problem with schemes and strategies, I think we need to be more rigorous to face social, environmental, and ecological challenges."

Hill is an associate professor and architecture chair at Auburn State University, where he teaches the importance of regenerative design. Following the Emerging Voices recognition, Hill hopes to expand the HILLWORKS team and continue to integrate plants into cities. **Moses Jeanfrancois**

HILLWORKS is conducting ongoing research at its Alabama Meadows Research Plots, located in the Mary Olive Thomas Demonstration Forest at Auburn University. This work blends academic rigor with the firm's design ethos.



# LATENT DESIGN

Katherine Darnstadt founded Chicago-based Latent Design in 2010 following a flurry of dramatic events: becoming a licensed architect, receiving a promotion at her job, getting married, finding out she was having a baby, and then getting laid off.

"It was in that moment of panic of having to make every single life and career decision at once that I ended up founding the firm, because that's all I knew how to do," she told *AN*.

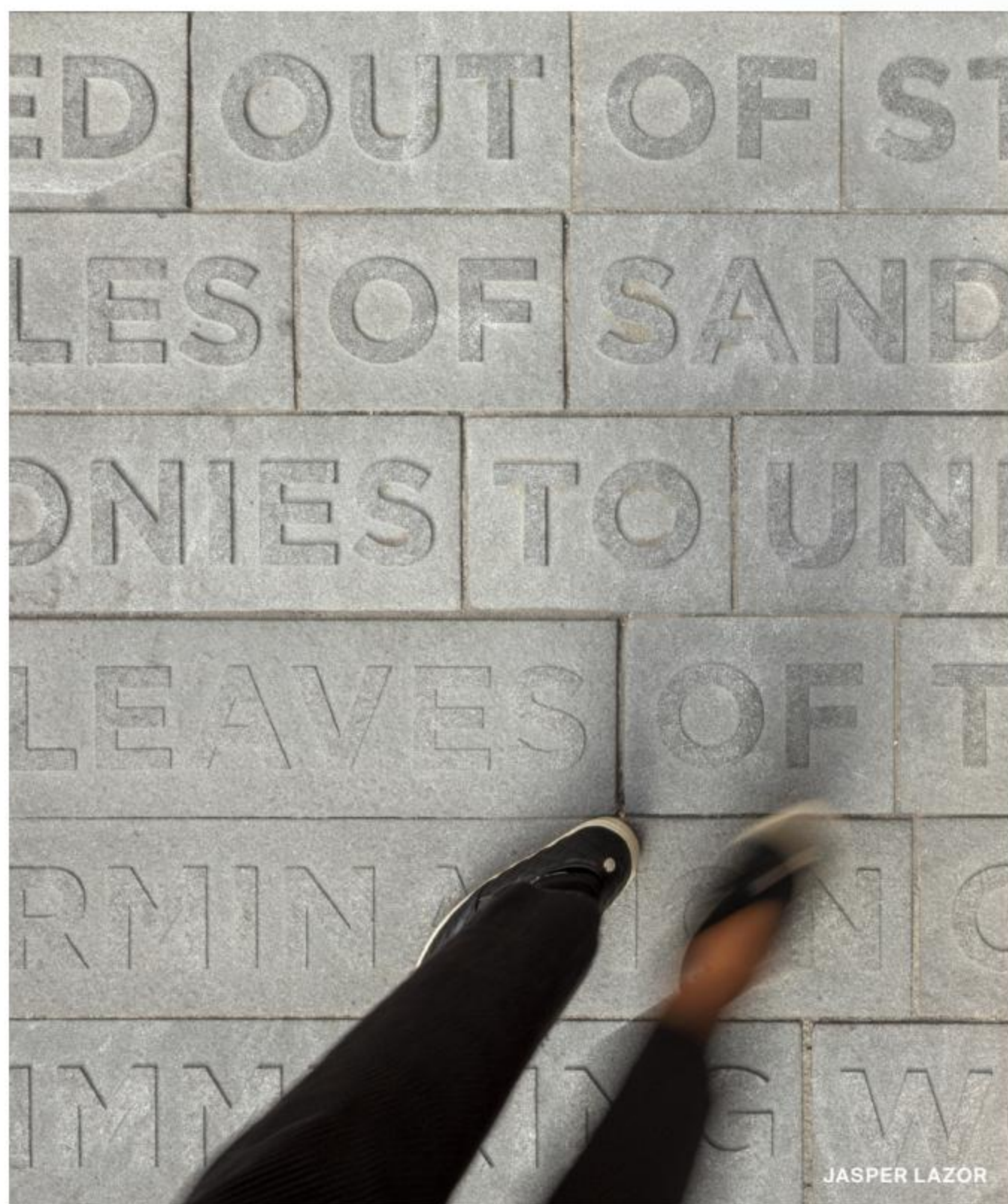
Darnstadt continued looking for work while slowly building her own firm. She recalled that those first projects were anything but glamorous—mostly code violation corrections or small residential jobs. But through these projects and in joining with like-minded design professionals, Darnstadt set out to design impactful, community-based architecture.

The name Latent refers to the idea of "making the invisible visible," a trait that sounds loud and clear in the firm's work in underserved neighborhoods. Several projects have been realized along Chicago Avenue, reaching across neighborhood borders and typologies. Many have fulfilled and addressed goals set in quality-of-life plans (QLPs)—community planning efforts revisited every ten years. Darnstadt explained that a neighborhood may ask for more grocery stores or affordable housing, or for adaptive reuse projects to take hold—projects she didn't anticipate taking on as a young professional. "Now I can see the value of thinking through what those impacts ultimately lead to," she said.

Latent recently completed the Rusu-McCartin Club for the Boys & Girls Club of Chicago on a former brownfield site. A smaller but equally impactful project is the Boombox: a humble kiosk that artists or small-business owners can lease. Boombox tenants have gone on to be clients: Two tapped the firm to design a grocery store and an art gallery.

"As a firm," Darnstadt concluded, "we're interested in working at the scale of the bench, the building, and the block." **KK**

Pedestrians interact daily with Latent designs for Heart of the City in Rochester, Minnesota. This city plaza renovation transformed an underutilized public space into a meaningful one and won the ASLA Award of Excellence in Urban Design.



JASPER LAZOR

# THE OPEN WORKSHOP

Neeraj Bhatia's architectural practice draws on the philosophy of Hannah Arendt. "My work is aligned with her definition of power: Power is derived from people speaking and acting in concert, and dissipates when they choose not to," he told *AN*. For Bhatia, this attitude toward power provides hope for architects practicing under the pressures and crises of our time, but it also has allowed his studio, The Open Workshop, to create a new kind of power within practice.

Bhatia has become synonymous with collective design movements. From projects at the Chicago and Venice biennials to a recent book, *New Investigations in Collective Form*, The Open Workshop proposes "frameworks" and "choreographies" that re-present what agency and values can look like today. "The benefits go way beyond just sharing resources," he said. Collective living strategies are poised not only to combat the effects of the housing, climate, and affordability crises but also to offer more robust systems of care, solidarity, and social resilience.

While The Open Workshop's ideals can seem quite lofty, the very rigorous (and beautiful) work that happens there grounds these goals in accessible language. Inspired by radical newspapers, the studio created a series of broadsheets to spread information about mutual-aid groups in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood and created installations that put viewers in a worm's-eye-view drawing, suspending projects from the ceiling. But most recently, Bhatia has also worked at the level of the architectural drawing, taking inspiration from his own backyard in San Francisco, to create *Lots Will Tear Us Apart*, a proposal to transform historically working-class urban housing into collective forms and tomorrow's neighborhoods.

Still, architects like Bhatia have learned lessons from our midcentury predecessors: "We can't give agency," he asserted. "Our choreography merely seeks to re-situate the architect's role." **EC**

Literally putting collectivity in practice, The Open Workshop conceived of *Collective Form* so visitors had to interact with each model as a team. The worm's-eye model perspective also added an unexpected detail to the spatial design.



NEERAJ BHATIA

# TEN X TEN

The goal of landscape architecture and urban design firm TEN x TEN is not to learn, but to unlearn. "We like to begin with the idea of unlearning as an active practice, which allows people to be aware of biases and get rid of preconceived notions," said Maura Rockcastle, TEN x TEN principal and cofounder.

Rockcastle founded the practice in 2015 alongside fellow principal Ross Altheimer, and today they're 18-people strong. They got their start transforming a historic mill site in Pittsburgh into a high-tech district—its third phase was completed last year—and since then the practice has expanded nationally and internationally.

Experimental methods allow the firm to integrate community needs: Cataloging a space, using clay to get a sense of a site's tactile feel, and making cyanotypes are just a few of the unconventional methods the firm uses to take on innovative, sensitive work. This can be seen in TEN x TEN's recent design for the Louise B. Miller Memorial and Freedom Garden at Gallaudet University, a hard-of-hearing university in Washington, D.C., that honors Miller's fight for the rights of Black deaf children during her 1952 suit against the Department of Education. A winding sensory garden moves through five stages of the Black deaf experience. Benches allowing users to call attention to those sitting on the other end without the use of sound were planned with Black, deaf codevelopers, though they are not yet under construction.

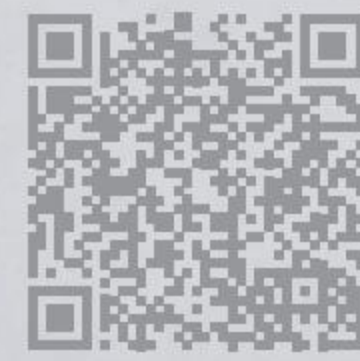
The firm's work structure continues its creative approach. In describing its "flex flat" model, Rockcastle explained: "Within project teams we have leaders and designers, but people play different roles in different projects. You might be a project leader on one and then a designer on another."

The dream is to advocate for a new type of architectural work and diverse clients. As Altheimer puts it, TEN x TEN wants "to have experience and knowledge that we can leverage on other communities' behalf." In many ways, the practice has already arrived at its destination. **Kelly Pau**

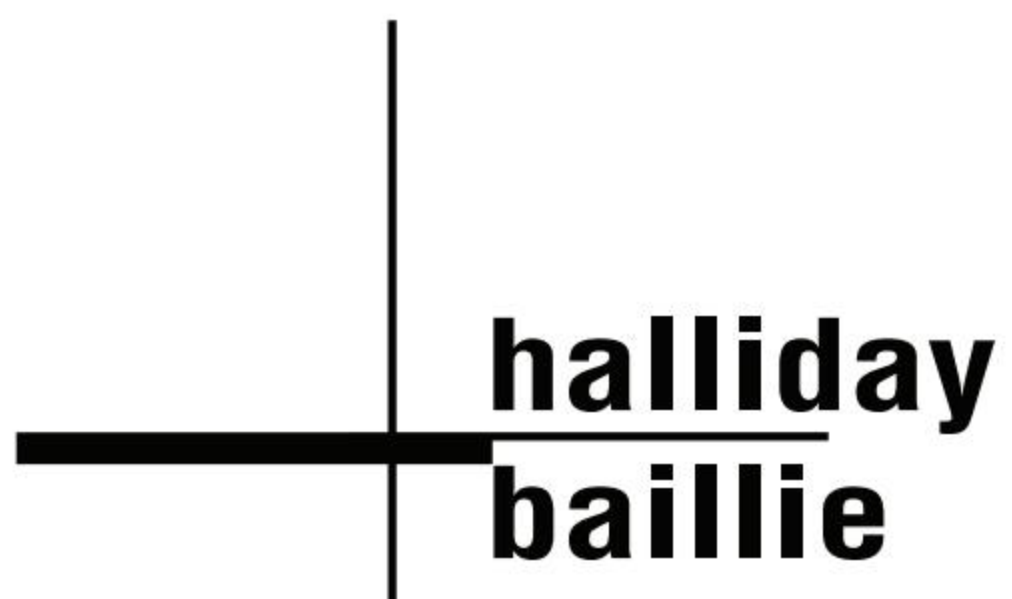
Rondo Commemorative Plaza acknowledges the violent deconstruction of St. Paul's historic Black neighborhood, Rondo, and invites the whole community to celebrate the future of the neighborhood.



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*Cultural institutions have long been key commissions for architects looking to make their mark. From Mazatlán to Maine, this issue celebrates the innovation and experimentation possible within the typology of the museum while also investigating the sociocultural role these institutions play in the lives of their publics.*

# CULTURE

*Tatiana Bilbao  
ESTUDIO designs  
an aquarium in  
Mazatlán, Mexico,  
around the premise  
of a “flooded ruin.”*

# EL GRAN ACUARIO

Located at the confluence of the Sea of Cortez and the Pacific Ocean, Mazatlán was called Mexico's “Pacific Pearl” in the 1950s, when it was a favored destination for Hollywood stars. In recent years, there has been an attempt to revive some of Mazatlán's bygone luster. The city's historic center has been meticulously restored, and some of the Midcentury mansions dotting its hills are yet again hosting visitors drawn by the area's cultural and natural wonders. The crown jewel of this comeback effort is the city's grand new aquarium, one of the most anticipated projects of new architecture in Latin America. Designed by the studio of Tatiana Bilbao, in person the building defies expectations, refusing to play subtle or inviting. Instead, the Mazatlán aquarium's new home is a monumental rationalist structure, entirely made of rose-tinted concrete that looks like a stranded *Dune* set.

That's not a bad thing. On multiple visits, the Brutalist building was full of life, both the myriad sea species it's home to and countless families visiting it. Since opening last May, it is evident the aquarium's massive walls serve their purpose well, making a bold statement while letting the building's contents—the formidable natural wealth and variety of the Sea of Cortez—be the star.

The Gran Acuario de Mazatlán is the brainchild of Ernesto Coppel, a local business magnate who has led an ambitious initiative to broaden his hometown's appeal for visitors (surely so they spend an extra night or two at one of the hotels he owns). Bilbao had already been tasked with reinvigorating the city's long-neglected and heavily polluted Parque Central, a long green expanse running parallel to the coastline. Then in 2017, her office got the commission for the aquarium, sited on a 6-acre plot at the park's southern end. The \$100 million project was jointly financed by Coppel

and the state, with public land leased to the privately operated aquarium.

For a structure of its scale—a total built area of 186,000 square feet with walls reaching 74 feet in height—the new aquarium is strikingly isolated from the surrounding urban landscape. It's enclosed on all sides. A busy road flanks its fenced eastern edge, and its form is hidden from the south by various constructions, including the old aquarium building. It's also cut off from Mazatlán's prized waterfront to the west both visually and physically—a newly sanitized lagoon separates it from a string of speculative high-rises along the beach. Most perplexing is the new aquarium's lack of integration with the park to the north, especially considering Bilbao's involvement.

Once it does appear, the aquarium is a captivating sight, mysterious, strikingly uncontemporary, and severe in its

bunker-like massing. Even though there's an elegance to the vertically staggered, 3-foot-wide slabs of concrete that define it, this is a willful composition that resists easy categorization or comprehension. In fact, the aquarium's most striking vista is not of one of its elevations—none of which is particularly legible—but its plan. Seen from above, the building appears as a gridded system whose intersecting walls form a series of round and rectangular chambers. Beyond its forceful form, the building's most indelible feature is the concrete's mauve shading, part of an effort by the architects to temper the rigorous rectilinearity and stark tectonics.

To enter the aquarium, visitors are expected to go up a 112-foot-long ceremonial staircase (a small elevator is tucked to the side). The ascent leads to the roof, where planted



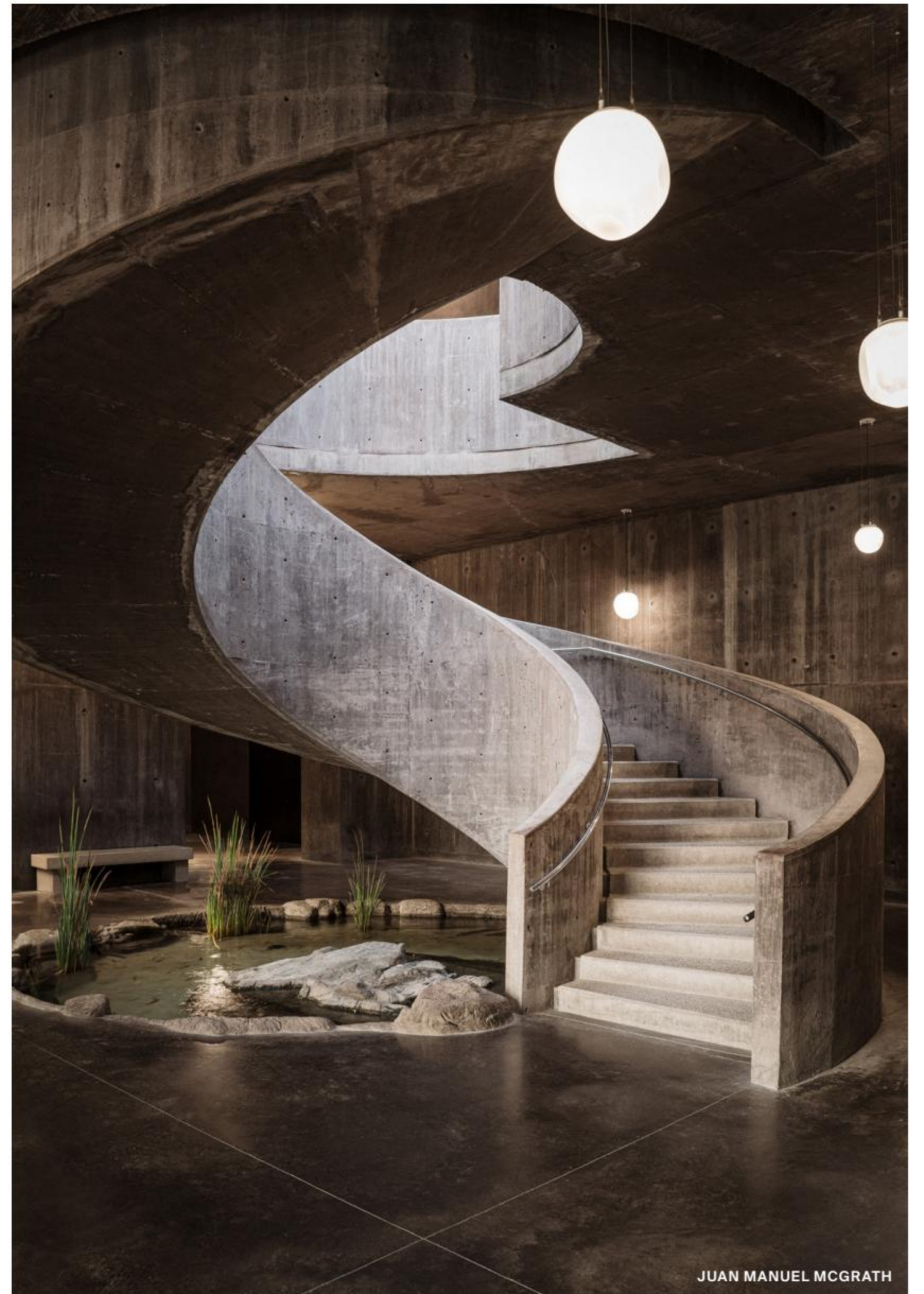
JUAN MANUEL MCGRATH



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JUAN MANUEL MCGRATH



JUAN MANUEL MCGRATH

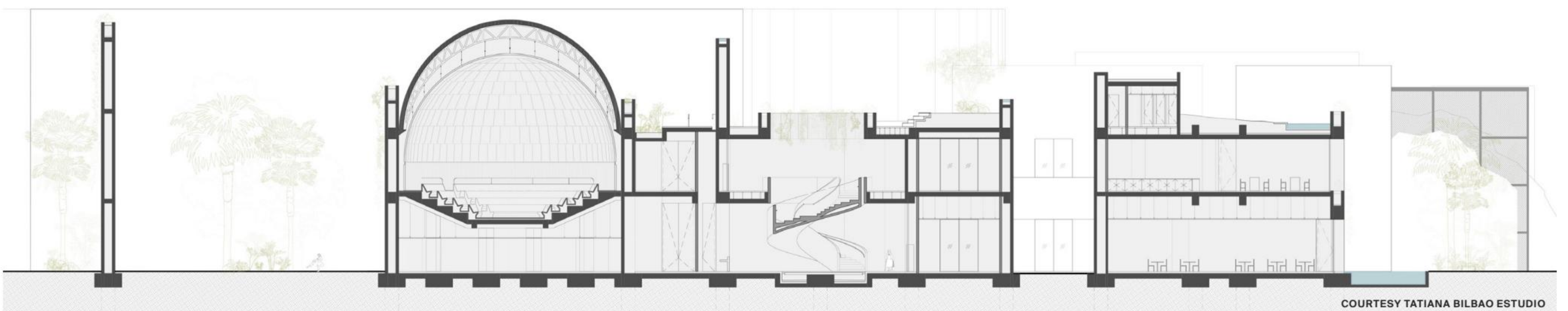
**Opposite page:** The visitor enters the aquarium by first ascending a monumental stair with water cascading down the left-hand side.

