

The Architect's Newspaper

May 2025

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A new entrance at the National Gallery, Storm King expands, and more news page 6

Salone del Mobile: A romp through the good, rad, weird, schlep, and zen page 8

AN stays close to home in Tribeca to check out projects by Fogarty Finger page 16



Read an excerpt from Sérgio Ferro's English introduction to a new book of his texts page 82

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A Place Where the Soul Can Rest

"A porch was a sign of living a life without shame," bell hooks wrote in *Belonging: A Culture of Place*. "To come out on the porch was to see and be seen, to have nothing to hide. It signaled a willingness to be known."

The U.S. Pavilion is now open at the Biennale Architettura 2025 in Venice, and its focus on porch as an architecture of generosity promotes the value of this liminal space. A new porch, designed in wood by Marlon Blackwell Architects and complete with a blue soffit, lines the front of the building; the courtyard has been reimaged by TEN x TEN and D.I.R.T. Studio; and Stephen Burks Man Made offers contemporary expressions of vernacular home furnishings. Inside, 54 contributions from across the country showcase the variety, utility, and beauty of the idea of the American porch. [Read on page 10.](#)

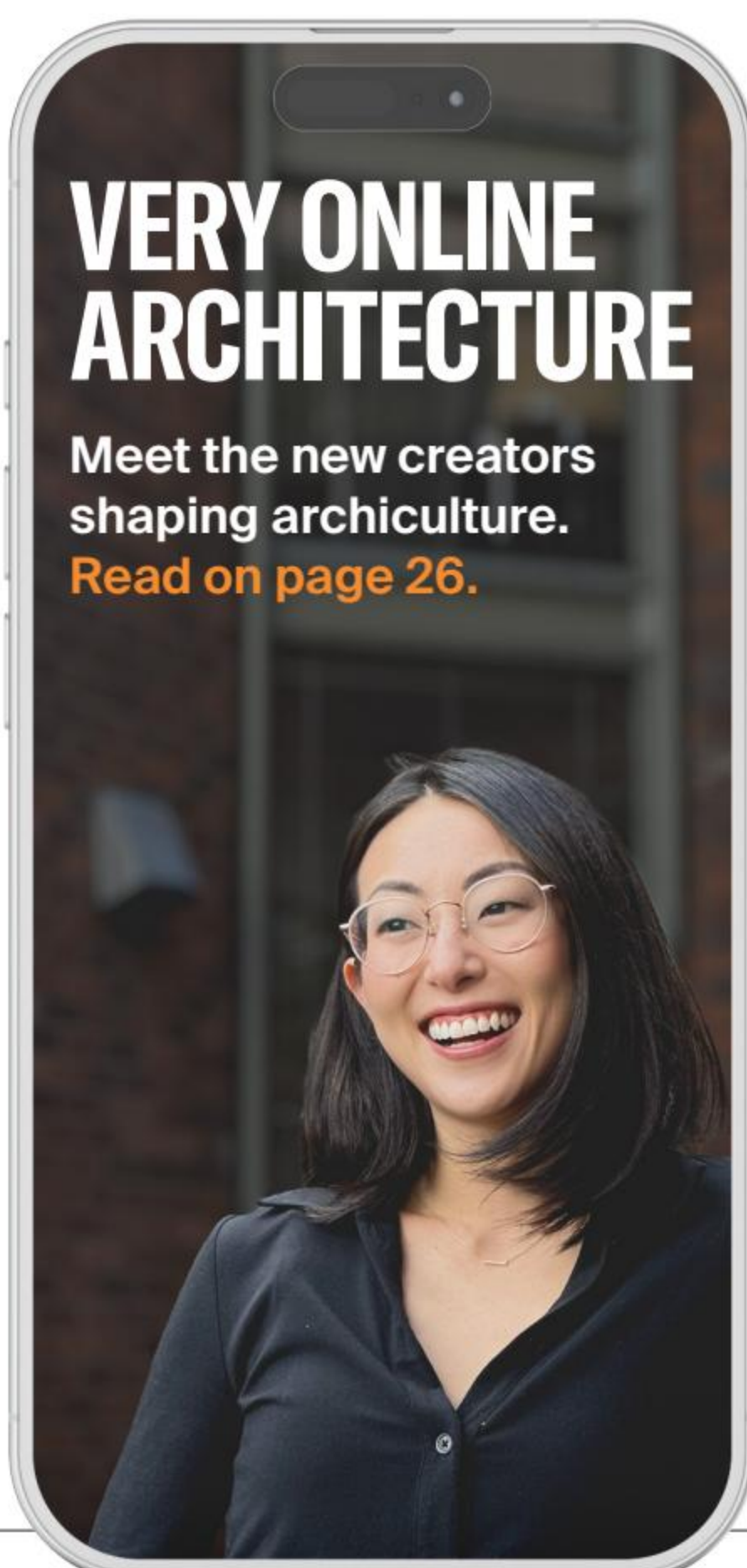


Frickin' Sweet

Rockefeller had more of it. Mellon did more with it. Barnes had more interesting ideas about it. But in the annals of great early-20th-century art collectors, no other plutocratic culture vulture quite measures up to Henry Clay Frick—not, at least, when it came to an eye for the good stuff.

When the Pennsylvanian coal baron moved into a spacious, Thomas Hastings-designed mansion on Fifth Avenue in 1914, he brought with him an already substantial trove of paintings, which he continued to augment right up to his death, five years later, at the age of 69. He didn't bother with such trivial distinctions as movements or styles; he didn't even organize the work by theme or by era. He just bought solid-gold masterpieces, over and over, and put them wherever he felt they looked best. And then, after he was gone, he invited the world to come have a look.

After a prolonged separation, Frick's house and his masterpieces—1,800 of them, in total—[continued on page 14](#)



West Bund Grand Theater by SHL

[Read on page 12.](#)



Museum Futures

Two experts chat. [Read on page 81.](#)

The museum refuses spatial optimization—there's no "best" way to design one. In part, that's because contemporary art is evolving.

—JULIAN ROSE

What everybody profoundly believes is that a successful museum experience must have a magic combination of three things: objects, humans, and architecture.

—ANDRÁS SZANTÓ

AN FOCUS

Facades

Surfaces, signs, and specs. [Read on page 29.](#)



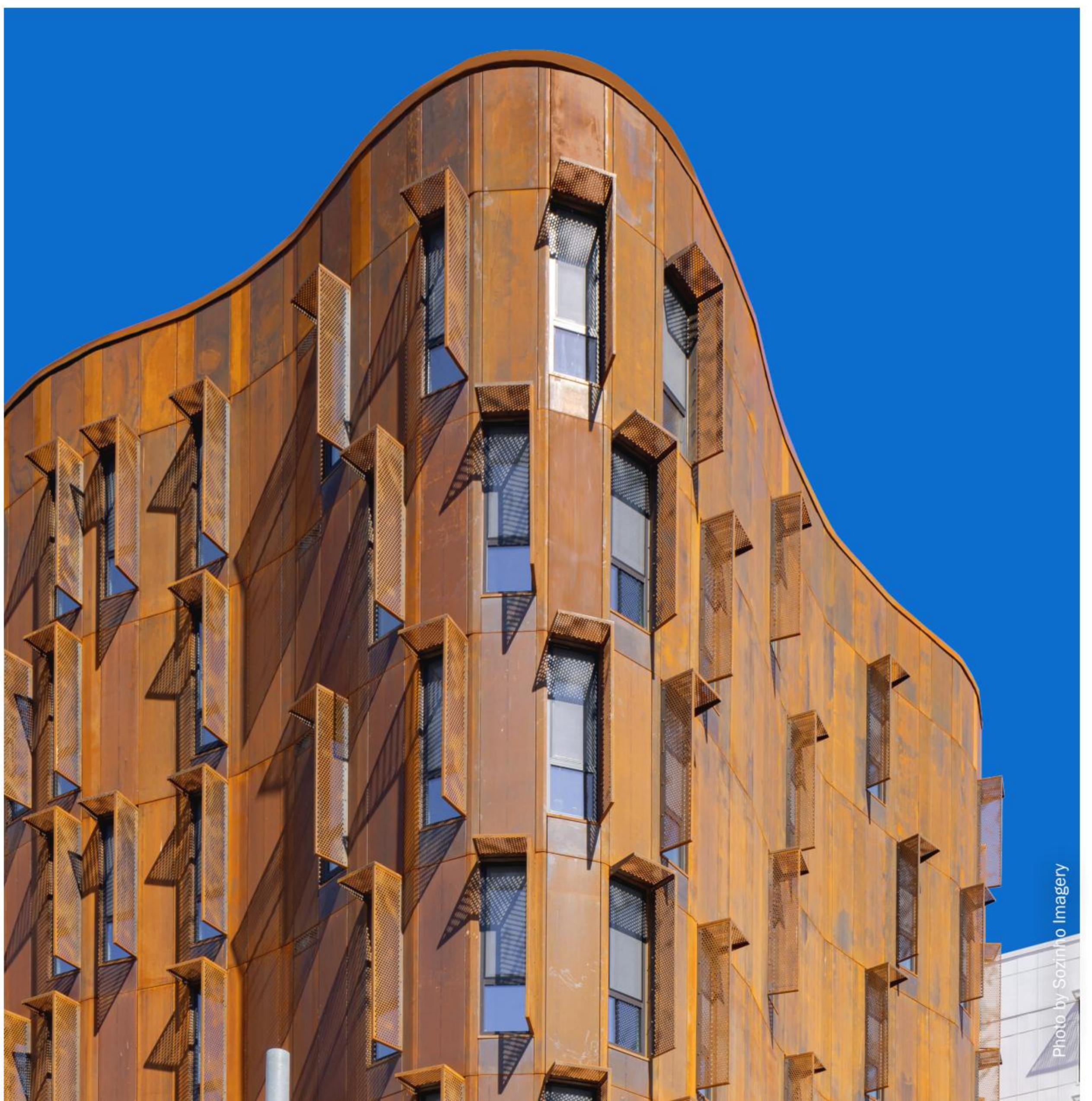
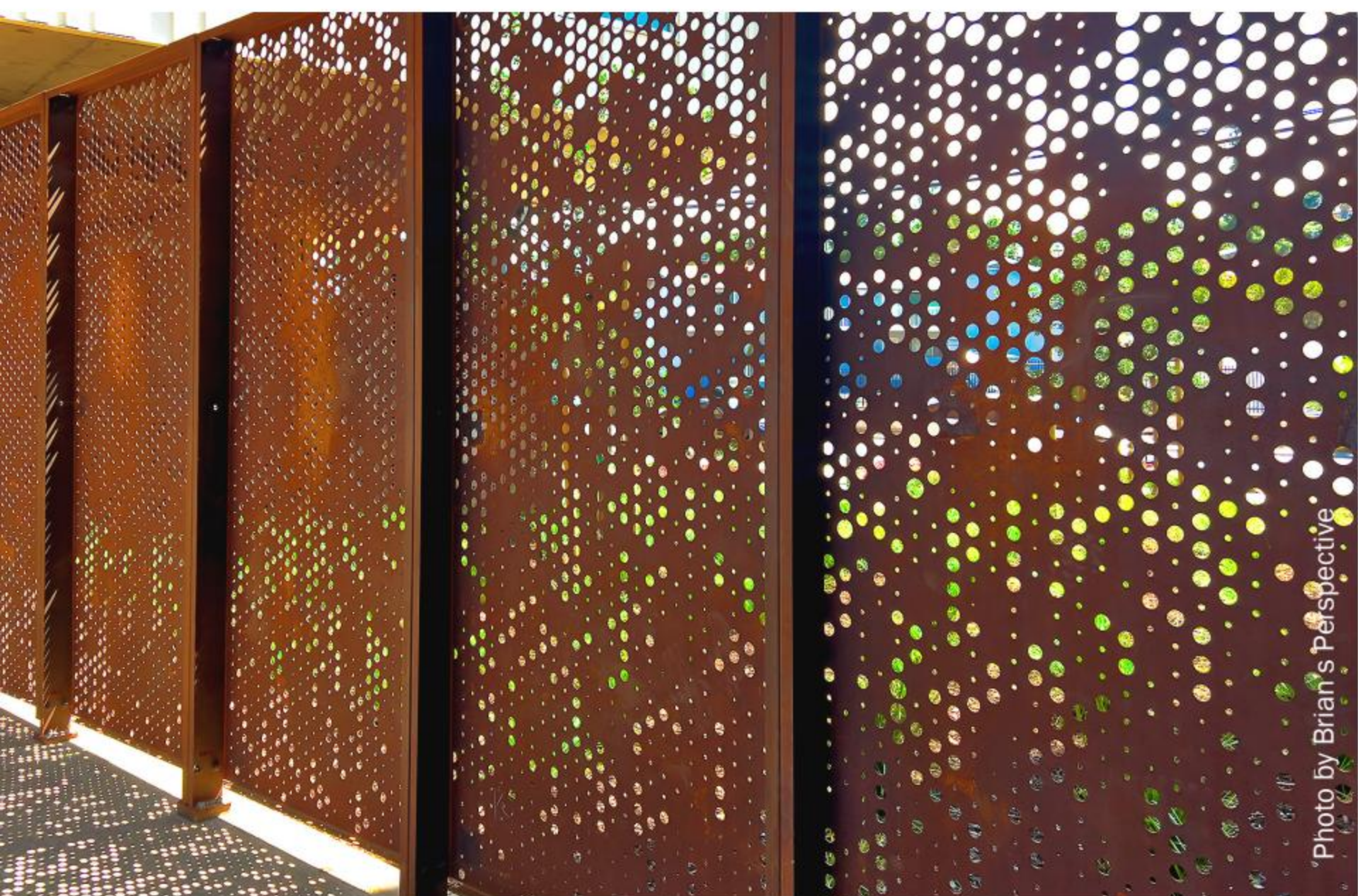
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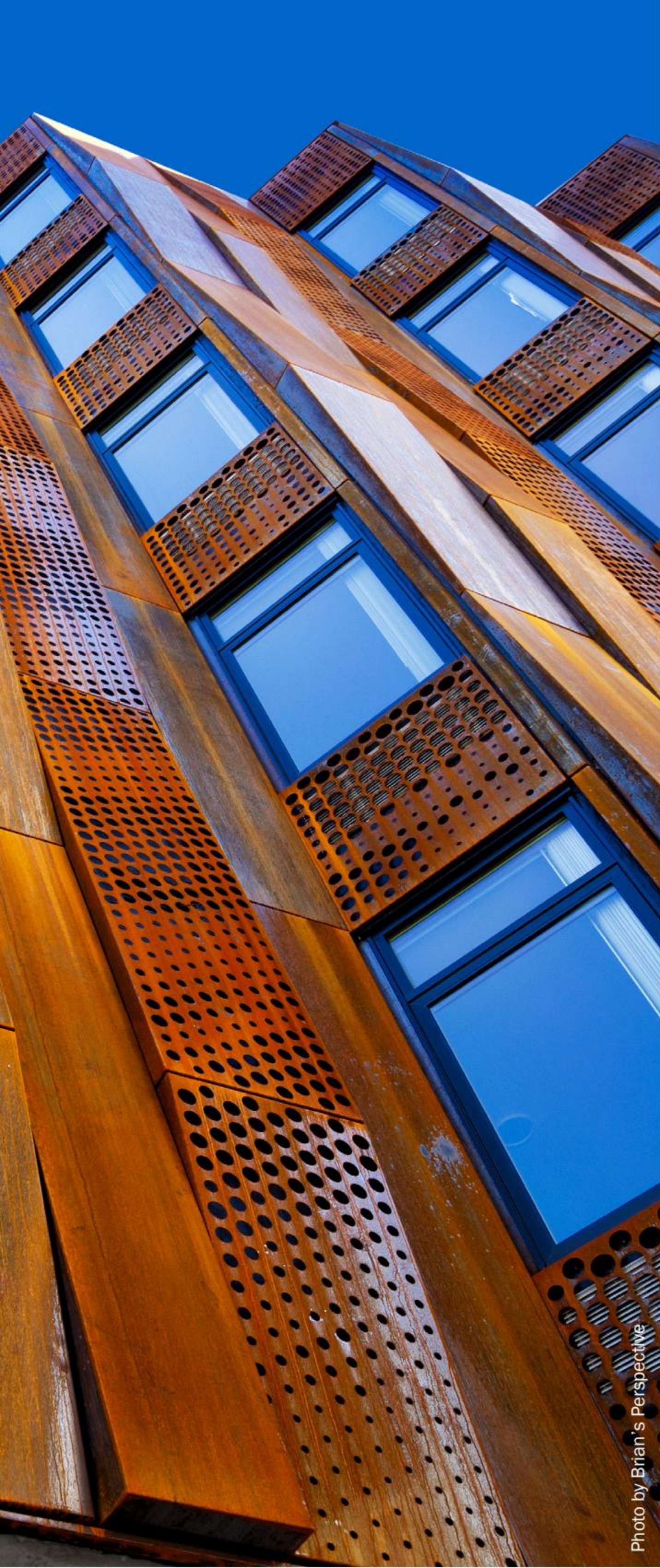


Photo by Brian's Perspective



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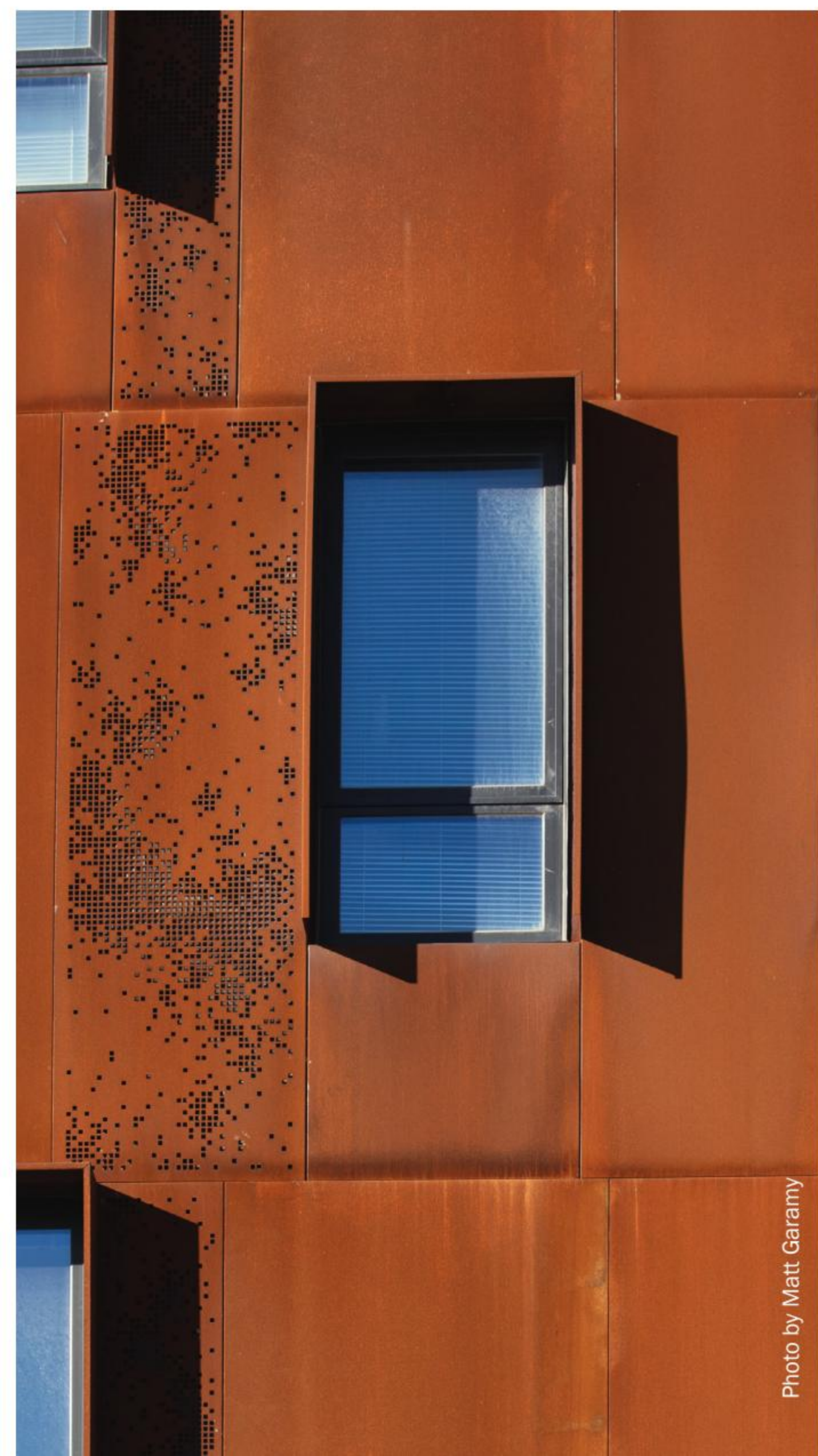


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Editor's Note



Form Is Over! (If You Want It)

I've been thinking about art deco. The style recently turned 100, and after it arrived via the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris, its influence quickly proliferated around the world: One can see its streamline sensibility in New York's skyline; hotels that line Miami Beach; bus stations across the U.S.; the UNESCO-designated World Heritage city of Asmara, Eritrea; in Mumbai, India; and the Kavanagh Building in Buenos Aires, among other venues. It has a syncretic, catholic vibe in that its geometric directives were combined with vernacular material cultures to create distinct local varieties.

Art deco's optimistic eclecticism absorbed the aesthetic flourishes of art nouveau and cubism alongside rapid transformations in building technology. It arrived in a moment of societal change: Just four years after its eponymous fair, squarely in the middle of the Roaring Twenties, the great crash struck in 1929. (The resulting depression contributed in part to the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany.) In my view, art deco embodies the aspirations of a society that was rapidly concentrating capital, which makes sense that it is experiencing a comeback today.

Our current moment bears a striking resemblance to that time: We too have emerged from a global pandemic, are dealing with the rise of fascism, and are grappling with extreme wealth inequality. Architects of that era were responding to rapid changes in technology, just as contemporary practitioners are now. But we have the added anxiety of the climate crisis. While art deco's formal exuberance was revelatory, these days the same showy flourishes often land as wasteful, overwrought, even lame.

Which is to say: Architecture's long capital-P Project of exploring ever-more-complicated forms has finally come to an end. The heroic pursuit of formal complexity for its own sake feels like a bygone thing. The urgent question is not "Can we build it?" but "Should we build it?" Our technology is sufficiently advanced that all manner of shapes and assemblies are within our reach to imagine, though having the money or construction ability to realize them is another story entirely.

This provocation is in part the premise of "Crisis Formalism," a smart issue of *Flash Art Volumes* guest edited by Michael Abel and Nile Greenberg of the New York-based ANY, a partnership in architecture, scenography, theory, and design. Their introduction

begins: "If we recognize that architecture is at a tipping point—in which form, once immediate and vital, risks dissolving into a haze of proliferating crises—then the moment calls for a fundamental rethinking of form itself, not as an outcome of crisis but as its very cause."

ANY's contents help us exit the tailspin of architecture's sublime uselessness, in Manfredo Tafuri's description. We can move beyond the caveman logic: If form bad and architect make form, then... architecture bad? Uh, not really. Architects should still make things, but perhaps they should be making maintenance plans or organization charts or business plans or adaptive reuse scenarios or affordable housing. Making form is necessary but easy; it's the rest of the stuff that is hard. What's needed is a deeper, more thoughtful accounting of form's impacts, material flows, and complications. We ought to train ourselves to see form's shadow.

Theater artist Robert Wilson does exactly this with *Parzival: A Chair with a Shadow*, the chair pictured above as photographed by Martien Mulder. The seat includes a built version of its shadow. "A chair and its shadow—and its shadow's shadow" and, correspondingly, "the shadow's shadow—and its chair," Dung Ngo writes at the end of *Robert Wilson: Chairs*, a new book published by Ngo's August Editions and Raisonné. Wilson's chairs become characters in his plays, so this new publication documents his cast of furniture. This resonates. Wilson, who earned a degree in architecture at Pratt after landing in Brooklyn from his hometown of Waco, Texas, writes in the introduction: "I never thought of theater design as decoration, but as something architectural."

Across this issue, we are on a search for the rationales beneath form, from our news to features on material uses (page 19) to a Focus section on facade expertise (page 29) to a Q&A about the future of museums (page 81) to an excerpt from Sérgio Ferro's forthcoming book (page 82). Much like a century ago, with everything going on in the world, it feels like the right time to press ahead—not to discard architecture's value but to reexamine what anchors it in our wider culture. It's like the opening of the poem "Tear It Down" by Jack Gilbert: "We find out the heart only by dismantling what / the heart knows." Later, a line of welcome direction: "We must unlearn the constellations to see the stars." **Jack Murphy**

Masthead

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Corrections

In the March/April issue, the story "Rising Again" misidentified a type of wood used to create checkout stands in a photo caption. It should read "character white oak," not "mahogany."

In the March/April issue, the story "Culture Garden" mistakenly referred to the Mexican people as the Mexican people in the opening paragraph.

In the March/April issue, the story "Higher Education" featured an inaccuracy in the section about the Judith Enyeart Reynolds Performing Art Complex. The building will replace The Art Annex, which was torn down, not Craig Hall.

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6 News

LEED launches updated standards, do they go far enough?

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has announced the release of LEED v5—an updated standard that incorporates new criteria focused on human health, resilience, and decarbonization. LEED v5 works to address challenges around carbon emissions, quality of life and climate resilience. The updates signal a more adaptive approach to sustainability—one that considers a building's full life cycle and its interaction with the surrounding environment.

ILANA AMSELEM

Lifeseize Plans opens New Jersey venue for casting immersive architectural projections

Lifeseize Plans creates 1:1 scale walkthroughs of architectural plans with patented projection mapping technology. The company continues to expand internationally, with locations in France, Ireland, the UAE, and now the U.S. STEVEN SCULCO

Beyond gold-heavy interior redecorating, Trump's White House design plans include tall flag poles and paving over the Rose Garden

It's been just over 100 days since the inauguration, and a slender part of President Trump's frenzy has been dedicated to keeping groundskeepers and decorators busy with renovation ideas both inside and outside the White House. Since taking office in January,

he has opined about showerheads, issued an executive order to promote "beautiful federal civic architecture," planned to pave over the Rose Garden, and put his own gilded stamp on the Oval Office. KRISTINE KLEIN

Susan T Rodriguez | Architecture • Design and Mitchell Giurgola Architects restore and revamp Central Park's Harlem Meer with the completion of the Davis Center

The new Davis Center at the Harlem Meer reconnects the community in Harlem with Central Park and makes a visit all the more worth it. The project led by Susan T Rodriguez | Architecture • Design, Mitchell Giurgola Architects, and Central Park Conservancy, considers the park's history with contemporary means and vision. In spring and fall, the ovoid lawn space fronting the Davis Center can be used for myriad recreational use, in summer, it will transform into Gottesman Pool, and when temperatures drop, the site will transform into a full-size skating rink KK

Winka Dubbeldam is SCI-Arc's next director/CEO

SCI-Arc has named Winka Dubbeldam as its next director/CEO. Dubbeldam is a New York-based Dutch architect and educator. She is a founding principal of the international firm Archi-Tectonics. SCI-Arc's search for its next director was announced in June 2024. An advisory committee and the executive search firm Isaacson,

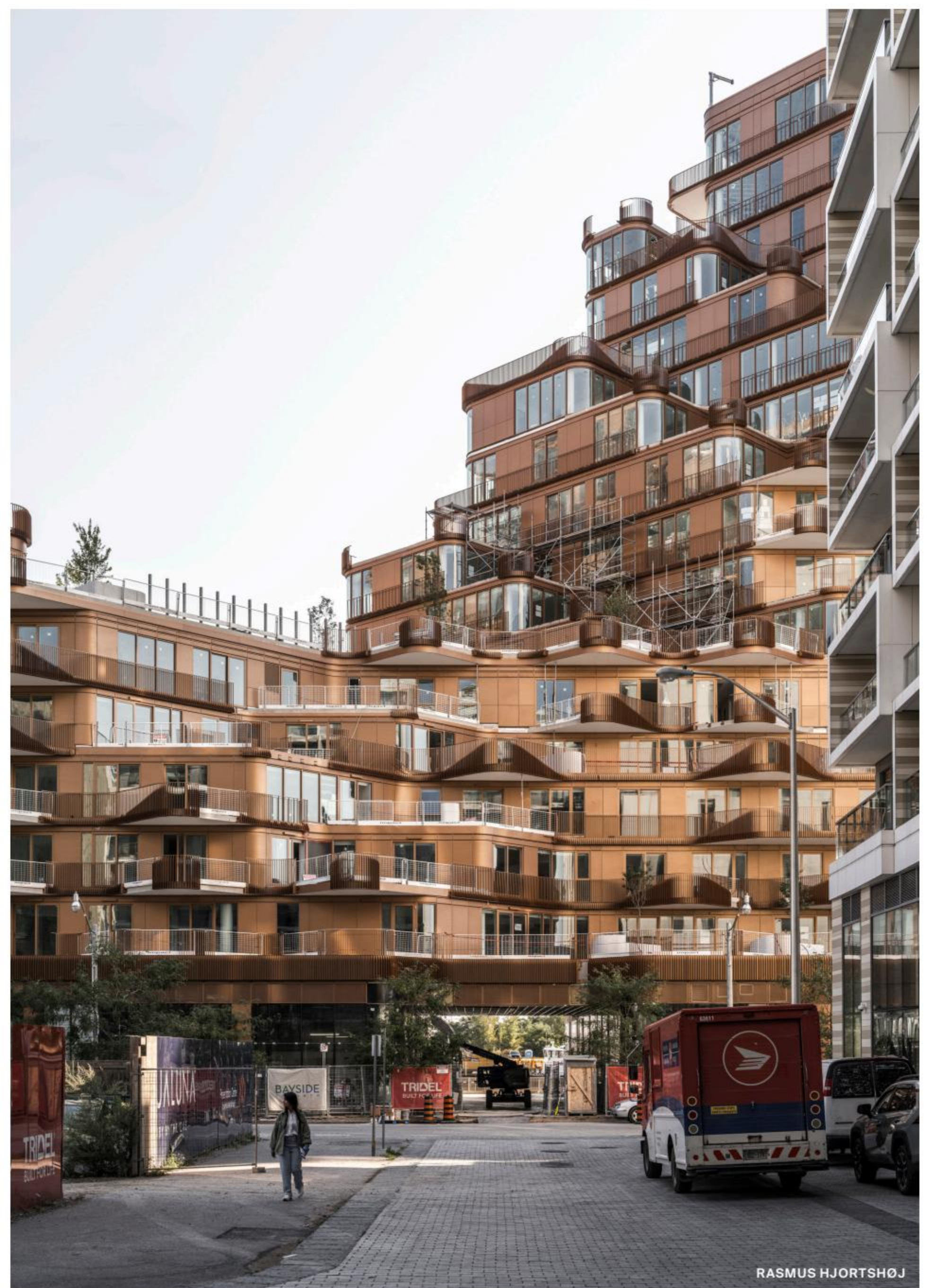
Miller headed the effort. Dubbeldam will follow the tenure of SCI-Arc Director/CEO Hernán Díaz Alonso, who took over in 2015. Alonso will vacate the position ahead of the Fall 2025 semester, and Dubbeldam will assume her new role September 1. KK

Austin City Council approves code change to allow single-stair construction

Austin City Council approved a code change that allows buildings up to 5 stories tall to be built with a single staircase. Among housing advocates and architects, single-stair reform has been top of mind in recent years as cities grappling with housing demand and affordability issues look for ways to build more. Austin joins other U.S. cities—including Seattle, New York, and Honolulu—in amending its local building code to allow this housing typology. KK

ArchitectureWorks and WATERSHED offer a sustainability master class with the Gulf Coast EcoCenter in Alabama

A new hub for environmental education and sustainable tourism designed by ArchitectureWorks and WATERSHED has opened in Gulf Shores, Alabama. The new 12-acre campus contains more than 17,000 square feet of space that supports long-term ecological and community resilience on the Gulf Coast, one of the areas most impacted by rising sea levels and temperatures. It has open-air classrooms, teaching



RASMUS HJORTSHOJ

Ten projects by BIG, Frank Gehry, Studio Gang, and others reshaping Toronto's skyline

Frank Gehry, Foster + Partners, Hariri Pontarini Architects, and other offices are trying to outdo one another in a space race to deliver Toronto's best skyscraper. Pictured here is Aqualuna by 3XN, scheduled to be completed this year. Projects by Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG), Selldorf Architects, Moriyama Teshima Architects, Studio Gang, and Henning Larsen are also underway. For more on Toronto's star-studded building boom, visit archpaper.com. DJR



EDMUND SUMNER

↑
The first phase of the renovation of the National Gallery Sainsbury Wing in London by Selldorf Architects opened on May 10. The update on the 1991 wing by Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates strives to meet modern needs while respecting the historical architecture, according to a design statement.

gardens, an adventure challenge course, and maker spaces. DANIEL JONAS ROCHE

Twenty must-see Expo 2025 pavilions in Osaka, Japan

Amid global turmoil and tariff wars, the world gathers in Osaka, Japan, at Expo 2025 to see the latest innovations in technology, agriculture, and more. AN rounded up 20 must-see pavilions at the event, including the Qatar Pavilion, designed by Kengo Kuma and OMA, and the USA Pavilion by Trahan Architects, supported by the National Endowment for the Arts. Visit archpaper.com for more. DJR

Weiss/Manfredi and SCAPE win Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art competition

The jury has spoken: Weiss/Manfredi will design the new addition at Kansas City's Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. SCAPE; Atelier Ten; WeShouldDoltAll; Taliaferro & Browne; Jaros, Baum & Bolles; and Severud Associates are also on the winning project team, with Weiss/Manfredi. The choice to go with Weiss/Manfredi was unanimous, a spokesperson for Nelson-Atkins said in a statement. "Weiss/Manfredi's concept absolutely blew us away as it captured the spirit of the museum while offering a bold

vision for our future," Nelson-Atkins CEO Julián Zugazagoitia said. DJR

Akima Brackeen and Cory Henry among the 2025-26 Rome Prize winners

The American Academy in Rome (AAR) has announced the 2025-26 Rome Prize winners. Starting in September, these architects, designers, preservationists, artists, and scholars will reside at AAR's historic Roman compound designed by McKim, Meade, and White for several months. Rome Prize architecture winners include Akima Brackeen of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

and Cory Henry, founder of Los Angeles-based Atelier Cory Henry. DJR

Coachella's art program channels the common desire for lightness in a heavy world

Finding a good spot to vibe is serious business at Coachella, and Public Art Company (PAC) has turned it into something of a science. This year, Coachella's art program commissioned three designers to produce playful, large-scale installations: Uchronia, Stephanie Lin of Present Forms, and Isabel+Helen. SHANE REINER-ROTH

Winners of the 2025 Architectural League Prize engage with "plot," whether as "land, drawing, or scheme"

The Architectural League of New York has announced this year's winners of the Architectural League Prize for Young Architects and Designers, now in its 44th iteration. "Plot" was the theme to guide this year's competition. The 2025 winners are: Juan Manuel Balsa, Rocio Crosetto Brizzio, and Leandro Piazzzi of Balsa.Crosetto.Piazzzi; Karina Caballero and Camila Ulloa Vásquez of Otros Entregables; David Costanza; Deborah Garcia of DEBORA.STUDIO; Mahsa Malek and Alex Yueyan Li of 11 x 17; Laura Salazar, Pablo Sequero, and Juan Medina of salazarsequero. DJR

Studio Gang designs multidisciplinary building for Spelman College to foster connections and public engagement

Studio Gang designed the Mary Schmidt Campbell Center for Innovation & the Arts at Spelman College not to just foster connection and collaboration among disciplines but also to invite the public in. "The students wanted this connection to the immediate community," Jeanne Gang told AN. "Spelman wanted to put students' work on a bigger stage but also embrace the community around them. The building helps facilitate that." KK

The Bureau of Overseas Building Operations sent a memo restricting sustainability language for architects

A memo dated February 19, 2025, directed to "all prime and subcontractors supporting projects for the Overseas Building Operations (OBO)" requests all public-facing materials cleared prior to January 20, 2025, be submitted for review. According to the memo, before resubmission "all references to sustainability or diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) shall be removed." JM

Peterson Rich Office to renovate MoMA Design Store Soho

Peterson Rich Office (PRO) has been selected to redesign the MoMA Design Store in Manhattan's Soho neighborhood. The retail space is located within a 19th-century building with cast iron columns and masonry walls concealed by past renovations. PRO's renovation will reveal the 19th-century elements that have long been kept from sight and improve the shop's entrance with new storefront

145

Donald Trump has launched an unprecedented assault upon the environment, instigating 145 actions to undo rules protecting clean air, water, and a livable climate in this administration's first 100 days—more rollbacks than were completed in Trump's entire first term as U.S. president.

windows and eye-catching artwork. DJR

House Museum proposes memorial made of chimneys to commemorate people and places lost in the Southern California wildfires

Project Chimney, a new initiative by House Museum, as the name suggests, seeks to relocate several historically significant chimneys designed by Richard Neutra, Paul R. Williams, and Frank Lloyd Wright,

Jr., and others in the Pacific Palisades burn zone. House Museum envisions these chimneys coming together in a new location to create what it calls the Palisades Fire Memorial. DJR

Trump administration tariff announcements cause varying impacts on sustainable building product industries but uncertainty everywhere

Since the Trump administration rolled out its first rounds of tariffs in March, sudden announcements and equally

quick rollbacks have created an unpredictable market for manufacturers and vendors of sustainable building products like lumber and aluminum. OSCAR FOCK

Antoni Gaudí declared "Venerable" by Vatican, a necessary step toward sainthood

Just days before his passing, Pope Francis elevated six historical figures to "venerable," a necessary step toward canonization, or being named a saint. Among these was Spanish

architect Antoni Gaudí, who has long been referred to as "God's architect." Of the six named by the late Pope, Gaudí was the only one person who was not a priest, missionary, or religious sister. DJR

Artist Jennie C. Jones's Ensemble plays music on the roof of The Met

Jennie C. Jones often explores sound in her work to engage and rethink minimalism and modernism. Influenced by Black avant-garde music, she uses sound and listening as key parts of her creative process. Jones's *Ensemble*, this year's Metropolitan Museum of Art Roof Garden Commission, reflects these ideas through three geometric sculptures that interact with natural elements to produce sounds that blend seamlessly with the cacophony of New York City noise. The smooth surfaces of the sculptures are made of aluminum and coated in deep maroon. The shapes are contemporary interpretations of string instruments featured in The Met's collection. IA

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← **Storm King Art Center capital project by Heneghan Peng, WXY, Reed Hilderbrand, and Gustafson Porter + Bowman is now open**

The cultural staple in New York's scenic Hudson Valley debuts new buildings and art this spring following the first capital project in Storm King's 65-year history. New contemporary art commissions include works by Kevin Beasley, Sonia Gomes, Dionne Lee.

RICHARD BARNES

8 Eavesdrop

Milan Musings

A mad weeklong sprint around Salone del Mobile and satellite Design Week fairs.

As moviemaking is to Los Angeles, so design is to Milan. Homewares and interior fittings are the lifeblood, mythic history, cocktail chatter, and standard billboard fare of Italy's commercial capital, and never more so than during Salone del Mobile, the mega-function that rolls into town every April. The 63rd annual version of the festivities was positively frenzied, with later-debunked rumors that attendance had already broken last year's record of 370,000 at the main fair in suburban Rho, with tens of thousands more flocking to events throughout the city center. Through it all, *The Architect's Newspaper* was there, taking in the scene at the Oscars of chair, lamp, and postconsumer laminated-bamboo room divider enthusiasts. What did we see?



SEAN DAVIDSON

The Marimekko Collection by Laila Gohar showcased her designs on a giant bed.

The Good

"That's where the cow piss used to go," said **Joseph Grima**. The prolific curator and *fuori* fixture was pointing to channels in the floor of a massive former slaughterhouse on Milan's eastern perimeter, where he and longtime collaborator **Valentina Ciuffi** had installed a late-night pop-up bar, restaurant, and exhibition space. **Vocla**, as the venue was called, was in fact Ciuffi and Grima's lesser postindustrial coup of the week. At their **Alcova**, situated for the second year in Varedo, north of Milan, the duo expanded their footprint to include a remarkable former factory space that they populated with installations, including a playful, make-your-own-idea-board workshop from **Habitare Materials**, as well as a giant machine arm from New Jersey manufacturer **Decibel Made**, turning out work from **Charles Birschaw** and others in real time. (Like Vocla's siting at Ex Macello, this "ex-SNIA" industrial building is slated for redevelopment.) As if that weren't quite enough, the Grima-Ciuffi affinity also curated a small but power-packed show at gallery **Delvis (Un)Limited** in the Brera district, featuring not only work by prominent figures like **Stefania Ruggiero**, but also some of those very figures appearing in person, lying down in turns in an **Espace Aygo**-designed bed in the middle of the room. The lucky occupant on Wednesday afternoon? None other than Valentina Ciuffi, plainly enjoying a well-deserved rest. "I needed this," she said.

