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The raised deck in noroof architects' Finger | Kennedy Apartment, which won a Merit award in our Renovation category, allows for under-floor storage and helps reduce clutter. Photo: Chuck Choi. Cover photo: Michael Hanson/Aurora Select.

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from the editor

# sole practitioner

if you're out on your own for the first time, you need to put your heart and soles into the effort.

by s. claire conroy

**b**ecause of our *residential architect* LinkedIn Group, I have a behind-the-curtain view of a trend in the profession: Quite a few young associate architects are launching their own sole proprietorships. Those résumé-style LinkedIn profiles reveal their curriculum vitae and they usually read like this:

John Smith Architecture  
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(10 months)

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Brand Name Architecture  
Firm  
June 2007 to July 2010  
(3 years, 1 month)

Education  
Masters of Architecture  
Harvard/Yale/Princeton

It all looks official. Most established sole proprietorships would show similar credentials, albeit with longer intervals at various firms and on their own. What's uncertain is how formal these fledgling firms really are. Have they done the legal paperwork to incorporate? Do all of these associates have their licenses yet? Do they even

have the basic office equipment to get a real project under way?

My assumption is that what we're seeing is a lot of laid off novice architects (and veteran senior associates, for that matter) realizing the next staff job looks highly unlikely for some time, so they're concluding they might as well hang out their own shingle. Something similar is happening in the journalism profession, as well. Editors lose their staff jobs and suddenly they declare themselves "freelance writers."

But working on your own is a huge step that's best taken deliberately. Understandably, not everyone has had that liberty lately, and many Dilbert professionals are heading home to "work" out of their guest bedrooms—like it or not. One of the keys to turning this situation into a success story is a serious attitude. You have to put your heart, soul, and soles into making it fly. Legwork and a high degree of professionalism are critical.

The first thing to do when you've been shown the door (while your employer is still feeling guilty) is to secure the rights to display projects you contributed to at the firm on your new website



Mark Robert I. ...

(with proper, vetted attribution and cleared photography releases). Also, if you haven't done so already, take the time to pursue your licensure. Hire out or do your own website design (see page 25 about best practices in firm websites). If you don't have much previous work to put online, enter competitions and post your conceptual work as examples of recent design.

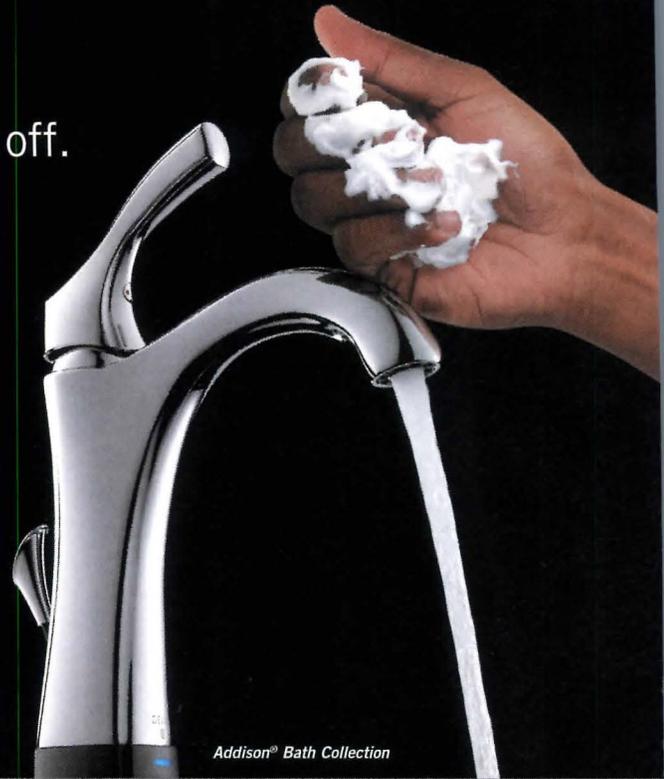
If you haven't had billing responsibility at your previous firm, you really need to spend some time thinking about how you want to charge potential clients for your work. Even if you've had billing duties, you may need to rethink your own approach as a sole

practitioner. You'll want to be flexible with clients, but you must also appear confident and competent to carry them through a very daunting process.

But here's the hardest piece of advice to follow—and the most important. Even though you may be hungry, don't jump at a job that's too big or complicated for you to ace. Make sure you understand what you really can do, without the support of a big firm behind you. You're not just paying the rent, you're building your own business—and it's your reputation at stake now. *ra*

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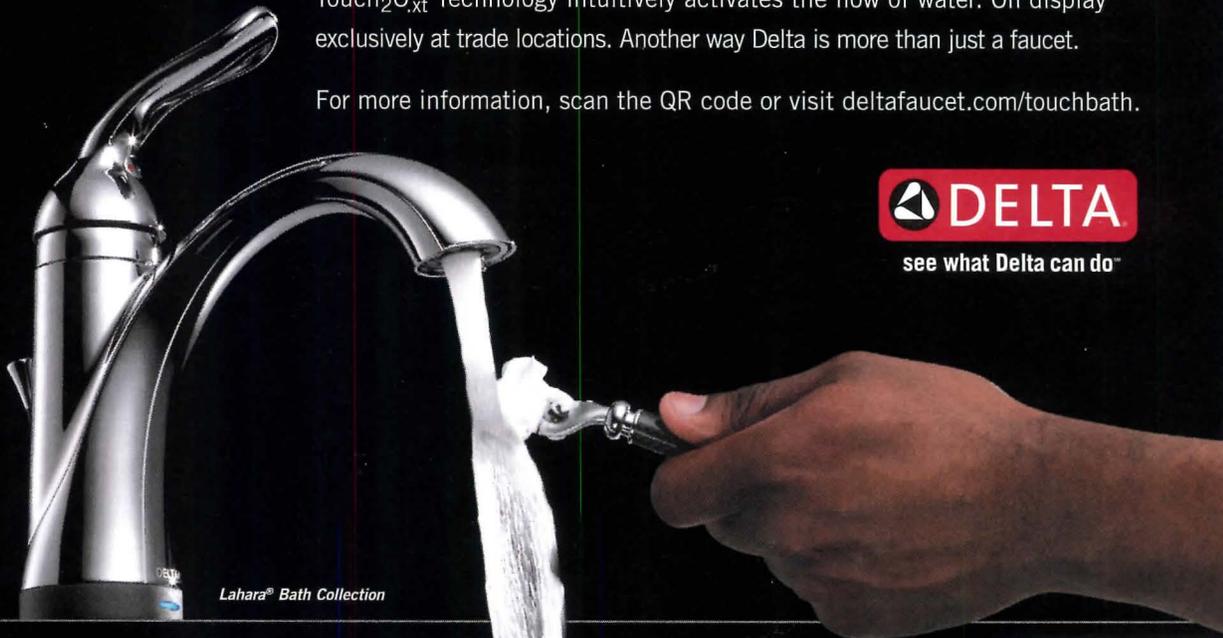
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## AIA VOICES

DIGGING IN YOUR HEELS SOMETIMES MEANS MOVING, SAYS CASIUS PEALER

*For Casius Pealer, former Gulf Coast director of Builders of Hope, his time in New Orleans has been a moving experience. Literally. Last fall, Pealer and Builders of Hope relocated 70 historic homes otherwise slated for demolition. The move happened in four months—likely one of the fastest and largest efforts of its kind in U.S. history. Pealer, now a senior sustainable building adviser for the New Orleans-based Affordable Housing Institute, speaks about this innovative approach to preservation and housing.*

**BUILDERS OF HOPE WAS WORKING WITH A NONPROFIT**

housing developer in New Orleans to do a scattered-site infill project in neighborhoods flooded by Katrina and, at the same time, a major hospital expansion was taking out nine square blocks of a historic neighborhood nearby. Since there were going to be a lot of homes demolished at the same time the nonprofit was looking to create infill housing, it just became a natural fit.

Initially, it was a pretty big jigsaw puzzle. It was a dense urban neighborhood and the houses, mostly built between 1900 and 1910, weren't contiguous—and neither were the sites we were moving them to. Some houses we could only get at if we first removed another house. Some we had to pull out backward. Additionally, the network of utility lines and oak tree limbs meant that we had to remove the roofs before moving each house. It's a logistical challenge to do this in the midst of a commercial construction project and a working city, but depending on how many homes we ultimately pull, up to 4

million pounds of debris could be saved from landfills, and all of the homes will meet Enterprise Green Communities standards and be affordable to low- or moderate-income families.

A lot of things can be done if there's the political will to do them. New Orleans Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu hadn't seen this many houses move either, but he had the faith that this could be done and made a public commitment to save the cultural fabric of the city while still making room for large-scale economic development. We can't demolish our neighborhoods, but we also can't force projects like the hospital, a needed resource for the community, to be located outside of the city they're trying to serve. This project is a way to do both.

The part that takes the best pictures is the houses moving, but the hardest part, and most important part, is the rehab and getting families in them. That's to come. We're aware that every house we move leaves a hole in a sense. It's an opportunity, but it's a house that needs to be rehabbed now. If you push them all in a landfill, then you're done and you can you move onto the next project. But if you pull them all, then you really have a hill to climb once you've got them out.

The idea of moving houses is rarely considered. People think they have to choose between either historic preservation or economic development. We have had a unique opportunity here in New Orleans to achieve both, and what we're doing now can be a lesson for urban communities around the country and around the world. *As told to Joe Sugarman.* **AIA**



PHOTO: COURTESY MODATIVE ARCHITECTURE

## What the Market Needs Next

### Deploying efficient design in the new residential reality.

NANCY EGAN

**ASK ANY REPUTABLE ECONOMIST AND THEY WILL CONFIRM** that the pre-2008 go-go housing market is not coming back—ever. “The housing bubble distorted decision making, luring buyers to purchase more expensive properties based on the expectation of rapid appreciation and big profits at sale,” says AIA Chief Economist, Kermit Baker, Hon. AIA. “Now the fantasyland surrounding the market is gone and we expect to see a return to housing decisions based on need, as opposed to appreciation.”

If the days of bigger and more extravagant homes are over, what do people need now? The answer varies by generation and geography as much as by income bracket. Two major demographic groups will soon reach turning points in their lives. Some 77 million Baby Boomers are aging and the oldest among them will reach retirement in the next decade. Some 80 million

Gen Y’ers, ranging in age from 18 to as old as 30, have delayed home buying. Add another 40 million immigrants and there is a substantial market looking for places to live.

While the needs of these groups is not completely clear, John K. McIlwain, senior resident fellow and J. Ronald Terwilliger Chair for Housing at the Urban Land Institute in Washington, D.C., offers a perspective in his article, “Housing Gen Y: The Next Challenge for Cities.” “When asked how they want to live...members of generation Y respond much as did previous generations,” McIlwain writes. “Many want to rent for a while, but a high percentage of Gen-Y’ers wants to own their own home eventually. These are the first-time homebuyers needed to restore the housing markets to stability.”

McIlwain notes that this generation is the most economically challenged in several decades. Its members face high unemployment, student-loan debt, and uncertainty. Creating appealing, affordable housing for them, as well as others currently priced out of homeownership—including retirees—is one of the strongest opportunities for residential architects.

Frank Lucas, AIA, founding principal of Maryland’s Lucas Associates Architects, attempts to match generational needs and wants in one Baltimore project, along with a local developer. “It’s part of an up-and-coming neighborhood—Charles North—with vibrant retail, restaurants, and nightlife,” he says. Lucas also plans to include a Zipcar terminal, bike storage, and meeting rooms in the project. “Consisting of one-bedroom and studio lofts, it’s targeted for young professionals,” he reports.

In Boston, which has suffered a substantial residential market downturn, Alfred Wojciechowski, AIA, a principal



# AIAPERPECTIVE

NEW ORLEANS CALLING

at CBT, reports an uptick in interest in rental units. As apartment developers seek locations in urban centers, he says, "National developers are now looking at challenging city sites. Even primarily suburban builders are finding properties in the city center because that's where the market for rentals is the strongest." Developer AvalonBay's recent decision to begin construction on Avalon Exeter, a rental apartment tower at the edge of the Prudential Center, is a case in point. Wojciechowski sees other similar projects happening throughout greater Boston.