**Left:** The roof garden plaza offers a place to rest and reflect at any point during a visit.

**Top:** Throughout, concrete panels are pigmented a subtle mauve tone.

**Above:** The central stair takes on a sculptural quality, bringing visitors from the roof to exhibition spaces.

**Below:** A section shows both the domed auditorium and the open-air stair.



COURTESY TATIANA BILBAO ESTUDIO



COURTESY TATIANA BILBAO ESTUDIO



COURTESY TATIANA BILBAO ESTUDIO

walkways create a pleasant (albeit shade-free) landscape pierced by a large central cylinder. The visitor is now required to descend more stairs into a courtyard at the bottom of this rotunda. In spite of the 44-foot-tall curving walls that enclose it, there is a human dimension to the round plaza, which, with its cafe and fountain, is the first space one encounters in the building whose solemnity feels welcoming.

If the prescribed approach seems capriciously convoluted—not to mention impractical for a building expected to draw thousands of daily visitors—it serves an elaborate narrative Bilbao and her office like to cite as the origin of their design.

Faced with having to design a huge edifice with a set of specialized requirements in a matter of weeks, the team came up with the idea of an abandoned building designed for an unknown purpose at an unspecified point in time. As the ocean waters rose, the walled warren of spaces was submerged, only to one day reemerge with its rooms filled with marine life that claims the superstructure as its home. Entering the building from above is intended to convey the visitor's submersion into this mythical, pseudoarchaeological realm, while the water running down walls at various points reinforces the fictional inspiration. It's all a little corny and literal, and, at the same time, admirable in its imaginative panache and the architects' determination to see the fantastical conceit through.

The circular plaza segues into a vestibule with a spiral staircase that unfurls under an open oculus. It is here that the actual aquarium begins. The promenade conceived by Bilbao's studio is both effective and evocative, with spaces that transition effortlessly from indoor to outdoor. Even "interior" rooms are in fact only semi-enclosed, lacking doors or windows so the entire space feels like an open-air structure.

The exhibitions unfold over 19 rooms, following a progression from land down toward the canyons at the ocean's bottom. Designed with the Vancouver-based conservation organization Ocean Wise, the displays are enlightening but never condescending, aiming as much to entertain and delight as to educate visitors of all ages about the abundance and intelligence contained in our seas—as well as the ways humans endanger the same treasures.

The aquarium's rose walls never remind the user too loudly of their presence. The architecture becomes a kind of integral skin, with built-in recesses, nooks, steps, benches, terraces, and cenote-shaped light wells carved out of the thick concrete to cradle a mangrove or turtle basin.

The sequence builds up to the aquarium's most dramatic displays, held in the two largest, dimmest rooms. The first houses cylindrical floor-to-ceiling tanks devoted to colorful coral life. These are followed by the building's centerpiece, a hall that functions as a kind of cinema with the screen replaced by one face of a gigantic water tank filled with sharks and other ocean dwellers. (Like all of the aquarium's thick acrylic panes, the Kobe, Japan-based firm Nippura manufactured the 43- by 29-foot panorama.)

After viewing the exhibitions, visitors can take the spiral staircase down to the ground-floor food court and additional public gathering spots. The aquarium's offices are also on this level, as is an area with the advanced filtration and life-support technologies needed to sustain and clean the tanks above. A third floor is reserved for research, biologists, and veterinary staff.

In an interview at her Mexico City office, Bilbao explained her design's imperative to respond to natural conditions and convey permanence. "It needed to be a robust building, to imply that it's been there forever and will last for a long span of time. Our main objective was to create a building that flows openly between inside and outside and fosters

a natural relationship with its environment." In practical terms, the building needed to withstand extreme humidity, heat, and hurricanes characteristic of the climate. The sturdy materiality, weathered from the onset, as well as the breathing openness of the aquarium's complicated plan suggests a man-made ecosystem both alien to nature and destined to be appropriated by it. Its exposed expanses are primed to be co-opted by time, vegetation, light, and the elements.

As for the building's unexpected formal language, Bilbao claims it's a direct result of the "flooded ruin" premise her studio concocted: "We didn't design it around a program, but as a set of walls that open and enclose different spaces, without regard to predetermined specifications other than the need to create an experience."

Bilbao also acknowledges that the building's reliance on concrete, a leading source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, can be regarded as at odds with the aquarium's mission to raise awareness about the need to take better care of our planet. "[Based on] the way sustainability is measured now, which I don't believe makes sense, it's not a sustainable building. But you could also consider it's a structure that could last a thousand years and be inhabited in a variety of different ways in the

future, so you could say that durability and versatility offset the resources used to build it."

On a recent weekend, the building's shortcomings seemed moot, considering its successes. Visitor numbers have surpassed projections, and invariably, guests appear mesmerized by what they see. The building's lack of overly refined details suits not just the climate and heavy traffic but also the fact this isn't an art museum. Snacks are sold in some of the interstitial open spaces between exhibition areas, and visitors are allowed—with protective precautions—to interact with the animals. As the aquarium's executive director, Rafael Lizárraga, put it on one of my visits, "Our reason to exist is the conservation of marine life. We're both a tourist attraction and educational facility, with a special mission to support species at risk." It will take time to assess if the Gran Acuario lives up to its noble objectives. For now, Mazatlán has an impressive new landmark worthy of its storied past, and its manifestation of Bilbao's architectural imagination makes it all the more remarkable.

**Suleman Anaya** is a regular contributor to *PIN-UP*, *The Architectural Review*, and *Aperture* living in New York and Mexico City.



Above: All rooms have an indoor/outdoor connection.

Right: A dramatic central oculus brings in daylight to aquarium pools and allows visitors to peek into the water from the roof.

Opposite: A second-floor plan (above) and section (below).



*The Paul J. Schupf Art Center steps off campus to bring town and gown together.*

# ENCORE ON MAIN STREET



TRENT BELL

As far back as the 13th century, when students at the Sorbonne got into armed brawls with Parisian tavern keepers, the town-and-gown relationship has been a fraught one. Treading on issues of class and culture, the tension between educational institutions and the communities that surround them is often exacerbated by attempts at keeping the one segregated from the other: Walling up the groves of academe only irritates the neighbors, and worse, it blocks out the light.

But in Waterville, Maine (population 16,000), some of those walls are coming down. On my recent visit, major changes appeared to be afoot—in a gaggle of new student-friendly restaurants and a bar, a new bookstore, and in a couple of major new buildings dotting the old downtown streetscape. “It’s enlightened self-interest,” said David Greene, president of Colby College. Since assuming the post in 2014, Greene has been busy finding new, resourceful ways of making his 211-year-old liberal

arts program an integral part of its hometown’s future. His most recent venture at Colby is a new facility for a local arts group called Waterville Creates: The Paul J. Schupf Art Center was recently completed by New York-based Susan T. Rodriguez Architecture and Design (STR), and it’s a multivenue cultural hub smack in the middle of Waterville’s Main Street.

“We’ve had an incredible array of arts assets here for years,” said Shannon Haines, president and CEO of Waterville Creates. First launched a decade ago, Haines’s organization is a composite of several local institutions: the Ticonic Gallery + Studios, a grassroots art-making space; the Maine Film Center; and the Waterville Opera House, a fixture of the town for over a century. With Greene and Colby playing matchmaker, longtime college donor Paul J. Schupf left his estate to Colby for the purpose of creating an arts center in downtown Waterville. When Maine-based OPAL Architecture heard



TRENT BELL



TRENT BELL

about the project, it asked STR's founder Susan T. Rodriguez, an acquaintance from New York, to partner in the interview process. Together, they won the commission with a design solid and simple enough to fit in on old-fashioned Main Street, yet flexible enough to accommodate not just Waterville Creates but a new outpost for the Colby College Museum of Art's impressive collection. "It really is a collaborative effort between Colby and the local arts community," said Rodriguez, herself a seasonal Mainer for many years.

Colby's physical presence downtown represents a rapprochement of sorts between city and school. As David Greene notes, Schupf Arts has roots that "go back to the history of Colby and Waterville." The college was originally located in the town proper before moving in 1929 to its current digs to the west, about a ten-minute drive away (on grounds deeded by the town, no less). Following its departure, Waterville persevered, but the region's declining industrial sector slowly caught up with it, leaving behind vast, empty mills and a sense that the town's best years were behind it. "They've seen some hard times," Rodriguez said—though times have plainly been changing of late. Walking down Main Street, I passed a new parent-friendly hotel, a college dorm, and a bus running between downtown and the main campus. All are evidence of Colby's increasing reinvestment efforts, with Schupf Arts now the jewel in the crown.

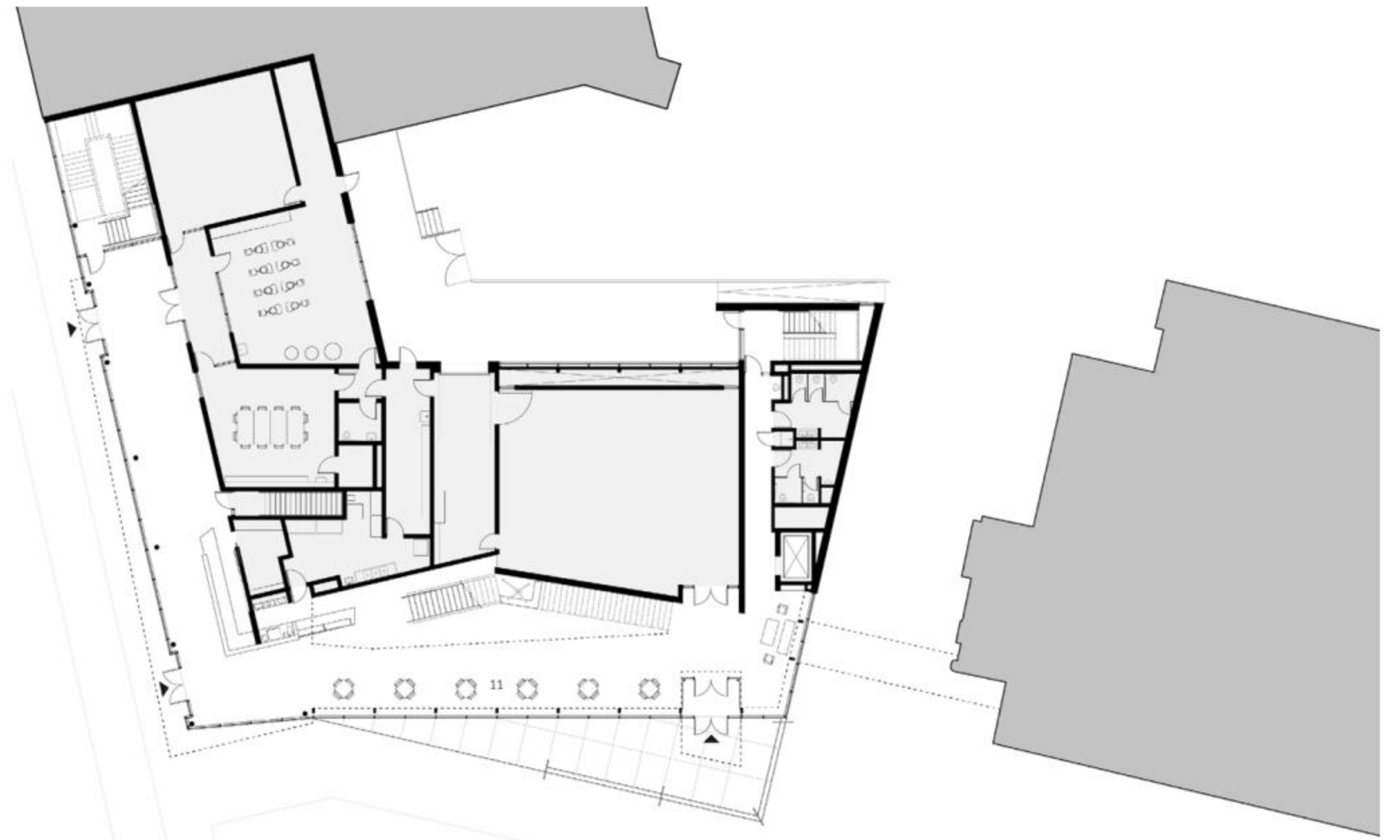
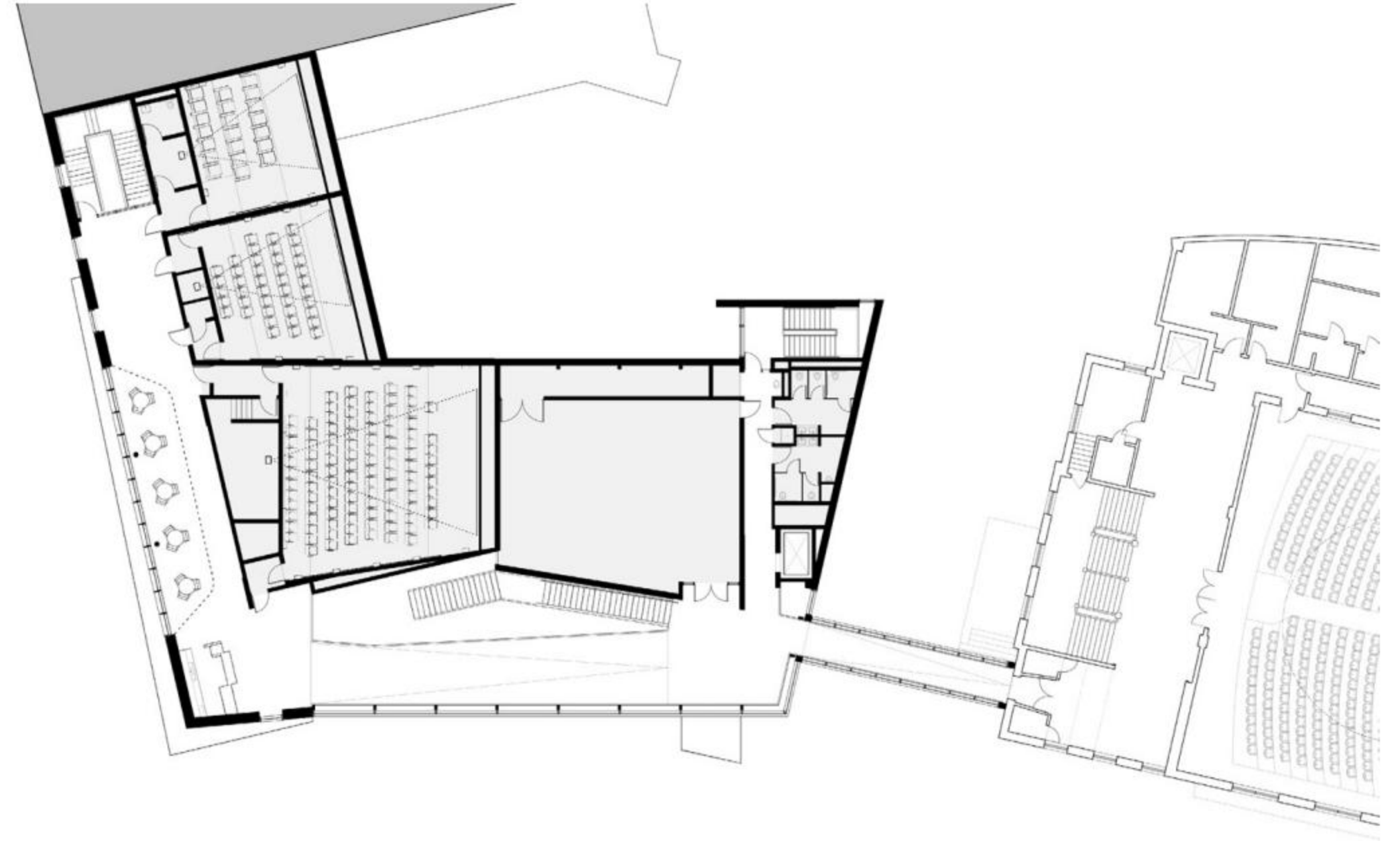
To place a new arts center right at the center of the town, rather than on Colby's campus, Rodriguez and her collaborators—including architects of record OPAL Architecture—had to contend with a delicate urban condition. The site is fronted on one side by the village green (a classic New England feature) and on the other by city hall, which doubles as the opera house (another staple of small towns in the region and elsewhere). The former occupant of the corner property was a somewhat awkward 1930s-with-additions pseudo-Georgian structure. Waterville Creates had kept offices in the building for years, but it was

totally unsuited to the art group's needs. "It was impenetrable," said Haines. "There were almost no windows." After some attempts to preserve it, it was decided the old would have to make way for the new.

That move opened the door for Rodriguez and company to—well, open up the door. "It was so important for [Schupf Arts] to have a sense of generosity," said the architect. "We wanted this to be like a living room for downtown." With a fully glazed facade looking over the village green, and a strongly articulated Main Street entry, the new design combines a feeling of freshness and openness with a simple material palette and modest scale. Where the old building effectively masked city hall from the street, the new one reestablishes the visual connection from west to east. This was an important prelude to STR's chief logistical coup: Coming through the doors on Main, visitors can cross the glazed southern lobby and proceed up a set of stairs to a skywalk that leads directly into the opera house. A physical expression of Waterville Creates's multipart organizational structure, that link is complemented by a plan that gives each program its own discrete space, with movie screens upstairs, the community studio and gallery at street level, and the Colby College Museum of Art's satellite toward the rear.

On a cold winter day, the building certainly seemed to be living up to STR's vision of a warm, collective gathering space, as a local weavers' group gathered with their spinning wheels near the theater's concession stand, home-baked goodies filling the space with a distinctly cozy aroma. But the space also draws Colbians off campus: "You see college students here all the time doing homework or just relaxing," said Haines. And that's exactly what their school's president was hoping for. "Students today can choose from a lot of exciting places," president Greene said. "This is making a huge difference in attracting people to Central Maine."