The Rad

More so than in some recent Milan Design Weeks, this year's installment appeared determined to push the artistic and intellectual boundaries of the fair. At the heart of Salone's official cultural program this year was acclaimed avant-garde director **Robert Wilson**, now 83, whose primary contribution at the historic **Castello Sforzesco** comprised the lighting of the unfinished final Madonna statue by **Michelangelo**. Wilson used it as an object "onto which to paint light," in the words of curator **Franco Laera**. Though plainly keyed to the lighting theme of the **Euroluca** sub-fair at Rho, the piece was remarkably moving and decidedly uncommercial.

The same could (almost) be said of the presentation from **Cassina**, a collaboration with omni-designers **FormaFantasma** in which performers spun, gavotted, and shimmied around historic furniture by Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanerret, and Charlotte Perriand in a spirited exploration of modernism's wild side. Further expanding the conversation was a series of talks at the **Casa Cork**, a venue where everything—including the chairs and rugs—was made out of the squishy brown stuff and on which visitors sat as host **Tiffany Jow** spoke to design biggies, including **Yves Béhar** and **David Rockwell**, about the future of sustainable materials. How to sell the public on unconventional, eco-friendly cork? In Rockwell's view, make it aspirational. "People respond better to a 'want' than a 'should,'" he said.

The Weird

Admittedly, the juxtaposition of a big, brand-heavy trade fair and high-minded aspirations was bound to produce a few peculiar encounters. On entering the gorgeous, **Wes Anderson**-ish 1950s train that served as a venue for the **Prada Frames** talk series, a pair of visitors were more than a little surprised to hear architect and researcher **Lorenzo Pezzani** recite the famous Walter Benjamin quip to the effect that "There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism." Presumably this sweeping assessment would have to include not only the materials being produced by the talk series itself but also the output of another, brand-adjacent event across town, **Miu Miu**'s second annual Literary Club, which included appearances by novelists **Geetanjali Shree** and **Lauren Elkin**.

One piece of weirdness that did not feel the least barbaric: **Laila Gohar**'s bedding debut for **Marimekko**, which offered all visitors the (rather Delvin-ish) pleasure of sprawling together on a giant mattress, receiving breakfast from liveried attendees. When asked who had thought of the installation, one particularly comfortable-looking attendee in matching pajamas and slippers looked a little surprised. "You're looking at her," said Gohar.

The Schlep

Getting to and around the fair is seldom a pleasure, but logistical bothers were especially intense for a few unlucky Salonians on an **American Airlines** flight from New York to Milan on Monday night. In an incident that made international headlines, a disgruntled passenger complaining about an unavailable meal choice attempted to charge the cockpit halfway into the 8-hour flight; despite being closer to European airspace, the pilot returned the plane to JFK, remaining there till late the next morning, by which point "I'd missed half my meetings," one exasperated Salone regular reported. (Remarkably, this was the *second* major delay of the week caused by onboard shenanigans; a **Delta** flight on Saturday evening was briefly waylaid on the JFK tarmac for similar reasons.)

Of course, it could have been worse: The challenges faced by visitors are little compared to those confronted by exhibitors, especially exhibitors appearing at the fair for the first time. At **SaloneSatellite**, the **Marva Griffin**-initiated showcase of emerging designers, **Abraham Bendheim** of New York-based **Juntos** was displaying his delicate, wood-hewn chairs, last seen at Alcova's Miami outpost. Though it was well worth the effort in his view, Bendheim had to do some pretty expensive somersaults to get the work to Milan. "The first quote we got for shipping was for \$60,000," he said. "Luckily we worked that down."

The Zen

Steps from the Duomo, at the newly opened **Palazzo Cordusio Gran Meliá**, artist **Mirei Monticelli** used the astonishing double-height lobby of the historic 19th-century building as a stage set for one of her sinuous, biomorphic lighting sculptures, this one accompanied by a reflective table from American designer **William C Stuart** and inspired by a Greek mythological mosaic on the palace facade. "I was so amazed by the architecture," Monticelli said. "When you enter the hotel, you feel like you've come through the gates of paradise."

Across Milan, the illumination inspiration amply flowed: Lighting genie **Bocci** opened its appointment-only space near Parco Sempione for a party that saw guests flitting under **Omer Arbel**'s elegant pendants and sconces, currently paired with original furniture from **David Alhadeff**. Across town, the installation from artist **Lachlan Turczan** at **Google**'s "Making the Invisible Visible" show, a black vastness punctuated by cascades of light, could be physically manipulated by visitors. "Erik Satie had this idea of light as furniture," said the artist. "I wanted to do something like that." Actual Erik Satie music played quietly in the background at the **vowels** storefront show for **Capsule Plaza**. In the thick of it, a fleeting moment of transcendence was set aside at the legendary **Pasticceria Sisi**, savoring an apricot cornetto and not thinking about design at all.

Ian Volner has contributed articles on architecture and design to *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Architectural Record*, among other publications. He is the author of numerous books and monographs, most recently *Droese Raney X Design*.

Glam by Design

New restaurants and spaces by architects, chefs, and others to celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.



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Sōko by CAAM + Arquitectos

11798 Paseo de la Republica, Epigmenio Gonzalez, El Salitre, 76127, 76146 Santiago de Querétaro, Mexico

Located in a former warehouse, Sōko is a teppanyaki restaurant that blends its Japanese influence with its industrial site. The design of the restaurant unites a sense of tranquility with the warehouse's preexisting materials. Enclosed by brick and topped with an arched roof, the space takes advantage of Mexico's warm weather with an open-roof dining area and entry. A suspended planter, supported on concrete, trapezoidal structures, anchors Sōko. The structure is both functional (it provides ventilation for the cooking stations and establishes zones in the area) and decorative (the sculptural forms draw connections between the indoor and outdoor areas and create opportunities to hang more greenery). Past the planter, the barrel-vaulted room continues the sculptural nature of the design.

It's given a serene feeling by wood furnishings and ambient lighting that lean toward minimalism.



LEONID FURMANSKY

Haii Keii by gin design group

3300 Kirby Drive, Suite 9-A, Houston, Texas 77098

Pan-Asian cuisine meets *Blade Runner* and *Kill Bill* in this new restaurant by gin design group. The fantastical and futuristic fusion is immediately apparent. In the entryway, undulating walls and an irregularly shaped ceiling are clad in metallic plaster. A long, glowing hallway leads to the main dining room. The compressed corridor allows for a grand reveal, opening up large shoji screens and lit with projected shadows that recall the fight scenes in Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill*. Below the screens, crimson ropes drop down to velvet banquettes. At the center, a bar combines a river rock mosaic with red metal and gold mesh. An upside-down bonsai tree hangs above it. The concept continues into the mezzanine and private dining areas, divided with velvet curtains and traditional Chinese moon gate portals. Black leather and more red metal decorate the space, as it frames apertures back down to the main dining room.



CHASE DANIEL

The Kitchen by Michael Hsu Office of Architecture

400 West 6th Street, Austin, Texas 78701

Michael Hsu Office of Architecture's design of The Kitchen is unveiled in stages. The 8,300-square-foot bistro begins with an open and airy bar defined by a vaulted, coffered ceiling with moldings extending down to the walls. Lit with a grandiose sculpture by artist Jen Lewin, the space makes for an elegant yet grounded introduction. The color palette shifts to include green or blue textiles throughout the dining rooms, all within the black, white, and gray base, and oak flooring. Darker hues take hold in the private dining and wine rooms via black curtains and wallpaper. The regal details and artistry make the bistro appear refined, but structural reveals and elements ensure the space feels at home with The Kitchen's previous locations and the locale itself. Exposed steel and concrete columns, slatted walls popular within traditional country homes, and cowboy hats as decor tie the design to Texas.



YERIN MOK

Archives of Us by Studio/ JIALUN XIONG

555 North Spring Street, Suite 201, Los Angeles, California 90012

Studio/ JIALUN XIONG continues to explore duality and restraint, this time for a coffee shop from Nick Kim's apparel, accessories, and home-ware line, Archives of Us. Located on the second floor of a building, the shop favors monochromatic materials: stained black ash wood, off-white leather upholstery, and brushed-metal accents. The palette was chosen based on the way each responds to light: The former absorbs while the latter two reflect. Set against a concrete floor and white walls, these materials, and the furniture created from them, are the anchors of the 2,300-square-foot space. The furniture stems from the studio's own line, including seating and lighting from the Building Blocks collection. All are sculptural and geometric, playing with lightness or a sense of the monolithic. Together, the design forms a serene environment by day and a sleek, futuristic space in the evening. (It closes at 7 p.m. except during the special events that Archives of Us occasionally hosts.)



COURTESY AVROKO

Nuri Steakhouse by AvroKO

2401 Cedar Springs Road, Suite 120, Dallas, Texas 75201

Nuri is a Korean steakhouse divided into a traditional dining room, wine room, bar, and outdoor patio, as well as a members-only bar and lounge. AvroKO translated the unique and elevated 9,500-square-foot restaurant into a design that merges art deco style with touches of cyberpunk. Gold tones, reflective surfaces, and maximalist patterns recall the former. A plethora of fluted finishes further enhance this, including the columns topped with glowing, ribbed resin crowns. Cyberpunk references manifest through mechanical elements, like the spherical, custom-designed table lamps and pendants alongside metallic ribbing used to clad the ceiling above the bar. In the members-only lounge, maroon, red stone, and walnut burl make a brighter departure from the darkly themed areas. For this room, AvroKO designed a chandelier with radiating brass fins that surround a glowing core dripping in beads. Here every detail is an opportunity for glitz and glam.



SEBASTIAN LUCRECIO

Matsuyoi by Modellus Novus

156 Northeast 41st Street, Miami, Florida 33137

Matsuyoi, designed by Modellus Novus for restaurateurs Lisa Limb, Taka Sakaeda, and Jihan Lee (and investor Pharrell Williams), fills the space above their acclaimed Design District restaurant Nami Nori. The firm, which also worked on the previous endeavor, created this intimate space with a chef's counter by looking at the work of wood-block artist Hasui Kawase, specifically his intent to capture seductive moonlit evenings on Japan's seaside. The *shou sugi ban* wood and black terra-cotta tiles in the bar express deep, mysterious qualities while aiming to complement the chef's counter, which is covered in dark stone and features moss-green stools. Saturated hues and lighting decorate the space, from the blue-tinted lights that frame the bar to the dark green private dining area, lit with a moonlike glow on the wall. This restrained palette makes the small restaurant feel elevated and open, delivering on its name, an allusion to waiting for someone special. **KP**

10 Venice Visual



An Atlas of American Porches

PORCH: An Architecture of Generosity is the United States's contribution to the 19th International Biennale Architettura of La Biennale di Venezia. Projects, selected through a juried competition organized by AN and sited across the country as seen on this map, are on view inside the pavilion through November 23. JM



A Porch in a Northern Climate: An Apparatus for Socially Connecting and Slowing Things Down
VJAA
Minneapolis (multiple locations)

Outdoor Living Rooms: Architecture Through Conversation
Matthew Mazzotta
Lyons, NE & York, AL

Preston Outdoor Education Station
El Dorado
Elmsdale, KS

First Americans Museum
Johnson Fain
Oklahoma City

More Delicious, More Lovely, More Beautiful
Danielle Hatch
Springdale, AR

Lake Como Pavilion
RDG Planning & Design
Fort Worth, TX

Plugin House: Tackling Housing Affordability and Homelessness
Peoples Architecture Office and Plugin House
Austin

Confluence Park: Nature as Inspiration
Lake|Flato + Matsys Design
San Antonio

Projects for the People
Ross Barney Architects
Chicago (multiple locations)

A Civic Porch
Studio James Carpenter / JCDA and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates
St. Louis

Tom Lee Park: A New Front Porch for Memphis
Studio Gang
Memphis, TN

The Memphis Slim Collaboratory: A Front Porch For the Soulsville Neighborhood
brg3s architects
Memphis, TN

Coler Mountain Bike Preserve
modus studio
Bentonville, AR

Bennie G. Thompson Academic and Civil Rights Research Center
Duvall Decker Architects
Tougaloo, MS

Louisiana State Museum
Eskew+Dumez+Ripple
Baton Rouge, LA

Understory: A Forest Porch
Letter J
Fremont, MI

Pavilions As Porches: Temporary Gatherings and Reframing Public Spaces
Somewhere Studio
Columbus, IN & New York

Neuhoff: Reviving the Soul
Smith Gee Studio
Nashville

Wood Chips, Oak Trees, Folding Chairs and People Watching: What These Porches Are Made Of
Fred Carl Jr. Small Town Center at Mississippi State University
Philadelphia, MS

Rev. Walker's Home: The Porch as a Threshold, a Space of Possibilities
AU Rural Studio
Newbern, AL

Women in Construction: Claiming Power on the Porch
Gulf Coast Community Design Studio
Biloxi, MS

This Porch Is Not Where it is Supposed to Be.
Coles House Project
Buffalo, NY

Avis-Elsmere
Detroit Collaborative Design Center, University of Detroit Mercy
Detroit

Neighbors' Porch(es)
Brightmoor Maker Space
Detroit

Locust Grove Pavilion: The Porch Revisited
de Leon & Primmer Architecture Workshop
Louisville, KY

Art as Shelter
Katherine Hogan Architects
Raleigh, NC

Williams Terrace: "To Make Old Age Comfortable"
David Baker Architects
Charleston, SC

Forward Together
Young + Wales Architects
Charleston, SC

A Porch for Charleston and the Nation: The International African American Museum
Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Moody Nolan, and Hood Design Studio
Charleston, SC

MASS Haptic
Atelier Mey
Gainesville, FL

A Roof and a Platform
Chibbernonie
Callicoon, NY

Free to All
Architecture for Public Benefit
Boston

Sankofa
Jerome Haferd Studio
New York

The Park with Two Porches, The Crystalline Porch, the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi
Weiss/Manfredi
Long Island City, NY (multiple locations)

Domino Square
Studio Cadena
Brooklyn, NY

Coastal Porchscapes
WXY Studio
Queens, NY

A Community Porch between Land and Water
Marpillero Pollak Architects
Staten Island, NY

What Makes a Porch Public? Enhancing Civic Life in New York City
New York City Department of Transportation
New York

Three Porches. Three Scales
Olson Kundig
New York (multiple locations)



Shanghai Showstopper

The West Bund Grand Theater, by Schmidt Hammer Lassen (part of Perkins&Will), stands out for its simplicity and public openness.

In Shanghai, high culture is a booming industry. The Grand Theater, designed by Schmidt Hammer Lassen (SHL), is the latest in a string of arts centers to open along the West Bund, in accordance with a master plan that has been in the works for the last decade and a half. Operated by the Shanghai Grand Theater Arts Group and supported by the City of Shanghai, it is one of three new theaters that will be opening in the neighborhood this year.

If this explosion of cultural centers signals a healthy market, it also means tough competition. This is a theme that Bonnie Zheng, head of branding and public relations for the theater, emphasized as she led AN on a tour of the building shortly after its opening. Differentiation is key, she said, and the West Bund Grand Theater is banking on its commitment to “publicness”—something shared by the public—will help set it apart. In addition to the young, single, white-collar connoisseurs who make up the backbone of China’s theater audience, the architects envision neighbors and even dogs visiting the lobby on their daily walks; a coffee shop and restaurant to attract visitors at all hours; dance and music lessons to bring children and parents to the building; and discount programs for the elderly.

The building design does much to support this public mission. Its lobby opens on three sides right onto a highly active plaza, by Field Operations. The grade is continuous, and the dark slate ground plane flows from outside to inside, making the lobby an extension of the exterior space. An elevated terrace provides diners with river views while enlivening the facade with human activity.

Community is forming already: On our visit, a rehearsal room was set up for an open mic night; another for a choir lesson. Posters advertised an upcoming arts festival.

This heavy emphasis on publicness is possible in large part because of the theater’s location. It sits at a key transition along the West Bund, where a more parklike landscape

of cultural pavilions to its north gives way to a denser, more commercial environment to its south. East to west, it sits between the Huangpu River and the Dome Art Center, a circular adaptive reuse project also by SHL. Just west of the Dome sits a new office hub headquartering China’s leading tech companies, a steel and glass bonanza of buildings by SANAA, SOM, Foster + Partners, and others that complements the public waterfront. The whole development is a star-studded assemblage of names and forms, comparable to Vitra, the MIT campus, and other concentrations of contemporary architecture celebrity.

The Grand Theater responds to its complex surroundings with simplicity. It takes cues from its context, abstracts them, and integrates them into a distinct, legible whole. For example, the glass-fiber reinforced concrete facade is a nod to the site’s history as a cement factory. The sculpted curves of these concrete panels reference the rippling surface of the adjacent river, constantly perturbed by the freight ships passing back and forth as a feature of the landscape. The scalloped form is a concave allusion to the circular Dome Arts Center next door. Finally, the monolithic reading of the theater is a response to the busyness surrounding it, as well as an homage to the primitive factory buildings originally on-site. In SHL principal Chris Hardie’s words, they were looking for “a new vernacular of an industrial-shaped large building.”

This quest for simplifying responses to context, which is also a quest for balance that Hardie relates to yin and yang, continues on the interior. The lobby is clad in warm tones of earthy ceramic, in contrast to the cool exterior. Crisp, white landings pop out amid the dark curves of the walls. One of the most unexpected and rewarding moves is a gold-tinted, reflective surface on the ceiling of the lobby, bordered by continuous skylights that lend it a floating appearance. Beyond adding lightness and

volume to a relatively tight space, this mirror creates an inverted spectacle of the activity in the lobby, letting you look down on the movements of the crowd as its own type of performance. These paired reflections of performer and audience—stone and water, concave and convex, past and future—while subtle, undergird the project with conceptual continuity.

This clarity is essential partly because the architects have little control over the spaces once handed over to the client. “One of the challenges we always have with our public buildings in China is keeping them clean and clear to the intent,” Hardie explained. Simplicity is a way of accommodating the inevitable bric-a-brac of vending machines, security checkpoints, art installations, and other chaotic additions. This strategy is successful when the intrusions are small-scale and obviously added later. It even helps to mask some fairly wide tolerances in the installation of the exterior panels. However, the clarity can suffer when these intrusions are themselves of architectural scale. For example, a bank of elevators rise from the existing parking garage into a corner of the lobby, muddying its spatial clarity and the visual impact of the floating stair.

Overall, though, within a highly varied, complex context, the design strategy of subtle response allows the building to achieve spatially what is a contradiction linguistically: It stands out by blending in and blends in by standing out.

The West Bund Grand Theater is a significant contribution to the growing cultural landscape of the West Bund, especially in concert with its flexible neighbor, the

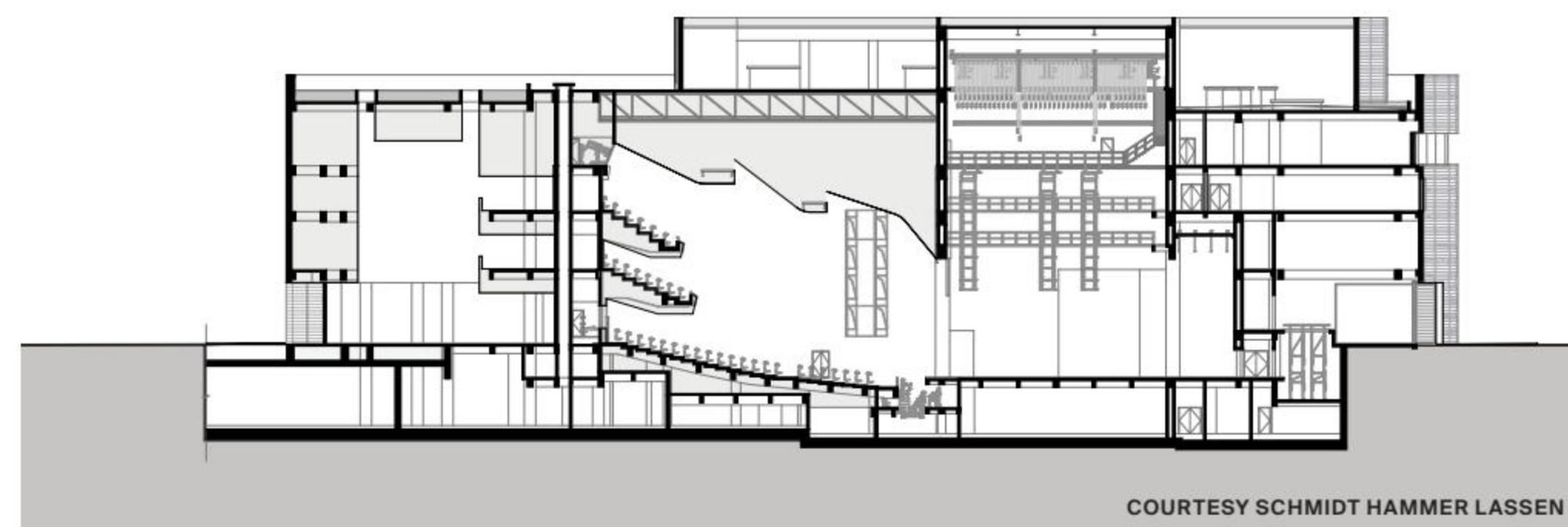
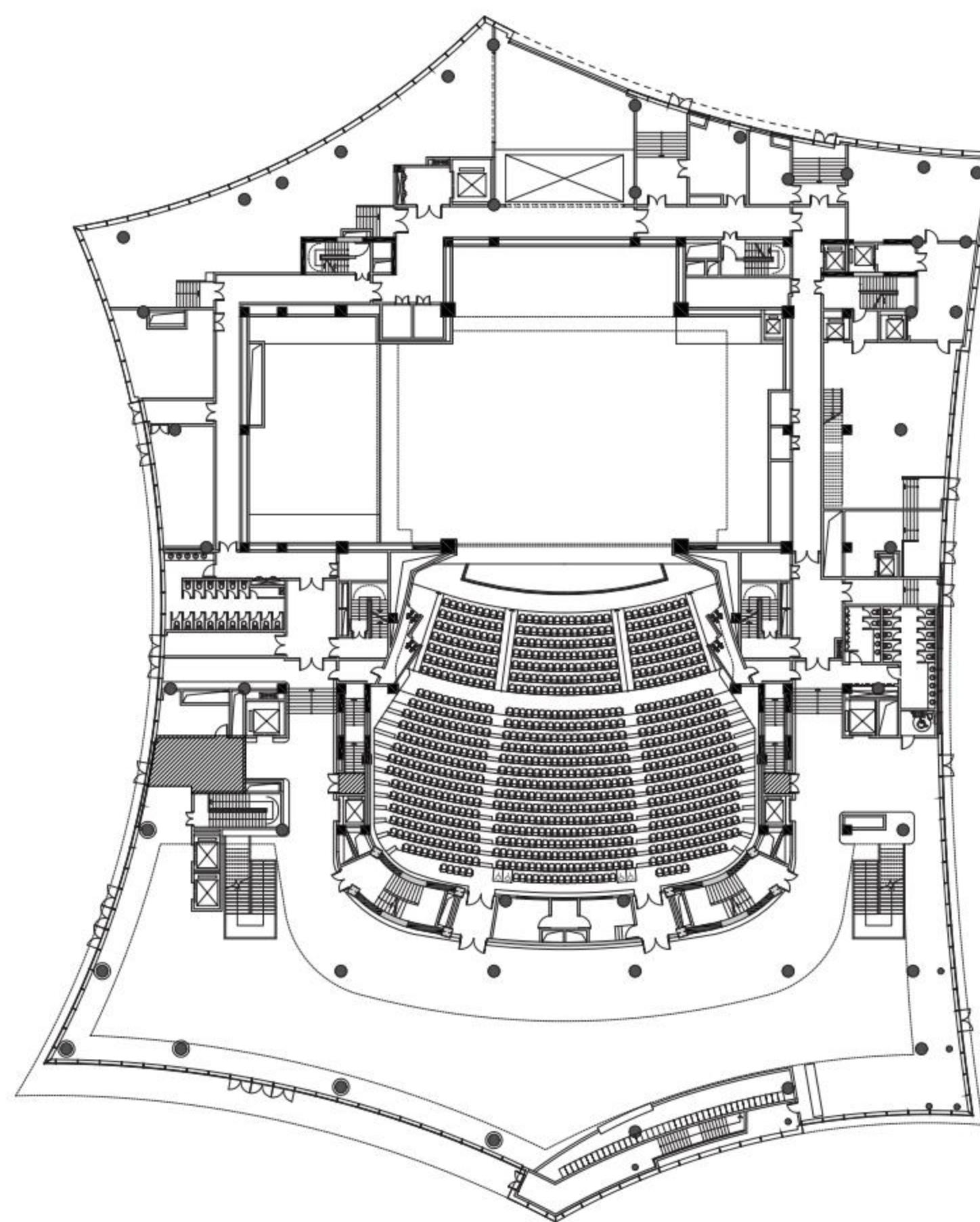
Dome Art Center. Thanks to these two venues and their highly programmable plaza (a go-kart track was installed for a recent family-friendly event), the West Bund is becoming more active, more broadly appealing, and more engaged with community.

Ben Parker is an architect and urban designer based in Guangzhou, China.

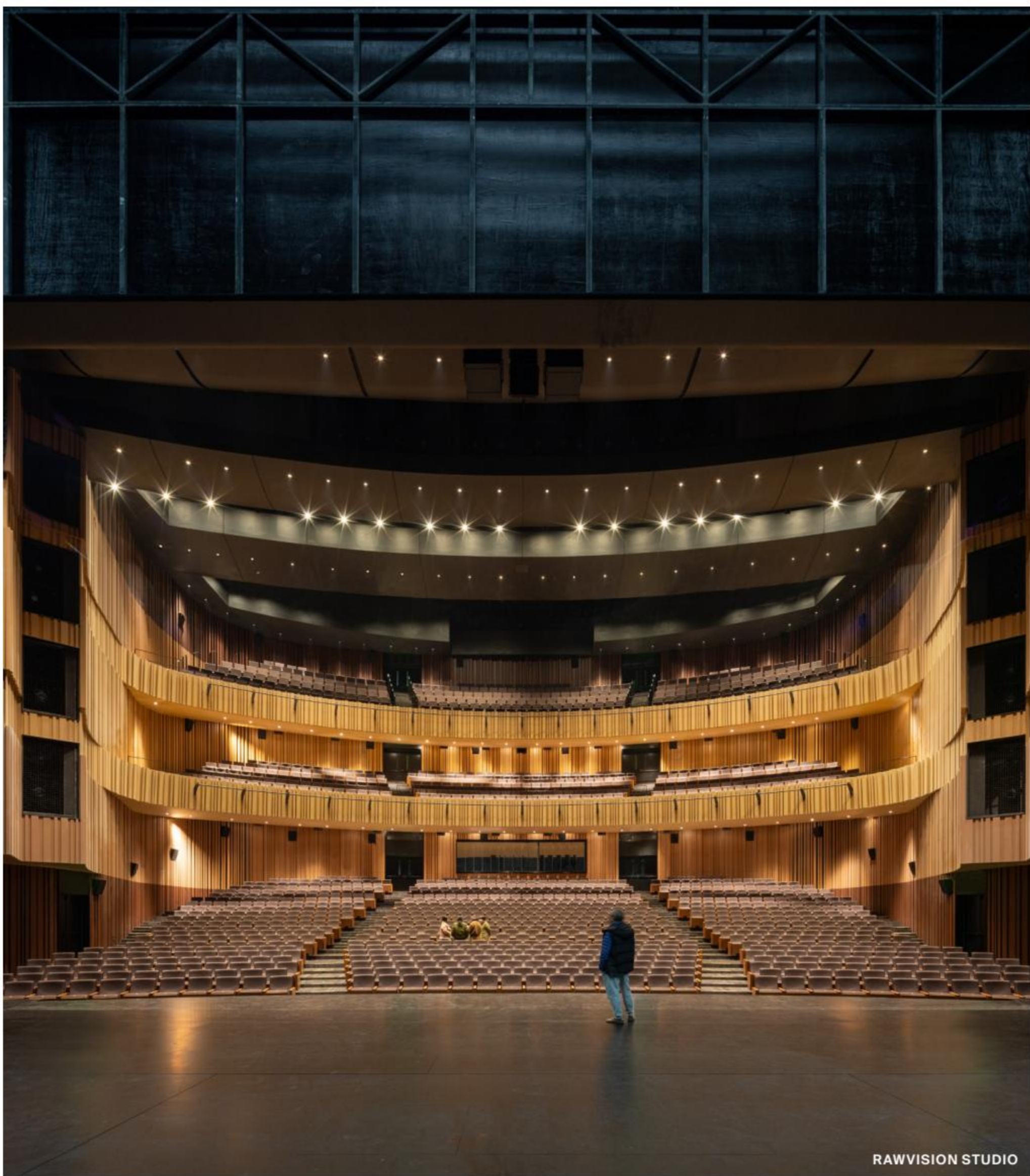
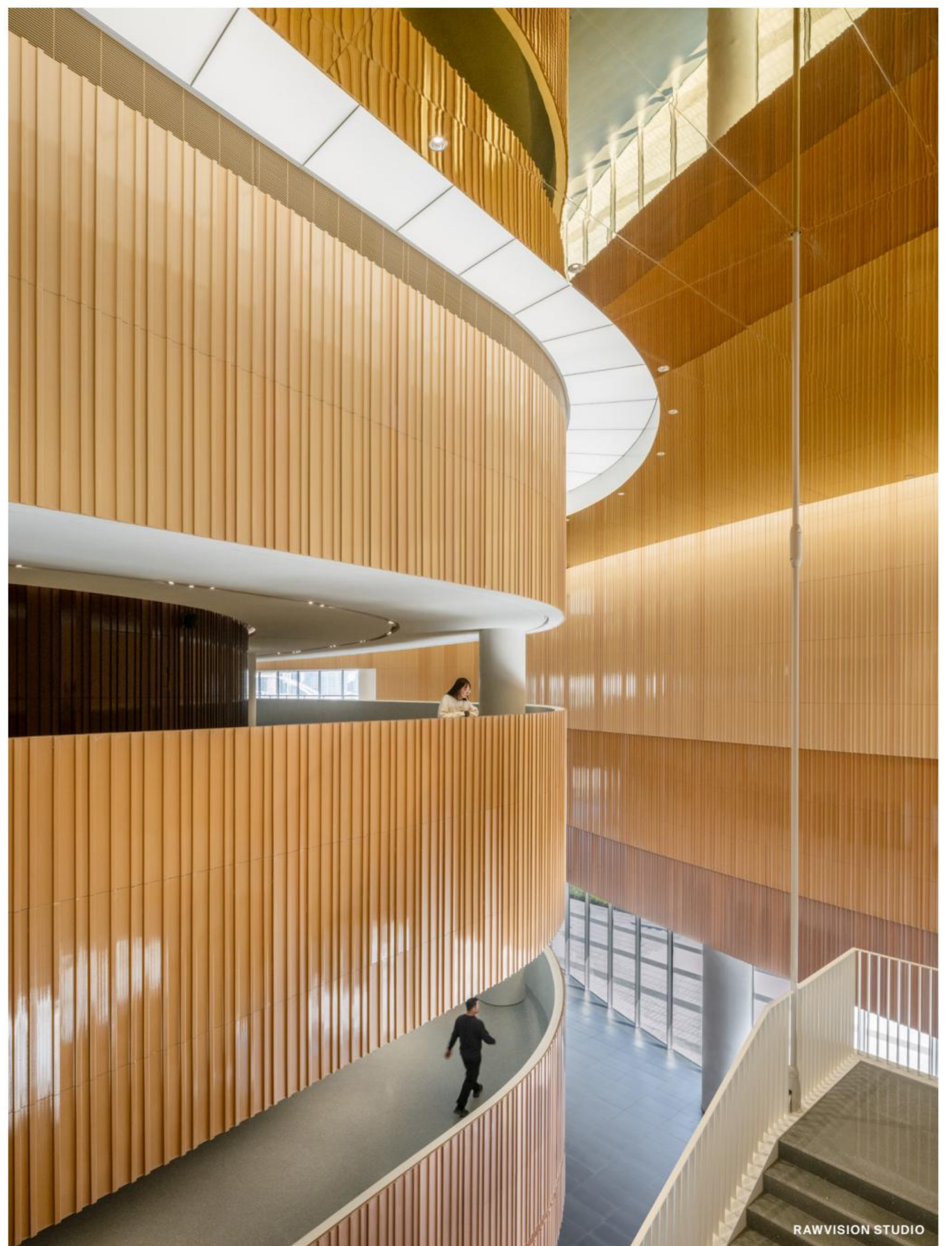
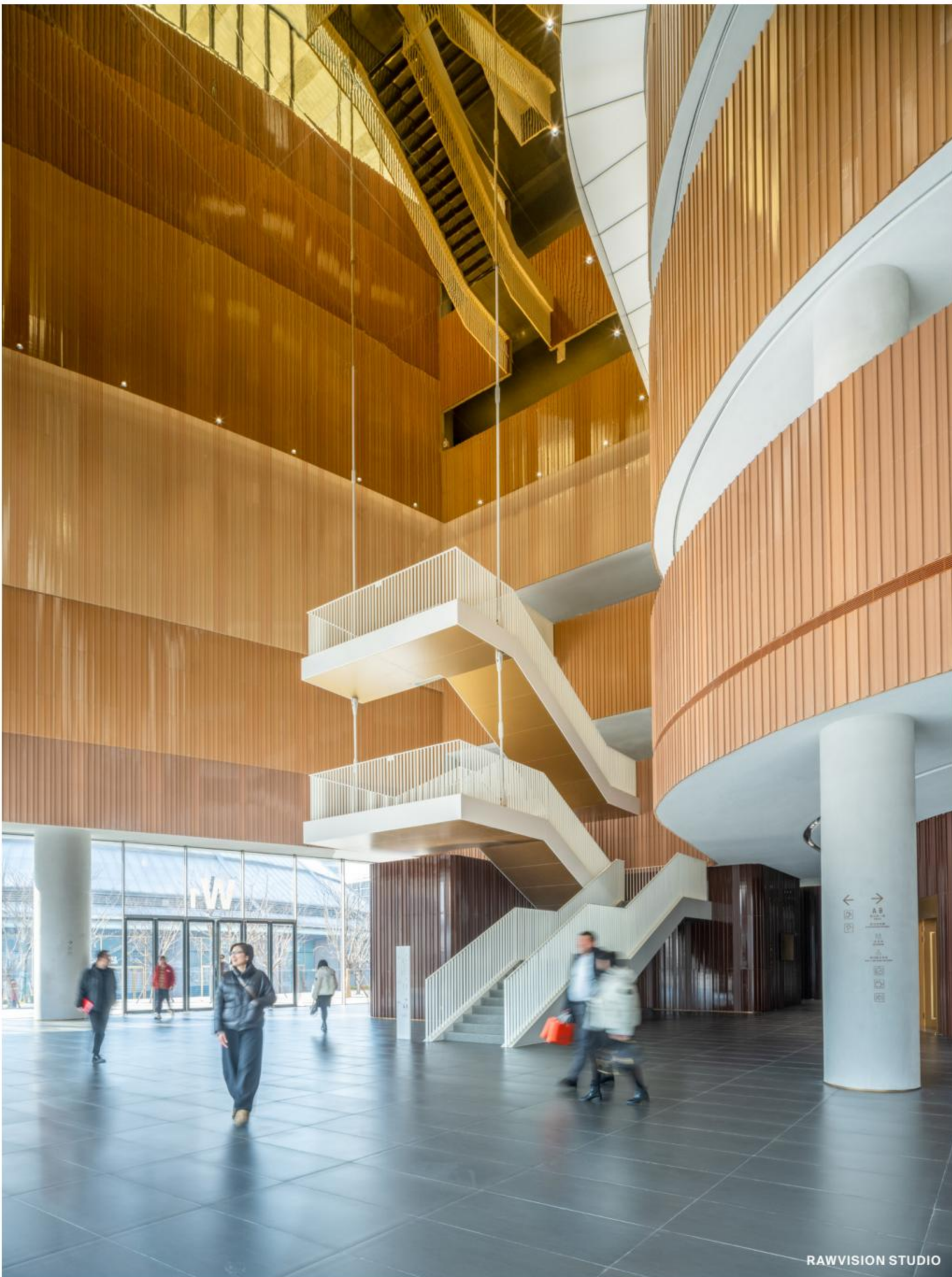
Left: The Grand Theater in Shanghai opens to a highly active plaza. Its facade nods to the site’s history as a cement factory.

Below: Schmidt Hammer Lassen designed the building in a quest for balance, akin to yin and yang, according to principal Chris Hardie.

Opposite, clockwise from top left: The lobby, clad in warm tones of earthy ceramic; landings pop out amid the walls; children take part in a chorus class, bathed in natural light from the building’s expansive windows; the 1,600-seat auditorium is one of two theaters designed to be world-class performance venues.



COURTESY SCHMIDT HAMMER LASSEN



Change Is Good

The Frick reopens after a renovation by Selldorf Architects that transforms the museum into an astonishing Gilded Age fantasy land.

continued from cover have at last been reunited and are once again viewable by the public, as the old man intended. Nearly five years in the making (and accompanied by no small amount of controversy, not least over a since-scrapped proposal to demolish the museum's eastern garden), the renovation of the Frick Collection by Selldorf Architects with Beyer Blinder Belle (BBB) has added more space for art, curators, and people, bumping the size of the venerable campus by fully 10 percent to 196,000 square feet. And, as of last month, it is reopened to the public.

For museumgoers already familiar with the beloved institution, what awaits them is something astonishing: Like the common recurring dream of discovering a heretofore-unknown room in one's apartment, the building has undergone a kind of magical, dimensional mitosis, growing on the inside while appearing to remain largely the same from the street.

For those who have never been before, the revelation will be hardly less remarkable. The Frick—"the world's favorite museum," as its director Axel Rüger called

it during a preview event—has always been New York's great offbeat cabinet of curiosities; it is the only thing in this city that comes close to the kind of small, exquisitely curated *musée des beaux arts* one often finds in second-tier European cities. (The Hispanic Society Museum in Manhattan is a close second; incidentally, it is also being renovated by Selldorf and BBB.) Walkable in an hour or two, the museum features works from Velázquez, Rembrandt, Whistler, Turner, and Titian that can reward even a whole day's worth of contemplation, a process to which the refurbished environment is especially conducive. Selldorf's rework is the result of many hands, including a small army of skilled plasterworkers, woodworkers, and other craftsmen who, in coordination with BBB, "supported us, led us, goaded us along the way," as founding principal Annabelle Selldorf put it during

the preview event. The updates include new lighting, in particular above the celebrated long gallery; additional seating in the upstairs galleries; an actual cafe; more and better bathrooms; and more provisions for accessibility. An auditorium, maybe Selldorf's finest moment here, an almost Joseph Urban-ish flourish whose clamshell twist combines art deco showiness with pristine acoustics by Arup. No one arriving for the first time would guess just how peculiarly incommodious, if sometimes charmingly so, the museum used to be.

More astonishing is that all these changes have in no way stripped the house of its character. On the contrary: Admirers now have access to even more of the original interior, with the upstairs quarters of the Frick family—previously reserved as office space—restored and made an integral part of the exhibition experience. Now, for the



Left: Entrance hall at the Frick Collection

Bottom left: The Fifth Avenue facade

Bottom right: The Frick Collection as seen from 70th Street in Manhattan



NICHOLAS VENEZIA

NICHOLAS VENEZIA

NICHOLAS VENEZIA

first time, explorers can ascend the staircase to see additional rooms repurposed as cozy galleries. From the lavish baroque frescoes in the old nursery to the new vitrines with decorative pieces seldom exhibited in the past, the warren of former boudoirs and studies doubles down on the peculiarly intimate, privileged art-viewing experience that has always set the museum apart. Looking out to Central Park over the parterre (also recently restored), surrounded by exquisite wall treatments (same), museumgoers can escape into a complete, Gilded Age fantasy.

Of course, it's a fever dream made possible by complex technical choreography. The \$220 million project includes substantial new construction, cleverly concealed within the existing complex and hosting a suite of conservation studios, offices, an education space, and a new gift shop. (ADA access, including at the main entrance,

was also included.) A new back-of-house corridor links the library reading room to the museum with its own internal connection to the much-improved main lobby; previously the journey required a hike around the block. Above, within the new tower—clad in Indiana limestone that perfectly mimics the historic facade—staffers can see how this surgery was carried out, including where an exposed steel beam sticks out somewhat awkwardly in front of a service elevator. Yet for the average visitor, movement between the historic home and the new spaces is so seamless as to make it almost impossible to tell where, exactly, one is in the overall scheme, at least without a three-dimensional, color-coded sectional drawing to clarify where the old portion ends and the new one begins. (Full disclosure: I have seen such a drawing. It is *still* almost impossible.) Selldorf has even

taken care to give the new lobby its own staircase, less grandiose certainly than its pendant in the mansion proper, but nonetheless charged with a distinctly prewar glamour, as though parasol-clutching, cloche-hatted dames were about to come swanning down it.