For buyers, projects that are "rightsized for the price point" are coming back, according to Sherida E. Paulsen, FAIA, principal at New York's PKSB Architects. "We are seeing no RFPs for new market-rate multifamily [projects], but projects that were on hold—like 20 Henry Street in Brooklyn—are going into construction," she says. "If those units sell as expected, we will hope to see more demand for well-designed, well-located, well-priced condos and co-ops."

The market drivers are similar for young buyers on the West Coast, according to firms like Los Angeles' Modative Archi-

**"We have the ability to solve lifestyle issues, to build green, efficient homes where every foot matters—and we need to do it."**

ecture. Modative's principals envision affordable, small-lot subdivision homes. "As a startup firm, in 2006, we saw an opportunity in the Small Lot Ordinance that the city of Los Angeles implemented in 2004," says Derek Chase Leavitt, AIA, cofounder and principal. "There was a void between single-family and condos for a home that would have no one above or below you, no shared walls, but provided some outside space and was reasonably affordable. It was a place that fit our personal profiles as young professionals."

In researching and designing their "starter home for Gen Y," Modative's principals brought the creative thinking and skills that J. Carson Looney, FAIA, principal of Looney Ricks Kiss, and veteran residential architect, sees as critical to successful future housing design. "Residential architects need to return to thinking about—and understanding—how people really live," Looney says.

Looney also understands that the architect's job doesn't stop at design. Working with clients on achieving net-zero homes, he also is helping them secure Energy Efficient Mortgages by convincing banks and appraisers to consider more than just square feet. "If we can help quantify the comparative energy savings, then we can help change the way valuations are made and move housing towards a more sustainable future," he says.

Every residential market type presents architects with opportunities that sit at the edge of their conventional role, whether it's market rate homes, luxury homes, starter apartments, or senior living. The new economic and demographic realities favor architects who are willing to work with all the players at the table to find innovative solutions to zoning ordinances, financing, energy efficiency, or affordable amenities. "We have the ability to solve lifestyle issues, to build green, efficient homes where every foot matters—and we need to do it," says Looney. **AIA**



PHOTO: WILLIAM STEWART

It's been 14 years since the AIA held a convention in New Orleans. Back then, the AIA pioneered the concept of leaving something of value behind for the host city. What emerged was a shelter for the homeless consisting of a series of green pavilions on seven acres of land.

In the ensuing decade and a half, New Orleanians have seen some of the most wrenching chapters written in the city's long history. Fourteen years ago, visiting architects focused their creative energies on one piece of this city's tapestry: the homeless population. Today, the events of the recent past demand a broader view. In response, our focus at the AIA Convention in May pulls back to take in not only the city itself, but the entire region. At issue is not a single thread of the city's tapestry, but the continuing vitality of the entire urban and regional fabric.

True, the business and entertainment districts are once again booming. The tourists have returned and the great restaurants, along with the music scene, pulse with renewed life. Yet the soul of the city and the region is greater than the sum of the economic forces that feed it. The soul is its people.

Here, the tapestry remains frayed. Although many residents have returned, the current population is still well below pre-Hurricane Katrina levels. And as last summer's disaster in the Gulf made clear, residents go about their daily business with the uneasy feeling that their homes are vulnerable to the next natural or human-induced disaster.

The hopeful and, in some cases, truly inspirational news this year's convention attendees will discover is about architects (whose work is primarily residential) who are making an important contribution to healing the region's soul. Historic homes are being saved from the wrecking ball, and the region also has become an incubator of extraordinary innovation in new residential design. This is happening at the very time that much of the housing market in the rest of the nation is gasping for breath.

This time, the design legacy of the 2011 National Convention and Design Exposition in New Orleans will not be left in the host city. Rather, it will exist in the lessons architects take back home about how their creativity can preserve the best of the past, push the boundaries of innovation, and—in doing both—bring a region's soul back to life. **AIA**

Clark D. Manus, FAIA, 2011 President



# home front

news from the leading edge of residential design.

## house pride

Now in its 11th year, the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Housing Awards recognize the best in residential design by its members, emphasizing the concept of good housing as a regenerative and enriching force for humanity and a necessity of life. In March, the AIA announced the 2011 Housing Awards winners—each of which demonstrates how well-designed housing benefits individuals, families, and communities.

The jury selected 18 projects for honors in four categories: One/Two Family Custom Housing, One/Two Family Production Housing, Multifamily Living, and Special Housing.

Jury members included Katherine Austin, AIA, Katherine Austin Architect; S. Claire Conroy, editorial director, *residential architect* and CUSTOM HOME magazines; Mike Jackson, FAIA, State of Illinois Historic Preservation Agency; Luis Jauregui, AIA, Jauregui Inc.; and Marilyns Nepomechie, FAIA, Florida International University, Miami.

Each winning project selection was predicated on design excellence, sustainability, innovation, negotiation of both natural and built context, affordability, and achievement of client needs and goals.

For more information on each project, visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com).—stephani l. miller

### One/Two Family Production Housing

100K Houses, Philadelphia, by Interface Studio Architects



Interface Studio Architects



Richard Barnes

### One/Two Family Production Housing

R-House, Syracuse, N.Y., by Della Valle Bernheimer and Architecture Research Office

**Multifamily Living**

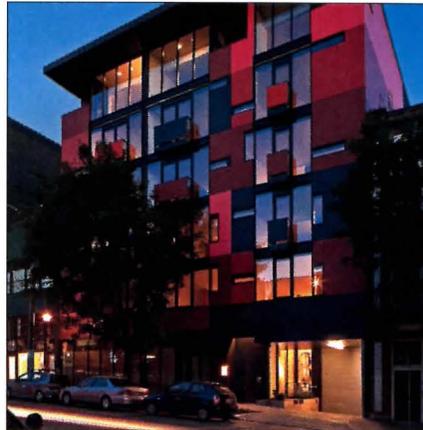
Hancock Mixed Use Housing, West Hollywood, Calif., by Koning Eizenberg Architecture



Eric Staudenmaier

**Multifamily Living**

1111 E. Pike, Seattle, by Olson Kundig Architects



Francis Zera

**Multifamily Living**

Tassafaronga Village, Oakland, Calif., by David Baker + Partners, Architects



Brian Rose

**Multifamily Living**

930 Poydras Residential Tower, New Orleans, by Eskew+Dumez+Ripple



Timothy Hursley

**Multifamily Living**

50 Saint Peter Street/ Historic Salem Jail, Salem, Mass., by Finegold Alexander + Associates



Neil Alexander Photography

**Multifamily Living**

Armstrong Place Senior and Family Housing, San Francisco, by David Baker + Partners, Architects



Brian Rose

**Multifamily Living**

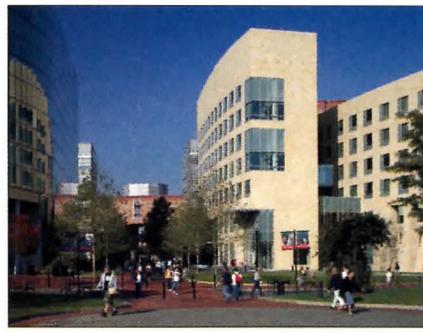
Art Stable, Seattle, by Olson Kundig Architects



Benjamin Benschneider

**Special Housing**

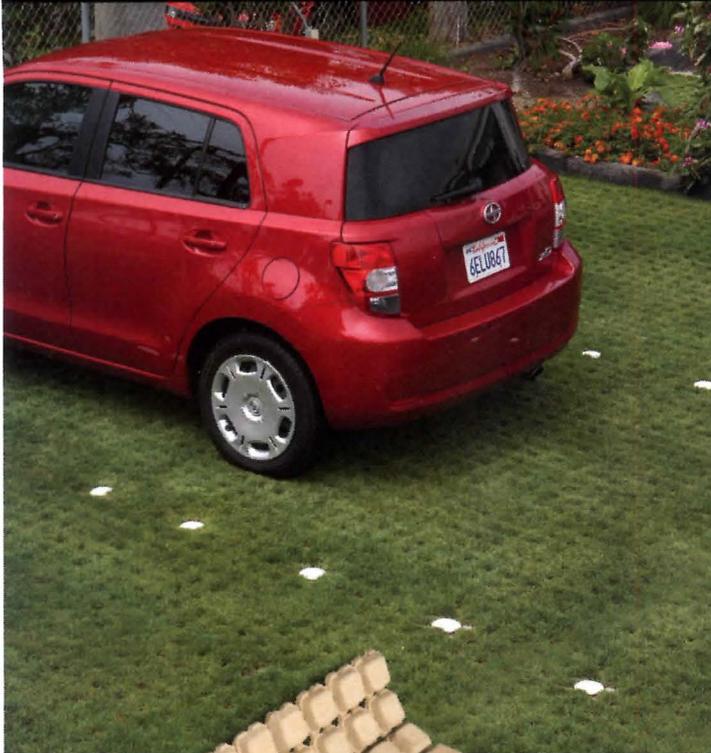
Northeastern University Building F, Boston, by William Rawn Associates, Architects



Alan Karchmer

*continued on page 16*

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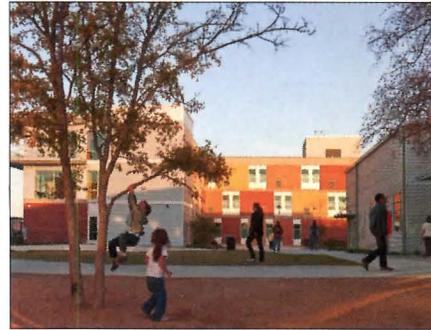
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Go to <http://research.hotims.com> for more info

home front

house pride *continued from page 15*



Scott Adams, Hester + Hardaway

### Special Housing

Haven For Hope,  
San Antonio, by  
Overland Partners  
Architects



David Sundberg/Esto

### Special Housing

The Schermerhorn,  
Brooklyn, N.Y., by  
Ennead Architects



Alchemy

### One/Two Family Custom Housing

Blair BarnHouse,  
Blair, Wis., by  
Alchemy



Nic Lehoux

### One/Two Family Custom Housing

Addition to an  
Historic Cape on a  
Coastal Farm, Little  
Compton, R.I., by  
Bohlin Cywinski  
Jackson

*continued on page 18*

residential architect / an aia magazine



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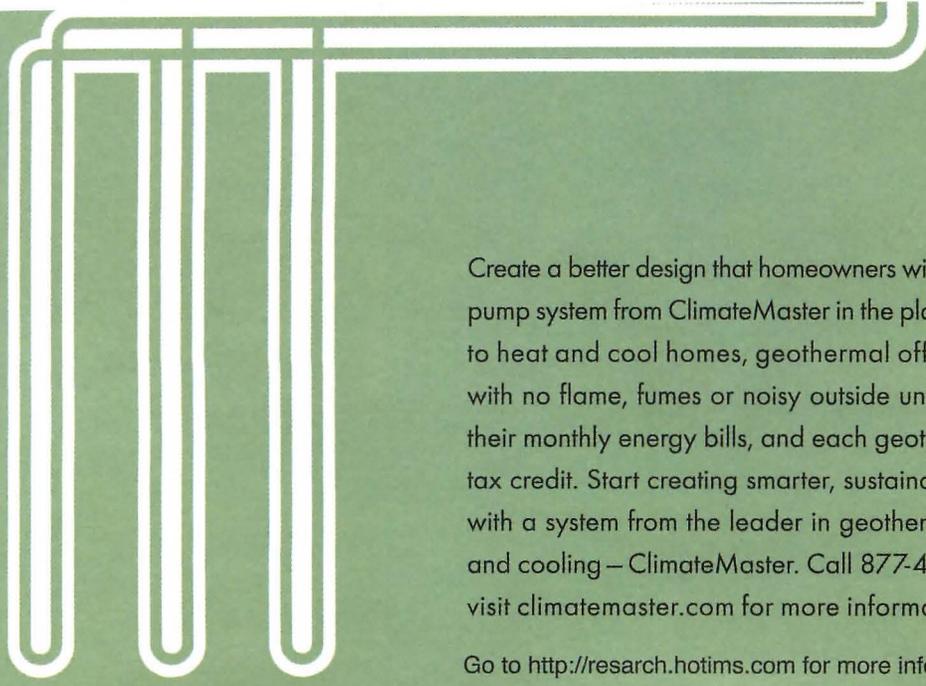
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home front

house pride *continued from page 16*



## One/Two Family Custom Housing

Combs Point Residence, Ovid, N.Y., by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

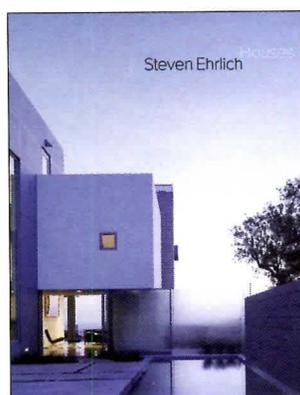
home front

## the natural

It's significant that two of the first three houses in the new monograph *Steven Ehrlich Houses* (Monacelli Press, \$50) originally were designed not by Steven Ehrlich, FAIA, but by Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler, respectively. Ehrlich is heir to those seminal California modernists, as demonstrated in his appropriately dramatic addition to a Neutra beach house once owned by Mae West and his respectful restoration and update of Schindler's modest House

on Ellis Avenue. Ehrlich's new houses also build on the work of his spiritual forebears, who imported academic modernism to the land of endless summer. But while the first generation of California modern spoke with a faint European accent, in Ehrlich's hands the tradition is fully naturalized.