Ian Volner is a Bronx-based writer covering architecture, design, and urbanism.



COURTESY SUSAN T. RODRIGUEZ

Opposite page, left: The new building on Main Street welcomes students and locals.

Above left: A pedestrian bridge connects Schupf Arts and the historic opera house.

Opposite page, below: A cafe and gathering space looks out onto the town square and lets in abundant natural light.

Above right: The second-floor (above) and first-floor (below) plans for the new arts center

Below: One of Schupf Arts's three theaters



TRENT BELL

# RENOVATED



ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

*Weiss/Manfredi updates the Tampa Museum of Art and looks ahead to a second phase.*



COURTESY WEISS/MANFREDI

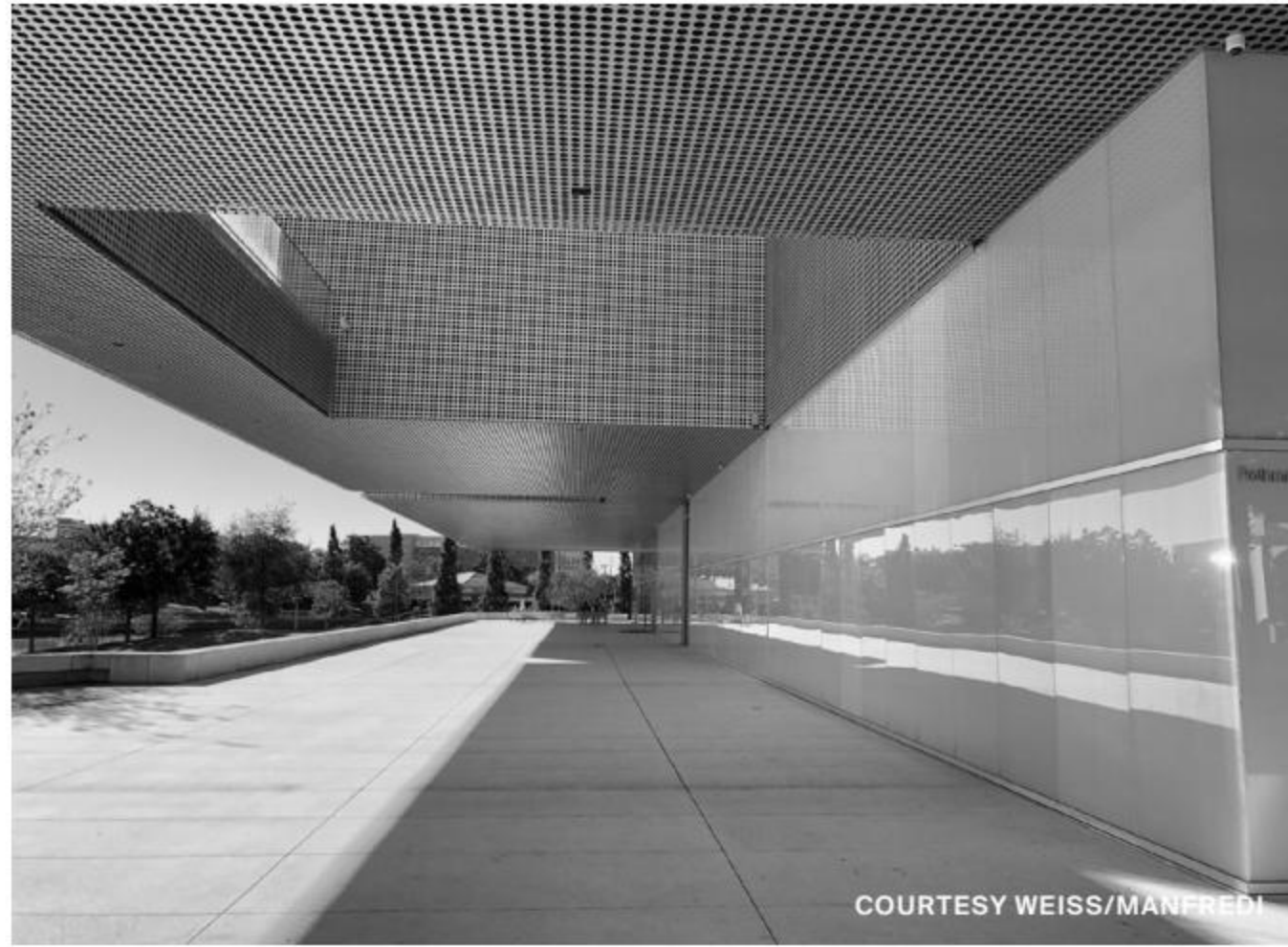
# WITH RESPECT

**Top:** The glass podium beneath the museum is now transparent and visually connected to the public.

**Right:** A rendering depicts Weiss/Manfredi's proposed second phase: a media- and performance-focused expansion over the park.

The Tampa Museum of Art was founded in 1920, but it didn't have a purpose-built space until 90 years later, when its 66,000-square-foot building opened on a prominent downtown site. This facility, designed by the San Francisco-based architect Stanley Saitowitz, opened in 2010. A cube enveloped in a perforated aluminum rainscreen sits atop a raised plinth surrounded by generous gardens, a public park, and the Hillsborough River.

Previously, the glass podium was backpainted and filled with museum storage, isolating the space visually.



COURTESY WEISS/MANFREDI

But problems quickly surfaced with the new building, mostly because it didn't exactly engage with its context: Its ground-level glass facade was back-painted a minty green as a way to fulfill an overly ambitious request for storage and administrative spaces, despite the fact that the museum "had a very modest collection and mostly showed visiting exhibitions," Saitowitz told *AN*. What could have been an elegant entry was filled by archival spaces, dimly lit offices, and art tucked away behind closed doors. After only a decade of operation, the museum was already in need of a renovation.

Weiss/Manfredi began working with the museum in 2018. The office's portfolio of signature cultural commissions includes the nearby Artis—Naples complex in Naples, Florida, home of the Baker Museum and the Naples Philharmonic. In January 2021, the museum unveiled plans for a Centennial Renovation project to increase exhibition space, enhance existing educational facilities, and allow for more hands-on experiences. While Weiss and Manfredi were given the opportunity to significantly alter Saitowitz's design, after environmental studies and site visits, they decided to chart a preservation-minded approach to keep the 2010 form intact. Their careful revival of the museum evidences their enormous respect for the original design. "It's a really beautiful building," Weiss said during a recent office visit. "We admire Stanley's work and the kind of restraint in the abstraction of the language."

This position required a more programming-forward approach to the design scope. "Both in practice and during school, architects are programmed to always add stuff in order to make our mark," Manfredi admitted. "Here, we decided to make our mark by subtraction, and the result is tangible when looking at the metrics." The numbers speak for themselves: Just by reallocating storage spaces and technology, activating previously liminal spaces like stairwells and corridors, and freeing up the ground-floor plaza spaces, Weiss/Manfredi increased the size of the education spaces from just 1,400 square feet to over 12,000. And the firm more than tripled the size of the galleries, starting with only 14,800 square feet and adding seven new rooms to grow the exhibition areas to 43,000 square feet—all without changing the envelope. This happened through, in Manfredi's words, "activated design thinking and careful surgery."

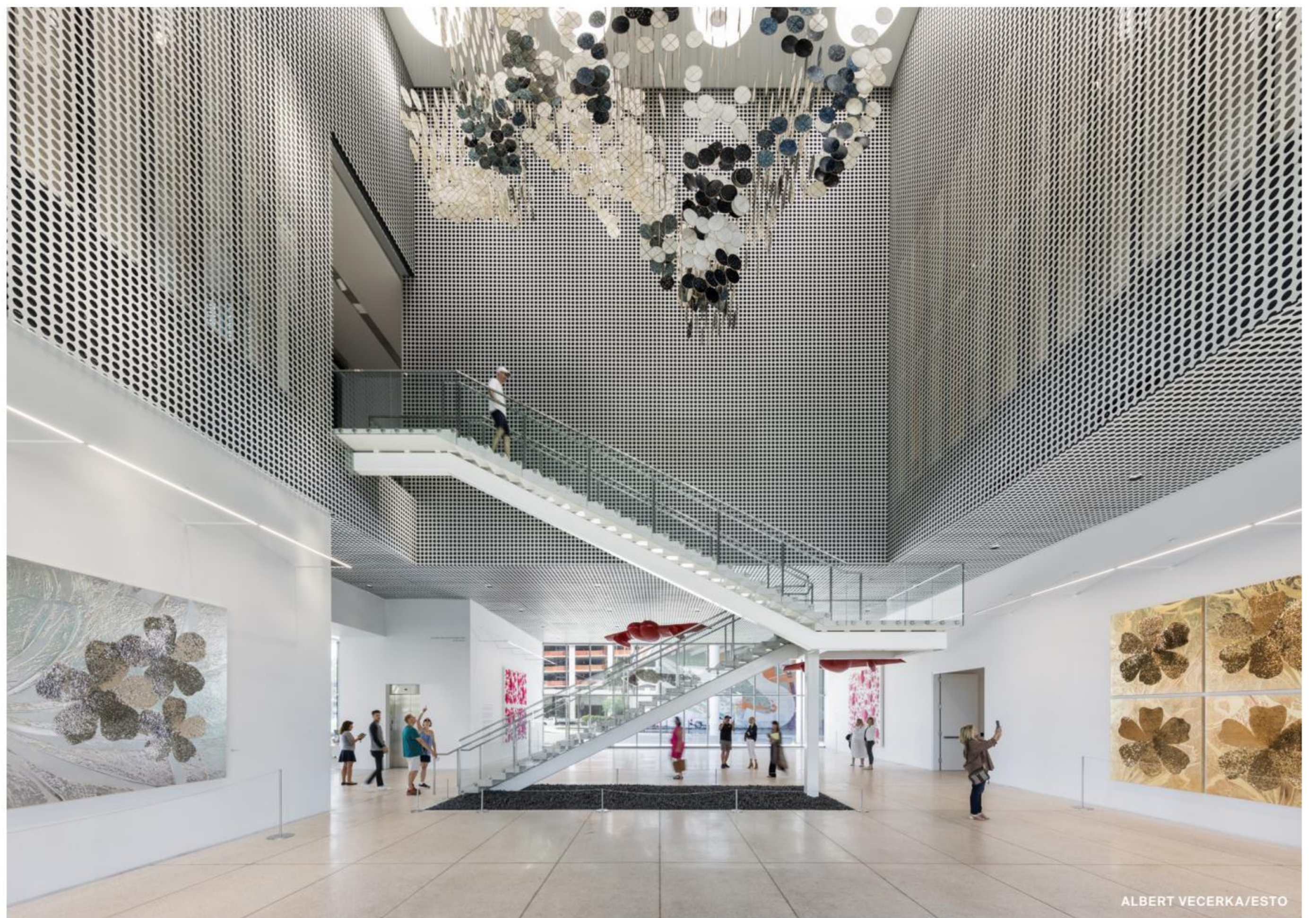
As educators themselves, Weiss and Manfredi were quick to get behind the goals of the museum's director, Michael Tomor, who prioritizes educational programming. "Today's museums are not just about exhibitions; they're focused on being a part of their communities through genuine engagement. In Tampa, this connection to the mission is pretty remarkable," Manfredi said. As nationwide funding cuts to arts education continues to be a hot-button topic, many families see institutions like the Tampa Museum of Art as an outlet for learning and community activation. This prioritization is now visible, literally: The back-painting has disappeared, and the entire glazed first floor is dedicated to education.

This works for a variety of reasons, but principally because the museum can't display art on this level due to flood risk. Weiss/Manfredi also addressed that insurance challenge by creating double-height loft spaces where monumental works can be suspended.

In addition to the ground-floor transparency, Weiss/Manfredi addressed other critical areas like entrances and newly allocated storage spaces. Where art used to be stored



ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO



ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

**Top right:** Now, the glazed first-floor is home to education spaces.

**Above:** Circulation spaces double as display areas for art.

**Right:** The designers optimized the design of museum storage to focus instead on transparency and gallery spaces.



ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

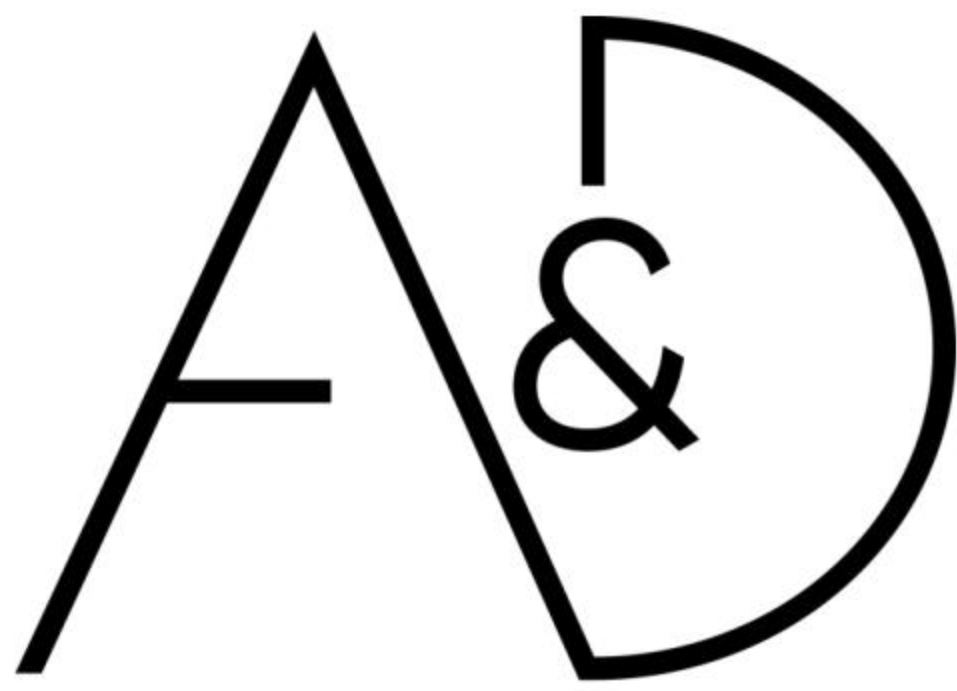
haphazardly in crates, the firm specified professional art-handling solutions, conservation labs, and office fit-outs. The design team also carefully addressed the parking lot entrance, where most visitors first encounter the building. New plantings and accessible slopes welcome visitors even from the back of the site. The improvements will be even more useful with the completion of a second phase of work.

Weiss/Manfredi has designed an additional freestanding, 51,000-square-foot wing to complement Saitowitz's building, which will allow the museum to better engage performance artists and multimedia installations. Its cantilever also shades public bike paths and green spaces on the river's edge.

Gesturing to a model of the new building set on a table in their New York office, Weiss and Manfredi each use their hands to trace new approaches to both buildings, simulate cyclists rounding the riverbend, and slice the air to suggest the knife-edge of the new cantilever: "This diagonal cut over the park was required by zoning setbacks, but even so, I think it's pretty cool," Manfredi said. The structure is anticipated to open in fall 2026.

Architects always work with and against constraints, but here in Tampa, Weiss/Manfredi has put intelligent and generous design thinking to work. **EC**

DISCOVER DESIGN



AT THE A&D BUILDING

# Fantini

For over 70 years, Fantini has been designing and manufacturing innovative products that set new standards for the industry. Founded in 1947 by brothers Giovanni and Ersilio, Fantini is still a family business today. Located in Pella, Italy, on the shores of Lake Orta, the region has a long tradition of metalworking, and “water is our common thread,” Daniela Fantini said—it permeates everything the company does. The lake is a constant presence, so much so that it represents Fantini’s true *genius loci*.

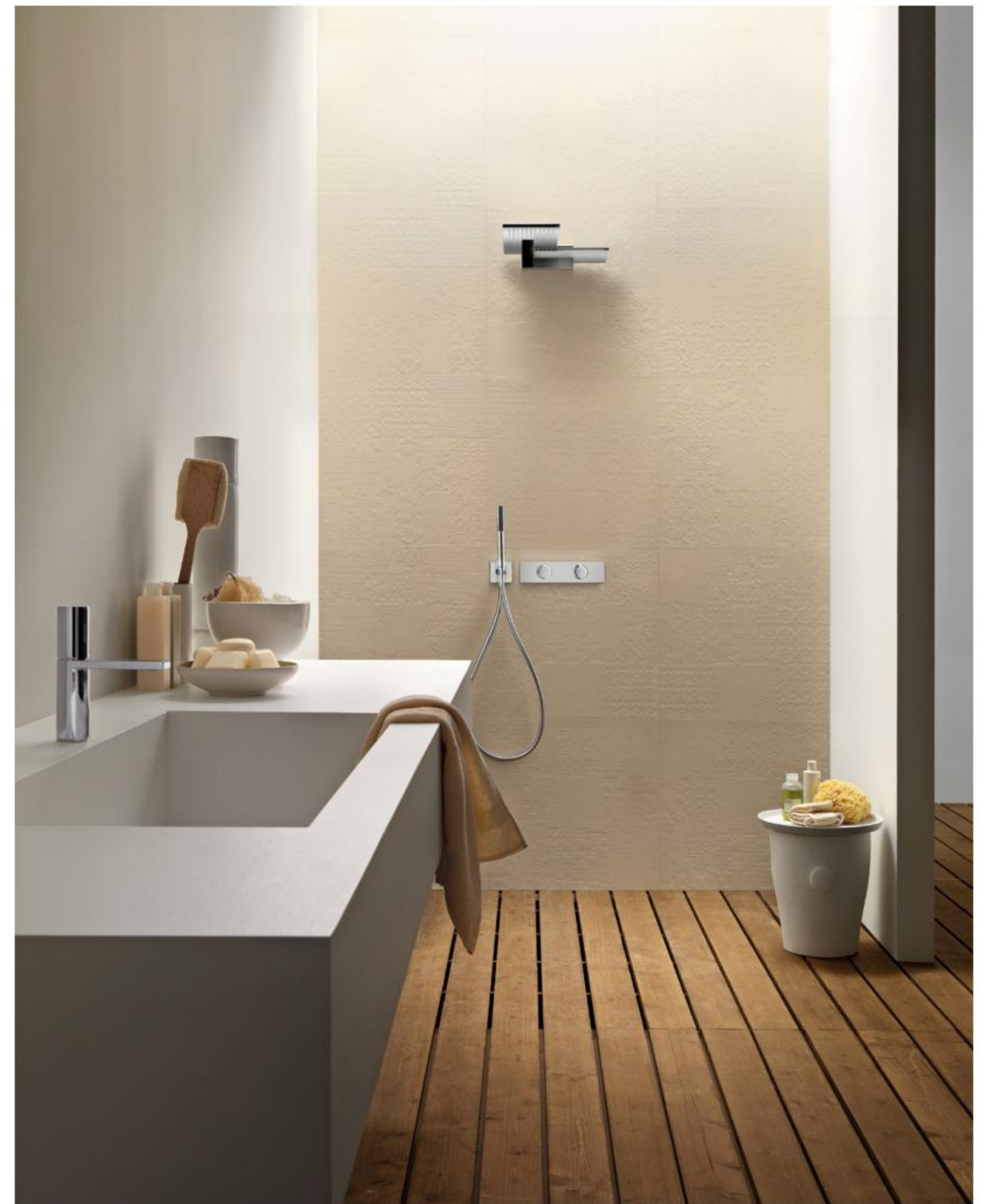
This project is titled Milano, designed by Franco Sargiani. It is one of Fantini’s most important designs setting the standard in the world of bathroom fixtures. A contemporary form that has become a classic modern icon unalterable over time.