All these infrastructural gymnastics were necessary to make way for the new galleries upstairs and, more broadly, to support and expand the Frick's overall mission. Along the way, they have also yielded a museum that furnishes more than ever a mysterious synchrony of environment and art. Now back in his proper venue, Bronzino's lad with his absurd codpiece glowers beside the staircase, daring visitors to ascend where the velvet rope used to hang, while Ingres's coquettish young woman presides over one of the bedrooms, head inquisitively cocked. Holbein's Cromwell and

Moore flank the mantle as before, looking somehow still more comfortable in their luxurious enmity, and even the faces on the coins now showing in one of Frick's former studies seem glad to be out of storage. It was fun, of course, to see some of these same works installed at the Frick Madison, the pop-up within Marcel Breuer's building for the Whitney Museum of American Art, where they were temporarily billeted and took on a new and novel sort of life. But honestly, after so much, it's great to have the gang back together. **IV**



Left: The new staircase in the James S. and Barbara N. Reibel reception hall.

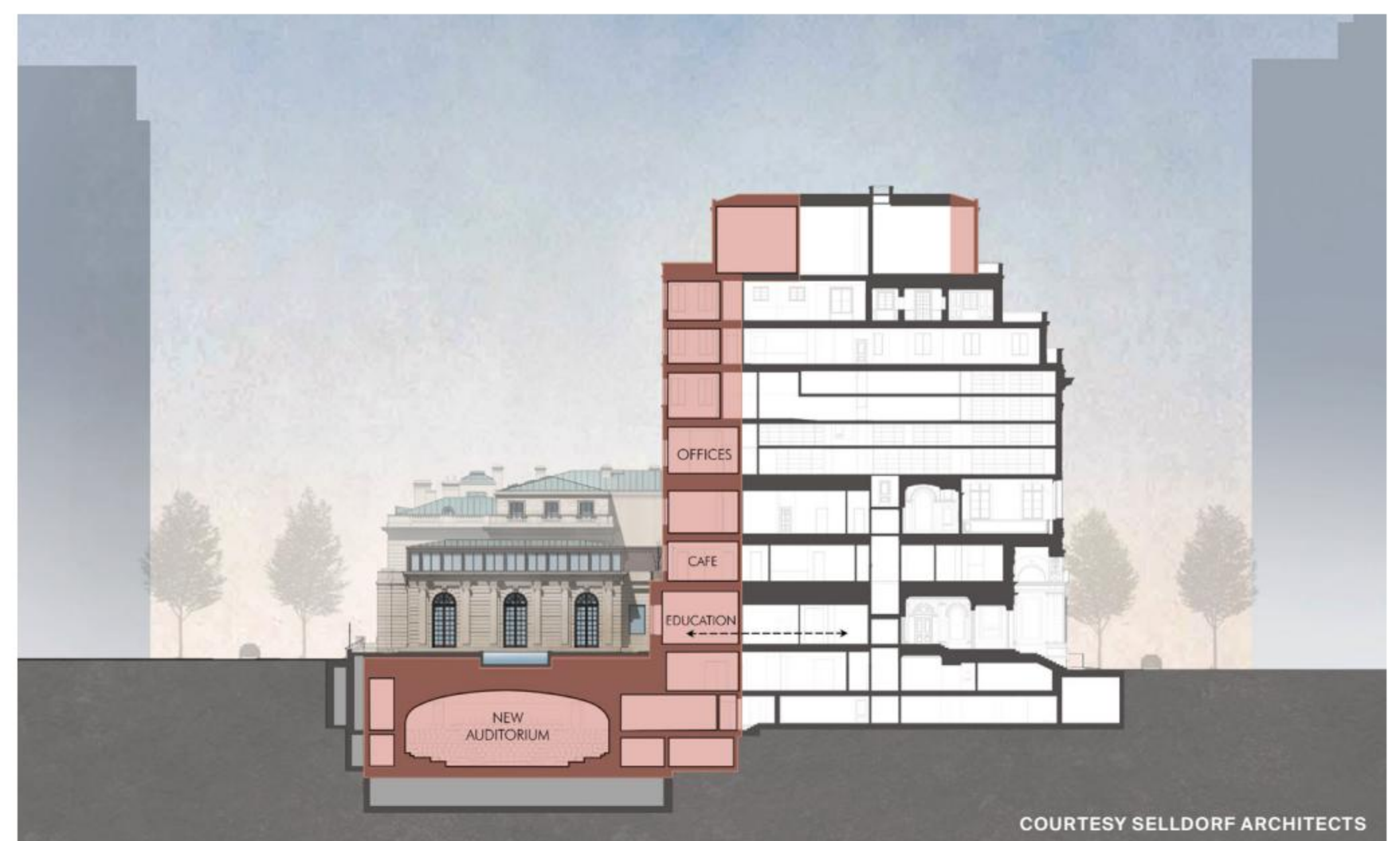
Bottom left: The West Gallery

Below right: The Stephen A. Schwarzmann Auditorium

Below right: Selldorf Architects with Beyer Blinder Belle added 10 percent more space to the Frick Collection campus.



JOSEPH COSCIA JR.



COURTESY SELLDORF ARCHITECTS



Bona Fide Boutique

Fogarty Finger flaunts its time-proven approach to projects big and small, which keeps clients coming back.

Behind 69 Walker Street's facade in the Tribeca neighborhood of New York is a beehive of designers all striving toward the same goal: making great work, whether big or small, luxury residential or affordable housing, interiors or ground up. Fogarty Finger occupies three floors of the industrial loft building so ubiquitous in the neighborhood Robert De Niro made famous. The 130-person firm was founded in 2003 by Chris Fogarty and Robert Finger after the pair spent a decade working at SOM. Alexandra Cuber joined the office in 2014 and is a director in Fogarty Finger's interiors studio. John Zimmer also teamed up as a director, following a stint in San Francisco. Despite having grown significantly, Fogarty Finger remains malleable, and responsive to ever-evolving industry trends.

"About 80 percent of our clients are return clients," Fogarty told *AN*. "Not only do clients often come back, they also recommend us. For the longest time we didn't do business development because we didn't need to. Now, at our size, we have to be a bit more thoughtful."

"One of many things that differentiates us from other, larger offices is that we're still first-generation leadership," Finger added. "We bring a very boutique approach to everything we do. Nobody has an expectation of what the firm does from generations past. This means we don't have people above us managing us from the financial side [who are] responsible for many, many offices. This gives us more freedom in terms of design; we don't come with the same overhead as many other firms have."

Astoria West, 2022

A waterfront site Fogarty Finger recently negotiated is in Astoria, Queens. Astoria West is a handsome, 500-unit luxury residential complex that's easily recognizable from Manhattan thanks to its bays, which jut out from the facade. The complex is broken up into three buildings with a shared courtyard. "We had a supertight budget," Fogarty said. "The client came to us and said, 'I need something I can recognize while standing in Manhattan.' So we used dormer rules that allowed for these

vertical portals into the apartment, which gave it an identity. Working on a very slim budget, a lot of detailing and thinking went into the windows, which change size, and the brick patterns. A lot of thought also went into the ground plane. We wanted to make apartments that people couldn't look into from the sidewalk, without creating a soulless pedestrian experience outside."



ALEXANDER SEVERIN

Private Equity Office, 2024

Fogarty Finger's interiors studio collaborates with high-caliber real estate, financial services, and legal firms across the Eastern Seaboard. Recently, Fogarty Finger redesigned a space within an iconic Manhattan tower for a private equity firm; the result was a design that's both inviting and dignifying. "Companies put a lot of thought into their address, but so often how they want their interiors to look and work is an open-ended conversation," Finger said. "Real estate is becoming a very experience-driven

industry, which is affecting everything." For Fogarty Finger, helping financial services and legal practices arrive at a clear understanding of their identity is paramount, as was the case in this project, in which the client requested to stay anonymous. "We often start with visioning sessions," Cuber said. "We ask clients to describe themselves in a few words, which often rattles them a bit. It's so interesting taking these interviews and creating a space that reflects the client and how they want to present themselves."



DAVID MITCHELL

The Eliza + Inwood Public Library, 2024

What to do with all of New York City's publicly owned land has mayoral candidates talking. Amid ongoing debates, one thing seems clear: The new Eliza Apartments at the redeveloped Inwood Public Library in Manhattan is a very good precedent to use when negotiating city land moving forward. Mayoral candidates Zohran Mamdani, Zellnor Myrie, and Andrew Cuomo all alluded to the Eliza + Inwood Public Library in their housing plans as a case study to emulate. The mixed-use building opened earlier this year and was reviewed by *AN*. Fogarty

Finger designed the ground-up building and its accompanying apartments, while Andrew Berman Architects ideated the ground-level library. "This is a truly multiuse building," Zimmer said. "It has a community center that's used for vocational training and STEM in the cellar, and there's also a universal pre-K."



ALEXANDER SEVERIN

Nevins Landing, 2021-

The Gowanus neighborhood is one of the largest, most significant development sites underway in New York today. Many high-profile firms are designing buildings near the polluted canal—a Superfund site in a yearslong cleanup—and Fogarty Finger is one of them. The firm is behind 320 and 340 Nevins Landing, on the banks of what many hope becomes the "eco-friendly Amsterdam of Brooklyn." Fogarty Finger's design at Nevins Landing can be understood as two separate plinths that front a shared plaza with towers above them. The

facades mimic the old brick buildings in the neighborhood, with all of their idiosyncrasies. One of the other commendable features of Nevins Landing's design is its retail component: Fogarty Finger created internal public corridors lined with a variety of small commercial spaces. This will ensure the ground level of Nevins Landing is a happening display of artists and coffee shops instead of, say, another Walgreens. "Our goal was to make a neighborhood," Cuber said. **DJR**



COURTESY FOGARTY FINGER

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MATERIAL MATTERS

Architects make decisions that reshape the surface of the earth. Based on what is specified for construction, raw materials are extracted, refined, assembled, and shipped, often around the world, prior to installation on job sites. In this section, read about Ellen Peirson's visit to a new stone-clad dormitory at Oxford University (page 20), explore Bill Millard's review of a museum exhibit about concrete as the predominant material in skyscrapers, and check out an interview with Ronald Rael about his recent experiments with printing with earth (page 24). Plus: In an expanded sense of the word "material" that embraces media as a medium, don't miss Diana Budds's survey of creators who make architecture content for online consumption (page 26).





ORIGINAL QUAD

Everything new is old again, as David Kohn Architects creates a satellite campus at New College, Oxford, meant to defy time.

Time is geological in Oxford. Its storied streets and colleges are largely sculpted from the same Jurassic belt of Corallian limestone that the English city sits on, much of it taken from the nearby quarry at Headington. What it means to be new takes on a radically different meaning here. The first stones to be cut from this quarry in the 1300s are impenetrably dense, a symbol of permanence to the buildings of some of the older colleges in Oxford, including “New” College’s

bell tower. New College, founded in 1379, had the name bestowed upon it when medieval Oxford was still young. Later, in the 16th century, Radcliffe Camera was also built from this stone, quarried from the depths as supplies dwindled, leaving it more vulnerable to erosion from pollution. To call something new in Oxford is to see all that is ancient was once fresh; stone is used here so that what is billed as new can eventually become permanent.

The stone parapet of New College features hand-carved gargoyles and grotesques, including depictions of creatures threatened by climate change, such as this pangolin.

New College has seen the steady erosion of its once-pristine golden limestone by the hands of time. In April 2024, David Kohn Architects (DKA) completed New College’s Gradel Quadrangles, a student accommodation complex of 94 en suite bedrooms and separate shared kitchens, study rooms, offices, and an auditorium, as well as new spaces for the adjacent New College School. In his 2020 essay “The Stones of the University of Oxford,” Professor Danny Dorling described the university’s buildings as “a place in which to hide away from the material world,” where defensive architecture “emptied out” quarries so that scholarly pursuit could be protected from society at large. DKA’s Gradel Quadrangles reinterprets the quadrangle building type—a now-archetypal Oxbridge form of which New College has the first purpose-built Great Quad, with a chapel, great hall, and student rooms built as one in 1403. Nearly three centuries later, New College added Garden Quad, the first three-sided quadrangle, which led out to the gardens with an ornamental mound at its center. “You can start to see the town on the horizon. It’s open to the landscape,” as David Kohn described it to *AN*. Today, the meandering elevations of DKA’s Gradel Quadrangles present the first curved quadrangle; it may not be a radical plan, but again, time moves slowly in Oxford.

Kohn described Garden Quad as giving the practice “a clue to what you could do with this next project.” In 1403, the college was defined by a defensive structure separating “town and gown”; by 1685, the architecture had begun opening to the landscape, reflecting the college’s decision to allow townspeople to take up residence and pay for education. As Kohn observed, “Even though it’s at quite a glacial pace, we’d like to reflect how the colleges continue to be opening up.... How does one make it a welcoming place to study?”

Despite these gestures toward openness, the project remains firmly rooted in the lineage of Oxbridge collegiate architecture, where a distinct separation from the outside world persists and only fellows can walk on the grass. The notion of permeability is carefully balanced. There is a welcoming gesture toward the street—students may walk on the grass—yet as with all Oxbridge colleges, access is tightly controlled behind a key card gate.

The site came with a history of planning battles. “The college’s view was they had slightly blighted their site from a planning perspective,” explained Kohn. With three failed planning applications, a Grade II listed villa and an unlisted arts and crafts villa, and numerous tree-protection orders, the college knew that it needed a bold, high-quality proposal if it were to unlock its last freehold site in Oxford. Though the project began as a way to accommodate students in the college who had to find rented housing in Oxford, ambition quickly grew, helped by a £15 million (nearly \$20 million) donation from alumnus Chris Gradel. Kohn described the brief as about “much more than a hall of residence. It was a whole way of thinking about what the college could be.”

This approach is most evident in the transition from an elegant gate and porter’s lodge to a landmarking tower at the quadrangle’s entrance. The tower design references historical motifs—a trefoil plan, chapel-like windows—ensuring that its function as something marking the continued lineage of New College is unmistakable. Without this clarity, Kohn argued, a tower risks ambiguity: “Unless it is bold enough and self-confident enough, you read functions into it that are not helpful. Is it a residential tower? Is it some bit of infrastructure?” The nature of the windows and their decorative quality affirm the tower’s role as a deliberate and integral part of both the composition of the new college complex and the evolution of the college as an institution. Kohn remarked that the college warden (the head of an Oxford college), Miles Young, regretted that they did not push the tower taller, so that it could look over the college’s nearby historic site.

This quadrangle sees new colors of stone rub up against the monotone Headington of much of the city center. The variegated Ancaster limestone is mainly cream in tone, but up close flashes of chalky white and pale blue stand in



New College's tower by David Kohn Architects both stands out from and blends in with the centuries-old spires of Oxford.

GARGOYLES AND GROTESQUES, 24 IN ALL, ARE PLAYFULLY INCORPORATED INTO THE SANDSTONE CORNICE, RIFFING ON THE UBIQUITOUS FORMS SEEN ACROSS THE CITY, BUT THIS TIME OF ANIMALS THAT ARE THREATENED BY THE CLIMATE CRISIS.



The project proposal included tree-protection orders. David Kohn Architects' new quads preserve existing mature trees.

bright relief, the blue from oxidized iron in the lower bed of the quarry. Less often, flames of red appear in the diamond formation of the stone blocks that pick up on the pink Cumbrian sandstone plinth and jagged cornice. This facing stonework ties back to the concrete frame and therefore lacks the solidity of the centuries-old stone architecture of the main New College site, but still the facade, built by Grants of Shoreditch, in its diamond-shaped blocks comes to life as the sun shines on it, its apparently flat face dancing with the veins of the stone and subtly undulating surface.

Gargoyles and grotesques, 24 in all, are playfully incorporated into the sandstone cornice, riffing on the ubiquitous forms seen across the city but this time of animals that are threatened by the climate crisis. All were chosen by Dr. Ashleigh Griffin, professor of evolutionary biology at New College, and author and academic Katherine Rundell. Animals such as a pangolin, a gecko, and a moth cling to the roof of the building as they continue to evade extinction. The roof, too, reinforces this sense of organic rhythm. Highly insulated and covered in polygonal anodized aluminum tiles, it breaks from the rigid geometries of traditional quadrangles, lending the building a softness that counterbalances Oxford solidity.

Less poetically, in the limestone of the tower is a carving of New College founder William of Wykeham, with the college motto, "Manners Makyth Man," emblazoned below it. Some things never change in Oxford, but this new addition bends and bulges, much like the scales of a pangolin, forming a rich interplay of movement and solidity. The weight of time is everywhere. Though the buildings defy the trend of university accommodation as quickly and poorly constructed anonymous shells, the series of buildings still exist in a lineage of donors attaching their names to university buildings—not just to build a legacy of philanthropy but perhaps to offset corporate transgressions.

Stories can never be rewritten in Oxford, a city where history moves at a measured pace—exclusive at best, a tool of empire at worst. New additions do not erase the past but build upon it, sometimes in an act of quiet atonement. The Gradel Quadrangles embody this continuum, adding another stratum to the storied fabric of New College, perpetually new, yet already woven into the city's deep geological and architectural history.

Ellen Peirson is a London-based writer, editor, and architect.



Flames of red appear in the diamond formation of the stone blocks that pick up on the pink Cumbrian sandstone plinth and jagged cornice.

WILL PRYCE

HARD TRUTH

Decades ago, concrete overtook steel as the predominant structural material for towers worldwide—the Skyscraper Museum's new exhibition examines why and how.

"Is that concrete all around, or is it in my head?" asked Ian Hunter in "All the Young Dudes," the song David Bowie wrote for Mott the Hoople in 1972. Concrete is all around us, and we haven't quite wrapped our heads around it. It's one of the indispensable materials of modernity; as we try to decarbonize the built environment, it's part of the problem, and innovations in its composition may become part of the solution. Understanding its history more clearly, the Skyscraper Museum's new exhibition in Manhattan implies, just might help us employ it better.

Concrete is "the second most used substance in the world, after water," the museum's founder/director/curator Carol Willis told *AN* during a recent visit. For plasticity, versatility, and compressive strength, reinforced concrete is hard to beat, though its performance is more problematic when assessed by the metric of embodied and operational carbon, a consideration the exhibition acknowledges up front. In tall construction, concrete has become nearly hegemonic, yet its central role, contend Willis and co-curator Thomas Leslie, formerly of Foster + Partners and now a professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, is underrecognized by the public and by mainstream architectural history. The current exhibition aims to change that perception.

The Modern Concrete Skyscraper examines the history of tall towers' structural material choices, describing a transition from the early dominance of steel frames to the contemporary condition, in which most large buildings rely on concrete. This change did not happen instantly or for any single reason but through a combination of technical and economic factors, including innovations by various specialists, well-recognized and otherwise; the availability of high-quality limestone deposits near Chicago; and the differential development of materials industries in nations whose architecture grew prominent in recent decades. As supertalls reach ever higher—in the global race for official height rankings by the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH) and national, corporate, or professional bragging rights—concrete's dominance may not be permanent in that sector, given the challenge of pumping the material beyond a certain height. (The 2,717-foot Burj Khalifa, formerly Burj Dubai, uses concrete up to 1,987 and steel above that point; Willis quotes SOM's William Baker describing it as "the tallest steel building with a concrete foundation of 156 stories.") For the moment, however, concrete is ahead of its chief competitors, steel and (on a smaller scale) timber. Regardless of possible promotional inferences, Willis said, "we did not work with the industry in any way for this exhibition."

"The invention of steel and the grid of steel and the skeleton frame is only the first chapter of the history of the skyscraper," Willis explained. "The second chapter, and the one that we're in



COURTESY THE SKYSCRAPER MUSEUM

now, is concrete. Surprisingly, no one had ever told that story of the skyscraper today with a continuous narrative." The exhibition traces the use of concrete back to the ancient Roman combination of aggregate and pozzolana—the chemical formula for which was "largely lost with the fall of the Roman Empire," though some Byzantine and medieval structures approximated it. From there, the show explores comparable materials' revival in 18th-century England, the patenting of Portland cement by Leeds builder Joseph Aspdin in 1824, the proof-of-concept concrete house by François Coignet in 1856, and the pivotal development of rebar in the mid-19th century, with overdue attention to Ernest Ransome's 1903 Ingalls Building in Cincinnati, then the world's tallest concrete building at 15 stories and arguably the first concrete skyscraper.

Baker's lectures, Willis reported, sometimes pose a deceptively simple question: "What is a skyscraper?" In 1974, when the World Trade Center and Sears Tower are just finished, you would say it's a very tall building that is built of

Above: The Skyscraper Museum in Lower Manhattan features an exhibition, *The Modern Concrete Skyscraper*, which examines the history of material choices in building tall towers.

steel, an office building in North America. But if you ask that same question today, the answer is: It's a building that is mixed-use, constructed of concrete, and [located] in Asia or the Middle East." The exhibition organizes the history of concrete towers by eras of engineering innovation, devoting special attention to the 19th- and early-20th-century "patent era" of Claude Allen Porter Turner (pioneer in flat-slab flooring and mushroom columns) and Henry Chandlee Turner (founder of Turner Construction), Ransome (who patented twisted-iron rebar), and François Hennebique (known for the re-inforced concrete system exemplified by Liverpool's Royal Liver Building, the world's tallest concrete office building when completed in 1911). In the post-war era, "concrete comes out onto the surface [as] both a structural material and aesthetic." Brutalism, perhaps to some observers' surprise, "does not figure very large in high-rise design," Willis said, except for Paul Rudolph's Tracey Towers in the Bronx. The exhibition, however, devotes considerable attention to the work of

Pier Luigi Nervi, Bertrand Goldberg (particularly Marina City), and SOM's Fazlur Khan, pioneer of the structural tube system in the 1960s and 1970s—followed by the postmodernist 1980s, when concrete could express either engineering values or ornamentation.

“In the '90s, there were material advances in engineering analysis and computerization that helped to predict performance, and so buildings can get taller and taller,” Willis said. The current era, if one looks to CTBUH rankings, is dominated by the supertalls seen in Dubai, Shanghai, and Kuala Lumpur, after the Petronas Towers (1998) “took the title of world’s tallest building from North America for the first time and traumatized everybody about that.” The previous record holder, Chicago’s Sears (now Willis) Tower, comprised steel structural tubes on concrete caissons; with Petronas, headquarters of Malaysia’s national petroleum company of that name, a strong concrete industry was represented but a strong national steel industry was lacking, and as Willis frequently says, form follows finances. In any event, by the '90s concrete was already becoming the standard material for supertalls, particularly on soft-soiled sites like Shanghai, where its water resistance and compressive strength are well suited to foundation construction. Its plasticity is also well suited to complex forms like the triangular Burj, Kuala Lumpur’s Merdeka 118, and (if eventually completed) the even taller Jeddah Tower, designed to “confuse the wind,” shed vortices, and manage wind forces. Posing the same question Louis Kahn asked about the intentions of a brick, Willis said, with concrete “the answer is: anything you want.”

The exhibition is front-loaded with scholarly material, presenting eight succinct yet informative wall texts on the timeline of concrete construction. The explanatory material is accompanied by ample photographs as well as structural models on loan from SOM, Pelli Clarke & Partners, and other firms. Some materials are repurposed from the museum’s previous shows, particularly *Supertall!* (2011–12) and *Sky High and the Logic of Luxury* (2013–14). The models allow close examination of the Burj Khalifa, Petronas Towers, Jin Mao Tower, Merdeka 118, and others, including two unbuilt Chicago projects that would have exceeded 2,000 feet: the Miglin-Beitler Skyneedle (Cesar Pelli/Thornton Tomasetti) and 7 South Dearborn (SOM). The Burj, Willis noted, was all structure and no facade for a time: When its curtain-wall manufacturer, Schmidlin, went bankrupt in 2006, it “ended up going to 100 stories without having a stitch of glass on it,” temporarily becoming a “1:1 scale model of the structural system up to 100 stories.” Its prominence justifies its appearance here in two models, including one from RWDI’s wind-tunnel studies.

The exhibition opened in March, with plans to stay up at least through October (Willis prefers to keep the date flexible), with accompanying lectures and panels to be announced on the museum’s website (skyscraper.org). Though the exhibition’s full textual and graphic content is available online, the physical models alone are worth a trip to the Battery Park City headquarters.

Intriguing questions arise from the exhibition without easy answers, setting the table for lively discussion and debate. One is whether the patenting of innovations like Ransome bar and the *Système Hennebique* incentivized technological progress or hindered useful technology transfer. Willis speculated, “Did the fact that there were inventions and patents mean that competition was discouraged, that the competition was only in the realm of business, rather than advancing the material?” A critical question is whether research into the chemistry of concrete, including MIT’s 2023 report on the self-healing properties of Roman pozzolana and proliferating claims about “green concrete” using alternatives to Portland cement, can lead to new types of the material with improved durability and lower emissions footprints. This exhibition provides a firm foundation in concrete’s fascinating history, opening space for informed speculation about its future.

Bill Millard is a regular contributor to AN.



COURTESY EERO SAARINEN COLLECTION, MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVES, YALE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



CONSTRUCTION VIEW, COURTESY GEOFFREY GOLDBERG

Above: Eero Saarinen’s only skyscraper, built for CBS in 1965 and also known as “Black Rock,” under construction in New York City.

Left: One of Bertrand Goldberg’s twin Marina City towers being built in Chicago. When completed in 1968, the towers were the tallest reinforced concrete structures in the world.



LANCE GERBER/COURTESY DESERT X

MUDDY ROBOTS

Ronald Rael speaks with AN about combining ancestral intelligence with artificial intelligence.

For decades, Ronald Rael has been on a quest to spread the gospel of constructing buildings with earth. His ambition is evident across his 2009 book *Earth Architecture*, his website *eartharchitecture.org*, his extensive work with Rael San Fratello and *Emerging Objects*, and his teaching and research at UC Berkeley. Most recently, he has been exploring mobile 3D printing with mud, as seen in an installation for *Desert X*. A more personal story is on view in *Casa Desenterrada/Exhuming Home* in *Making Home—Smithsonian Design Triennial at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum*. *Emerging Objects* was also honored this year by Cooper Hewitt with its *National Design Award in the Digital Design category*. The day after the awards ceremony, Rael stopped by AN's office to discuss his journey with executive editor Jack Murphy.

Let's start with *Adobe Oasis*, your current installation at *Desert X*. What can you tell us about it?

Adobe Oasis references the oases that are in the Coachella Valley around Palm Springs. I was thinking about creating big and small spaces, and the textures and patterns of the wall are reflections of the bark of palm trees, so there's a poetic component to it. It also references oases around the world, where earth architecture is often present.

But it's also part of an ongoing technological experiment about how to build with earth. I'm testing the limitations and boundaries of the robotic system that I currently have at my disposal, so I'm extending the robot's printing arm to its maximum capacity and pulling it in as close to the robot as possible. I'm exploring how to achieve the wall thicknesses that are needed to build a building and even components like staircases. In many ways it's not an artwork but more of an architecture experiment.

I'm starting to move further away from the origins of these experiments, which is my family's property in Colorado, where I have access to materials, equipment, and land. So, *Adobe Oasis* is also an experiment in mobility, in moving the

equipment and looking for material to harvest and use.

The mix is manufactured from clay and sand, but it also has crushed recycled brick and straw. Except for the brick, it is all natural ingredients.

The material that you're mixing then goes through the nozzle. Does it vary based on the print site? Or is there a consistent recipe?

The beauty of earthen construction is that it doesn't rely on homogenous material formulations, because we're drawing from local sources. Sometimes it might have more clay, and sometimes it might have more sand. You can counteract extremes by the introduction of organic material like straw. The wide spectrum of material tolerances is part of the beauty of this robust and ancient form of construction.

One constraint is the pumping system, which can't accommodate large aggregate sizes, so we sift the dry material. And there are limits as to how dense or liquid the mix is to work with the printer, so we monitor that.

Can you tell me about your current printing rig?

I've always believed there are different approaches of printing architecture. One approach is to construct a printer that's larger than the building itself, which would move on a gantry. For me, I prefer mobility and the idea that we can harvest soils from different places.

My current rig was manufactured by Twente Additive Manufacturing, from Canada. It's a seven-axis robot mounted to the back of a 25-foot-long trailer. It has a rail, so the robot can move back and forth along that rail, and the robot's arm can extend 13 feet on each side. It can produce a building-scale structure, but then the trailer can be repositioned and construction can continue.

Working with Virginia San Fratello at *Emerging Objects*, we developed software for printing over the years; one product that came

Left: Ronald Rael created the installation *Adobe Oasis* for this year's *Desert X* in California's Coachella Valley.

Below: The test print Rael made on his family's Colorado property, a serpentine wall that tested the reach of a robot's arm.

out of it is the Potterware application, which is now used all over the world to print pottery.

Lately, I've been collaborating with Andrew Kudless on printing, so it has been productive to combine my trajectory in earth architecture and technology with his parallel expertise in robotics and fabrication. It feels like a nice moment of bringing these two knowledge bases together to see how we can propel this technology forward.

A lot of the work is developing algorithms for the robot's movements that can reduce cracking and increase strength. Earth architecture has always been monolithic and thick, and the beauty of robotics is that we can make thinner systems and embed intelligence, like air pockets; other structural systems; or places for insulation, conduit, wiring, and different details for windows and doors.

Can you share about a test print you made last summer on your family's land in Colorado?

This was testing the largest possible reach of the robot's arm. The wall itself is serpentine to allow it to be thin, and it's 10 feet tall, but it's quite strong. It is also testing labor: There's a lot of mixing! For most of this project, it was just me. I did have help starting things up, but then everyone left and I was like, "OK, I have to do



COURTESY MUDDY ROBOTS

this." I was mixing large amounts of earth and getting it into the pump. The robot is controlled by a controller, so you can start and stop it. You can rewind it if there's a mistake. You can speed it up or slow it down, because sometimes the earth mixture might be wetter and more viscous or drier and more solid. And a person must monitor that there is a consistent bead coming out. There are advanced ways to do this, and more established companies have systems to monitor these aspects, even with automation.

What is a game changer here is cost: Having a concrete-printing company with a full team and expensive, proprietary materials would make this quite an investment. In my case, if you discounted my own labor, it cost something like \$400 to make a print that is the size of a very large room.

What kind of foundations or site preparation do you need to do before printing?

Of course, to make a building you need an engineered foundation with stem walls and proper drainage. For most of these experiments, I'm just printing on the ground. The *Skylos* project has an engineered foundation; there was a whole slab that was meant to supply plumbing for the chambers. But the beauty of the system is that if the ground is not level, or if there's a need for thinking of a foundation that steps, the robot can adapt to those systems.

In other experiments, I've used a SCARA robot that *Emerging Objects* co-developed with 3D Potter to test large radial structures. The roundness isn't for any poetic reason, though there are some structural advantages; it's basically reaching out as far as it can. This incorporates thinking about multicellular construction, because you can relocate the single robot as the previous print is drying. You can also move it vertically; the robot has a print height of just under 8 feet, so it can be moved upwards to print a second "lift."

"WE'RE IN AN IMPORTANT PLACE IN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY, AND I BELIEVE THAT NEW CASE STUDIES CAN POINT THE WAY BETWEEN MODERNITY AND WHATEVER HAPPENS NEXT. THAT'S EXCITING."
—RONALD RAE

The property on your family's land was also the inspiration for your contribution to *Making Home*. What does this land mean to you?

My mother's family has lived in this village for least seven generations, and we've lived in this region for thousands of years. And during those centuries we've lived in buildings made of mud. Maybe 50 yards from this print is my great-grandfather's house, which he built out of mud. It's where I live now, and most houses in the village are made out of adobe.

My father was a builder who built houses out of adobe, but he was also a carpenter, so he fixed roofs and made additions. I am part of a long history here of earth as the primary construction material. There is a lot of traditional knowledge that has been handed down for millennia, but then it started disappearing. Globally standardized building codes and the adoption of new building material technologies pushed aside these traditions, but they often continued in smaller settlements. I was lucky enough to be exposed to this form of construction: Before I went to Columbia GSAPP, I worked with my father on the restoration of a late-19th-century adobe house that was falling into ruins. I call that approach AI, for "ancestral intelligence." I combine it with another form of AI, "additive intelligence," so I'm thinking about how these traditional systems can be expanded through additive manufacturing.

It's an approach that also relates to the geography of the continent: The borderlands between the United States and Mexico are a hybrid place where things come together. It's often said that the borderlands are places that divide, but actually these are places where things come together, and new products emerge from that overlap.

You've also been using artificial intelligence to create images of possible earth architectures, right?

AI image-making technologies are changing so fast. We're working on how to move from a 3D model to AI-generated image as a form of rendering so there is design control. I think of early AI image generations like going into a casino and playing slot machines. You add some credits, upload a prompt, and decide, "I like this—no, I don't like that." Now there's some control and you can train AIs on image sets. We're looking at texture, form, and architectural languages to see how they might respond to different contexts.

It's interesting that we use the word *rendering* for image production in architecture, as it is related to the finishing of a wall through plastering. We're exploring clay materials because of our planetary ethos: Most microplastics in our environments come from household latex paints, so we want to create an architecture that instead uses natural clay surfaces, which are inexpensive, nontoxic, sustainable, and have a minuscule carbon footprint. Again, earth is the oldest building material on the planet and has been used to make the oldest buildings on the



Above: Rael constructed 8 3D-printed silos for *Skylos*, an art installation in the high alpine desert of Colorado's San Luis Valley.

Right: Inside Casa Covida, a Covid-era house that stemmed from an experiment in 3D-printed earth. The three rooms are built for two cohabitants, with openings to the sky, horizon, and ground.

Below: A Muddy Robots house made with help from AI.

planet; it's also the most easily recycled building material, so maybe we can establish that as an ethos.

The first day of printing for Desert X was also the first day of the fires around Los Angeles. There was a tremendous wind in the Coachella Valley because of the Santa Ana winds, which were spurring the flames. But for us, it was useful because it made our print dry quickly. The first 18 inches of material was a constant reminder of how the tragedy unfolded, but also how we could respond with a structure that is fire resistant instead of one that results in the burning of toxic materials that enter the atmosphere, oceans, and ground—and our blood. That's another purpose of *Adobe Oasis*: to contemplate the future of construction in fire-prone regions like California and beyond.

How do you move from doing experiments and installations to full building projects? What do you need to be able to deliver inhabitable architecture using this technique?

After the L.A. fires, there has been a lot of interest, but nothing certain yet. There are a few leads that seem promising; many are prompted by the same ethical concerns that I have related to toxicity, fire resistance, and carbon emissions.

More generally, with my Muddy Robots company I'm looking for an organizational structure that wants to promote this method as a game-changing technology. Architectural investments are usually about how cheap and fast you can make something in order to make a profit. 3D printing with earth is novel and important enough that there needs to be a long-term investment to grow this strategy. An ethical approach isn't typically something that is often done in the real estate development world or even the architectural technology world.

I know others have said this, but there needs to be a slow architecture movement that considers where things come from and where they will go, plus who is living in them. I actually think it is smart to model the direction after these food movements, because there are a lot of parallels between food and architecture—being conscious of where materials come from, what they are made of, and what they do to the planet.

I also think earth architecture should be considered separately from alternative building movements. It is different than Earthships or straw-bale houses, as the tradition represents 10,000 years of building, knowledge, and heritage. It's not the same thing as repurposing mass-produced waste to make buildings, such as tires, bottles, or agricultural waste.

Beyond items like plumbing and conduit, what is holding back progress for earth architecture today?

Plumbing and conduit are not holding back progress for earth architecture today—the practice is ready to go, and it has been for thousands of years. Robert A. M. Stern was one of my professors in architecture school back in the 1990s. The internet was still new, so there was a lot of conversation among the students about how the internet is going to change architecture. Bob would always say, "It's just a hole in the wall!" And as reductivist as that was as an answer, I feel the same way about these secondary items. We could come up with interesting ways to make a hole in the wall or to lay conduit, but that's not the problem. The problem that needs to be

solved is how to demonstrate to people who have been distanced from this building technology that it can be a building system that responds to their contemporary lifestyles.

How does earth architecture relate to the history of modern architecture?

There's an interesting liminal history about modernism and what came before. Nearly all the modernists—Wright, Loos, Schindler, Gaudí—were designing and building buildings made of earth. During World War II, Le Corbusier shut down his office and wrote a pamphlet about building in earth for schools, housing, and factories.

As another example, Rudolph Schindler traveled across the country to work for Frank Lloyd Wright in Los Angeles. He stopped in Taos and fell in love with adobe architecture and eventually designed an adobe house for a doctor there; however, it was never built. But then in L.A., he was working on the Ennis Brown House for Wright and used the dirt of the site with a bit of cement to make the textile blocks. It is often thought that the Ennis House is influenced by Mayan architecture, but the references are actually from the pueblos of New Mexico. Ultimately, the modernists became more well known for their advancements and innovations that fell largely on the side of industrial materials, but nevertheless, they were influenced heavily by the earthen building traditions of the past and crossed a threshold between craft traditions and industrial processes.

I believe we're in that threshold moment again, where fabrication has matured enough to the point that new forms of automation are going to be embraced by architects. We're in an important place in architectural history, and I believe that new case studies can point the way between modernity and whatever happens next. That's exciting.



We're also in a health-conscious moment, so it makes sense that we should be aware of all the items that make up our buildings.

I've been writing a bit about the wall section of a typical single-family house. Think of the number of materials, the number of companies represented in those materials, and the number of tools and tool companies that are used to install those materials. Given all the products, this is a fairly specialized form of construction. Within those 8 inches or so of wall section, so many companies are competing to secure real estate within the wall to sell wallboards, insulation, screws, coatings, vapor barriers, and so much more. The building section is a capitalist battleground!

In earth buildings, there are fewer materials, maybe just a handful. Again, it's like healthy food. The author Michael Pollan has advised not to eat anything that has more than five ingredients or items that your grandmother can't pronounce. I think that's a good rule for the architecture of the future.

Ronald Rael, a 3D-printing pioneer in earthen construction, is a cofounder of Rael San Fratello and Emerging Objects and a founder of Muddy Robots, among other initiatives. He is also the Eva Li Memorial Chair in Architecture in the Department of Architecture in the College of Environmental Design at UC Berkeley.



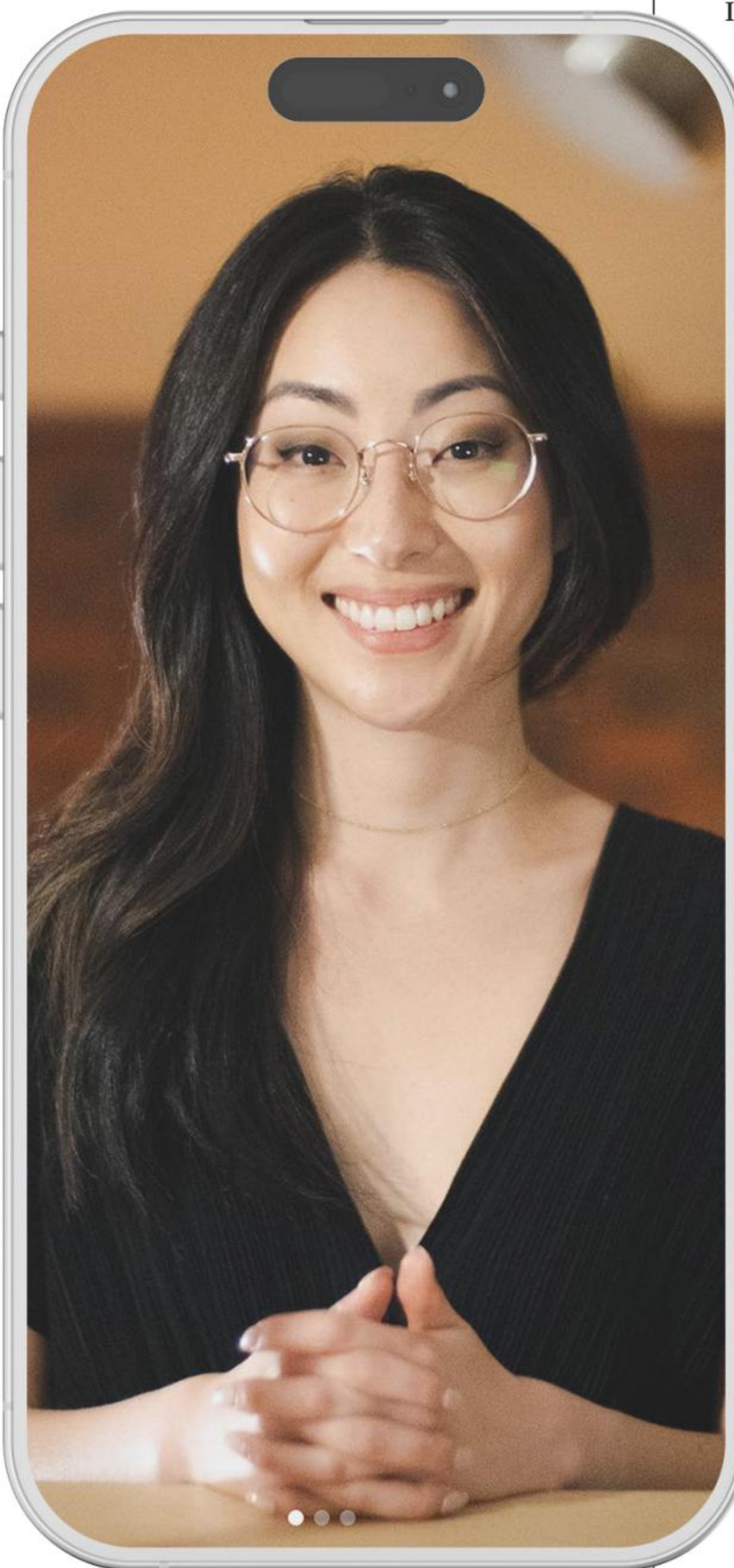
COURTESY MUDDY ROBOTS

VERY ONLINE ARCHITECTURE

Design discourse has moved from the page onto the phone screen. Is the field better for it?