In his houses, Ehrlich combines geometrical rigor with a subtle feel for material and the landscape. Strongly influenced by traditional West African architecture—he spent six



years in the region with the Peace Corps and, later, as a teacher—Ehrlich makes frequent use of massive, monolithic forms. Walls, roofs, and interior elements develop as independent, almost geological phenomena. Bridged by walls of glass, they enclose living space as if that outcome were incidental to their

existence. Incidental but most fortuitous, because the spaces often are compelling.

Named to the ra50, our list of architects we love, Ehrlich's also the recipient of our Top Firm Leadership Award and many *residential architect* Design Awards (he served on this year's RADA jury). For those who have admired this work for years, *Steven Ehrlich Houses* affords a chance to view it in greater depth. For newcomers, it introduces a regional modernist at the height of his powers.—*bruce d. snider*

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home front

## architectural laurels

For the second time, a Portuguese architect has won the Pritzker Architecture Prize. The 2011 winner, 58-year-old Eduardo Souto de Moura of Porto, Portugal, joins Alvaro Siza (the 1992 winner) in the honor.

Since opening his own practice in 1980 in Porto, much of Souto de Moura's work has been built in Portugal, but he also has designed projects in Spain, Italy, Germany, the U.K., and Switzerland. His work ranges in scope from residences to sports stadiums to skyscrapers. In fact, Souto de Moura has designed many types of housing through the years, from single-family residences to multiple-home projects and apartment buildings.

According to the Pritzker Prize jury, Souto de Moura's body of work "is of our time, but also carries echoes of architectural traditions."

The citation concludes:

"Eduardo Souto de Moura's architecture is not obvious, frivolous, or picturesque. It is imbued with intelligence

and seriousness. ... His buildings have a unique ability to convey seemingly conflicting characteristics—power and modesty, bravado and subtlety, bold public authority and a sense of intimacy—at the same time. For architecture that appears effortless, serene, and simple, and for the care and poetry that permeates each project, Eduardo Souto de Moura receives the 2011 Pritzker Prize."

The Pritzker Architecture Prize (founded in 1979) annually honors a living architect whose built work demonstrates talent, vision, and commitment, and who—through architecture—has made significant contributions to humanity and the built environment. Pritzker Prize laureates are awarded a \$100,000 grant and a bronze medallion.

The 2011 Pritzker jurors were: The Lord Palumbo (chairman); architect Alejandro Aravena; architect and professor Carlos Jimenez; architect Glenn Murcutt; architect, author, and professor Juhani Pallasmaa; architect Renzo Piano; and writer, editor, and architectural consultant Karen Stein.—*s.l.m.*



Augusto Brázio

The 2011 Pritzker Architecture Prize laureate Eduardo Souto de Moura has designed numerous residential projects, including this angular hillside House in Serra da Arrábida, Portugal (1994-2002).



Luis Ferreira Alves



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# on the web and in the loop

does your firm's website tell your story?

by cheryl weber, lead ap

**W**hen was the last time you cast a critical eye on your company's website? If it requires visitors to download plug-ins, features small photos, has hard-to-find contact information or important sections that can't be printed, it's time for an update. With the proliferation of the iPhone, iPad, and other handheld wireless devices, overly complicated Flash sequences are out, too. What's in? Bold graphics, personality, and quick access to information.

Architects like the understated elegance of white space. It makes your portfolio pop and maybe even expresses your minimalist philosophy on screen. But let's talk about font size. "When I survey architects' websites, I'm amazed at how small the type is," says Michael Bierut, an associate at New York-based graphic design firm Pentagram. "I don't think there's any profession that has such an addiction to tiny type." The problem, he says, is that it misses the intent, which is to communicate something useful. As Bierut reminds modernists, the ethic also has a purposefulness and functionalism and blunt

force. "The sign on the front of the Bauhaus was big, not clever and subtle," he says.

Website design has changed rapidly over the years, along with upgrades in technology and bandwidth. A decade ago, people were happy if they could find some information about a company online. Soon after, websites were providing vast

amounts of content, such as downloadable bios and project sheets. About five years ago, architects began using their online platform to demonstrate their design ingenuity. Visitors were greeted with sophisticated Flash intros, which in effect withheld real information while the animation painted a picture. These days, though, it's all

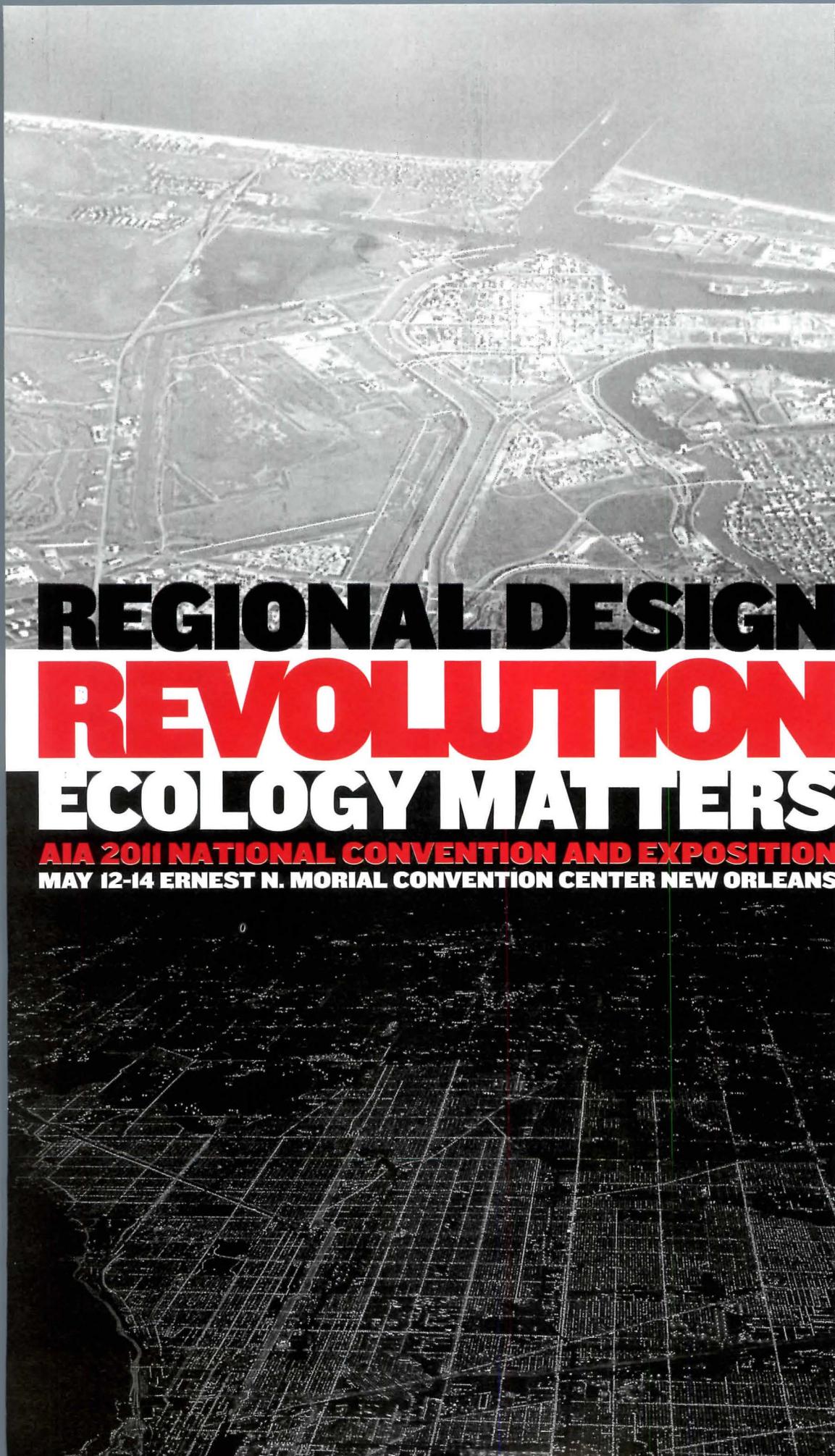
about accessibility. Visitors use websites as a quick, intuitive tool. They want a clean experience that gets to information quickly and expresses something about an organization's character, without romance and atmosphere getting in the way.

Bierut is hardly the only branding expert questioning a practice that has become

*continued on page 27*



Doug Ross



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## practice

routine among architecture firms: intricate online personas long on style and short on personality. "From a branding perspective, most of the time people get their understanding about a company from its website," says Tyler Young, creative director at San Francisco-based Young Nomad Brand. "At the end of the design process you really need to say, 'Yes, this site talks for us in its tone and content.' By themselves, beautiful photography and boring text don't convey an identity very well."

### information architecture

That doesn't mean you have to blog, if it's not your metier. Blogging is time-consuming and takes effort to sustain, and there are other ways to interact online with your audience. McKinney York Architects in Austin, Texas, for example, publishes newsy items about the practice and the local community on its site, along with links to its Twitter feed and Facebook page. The move to a new building and the addition of partner Al York, AIA, to the firm name prompted a recent website redesign, which won a 2010 American Web Design Award from Graphic Design USA.

"We're a general practice firm, so we didn't want to appear too corporate or too residential," says associate Will Wood, AIA. "We wanted the site to look clean and organized, friendly and informal, but professional."

### making movies

David Baker, FAIA, LEED AP, nearly became a professional filmmaker. Before he decided to pursue architecture, he was accepted at New York University's film school. Now he's developing that latent talent by making short videos about his firm, David Baker + Partners Architects, San Francisco. Outfitted with a Nikon D90 camera and iMovie editing software, Baker posts videos on Vimeo, a smaller, more refined version of YouTube. "You'll see Vimeo used on websites where people are more interested in the quality of the link than tapping into the gazillion people on YouTube," Baker says. It also allows him to update videos seamlessly rather than starting over.

The movies are artless, personal, and people-focused, covering issues close to his heart, such as livable cities and alternative transportation. A video tour of his office shows him arriving by bike (he has no car); others feature the smiling faces of people living in the buildings he's designed, and some are taken from his lectures. To document the Paseo Senter in San Jose, Calif., Baker mixed his own footage with still images taken by a professional photographer. "She had no interest in the architecture, but was really into the people," Baker says.

"The videos we make are quirky, which makes up for a professional production—we don't have a budget for that," Baker adds. "It's part of our overall firm strategy." Put in food terms, the practice is like a small, high-quality chef-owned restaurant, he says, blending an artisanal approach with technology.

According to Baker, roughly 100 people view the films each week. Recently they caught the eye of the modular carpet company FLOR, which invited him to a "tribal gathering"—a retreat for thought leaders addressing sustainability issues. The videos add color and depth to David Baker + Partners, making its work not just about buildings, but about people and about ideas that interconnect us all.—C.W.