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COURTESY FANTINI

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COURTESY FANTINI



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COURTESY MILLENIUM

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# True Residential



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Elevating the everyday, True Residential's line of refrigeration solutions can add character and refinement to any home. The unique baby blue color palette shown here is one example where True appliances shine.

Luxury refrigeration brand True Residential's inaugural showroom in New York opened this fall at the Architects & Designers (A&D) Building. It's thoughtfully configured to showcase the brand's refrigeration innovations through intentionally designed vignettes. The 1,600-square-foot-space highlights the family-owned, American-made brand's unique history, alluring finishes, and signature high-end refrigeration solutions. Here, architects and designers to get an unmitigated feel for the products.

The brand's industry-exclusive joining kits showcase the myriad configurations available. Various themed areas, such as an "outdoor" entertaining area exhibits a variety of True's under-counter designs for those looking for units dual-rated for indoors and outdoors. A dazzling yet fully functional "chef's kitchen" allows for live programming. A nearby conference room, available to A&D professionals for private meetings, is outfitted with several accessible refrigeration units. A milestone for the brand, the inviting new space was designed to serve as a year-round hub for timely educational programming for trade, product training and demonstrations, as well as events for the design community and consumers.

[true-residential.com](http://true-residential.com)

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NATHAN KIRKMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

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# Hospitality

People are hungry for both new experiences and trusted ways to unplug, relax, and reconnect. These projects and products show some of the best recent efforts that are pushing the envelope.

32 CCY Architects in Aspen  
34 Acoustics  
36 Lighting  
37 Furniture  
38 Side Angle Side in Austin

39 Linden, Brown Architecture in Oregon  
40 Outdoor Furniture  
42 Health & Wellness  
44 Resources

## Backcountry Bauhaus

CCY Architects and Post Company contextualize Aspen modernism for new hotel.



DRAPER WHITE

**Architect:** CCY Architects  
**Interior design:** Post Company  
**Landscape architect:** Clauson Rawley  
**Structural engineer:** REG  
**Civil engineer:** SGM  
**Mechanical engineer:** BG Building Works, Shaw Construction

**Windows and doors:** Marvin Modern  
**Brick:** Interstate Brick  
**Patio doors:** LaCantina  
**Fireplace:** Raw Urth Designs, Stuv  
**Floors:** Creative Floors, Arto  
**Lighting:** LS Group  
**Fixtures:** Water Works, Toto, Kohler  
**Cabinets:** Edge Construction



NICOLE FRANZEN

In 1945, Walter Paepcke began buying up property in Aspen, Colorado, with a goal—inspired by the ideology of Walter Gropius—to both preserve the mountain site's natural beauty and to modernize. He enlisted the help of architect Herbert Bayer, whose modernist legacy still endures through the city's landmarks, including the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies.

These days Aspen's Bauhaus lineage may not be so obvious, but a newcomer to the ski town, the MOLLIE Aspen hotel, doesn't overlook this history. Designed by CCY Architects with interiors by Post Company, the 68-room retreat is "grounded in a desire to do something that's a little unexpected but still highly contextual," explained Ruben Caldwell, cofounder of Post Company.

The hotel's exterior is already a departure from the surrounding mountain vernacular. Simple rectilinear massing makes up the facade, referencing the historic lot lines of Aspen's West End. And with support from the community and the Historic Preservation Committee, CCY opted for wood siding and brick "due to their durability and resiliency given the harsh winters and intensity of the UV light at high altitude in Aspen," said partner and principal at CCY John Cottle. "The vertical window openings pay homage to the proportions found throughout Aspen's historic West End, subtly reinforcing our commitment to having MOLLIE belong in the neighborhood."

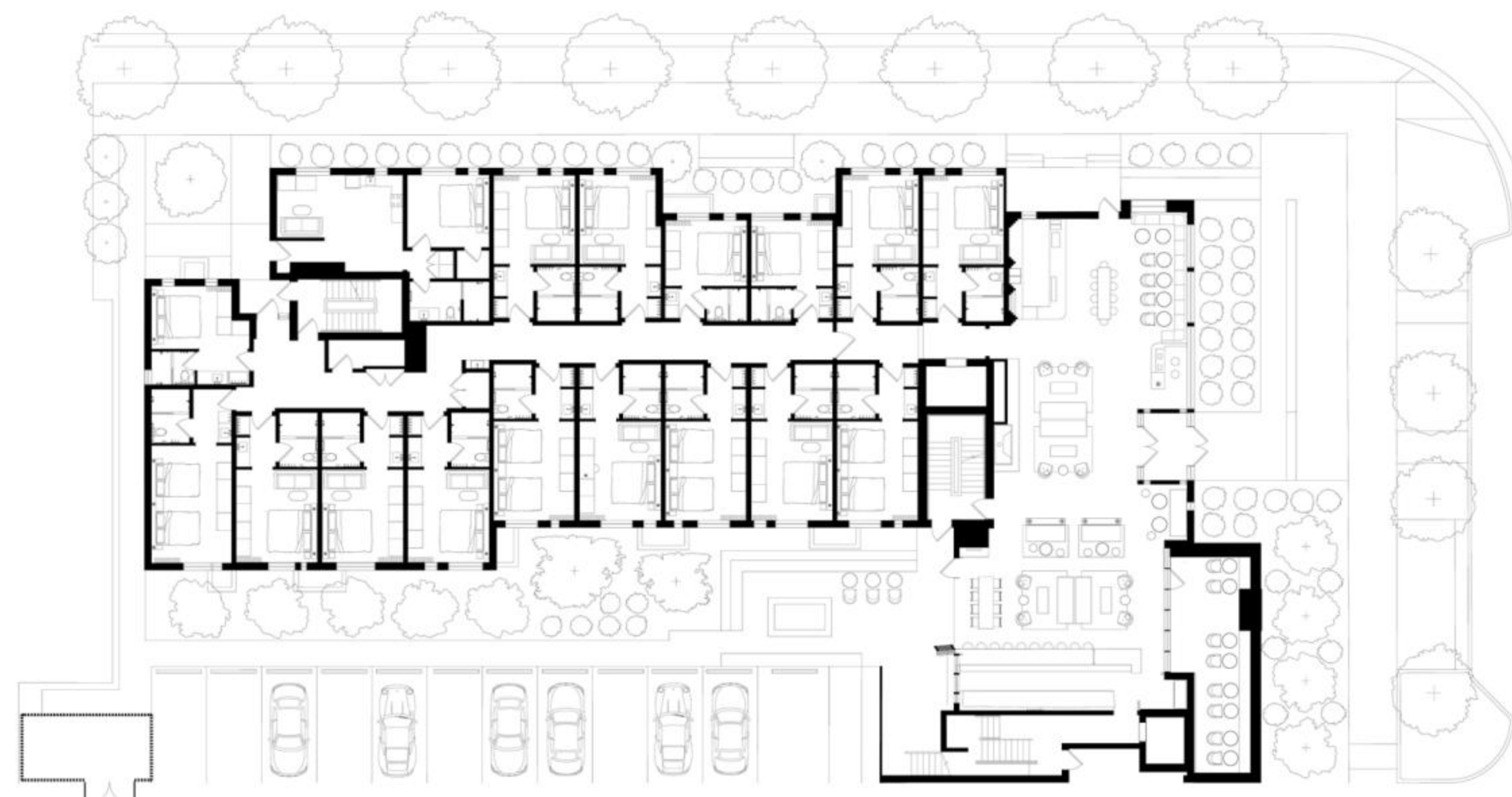
Inside, the local influence continues through a material palette of white oak and concrete tiles, expressing a formal geometry. The raw materials also clearly show how the architecture was constructed—another Modernist nod. In the bedrooms, excess ornament is reduced, allowing gridded wood ceilings, sand-cast brass lighting, and earthen ceramics to take the lead in this comfortable yet refined sanctuary for those hitting the slopes. **KP**



NICOLE FRANZEN



NICOLE FRANZEN



**Clockwise from top:** The exterior shows geometric rigor with syncopated material expressions; the interiors are warm and replete with wooden finishes and furnishings, offering ski chalet coziness beneath a gridded ceiling.

**Left:** Ground-floor plan



Hotel Roki, Amsterdam  
CONE by Osiris Hertman

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# 34 Products

A'N FOCUS

March/April 2024

## Acoustics

Wall, floor, and ceiling solutions to reduce noisy distractions for guests. Rita Catinella Orrell



**Reed Wall Panel** | Turf  
turf.design

Featuring a dense row of fluted felt, the updated version of the Reed wall panel presents custom options including width expansions.



**Abstracta** | Abstracta x Wall of Art  
abstracta.se

Abstracta and Wall of Art have collaborated to develop an updated acoustic panel solution featuring contemporary art by Stockholm-based illustrator Lena Wiggers.



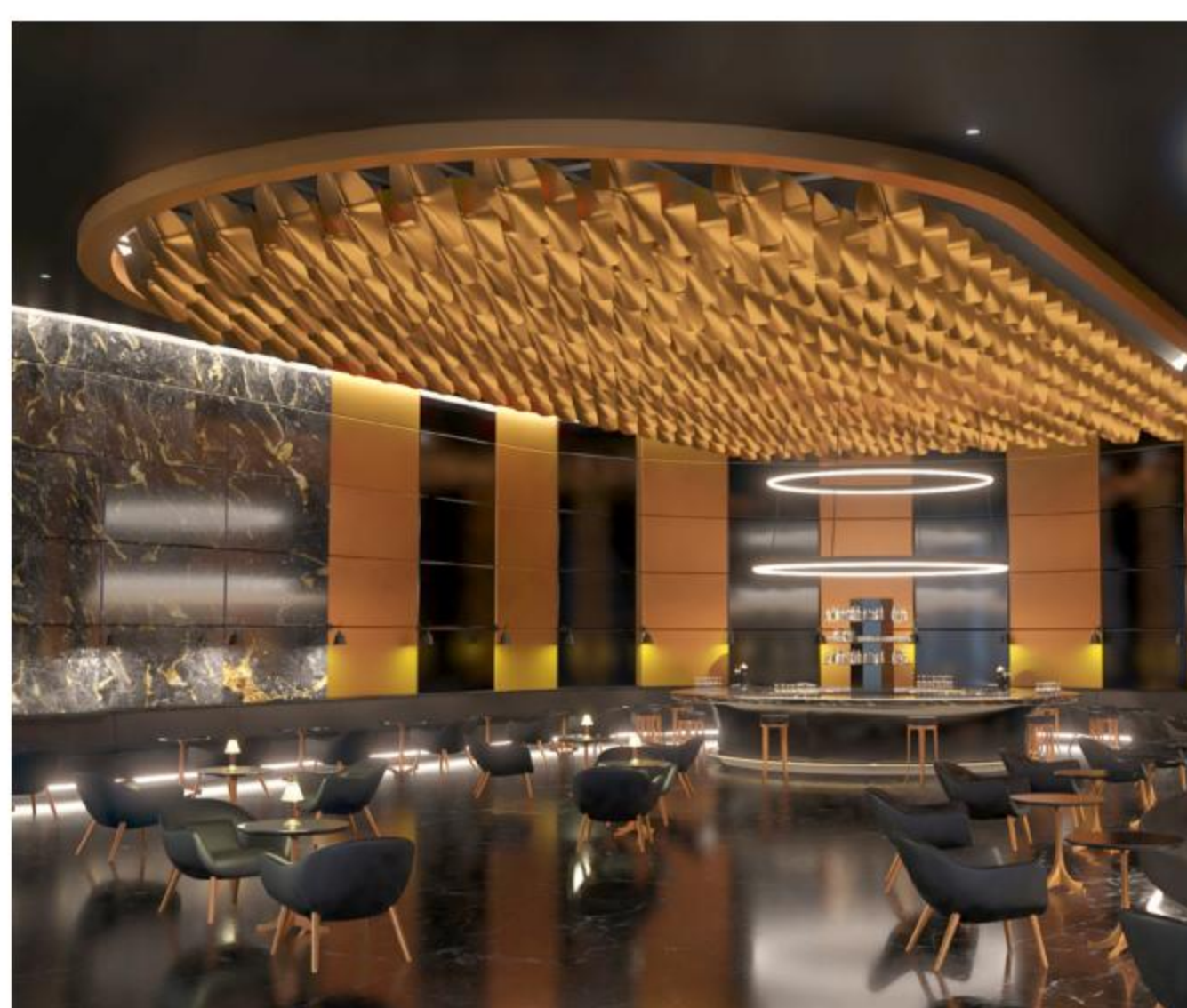
**Regupol Upscale** | Regupol  
regupol.com

This collection of recycled rubber tiles and planks is made of a blend of post-consumer tire rubber, post-industrial vibrant EPDM chips, and a low-VOC binder.



**Acoustic Wooden Panels** | Form at Wood  
formatatwood.com

Crafted from premium wood in a range of patterns and hues, these noise-reducing acoustic panels are ideal for hotel lobbies, offices, and conference rooms.



**Petal Ceiling Tiles** | CertainTeed  
certainteed.com

This collection of biophilic, lightweight aluminum panels for larger commercial spaces is available in eight solid or perforated shapes that can be staggered, clustered, or overlaid.



**Mosaik Collection** | FilzFelt  
filzfelt.com/mosaik

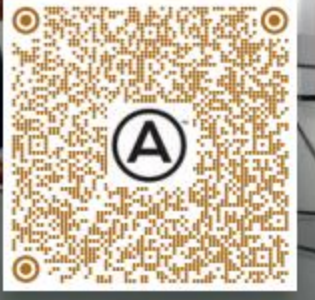
Created in partnership of Artaic, this acoustic wall application creates large and small patterns with 2-inch square tiles in more than 90 colors of wool felt.

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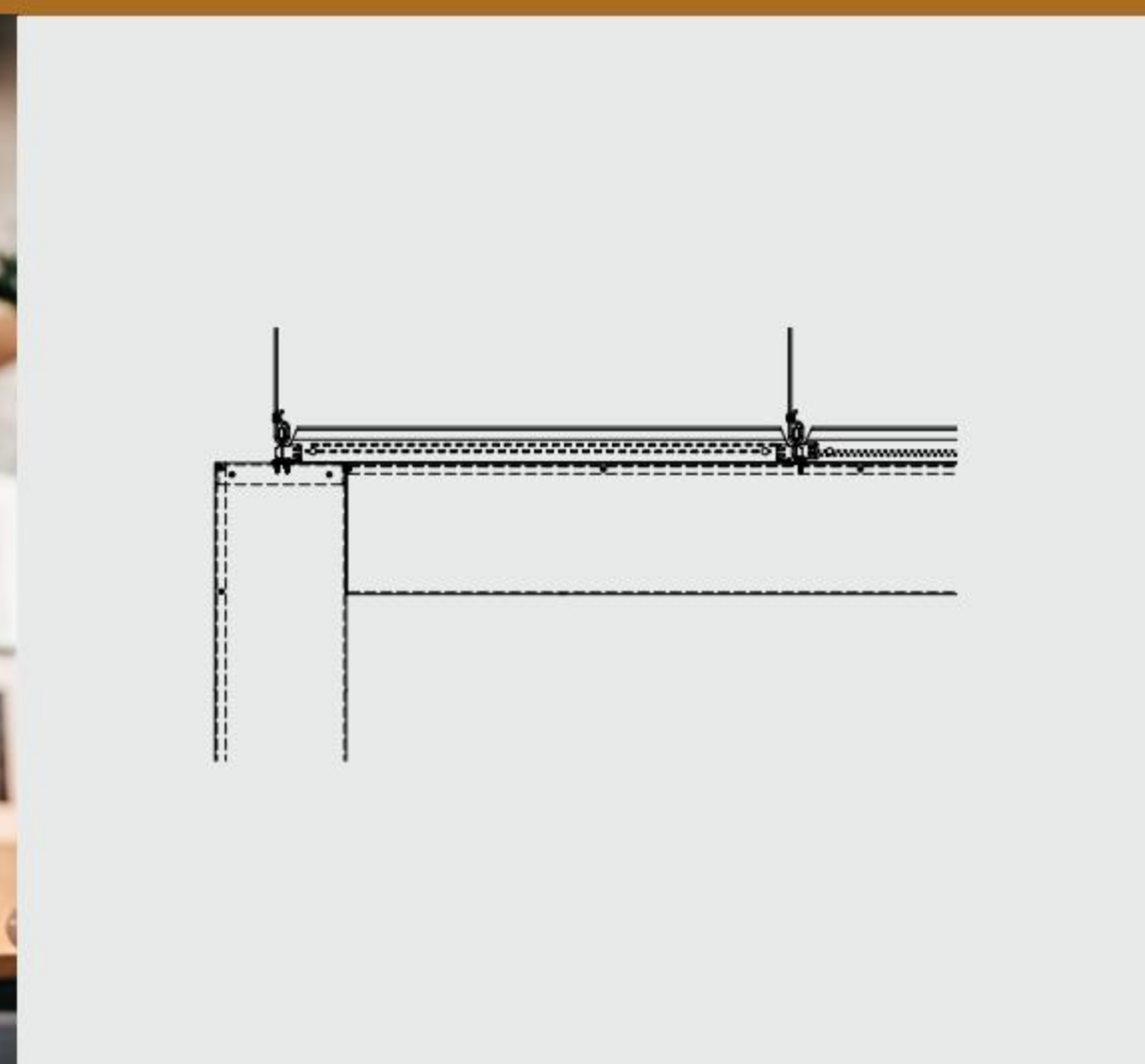
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## Lighting

Track, pendant, and tabletop luminaires to create warm and welcoming spaces. RCO



**My Circuit** | FLOS  
flos.com

Designed by Michael Anastassiades, this flexible track lighting system is offered with complementary pendant fixtures and can be curved or bent.



**Stem Pendant** | Hollis + Morris  
hollisandmorris.com

Secured with a brass, copper, or stainless-steel base, the conical solid wood spire of the Stem Pendant opens up to a handblown frosted-glass shade.



**Saga Collection** | In Common With  
incommonwith.com

Featuring art deco-inspired fluted edges, this modular pendant system incorporates low-waste aluminum hardware, recycled LDPE plastic, and LEDs in three sizes.



**Echo Lamp** | Ravenhill Studio  
ravenhillstudio.com

Both a light source and a reflector, this limited-edition sculptural fixture is handmade from recycled metals by artisans in Burkina Faso.



**Block Acoustic Pendant** | Sabin Lighting  
sabin.lighting

This acoustic pendant offers an NRC rating of more than 0.85 and is offered in three lengths, two widths, and four height configurations.

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## Furniture

This season's furnishings prioritize simplicity and comfort in sculptural style. RCO



**Studio CHS** | Carl Hansen & Søn  
studio-chs.com

Studio CHS collaborates with clients to create accessibly priced bespoke furniture, complemented by an off-the-shelf collection from new designers.



**Decker Tables** | Room & Board for Business  
roomandboard.com/business

Made in Wisconsin, this collection of dining, counter, coffee, and end tables has a tapered steel base and a variety of top options.