If your algorithms are anything like mine, there's a lot of architecture and design served up no matter if I'm scrolling through TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube. One second I'm touring John Lautner's Sheats-Goldstein House, the next I'm watching a deep dive into the psychology of reality TV homes, and then I'm seeing a roast of sofas that scream Instagram trend victim. (Note to shoppers: Avoid the much-duped Togo and Camaleonda.)

A decade ago, criticism like this was confined to the printed page or, occasionally, documentary films. But now, it's moved onto our phone and computer screens, served up in brief snippets that just make you want to get swallowed even deeper. This world, which we'll call Very Online Architecture, is always informative, often funny, and highly addictive. Want to know more about congestion pricing? Or the absurdity of NEOM, the mirror-covered 100-mile linear "city" in Saudi Arabia? Or how messed up Robert Moses is? It's more fun, and digestible, to scroll through a series of before-and-after photographs showing his impact on cities than pick up a book.



In the past, critics and architects pursued publication in big-name journals and networked in salons and conferences. They still do, but there's a growing faction who are pursuing content creation as a significant element of their work. And some are making their entire living off it. They're heading to the places where audiences hungry for this information already are—Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok each have over 1 billion monthly users—and building sizable platforms on them. Of course, this isn't the first time that critics and architects have leaned into mass communication to get their ideas across, but it has the most reach by far.

While the intersection of architecture and social media in tech's early days may have been limited to firms promoting their work and seductive design-porn images, the creators within the genre of Very Online Architecture are developing new forms of practice, using their platforms for advocacy and serving as mediators, employing the tools of our time to welcome us into their worlds. And they're having a lot of fun doing it.

"I have friends who are in architecture or adjacent fields and there's a sense of, *Oh, we have to take this very seriously*—it's very dry.

It's very bureaucratic. It's very important," said Diana Regan, a gamer turned content creator who runs the TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram accounts Cities by Diana (combined reach 440,000), which features absurd and unfathomable situations, such as Presidents Obama, Biden, and Trump playing the video game *City Skylines* together or a day in the life of a "red-blooded" Cybertruck owner. Regan is candid about having "no qualifications whatsoever" in design, as she told AN, but she has tapped into topics like car culture and the ubiquity of placeless suburban development, which are familiar to a lot of people but are absent from mainstream conversations. "I'm expressing this contradiction and conflict between the unsustainable way our cities are built but also how they're kind of cool," Regan said. "I kind of like getting on a big-ass highway, seeing the same cookie-cutter buildings over and over again, and going to Costco and Target."

The frustration with this too-serious world of design is why Dami Lee, a licensed architect turned YouTuber with 1.9 million subscribers, became a content creator. While she loved her field, every time she talked about it to her friends, their eyes glazed over. "In the beginning I was like, Why aren't people interested in it?" Lee said. "But then over time, I just realized that it was the way that I was talking: It was so academic, nonaccessible, and weird." She initially started making videos for students and designers about how to become a licensed architect, but during the pandemic—when architecture work was drying up—shifted to design history and analysis targeted to a wider audience. Now she makes videos that explain topics like hostile architecture, megacities, and the urbanism of Burning Man.

Left: Dami Lee has grown her architecture practice as a result of her engaged following on YouTube, where she and her team make videos explaining architectural topics.

Right: Cathal Crumley, an architect whose success with content creation has forced him to rethink the idea of practice



The move has also given her a competitive edge. Lee and her five-person team spend about 70 percent of their time producing videos and 30 percent on design practice. Her YouTube platform helps the business side of her practice, too. "It's just a really great microphone," Lee said. "I never have to do proposals. The clients who

reach out already feel like they know me. In my first meeting with a client, I was prepared to go in with my very limited portfolio and try to sell myself, but they said, 'I've already watched all of your videos. I know where you are in your career. I just want to work with you.'"

ONE OF THE REASONS WHY ARCHITECTURE IS SO ADDICTIVE ONLINE IS THAT WE'RE ABLE TO TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD IN THE PALM OF OUR HAND, LOOKING AT PLACES THAT ARE OFTEN SIGNIFICANTLY MORE INTERESTING THAN WHAT'S IN FRONT OF US.

The creator and influencer economy has become big business over the years. One study estimated that there are 11.4 million full-time content creators in the United States. It makes sense, then, that architects would join the party. It has also led to an unlikely outcome: The insider perspective on architecture work that people outside the field usually consider mundane has grabbed their attention.

Cathal Crumley, who became a content creator six months ago, believes that the rise in content creation in architecture is an example of the shifting nature of practice. During COVID-19 lockdowns, he saw how remote work impacted the way that architects interacted. "I just remember thinking, This might be the future, a digital way of architects designing things and communicating to one another," Crumley said. When he began his career, he envisioned having his own office. But he can't see himself building a traditional practice. Now, he consults on video games and creates videos that address third-rail topics like the ethical dilemma of accepting commissions from fossil fuel companies. "Making videos has come quite easy, and I joke to my wife that I have so much to say and I no longer bother her with those opinions," Crumley explained.

Commentary and jokes aside, there are also significant strides happening in the strategy of digital communication on these platforms. Stewart Hicks, a professor at the University of Illinois Chicago, also began shooting videos during COVID after the school adopted remote

learning. “I didn’t want it to just be a worse lecture,” said Hicks, who has amassed a following of 594,000 followers on YouTube and whose most popular videos attract millions of views. He had an aha moment when he came across science videos, which have more established discourse around the craft of communication. He applied some of those approaches—e.g., animation, sequencing, timing, and narrative—to architecture.

Most importantly, Hicks uses examples from pop culture—like the show *Severance* or reality TV—as a Trojan horse to engage on headier topics. “The only way to understand the impact of something is to be able to make it relatable in some form,” Hicks said. “Otherwise it’s just information.”

While informing broader audiences about the history and meaning of architecture is a through line in many creators’ accounts, there’s also a deeper mission: to create change. It’s why Adam Paul Susaneck—an architect at AECOM who works on highway capping and removal projects, and who is a PhD candidate at Delft University studying the effectiveness of strategies related to those interventions—started the Instagram account Segregation by Design (181,000 followers). In it, he shares before-and-after photographs and animations of urban renewal projects and the devastation they have wrought on neighborhoods. The information about how race has shaped architecture and city planning is available in books and in academic journals; however, it’s not accessible to a mainstream audience. “To some extent, I did this because I was tired of telling people to read *The Power Broker*,” Susaneck said, referring to Robert E. Caro’s celebrated biography of Moses. Susaneck’s hope is that people will understand



Left: Stewart Hicks, an architecture professor at the University of Illinois Chicago, started shooting videos during the pandemic. His YouTube channel is nearing 600,000 subscribers.

how race has shaped urban planning in their cities and demand something different. “It’s so visual that when you look for it, you can see it everywhere,” he added. “I want people to recognize that—and then organize.” In effect, he’s creating more public demand for, and

Right: Dan Rosen’s celebrity home tours on YouTube and TikTok are critiques of those who flaunt wealth and power.



understanding about, the transformative projects he works on at AECOM.

With so many images and videos circulating these days, there’s also a growing sense among creators that there’s room for more media literacy. On average people spend nearly two and a half hours a day on social media, according to Statista. But are we really aware of what we’re seeing? Dan Rosen, a comedian who skewers trends in videos that regularly rack up tens of thousands, and sometimes millions, of views on Instagram and TikTok, doesn’t think so. He wants to tune people into the complexities of visual culture, “like John Oliver is doing for politics,” he noted, with a little bit of John Berger mixed in. To wit: his celebrity home tour reviews, which are actually critiques on wealth, consumerism, and power. “I’m like, OK, I can hook you with Yolanda Hadid, but maybe you’ll stick around and understand why her home makes no sense and is in terrible taste and is just bizarre,” Rosen said.

Rosen believes his outsider status gives him freedom to be honest about what he sees. “All the big architecture magazines have an unholy alliance with celebrity culture and sometimes just become PR for them,” Rosen explained. “There’s a silence that occurs. There’s a movie critic and architecture critic in *The New York Times*, but there’s not an interior design critic who’s looking at new collections or looking at homes in the same way as new music or film. It’s a lane that people in the design world are glad to see filmed.”

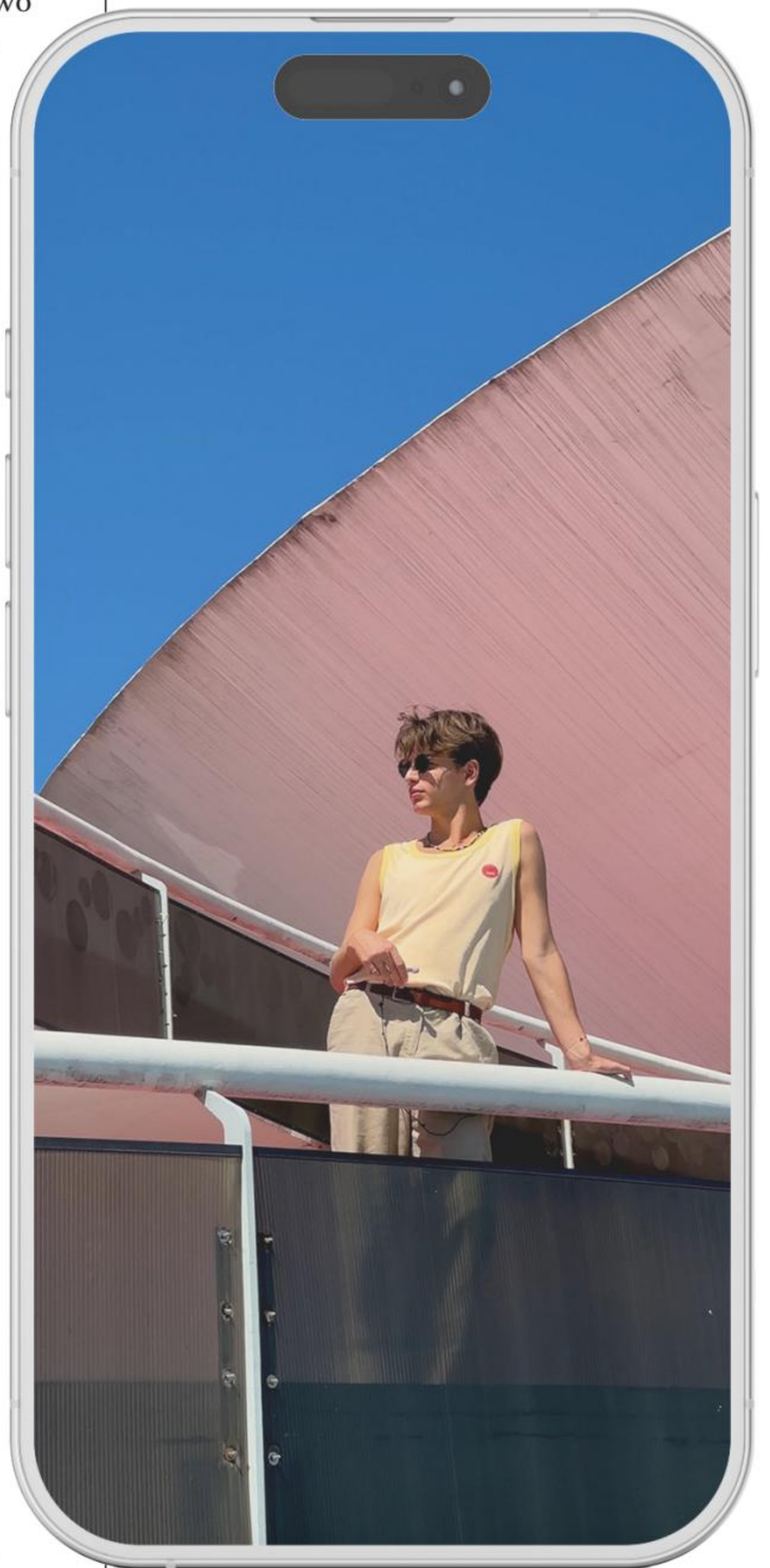
One of the reasons why architecture is so addictive online is that we’re able to travel around the world in the palm of our hand, looking at places that are often significantly more interesting than what’s in front of us. “People are naturally drawn to beauty and well-designed spaces, but many don’t have access to them,” said Nino Ferrari-Mathis, the undergraduate architecture student behind Ninos Buildings, an account on

Far Right: Nino Ferrari-Mathis, the undergraduate architecture student behind the charming Ninos Buildings TikTok account

Instagram and TikTok (with 583,000 combined followers). He often visits famous buildings as part of his schoolwork. He credits a friend for encouraging him to document these field trips. Soon Ferrari-Mathis began posting the videos. In them, we’re hearing stories about the buildings, with Ferrari-Mathis as narrator and tour guide. He’s learning right alongside his audience as he produces his videos. “I feel like it’s served as an apprenticeship, a different form of firsthand learning that has become rare in institutional spaces,” he said. “Even as an architecture student, I often struggle to fully understand what I’m learning, so I can only imagine how people outside the industry feel.”

The ranks of architects and designers becoming content creators provokes a question: Will they eventually pursue this as an alternative career path if it becomes lucrative enough? Of the creators *AN* spoke to, only Regan makes a living off her work. After a layoff from a job in sales, she decided to pursue content creation full-time, and so far it has worked for her. But most see it as a complement to their career. Hicks noted that the only reason he felt comfortable starting a YouTube channel is because he earned tenure. “I had to feel safe in order to start,” he said. “This is my hobby, and I don’t really want too much more out of it than what it is.... I don’t think the roller-coaster ride of being at the mercy of AdSense and the YouTube algorithm would work for me.” However, it might be a path for his students. Hicks is now teaching a seminar on video and film essays. “I didn’t pitch the seminar as having anything to do with YouTube, but the students ask about the algorithm a lot,” he said. “I’m hesitant to go there—I think I want this to be broader—but at the same time, this is the world that they’re in, and this is the world in which the practice of architecture operates. YouTube might not always be around, but video is not going away.”

Diana Budds is a design journalist based in Brooklyn, New York.



9:15 AM
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Facades

Buildings have faces, and architects decide what expression they wear. As celebrated in our inaugural Faces of Our City Awards program (see page 32 for the winners), envelopes serve a dual purpose as they improve the lives of both interior occupants and civic onlookers. Across this section, see examples of compelling new facade designs, along with a visit to the New York Sign Museum. Plus, check out the latest products to consider specifying in your next commission.

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Facade Trends

These topics, ideas, and materials define building envelope design in 2025.

AN's Facades+ conference series has traveled to cities across North America for 13 years, highlighting developments in building envelope design through engaging presentations from industry-leading professionals. AN Senior Program Associate **Trevor Schillaci** works on up to 15 of these conferences annually, and has noticed a thing or two about what is trending. For 2025, he has pinpointed aesthetic fads, new technologies, and methodologies, as well as important developments in the push for sustainability that facade followers—and leaders—need to know.



GEOLOGY-INSPIRED FACADES

Facades have long been used as symbolic devices: The exterior of a structure visually can represent the contents and programs of its interior, for instance. Lately, we've spotted a slew of projects that draw inspiration from geology. They include two recently completed additions to natural history museums: a new wing of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, the Gilder Center, by Studio Gang, and an expansion of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History by DLR Group. Both exteriors—one granite, the other glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC)—allude to the erosion of rock over eons with their flowing facades, an apt metaphor to represent the collections within, which span millennia. Other examples use geology as a means of connecting a new building to its surrounding context, such as at Flad Architects' Torrey View research complex in San Diego, where the building's GFRC panels cleverly mimic the surrounding canyons.



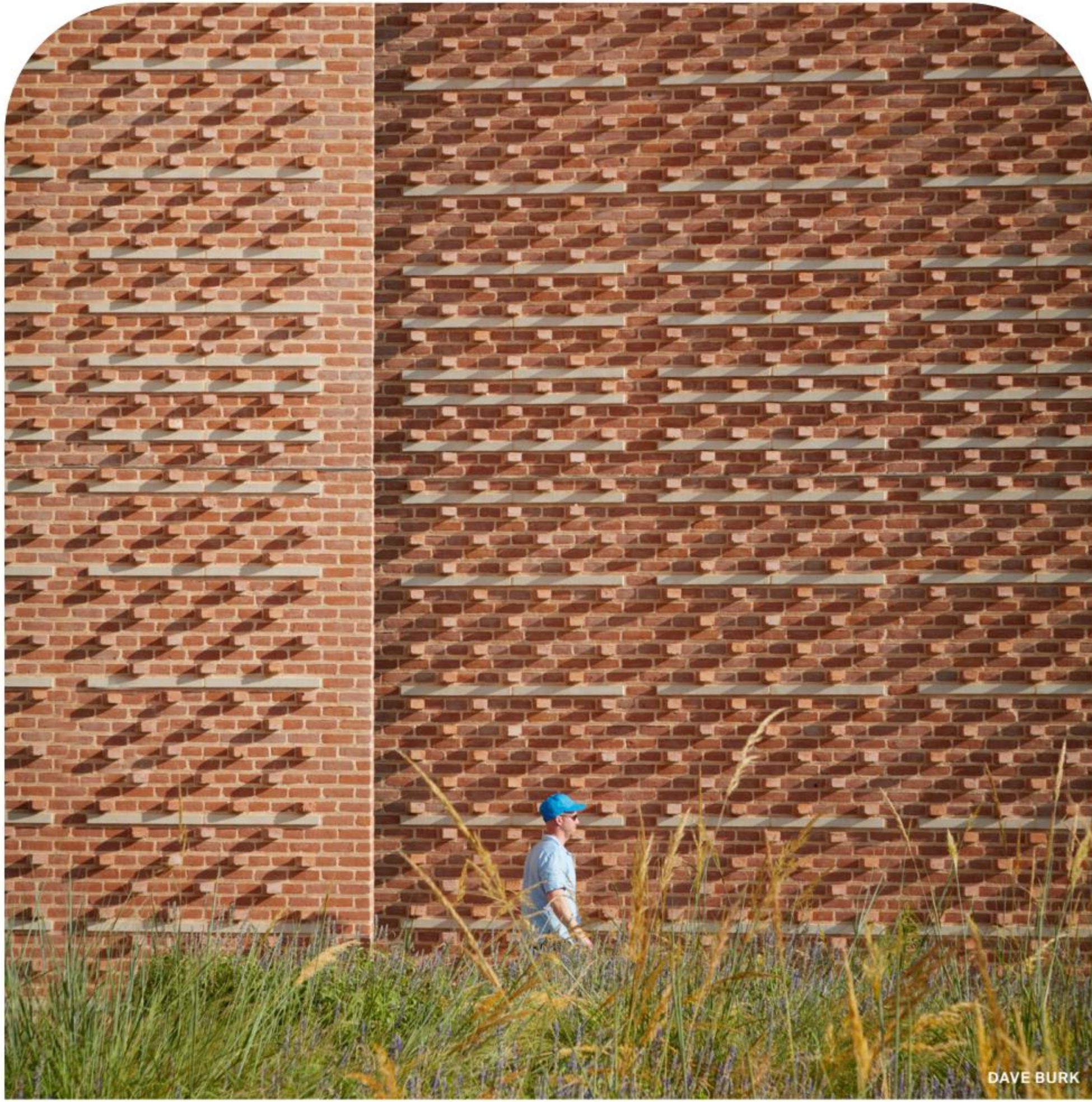
PREFABRICATION

One popular cost-reduction strategy is the prefabrication of building components offsite. Projects where portions of the facade, or in some cases the entire building, were prefabricated, are said to have lower cost, reduced waste, and improved quality control, ultimately speeding up the pace of construction. In Montreal, ACDF Architecture's Link apartment building is clad in prefabricated precast concrete panels that reference nearby Victorian architecture with arched and gabled balcony openings. A more extreme example is David Baker Architects' Blue Oak Landing, an affordable housing complex in the Bay Area that was constructed in just five months using modular units and a prefabricated facade of weathered steel.



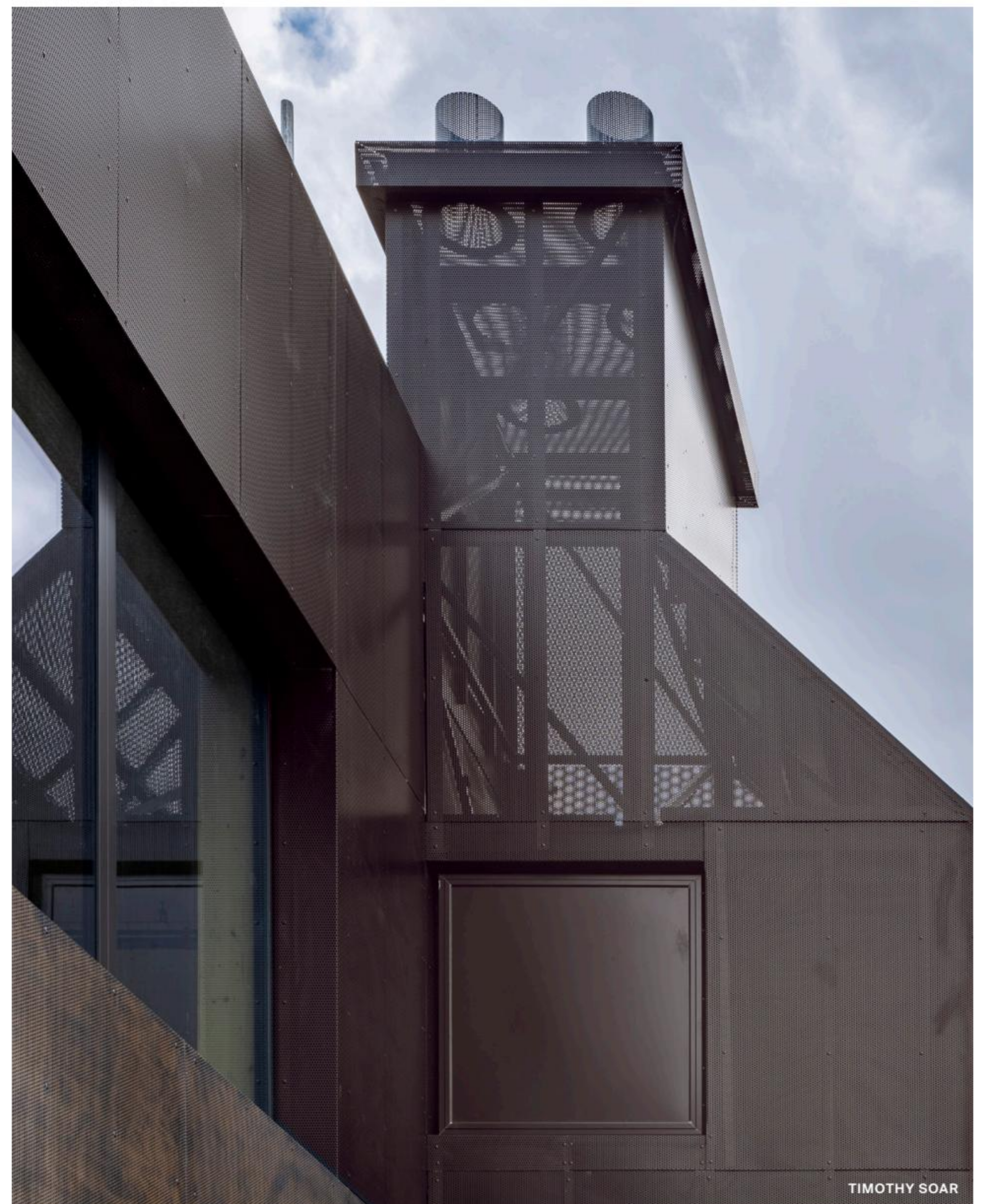
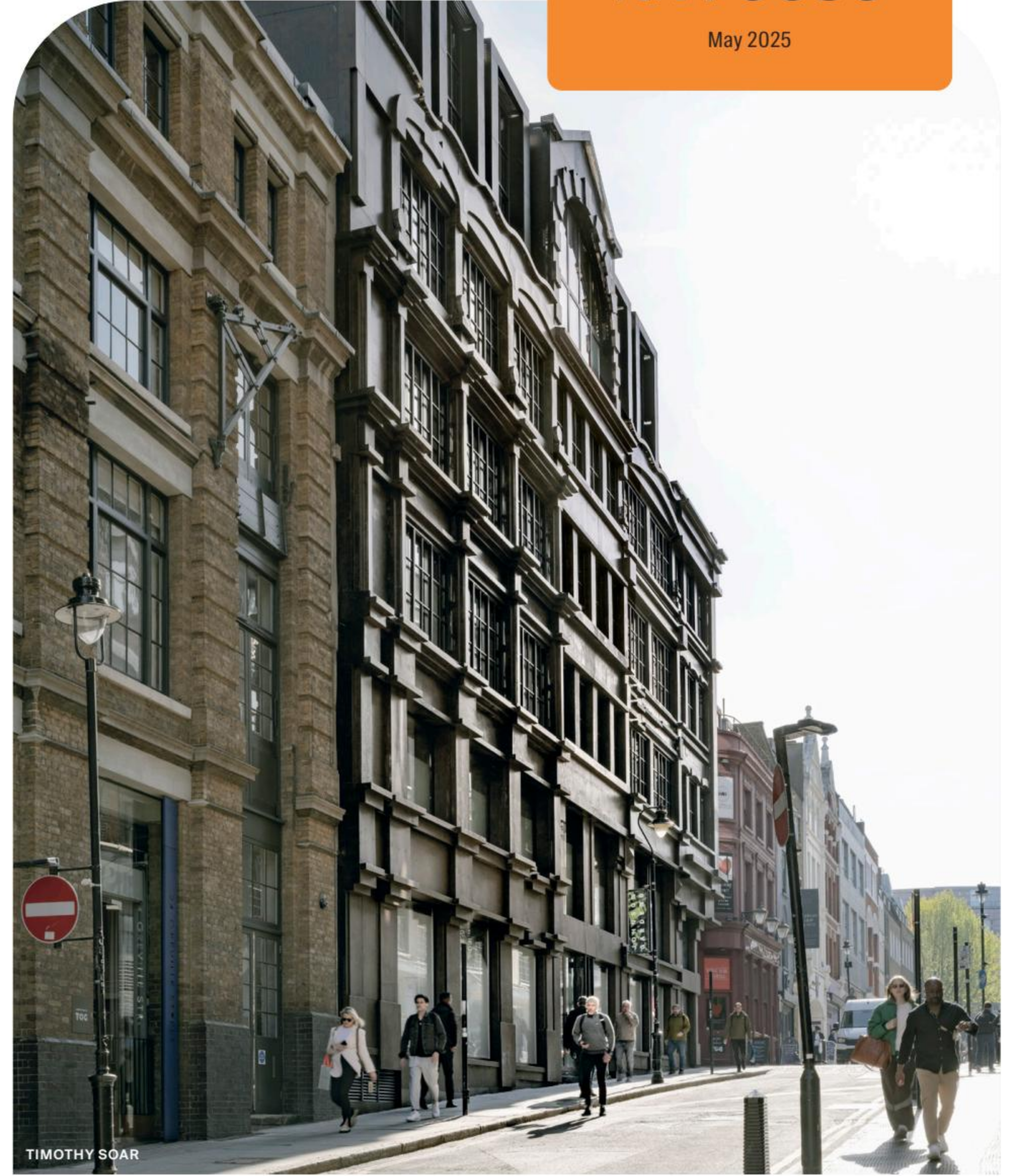
EMULATING FABRIC

A related trend within the realm of aesthetics and symbolism is facade design inspired by textiles and fabric. Marketing materials for these buildings allude to "pleating," which it seems can apply to even a simple corrugated metal facade. One example is Ennead Architects's recently completed tower for Jefferson Health in Philadelphia. In a nod to the city's forgotten textile industry, the architects designed a rippling glass facade composed of custom panels. This trend comes as advancements in manufacturing make the complex geometries of fabric more readily reproducible across the facade of a building. In Germany, allmannwappner and Menges Scheffler Architekten wove together carbon fiber filaments to create a screen for Reutlingen University's School of Textiles and Design, using a novel robotic manufacturing process. Another explanation for fabric's appeal in architecture is a similar movement within the world of fine arts, where textiles, once relegated to the category of craft tradition, have enjoyed a series of high-profile shows at major institutions. One example: the recent *Weaving Abstraction in Ancient and Modern Art* show at The Met in New York.



EXPRESSIVE BRICK SCREENS

Masonry is experiencing a resurgence following a precipitous decline in use for facades from the mid-20th century onward. Whether designers are interested in its low-carbon properties or re-creating the historic urban fabric of major American cities, the material is lately appearing with increasing frequency in new construction. One common use—that addresses both embodied and operational carbon concerns—is the implementation of complex masonry screens as a shading device. For instance, at Rice University in Houston, SOM created a screen of suspended brick modules to shade the colonnades of the new Ralph S. O'Connor Building for Engineering and Science. In Philadelphia, Moto DesignShop's Cadence House goes one step further, using an angled brick screen to not only shade the home but also obscure views of an unsightly gas station located across the street.



LOW-EMBODIED-CARBON MATERIALS

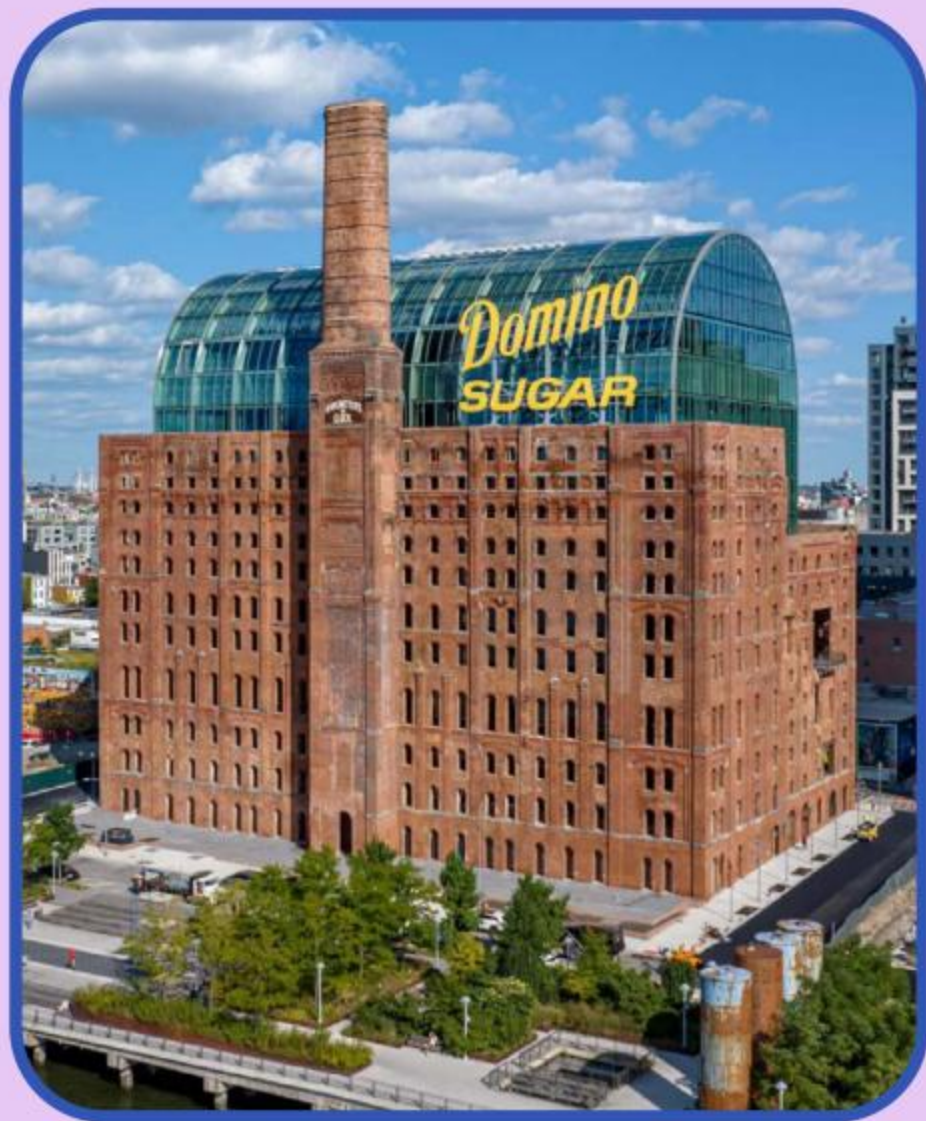
With a wealth of new carbon-accounting technologies available to architects—and some clients and jurisdictions even mandating building life cycle assessments—many design professionals have turned to low-embodied-carbon cladding materials. This includes a wide range of systems, such as terra-cotta, brick, natural stone, rammed earth, and more. We are also beginning to see widespread adoption of environmental product declarations, often referred to as EPDs, which bring greater transparency to the origins of building products.

ADAPTIVE REUSE

The climate crisis has also spurred a push within the AEC industry to reuse existing structures. Often, renovations to the facade are a central aspect of these projects, as owners seek a new identity for the building. In London, GROUPWORK reclad a brick office building with aluminum panels that resemble the historic facades of Victorian townhomes that once stood on the site. Likewise, Ennead Architects reclad the former Newseum in Washington, D.C., with Tennessee marble, creating a distinctive identity for Johns Hopkins University's new Bloomberg Center. TS

THE FACES OF OUR CITY

2025 AWARD WINNERS



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PRODUCT
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Hydro CIRCAL



LIFETIME
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Robert Heintges
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Architects & Engineers



EMERGING
PROFESSIONAL
Kateri Knapp
ARUP

Awarded on April 3 as part of AN's Facades+ New York conference, The Faces of Our City is an annual facades award event that honors and celebrates the teams who shape New York City through their work. This recognition celebrates the ambition, innovation, craftsmanship, and dedication that bring the city's skyline to life. With this program, AN aims to inspire future projects and professionals that will continue to define the city's architectural landscape.

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Alphabet City

Photographer Christopher Payne captures the pleasing graphic collisions of the New York Sign Museum in Brooklyn.

In Berenice Abbott's photographs of 1930s New York City, the signage of the bustling city often overwhelms the building facades. Signs—especially illuminated ones, ringed in neon or dotted with individual bulbs—are an important part of the cultural expression that is essential to why facades are endlessly interesting subjects for architects. But these items are often tossed in the trash when they decay from decades of wear, enterprises go out of business, tenants make improvements, or technology changes.

Now, Noble Signs, a shop near Broadway Junction in Brooklyn, has taken up the cause to preserve these fascinating graphics. It, along with artists, archivists, and signage

professionals, have created the New York Sign Museum, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of advertising and signage in New York City and the surrounding areas. The effort, housed in a space adjacent to Noble Signs, uninstalls pieces at no cost or offers repairs. The salvaged signs are stored together in a growing collection that is fascinating to explore. (Interested parties can sign up for a scheduled tour or arrange an appointment via email. Visit nysignmuseum.org for details.)

Christopher Payne's photos of the interior showcase the pileup of graphics, along with the signage professionals who restore these pieces of New York's graphic history. **JM**



Biomimetic Moves

Lake|Flato brings mass timber to Penn with Amy Gutmann Hall, a new academic hub for data science and AI.

Mass timber construction is gradually taking hold on the East Coast. Following D2 Groups's completion of a timber office building just outside of Philadelphia, Lake|Flato—an award-winning practice based in Texas—has delivered the first such project within city limits. The new building is designed for the University of Pennsylvania's growing data science and artificial intelligence program, delivering sleek new classroom, laboratory, and study spaces set in juxtaposition to the rough natural appearance of glulam columns and beams.

Christened Amy Gutmann Hall after the university's recently departed president, the building is situated at the corner of 34th and Chestnut streets, directly adjacent to the campus of Penn's neighbor, Drexel University. This particular site was ceded to Penn in the 1960s during Philadelphia's urban renewal efforts but has remained underutilized for decades (as a surface parking lot). The architects needed to work around a parking garage that occupies the northern end of the site. The solution? To build up vertically within the long and narrow footprint.





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Biomimetic Moves continued

DESIGN ARCHITECT: Lake|Flato Architects
 ARCHITECT OF RECORD: Lake|Flato Architects
 ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT: KSS Architects
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Ground Control
 INTERIOR DESIGN: Lake|Flato Architects and KSS Architects
 STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Buro Happold Engineering
 CIVIL ENGINEERING: Pennoni Associates
 LIGHTING DESIGN: Buro Happold
 ACOUSTICS: Metropolitan Architects
 FACADE CONSULTANT: RWDI Consulting Engineers & Scientists
 GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Gilbane Building Company

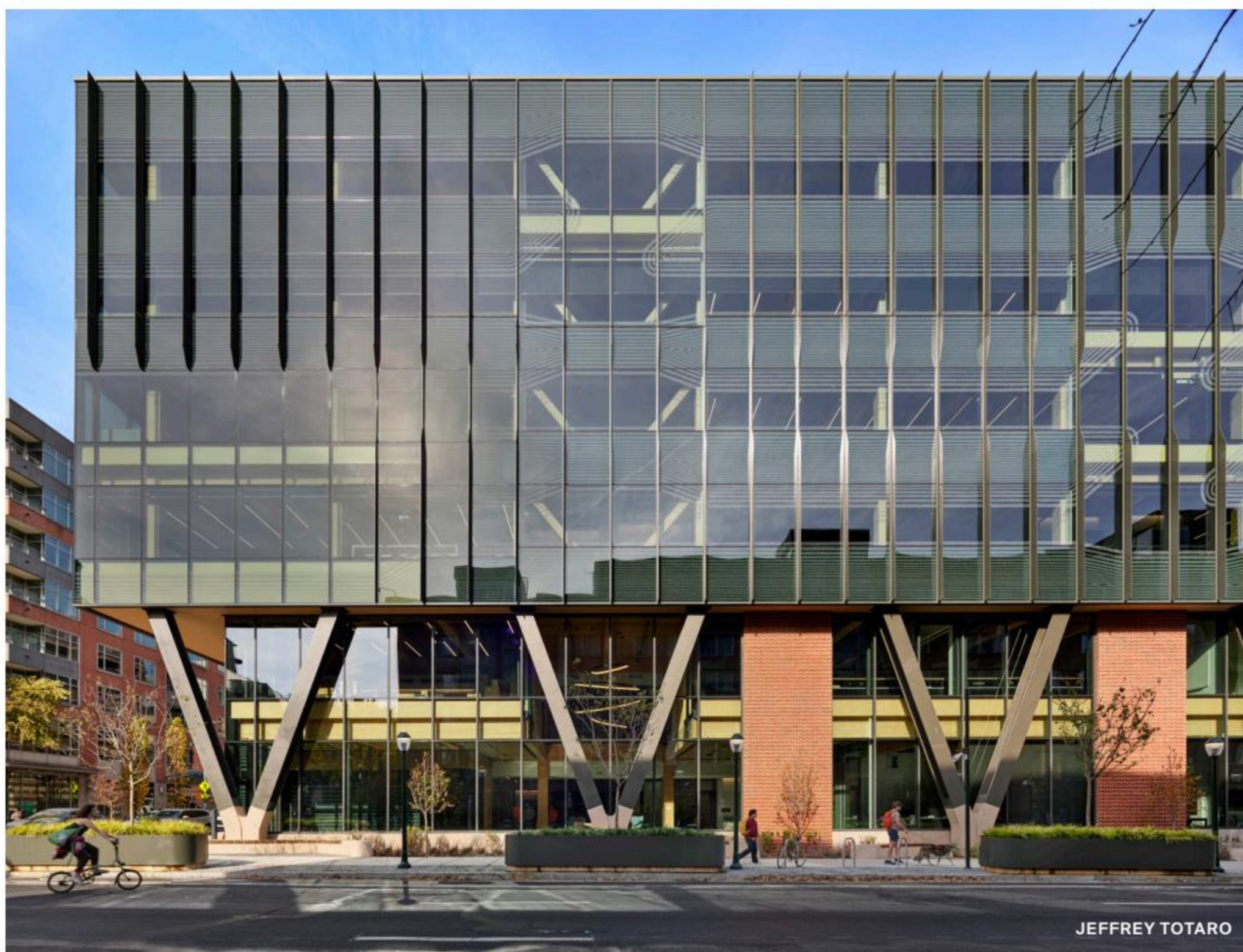
FACADE SYSTEM: National Glass and Metal Company
 CLADDING: Glen-Gery, Morin, Master Builders Solutions, DOW
 GLASS: Viracon
 WINDOWS: National Glass and Metal Company, Inc., YKK AP
 DOORS: OshKosh Door Co., Delafontaine Industries, Steelcraft
 WATERPROOFING: Xypex, Henry

"This is probably the first academic building for Penn that has students leaving the core of the campus on Locust Walk to come about two blocks north," Mark Kocent, Penn's university architect, told *AN* during a recent visit. "So there were some challenges for the design team to make the building inviting."