The architects already had a strong identity, but they asked Creative Suitcase, a local graphic design firm, to develop a more dynamic site. In addition to rewritten content, the customized WordPress application features easier navigation that eliminates use of the "back"

button, a custom slideshow with large photos, location maps, video, and a content management system that staff members can update themselves. The architects often upload construction photos from their phones, and finished projects get a

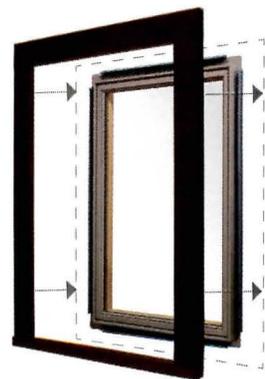
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## practice

short summary and mouse-over icons that highlight awards recognition and sustainable ideas.

If proof was needed of the importance of the human touch, Google Analytics showed that McKinney York's visitors check out the profile photos first. In response to other traffic reports, the home page was tweaked a year after launch. "News stories were not getting much attention, so we put the news feed on the front," Wood says. "And we originally had a slideshow up front with automatic pan,

and whistles. On McKinney York's Work page, for example, the scrolling slideshow supplies movement without being Flash-based. Other essentials: Make it easy for people to contact you with an e-mail form or by clicking on an icon, map your office location on the contact page, and include short videos with searchable tags. "It's so easy to put video online now because everyone's bandwidth is caught up," Clemens says, adding: "A simple site outweighs a complex site. People leave quickly if they

goal isn't necessarily to get people to linger, but to create a coherent experience that piques their interest enough to continue the conversation. The starting assumption, Bierut says, is that you can't design a site that works for everyone, so you have to make judgments about your real audience. "Maybe someone in authority has said, 'We've got a project to do. Research these six firms to see if they've done this kind of work before,'" he says. Particularly for large firms, that means matching what's offered to their clients' vetting process.

At New York-based Robert A.M. Stern Architects, it means making pages that look good in print. "One thing we know from working in an office with people of all ages is that even Web-savvy decision makers often ask junior people to print information for them to review while they're on a plane or away for the weekend, and we want to make the cut," says Peter Morris Dixon, director of external communications at Robert A.M. Stern Architects.

Large, diverse practices like Stern's must represent their breadth of work online, conveying authority in each sector without overwhelming visitors. Bierut, who designed the firm's new website, notes that if you arrive thinking you're commissioning a house, it's confusing to see an apartment building or office tower. His solution?

*continued on page 31*



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*"from a branding perspective, most of the time people get their understanding about a company from its website."*

—tyler young

but now we have four banner photos directing people to a project that recently won an award or was published. If someone only sees two or three projects, we know they'll be our best."

Everyone wants to be found on Google, so a search-engine-friendly site is crucial. And that means forgoing some fancy maneuvers. "Mobile apps won't play Flash, and search engines can't read the content unless you go to great effort to make it readable," says Rachel Clemens, creative director at Creative Suitcase. But that doesn't eliminate all bells

can't figure out how to get something they're after."

### identity issues

Michael Bierut agrees. "When our firm designs signage for museums and college campuses, the most popular sign is the one for the bathroom; people want to know where it is," he says. Likewise with websites, "it's surprising how often people who visit simply are looking for an address or phone number, and how often it's difficult to find it."

Content should be to-the-point and found in a quick visual sweep. The

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## practice

To graphically depict all 12 project categories on the home page in large type, accompanied by abstracted thumbnail apertures that scale up into oversize images when scrolled over. “Rather than putting the navigation of building types somewhere else on the site, it’s the first thing you see when you arrive, and is meant to get you to those categories quickly,” Bierut says. “The cream background is warm, and the design lets the photos be the star. You grasp that the range is impressive, without being confused.”

Robert A.M. Stern’s new website uses the latest technology to more accurately reflect the firm’s character. According to Dixon, who spearheaded the six-month process, the design program included adding some interactivity, replacing thumbnails with larger images, and creating a more glamorous look on par with the firm’s monographs. To that end, the kerned serif headlines are consistent with the monographs, which Bierut also designed. “The words are images, not text, and are intended to evoke a sense of permanence, like carving in stone,” Dixon explains.

The site design—which represents 16 partners, nine associates, and selections from a portfolio of more than 1,000 projects—also strikes a balance between quick reads and deep wells of information. Featured projects are briefly described and stats are omit-

### How much do websites cost?

- **Low:** \$4,000 to \$10,000 gets you bare-bones services from a Web developer. That usually means you’ve already established the site layout, text, and images.
- **Middle:** Graphic design firm fees clock in at \$10,000 to \$20,000 for standard components such as an interactive site layout, a client log-in area, and a content management system that you can update yourself.
- **High:** Full services run \$25,000 and up, and include sophisticated slideshows, movement or animation, search engine optimization, and copyrighted written content.
- **DIY:** For resourceful architects on a serious budget, open-source content management systems can be just the ticket. Austrian-born architects Werner Morath and Sam Bargetz of Loadingdock5 Architecture in Brooklyn, N.Y., used Indexhibit to design an online portfolio with an embedded WordPress blog. “You have to know how to install a database, but anybody can maintain it,” Bargetz says. “We like the simplicity, and the website stays updated—that’s the most important thing for us.”

ted, but staff bios are fleshed out. “If we were pursuing a corporate headquarters project, our presentation might abbreviate the universities a partner has done, but on the website we don’t know what people are looking for on any particular day,” Dixon says. “Experience is important to convey.”

So is sustainability, he believes. While some architects might argue that an environmental tab is gratuitous because the ethic permeates everything they do, the Stern partners wanted it prominently displayed on the main navigation bar. “We had heard from clients that our information on sustainability was hard to

find,” Dixon notes. “We’re very aware that people don’t associate some of the traditional architecture we do with sustainable design, but our approach is specific. We want to make it easy for people checking out firms to see that, even though it’s also explained in the project descriptions.”

Some issues called for compromise, such as photo size. Large images take longer to load, so the team had to find a balance between speed and size. These days, site visitors want information to load quickly, and if what they’re looking for doesn’t pop right up, they’re likely to move on. “The

*continued on page 32*



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## practice

redesign was not linear and required a consultant team skilled at collaboration,” Dixon says. And there’s more work to come. Next on the drawing board: a site tailored for mobile devices.

### personal best

As social media rises, sites that are little more than online brochures are on the wane. Social media has changed the way people interact with information, and creating the built-in browsing experience they expect is another way to round out a firm’s personality. One architect doing that

subcategories such as blog, homes, books, buzz; and at the bottom is an explanation of her guiding eco-principles, plus a tag cloud and social media links.

“A sense of collaboration and community is so much a part of Michelle’s work. If you just see her buildings, you have only half the story,” says Young Nomad Brand’s Tyler Young, who designed the new site. A prolific blogger, Kaufmann had observed that some architectural websites were geared more toward other architects than to clients, and saw hers as a way to

*“it’s surprising how often people who visit [websites] simply are looking for an address or phone number, and how often it’s difficult to find it.”*

—michael bierut

exceptionally well is Michelle Kaufmann, Michelle Kaufmann Studio, San Francisco, whose new website reflects her separation from mkDesigns, the brand she sold to BluHomes in late 2009.

Her content-rich home page is packed with visual cues, yet the fluid design is easy to absorb. A banner features rotating portfolio images with superimposed large-type adjectives describing her design ethic, such as “healthy,” “smart,” and “systems built.” The mid-section includes a three-sentence blurb and

connect the dots. “I thought, here is a real opportunity to help people make more thoughtful decisions,” she says. “It’s not just about, ‘Hey, come hire me,’ but about, ‘Let’s make this world a better place, and talk about things people can do in their existing homes.’ Then they’re more likely to engage an architect rather than just go to a builder.”

When Young asked what architects inspire her, Kaufmann mentioned Charles and Ray Eames. The question became: If the couple were alive today,

*continued on page 34*

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## practice

what would they be doing online? Young found examples of the Eameses being playful in the studio. There were photos of them taking photos, showing the guts of their designs in beautiful ways and telling stories about how things were made.

"Architects are sometimes very linear, but they're also interesting people with a ton of knowledge," Young says. "It's important for clients to understand how they work rather than just the work, because it's often similar to what others are doing." He gravitates toward images that capture the human side of architecture. "It's not just about the house,

*"a simple site outweighs a complex site. people leave quickly if they can't figure out how to get something they're after."*

—rachel clemens

but life in the house, which is crucial from branding perspective," Young says. "Architects might be better served reflecting the environment they built than their design aesthetic."

Michelle Kaufmann Studio's website traffic statistics seem to bear that out. According to Compete, last year the number of unique visitors to Kaufmann's site

far outperformed those of architecture giants Kohn Pedersen Fox and OMA, Rem Koolhaas' firm, suggesting that interactivity attracts a larger audience.

Ultimately, though, technology is just a tool. It changes, but key branding messages never do. San Francisco graphic designer Earl Gee, Gee + Chung Design, whose clients

include Apple, Autodesk, and IBM, applies a standard beyond resonating with a target clientele: Would an outside audience understand and appreciate the message? Simplicity is a big deal.

When Gee judges website competitions, he runs through a checklist: a strong concept that permeates the site, well-organized content, clear navigation, the engaging use of interactivity, and multiple entry points and ways to experience the site. "You use storytelling to define how you're different and why it matters to your audience," Gee says. "A website is a key investment in your business. It's how people meet you nowadays." *ra*



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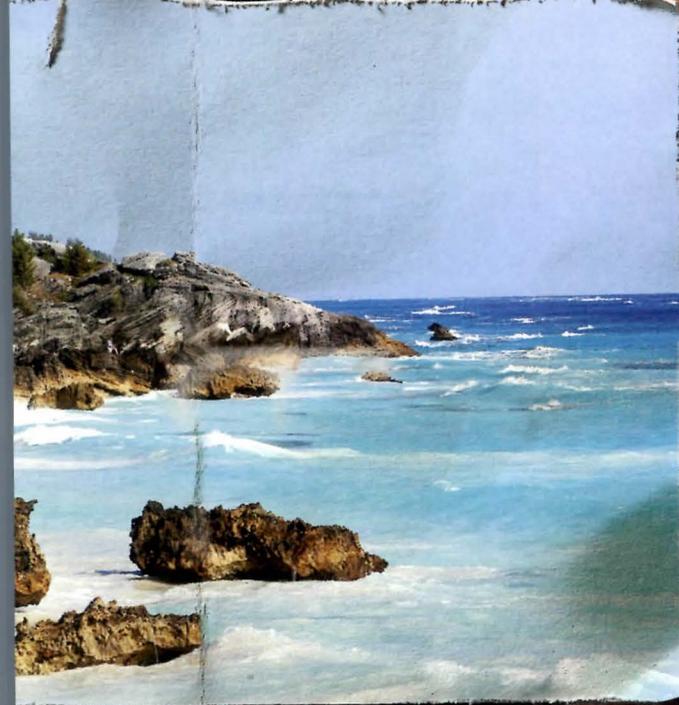
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# 121

residential architect  
design awards

by meghan drueding,  
cheryl weber, leed ap,  
nigel f. maynard, and  
bruce d. snider

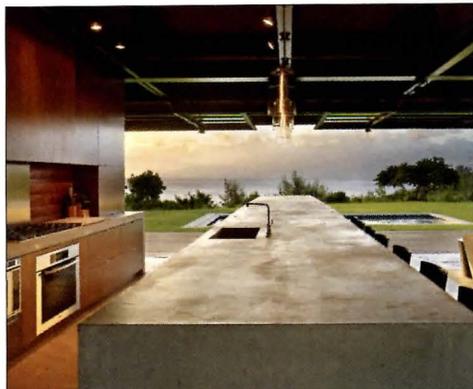
We know these past several years have been among the most difficult for architects who specialize in residential work. Sometimes it feels as if no one is building anything at all. But the 824 entries we received in 14 categories for the 12th annual *residential architect* Design Awards are evidence to the contrary. Buildings are going up, and handsome ones at that. Indeed, the quality of work is undiminished despite the additional challenges each project faces in these tough times.