**Spinni Stool** | Division Twelve  
division12.com

Designed by Montreal-based Thom Fougere, this stool swivels a full 360 degrees and comes in counter or bar stool heights.



**Luna** | Stylex  
stylex.com

Available in segments with rounded edges ranging from 25 inches to 60 inches, this banquette seating system by Anthony Land can be customized to fit even the most unusual spaces.



**Firma Table Collection** | HBF  
hbf.com

Drawing inspiration from the Parsons table from the 1960s, HBF's Firma Collection includes an array of sizes, discreet power options, and an integrated lighting system by Juniper.



**Bolete Lounge** | Andreu World  
andreuworld.com

Designed by Patricia Urquiola, this retro lounge chair is a single upholstered module that can act as an individual piece or form curved compositions.

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## Stocking Up

Side Angle Side delivers an interior for Tiny Grocer and Bureau de Poste in Austin's Hyde Park.

**Architects:** Side Angle Side and Thoughtbarn  
**Architect of record:** Side Angle Side  
**Landscape design:** Side Angle Side and Wild Heart Dirt  
**Interior design:** Side Angle Side  
**Structural engineer:** Creative Engineering  
**MEP engineer:** ATS Engineers  
**General contractor:** Archive Properties

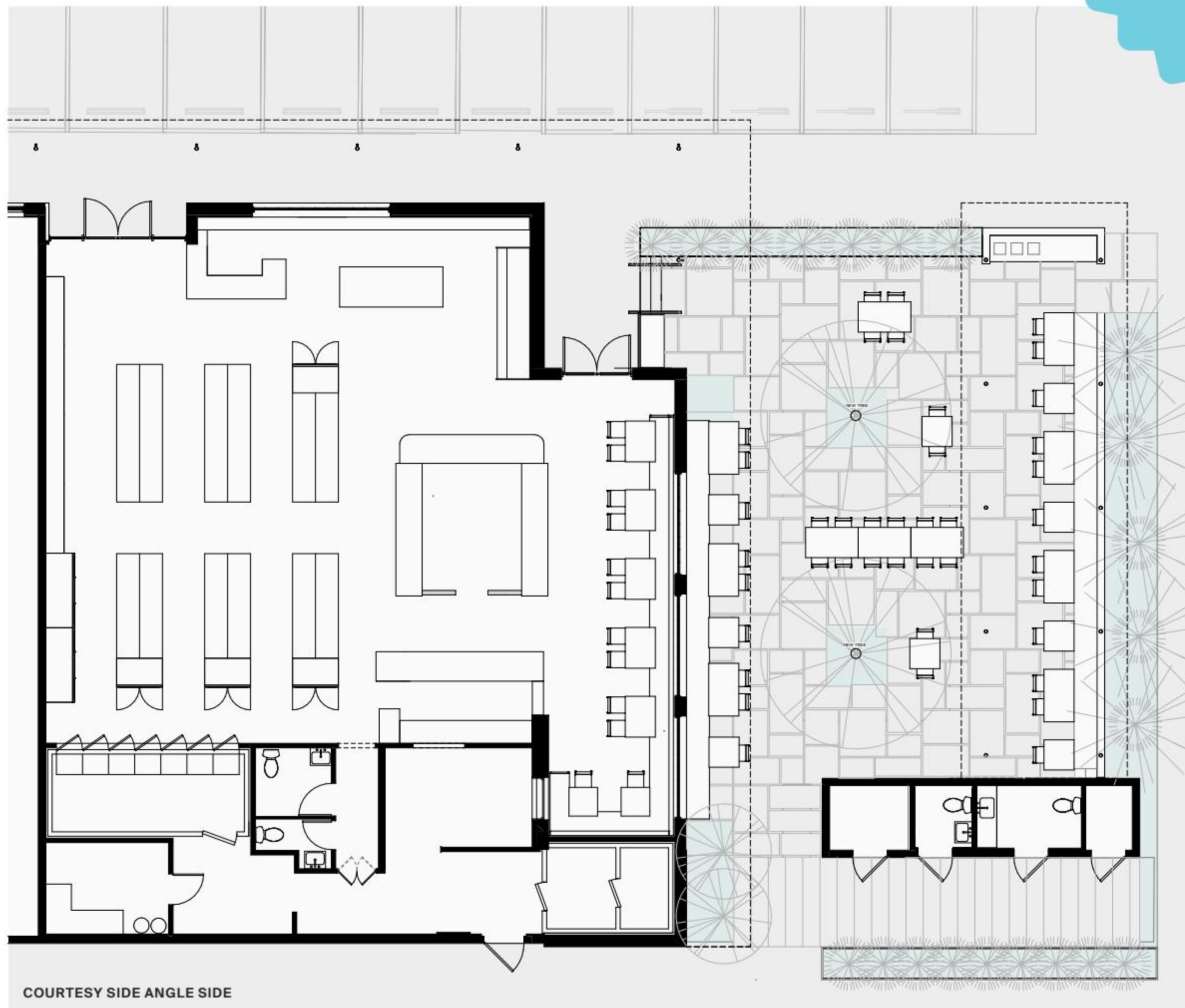
**Windows and doors:** Q Construction  
**Roofing:** Soprema  
**Waterproofing:** Huber Engineered Woods  
**Insulation:** Rockwool  
**Lighting:** Juno, WAC, AQ Lighting  
**Appliances:** Ecolab, Jennair  
**Furniture:** Isimar, Wooden Soul  
**Landscape furniture:** Loll Designs  
**Terra-cotta tile:** Seneca  
**Countertops:** Quartz

In Austin, local architects Side Angle Side and Thoughtbarn collaborated on a new location for Tiny Grocer, a boutique grocery store, and a small French bistro called Bureau de Poste. The bistro is helmed by chef Jo Chan of *Top Chef* fame, and its name takes cues from the architecture itself—both grocer and bistro are new activations within the shell of a Midcentury post office. The revitalized structure is located in Hyde Park at the intersection of West 43rd Street and Speedway.

The designers wanted to pay homage to Tiny Grocer's original location on South Congress—a white brick building with a black-and-white striped awning. To achieve this, the post office's original ocher-colored brick was painted white, and the striped pattern can be found on the patio's seat cushions. Thoughtbarn led the architectural renovation, and while Side Angle Side was originally only tasked with the interiors, it became involved in the evolution of Bureau de Poste.

What was originally a small cafe within the grocer became "a full-blown restaurant" when a patio was added on the footprint of the old loading dock. Arthur Furman, the firm's founding partner, told *AN* that "the outdoor space became absolutely essential for that capacity." Fifteen hundred square feet of asphalt was stripped from the parking lot, regraded, and paved with reclaimed brick sourced from San Antonio. A vine-covered trellis made from steel pipes covers the southern end, and where trucks used to dock there are now generous steel-framed windows.

Inside the grocery there are other choice details like exposed joists, the same naturally finished birchwood shelving used in the original location, and a bright green accent wall behind the checkout counter. Overall, the palette is complemented by the white quartz countertops of the bistro and a central bar faced in terra-cotta. The corner store is a small yet thoughtful transformation. **TS**



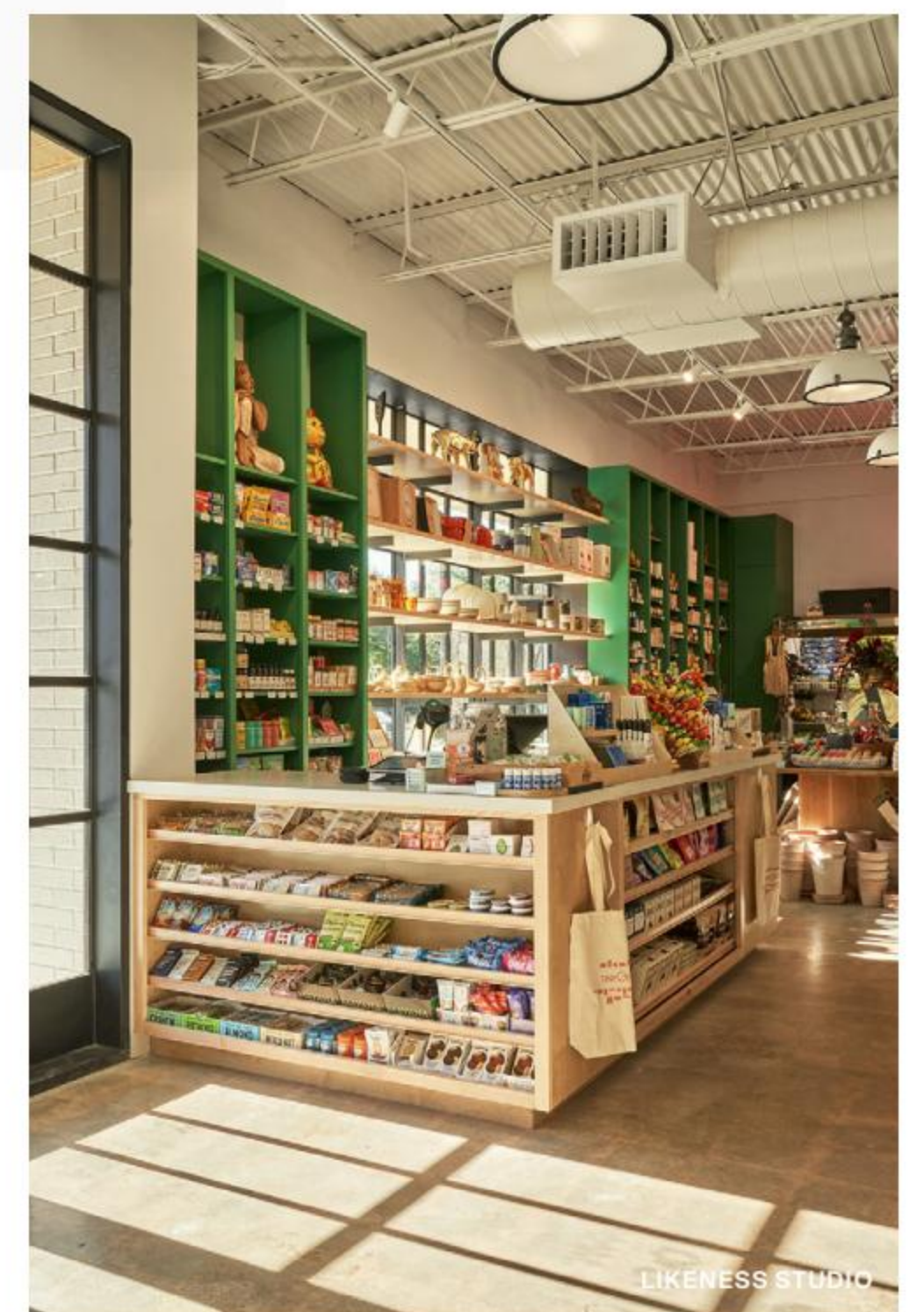
COURTESY SIDE ANGLE SIDE

**Left:** Ground-floor plan showing the grocer (left) and patio (right).

**Clockwise from middle left:** The facade retains the character of the Midcentury post office; interiors are flooded with light and accented with green paint; a bar area unites the grocery with the bistro; and the old parking lot is now an outdoor patio for diners.



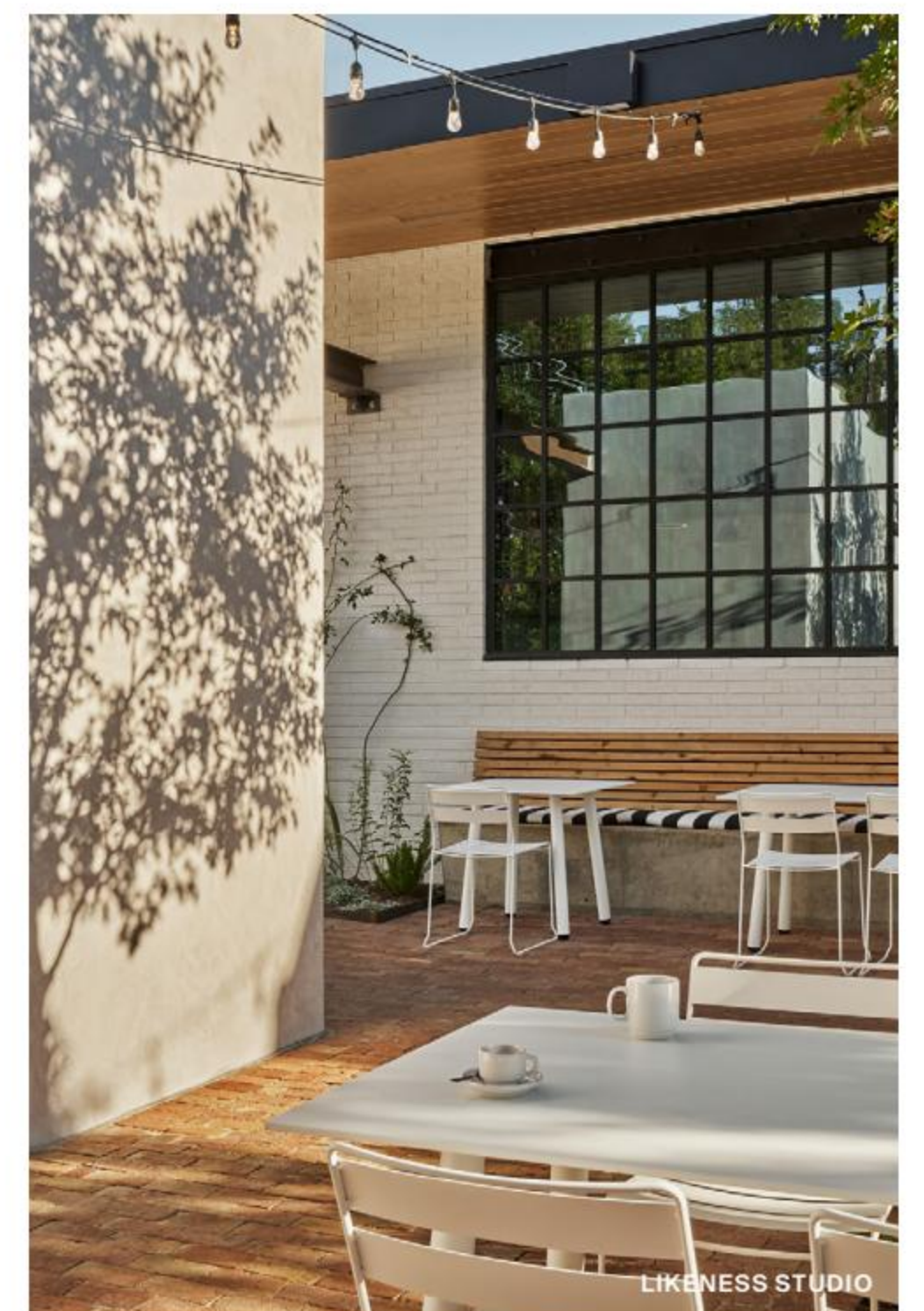
LIKENESS STUDIO



LIKENESS STUDIO



LIKENESS STUDIO



LIKENESS STUDIO

## Wine Time

In Oregon, Linden, Brown Architecture converts an old dairy barn into Sequitur Winery.

**Architect:** Linden, Brown Architecture  
**Interior design:** Linden, Brown Architecture  
**Landscape architect:** Reed Hilderbrand  
**Structural engineer:** Grummel Engineering  
**Civil engineer:** WCL Engineering  
**Electrical engineer:** Glumac Engineering  
**General contractor:** AD Construction

**Windows and doors:** Flux Design, Lincoln Windows

**Vertical circulation:** MW Design Workshop

**Appliances:** Zline, Everest

**Fireplace:** Stuv

**Lighting:** Louis Poulsen, Andrew Neyer

**Fixtures:** Chicago Faucets

**Furniture:** Design Within Reach

The values of winemakers and farmers overlap, but what about that of architects and winemakers? While working on the Sequitur Winery in Newberg, Oregon, Chris Brown and Brent Linden—cofounders of Linden, Brown Architecture—learned that much like architects, winemakers draw on history, tradition, and the act of taking something old and making it new again. At Sequitur, the studio transformed an old dairy farm into a working winery and tasting experience, proving architects can be just as resourceful as winemakers by working with what's already there.

Visitors are offered a taste of the process behind each glass. "We were driven by this question, 'what would a farmer do here?'" Brown told *AN*, defining the design ethos for the project.

From the start it was clear that the property's large red barn would be reclaimed. Grafted wood sourced from adjacent trees became roofing panels, made to resemble existing conditions: Each was felled and milled by the team on-site.

The concrete stave silo, once a structure for storing cow feed, was similarly a relic of the past. During demolition and excavation, it became apparent the cylindrical volume could be used to access a subterranean chamber full of manure, which winemakers then used as fertilizer. A dynamic new spiraling staircase now takes winemakers and visitors down to the cellar, which has been converted into wine storage.

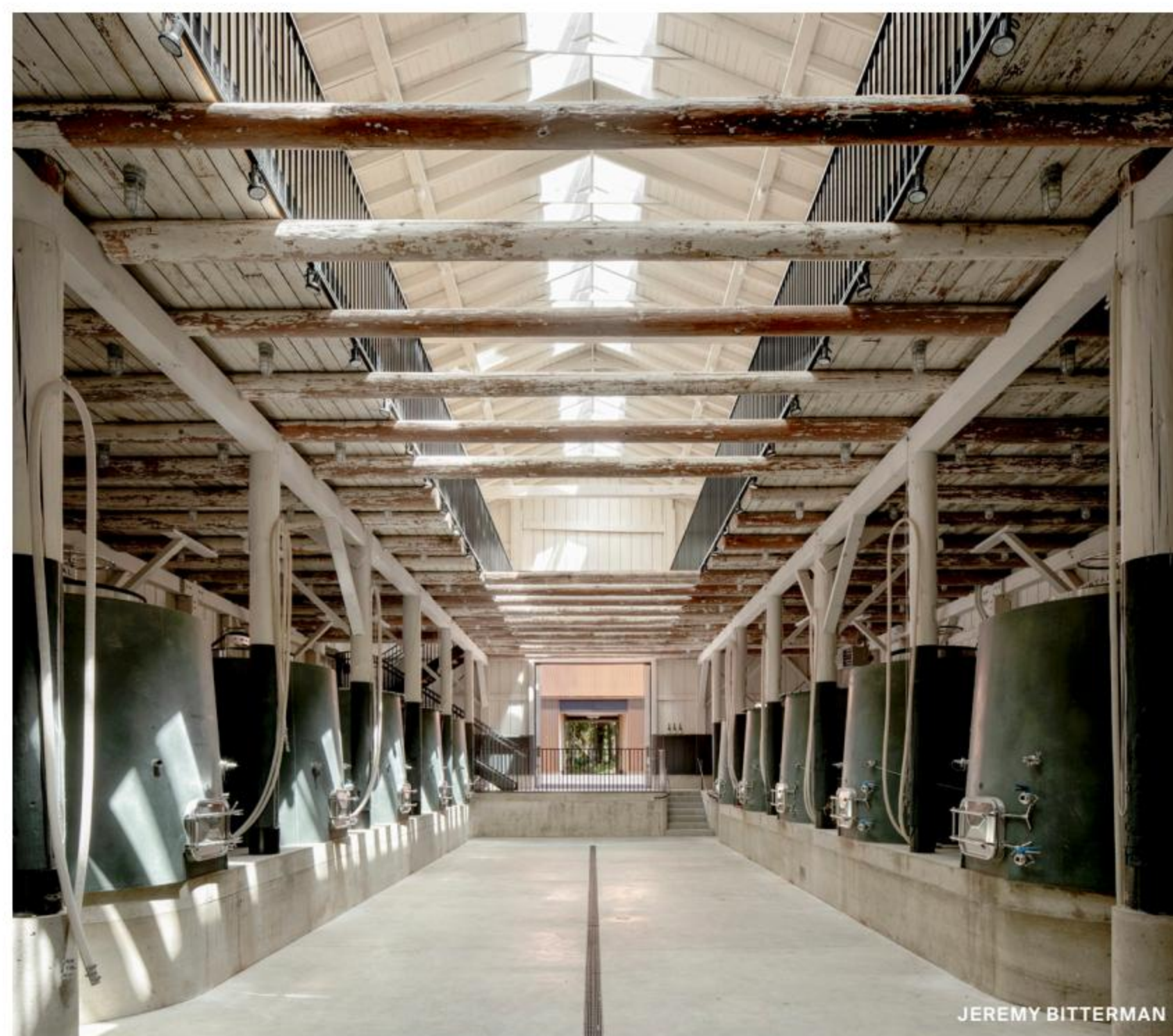
But a key element the client wanted was a bespoke retreat. Linden, Brown's design for a long, rectangular tasting room does just that. The volume's bold, gabled profile evokes the rural character of the site, but it also exerts an elegance through large apertures and detailing. Bench seating along the custom window treatments frames views toward the barn, orchards, creek, and valley—though the vineyard is out of view. The tasting room is designed to be a sanctuary, "a space of respite amid the chaos of working," Linden said. **KK**



JEREMY BITTERMAN



JEREMY BITTERMAN



JEREMY BITTERMAN



JEREMY BITTERMAN

**Clockwise from top:** The new tasting room is a serene volume with rustic character; its interior is a restrained yet warm palette of dark wood paneling and simple furnishings; and the dairy barn now houses winemaking processes.