Particular attention was devoted to the streetscape along Chestnut, where Ground Control, the project's landscape architect, added a series of above-grade planters that insulate pedestrians from automobile traffic. Parallel to this, the ground floor jogs inward, while a succession of V-shaped struts support the upper floors, adding a sense of structural expression to an otherwise boxy building.

Inside, the 6-story structure is peppered with double-height spaces that negate any reading of the building as one long corridor. These occur in the lobby and sporadically between the upper floors, creating a sense of openness within the tight footprint. The interior palette is accented with green, which appears in the furniture and rug pattern, an allusion to nature that complements the exposed timber. Pink chairs were also added throughout the space, a gesture meant to rebuke any notion that engineering is a male discipline.

Green dominates Amy Gutmann Hall's exterior envelope as well through a tint applied to the glass curtain wall system. Because of its largely south-facing orientation, the facade is equipped with vertical sunshades that reduce heat gain and



JEFFREY TOTARO



JEFFREY TOTARO



JEFFREY TOTARO

Previous page: Amy Gutmann Hall hosts the University of Pennsylvania's data science and AI program.

Top left: Ground Control designed above-grade planters fronting Chestnut Street that protect pedestrians from street traffic.

Top right: The 6-story building is internally integrated with multistory spaces, connecting deep parts of the floor plate to natural light.

Left: The building has classrooms, lab space, and study areas washed in natural light.



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Biomimetic Moves continued

recede occasionally to allow views into the main campus across the street.

Lake|Flato collaborated with Houston-based designer Andrew Kudless to develop a ceramic frit pattern for the glass, which acts as a supplementary shading element and spandrel decoration. Imagined as the synthesis of leaf veins, wood grain, and computer circuitry, the pattern symbolically connects the building's sustainability mission with its technology-driven program. Kudless's design originated as a hand-drawn sketch and was rationalized in Grasshopper prior to its application to the glass panels. During the day, the pattern is cast in shadow inside the building, often falling across its timber framing.

Amy Gutmann Hall's appeals to nature go far beyond symbolism and are backed up by significant sustainability chops. The architects estimate that the use of mass timber enabled a 55 percent to 70 percent reduction in embodied carbon compared to a similar structure designed using steel or concrete. Operationally, the building's efficiency was increased through the use of chilled beam technology, which is neatly tucked between the joists of the exposed timber ceilings, as well as the specification of double- and triple-paned glazing.

While timber's sustainability benefits are now widely known, implementation of the material is still a challenge for design professionals.

"This is not a strong market for mass timber,"

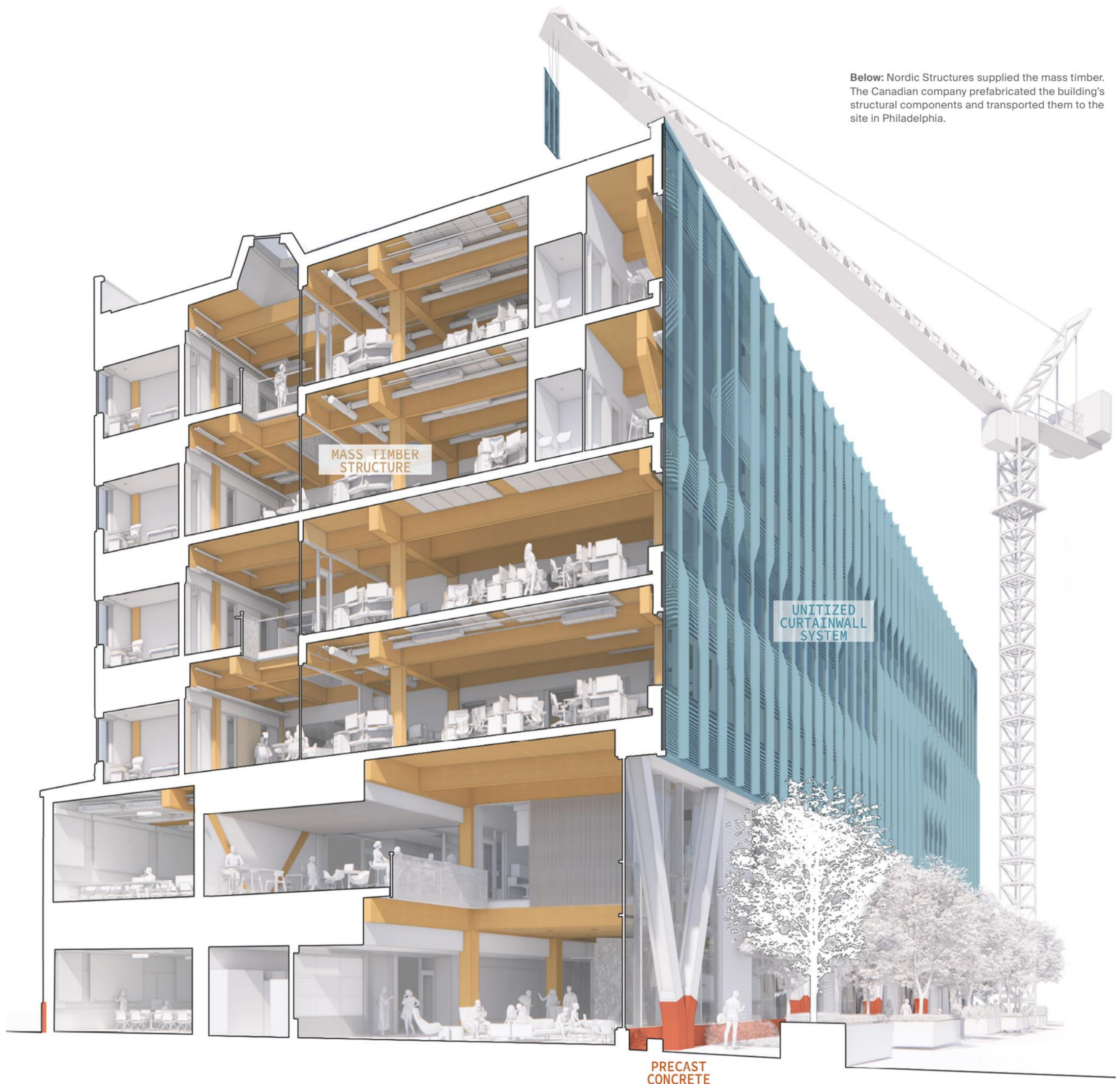
shared Andrew Herdeg, partner at Lake|Flato. "It required the university to think differently, and we worked with the contractor, Glibane, to basically redesign their procurement process."

After conducting a comprehensive search for a mass timber supplier, the team selected Nordic Structures in Canada. The vertically integrated company, which maintains its own sustainably managed forests, prefabricated the project's structural components, delivered them to site, and even assisted in construction.

"It was about a 15-week erection process for the timber for 6 stories," said Becker Raab, associate at KSS Architects, the project's architect of record. Nordic Structures "did it with a crew of six

to eight people, so a significantly smaller crew than steel or concrete construction and a lot quieter as well. We're right across the street from a residence hall for students, so I think that was another big benefit."

In a different context, mass timber's rough imperfections might clash with the synthetic furnishings of a typical academic building. However, Amy Gutmann Hall embraces this dissonance, boldly proclaiming the fusion of nature and technology across its facade. **TS**



Below: Nordic Structures supplied the mass timber. The Canadian company prefabricated the building's structural components and transported them to the site in Philadelphia.

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UCONN DORMITORY / Storrs, CT (USA) / Architect: Sasaki - Newman Architects / Image: Tim Gormley

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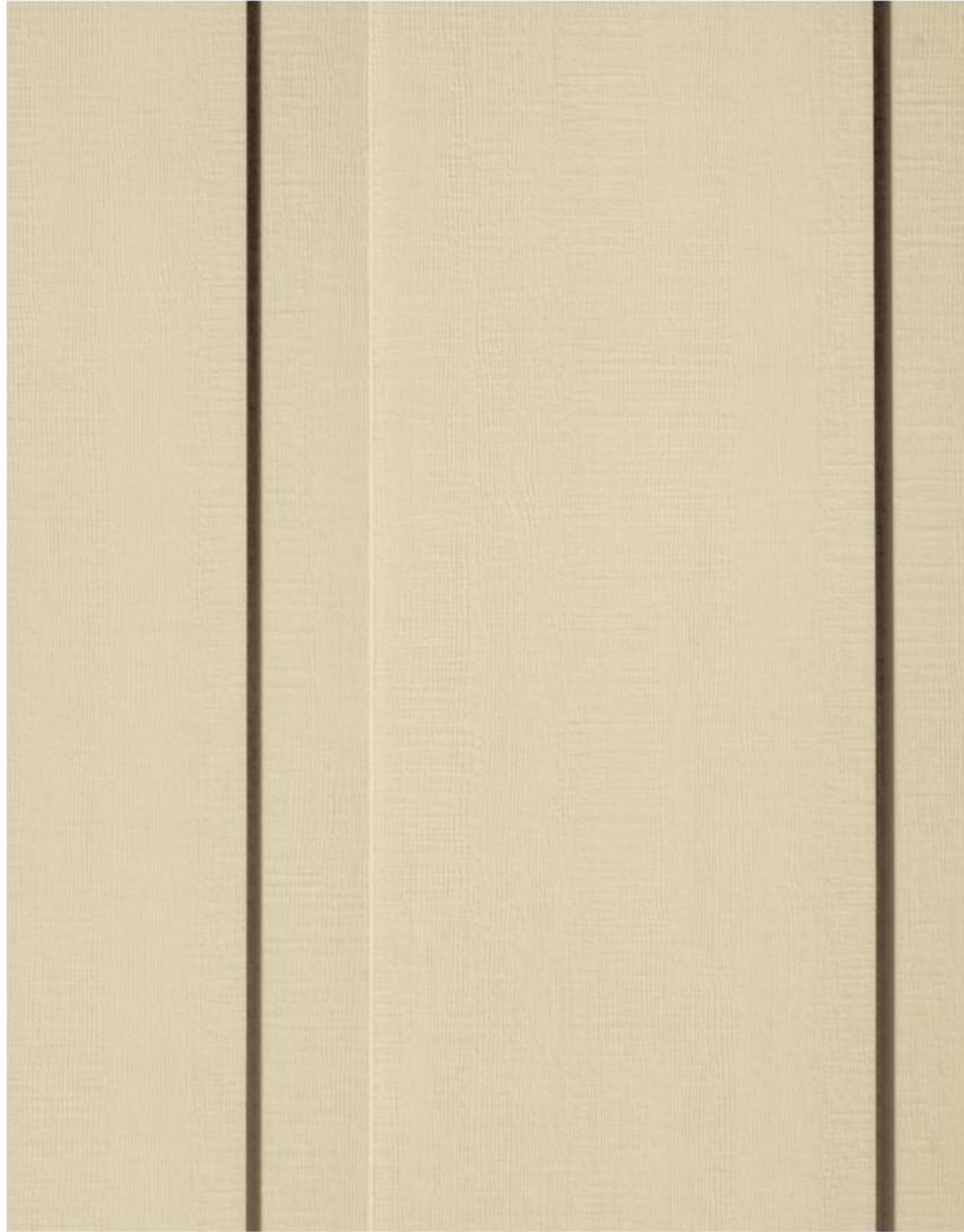
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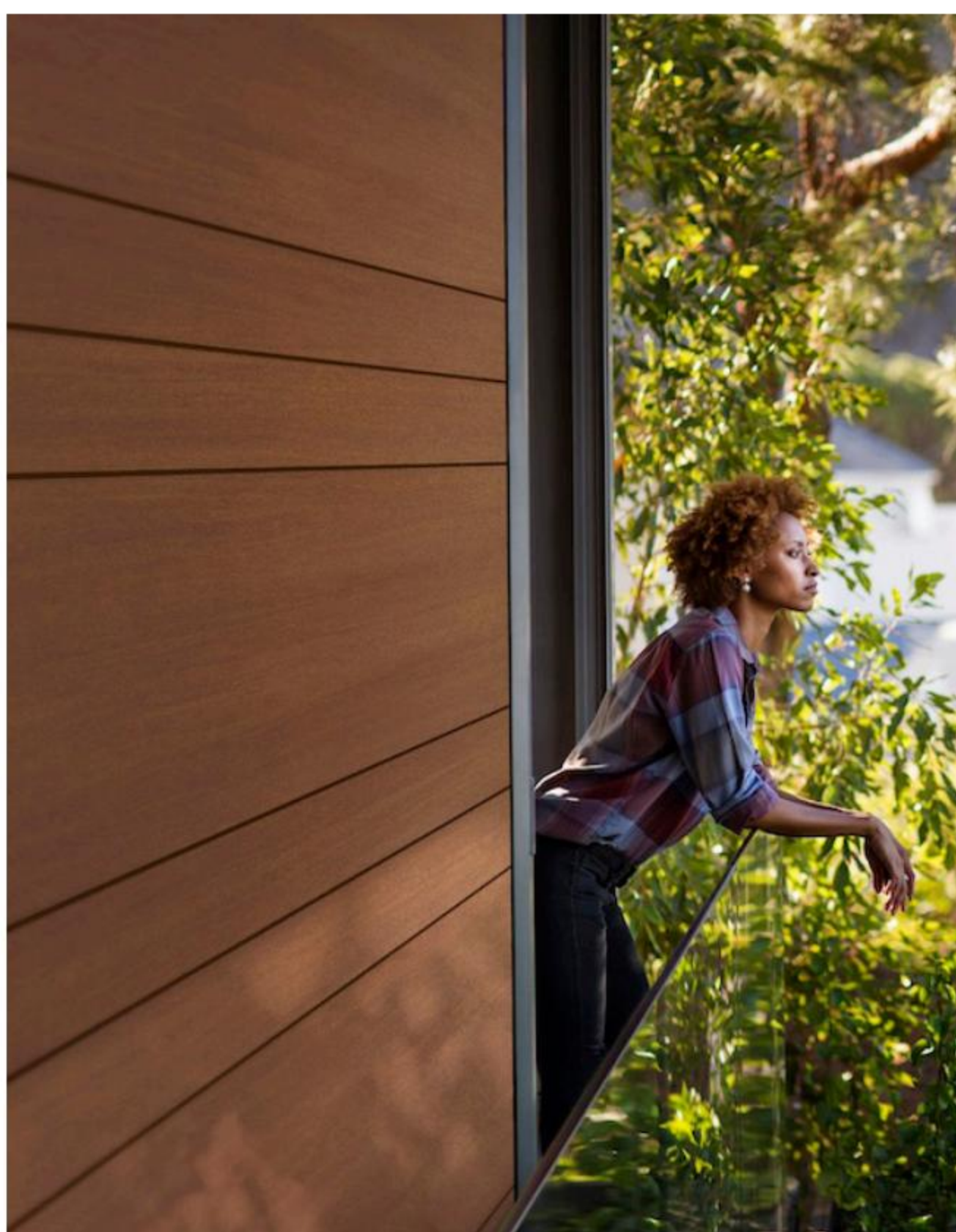
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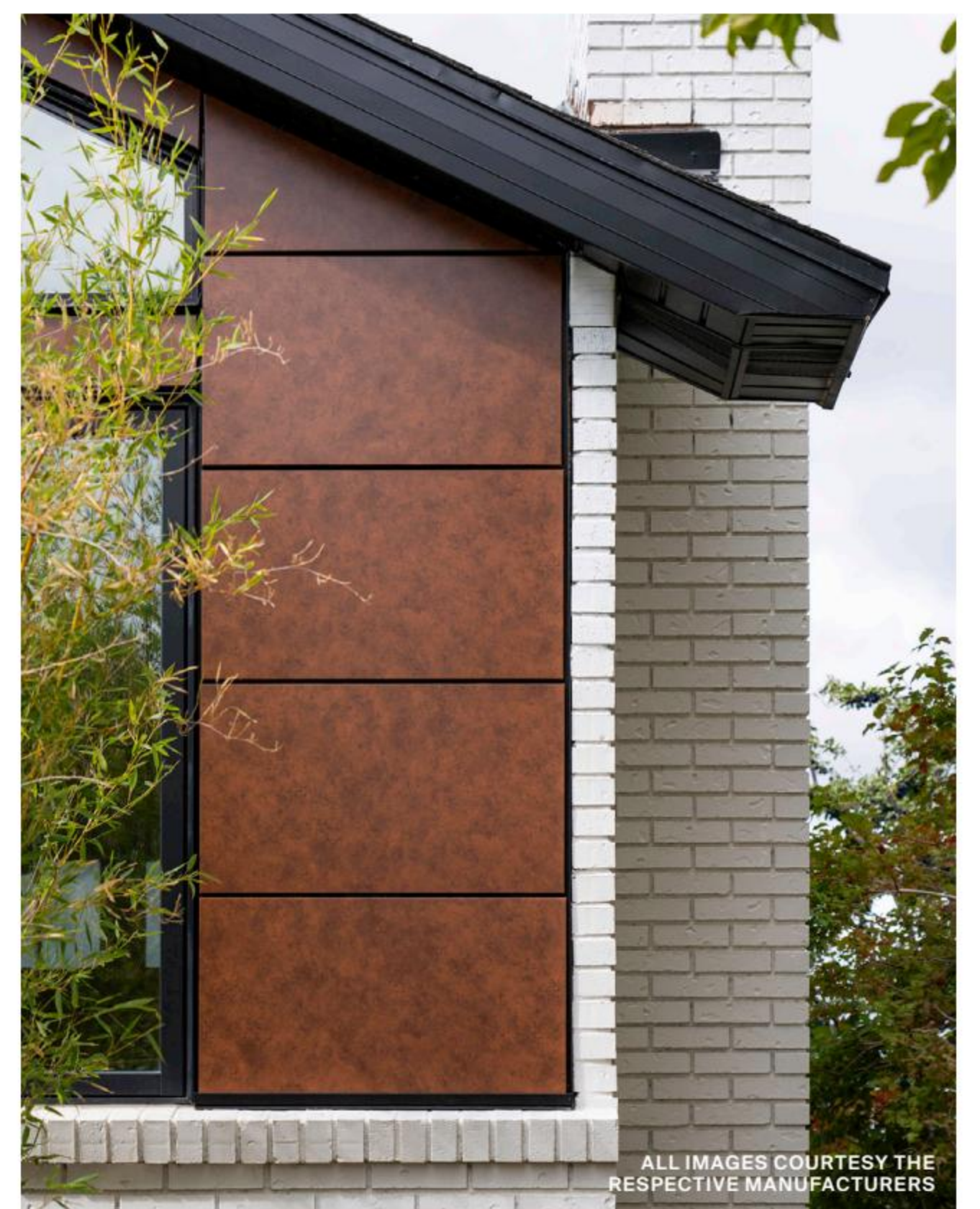
Pura NFC | Trespa International B.V.
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Two new medium and large plank sizes were introduced in the Pura NFC line, offering greater design flexibility for buildings over 40 feet.



TandoStone ProBrick | Tando Composites
tandocomposites.com

A new offering from the manufacturers, this composite brick is lighter than traditional brick and can be installed quickly in any weather using traditional tools.



ALUCOBOND EasyFix | 3A Composites
3acompositesusa.com

Using the aluminum composite metals of ALUCABOND PLUS, EasyFix allows streamlined installation for wood-frame construction in multifamily and mixed-use sectors.

ALL IMAGES COURTESY THE RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS

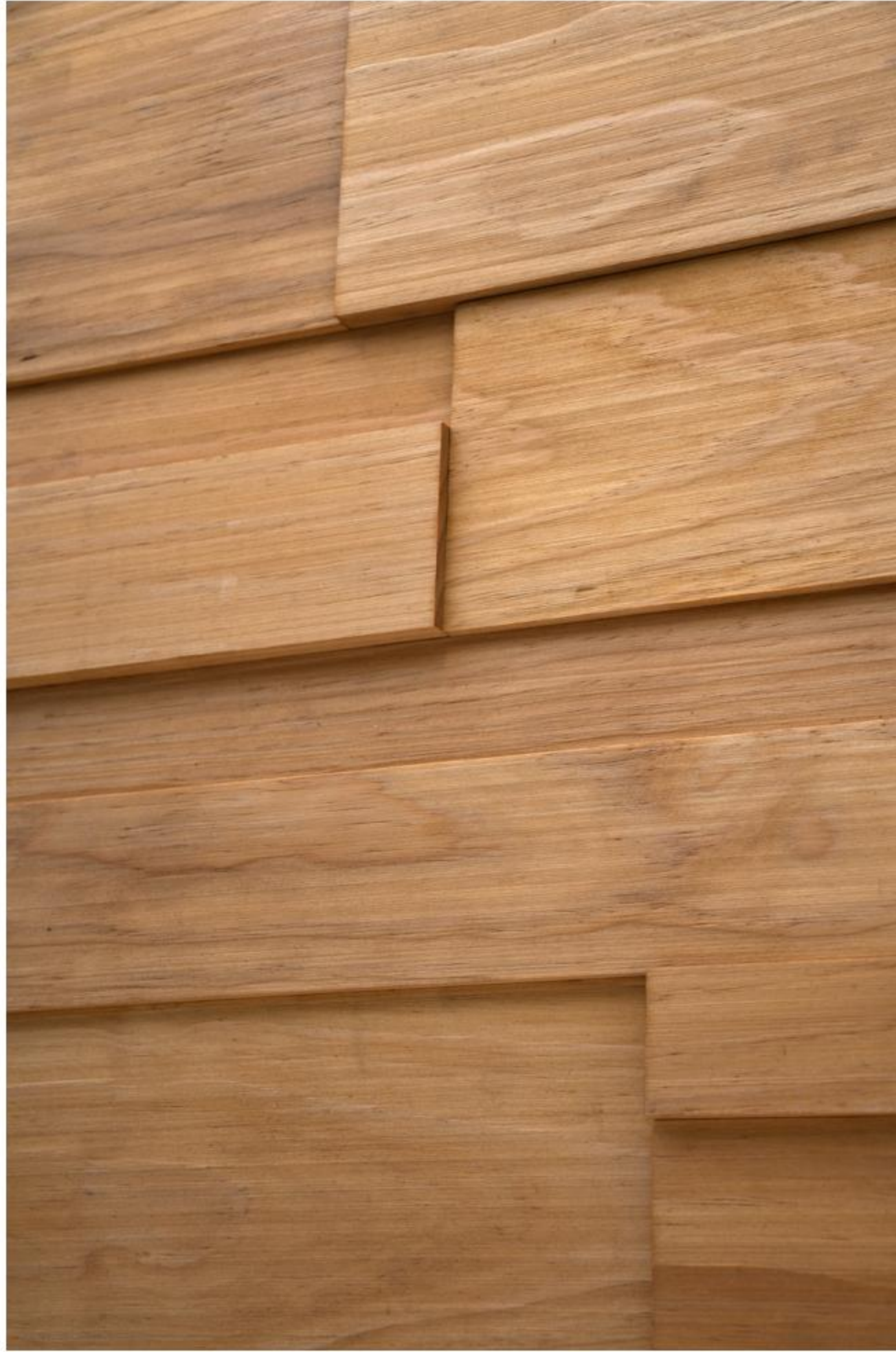
Rieder

Monolithic facade panels
made of concrete skin.



Wood

These wood cladding options focus on sustainable production, increasing material longevity and expanding the design options for wood while maintaining the honesty of natural wood grains. KP



Skyline | Pioneer Millworks
pionermillworks.com

This multidimensional exterior cladding allows for unique, textured applications with FSC-certified wood.



Accoya 2024 Collection | Delta Millworks
deltamillworks.com

Accoya Collection has added 47 new products to offer a range of on-trend colors and textures.



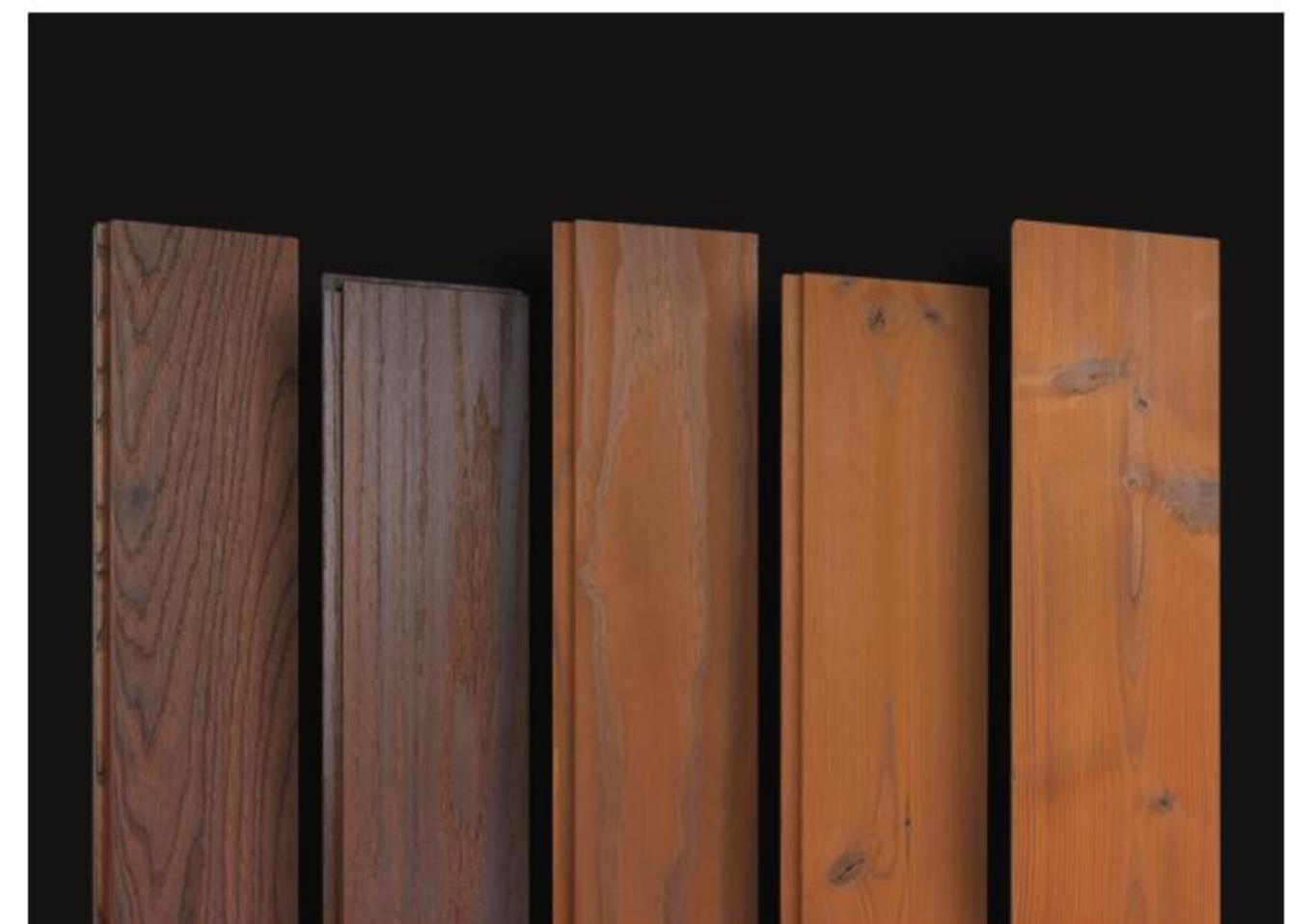
Maximo Thermo Clear Radiata | Maximo Wood
maximowood.com

A proprietary thermal modification process and OPX anti-termite treatment enhance the performance of wood so it lasts longer against the harshest environments.



Gendai | Nakamoto Forestry
nakamotoforestry.com

Commonly specified as *yakisugi* or *shou sugi ban*, Gendai is made with a light brushing process that knocks down the heavy soot layer and leaves a smooth, silky appearance.



Vivid by Thermory | Thermory
thermoryusa.com

Vivid by Thermory offers a range of colors—silver, black, white, white oak, brown, and golden brown—that feature a translucent finish to highlight the wood's natural grain and texture.



Textured with Color | Kebony
kebony.com

Kebony's first prefinished cladding product line saves on installation time and labor while rising to the demand for uniform cladding with a distinctive look.



Modern Exterior Cladding | WoodPlank
woodplank.ca

Manufactured in the U.S. from sustainably sourced, FSC-certified wood, Modern Exterior Cladding is thermally treated to protect against moisture, pests, and termites.

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Made in the Shade

BNIM used biology as inspiration for the new home of LifeServe Blood Center, with large spans of glazing to protect the building and its inhabitants.

In the human cardiovascular system, blood, oxygen, and the heart can't function without one another. At LifeServe Blood Center, a laboratory and blood donation center in Iowa, the building's integrated design operates the same way: If you take away any component, it doesn't work as it should. BNIM designed the facility in Johnston, Iowa, to account for privacy, where needed, while also delivering a building that puts its life-saving vocation front and center.

LifeServe previously operated out of a

former bank downtown. Age, a lack of parking logistics, and a separation of spaces within the building were among the challenges. For its new headquarters, it was apparent that LifeServe needed a space that wholeheartedly reflected its mission to support long, healthy lives.

"Being an institution that supports life in the way that they do, the whole idea of well-being was important to them, also longevity in terms of being responsible with regards to materials and building a facility that would last," Rod





©Tom Bonner/Aquarium of the Pacific



PROJECT SHOWCASE

The Aquarium of the Pacific

Long Beach, CA

Pulp Studio fabricated over 800 custom, triple-laminated glass panels—featuring SentryGlas® ionoplast interlayer from Trosifol™—for the striking Pacific Visions wing at the Aquarium of the Pacific. The façade, designed as a ventilated rain screen, evokes the fluidity of the ocean while diffusing light and reducing bird strikes—beauty with purpose.

Architect: Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis
Photographer: Tom Bonner

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www.pulpstudio.com

2100 W. 139th St. Gardena, California 90249

Tel: 310-815-4999 Fax: 310-815-4990

Email: sales@pulpstudio.com

Made in the Shade continued

DESIGN ARCHITECT: BNIM
 ARCHITECT OF RECORD: BNIM
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Confluence
 STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Raker Rhodes
 Engineering, LLC
 LIGHTING DESIGN: MODUS
 CIVIL ENGINEERING: Civil Design Advantage

FACADE SYSTEM: Tubelite
 CLADDING: Tekko Steel, Petrarch, PDM Precast,
 David Bear Inc.
 GLASS: Vitro
 WINDOWS: Kingspan, Solatube
 DOORS: Tubelite, Wayne Dalton, Stanley, Uniq-
 Wall, VT Industries
 INTERIOR FINISHES: Mannington, Delta, Autex,
 Linea, Bradley, Tarkett, Concreteworks
 East, Nevamar, Corian, Cambria
 FIXTURES: Waldinger

Kruse, principal at BNIM, told *AN*.

LifeServe's new site is located in a suburban setting with easy access to the interstate. The move addressed the need for parking and easy access to its distribution network.

For BNIM, working on LifeServe was a real "discovery process," according to Kruse, which required understanding how the company's services operate and how a new facility could make these processes more efficient. The 56,290-square-foot building serves myriad purposes: corporate headquarters, donor center, blood-processing laboratory, and a garage for a fleet of commercial vehicles.

The long, linear site spans from east to west; this orientation informed the building's programming and its facade system. Public-oriented spaces were largely placed to the south

side, while support areas such as the bus traffic and lot occupy the north and west faces. The massing comprises two long, horizontal volumes set off from each other in plan. An opening for bus traffic flow was located between the building and the garage area.

A primary goal of the facade system was to deliver comfort without compromising character. A robust shading scheme installed over the large spans of glazing was the best solution. BNIM's design considered glare and heat gain. The firm opted for horizontal shading fins, as solar studies found that a horizontal orientation worked better than vertical on the south-, east-, and west-facing elevations. Studies also informed the ideal spacing for the blades, to control the amount of light entering the building. They were spaced to also afford views out



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY (HALL+MERRICK+MCCAUGHERTY)

Previous page: The bus lot and most public-facing facade were fronted with a screen BNIM custom-designed to recall blood cells.

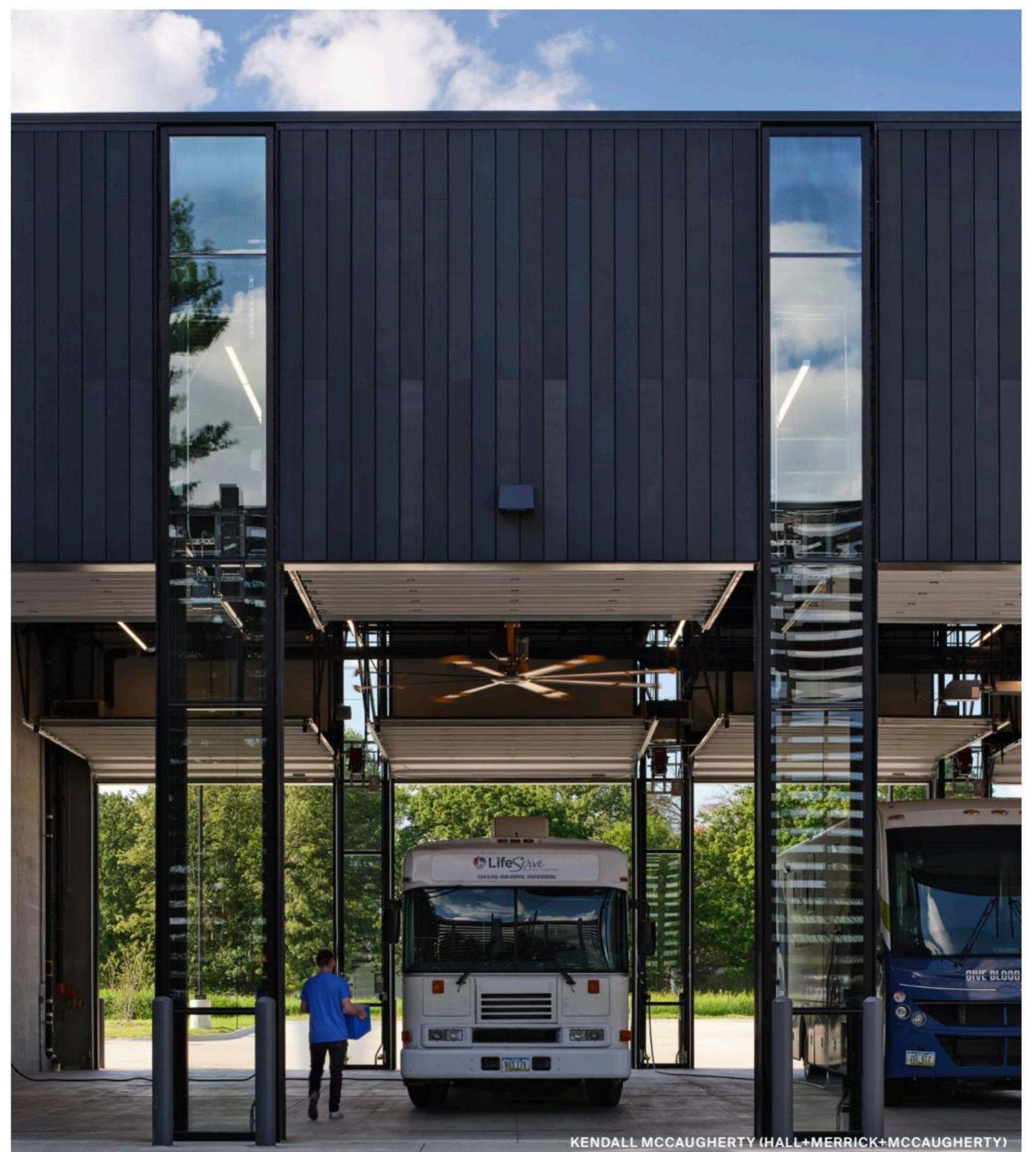
Top left: Horizontally oriented shading devices were implemented on the south- and west-faces.

Top right: The site allows for ease of traffic flow for LifeServe's fleet of vehicles.

Right: Precast concrete was left exposed on the garage and bus shelter bays.



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY (HALL+MERRICK+MCCAUGHERTY)



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY (HALL+MERRICK+MCCAUGHERTY)

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BNIM continued

toward the tree-lined landscape. While typically laboratories are dark, internal spaces with little to no natural light, at LifeServe they were located to take advantage of natural light. Inside, shading devices, like daylight and glare sensors, also keep solar gain at bay.

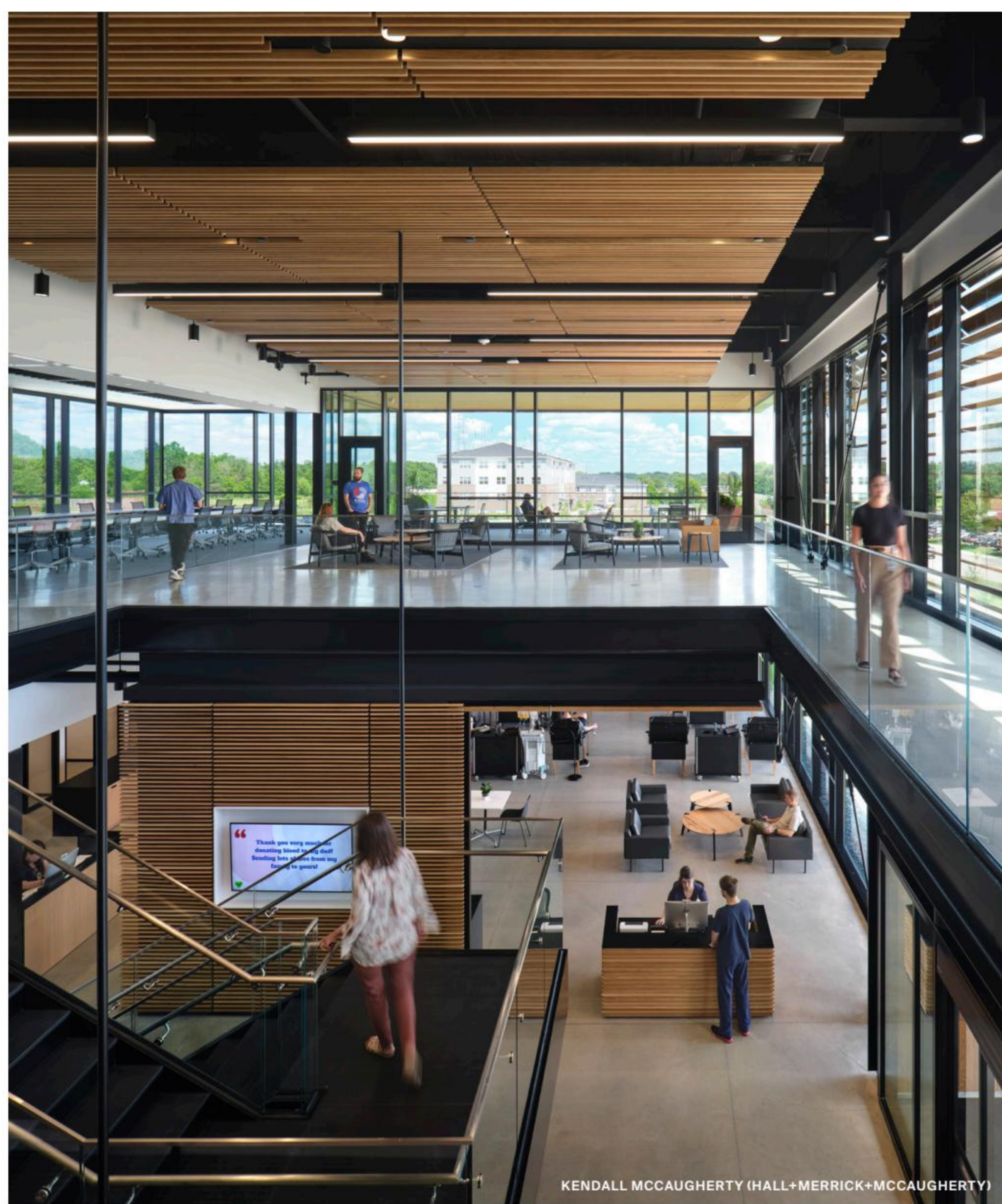
“The facade system basically becomes the architecture and the character of the building,” Kruse added. “It’s a functional element that really results in the architectural expression.”

Corten steel was applied on the facade sparingly to leave room for large spans of glass. The shading devices installed on the glazed portions of the building were specified with a similar reddish-brown hue. Precast concrete is largely enveloped by the exterior shading devices but left exposed to face the bus stalls and garage facilities.