What is diminished is the number of fresh faces we see among our list of winning firms this year. With just a few exceptions, the 2011 A-Team is made up of seasoned veterans—firms with 15 years or more experience. This underscores the truth about what we've been hearing on the street: The architects who've persevered in the housing bust are those with a thick portfolio of accomplishments and years of happy clients able to rehire them or recommend them to friends and associates.

Certainly younger firms entered the competition, but chances are the jobs they snagged were slimmer pickin's than in years past. If Tom Kundig or Peter Bohlin have room in their schedules to design your house, wouldn't you hire one of them?

And people did. Of our 40 winning projects, four were designed by Kundig or Bohlin. Kundig also nabbed our highest honor; his Art Stable in Seattle was named Project of the Year. Additionally, our jury members bestowed 10 Grand awards and 29 Merit awards. And they felt one project warranted the addition of an adaptive reuse category, bringing our category total to 15. Our distinguished jury included Marlon Blackwell, FAIA, Marlon Blackwell Architect; John Carney, FAIA, Carney Logan Burke Architects; Steven Ehrlich, FAIA, Ehrlich Architects; Audrey Matlock, AIA, Audrey Matlock Architect; Allan Shulman, FAIA, Shulman + Associates; and John Vinci, FAIA, Vinci | Hamp Architects.

We congratulate this year's all-star winners, but we also hope to see more fresh faces return with renewed vigor and exciting projects next year. That will mean all fortunes are rising again in residential architecture.



Photos (clockwise from top): John Edward Linden Photography, John J. Macaulay, Benjamin Benschneider

## project of the year

art stable, seattle

**olson kundig architects**

seattle

The 2011 *residential architect* Design Awards jury lauded this Seattle live/work loft project as a prototype for the future. “It’s an agenda for the next decade,” said one judge. “You could see it happening in a variety of neighborhoods and cities.”

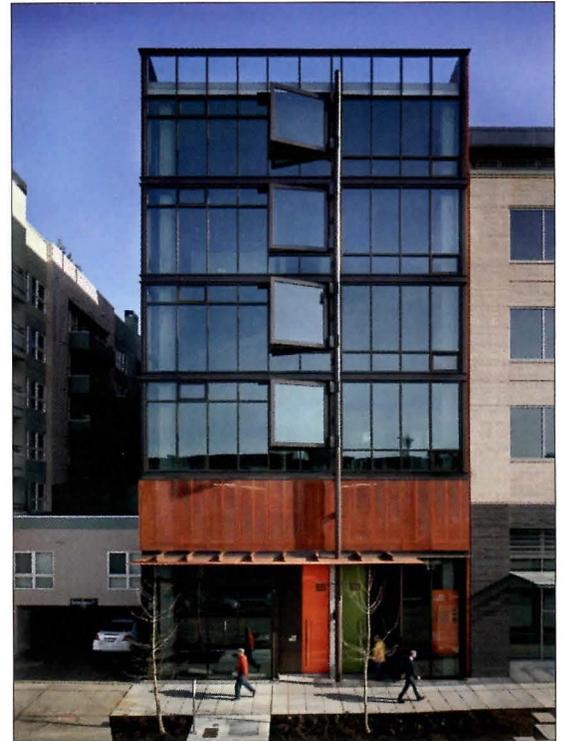
Designed by Tom Kundig, FAIA, of Olson Kundig Architects, the seven-story building features ground-level retail space, second-floor parking, and five stacked residential units. Kundig and the developer opted to leave the units’ interiors as raw space, with the thought that each owner would customize his residence to his own tastes. “Everybody has their idiosyncrasies,” explains Kundig, who appreciated his client’s willingness to try a new approach. “We left an empty slate to do the floor plan as you see fit.” Exterior detailing of oxidized mild steel creates a link to the surrounding mixed-use neighborhood, while oversized operable windows on the front façade relate the units to the street below.

Kundig is known for designing custom-made “gizmos”—hand-operated mechanical devices that move parts of his buildings—and he’s included one in Art Stable. “It treats the architecture as something that’s potentially kinetic,” one judge noted. At the rear of each unit, on the alley side, a large door opens up by means of an interior hand wheel and a 80.5-foot-tall hinge connected to a rooftop crane. Working artists and art collectors are the building’s target market, and these doors will enable them to hoist big pieces of artwork

*continued on page 43*



Michael Hanson/Aurora Select



Built on a site that once held a horse stable, Art Stable is heated by a geothermal loop system. Architect Tom Kundig, FAIA, is shown at left.

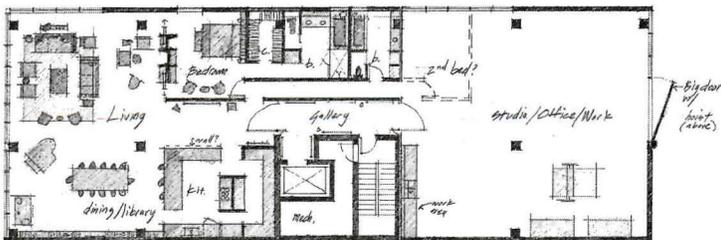
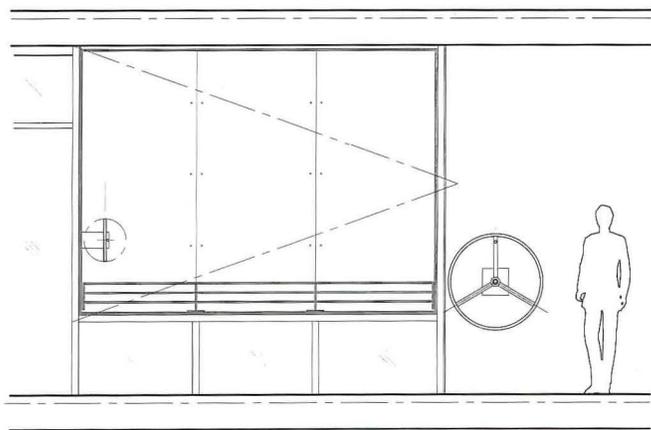




The "art doors" on the rear of the building act as owner-controlled portals for furniture and large pieces of art. Residents can customize the placement of windows on the project's north side (below), just as they can build out the unfinished loft spaces to their specifications.



Kundig and his team permitted the exterior mild steel to oxidize in the damp Seattle air. "If you let things develop naturally, it becomes more authentic," he says. The mixed-use building's active front elevation fits in nicely with the area's residential and commercial context.



A davit crane perches atop the back of the building, connecting to a vertical, 80.5-foot-tall hinge. By turning the hand wheel inside each unit, owners can open the attached art doors. Units are sold as raw space; above is a concept for how a typical layout might look.

and furniture into and out of their homes. “These larger openings allow you to open the building to the natural world and to the larger cultural landscape,” Kundig says. “How often you open and close the building doesn’t matter; for most people, it’s the promise that you can do it that’s more important.”

Easy access to the outside world, he adds, helps high-density multifamily housing maintain a comfort level for its inhabitants. “We all come from huts and villages, historically,” he says. “Reality now is leading us into denser situations.” But there may be a middle point between single-family housing and high-rise apartment blocks. “I think our future may in fact be more about small buildings than large buildings.”

The judges agreed that finding sensitive ways to achieve density should be a top priority for residential architects. And they admired Art Stable’s combination of refinement and toughness. “It’s very intimate—just five units,” noted a juror. “It’s about the city, about a continuation of the street. It’s just done so nicely.”—*m.d.*



Huge, operable windows on the front elevation provide an opportunity for cross-ventilation, while brightly colored doors create a sense of interest at the street level.

**design principal:** Tom Kundig, FAIA, Olson Kundig Architects; **principal:** Kirsten R. Murray, AIA, Olson Kundig Architects; **project managers:** Kevin Kudo-King, AIA, LEED AP and Jim Friesz, AIA, LEED AP, Olson Kundig Architects; **staff architect:** Jeff Ocampo, LEED AP, Olson Kundig Architects; **general contractor:** Sean Stimac, Exxel Pacific, Bellingham, Wash.; **structural engineer:** DCI Engineers, Seattle; **developer:** Point 32, Seattle; **envelope consultant:** Michael Aoki-Kramer, RDH Group, Seattle; **curtain wall / hinge design consultant:** All New Glass, Seattle; **gizmo consultant:** Phil Turner, Turner Exhibits, Lynwood, Wash.; **project size:** 4,000 square feet per unit; **site size:** 0.1 acre; **construction cost:** \$176.50 per square foot; **sales price:** Withheld; **units in project:** 5; **photography:** Benjamin Benschneider, except where noted. **drawings:** Olson Kundig Architects. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

custom / 3,000 square feet or less  
merit

hampden lane house, bethesda, md.

robert m. gurney, faia, architect

washington, d.c.

Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, and his client shared a philosophical approach to this suburban infill project—one that dictated an efficient footprint and acknowledges the nearby urban core. “Most of the neighborhood’s new Colonial and Craftsman-style houses are too big for their lots,” Gurney says. “He wanted to have green space.” The ground-face block cube has windows of varying sizes to focus and edit views, and its flat roof adds 1,100 square feet for outdoor living. The judges called the outcome “very elegant,” praising the composition, materials, and the “roof-level porch.”—*c.w.*



Mahogany and concrete block landscape walls complement the cube and orchestrate the relationship between the street, a required parking court, and the house.

**principal in charge:** Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect; **project designer:** Brian Tuskey, Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect; **general contractor:** John Thompson, Freedom First Homes, Bethesda, Md.; **engineer:** D. Anthony Beale, D. Anthony Beale LLC, Springfield, Va.; **project size:** 2,200 square feet; **site size:** 0.23 acres; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Maxwell MacKenzie. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

custom / 3,000 square feet or less  
merit

port townsend residence, port townsend, wash.

bohlin cywinski jackson

seattle

This house, on a bluff at the northern edge of the Olympic Peninsula, is about the landscape: hiding it, revealing it, and fitting it in. The judges praised the “great entry sequence,” which allows a glimpse of the house from across a long meadow, before winding through dense forest to the parking court, and entering through a series of wood screens. Rustic and refined materials—reclaimed barn wood, black-stained cedar, and weathering steel—express each environmentally attuned volume and reduce the building’s scale.

Peter Q. Bohlin, FAIA, likens the design to “agrarian buildings, which affect how we relate to the natural world.”—*c.w.*

**principal in charge:** Peter Q. Bohlin, FAIA, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; **project manager:** David Guthrie, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; **general contractor:** Pete Crocker, Crocker Construction, Seattle; **landscape architect:** Randy Allworth, Allworth Design, Seattle; **project size:** 2,805 square feet; **site size:** 6.1 acres; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Nic Lehoux. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



The entry path steps up and turns onto a breezeway deck, revealing vistas of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Bedroom window bays are canted toward Olympic Mountain views.



## custom / 3,000 square feet or less merit

allee house, mount airy, md.

mcinturff architects

bethesda, md.

**a** pin-oak allee leading to nowhere set up a drum roll on this small farm. The owners planted it in 1994, letting it grow to create a place for their future house. Architect Mark McInturff's finishing flourish is an elevated box that neatly sidesteps the axis, "like a bull with a cape." The house's carport and second-story porch straddle the drive, so you can look down its length. Lifting the living spaces also lengthened views of the rolling landscape. A judge pronounced it "too sweet for words," adding, "The porch is wonderful. Couldn't you spend a day reading right there?"—*c.w.*



An elevated box deals with the existing driveway allee indirectly, creating some distance between it and the landscape. Clad in corrugated metal, the upper part appears to hover from a distance.

**principal in charge:** Mark McInturff, FAIA, McInturff Architects; **project architect:** David Mogensen, AIA, McInturff Architects; **general contractor:** Paul Mueller, Mueller Homes, Sykesville, Md.; **project size:** 2,100 square feet; **site size:** 7.21 acres. **construction cost:** \$208 per square foot; **photography:** Julia Heine. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



The house sits on a platform to give the impression of floating on its vast, grassy site. Its sloped roofline echoes that of the nearby barn.