### Outdoor Furniture

These furnishings allow guests to spend time outdoors more comfortably. RCO



**Every Day Chair** | Landscape Forms  
landscapeforms.com

This sled-based chair for outdoor dining, gathering, and multipurpose spaces has precisely bent wire and steel strapping and comes with or without arms.



**Tradition** | Fritz Hansen  
fritzhanzen.com

Made of FSC-certified teak heartwood that's shaped and joined by hand, Tradition modular lounge seating is the brand's first in-house designed garden furnishings collection.



**Ypsilon Bench** | Vestre  
vestre.com

Designed by Daniel Rybakke using a laser-cut steel base, this bench comes in straight or round versions with or without armrests or backrests.



**Montego Outdoor Collection** | Room & Board for Business  
roomandboard.com/business

This collection of lounge chairs, tables, sofas, bar tables, and stools will now include a mix of durable steel and ash that has been reclaimed from fallen urban trees or harvested from sustainably managed U.S. forests.



**Veracruz** | Tidelli Outdoor Living  
tidelli.com

Inspired by the Mexican state of Veracruz, Mexican artist Sami Hayek has mixed materials such as aluminum, wood, and ribbon rope to develop this collection.



**Mah Jong Sofa** | Roche Bobois  
roche-bobois.com

Designed by Hans Hopfer, this iconic sofa has been revisited with an outdoor version in a colorful new collection of Jean Paul Gaultier fabrics.



**Good Company Table** | Loll Designs  
lolldesigns.com

Made of HDPE, this table comes in bar height with a sculptural base, umbrella hole, and the option of either a 26-inch or 32-inch diameter top.

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GCB1002

GCB1004

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GCB1009

Size & Color: 4" x 4", 4" x 8", 8" x 8", GCB91001

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# 42 Products

A'N FOCUS

March/April 2024

## Health & Wellness

New solutions for cleaner and healthier air, water, and bodies. RCO



**Wellness Paint** | Alkemis Paint  
alkemispaint.com

Now part of the Parsons Healthy Materials Lab, this interior paint has a base derived from renewable minerals and earthen raw materials. Made in the U.S., Alkemis products are 100 percent vapor-permeable.



**Elvari Washroom Collection** | Bradley  
bradleycorp.com

This suite of stainless-steel accessories features a modern pill-shape design with smooth curves and soft edges.



**Array** | Fellowes  
fellowes.com

This networked air-quality system combines the benefits of stand-alone air purifiers, HVAC, and monitoring systems into one solution.



**Bluewater Mineralizer** | Bluewater  
bluwatergroup.com

To provide a sustainable table water solution, Bluewater Mineralizer infuses a concentrate of naturally sourced Swedish minerals into local water purified with reverse osmosis technology. Available still or sparkling, the water is served to dining guests in borosilicate glass bottles.



**Kiva Outdoor Sauna** | Thermasol  
thermasol.com

Crafted from clear western red cedar or Nordic spruce, the Kiva outdoor sauna was inspired by Northern European sauna technology and design.



**Ritual** | Momentum  
momentumtextilesandwalls.com

These textile patterns are inspired by ritual impact and explore the repetitive use of simple and familiar geometric shapes.



**Bobrick SureFlo Soap Dispenser** | Bobrick  
bobrick.com

The SureFlo automatic, top-fill bulk foam soap dispenser is designed to fit into existing industry standard 1-inch-diameter counter holes. The dispenser's top fill function with an integrated funnel makes it easy to fill and clean.

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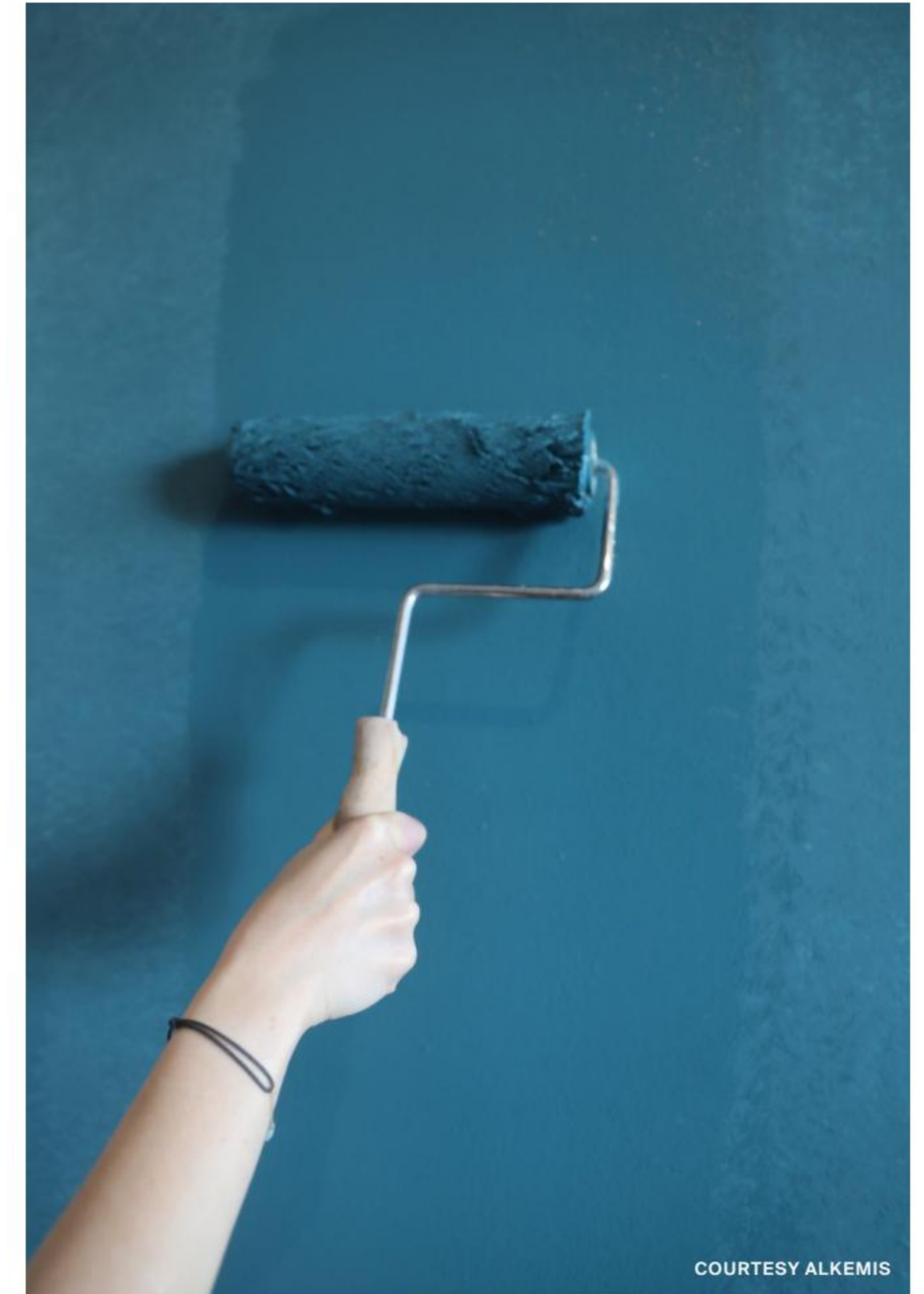
This listing combines companies specified in case studies; product highlights from our Contributing Products Editor, Rita Catinella Orrell; and additional recommendations, all in one place.



COURTESY TURF



COURTESY MOMENTUM



COURTESY ALKEMIS

## Acoustics

- 3form**  
3-form.com
- Abstracta**  
abstracta.se
- Architex**  
Architex-ljh.com
- Arktura**  
arktura.com
- Armstrong**  
armstrongceilings.com
- Carnegie**  
carnegiefabrics.com
- CertainTeed**  
certainteed.com
- CF Stinson**  
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formatwood.com
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genesisproductsinc.com
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pinta-acoustic.com
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regupol.us
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supreefabric.com
- Turf**  
turf.design
- Unika Vaev**  
unikavaev.com
- Whisper Walls**  
whisperwalls.com

## Lighting

- AllModern**  
allmodern.com
- AQ Lighting**  
aqlightinggroup.com
- Bartco Lighting**  
bartcolighting.com
- BEGA**  
bega-us.com
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juno.acuitybrands.com
- Ketra Lighting**  
ketra.com
- LED Linear**  
led-linear.com
- LightArt**  
lightart.com
- LIGHTBLOCKS**  
lightblocks.com
- Litecontrol**  
currentlighting.com/  
litecontrol

**Lithonia Lighting**  
lithonia.acuitybrands.com

**Lumenpulse Lighting**  
lumenpulse.com

**MARK Architectural Lighting**  
marklighting.acuitybrands.com

**Pinnacle Architecture Lighting**  
pinnacle-ltg.com

**Prescolite**  
currentlighting.com/  
prescolite

**Pure Edge Lighting**  
pureedgelighting.com

**Ravenhill Studio**  
ravenhillstudio.com

**Sabin**  
sabin.lighting

**Signify Lighting**  
signify.com

**Soraa**  
soraa.com

**Southern Lighting Source**  
southernlightingsource.com

**USAI Lighting**  
usailighting.com

**Vode Lighting**  
vode.com

**WAC**  
waclighting.com

## Furniture

**Allseating**  
allseating.com

**Andreu World**  
andreuworld.com

**Carl Hansen & Søn**  
carlhansen.com/en/en

**ERG**  
erginternational.com

**Futrus**  
futrus.com

**Hastings Tile & Bath**  
hastingsstilebath.com

**HAT Collective**  
hatcollective.com

**HBF**  
hbf.com

**Herman Miller**  
hermanmiller.com

**Integra Seating**  
integraseating.com

**Isimar**  
isimar.es/en

**Keilhauer**  
Keilhauer.com

**Knoll**  
knoll.com

**Muuto**  
muuto.com

**OFS**  
ofs.com

**S-CAB Design**  
scabdesign.com/en

**SitOnIt**  
sitonit.net

**Steelcase**  
steelcase.com

**Stylex Design**  
stylexdesign.com

**Versteel**  
versteel.com

**Via Seating**  
viaseating.com

**Wooden Soul**  
woodensoul.co

## Outdoor Furniture

**Dekko**  
dekko.com

**Emeco**  
emeco.net

**Fritz Hansen**  
fritzhanzen.com/en

**Landscape Forms**  
landscapeforms.com

**Loll Designs**  
lolldesigns.com

**Poliform**  
poliform.it/en-us

**Roche Bobois**  
roche-bobois.com

**Room & Board**  
roomandboard.com

**Royal Botania**  
royalbotania.com

**Skargaarden**  
skargaarden.com

**Talenti**  
en.talentspa.com

**Tidelli**  
tidelli.com

**Vestre**  
vestre.com/us

## Wellness

**Alkemis Paint**  
alkemispaint.com

**Bluewater**  
bluewatergroup.com

**Bobrick**  
bobrick.com

**Bradley**  
bradleycorp.com

**Carrier**  
carrier.com

**Fellowes**  
fellowesbrands.com

**Friedrich**  
friedrich.com

**LG**  
lg.com

**Momentum**  
momentumtextilesandwalls.com

**Panasonic**  
na.panasonic.com/us

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puraclenz.com

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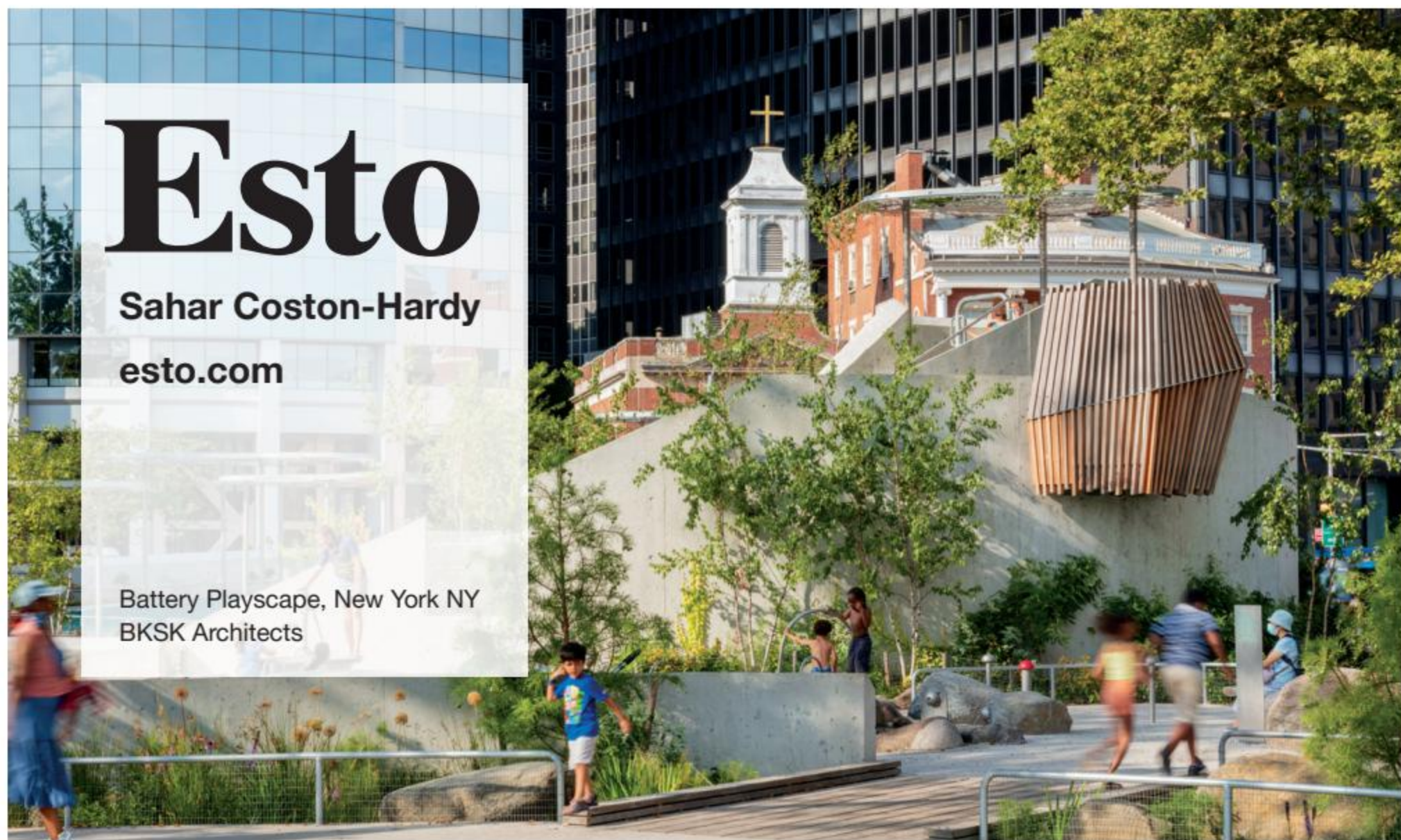
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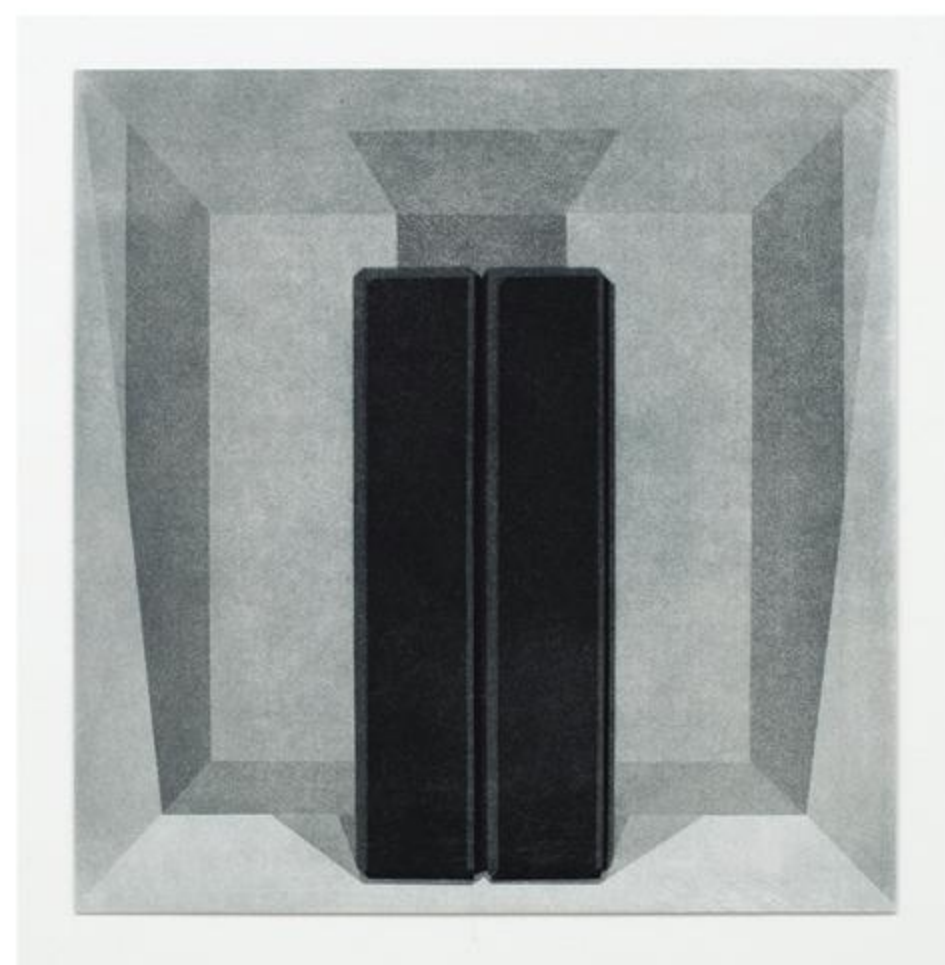
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# May 16–23