To conceal the bus lot at the north end, a

custom-designed screen serves as an organizational device. It completes the building visually, while also projecting its identity. The pattern on the metal paneling was inspired by blood cells viewed under a microscope. Using imagery, BNIM developed the pattern in its own software.

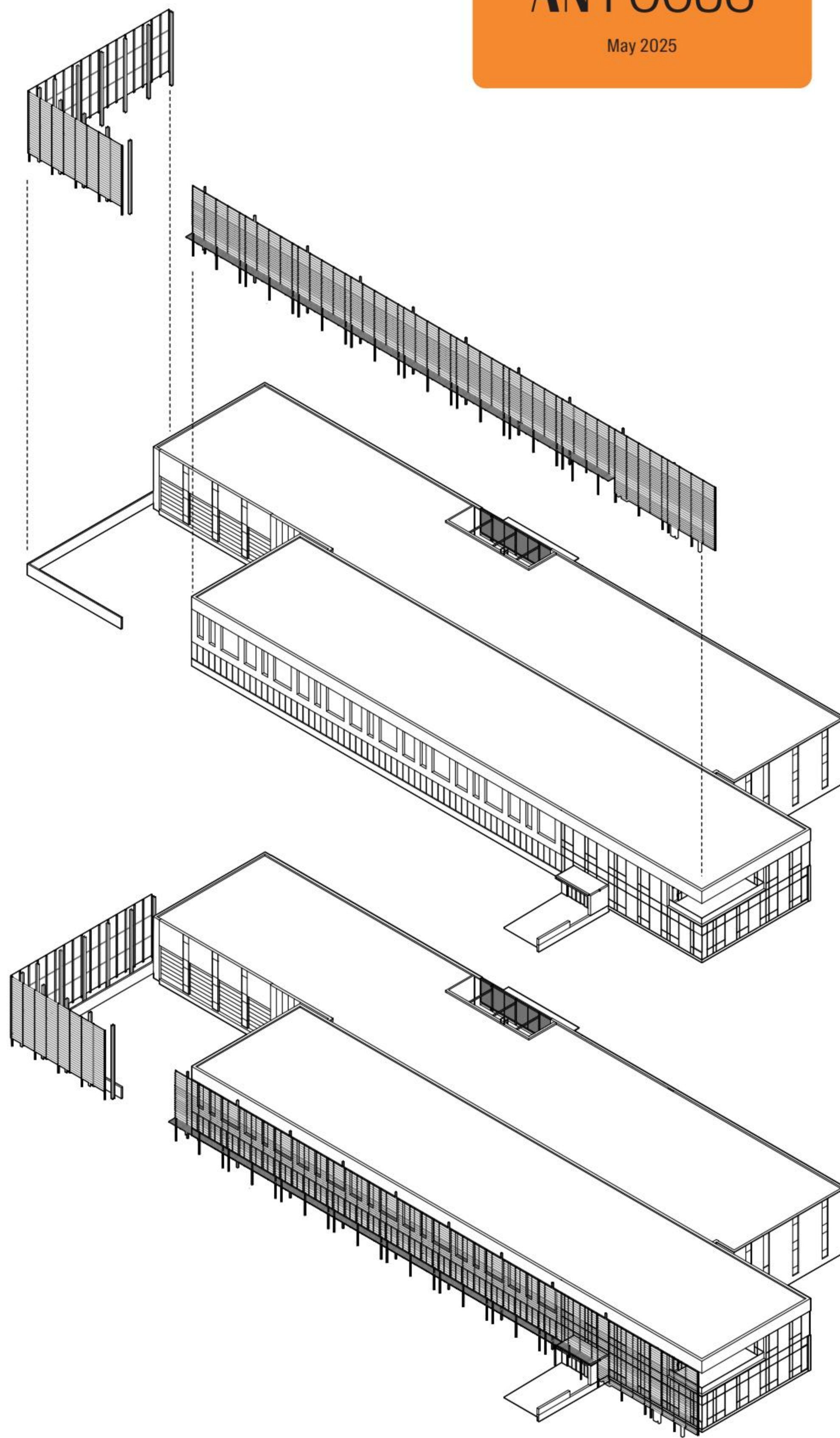
Inside, flexibility was key. To accommodate changing technologies, LifeServe needed lab space that could adapt to new equipment. Power distribution was run through the floor, and all the ducting and mechanics were systemized on the ceiling, allowing for future upgrades. Much like the facade, and the human body itself, the interiors operate as an integrated system where aesthetics drive functionality—or perhaps the other way around. **KK**



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY (HALL+MERRICK+MCCAUGHERTY)



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY (HALL+MERRICK+MCCAUGHERTY)



Top right: A diagram shows the installation of the shading system and screens.

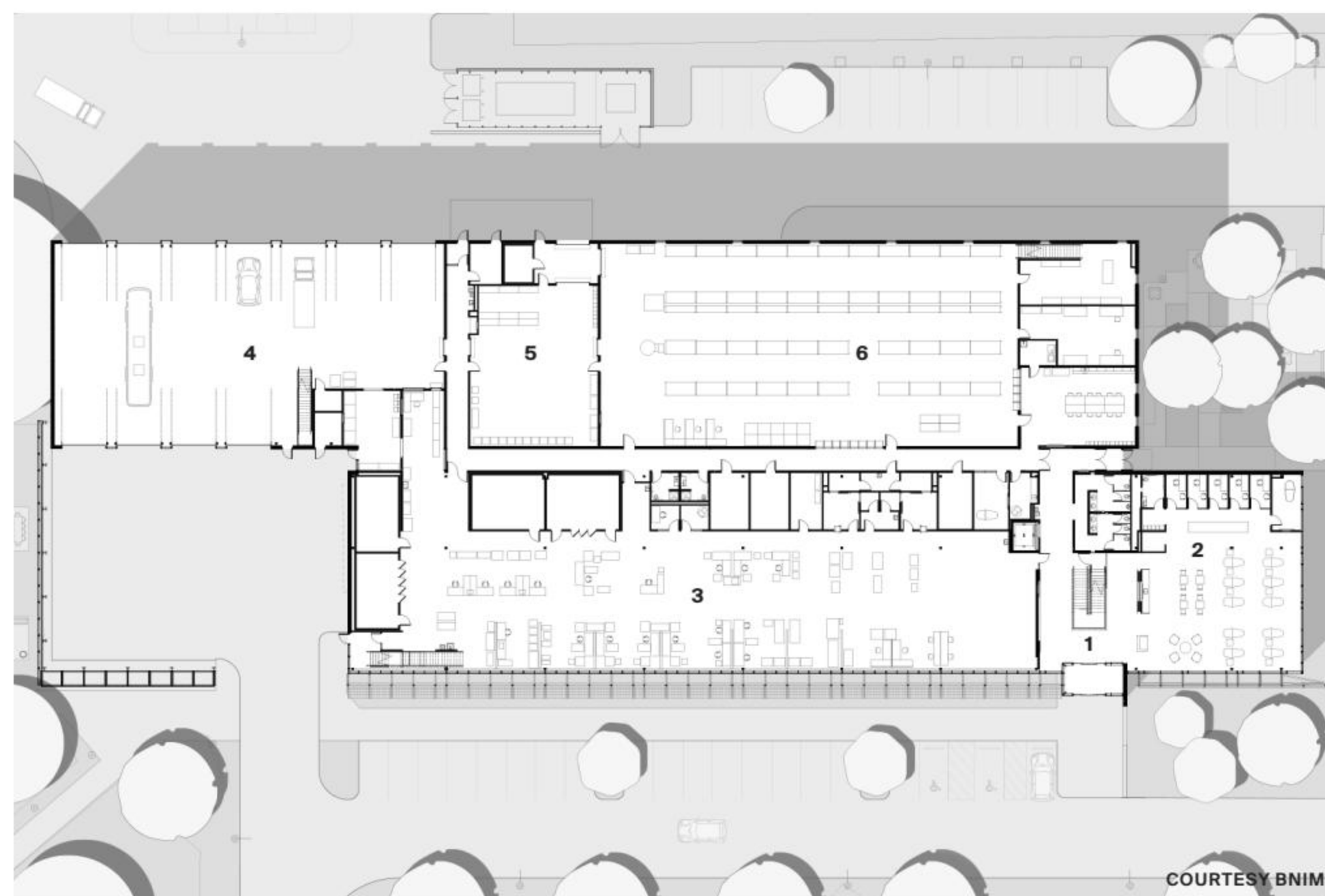
Left: Inside, so that new equipment could be added, ducting and mechanics were systemized on the ceiling.

Bottom left: Large spans of glazing afford views out to the tree-lined landscape and necessitated the need for a robust shading system.

Bottom right: BNIM’s plan for the ground floor

↓ **GROUND FLOOR PLAN**

- 1. Lobby
- 2. Donor Center
- 3. Laboratory
- 4. Garage
- 5. Operations Staging
- 6. Supplies



COURTESY, BNIM



©Benjamin Benschneider

Product: Cascade Glass Partition System
Project: Seyfarth Law Offices
Architect: TVA Architects

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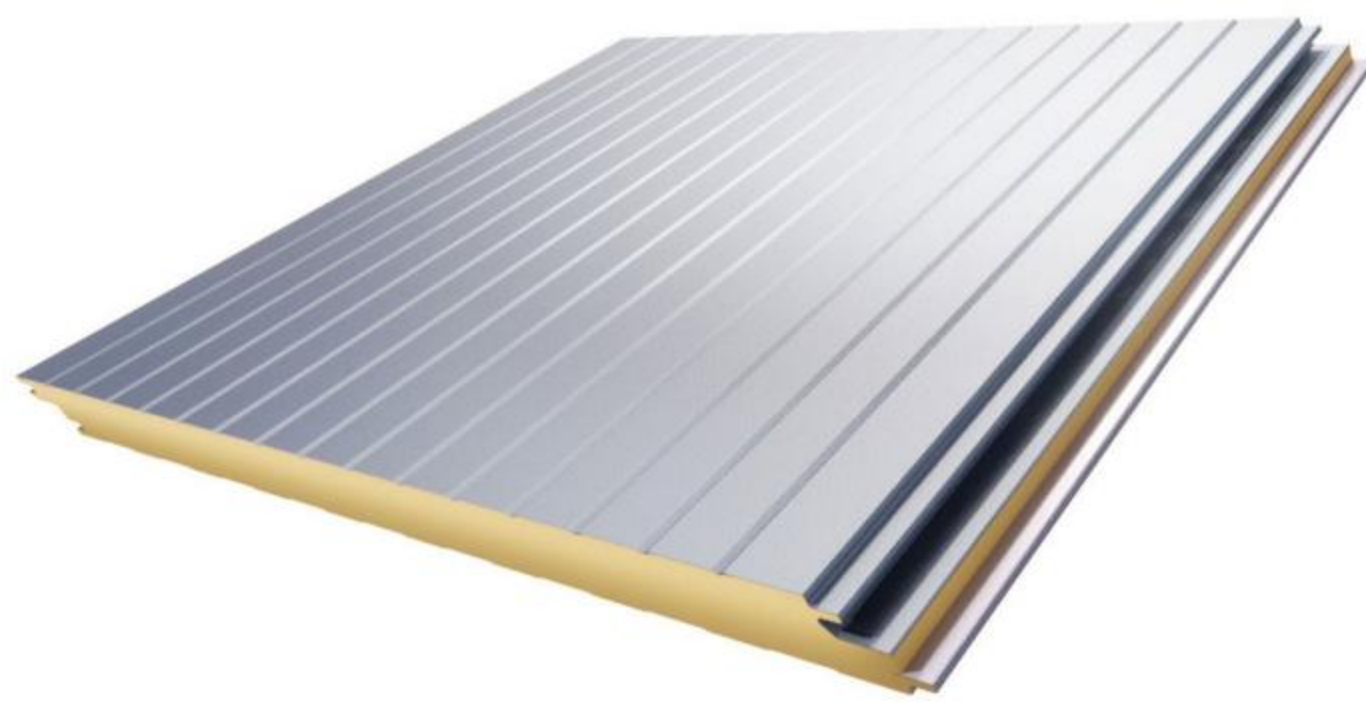
Metal Systems & Surfaces

The following systems and surfaces are designed to resolve all types of project hurdles, offering elegant yet affordable looks with added benefits. ^{KP}



Anodized InvariMatte Aluminum | Rigidized Metals
rigidized.com

Featuring nondirectional, low-gloss, uniformly textured finish, and improved consistency, this product maximizes its design yet requires little maintenance.



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MV40 Micro-Vee Wall Panel | All-Weather Insulated Panel
awipanel.com

This surface offers a sleek, modern profile with clean, refined lines and an overlapping joint for self-aligning.



Urban Reserve | CertainTeed
certainte.com

This metal siding collection is made with high-tensile-strength aluminum for improved durability but offers the look of traditional siding.



BetterBillet | YKK AP
ykkap.com

Featuring recycled aluminum scrap from low-carbon suppliers, BetterBillet is a sustainable alternative to traditional metal surfaces.



Perforated Panels | Morin
morincorp.com

In addition to creating graphic facades, Perforated Panels offer passive solar shading and control of light and sound. (please note photo credit is Kendall McCaugherty © Hall+Merrick Photographers for project photo)



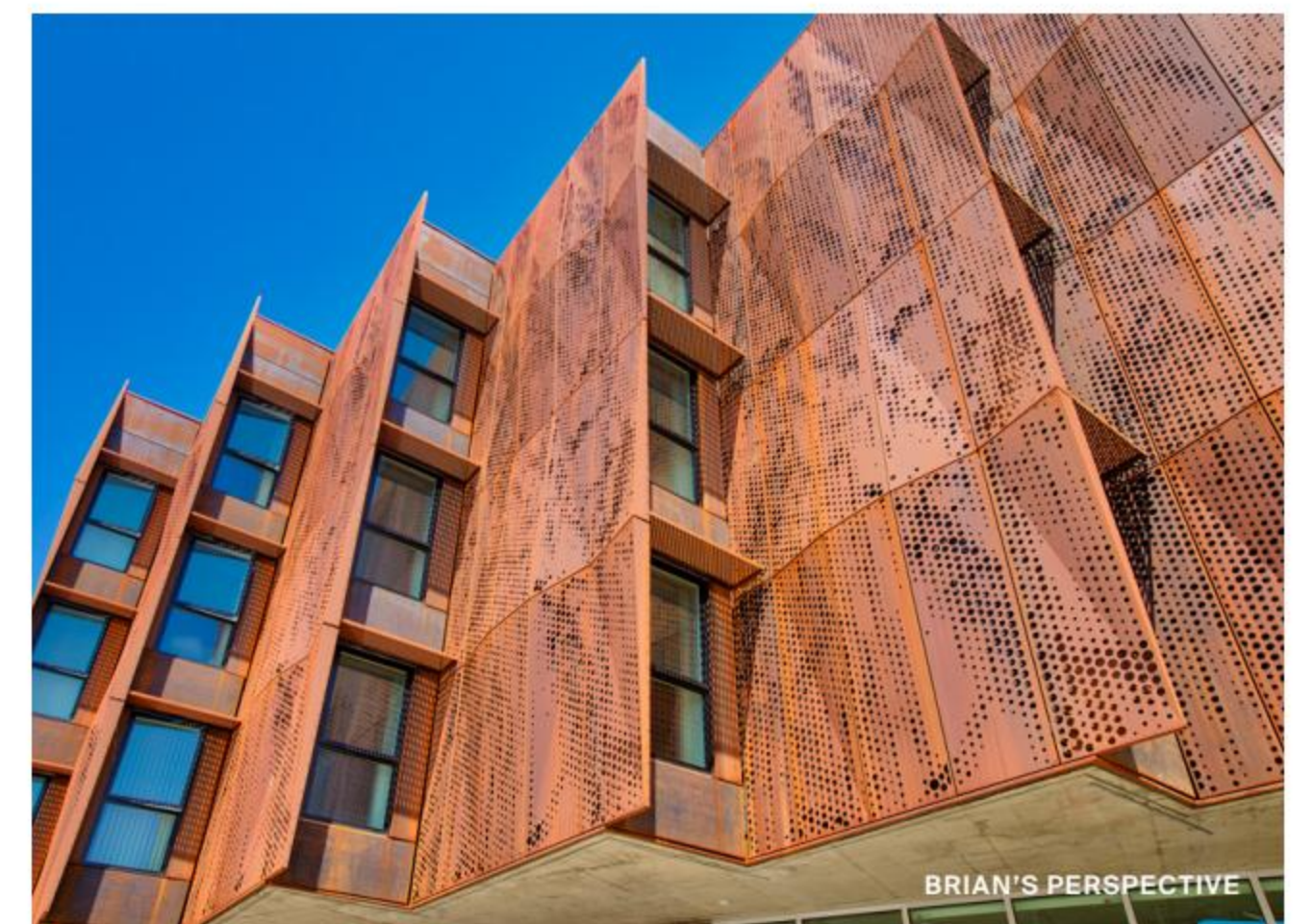
Board and Batten wall panel system | PAC-CLAD
pac-clad.com

The PAC-CLAD Board and Batten wall panel system creates clean facades with the help of a concealed fastener system.



2500 UT Unitwall System | Kawneer
kawneer.us

This system provides a cost-effective, unitized curtain wall system that reduces the time required to fabricate, assemble, glaze, and install.



Corten Weathering Steel | BÖK Modern
bokmodern.com

Known for its distinctive patina, which eliminates the need for maintenance, Corten weathering steel can be used to create visual and textured facades—without the high price tag. (please note photo cred to Brian's Perspective)

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Rapolano | Neolith
neolith.com

Available in a 6-millimeter thickness, Rapolano takes after the Italian stone from which it is named but offers the ease of sintered stone.



Dekton Pietra Edition | Cosentino
cosentino.com

This line of sintered stone is available in new designs, introduced with a technological layer inspired by Mediterranean stones.



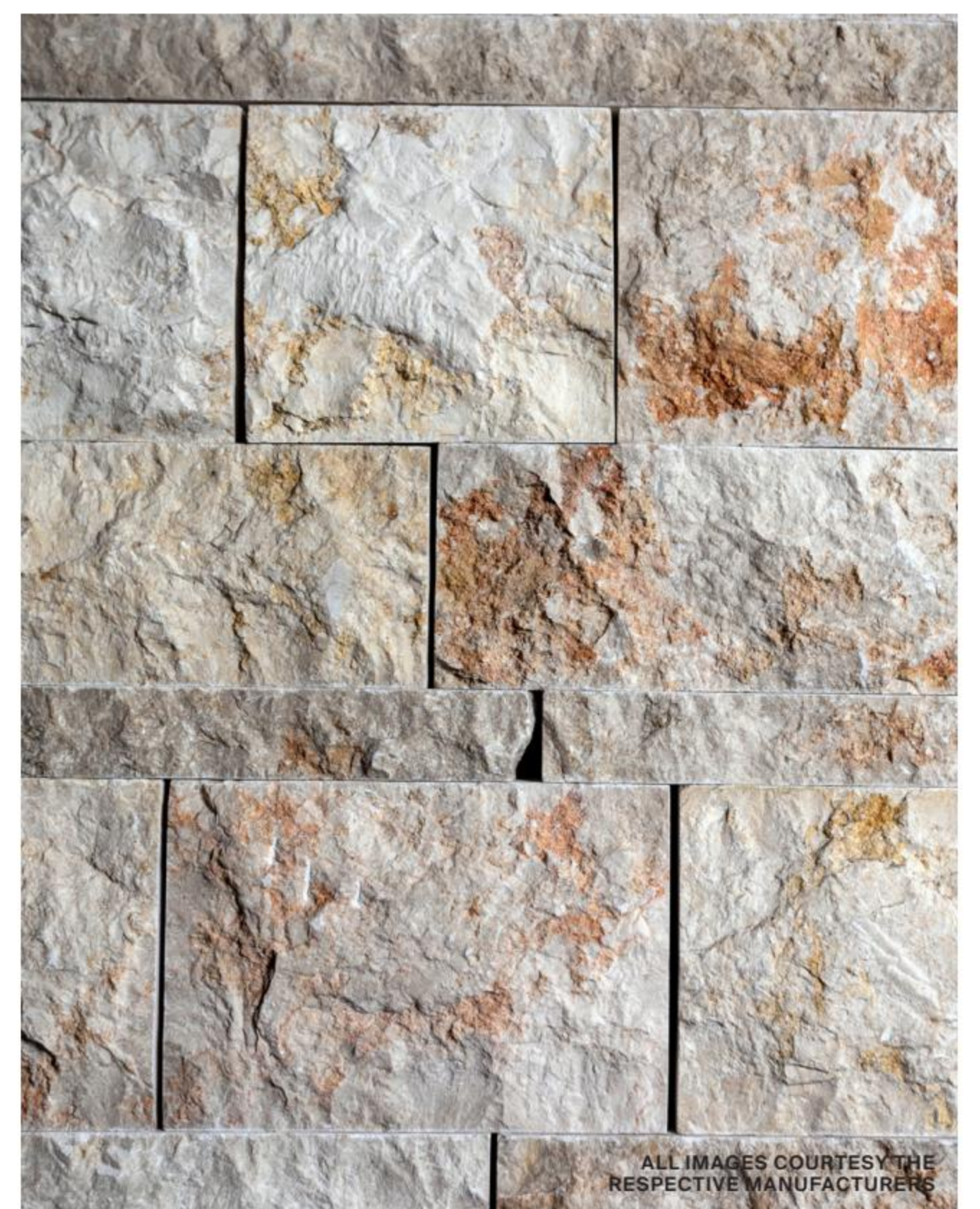
Petrarch PlanX | Petrarc
petrarchpanels.com

Crafted from crushed marble and stone that would otherwise go to landfill, this panel boasts sustainable production in a lightweight, slim profile.



EQUITONE [inspires] | EQUITONE
equitone.com

[Inspires] is a high-strength and high-density cement rain-screen panel with a digitally printed surface covered with a UV finish.



Linea Cladding System | ABC Stone
abcworldwidestone.com

Natural stone panels are mounted in an economical and safe way, including in small pattern claddings, thanks to this ventilated system.

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Limestone



Utah State Capitol Dome
Terra Cotta Restoration



90 West Street (NYC)
Granite Restoration (post 9/11)



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Milk Made

PPAA clads a cross-laminated timber expansion of an industrial dairy building in a polycarbonate system for maximum efficiency at minimum cost.

Sometimes all it takes to deliver a successful project is a client who is willing to take a chance. When a past residential customer approached Pablo Pérez Palacios, principal of his eponymous firm, Pérez Palacios Arquitectos Asociados (PPAA), about an expansion of an office for the premium dairy company Lyncott in Santiago de Querétaro, Mexico, the architect suggested something unusual: a modular structure made entirely of cross-laminated timber (CLT).

In Mexico, as Pérez Palacios explained to *AN*, concrete is considered the de facto building material. In fact, when the client asked for examples of similar wood construction in Mexico, there simply weren't any. Adding to the complexity, the architect advocated to use a polycarbonate system by the manufacturer Danpal as the facade. Essentially, Pérez Palacios was proposing a never-used (in Mexico) structure clad in a translucent envelope that would obscure most views



Ginza 41 restaurant, Andorra la Vella, Andorra
Architecture: África Sabé & Eva Dalmau | Photo: Álvaro Valdecantos

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Creative façades with aluminum chains
that shape the urban identity

INTERIORS
FROM SPAIN



Milk Made continued

ARCHITECT: PPAA

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Vigalam

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING: ROA

CIVIL ENGINEERING: Consulta Urbana

LIGHTING DESIGN: PPAA

FACADE SYSTEM: Danpal

GLASS: Consulta Urbana

ROOFING: Aircrete

INTERIOR FINISHES: Alfombras de Mexico

FIXTURES: Biticino

LIGHTING: Magg

FURNITURE: PM Steele, Vipp

from the interior offices. In theory, it sounded kind of crazy.

Fortunately, the client, who had recently risen to the top spot in the family-owned company, engaged with Pérez Palacios. At first, the executive told him, "I'm sure you won't take this project, because it's in an industrial park with zero budget," recalled the architect, a past *AN Interior* Top 50 honoree. "I told him I'd take the project, without telling him that in the back of my mind, I knew I was going to do it out of wood."

Pérez Palacios had to overcome two hurdles from the outset: keeping costs down despite CLT being a more expensive material than concrete, and finding workers who could deliver on the construction. Fortunately, Vigalam, a company that manufactures prefabricated wood structures, was

located in the same office park as Lyncott, virtually eliminating shipping costs and simplifying the contracting. The team enlisted representatives from Danpal to install the facade system. The company sent a team to place and attach the panels, an exacting process that involves a clip to which a frame is attached and then receives the polycarbonate pieces.

Pérez Palacios is either a sly salesman or an eccentric designer—or both—but he managed to pull off one of Mexico's first all-CLT projects and one of the most striking industrial buildings in recent memory. PPAA connected the thin 10,900-square-foot office expansion to an existing structure. Here the light, efficient addition contrasts the heavy, inefficient existing conditions; Pérez Palacios explained that the original steel

and concrete building operates 24 hours a day to support the dairy plant and relies on artificial light.

As PPAA captioned an Instagram post about the project, "This new intervention addresses the challenge of balancing the industrial character of the context with a serene and conscious environment focused on connecting with nature."

One of the most intriguing aspects of the facade is its lack of transparent glass, though Pérez Palacios noted that there are windows along the side of the building facing the dairy plant.

"When you're in an office, you're not looking at the view. You are looking at a screen," he said. "To create an atmosphere with natural light, it's super nice if you're going to be sitting at a computer for eight hours a day." Besides, he added: "There's nothing to see outside. It's an industrial park."



FABIAN MARTÍNEZ



FABIAN MARTÍNEZ



FABIAN MARTÍNEZ

Previous page: The building's exterior is clad entirely in Danpal, a polycarbonate system, and connected to a cross-laminated timber frame.

Top left: The new addition to the offices of a popular Mexican dairy brand creates a lighter, brighter counterpoint to the original structure.

Above: The translucent facade allows light into the offices and exposes the wood frame from the exterior.

Left: Inside, the framing systems of the CLT and Danpal meet.

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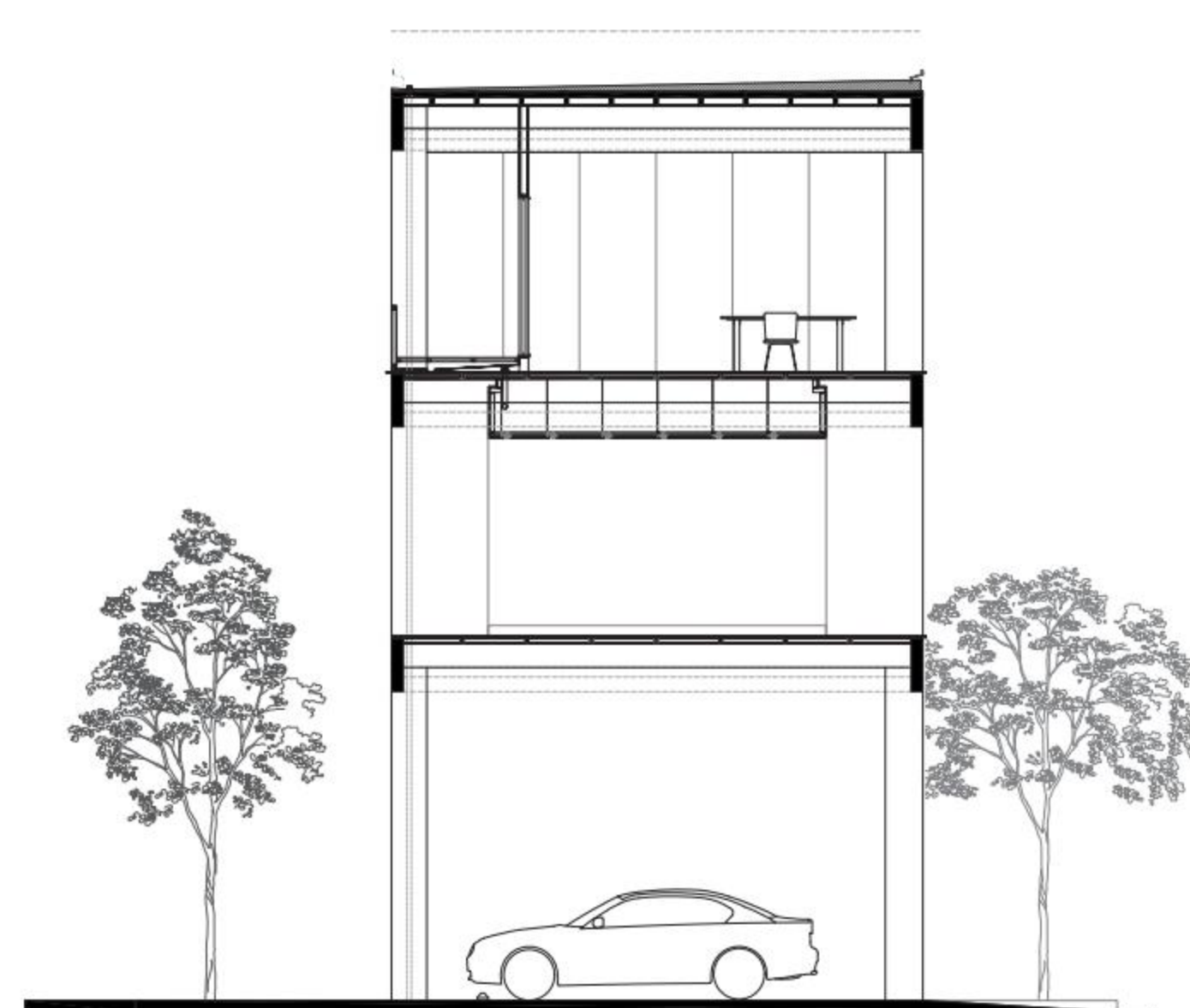
PPAA has completed two translucent projects previously: a now-finished office building in China that employed fabric, and a housing prototype for a 2022 exhibition at Crystal Bridges Museum in Arkansas. “It was our interpretation of an affordable housing project—and we used Danpal!” Pérez Palacios exclaimed.

Still, the dairy building project is the first time he has put his theories about Danpal into practice. “We created this translucent envelope that allows people to work in natural light all day long,” Pérez Palacios explained. “It has solar capacities; it blocks the sun rays. It requires zero maintenance and protects the interior structure.”

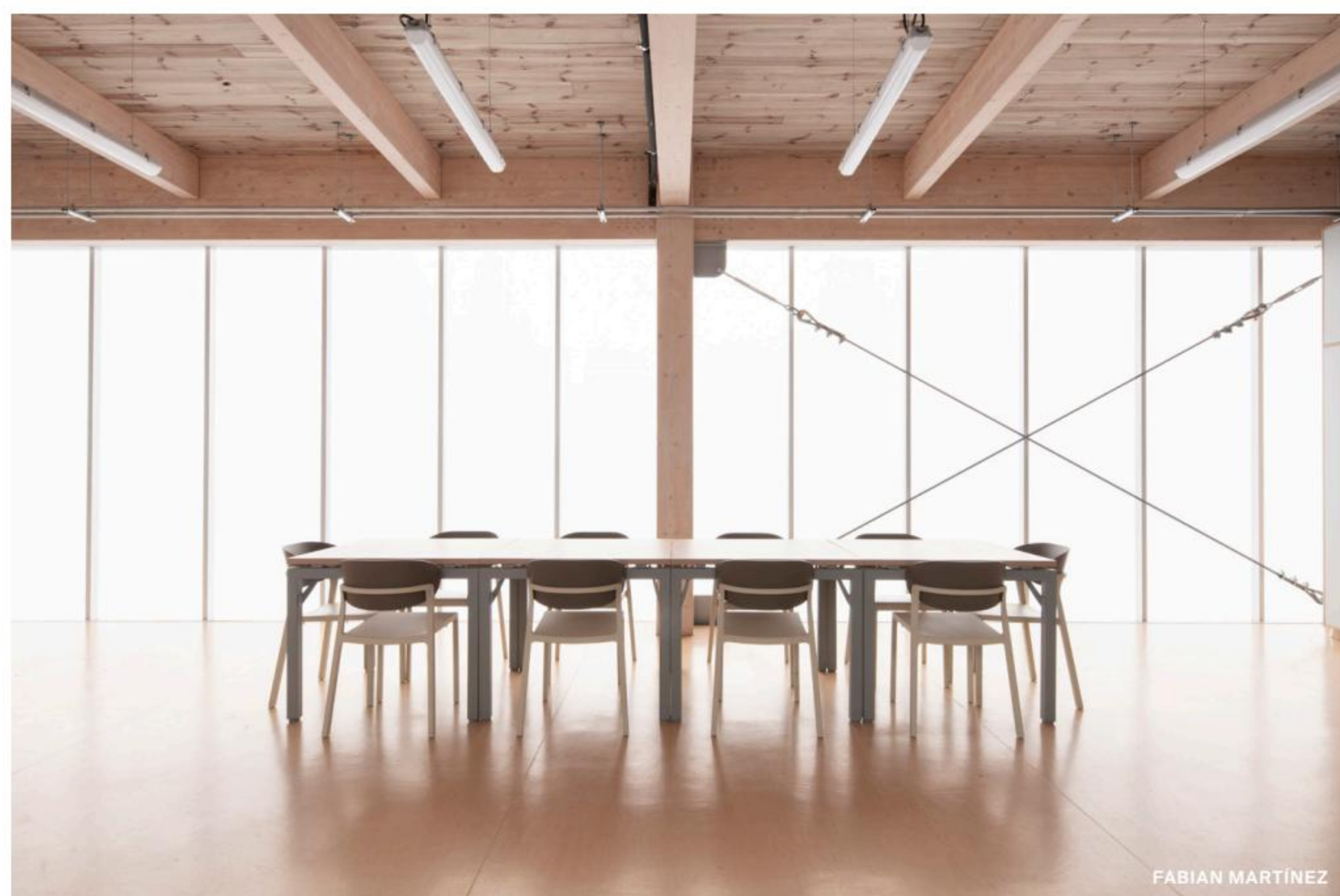
Efficiency was part of the selling point to Lyncott, whose leader worried about the building’s

lightness. “I had to tell him, ‘Don’t worry, it won’t blow away,’” Pérez Palacios recalled with a laugh. He went on to connect the agricultural aspects of the client’s business to the sustainability of building with these methods. The wood reduces the structure’s carbon footprint, and an all-glass facade would have run up the air-conditioning bills.

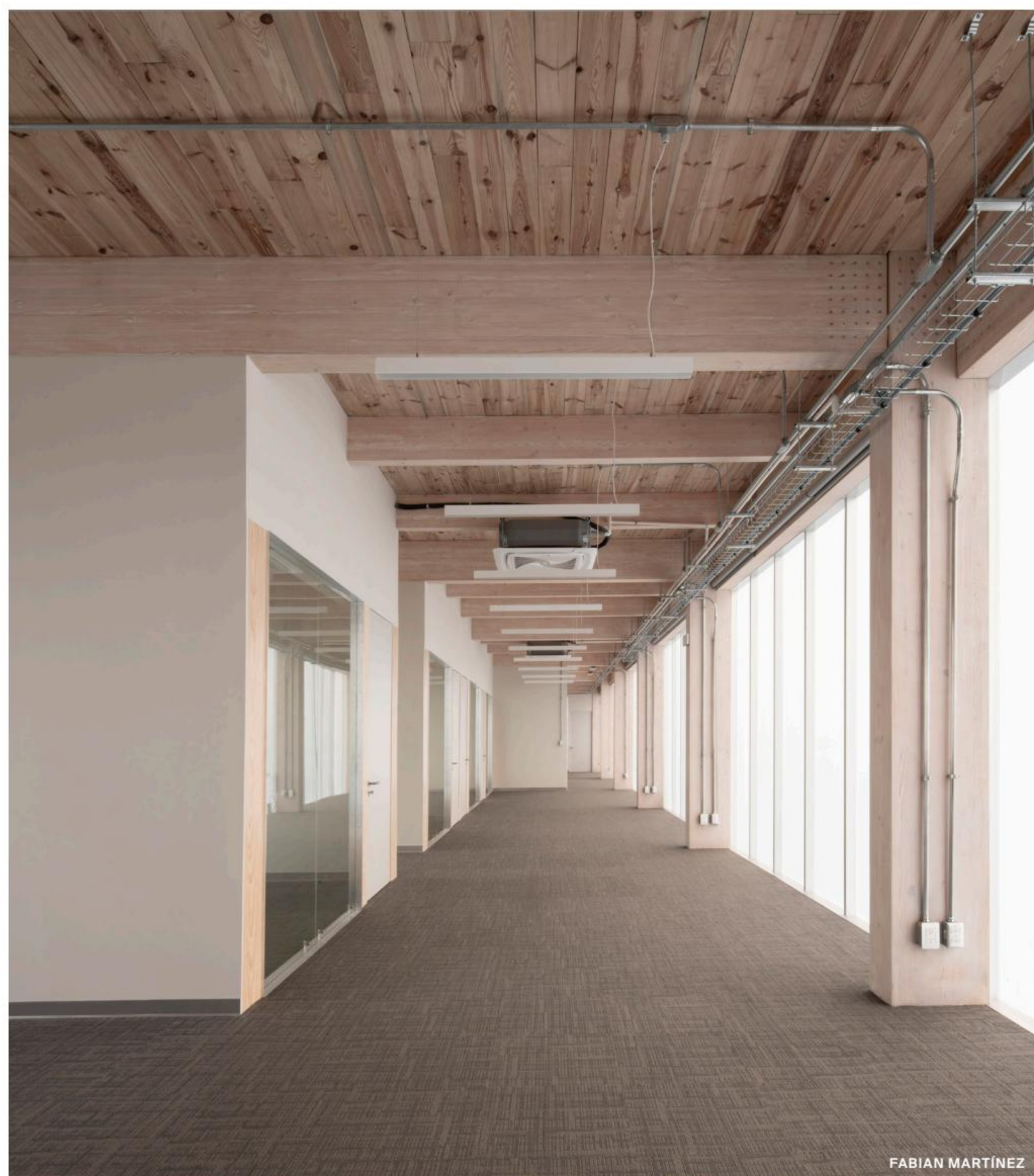
Instead, Lyncott’s new building redirects the sun—part of the reason it has become something of an attraction in Mexico. Pérez Palacios foresees bringing students for site visits, and Danpal has shown the site to potential clients. PPAA has even sold the idea of mass timber construction to a skeptical audience: Now the firm has two more wood projects in the pipeline. **Richard Martin**