## custom / 3,000 square feet or less merit

glass farmhouse, eastern oregon

olson kundig architects

seattle

**t**he judging panel called this Oregon compound "very cool and very different." As one judge noted, "If the house were by itself, it wouldn't work. It elevates the barn. That's a powerful thing for architecture to do."

Jim Olson, FAIA, envisioned the two structures as objects in the landscape. "The barn roof aims toward the ground and the house roof aims toward the barn," he says. "They shape a space." Though the barn traces its roots to the local vernacular and the glass house takes a more modern tack, the buildings share a sense of proportion and scale.—*m.d.*

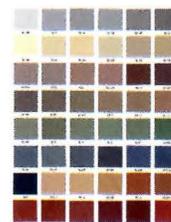
**design principal:** Jim Olson, FAIA, Olson Kundig Architects; **project manager:** Ellen Cecil, AIA, LEED AP, Olson Kundig; **architectural staff:** Michael Wright, Olson Kundig; **general contractor:** Louis Perry, LD Perry, Joseph, Ore.; **structural engineer:** Monte Clark, MCE Structural Consultants, Stevensville, Mont.; **lighting designer:** Brian Hood, Brian Hood Lighting Design, Seattle; **project size:** 1,450 square feet (house only); **site size:** 80 acres; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** John Clark. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



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weekend house on lake superior, schroeder, minn.

julie snow architects

minneapolis

This weekend home in Minnesota exhibits an intimate knowledge of its forested surroundings. “They know the environment they’re working in,” said one judge. Its architect, Julie Snow, FAIA, owns the house with her husband, a mechanical engineer. She designed the building to rest on a platform, so as not to disturb the site’s natural water runoff patterns. Inside and out, it’s supremely uncluttered, the better to highlight Lake Superior views. “It’s designed to be about being in that place in the summer, winter, fall, and spring,” Snow notes. “But winter is pretty spectacular.”—*m.d.*



The home’s two black volumes frame a view of Lake Superior, and they provide a strong contrast to the often-snowy landscape. Plenty of built-in storage helps keep the interiors looking pristine.

**principal in charge / project architect:** Julie Snow, FAIA, Julie Snow Architects; **general contractor:** Brad Holmes, Rod & Sons Carpentry, Gilbert, Minn.; **project size:** 1,024 square feet (main house), 256 square feet (studio); **site size:** 2.4 acres; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Peter Bastianelli-Kerze. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



Despite its abundant glazing, the home employs a ventilated rainscreen and soy-based spray foam insulation to achieve high-performance values. It also operates off the grid most of the year thanks to unseen photovoltaic laminates adhered to the roofing membrane.



custom / 3,000 square feet or less  
merit

os house, racine, wis.

johnsen schmaling architects

milwaukee

This house in Wisconsin belies its relatively small size, limited budget, and LEED Platinum certification. Built on an infill lot near Lake Michigan, the home is all space and light with floor-to-ceiling glass and a transparent main level permitting see-through views that connect the street side with the water. The architects cleverly carved outdoor spaces to extend the interior, and detailed the exterior with cement panels and color to create interest. This was “very skillfully done,” summed up one judge.—*n.f.m.*

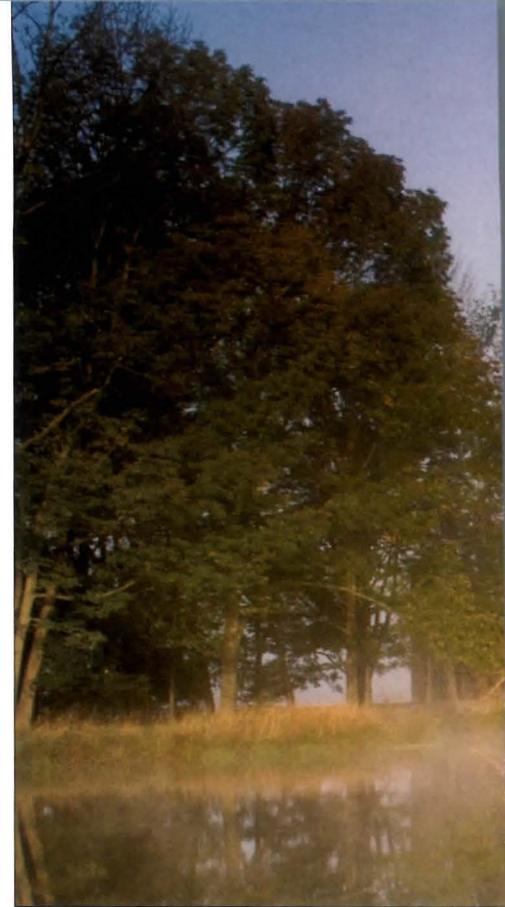
**principals in charge / project architects:** Brian Johnsen, AIA, and Sebastian Schmaling, AIA, LEED AP, Johnsen Schmaling Architects; **general contractor:** Beggi General Contractors, Racine, Wis.; **interior designer:** Johnsen Schmaling Architects; **landscape architect:** Dan Reidorf, Milaeger’s Landscape Design, Racine; **project size:** 1,940 square feet; **site size:** 0.3 acre; **construction cost:** \$290 per square foot; **photography:** John J. Macaulay. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

custom / more than 3,000 square feet  
grand

lily lake residence, dalton, pa.

bohlin cywinski jackson

wilkes-barre, pa.



**principal in charge:** William D. Loose, AIA, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; **principal for design:** Peter Q. Bohlin, FAIA, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; **project manager:** Todd Howard, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; **general contractor:** Warren Breig III, Breig Brothers, Dalton, Pa.; **landscape architect:** Michael Vergason, Michael Vergason Landscape Architects, Alexandria, Va.; **project size:** 5,960 square feet; **site size:** Withheld; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Nic Lehoux. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

“S ublime” is how a judge described the relationship between an old stone cottage and a long, linear house that hovers behind it, like a mirage in the rolling terrain.

The clients wanted their new house to assimilate the old one. Peter Q. Bohlin, FAIA, took cues from the raw materials of this early 1900s agrarian landscape: farm structures, high grass, and a pattern of dry-laid stone walls. He placed a wood-and glass house between the cottage, now renovated as a library and loft, and a new pond. A delicate glass passageway joins the structures, lining up the cottage’s front door with a massive fireplace in the new house. Light streams down its stone face from skylights on either side.

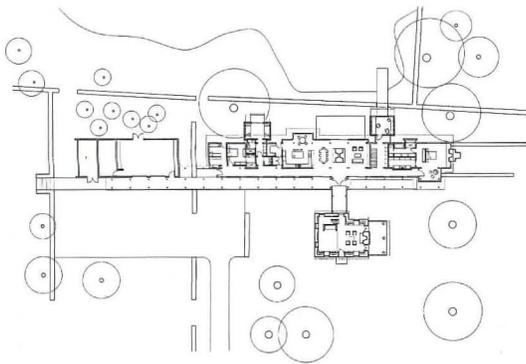
The low-slung house unspools along an existing stone wall. Two lattice-clad rooms, inspired by corncribs, pop out of the narrow footprint. One is the study, extended by a deck over the pond. The other, a guest bedroom, pushes toward a great maple tree along the wall. “The lattice makes it a special room, perfect for resting or reading in the afternoon, with a sliding door facing the water,” Bohlin says.

Our panelists appreciated that the new house defers to the original, but each has its own identity. “The design restores the old stone farmhouse and then just quietly makes it a grand estate,” a judge said.—c.w.



A glass passageway links the old stone cottage with a new milled timber house. Interwoven indoor-outdoor spaces include a deck that extends the lattice-clad study over a new pond.





The scheme enhances an evocative agrarian landscape. New and existing fieldstone walls organize the plan. Left: A skylit chimney marks the main house entrance.

custom / more than 3,000 square feet  
grand

slaughterhouse beach house, lahaina, hawaii

olson kundig architects

seattle

When architect Tom Kundig, FAIA, sat down to design this Hawaii beach house, he faced a dual challenge. The owner had asked him to make the project as sturdy and low-maintenance as possible, because it would have to weather strong storms on its waterfront site. At the same time, the local climate is often mild, so Kundig wanted to open the home to the outdoors as much as he could. “The trick is, how do you do that with a building that has to be sealed?” he says.



Simon Watson

He decided to take advantage of abundant natural breezes by strategically placing openings in the home’s corrugated metal roof. Rather than blowing into the house, trade winds sweep over the roof, creating a cooling vacuum that pulls air through the interiors. Kundig also separated the project into three structures, connecting them with covered walkways. The central portion features hydraulic window walls that, when raised, transform the building into an open-air pavilion.

Rammed-earth walls made with soil from the site help root the home in its location, as well as satisfying the need for durability. Their warm, variegated hues pick up the tones of the concrete, wood, and steel used throughout the project. “This house is just incredibly beautiful,” one judge said.—*m.d.*

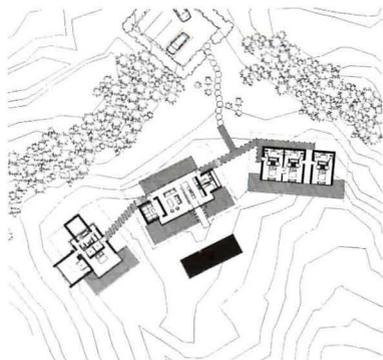


Traditional Hawaiian buildings inspired the home’s corrugated metal roofs, which Olson Kundig Architects tailored to the site’s wind patterns.





The house's three zones (one for sleeping, one for living, and the other for guests) are linked by protected walkways. Hydraulic walls lift up to extend the living area, including a dramatic dining island, into the spectacular site.



**design principal:** Tom Kundig, FAIA, Olson Kundig Architects; **principal:** Kirsten R. Murray, AIA, Olson Kundig Architects; **project manager:** Steven Rainville, AIA, LEED AP, Olson Kundig Architects; **general contractor:** Jim Bickford and Jim Dow, Schuchart/Dow, Seattle; **structural engineer:** Monte Clark, MCE Structural Consultants, Stevensville, Mont.; **mechanical engineer:** Interface Engineering, Portland, Ore.; **wind engineer:** RWDI, Guelph, Ontario; **project size:** 3,820 square feet; **site size:** 5 acres; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Benjamin Benschneider, except where noted. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

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# 11 residential architect design awards

## custom / more than 3,000 square feet merit

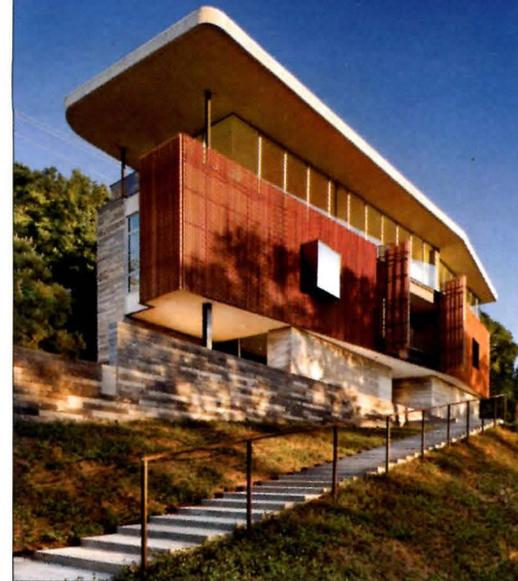
east windsor residence, austin, texas

alterstudio architects

austin

The East Windsor Residence is the answer to the question, "Does limitation yield innovative design?" Presented with a 200-foot-long triangular site and a 40-foot setback, architect Kevin Alter devised a sliver of a house that gently embraces the site's shape. The three-level home features the kitchen, living room, and master suite on the top floor, with secondary space sprinkled across the other two levels. Its warm but contemporary palette of materials includes oak, marble, limestone, and a 16-foot ipe shading screen. "[The home] has a lot of nice moves to it," one judge declared.—*n.f.m.*

A restrictive lot forced this thin home, but it also promoted light-filled loftlike spaces. An inviting mix of black lueders limestone and ipe greet visitors as they approach.