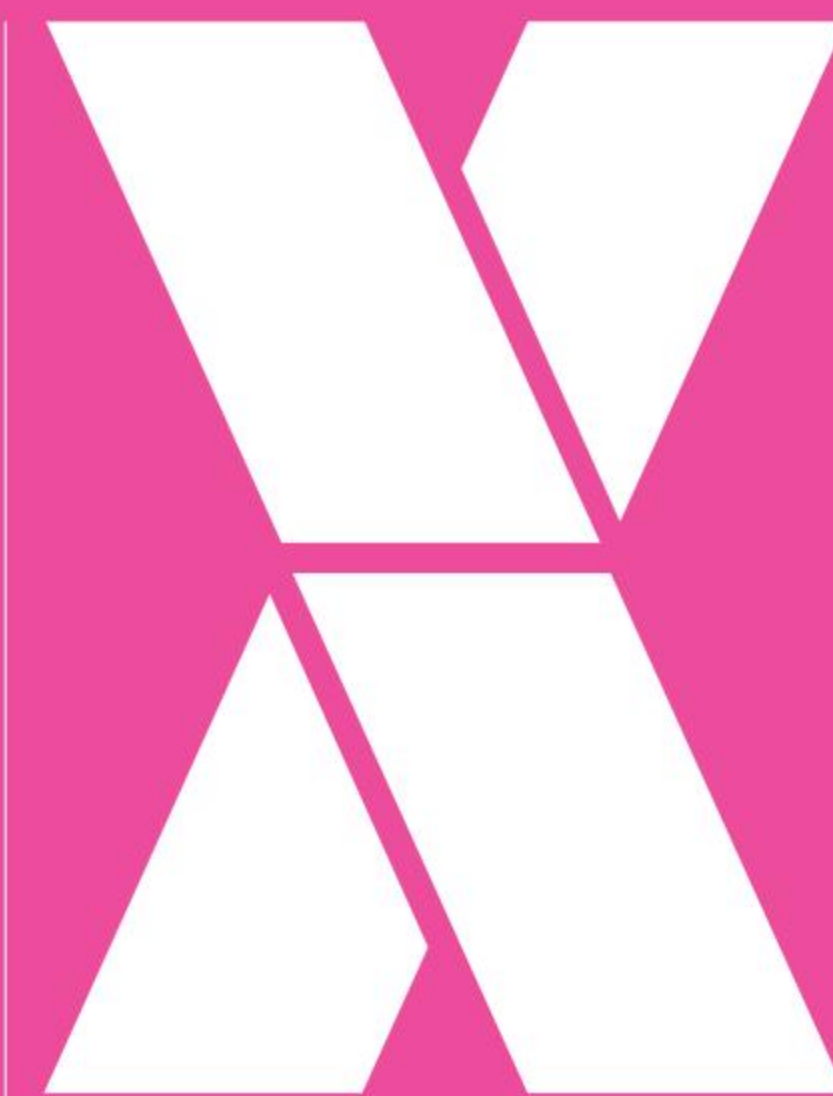
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# 48 Review

continued from cover The Cooper Hewitt retrospective is one of the rare times Devlin has been recognized as the main character. Since opening her studio nearly 30 years ago, she has designed over 400 projects, spanning stages for stadium tours, an opening ceremony for the Olympics, Super Bowl halftime performances, theatrical festivals, and runway shows. As Devlin described in the 2017 Netflix series *Abstract: The Art of Design*, she feels an innate drive to fill the world with art. This includes monumentally scaled sculptures (like a 30-foot-wide model of New York City's skyline twisted into an egg-shaped orb); building kinetic sets, like her Tony-winning concept for the play *The Lehman Trilogy*, which consisted of a rotating modernist glass office; and exploring new technology, like projections and generative AI. Her public installations have graced Trafalgar Square and Lincoln Center. "She's always creating the scaffolding for others to perform on and to tell their stories," Lipps said, "and this is the very first time that she was creating it for herself."

It's fitting, then, that the prelude to the exhibition takes place in a replica of Devlin's studio. The room is dimly lit, all white, and wrapped in floor-to-ceiling bookshelves holding paper models, storage boxes, and trinkets. There's a wide desk in the center of the space strewn with eraser shavings, cups brimming with rulers and pencils, blank notebooks, and manuscripts. Soon, images of Devlin's notes and drawings are projected on the desk and a video begins to play on a blank wall in front of it. We see Devlin's own hands drawing and cutting paper as she narrates, in a soothing and breathy voice, the story of who she is and how she thinks. As the film concludes, the blank wall reveals itself to be a door that slowly opens to the exhibition beyond it.

"There was very much a desire for the exhibition to feel intimate, to feel like you exactly have stepped into this space of the artist, that you are able to catch a glimpse of things beyond the finished glossy product," Lipps said. "You get to see some of the messiness of it."

While Devlin's medium might be sets, she is foremost a designer of experiences. The results of her works are a *feeling*, and she uses images, architecture, light, and sound to evoke it. She is known for creating arena spectacles (her latest is U2's residency at the Las Vegas Sphere), but her interest in designing experiences started at a much more intimate scale.

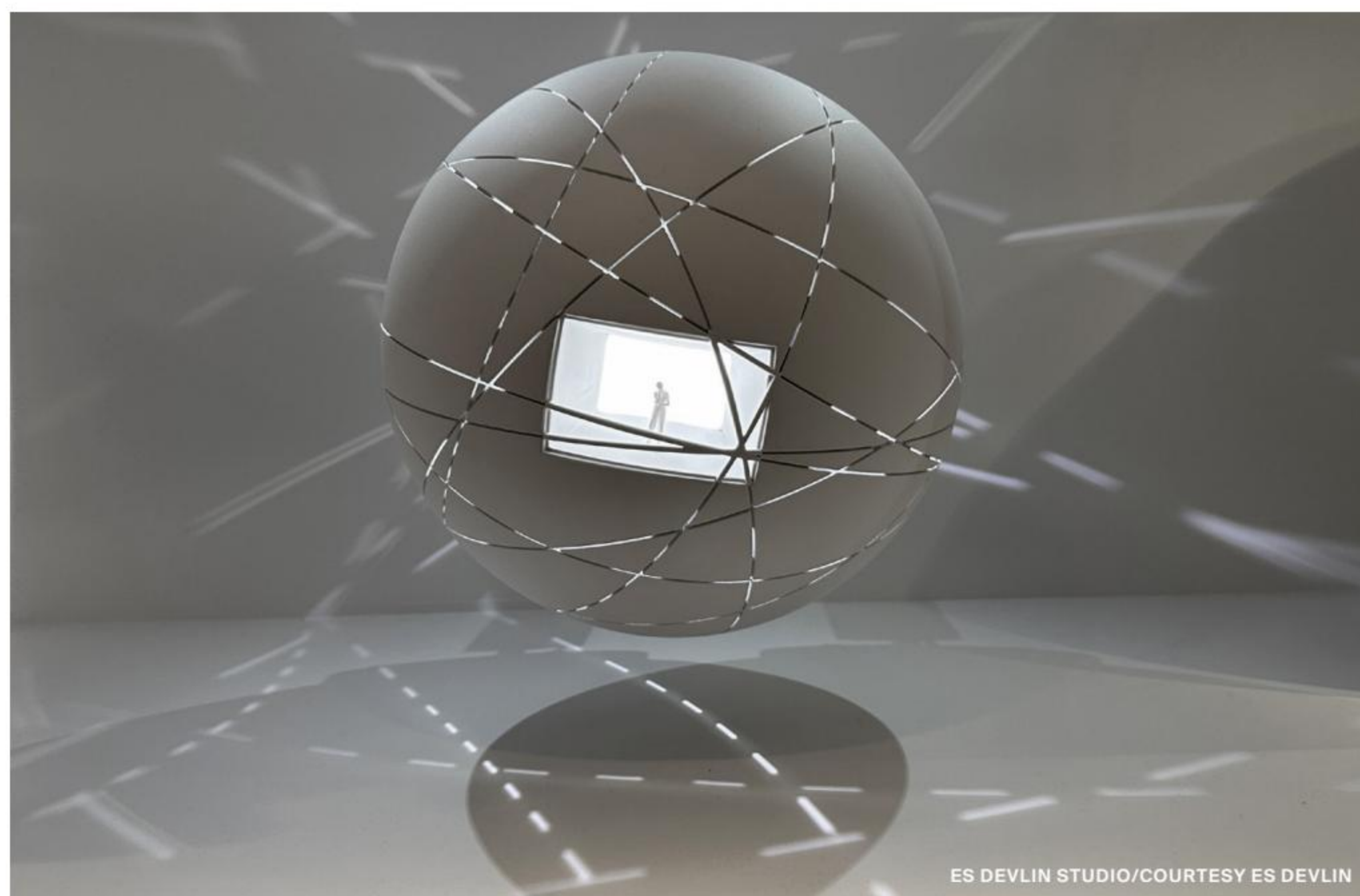
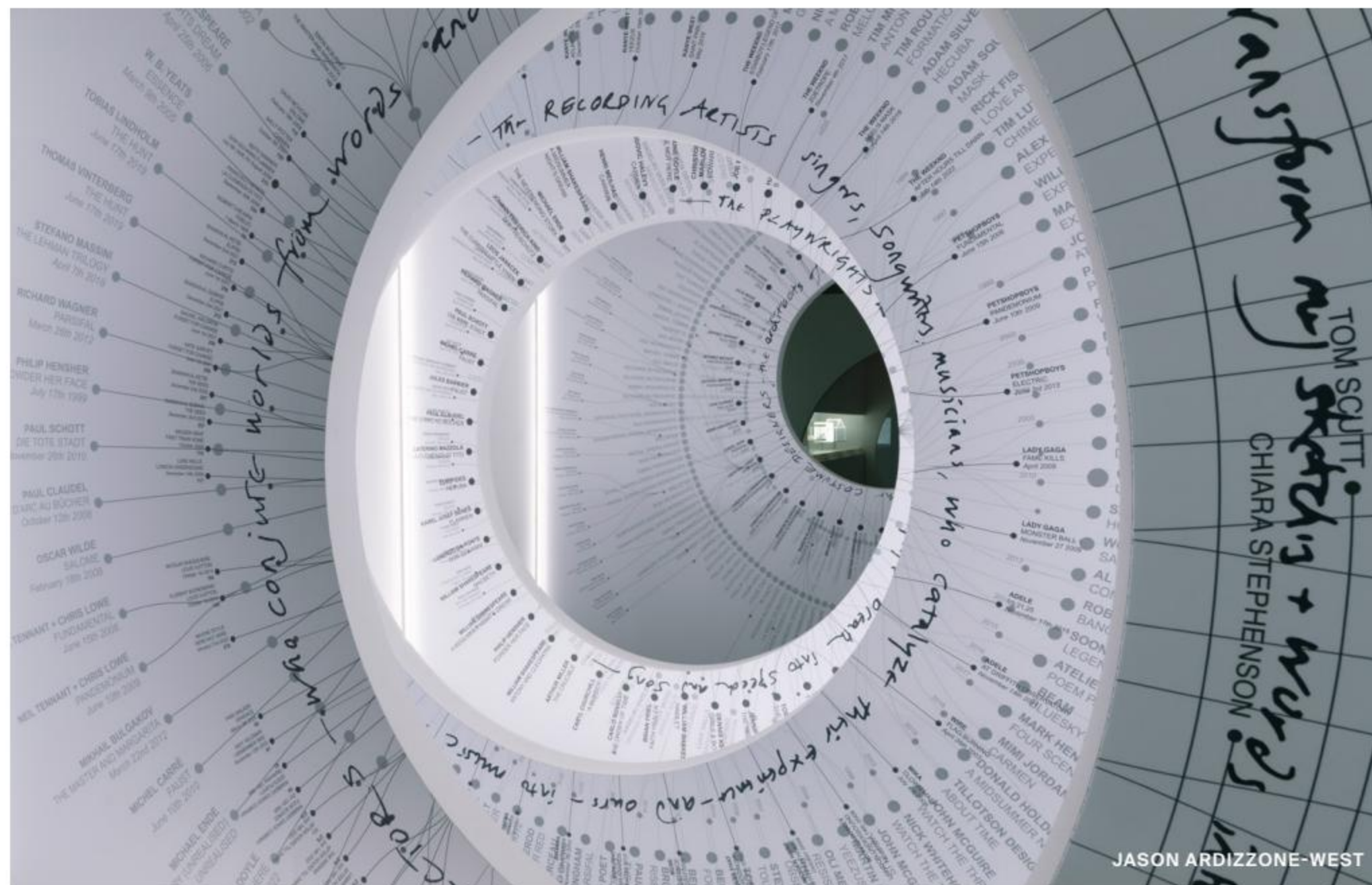
Devlin recalls walking down the corridor of a music school as a child (she studied violin for a little bit) and hearing snippets of performers playing Bach, Led Zeppelin, and Miles Davis through the glass doors of practice rooms. "Fragments of music, light, and atmosphere coalesced into something new and unnamable," she wrote in a catalog accompanying the exhibition. She now sees her entire career as an extension of that corridor.

What Devlin is describing in her childhood memory is awe. And that's what I felt the first time I knowingly experienced one of her installations, the 2016 *Mirror Maze*. It was a series of rooms that included a seemingly endless labyrinth of reflections bouncing down and around a corridor bathed entirely in red light and perfumed with Chanel fragrance. A film was projected onto a 360-degree screen set over a reflecting pool. While many of us outgrow a sense of wonder with the world, or find it harder to find as we age, Devlin has been able to harness this way of seeing and invites us to experience it with her.

Like all of Cooper Hewitt's exhibitions, *An Atlas of Es Devlin* is intended for a wide audience, from school groups who are coming to the museum for a field trip to design professionals who are eager to learn more

## An Atlas of Es Devlin

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum  
2 East 91st Street, New York, NY 10128  
November 18, 2023–August 11, 2024



*An Atlas of Es Devlin* was designed by Devlin herself and includes a huge variety of mediums, with a strong emphasis on video works and vitrines of personal ephemera.

about their peers' craft. Because of this, the exhibition operates on multiple levels: It's a reacquaintance to Devlin for people who may have experienced her work without knowing it, an introduction to the genre of design for live performance, and a look at artistic process. But what I found to be most revealing was the design of the exhibition itself, which she personally created for the museum.

The specific challenge of exhibiting spatial design compared to more traditional mediums like painting or sculpture or film is that what someone sees in a gallery is almost always a translation, not the real "thing," or artifact. We gaze at the scale model, read the book, and glance at photographs to approximate what it's like to be within the space that cannot be there. The inherent ephemerality of Devlin's work is an added layer to the challenge of exhibiting it. As Devlin said in the exhibition's opening film, "Every audience is a temporary society that departs a performance in an altered state, the architecture of their mind redrawn." Once the show is over, the stage is discarded. What's left is the impact of being there.

However, because Devlin's work is so experiential, the exhibition of her work is remarkably successful. While it's impossible to re-create the 60-foot-tall rotating cubic screens she specified for Beyoncé's Formation tour or the 80-foot-tall hands holding a deck of cards she created for the Bregenz Festival's production of *Carmen*, we see mirrors, projections, and experiments with scale in the gallery. At the heart of her designs is the metaphor of a "memory palace": a technique for recollection that argues ideas are best remembered when they are located in space. All her designs are environments that are physical analogues for the content of the performances that happen within them. As I walked through *An Atlas of Es Devlin*, I felt as though I were a voyeur in Devlin's own memory palace, a participant in an immersive performance of her persona as a creative visionary.

The exhibition is an archive of more than three decades of Devlin's creative output. The descriptions accompanying the sketchbooks and presentation models are written in first person, imparting a deeper sense of intimacy with the work. Devlin explained how her first design for a concert was in response to being bored. She shared many anecdotes, like when Lady Gaga's feedback on a concept was "Now vomit on it," leading her to source junk from a dump to roughen it up. We get a sense of her wide-reaching references, from Japanese woodcuts for a U2 stage to Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis* for the Weeknd's After Hours til Dawn tour. Lipps said, "She has this ability, then, to really distill everything into a singular gesture or form or idea that can carry a performance through."

The exhibition ends with three films that depart from Devlin's work for the stage, turning to engage nature and the interconnectedness of our environment, as if to say the spectacle is all around us, not just in the orbit of the celebrities for whom she designs. Over the past ten years, Devlin has been producing installations that grapple with environmentalism, especially the loss of biodiversity. I wondered what she thought about her industry's environmental impact, especially since it's dependent on temporary structures and the carbon cost of air travel. Now that might get at the kind of messiness that reveals something.

**Diana Budds is a New York-based writer and editor interested in how design reveals stories about history, culture, and policy.**

# 49 Review

In 1983, a stereotypically professorial man—60-something, ruddy complexion, tweed blazer—led public television audiences on a leisurely two-hour stroll through a history of American art. *New World Visions: American Art and the Metropolitan Museum, 1650–1914* began in the galleries of the famed New York museum but often cut away to significant locations beyond the gallery walls. There, the genial, polymathic host waxed poetic over architectural achievements in Manhattan's financial district, sleek rowing sculls in Philadelphia, faint battle scars still etched into the landscape at Gettysburg, and the noble Neoclassicism of the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

By the time the two-part special aired on PBS, the host was widely celebrated in academic and cultural circles. Eight years earlier, *People* magazine had declared him one of “12 Great U.S. Professors.” Nine years before that, he had graced the cover of *Time* magazine as one of ten “Great Teachers.” And roughly a decade after the release of *New World Visions*, my own sister, who, near as I could tell, was majoring in Jimmy Buffett at the University of Miami and never once displayed an interest in architecture, found herself captivated by a gifted professor she still affectionately refers to as “Vince.”