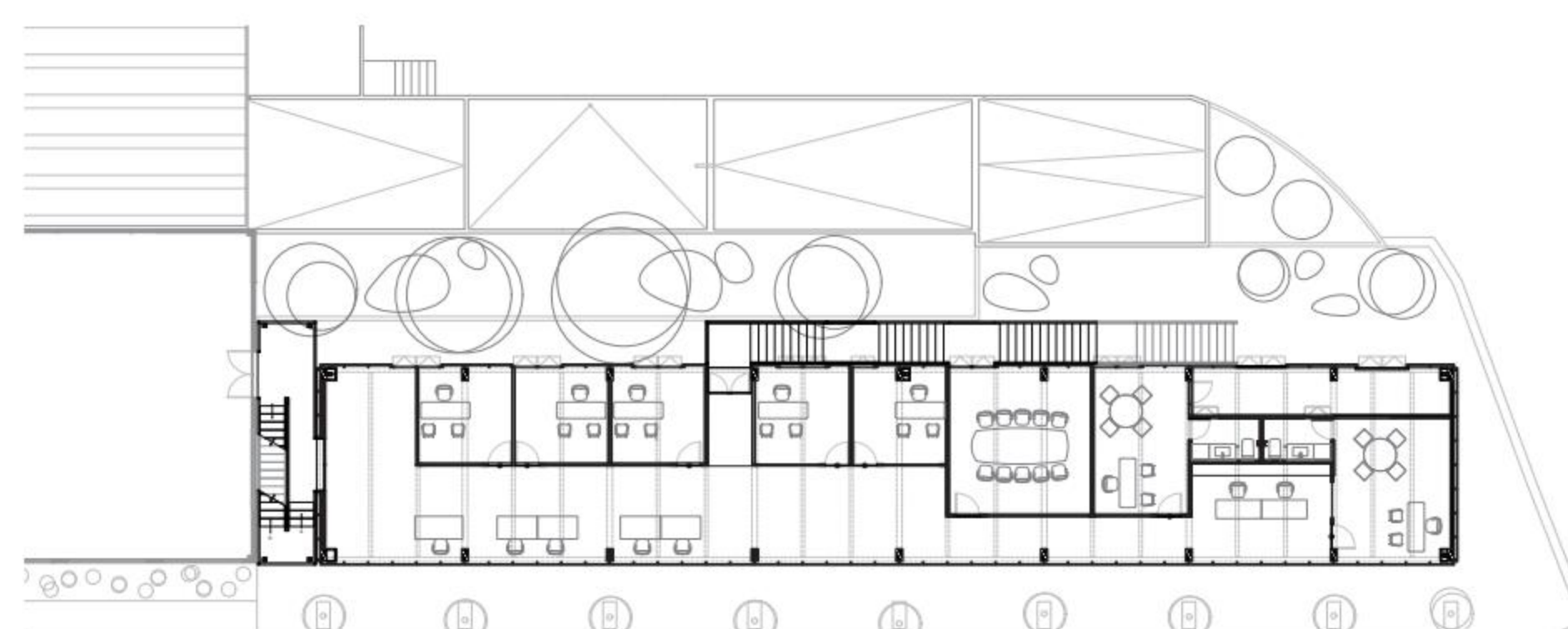
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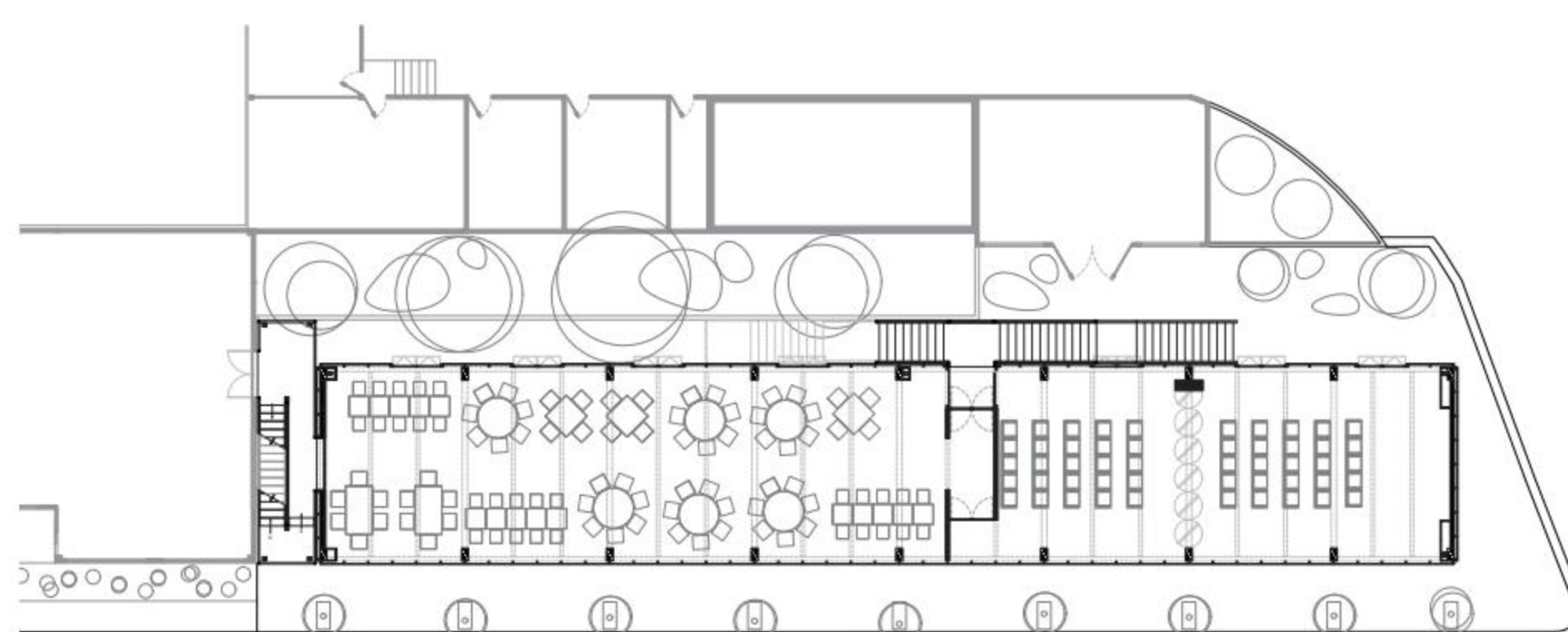
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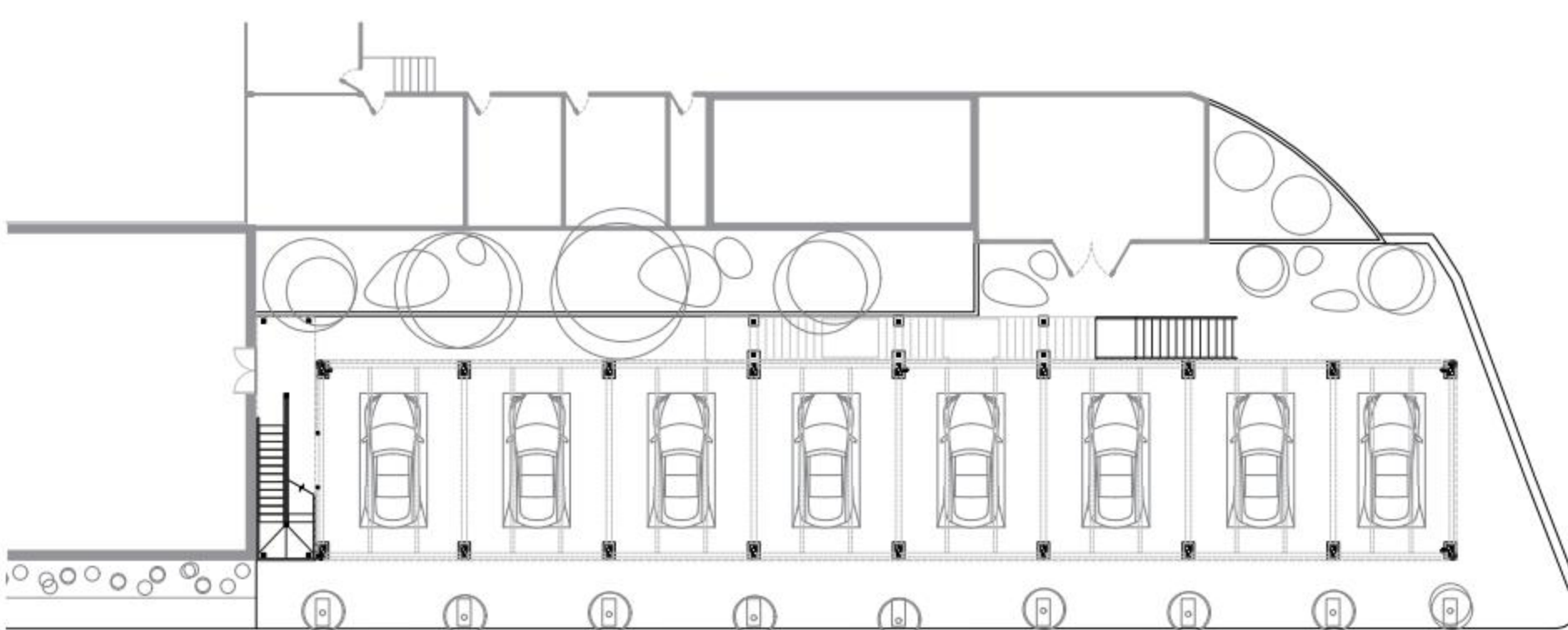
FABIAN MARTÍNEZ



LEVEL 3 PLAN



LEVEL 2 PLAN



LEVEL 1 PLAN

COURTESY PPAA

Top left: The offices are bathed in light via the translucent facade.

Above: The addition created two levels of office space atop a car park.

Left: PPAA used wood for the entire structure, including beams, columns, and ceilings.



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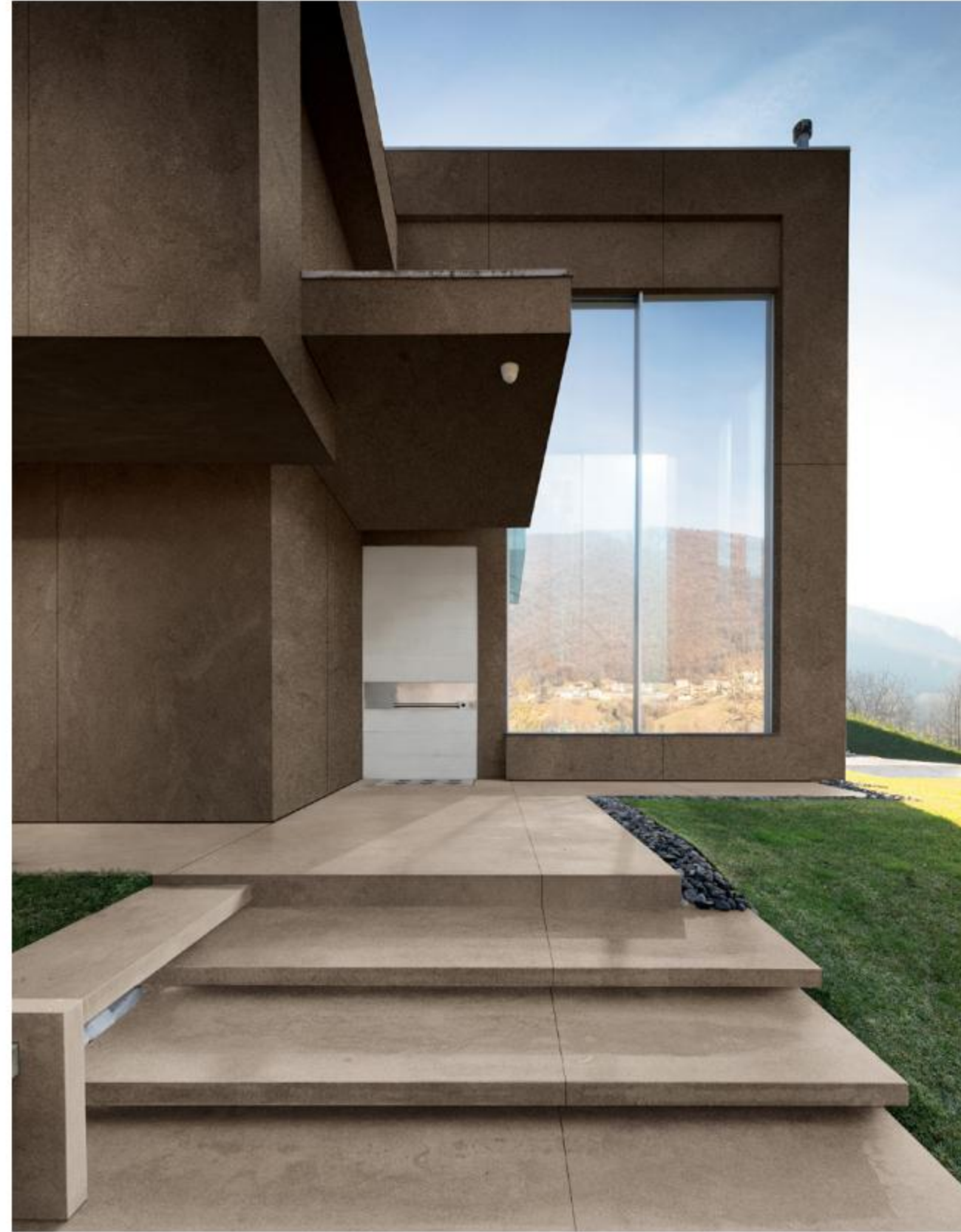
Ceramics

From integrating more recycled content to designing thinner yet durable slabs, the latest in ceramic cladding reflects industry innovation. KP



AFC TerraSlat by Tonality | American Fiber Cement
americanfibercement.com

These terra-cotta slats are sustainably made with reusable elements, and they have rear ventilation for improved performance.



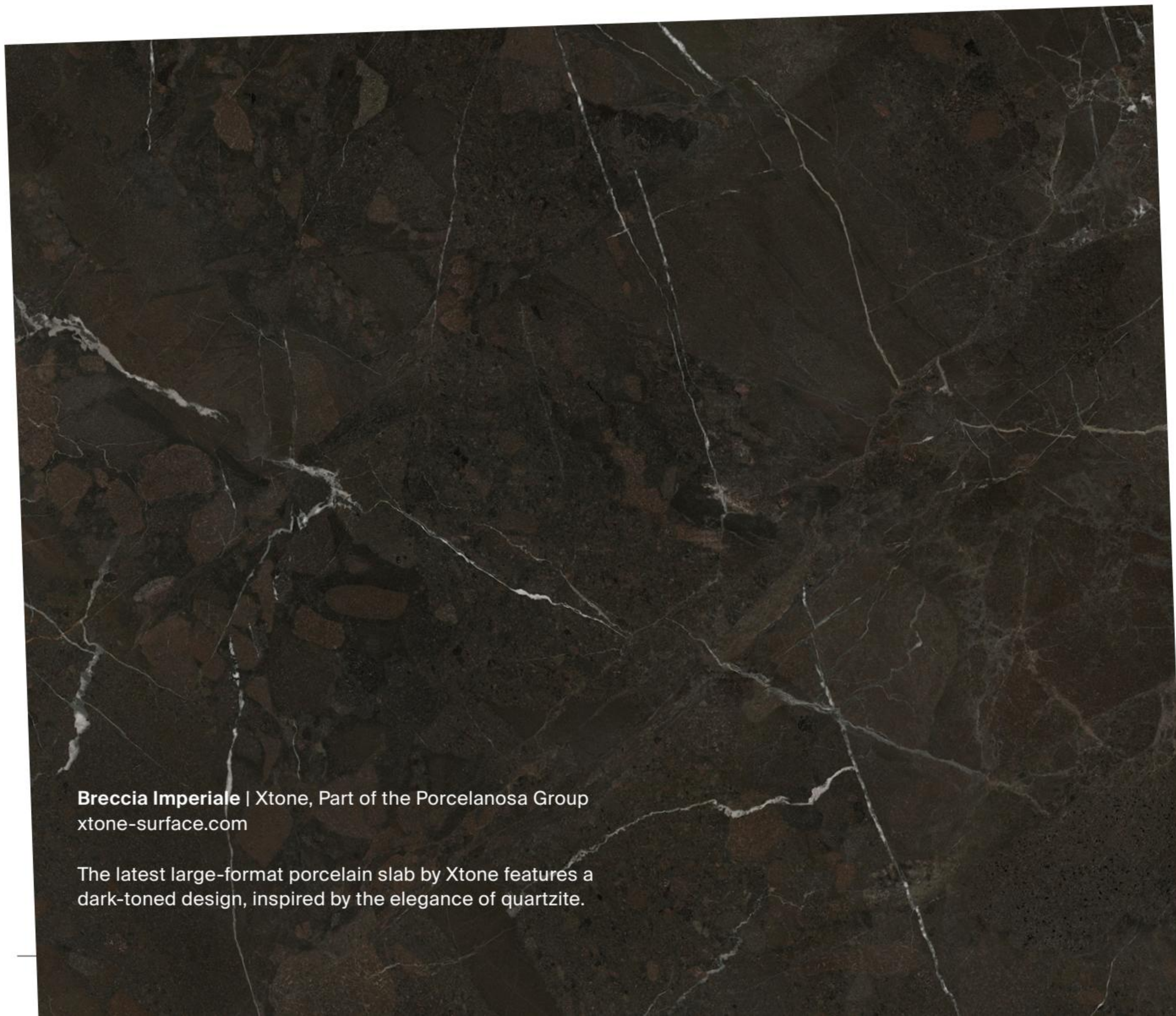
FLORIM Skin | Florim
florim.com

With a thickness of 3 millimeters and reinforced with a fiberglass mesh, FLORIM Skin is a ceramic slab that is lightweight, ultra-thin, and able to clad curved systems.



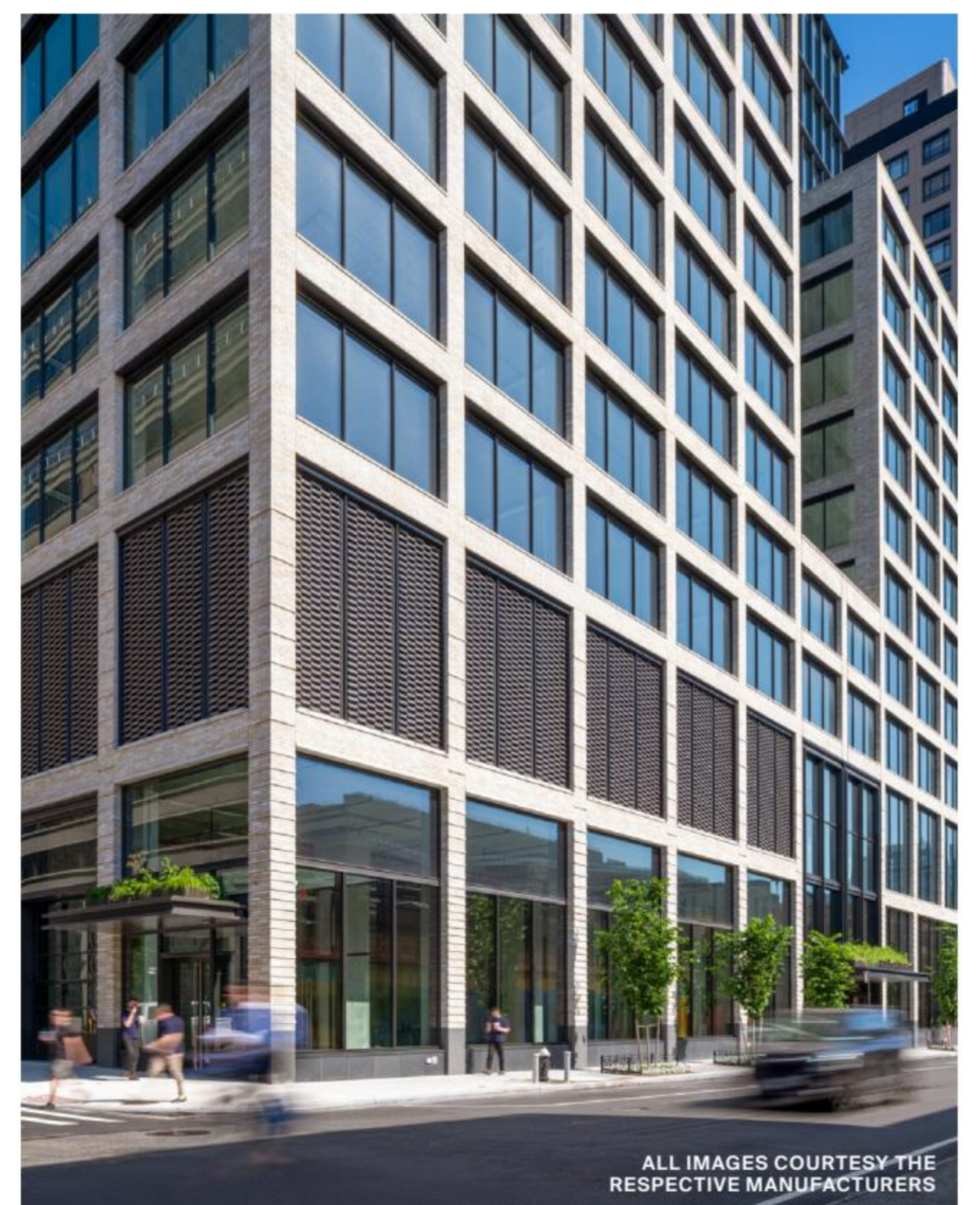
two | Laminam
laminam.com

This innovative porcelain slab is just 2 millimeters thick but with durability and performance similar to Laminam's other offerings.



Breccia Imperiale | Xtone, Part of the Porcelanosa Group
xtone-surface.com

The latest large-format porcelain slab by Xtone features a dark-toned design, inspired by the elegance of quartzite.



Fabrik+ | Shildan
shildan.com

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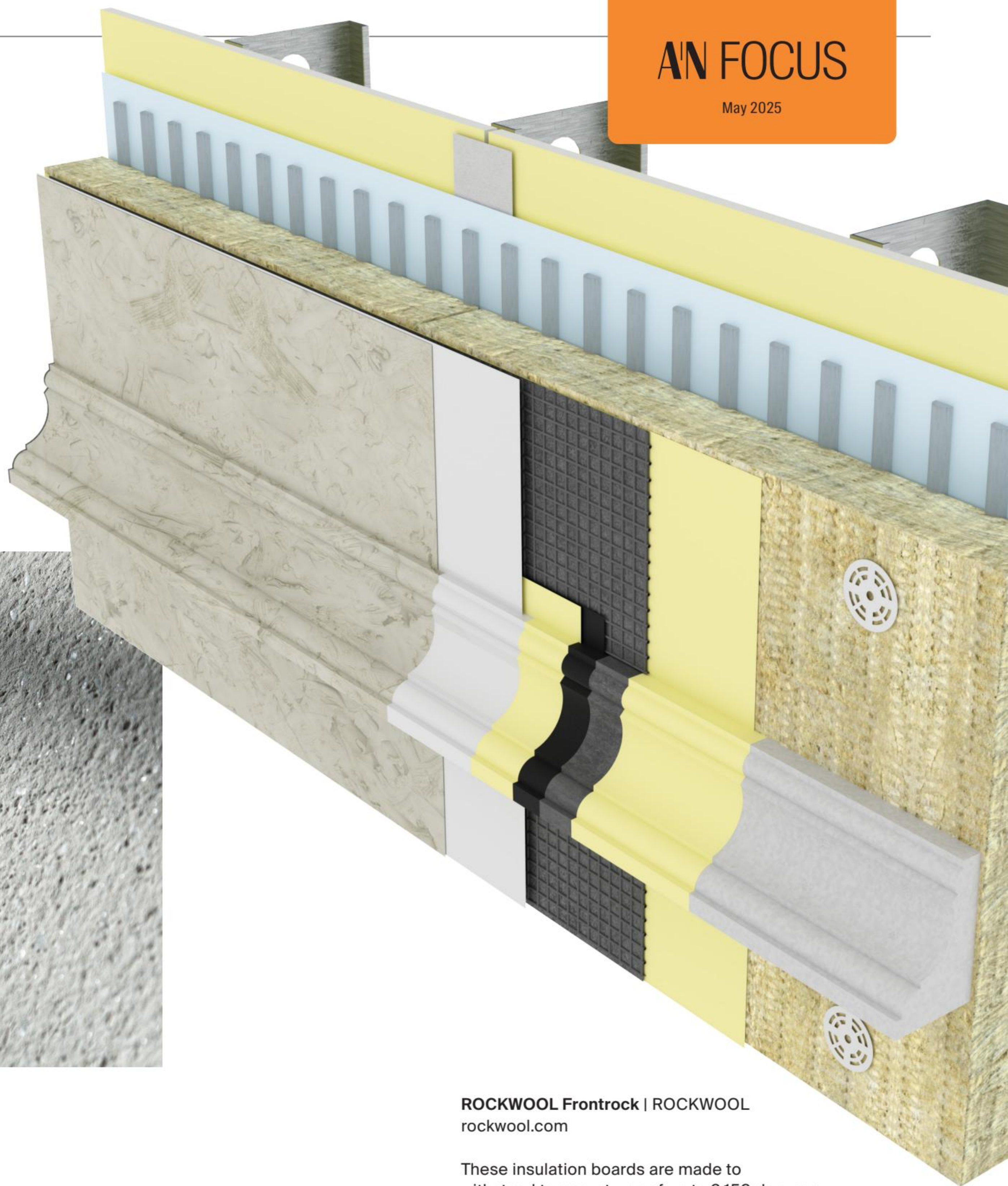


CUPACLAD.COM

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Resiliency

Between wildfires, an increasingly hotter climate, and pollution, these exterior and insulation solutions resolve to create more resilient buildings. ^{KP}



TAKTL SOLA | TAKTL
taktl-llc.com

These self-cleaning, pollution-removing, antimicrobial facade panels use the power of light to break down organic and inorganic contaminants and other environmental toxins.

ROCKWOOL Frontrock | ROCKWOOL
rockwool.com

These insulation boards are made to withstand temperatures of up to 2,150 degrees Fahrenheit without contributing to flame spread.



Mataverde ThermaWood FR | Mataverde
mataverdedecking.com

Using vertical-grain thermally modified Hem-Fir with the highest-rated fire-retardant treatment process available, ThermaWood FR is ignition-resistant for building safer and more sustainably.



StoVentec Fiber Cement Rainscreen System | Sto Corp.
stocorp.com

With noncombustible continuous insulation and fiber cement panels, this ventilated rainscreen cladding system enhances thermal performance and fire protection.



VintageWood | Nichiha
nichiha.com

Popularized after withstanding California wildfires, VintageWood is crafted from cement, fly ash, silica, recycled materials, and wood fibers.

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project: 11W
architect: ZGF Architects
finish: Pacific Bronze
photo: Lincoln Barbour

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Urbanism *alla* Milanese

Ebpc delivers a monolithic apartment building clad in travertine with balconies and cross-ventilated living units.

One aspect of Milan that makes it an enjoyable city is the scale of its seemingly endless blocks of midrise apartment buildings, many of which were built as infill after the city was heavily bombed during World War II. Ranging from 5 to 8 stories in height, the residential units are typically pressed against the front facade, leaving an open courtyard in the center of the block. Near the Viale dei Mille in the eastern part of the city, an opening in the street wall along Via Luigi Vanvitelli became the site for a handsome

16-unit apartment building designed by the Milan-based architecture practice ebpc, led by Emanuela Bartolini and Paolo Cardin.

The architects, partners in work and life, were both born in Milan and educated at the Politecnico di Milano. After separate careers, the pair founded their office together in 2016. ebpc—their initials, combined—prefers to work with a flexible network of collaborators that can be assembled as needed for projects. This allows the architects the ability to retain the





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Milan continued

ARCHITECT: ebpc architettura e urbanistica
 STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Ideas
 ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEER, AV/ACOUSTICS:
 Elco & Ebner Engineering
 GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Mazzalveri & Comelli
 GLAZING CONTRACTOR: Serrament
 FACADE INSTALLER: Tecnodima

FACADE SYSTEM: Tecnodima
 CLADDING: Arredo di Pietra
 WINDOWS: Serrament
 DOORS: Serrament
 VERTICAL CIRCULATION: Otis
 SWIMMING POOL: Swimpool Europa

hands-on pleasure of making images and drawings themselves. (They prefer the work of an architect as a craftsperson rather than a media personality; at the time of writing, their company's Instagram profile had one post.) Bartolini described the scenario as "happily decreasing" when they met me on a sunny afternoon to tour the project.

This plot of land used to include a factory for a family-owned business that made homeopathic products. The family, who previously lived on-site in a townhouse, retained the land and commissioned ebpc to design a new residential building with large units, some of which would be occupied by family members, including the patriarch's daughter, who is a friend of the architects. It was a "dream brief," Bartolini recalled.

The building is massed to be a good neighbor: Its volume, faced in travertine from Siena, aligns with the structures on either side, and its flat frontage is cut back at the top, perhaps a nod to the roof on the right. Inset windows are given a slight relief and shadow with a panel set at a slight breaking angle. The stone jointing is fully aligned horizontally and vertically, and the patterning translates to the champagne-

colored metal panels that are recessed along the main entrance.

Bartolini and Cardin are diligent, thoughtful, and determined architects. When there's a crisis of not knowing how to resolve a problem, "we go back to the first intention," Cardin said. Rather than accept the builder's solution to install tubular scuppers on the front street facade, they halted construction to be able to detail a linear slot drain for the inset balconies; the detail is incorporated into the joining between the thin, large-format stone pieces.

Ebpc used the commission to conduct "research on what it means to design an apartment in the city," Bartolini said. The firm landed on the value of a long great room that has exposures on two sides, which is uncommon but immensely comfortable in person. In plan, there are five structural bays, with the elevator and a single stair occupying part of the central one; the through-floor living areas are on either side, flanked by bedrooms and bathrooms. Across the floors, the generous units take turns acquiring the residual space next to the vertical circulation, which causes the alternating window and balcony expression on both facades.

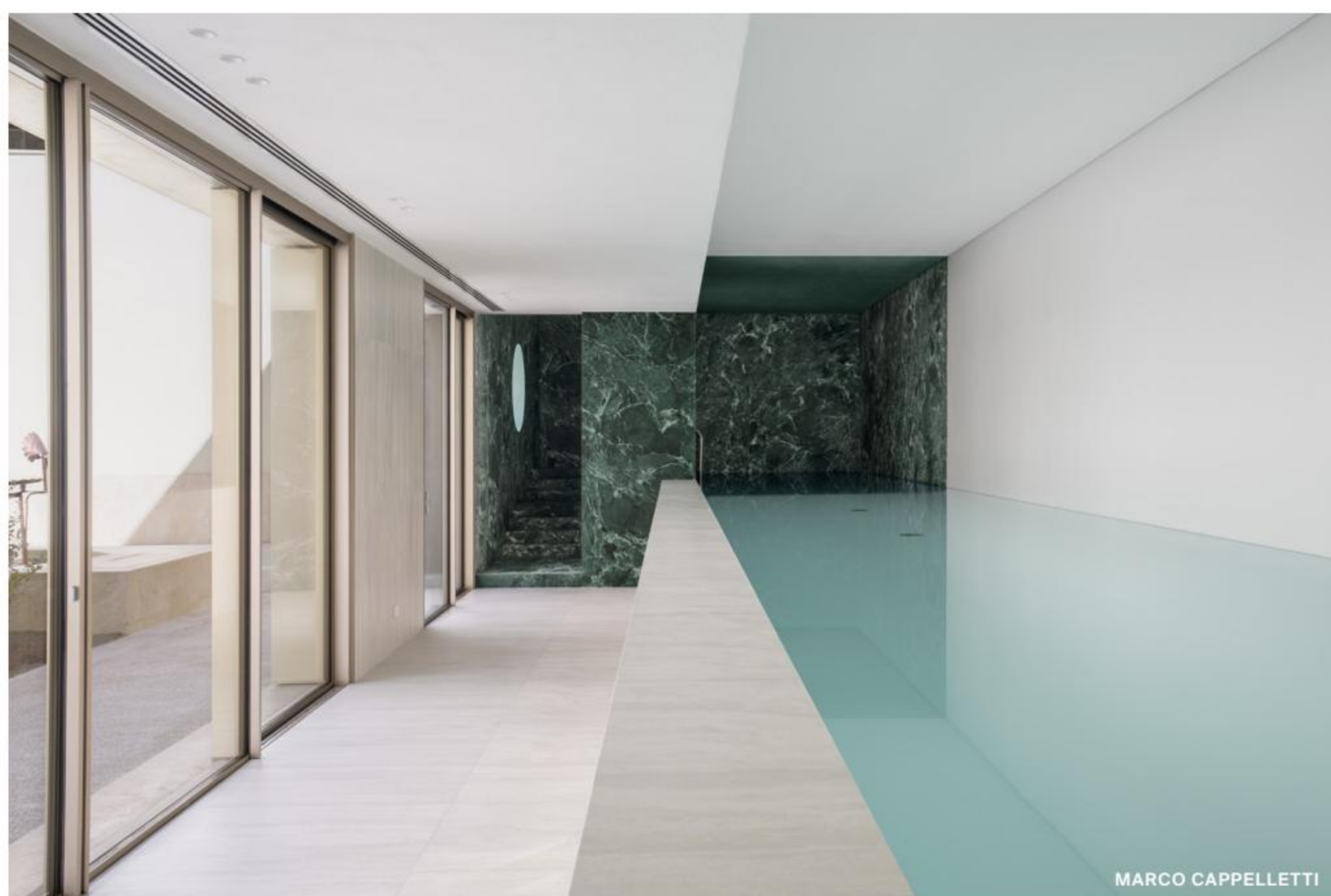
The architects also avoided the dichotomy between front and rear facade: Rather than cheaping out to render the courtyard in a more affordable finish, they faced it in stone and created similar details, though the rear elevation sports cantilevered balconies instead of inset ones. The stair is set against the facade here and crosses the windows. A larger one caps the stack, a nod to Luigi Caccia Dominioni's fondness for differently sized windows.

Upon entry, one can see through to the interior garden, which is set atop one level of underground parking. At the rear of the property, a small apartment perches above a linear indoor lap pool. The meditative shallow end is faced in a marbled green tile, and the specialness of the "room within a room" is heightened by the project's only circular window, a favored device of Piero Portaluppi's.

From the overall form down to the recessed slider details, ebpc's fastidiousness shines in this well-executed building shaped by the intention to give something back to the city. In time its travertine facade will stain and weather, and it will take its place among Milan's pleasantly anonymous urban environment. **JM**



MARCO CAPPELLETTI



MARCO CAPPELLETTI



MARCO CAPPELLETTI

Previous page: The travertine facade fronts Via Luigi Vanvitelli. Its massing steps on either side to align with the adjacent buildings.

Top left: The travertine continues on the rear of the building. The top of the building angles inward on one side to match its neighbor.

Above: Balconies that alternate in extents and depth overlook the rear planted court.

Left: Residents have access to a linear, interior lap pool. Its shallow entry area is marked by dark green tile and a circular window.

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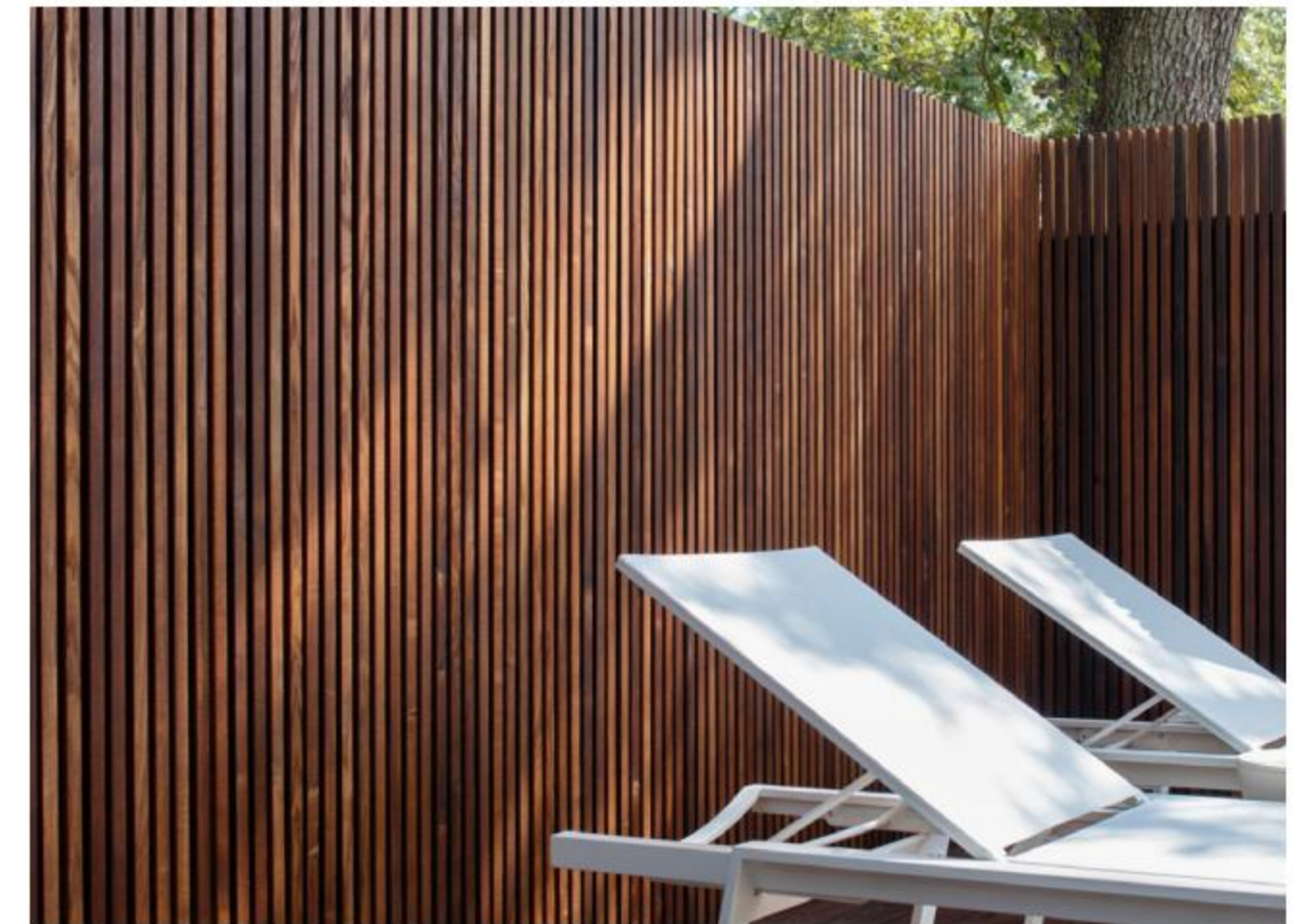


Cedar | BEHR
behr.com

Cedar is BEHR's 2025 Exterior Stain Color of the Year, chosen for its warm, earthy, and versatile hue amid a growing demand for inviting exteriors.

PPG CORAFLOX Platinum Powder Coatings | PPG
ppg.com

Available in a wide range of colors, this powder coating aims to increase color retention based on more than a decade of testing.



CUTEK Extreme | CUTEK
cutekstain.com

A high-performance oil protects wood against water damage and reduces warping and splitting to enhance the wood's natural beauty.



Element Guard | Benjamin Moore
benjaminmoore.com

The newest premium exterior paint from Benjamin Moore is specially formulated to tackle high moisture, extreme humidity, and wind-driven rain.



Quick Seal Exterior Oil-Based Stain | Valspar
valspar.com

Designed to protect wood, this oil-based exterior stain is easy to apply and maintain, and it resists cracking, chipping, and peeling.



WoodScapes Rain Refresh Solid Color Stain | Sherwin Williams
sherwin-williams.com

Made with self-cleaning technology, this stain keeps wood finishes and vertical exterior wood surfaces looking fresh, while easing the labor of upkeep.

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Gable House

Van Meter, IA

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ARCHITECT	Knop Killeen Architects
CONTRACTOR	Husk Homes
PHOTOGRAPHER	Brandon Huttenlocher



Resources

This listing combines companies specified in case studies, product highlights from Design Editor Kelly Pau, and additional recommendations, all in one place.

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henry.com

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huberwood.com

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ludowici.com

MSI Surfaces
msisurfaces.com

NBK Architectural Terracotta
nbkterracotta.com

Panaria Ceramica
panaria.us

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Shildan Group
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XTONE
xtone-surface.com

CLADDING SYSTEMS

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ecocladding.com

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nationalnail.com

Northern Facades
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EXTECH/Exterior Technologies
extechinc.com

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faourglass.com

Frameless Hardware Company
fhc-usa.com

GAMCO
gamcocorp.com

GGI
generalglass.com

GlasPro
glas-pro.com

Glasswerks
glasswerks.com

Guardian Glass
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Gutmann North America
gutmann-na.com

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Kuraray
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kawneer.us

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krskadecor.com

Longboard
longboardproducts.com

Metl-Span
metlspan.com

Millboard
millboard.co.uk

Morin
morincorp.com

PAC-CLAD
pac-clad.com

Pure + FreeForm
purefreeform.com

Q-railing
q-railing.com

Renson
renson-outdoor.com

Reynaers Aluminum
reynaers.com

Ridgidized Metals
ridgidized.com

TEKKō Metals
tekkometals.com

Tubelite
tubeliteusa.com

Zintek
zintek.it/en

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ABC Stone
abcworldwidestone.com

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Fabcon
fabconprecast.com

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glengery.com

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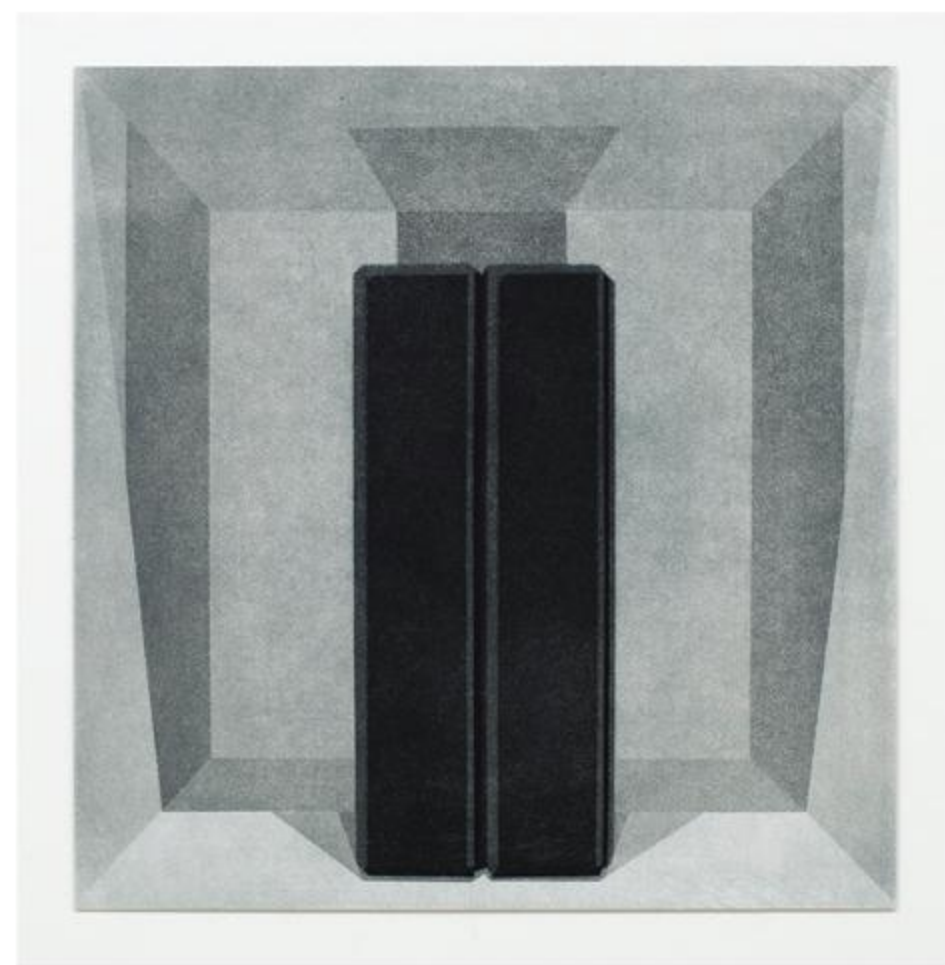
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77 Happenings

Exhibitions



Barbara Kasten: *Sideways Corner (Da Monsta)*, 2016/2025 HD video, color, silent, with painted wood cubes

The Inconvenient Giant: Blanco, Estudio Jochamowitz Rivera, and Ghezzi Novak at LIGA Space for Architecture

LIGA Space for Architecture presents a collaboration between the Peruvian architecture studios Ghezzi Novak and Estudio Jochamowitz with design office Blanco. The exhibition features a long roll of stranded totora reeds snaking from Lake Titicaca to nestle into LIGA, a space dedicated to celebrating art and architecture from Latin America.