**principal in charge:** Kevin Alter, Alterstudio Architects; **project team:** Ernesto Cragolino, AIA, and Tim Whitehill, Alterstudio Architects; **general contractor:** Don Crowell, Crowell+, Austin, Texas; **landscape architect:** James David, David/Peese Design, Austin; **interior designer:** Kathy Spinks, Kathy Spinks Interiors, Austin; **project size:** 4,500 square feet; **site size:** 0.50 acre; **construction cost:** \$750 per square foot; **photography:** Paul Finkel. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

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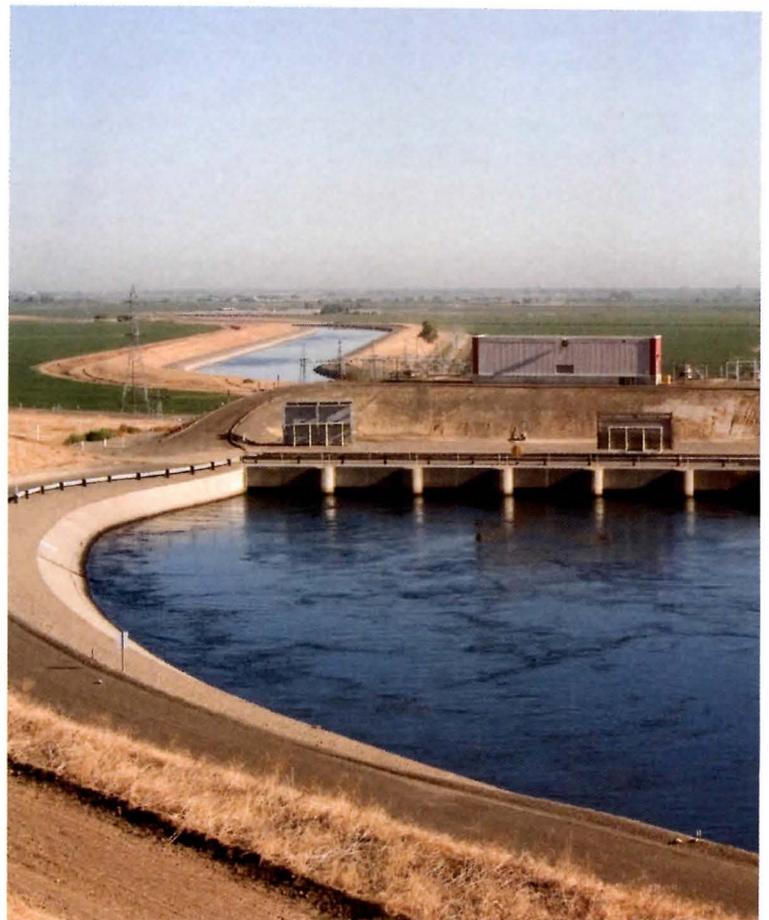
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## renovation

### grand

cedar street residence, tempe, ariz.

### colab studio

tempe

This addition to a 1950s ranch house encloses more space outdoors than indoors. Devoting the existing structure to a garage, four bedrooms, and a playroom, architects and owners Maria Salenger, AIA, and Matthew Salenger designed a separate kitchen/living/dining structure that also is the studio for their three-person firm. Joined by covered walkways and polycarbonate-clad garden walls, the two buildings frame a green courtyard that serves as a flexible outdoor living room. The configuration is novel in this suburban milieu, but the Salengers' execution and detailing—make it eminently practical.

Light rusted steel columns support polycarbonate roofs for protection from the Arizona sun, while an oper-

able polycarbonate awning controls south light at the kitchen/office structure. Reflective surfaces make the courtyard seem even larger than it is. Interiors are bone simple, divided largely with movable millwork "boxes" that easily are shifted to reconfigure spaces. "Sometimes we need just two bedrooms, and sometimes we need five," Matthew Salenger explains. "When we're entertaining, the office space disappears."

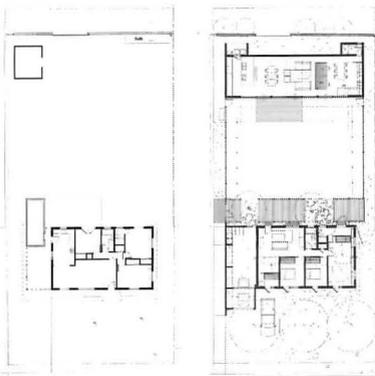
Calling the outcome "amazing," our judges remarked on how much the project accomplished while leaving the envelope of the existing house essentially untouched. More than a gut remodel, one noted, it serves as a model for "rebuilding your suburban lot to capitalize on your square footage."—*b.d.s.*

The street front of this remodeled 1950s ranch retains much of its original identity, but a new polycarbonate-clad garden wall encloses a hidden courtyard with a separate pavilion that houses both daytime living spaces and the owners' architecture studio (bottom).





An operable polycarbonate awning shades the live/work pavilion's south-facing wall (left). When lifted, it becomes a giant lantern. Wheeled millwork components move to create a variety of interior configurations (below).



before

after



**principal in charge / project architect / landscape designer:** Maria Salenger, AIA, and Matthew Salenger, colab studio; **general contractor:** Rich Fairbourn, Build Inc., Phoenix; **project size:** 2,222 square feet; **site size:** 0.25 acre; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Bill Timmerman. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



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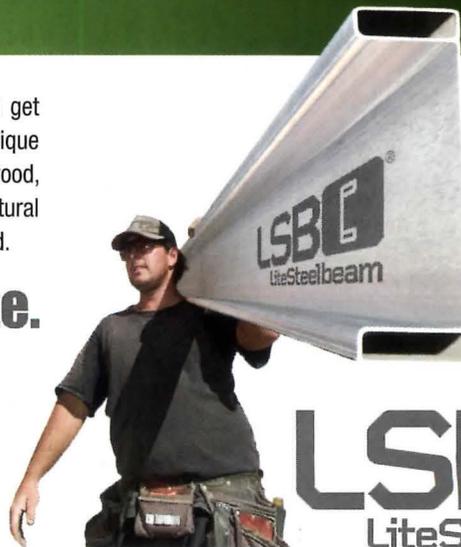
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## renovation merit

watergate apartment, washington, d.c.

robert m. gurney, faia, architect

washington, d.c.

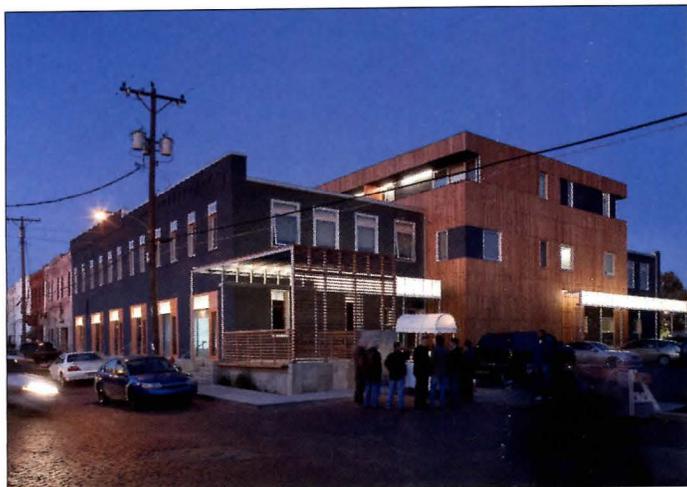
The Watergate is one of Washington's most prestigious addresses, but its circular geometry poses interior challenges. Gutting this vintage 1960s apartment cleared the way for the organizing stroke: a V-shaped, dark plaster wall that orients the living areas toward the Potomac River. "The new framework draws attention away from the ceiling heights, some as low as 7 feet, 6 inches," says Robert M. Gurney, FAIA. Crisp, minimalist materials—white terrazzo flooring, ash millwork, and glass walls—unify and define the spaces. "They got a lot of mileage out of the simple move of breaking the wall free," one judge said, "and the materials are very well done."—c.w.



A charcoal wall separates the living area and master bedroom. Its electrostatic glass ribbon can go opaque or clear, giving a sense of the space beyond.

**principal in charge:** Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect; **project architect:** Sarah Mailhot, Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect; **general contractor:** Richard Hazboun, Added Dimensions, Takoma Park, Md.; **engineer:** D. Anthony Beale, D. Anthony Beale LLC, Springfield, Va.; **interior designer:** Therese Baron Gurney, Baron Gurney Interiors, Washington, D.C.; **project size:** 1,250 square feet; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Maxwell MacKenzie. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

**principal in charge / project manager / interior designer:** Douglas W. Stockman, AIA, el dorado; **project architect:** Steve Salzer, AIA, el dorado; **project designer:** Chris Burk, el dorado; **general contractor:** Mark Wagner, Farha Construction, Wichita, Kan.; **developer:** David Farha, Brock Oaks, and Mark Farha, The Finn Lofts LLC, Wichita; **landscape architect:** Alan Mackey, Landplan Engineering, Kansas City, Mo.; **project size:** 561 square feet to 1,208 square feet; **site size:** 0.6 acre; **construction cost:** \$102 per square foot; **rental price:** \$750 to \$1,600 per unit per month; **units in project:** 25; **photography:** Mike Sinclair. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



## renovation merit

the finn lofts, wichita, kan.

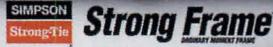
el dorado

kansas city, mo.

The century-old warehouse building containing The Finn Lofts presented el dorado with both a challenge and an opportunity. Its 30,750-square-foot size was a boon, but the square-shaped floor plate didn't lend itself to a standard multifamily layout. The question was, says principal Douglas W. Stockman, AIA, "How do you organize everything so each unit can engage with the exterior?"

He and his colleagues carved out the building's center and added on vertically, bringing illumination down into the middle units via light monitors. Other units feature interior courtyards. "It's done economically and urbanistically," said a judge.—m.d.

The building's existing exteriors were simply repainted; new portions consist of vertical cedar slats that also function as a rainscreen.



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renovation  
merit

322 reinvented, iowa city, iowa

substance

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The quiet composition of this remodeled 1941 home betrays the behind-the-scenes interventions. “The most challenging aspect was coming up with a strategy that made the house look like it was a newly conceived home,” says principal Paul Mankins, FAIA, LEED AP. With an eye toward adding square footage and connecting the interior to the landscape, the design team reframed the gable roof at a higher pitch and added new windows and porches to create transitional spaces. The structure is covered in standing seam metal and tongue-and-groove fir. “I like the clarity,” one judge said. “It’s a completely different direction—absolutely unapologetic.”—*n.f.m.*



Substance unified this home’s warren of rooms and connected everything to the verdant site with new windows and large porches that provide solar protection.

**principal in charge / interior designer:** Paul Mankins, FAIA, LEED AP, Substance; **project architect:** Matt Rodekamp, AIA, Substance; **project team:** Mike Killeen, Substance; **general contractor:** Curt Amelon, Amelon Construction, Iowa City; **project size:** 4,200 square feet; **site size:** 0.85 acre; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Paul Crosby. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

**design team:** Margarita McGrath, AIA, LEED AP, and Scott Oliver, AIA, LEED AP, noroof architects, and T.J. Stratton and John Andrews, STRand, Salem, Va.; **architect of record:** Ken Hudes, Atelier New York Architecture, Long Island City, N.Y.; **general contractor:** Ilyas Yakubov, Giron Contracting, Brooklyn, N.Y.; **millwork:** T.J. Stratton and John Andrews, STRand; **project size:** 510 square feet; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Chuck Choi. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



renovation  
merit

finger | kennedy apartment, new york

noroof architects

brooklyn, n.y.

“Where’s the fat in this project?” one of our judges asked of this apartment renovation. “There isn’t any.” Who could argue with that? The design team reorganized the existing dumbbell-shaped 510-square-foot apartment, moving the kitchen and bath from the back and deftly inserting them into the narrow middle zone. Two skylights and artificial illumination in a light cove make the space feel bright and airy despite the size, but the pièce de résistance of the project is the clever storage solutions in the floor and walls of the unit, which help create living and sleeping zones. “It’s a lot of nice renovation within a shell,” another judge said approvingly.—*n.f.m.*

This lean apartment renovation fits two sleeping areas and plenty of storage into its diminutive 510 square feet. A desk/fold-away bed, fold-down dining table, and under-floor storage compartments help maximize space.