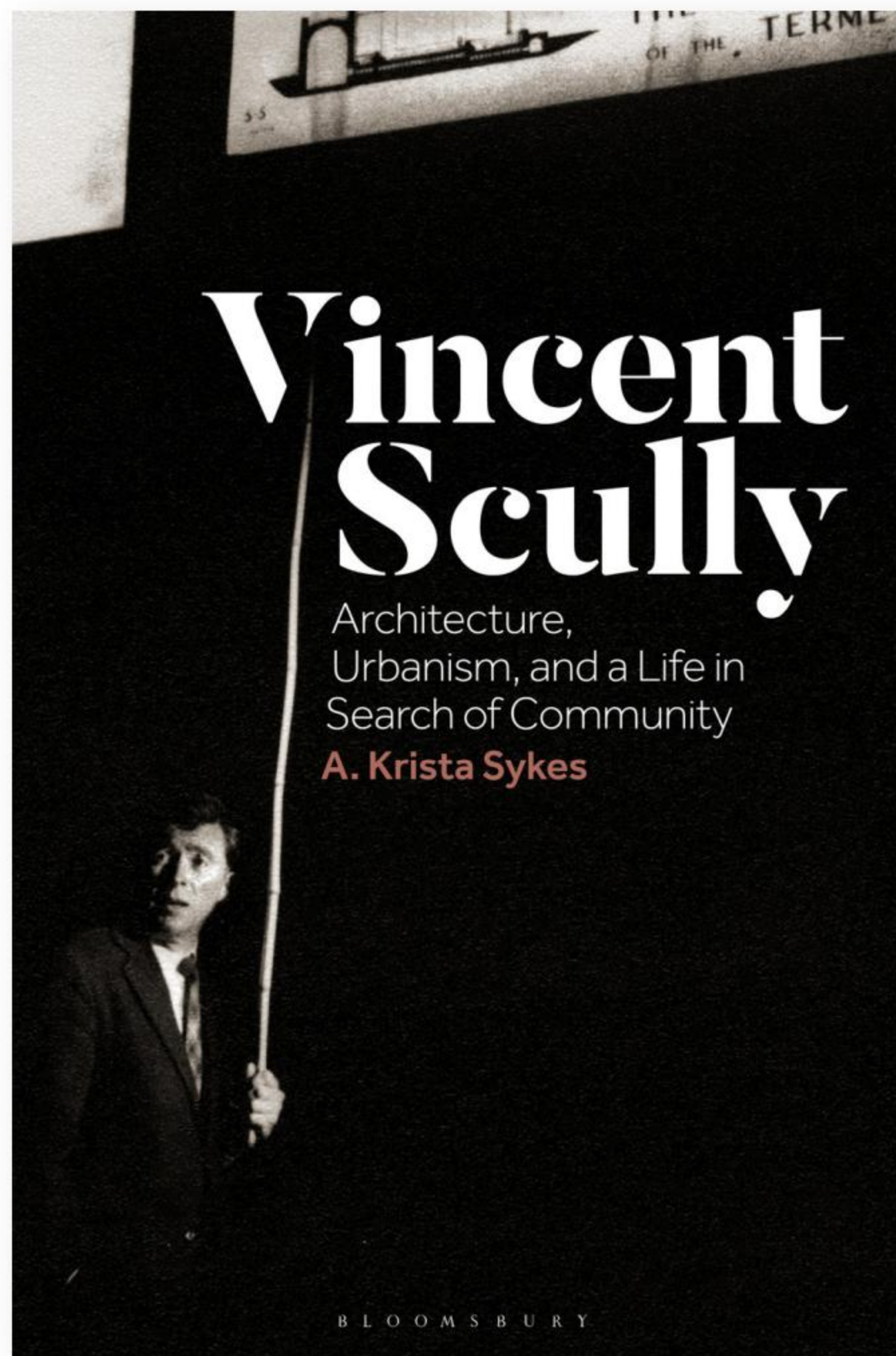
Just how Vincent J. Scully, Jr. (1920–2017) rose to such heights of academic celebrity is the subject of A. Krista Sykes's intelligently researched and smartly written biography, *Vincent Scully: Architecture, Urbanism, and a Life in Search of Community* (Bloomsbury, 2023), in which Sykes traces Scully's life from his childhood in New Haven, Connecticut, through his school days at Yale, his military service during World War II, and his rapid rise to fame in postwar academia.

As Sykes recounts, Scully was born an only child to a working-class family. A precocious student and voracious reader, he won early admission to Yale, where he helped pay his way by serving meals to his well-heeled classmates. The war years left Scully with a new wife, a young family, and psychological wounds that plagued him for the rest of his life. He sought solace in the study of art history at Yale, and soon fell under the sway of Henry-Russell Hitchcock, whose 1932 book *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*, coauthored with Philip Johnson to accompany their groundbreaking exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, had introduced mainstream American audiences to European modern architecture.

Studying design at the Yale School of Architecture alongside his coursework in art history, Scully was trained in an environment largely convinced of the rightness of European modernism. However, as his mentor Hitchcock had done, he soon turned his attention to the earlier work of Frank Lloyd Wright and then to American architecture more generally, eventually producing a dissertation on the American cottage style of the 19th century. Reworked for publication as *The Shingle Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Richardson to the Origins of Wright* (1955), Scully's research was well received and helped secure his place on the Yale faculty, even as some critics chastised the “extravagant phraseology” and “near evangelical furor” of his lively prose.

That unbridled enthusiasm for his subject matter became a hallmark of Scully's famous lectures on the history of art and modern architecture. He brought a similar enthusiasm to later works on an almost irresponsibly broad range of topics. He followed *The Shingle Style* with monographic studies of Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Kahn, surveys of modern architecture and American urbanism, analyses of sacred sites in ancient

## Vincent Scully: Architecture, Urbanism, and a Life in Search of Community



A. Krista Sykes  
Bloomsbury  
\$115

Greece and the American Southwest, a treatment of Andrea Palladio's villas, and a sweeping presentation of the relationship of built form to the surrounding landscape in his last major book, *Architecture: The Natural and the Manmade*, in 1991.

Sykes traces these investigations alongside Scully's development of his celebrated courses at Yale and his increasingly influential voice in both contemporary architecture and historic preservation. These efforts cemented his reputation on the world stage even as his

willingness to wander into neighboring academic fields sometimes drew harsh criticism. The drubbing he received from archaeologists who reviewed *The Earth, the Temple, and the Gods* (1962), for example, stung him deeply and likely moved him to cancel a planned sequel to his study of Greek sacred architecture. Even so, in Sykes's Churchillian phrasing, “Scully's driving conviction [was] that architecture and society share a give-and-take relationship—society *shapes* and is *shaped* by the architecture it creates.”

At the same time, Scully shaped and was shaped by the architectural and political culture around him. His early enthusiasm for the work of his friend Robert Venturi led him to proclaim the architect's now-canonical book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) “probably the most important writing on the making of architecture since Le Corbusier's *Vers une Architecture*, of 1923.” The claim seemed outlandish when it first appeared; with time, it proved eerily prescient. Scully's advocacy of Venturi's work helped create a receptive context for the architect's iconoclastic ideas, just as his support of Robert A. M. Stern and the so-called “gray” architects of the 1970s helped set the tone for the discourse on postmodern architecture in the United States.

After retirement from Yale, Scully took a visiting position at the University of Miami in Florida, which placed him in close contact with his former students Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, key players in the development of the New Urbanism. He spent many of his remaining years advocating for (and occasionally criticizing) New Urbanism's “architecture of community,” which embraced the American vernacular he had studied in his youth and the small-town feel of places like his beloved New Haven, which remained dear to him to the end.

Drawing on interviews she conducted with Scully during his lifetime, unprecedented access to his personal papers, and a deep familiarity with the architectural culture of the 20th century, Sykes treats these and other episodes in Scully's long career with intelligence, compassion, and admirable clarity. Anyone interested in the historian's life and work or in the development of American architecture from the postwar period to the present will find much of value here, though some specialized readers may wish for closer analysis of Scully's texts or more contextualization of his work with that of his peers.

While Sykes briefly examines Scully's relationship with Colin Rowe and Reyner Banham, for example, a more sustained comparison with these two close contemporaries could be of interest. And though his friend and Yale colleague Harold Bloom figures strongly, I waited in vain for a discussion of Scully's connection to the theory hothouse that burgeoned at Yale in the 1970s: One of the aims of deconstruction as developed by the so-called “Yale Critics” (Bloom, Paul de Man, Geoffrey Hartman, and J. Hillis Miller) was to destabilize exactly the sort of grand narratives the historian elaborated throughout his career.

Sykes, who previously assembled two informative anthologies of architectural theory, surely knows this, just as she knows that the sort of meticulous close reading such an analysis would require would run counter to her broader ambitions here. For in the end, *Vincent Scully* is a work of biography, not historiography. Sykes exhibits a preference for clear vistas across the narrative forest over scrutiny of individual trees. I suspect she does so in deference to intelligent general readers, like my sister and the countless students from outside the architectural ken who sat rapt in Scully's lectures. As is the case with Scully's texts, Sykes's engaging style and first-person involvement does not detract from her scholarly achievement. Rather, it offers a laudable model for contemporary scholars looking to expand the reach of their efforts and a valuable portrait of one of the most important American architectural historians of the 20th century.

Todd Gannon is a professor of architecture at the Ohio State University.

# Making Museums More Accessible

JSA/MIXdesign share its work for the Queens Museum and champion participatory design processes.

On January 26, The Architectural League hosted Joel Sanders and Seb Choe of Joel Sanders Architect (JSA)/MIXdesign to share their ongoing work on the MIXmuseum Study, a design research project initiated in 2018 that investigates the design consequences of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) in the museum context. After their presentation, they spoke with panelists from the Brooklyn Museum; Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum; Whitney Museum of American Art; and Queens Museum about the challenges of making museums more accessible. The conversation was moderated by Ignacio G. Galán, an assistant professor of architecture at Barnard College and Columbia GSAPP.

Though the report related to the MIXmuseum Study will be released this year, JSA/MIXdesign has completed other reports that center the benefits of participatory design processes. Last year, its report for the Queens Museum, titled *Central Atrium for All*, was released and is available on the museum's website.

AN's Executive Editor, Jack Murphy, spoke with Sanders and Choe after their lecture to learn more about the lessons from this report and how a broader idea of accessibility sets the stage for better multisensory experiences for everyone.



Joel Sanders (left) and Seb Choe (right) of JSA/MIXdesign.

**AN:** How did MIXdesign emerge from the work of JSA?

**Joel Sanders (JS):** For me, it began in 1996 with the publication of *STUD: Architectures of Masculinity*, which inaugurated my interest in looking at the relationship between gender and space through what we would now call a queer lens. Then in 2015, national controversies about transgender access to public restrooms motivated me to think about this social justice issue through a wider lens that considers not only gender but the intersecting needs of people of different ages, races, religions, and disabilities. What began with a coauthored essay published in the *South Atlantic Quarterly* grew into *Stalled!*—an initiative that made recommendations about safe bathrooms for everyone.

JSA then established MIXdesign in 2018 as an inclusive design studio. We work with progressive clients to help them meet their DEIA goals by looking at the spatial implications of these issues. Beyond working as architects for primarily institutional clients, now we're also working in partnership with other architectural offices, which we actually find to be gratifying, and we're writing toolkits that could then be applied to the site- and culture-specific needs of our clients.

**Seb Choe (SC):** *Stalled!* served as a spin-off moment. We had created a body of design research that we posted on an open-source website, which many people thought was valuable. Museums and university campuses were a natural evolution because of Joel's scholarship and our office's experience working on these kinds of projects.

Applying a lesson learned in *Stalled!*—the need to bridge theory and practice—made us realize that inclusive design couldn't be thought about only in the abstract; the work required concrete case studies and participatory design. For our work with museums, we wanted to have the effort grounded in partnerships with specific institutions and participatory processes that combined cross-disciplinary research with the ground-up, lived experiences that these museums were going through.

**AN:** Can you talk about MIXdesign's work for the Queens Museum?

**SC:** A grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services allowed us to expand our initial pilot study into a two-year participatory design process with the Queens Museum's staff and members of their community. The process centered around stakeholder and community engagement: We conducted surveys, held a number of public programs, and offered professional-development trainings so the staff could become more literate in accessibility practices.

In addition, we recruited an Access Cohort. It was composed of 25 members who represented a cross section of the museum's diverse audience, including native Spanish speakers, trans and nonbinary folk, users of wheelchairs, and older adults. They participated in a series of design workshops and focus groups. Collectively, they identified barriers to access and then proposed spatial recommendations or interventions that could address those barriers.

The findings divide the building or the user journey into different activities and spaces. At each step along the way, there were spatial recommendations made by the Access Cohort that were then iterated upon with design proposals by architecture and public health graduate students at Yale. The outcome is a report available to the public on the Queens Museum website. Rather than acting as an authoritative document filled with guidelines, the report chronicles what emerged and tries to be transparent about the process that generated these findings. It invites more inquiry and critique. There is a coda at the end of each section that asks, "What did we miss? Where is there room for growth and more research?"

**JS:** More broadly, what changed for me, as a senior architect who was taught to work in a particular way, is that I feel like I need to almost unlearn almost everything that I was taught to do. I was persuaded by the power of participatory design. We talked to stakeholders, identified the problem, and then we as architects, in conjunction with students, generated "recommendations" that could be used as the starting point for renovations to the Queens Museum. It wasn't so much that we as architects came up with these solutions but that they instead emerged from a participatory design process. That process is what I'm most proud of, because that is what is essential in the report.

**AN:** The report for the Queens Museum focused on four non-gallery spaces: the entry, reception, wellness, and the central atrium. Did anything unique or surprising emerge out of this participatory process for how to improve these spaces?

**SC:** Thinking about the word "unique," one thing we're always thinking about is what advice is generalizable versus what is specific. The report is called *Central Atrium for All* because this type of space is ubiquitous in many museums. This multipurpose space is activated by events of different sizes; it's a space that tries to be everything, but in the process, maybe it doesn't do any of them especially well. For example, on a regular day, school groups don't have anywhere to sit when they're going on tours, and children become overstimulated because of all the light and sound. But then the museum might host an event like Queens Museum's Lunar New Year celebration, where over 300 people attended. This fast shift in programming is something we addressed through spatial recommendations, but it's also an issue of staffing protocols.

**JS:** The participatory design process led to surprising insights that encouraged us to think beyond functionalism. For example, at a focus group composed of people with physical disabilities, the discussion focused on making the atrium accessible with additional ramps. But what really stuck with me was one of the participants, a wheelchair user, who said, "You could add all the ramps in the world to this space, but I'm not coming back here." Why? She said because "the way you're hanging the art [high on the wall] here, I have to crane my neck. And it's not that my neck hurts but that it sends a message that says I am invisible to you; the museum doesn't

recognize that I exist." This comment led the Access Cohort to come up with a new idea: What if instead of one horizon line for wheelchair users, there were multiple pedestals and hanging heights that reflected people of different ages and heights? What if coming to the museum was a multisensory experience that asked all of us to step out of our customary ways of being in the world and have sensory and embodied experiences—and even cultural experiences—that represent these different perspectives? That was an aha moment.

**SC:** From suggestions such as these we learned that functional and social accessibility are intertwined. Functional accommodations that make buildings physically accessible for a wheelchair user or a low-vision person don't work if a sense of belonging was missing in the first place. It was a surprise for us to learn that these two issues are related.

**AN:** What feedback did the museum have about the report?

**SC:** The Queens Museum was thrilled to receive the report and see our two-year collaboration documented for use both as an internal resource as well as a public offering. They even began to implement some of the recommendations before the report was complete. For example, there was one space that was acoustically reverberant, and it caused sensory overload for visitors with sensory sensitivities as well as staff. They reclad the floor with some carpet tiles left over from an event and closed a wall that was previously open to the main atrium. They also switched restroom signage to focus on fixtures and not gender, a relatively inexpensive change compared to altering spatial layouts. Considering less resource-intensive options is useful, because museums are always asking us about low-hanging fruit they might go after to begin making improvements.

**JS:** I initially resisted the idea of "low-hanging fruit," considering them just Band-Aids or quick fixes. I came to realize that my response reflected a bias of my training: The architect must introduce large-scale alterations to leave their mark. But my mind has been changed by the inclusive design process. Now, we offer clients a menu of recommendations—some are quick fixes, while others are more labor intensive and require more time and money. It's less about uniqueness and more about trying to solve systemic issues.

**AN:** What is urgent for your museum clients?

**SC:** All of our museum clients want to improve their buildings so their exhibitions and programs can be more accessible and welcoming for diverse audiences. Although this is a well-intentioned desire, putting it into practice requires a great deal of soul-searching and conflict resolution, not only in how the facility is treated in terms of architectural interventions, but also shifting the way museums make inclusive design decisions. It's daunting but required of them to rethink everything—the staffing, protocols, and language, everything down to how wall text is written.

This soul-searching that many museums are doing to rethink their purpose must be considered within the larger interrogation of museum funding that's going on right now, as well as the extreme underfunding of arts and culture. Often there are people in leadership and staff who have the vision but just don't have the resources to implement it. The movements of museum workers unionizing is another important aspect, as well as the movement to decolonize the museum as an entire apparatus. Museums are beginning to examine their origins and are considering the repatriation of artworks and stolen plunder. These are all interrelated struggles and movements.

**JS:** Design recommendations alone aren't enough: Their implementation depends on changing institutional cultures so that inclusive design values are completely integrated. And this insight is not specific to museums alone. We need to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Implementing inclusive design requires designers to think holistically about a wide range of practical, economic, governance, and cultural issues. That is what is so rewarding about the work. It becomes real when you have an actual client. It involves working with real people in a real space and an actual building. That's where the real work happens.

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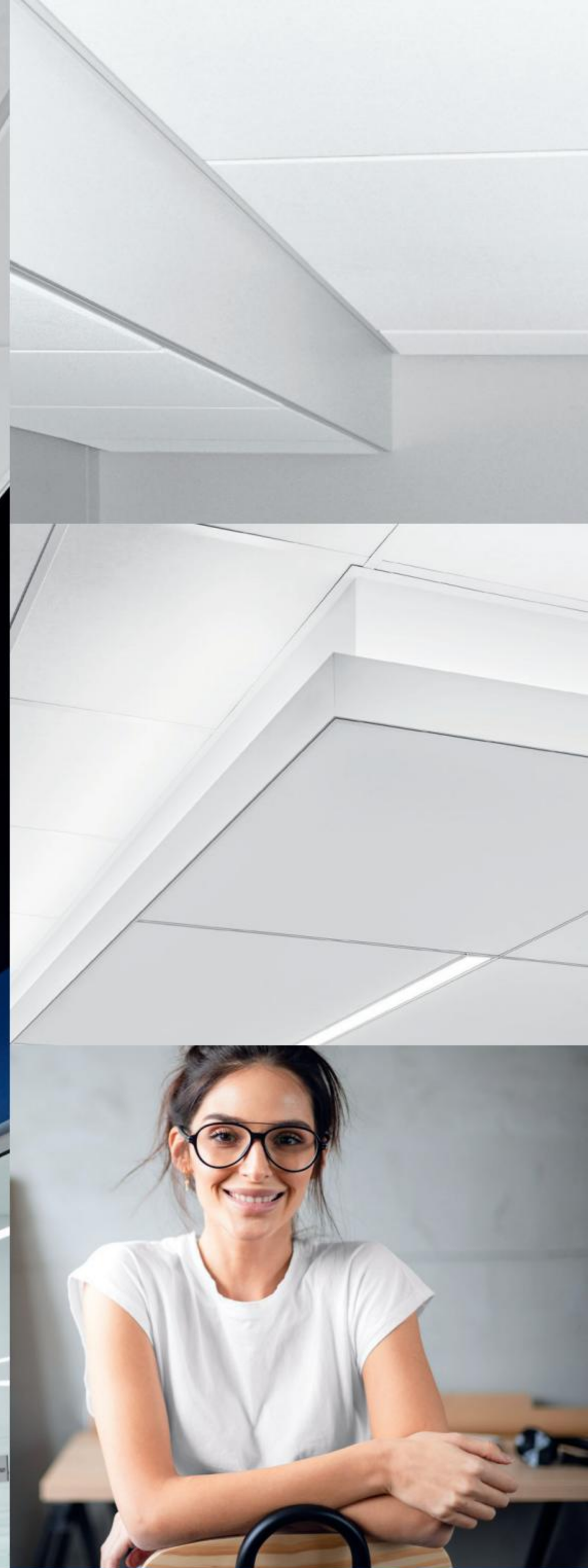
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