Calle Dr. Erazo 172, Doctores, Cuauhtémoc, 06720 Mexico City, Mexico
liga.df.com

Through May 30

Building Belonging: Designing the Future of the Nelson-Atkins

This exhibition presents design concepts for a future expansion to the Kansas City museum's campus, from six world-class architectural firms. After extensive input from the community and the project's selection committee, the winner was announced in April: Weiss/Manfredi, with SCAPE, Atelier Ten, and others, will design an addition which the winning firm referred to as a "connected tapestry."

4525 Oak Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64111
nelson-atkins.org

Through June 1

Myth of the Organic City at 6018|North

A contemporary and historical overview of Chicago's design and land use, from its Indigenous roots through 20th century infrastructure projects to present-day developments. Maps, landscape designs, multimedia works, wall drawings, and sculptures are on display across 3 floors.

6018 North Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60660
6018north.org

Through June 1

Sergei Tchoban: Sections of the Mind at Paul Rudolph Institute for Modern Architecture

Born in St. Petersburg but a longtime resident of Germany, this architect presents a provocative exhibition of 30 freehand charcoal and ink drawings, watercolors, pastels, and prints exploring effective and imaginary use of the architectural section.

246 East 58th Street, New York, New York 10022
paulrudolph.institute

Through June 7

Thus We Advance, Harvesting Our Caravans at MAS Context

Artist/architect Leticia Pardo and urban researcher/photographer Inés Vachez Palomar exhibit architectures produced by Mexican communities in Chicago and in Vista Hermosa, Jalisco, Mexico, the latter funded by remittances sent to families by migrant populations.

1564 North Damen Avenue, Suite 204, Chicago, Illinois 60622
mascontext.com

Through June 14

Rediscovering Dallas's Mediterranean Gardens Neighborhood at AD EX

Preserving Tomorrow explores the story of a pioneering midcentury residential development in East Dallas. The show highlights the vision, innovation, and community spirit that brought this neighborhood to life through original archival material, including architectural models, plans, photographs, sales brochures, and news articles.

325 North Saint Paul Street, Suite 150, Dallas, Texas 75201
dallasadex.org

Through July 6

Jardineros at The Ohio State University College of Engineering

The Spanish term *jardineros* refers to the immigrant gardeners and groundskeepers who maintain landscapes across the United States. But here, it means all those tasked with the cultivation of landscape: architects and designers, contractors, academics, students, and of course, laborers. See documentation of experimental collaborations between landscape designers and landscape laborers and more.

Banvard Gallery at Knowlton School, 275 West Woodruff Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210
knowlton.osu.edu

Through July 31

Formafantasma: Formation at Friedman Benda

The Italian design studio Formafantasma, founded in 2009 by Andrea Trimarchi and Simone Farresin, gets its first gallery exhibition in the United States. In *Formation*, it presents a new body of work that addresses the relationship between furniture, the domestic sphere, and the concept of archetype in design.

515 West 26th Street, New York, New York 10001
friedmanbenda.com

June 6–August 1

Do Not Try to Remember: The American School of Architecture in the Bay Area at Center for Architecture + Design

In the mid-20th century, a group of renegade architects broke all the rules, shaping a uniquely American vision of design. Known as the American School of Architecture, this program rejected European teaching styles in favor of bold originality. Instead of a singular aesthetic, it was defined by a set of shared values: pluralism, contextualism, and expression. This archival exhibition explores the work of a group of American School architects who went west and established groundbreaking practices.

Haldie Building, 140 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California 94104
centersf.org

Through August 8

150 Years of Design: The AIA Houston Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

The collection encompasses international, architect-designed objects made beginning in 1880—particularly furniture, metalwork, ceramics, glass, lighting, and industrial design. The selections on view include rare and limited-edition works such as a translucent, molded-plastic chair by Maarten Van Severen, a sterling-silver flower basket by Josef Hoffmann for the Wiener Werkstätte (Vienna Workshop), and a tubular steel chair and stool by Marcel Breuer.

Nancy and Rich Kinder Building, 5500 Main Street, Houston, Texas 77004
mfah.org

Through August 17

Fantasizing Design: Phyllis Birkby Builds Lesbian Feminist Architecture at AIA NY

This show traces the life and work of the feminist architect who pushed design professionals and the public to consider how the built environment could diverge from existing male-dominated forms. The Center for Architecture also hosts two shows connected to important AIA New York programs: New Practices New York and AIANY Design Awards.

Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place, New York, New York 10012
centerforarchitecture.org

Through September 2

Barbara Kasten: Structure, Light, Land at The Glass House

For five decades, this Chicago-based artist has created photographs and sculptural installations that reorient our sense of perception and explore the dynamic relationship between space, material, and form. Her artistic influences are deeply rooted in modernist architecture, the principles of Constructivism, and the interdisciplinary legacy of the Bauhaus. This show features work from multiple series and new iterations of digital projects, including *Sideways Corner (Da Monsta)*, a video projection of three-dimensional cubes in primary colors, pictured above.

199 Elm Street, New Canaan, Connecticut 06840
theglasshouse.org

Through December 15

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Events

Shelter by Afternoon Light Volume 1: Mart Nouveau

This new design fair debuts in New York City, bringing an exclusive roster of 100-plus brands from the worlds of furniture, art, and decoration to Chelsea. The 3-day event features The Library by *AN Interior*, featuring free publications (including our Spring/Summer issue of *AN Interior*), architecture and design books for sale by Head Hi, and talks featuring media and design professionals, including several by *The Architect's Newspaper* executive editor Jack Murphy with special guests.

Starrett-Lehigh Building, 601 West 26th Street, New York, New York 10001
afternoonlight.com

May 17–19

ICFF

Within the wider activity of NYCxDesign, ICFF returns to New York with its emphasis on original and sustainable design. The fair, including its WANTED feature and a series of ICFF Talks, presents furnishings for residential, contract, and hospitality environments to an audience of ten thousand architects, interior designers, retailers, distributors, developers, and press. This year's International Spotlight is on Brazil, featuring at least a dozen esteemed furniture and contemporary rug designers.

Javits Center, 429 11th Avenue, New York, New York 10001
icff.com

May 18–20

AIA Conference on Architecture & Design

With keynote speakers Dami Lee, Pete Buttigieg, and Allie K. Miller, the 2025 AIA convention aims to inspire architects and designers. Registration includes access not only to these notable talks but exclusive tours of Boston architecture, networking opportunities with peers and experts, and an expo featuring six hundred brands from the AED trade.

Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, 415 Summer Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02210
conferenceonarchitecture.com

June 4–7

NeoCon

Held since 1969, NeoCon is the world's leading platform for the commercial design industry. With this year's theme of "Design Ahead," expect a mix of thoughtful panels, an exhibition of 450-plus companies offering products for the trade, and keynotes by Alice Rawsthorn, Chris Barton, and Annie Jean-Baptiste. Other programming includes design panels, onsite CEUs, workshops, and more.

The Mart, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago, Illinois 60654
neocon.com

June 9–11

Check archpaper.com/calendar for updated listings and other exhibitions and events.



The Gift of Stillness

A visit to the Mattin Center ahead of its demolition in 2021 prompts a reflection on architecture's impermanence.

For me, photography is about knowing something is meaningful and documenting it properly because it may not be here tomorrow. There were a handful of events that shaped this perspective and determined my path as an architectural photographer. My visit to the Mattin Center at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, a triangular arrangement of three creative arts buildings around a central courtyard, was one of them. The complex was unoccupied when I was there in 2021, in anticipation of forthcoming change: It would be demolished weeks later, only 20 years after its opening, to make way for a student center designed by BIG.

Mattin was situated on the front south-east corner of campus between the lower elevation of the city and the higher elevation of the school. Its designers, from Tod Williams and Billie Tsien Architects, integrated a series of stairs, ramps, and elevators to navigate the transition between three levels of grade change. As an undergraduate student at the university, I went out of my way to spend time in this corner of campus more than any other academic space. But it would take years for me to fully understand why.

The materials were warm, simple, and cohesive. There were patinated zinc planters that felt clean, substantial, and weighty but not precious, and objects built by human hands, like a sculptural metal fountain with hammered bronze stones. There was seating and wall paneling made from cherry trees that grew on the site prior to construction, rich green tiles, and artwork created by students. There were many intimately scaled, room-like interior and exterior spaces to let students choose their relationship to the surroundings and how they wanted to spend their time between commitments. The spaces offered places to sit alone or gather in small groups, protected from the elements or exposed to them, within the activity of other students, or adjacent to them. Users could pause above the city or nestle deep in its gardens. The circulation paths were not prescriptive or linear: You could sprint through the central axis if you were late for class or meander up and down the ramps to breathe a little if you had time. You could hike up the large central stairs for the most direct route to the library or take a series of smaller steps to break up the workout.

Mattin's colors were modern and differential to the university's existing architecture: The predominant cladding was red brick laid in a running bond pattern, which matched its neo-Georgian neighbors in texture and color. There were other red bricks glazed with a layer of glossy steel gray over the top of them. These bricks,

which wrapped the second floor of a black box theater, created a volume that changed in appearance along with the atmosphere. When approached from the main campus, it simply receded into the landscape under dappled shadows. Up close, the glaze, which appeared as brushed and dripping, revealed red clay beneath its variable surface. There were a million different compositional moments on these walls if one stopped to look, and low granite benches invited passersby to do just that. Tall panes of frosted powder-blue glass also changed with the conditions, reflecting the landscape with a gentle monochromatic filter. Mattin was generously scaled, and the buildings felt important but not imposing because they were embedded in the earth and the landscape had matured around them.

And the light. I've long been sensitive to it, which may explain my journey to becoming a photographer. When I photograph a building, I am guided by my emotions, which are influenced by daylight and shadow. Inside Mattin, the light was breathtaking, especially in the common spaces. Large windows and clerestories bathed surfaces in a soft, unobtrusive blanket I could feel wrapped around my entire body. When I moved, the light was displaced around me, like water or smoke.

Nearly everyone experiences the world on the spectrum between chaos and peace, though lately it seems like more of the former. It is a gift to have choices, to be able to disconnect from the anxious flood of everyday concerns, to take a moment for free thought and stillness. And when we get the opportunity, it's not easy to know what to connect to, or even how to sit quietly without distraction.

For an instant or an hour, buildings and landscapes like the Mattin Center offer choices in how we use them. There are paths that can excite or calm our nerves, generous transitions with places to rest, and connections that make us feel like we are gripping the earth as much as the earth is holding us close. Buildings like this can center us. They are rare, which makes their demolition that much more difficult to process. I am grateful for my time with them, and I hope my photographs help capture their spirit.

Nicholas Venezia is a photographer based in New York and Connecticut. He photographs the work of architects, landscape architects, interior designers, and artists because it's meaningful and it might not be here tomorrow.





Architecture Follows Fish: An Amphibious History of the North Atlantic

André Tavares
The MIT Press
\$50

On Columbus Day in the sixth grade, I told my teacher that the Genoan was not the first European to reach the New World. Portuguese fisherman, I noted, had dried their cod on the shores of Newfoundland for centuries, for which impertinence I was chastised. Miss McDonnell's ignorance could have been erased had there only been André Tavares's comprehensive amphibious history of the North Atlantic, *Architecture Follows Fish*.

The Porto-based architect asks us to imagine a fish's-eye view of architecture. He writes: "An amphibious gaze transcends histories of architecture as an exclusively human activity or art form." Tavares sees it "as a component with a larger socioecological history." Fish know no nationality, and while much of the framework of history is political, this book places humankind at the pivot between a consumer product and a natural resource. "Biology, technology, processing, politics, and consumption are lenses to help us perceive just how intimately entangled fishing and terrestrial landscape are."

Casting his gaze from the Industrial Revolution to the era of frozen fillets and globalization, Tavares addresses docks, storage sheds, and processing plants—what Bernard Rudofsky referred to as "non-pedigreed architecture." Modernism and Le Corbusier, nevertheless, are mentioned—the book opens with a 1950 severe white cube of a freezing plant in Myre, Norway. There was a Cold Storage Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, and three years earlier Adler & Sullivan tried to "develop a language for a novel public monument" with its Cold Storage Exchange. The 1934 Massarelos fish market in Porto, designed by Januário Godinho, undoubtedly new to most readers, became an emblem for the city and is "a point of reference in modern architecture" in the history of cod-obsessed Portugal.

Piscatorial architecture is a reflection of transformations in technology. Revealing how fish shape landscape and architecture, Tavares is not so much interested in the form of buildings as in a "desire to understand built manifestations of the human presence within nature." The intersection of various technologies marks the architecture of fishing, so there is a lot of information here on oceanography and marine biology. Cod and sardine fisheries are different, for example, one depending upon drying, the other on canning. Hence, their respective architecture of drying racks, warehouses, cold storage, boats, nets, and traps is different. Conversely, since this is an ecological history, marine ecosystems are affected by what we build on land.

Eating fish is just one aspect of a larger food chain, wherein fish is a commodity—also a nonrenewable one, the success of which depends upon its exploitation. Fishing is less like agriculture than mining, in that once the vulnerable

fish are extracted from the ocean, none are left. The fishing villages clinging to the rocky shores of Newfoundland serve as an example of how the fundamental supporting structures on land were altered as the cod moved farther from shore; the introduction of factory ships in the 1950s rendered many villages redundant. In the 1850s, sardine fishing, which doesn't need harbors, was transformed by the introduction of canning.

The evolution of such technological and political changes can be charted by following whaling. The discovery of oil in western Pennsylvania in the mid-19th century

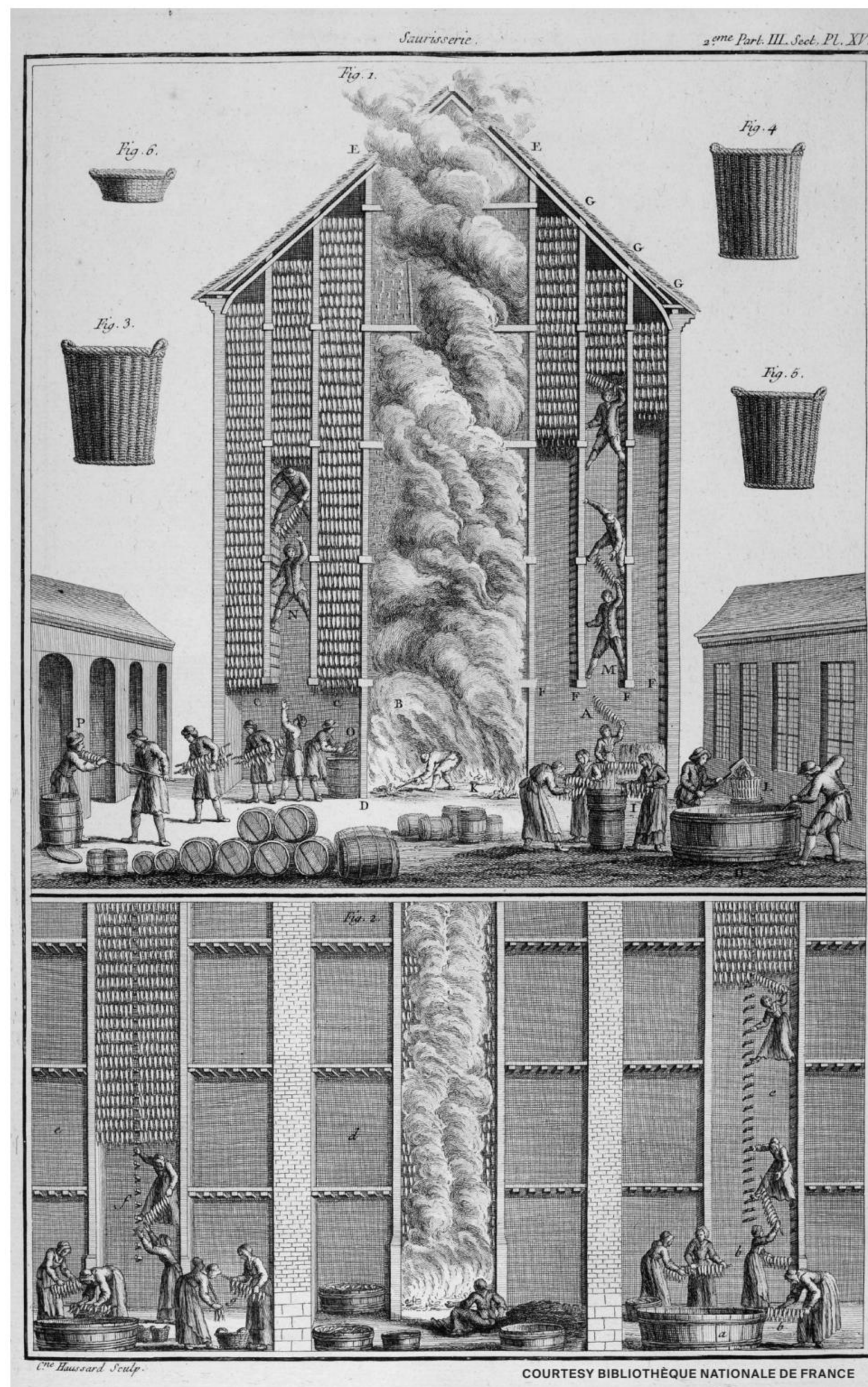
came at the apogee of whaling, and prior to that we can read the landscape and structures formed by the hunting of the Leviathan. The first Nantucket whalers fished close to shore, but as they chased the sperm whale around the globe, bigger boats, longer journeys, and more infrastructure changed the island and spelled its doom as an industrial powerhouse.

The growth of the food-processing industry, spurred by the ability to can sardines, saw the construction of huge market halls, like that in Lorient, Brittany—a Les Halles for fish, accompanied by the dredging of a new harbor. The Italianate palace for Billingsgate Market on the Thames in London was designed for the social aspirations of the Fishmongers Company rather than proximity to the fish. Billingsgate, Hungerford, and Covent Garden were all connected to the railroad, allowing fish to become available to the urban poor. Fish and chips is still Britain's most popular take-away food.

"From the perspective of fish, architecture is a passage. Appearing on its path from animal to commodity, buildings are interfaces, facilitators inscribed within a sequence of logistical movements leading from the harvesting to their arrival in distant places to be turned into food." In this process, Tavares writes, "no building typology has had a larger impact than freezers." Refrigeration made possible new products like fish sticks, as witnessed by Clarence Birdseye's 1924 patented "Method of Preserving Piscatorial Products." Iceboxes, along with improved schooner designs, drove fish consumption way up. One of the main reasons the Nazis occupied Norway was for its rich fishing grounds; their factories increased production of needed protein for the Reich to 35 times prewar levels. Under Portugal's Salazar dictatorship cod fishermen were mythologized as Atlantic heroes "following a glorious nation's destiny." Lisbon's cold-storage facility became a symbol of national self-sufficiency during World War II.

The North Atlantic has been overfished, technology has been unable to offset the inevitable decline, and there is "no marine counterpart to the picturesque quality of terrestrial ruins." As Rachel Carson wrote in *The Sea Around Us*, "We still haven't become mature to think of ourselves as only a very tiny part of a vast and incredible universe." Such interconnectivity, however, is Tavares's grand theme. *Architecture Follows Fish* is not an easy meal, for there is a lot to digest here. But it is a bold, significant, and even revolutionary approach to architectural history.

William Morgan writes extensively about New England architecture. His latest book is *The Cape Cod Cottage* (Abbeville Press).



Herring preparation and smokehouse, in Duhamel du Monceau, *Traité général des pêches et histoire des poissons*, vol. 2, section 3, plate 15, 1772, as featured in *Architecture Follows Fish*

Julian Rose's *Building Culture*, published last year by Princeton Architectural Press, contains 16 in-depth interviews with leading architects who have designed museums around the world. In 2023, András Szántó's *Imagining the Future Museum: 21 Dialogues with Architects*, published by Hatje Cantz, offered a complementary glimpse into the sensibilities of a new generation of voices. (The titles share four interviewees: David Adjaye, David Chipperfield, Elizabeth Diller, and Kulapat Yantrasast) Rose and Szántó sat down with AN's executive editor, Jack Murphy, to discuss the museum's inexhaustible spatial variety and its capacity to shape civic and cultural space today.

AN Julian, what are the major themes, concerns, and anxieties that you heard when interviewing architects about designing museums?

JULIAN ROSE The conversations in *Building Culture* grew out of my time at *Artforum*, so they began nearly ten years ago in a pretty different world. In that context, one important theme was looking at the museum to understand how architecture relates to arts. Architects, either by choice or because the culture at large compels them to, are always defining what they do in relation to other cultural practices, especially the visual arts. This relationship goes back to the modernist avant-garde, and you could trace it even further. I was drawn towards architects who had deep connections to art; maybe they had even gone to art school or had a record of collaboration. Not coincidentally, a lot of them have become known as museum specialists.

The answers I heard were refreshing; people were not necessarily learning the lessons I expected. As an example: With Peter Zumthor, I thought we were going to have a focused conversation about the very architectural aesthetics and materials used by certain artists like Richard Serra or Donald Judd. No—he wanted to talk about the bigger picture, the emotional and philosophical connections. He's obsessed with Walter De Maria's landscape works, like *The Lightning Field*. Even if they don't seem to have an obvious connection to architecture, he loves the scale and ambition. This kind of surprise happened in several conversations.

The other key topic is the typological problem of the museum. As I write in my introduction, the museum refuses spatial optimization—there's no "best" way to design one. In part, that's because contemporary art is evolving. Look at the popularity of large-scale installations today, which require big open spaces, versus the more old-fashioned idea of a museum being the place you go to have a one-on-one moment with a masterpiece, which needs intimate galleries. Until recently, "public art" was a kind of forlorn category. It was something you might happen on in a park or a subway station, and it was separate from what most people thought of as real art, which of course was what you saw in the museum. And you went to the museum to have what was essentially a private experience of that art. Now you go to the museum to have an experience that's both aesthetic and social—to look at art and to enjoy a public space—and I think that's a huge part of why museums are so popular today.

AN András, how does this compare to how you approached your book?

ANDRÁS SZÁNTÓ One reason why the two books are quite complementary is that their genesis is so different. Julian, your book approaches its subjects with an interest in their relationship to art and their creative work. For me, the direction of travel was different. My talks came out of a previous book, which I did during the pandemic, for which I interviewed museum directors about how their institutions are changing. Rather than reviewing past projects, I was interested in the architects' overall perspective on the museum as a form.

Generally, there is the idea that architecture saved the visual arts from the fate of other forms of high art. And there has been a post-pandemic realization that you can do highly elitist and exclusive architecture in the language of modern design, just as you can using neoclassical architecture. We see a reckoning for how to realign museums to serve a wider segment of the population, not just the creation of these beautiful confections to attract the wealthy, highly educated cultural tourists of the world, but maybe the ability to send the message to someone who lives two miles away, "This is for you."

AN How did you go about selecting the architects you wanted to interview?

JR I thought about *Building Culture* as an oral history project. I almost did the opposite of András: I have a couple

Objects, Humans & Architecture

Julian Rose and András Szántó share notes about interviewing art-focused architects and the future of the museum.



Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery, London, UK, 1991, as featured in *Building Culture*

younger voices, but I wanted to speak with established figures because that generation has shaped the present and has ideas about the future, too. Frank Gehry was one of the first people I interviewed; he's 96 and he still has important museums under construction. It was interesting to ask Renzo Piano what he thinks is next. I was thrilled to have Denise Scott Brown in there, because the Sainsbury Wing [of the National Gallery, London] alone is a paradigm-shifting project. She's part of a whole generation that had a huge impact through postmodern museum designs, although most of [her peers] are no longer with us. That felt important to capture.

AS We're discussing the success of contemporary visual art, which for most people feels inscrutable and hard to access. You had an interesting thought experiment: What would the same art have done without the scaffolding of the museum around it? The art museum could have become a dusty, irrelevant thing—and often still is—but through the efforts of a new generation of museum experts, working together with architects, communicators, and other specialists, this form has been lifted up and made super contemporary through, frankly, a lot of the functions that were seen as somewhat secondary.

JR Museums have always had a civic function, but almost as a secondary part of the program. With an institution like the Centre Pompidou in Paris the civic aspect starts to dominate. Meanwhile, all of these other institutions that used to provide shared social space have largely disappeared, which has an isolating and alienating effect on culture. It's funny: Civic engagement started out as almost an afterthought, but it has become a crucial function of the museum in the 21st century.

AS Another point to make about generations: Do not confuse age with being namby-pamby or conservative. Today's older architects are people of the 1960s, absolutely. Many, like

Elizabeth Diller and David Chipperfield, were more radical than some of our younger architects are today. They did not necessarily expect to be multimillionaires. They were devoted to the public sphere. These "older" figures who now get giant commissions are, on a DNA level, super radical people.

JR Richard Gluckman is another important example. Like Chipperfield, he has a direct connection to modernism through his education. We can talk all day about modernism as a failed project, but the fact is that back when people like Richard and David were in school, architecture was still seen as a fundamental part of the progressive state. Gluckman went to school at Syracuse University in the late 1960s, and as a student he worked for his professors exclusively on projects like housing and university campuses. But by the time he got around to opening his own office, it was 1977. New York had almost gone bankrupt—no one was building that stuff anymore. Gluckman got involved in designing spaces for art, and this was his way of basically sneaking back into the public sphere. I think their generation was connected to a very different—and very powerful—understanding of what architecture meant for society, and you still see that in their work today.

AS What everybody profoundly believes is that a successful museum experience must have a magic combination of three things: objects, humans, and architecture. And when those three things come together—incredible real objects with a social experience in the company of other people in a magisterial architectural space—that creates an enduring magic that you cannot sacrifice.

AN What else should we discuss?

AS Globalization is worth mentioning. There is a parallel to be drawn, perhaps, to the evolution of art. At the end of the 20th century, an astonishing amount of liberation became available to artists as the master narrative of modernism splintered to a more pluralistic discourse where all kinds of positions were accepted as art. Today I think something similar has happened in museum architecture: With the proliferation of museums globally, the language of museum architecture has opened up into a new openness to difference and variation, often informed by regional, vernacular forms and needs. Museums can be built using local materials or respond to local typologies, versus the older ideas of the white cube or the enfilade gallery sequence. Anything can be a museum—not just because of reuse, which is important, but because architects can build some crazy stuff inside almost any kind of building: a power station, a prison, a hospital, an army barracks. And people will say, "That's a museum."

JR There's a running joke in museum design that the Louvre is an adaptive reuse project. And it's true: The world's first public art museum started out as a palace. This speaks to the museum's typological flexibility. Its program is very architectural in the sense that it's about how people and artworks interact in space, but it's not like an airport or a hospital with a hyperspecialized program that is understandably difficult to fit into an existing structure. I'm optimistic that museums will stay on the cutting edge of adaptive reuse even as it gets more and more important for the whole architectural profession.

Another thing that came out of my book is how much museum architects pay attention to the spaces artists are working in. The New York loft is the classic example. Once upon a time, not every gallery looked like a renovated postindustrial space, but artists moved into defunct industrial spaces decades ago and eventually exhibition spaces followed.

This exchange goes both ways—its dialectical. As museum buildings have gotten more varied, artists have had a lot of fun learning how to use these new spaces. The Guggenheim in New York is an example. For decades, [Frank Lloyd] Wright's design has been criticized because it's hard to show most traditional art forms on the spiral ramps. But the best things I've seen in that museum in the past ten years have been installations in the atrium. Artists can do something wild with that space. After seeing that, do you really want to look at a little painting on a curvy wall?

Julian Rose is a designer, critic, and historian. He is currently completing a PhD at Princeton on the origin and evolution of museums of contemporary art.

András Szántó advises museums, foundations, educational institutions, and corporations on cultural strategy and program development worldwide.

82 Excerpt

Last year, MACK Books published *Architecture from Below*, which anthologized writings by the French Brazilian architect, theorist, and painter Sérgio Ferro. (Douglas Spencer reviewed it for AN.) Now, MACK follows with *Design and the Building Site and Complementary Essays*, the second in the trilogy of books dedicated to Ferro's scholarship. The following excerpt of the author's 2023 preface to the English edition, which preserves its British phrasing, captures Ferro's realization about the working conditions of construction sites in Brasília. The sentiment is likely relatable even today for young architects as they discover how drawings become buildings. *Design and the Building Site and Complementary Essays* will be released on May 22.

If I remember correctly, it was in 1958 or 1959, when Rodrigo and I were second- or third year architecture students at FAUUSP, that my father, the real estate developer Armando Simone Pereira, commissioned us to design two large office buildings and eleven shops in Brasília, which was then under construction. Of course, we were not adequately prepared for such an undertaking. Fortunately, Oscar Niemeyer and his team, who were responsible for overseeing the construction of the capital, had drawn up a detailed document determining the essential characteristics of all the private sector buildings. We followed these prescriptions to the letter, which saved us from disaster.

Nowadays, it is hard to imagine the degree to which the construction of Brasília inspired enthusiasm and professional pride in the country's architects. And in the national imagination, the city's establishment in the supposedly unpopulated hinterland evoked a re-founding of Brazil. Up until that point, the occupation of our immense territory had been reduced to a collection of arborescent communication routes, generally converging upon some river, following it up to the Atlantic Ocean. Through its ports, agricultural or extractive commodities produced by enslaved peoples or their substitutes passed towards the metropolises; goods were exchanged in the metropolises for more elaborate products, which took the opposite route. Our national identity was summed up in a few symbols, such as the anthem or the flag, and this scattering of paths pointing overseas. Brasília would radically change this situation, or so we believed. It would create a central hub where the internal communication routes could converge, linking together hithertoseparate junctions, stimulating trade and economic progress in the country's interior. It was as if, for the first time, we were taking care of ourselves. At the nucleus of this centripetal movement, architecture would embody the renaissance. And at the naval of the nucleus, the symbolic mandala of this utopia: the cathedral.

Rodrigo and I got caught up in the euphoria. And perhaps more so than our colleagues, because we were taking part in the adventure with 'our' designs. The reality was very different — but we did not know that yet.

At that time, architects in Brazil were responsible for verifying that the construction was in line with the design. We had already monitored some of our first building sites. But the construction company in charge of them, Osmar Souza e Silva's CENPLA, specialized in the building sites of modernist architects from the so-called Escola Paulista led by Vilanova Artigas (which we aspired to be a part of, like the pretentious students we were). Osmar was very attentive to his clients and his workers, who formed a supportive and helpful team. He was even more careful with us, because he knew how inexperienced we were. I believe that the CENPLA was particularly important in São Paulo modernism: with its congeniality, it facilitated experimentation, but for the same reason, it deceived novices like us about the reality of other building sites.

Consequently, Rodrigo and I travelled to Brasília several times to check that the constructions followed 'our' designs and to resolve any issues. From the very first trip, our little bubble burst. Our building sites, like all the others in the future capital, bore no relation to Osmar's. They were more like a branch of hell. A huge, muddy wasteland, in which a few cranes, pile drivers, tractors, and excavators dotted the mound of scaffolding occupied by thousands of skinny, seemingly exhausted wretches, who were nevertheless driven on by the shouts of master builders and foremen, in turn pressured by the imminence of the fateful inauguration date. Surrounding or huddled underneath the marquees of buildings under construction, entire families, equally skeletal and ragged, were waiting for some accident or death to open up a vacancy. In contact only with the master builders, and under close surveillance so we would not speak to the workers, we were not allowed to see what comrades who had worked on these sites later told us in prison: suicide abounded; escape was known to be futile in the unpopulated surroundings with no viable roads; fatal accidents were often caused by weakness due to chronic diarrhoea, brought on by rotten food that came from far away; outright theft took place in

Hegel or an Adorno, a Marx or a Lukács, like a foreign language that has resources unavailable in our own.

And what is more: the Chinese and Cuban revolutions, the war in Vietnam, guerrilla warfare of all kinds, national liberation movements, and a rare libertarian disposition in contemporary history, totally averse to fanaticism and respect for ideological apparatuses of (any) state or institution. Going against the grain was almost the norm. We were of course no more than contemporaries of our time. We were soon able to position ourselves from chapters 13, 14, and 15 of *Capital*, but only because we could constantly cross-reference Marx with our observations from well-contrasted building sites and do our own experimenting. As soon as we identified construction as manufacture, for example, thanks to the willingness and even encouragement of two friends and clients, Boris Fausto and Bernardo Issler, I was able to test both types of manufacture — organic and heterogeneous — on similar-sized projects taking place simultaneously, in order to find out which would be most convenient for the situation in Brazil, particularly in São Paulo. Despite the scientific shortcomings of these tests, they sufficed for us to select organic manufacture.

Arquitetura Nova had defined its line of practice, studies, and research.

There were other sources that were central to our theory and practice. Flávio Império was one of the founders of the Teatro de Arena, undoubtedly the vanguard of popular, militant theatre in Brazil. He won practically every set design award. He brought us his marvelous findings in spatial condensation and malleability, and in the creative diversion of techniques and material—appropriate devices for an underdeveloped country. This is what helped us pave the way to reformulating the reigning design paradigms.

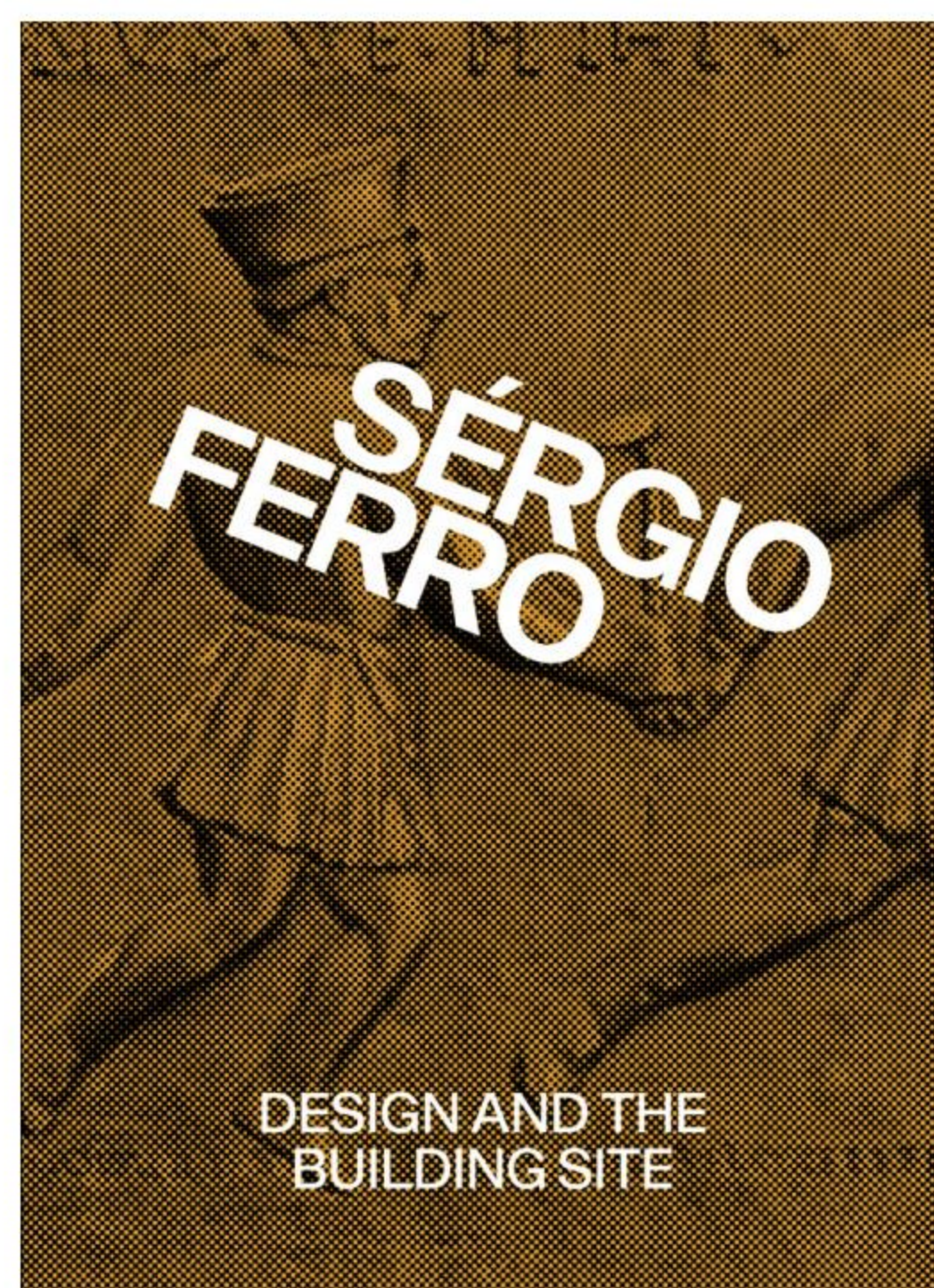
We had to do what Flávio had done in the theatre: thoroughly rethink how to be an architect. Upend the perspective. The way we were taught was to start from a desired result; then others would take care of getting there, no matter how. We, on the other hand, set out to go down to the building site

and accompany those carrying out the labor itself, those who actually build, the formally subsumed workers in manufacture who are increasingly deprived of the knowledge and know-how presupposed by this kind of subsumption. We should have been fostering the reconstitution of this knowledge and know-how—not so as to fulfil this assumption, but in order to reinvigorate the other side of this assumption according to Marx: the historical rebellion of the manufacture worker, especially the construction worker. We had to rekindle the demand that fueled this rebellion: total self-determination, and not just that of the manual operation as such. Our aim was above all political and ethical. Aesthetics only mattered by way of what it included—ethics. Instead of *estética*, we wrote *est ética* [this is ethics]. We wanted to make building sites into nests for the return of revolutionary syndicalism, which we ourselves had yet to discover.

Sérgio Ferro, born in Brazil in 1938, studied architecture at FAUUSP, São Paulo. In the 1960s, he joined the Brazilian communist party and started, along with Rodrigo Lefevre and Flávio Império, the collective known as Arquitetura Nova. After being arrested by the military dictatorship that took power in Brazil in 1964, he moved to France as an exile. As a painter and a professor at the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Grenoble, where he founded the Dessin/Chantier laboratory, he engaged in extensive research which resulted in several publications, exhibitions, and awards in Brazil and in France, including the title of Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in 1992. Following his retirement from teaching, Ferro continues to research, write, and paint.

“Our Aim Was Above All Political and Ethical”

An excerpt from a new book by Sérgio Ferro, published by MACK Books, showcases the architect's moment of disenchantment.



the calculation of wages and expenses in the contractor's grocery store; camps were surrounded by law enforcement.

I repeat this anecdote yet again not to invoke the benevolence of potential readers, but rather to point out the conditions that, in my opinion, allowed two students (Flávio Império joined us a little later) still in their professional infancy to quickly adopt positions that were contrary to the usual stance of architects. As the project was more Oscar Niemeyer's than it was our own, we did not have the same emotional attachment that is understandably engendered between real authors and their designs. We had not yet been imbued with the charm and aura of the métier. And the only building sites we had visited thus far, Osmar's, were incomparable to those we discovered in Brasília. In short, our youthfulness and unpreparedness up against an unbearable situation made us react almost immediately to the profession's satisfied *doxa*.

Unprepared and young perhaps, but already with Marx by our side. Rodrigo and I joined the student cell of the Brazilian Communist Party during our first year at university. In itself, this did not help us much: the Party's Marxism, revised in the interests of the USSR, was pitiful. Even high-level leaders rarely went beyond the first chapter of *Capital*. But at the end of the 1950s, the effervescence of the years to come was already nascent:

[...] this extraordinary revival [...] the rediscovery of Marxism and the great dialectical texts and traditions in the 1960s: an excitement that identifies a forgotten or repressed moment of the past as the new and subversive, and learns the dialectical grammar of a

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