**restoration/preservation**  
**grand**

yachiyo, kanagawa prefecture, japan

**atelier tekuto**

tokyo

Responding to the widespread neglect of his country's vernacular residential architecture, Tokyo architect Yasuhiro Yamashita has created a new model of adaptive preservation. This project, in a seaside community south of Tokyo, uses the timber-frames of two 100-year-old "folk houses" as the armature for a contemporary private residence/art gallery. Rotated in relationship to each other, the dark-stained exposed structural frames form a spatially complex interior. Contrasting colors distinguish new material from old, while steel post bases hold columns above floor bricks salvaged from an 80-year-old factory building in China. Sandwich panels (galvanized steel, rigid

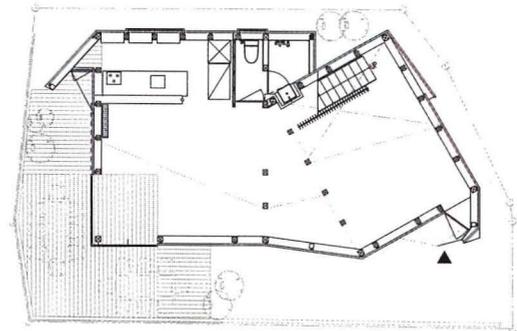
insulation, and wood-wool cement board) wrap the building in a sculpturally abstract envelope.

"The inside is old, but the outside is new," Yamashita said, through an interpreter. "Both are independent, but both are networking very well. The one thing that connects them is the light." Our judges saw in the result "a new approach to preservation: Instead of absolutely freezing [a historic building] in amber or demolishing it, a way to preserve it." To Yamashita, it represents an effort to highlight the value of tradition in a culture oriented ever more toward the new. "An old thing is just an old thing for some people, but it does have value if you see it from a new point of view."—*b.d.s.*

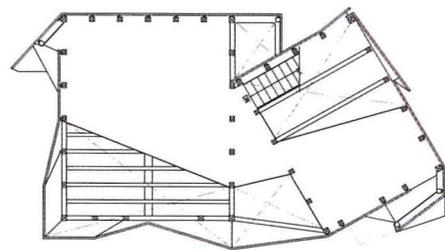


Two 100-year-old timber-frames, relocated and combined, form the structural system of a new house (left). Galvanized steel-faced sandwich panels wrap the building in a modern skin (top), and corner sliding doors open onto a private terrace (above).

Rotated in relation to each other, the timber-frames form a geometrically complex interior. New materials contrast with the antique timbers, setting up a dialogue between old and new (below).



first floor



second floor

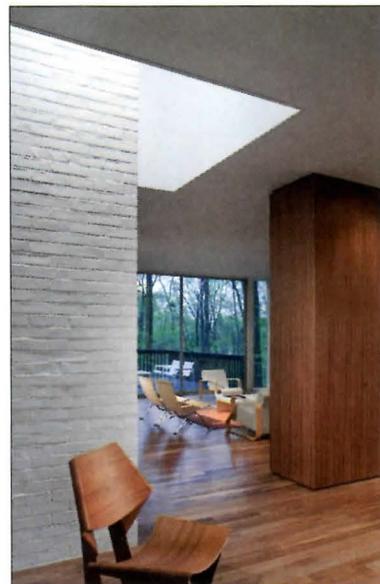
**principal in charge / project architect:** Yasuhiro Yamashita, Atelier Tekuto; **general contractor:** Marutomi Construction, Yokohama, Japan; **engineer:** Jun Sato Structural Engineering, Tokyo; **project size:** 667 square feet; **site size:** 0.03 acre; **construction cost:** \$367 per square foot; **photography:** Toshihiro Sobajima. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

restoration/preservation  
grand

record house revisited, owings mills, md.

david jameson architect

alexandria, va.



bringing a notable 1969 house up to today's standards can be a delicate maneuver, but this one succeeds on the strength of a central idea: the elegant mixing of materials that both define and weave together the new floor plan.

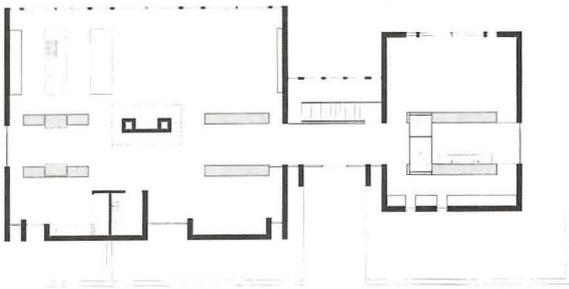
"Going into this project, we had no idea that what we ended up with was possible," says David Jameson, FAIA, of the house designed by Charles H. Richter. While the exterior was beautifully detailed, both living pavilions contained a clutter of rooms that defied the structure's simplicity. Liberation came from the existing truss roof system, which allowed Jameson to make a clean sweep of the interior.

Two dramatic moves opened up the floor plan while also respect-

ing the building's character. One was to expose the skylight ring around the chimney so that it reads as an obelisk, anchoring the entire composition. The other was the use of bold contrasts to organize space. Flat-sawn walnut floors and quarter-sawn walnut casework wrap the living areas. Cabinetry and countertops are sanded Corian. "We thought, let's find this voiceless casework that relates to the white brick and plaster ceilings," Jameson says. "Corian has the luminosity of an eggshell juxtaposed with the brick. Those materials were a way of repositioning the house as organic and part of woods, and also tectonic and driven by the architecture." Commented a judge: "It's spectacular the way the different materials come together."—c.w.

The smooth opalescence of Corian casework in the kitchen, mudroom, and bath is a textural counterpoint to the brick and plaster.

A truss roof system allowed the interior walls to be removed, resulting in public and private pavilions linked by a glass entry node. The skylight-encircled chimney stands as an obelisk, and an allee of walnut case-work defines the living spaces.



**principal in charge:** David Jameson, FAIA, David Jameson Architect; **project manager:** Christopher Cabacar, David Jameson Architect; **general contractor:** Simon Ley, Ley Group, Washington, D.C.; **project size:** 3,000 square feet; **site size:** 1 acre; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Paul Warchol Photography. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



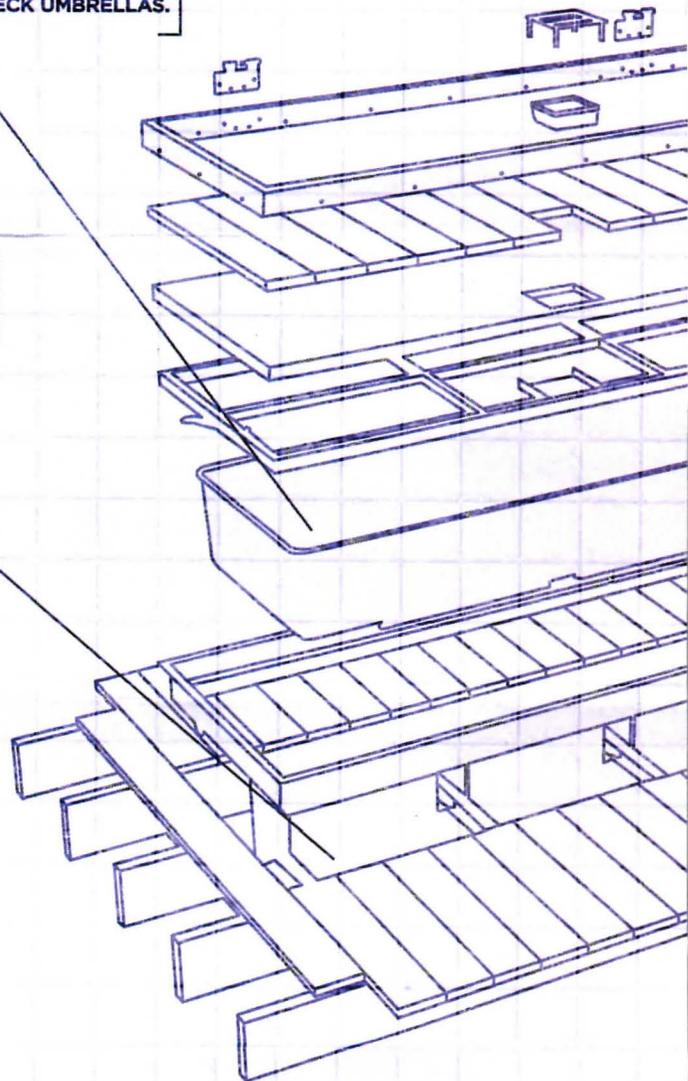
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## restoration/preservation merit

restoration of the Luis Marden House, McLean, Va.

**richard williams architects**

washington, d.c.



The contractor restored the entire structure, including signature red concrete floors, mahogany paneling, and millwork. Williams chose period furnishings that respect the house's authority and dramatic setting.

**principal in charge / project architect / interior designer:** Richard Williams, FAIA, Richard Williams Architects; **general contractor:** Bailey C. Adams, Adams General Contractors, Chevy Chase, Md.; **project size:** 3,000 square feet; **site size:** 0.50 acre; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Robert Lautman. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

**P**ainstaking surgery restored this 1959 Frank Lloyd Wright house, poised delicately above the Potomac River rapids. Part of the restoration team, Richard Williams, FAIA, chose serene, understated interior elements that play to Wright's tune—a new kitchen with concrete counters, Xenon under-cabinet lighting in the living room, kitchen, and bedrooms, and vintage furniture. "The new high-end cabinetry and lighting helped bring everything into sharper contrast and focus," Williams says.

Citing the technical skill evident, a judge noted that "somebody obviously spent a lot of time and money to put it all back together."—*c.w.*

## adaptive reuse merit

the cork factory lofts, pittsburgh

**antunovich associates**

chicago

**b**uilt in 1901, the former Armstrong Cork Factory now gleams with a fresh makeover after Antunovich Associates converted it into 297 loft apartments. The firm restored worthwhile elements such as the red brick, silo, and engine room, but, on the adjacent lot, it added necessary elements for modern habitation: a 427-space parking garage and 47,000 square feet of retail. Units are highlighted by 14-foot exposed ceilings, exposed brick walls, and riverfront views.—*n.f.m.*

**principal in charge / project architect / land planner:** Joseph M. Antunovich, AIA, Antunovich Associates; **general contractor:** Craig Allison, Plant Construction, San Francisco; **developer:** Daniel McCaffery, McCaffery Interests, Chicago; **interior designer:** Susan Caruso, Intra-Spec, Marina del Rey, Calif.; **landscape architect:** Craig Farnsworth, Hitchcock Design Group, Chicago; **project size:** 630 square feet to 2,323 square feet; **site size:** 4.06 acres; **construction cost:** \$139.91 per square foot; **rental price:** \$1,104 to \$3,865 per unit; **units in project:** 297; **photography:** Ed Massery. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



This old cork factory was redeveloped into a vibrant, mixed-use apartment complex with commercial, retail, and entertainment. Units are an eclectic mix of old architectural details and modern-day conveniences.



**multifamily**  
**grand**

one madison park, new york

**cetraruddy**

new york

One Madison Park won our judges' approval for its sheer audacity as well as for its outright sheerness. "This one wins on proportion and elegance," one judge said. "It's pretty damn amazing."

Overlooking Madison Square Park on Manhattan's East Side, the 50-story tower rises 618 feet and is clad in dark bronze glass. The architects used a modular, plug-in design concept that is expressed through six-story glass pods that essentially hang off the building's main shaft, giving residents a 270-degree view of the city. The pods, the architects say, "deconstruct the building's mass and give it a sense of lightness."

Apartments feature floor-to-ceiling glass, with windows in almost every kitchen and bathroom. The design team at CetraRuddy located lateral bracing between rooms and shafts (instead of around the perimeter) to minimize impact on the layouts in the loft-like units. Additionally, because the building is so tall and thin, the architects used rooftop dampers to stabilize the towers in the event of strong winds.

The project offers a mix of unit types as well as all the amenities of a luxury building, including a spa, outdoor terrace, fitness room, wine cellar, multipurpose room, and two pools. Another judge summed up the results with architectlike austerity: "They did a nice job."—*n.f.m.*

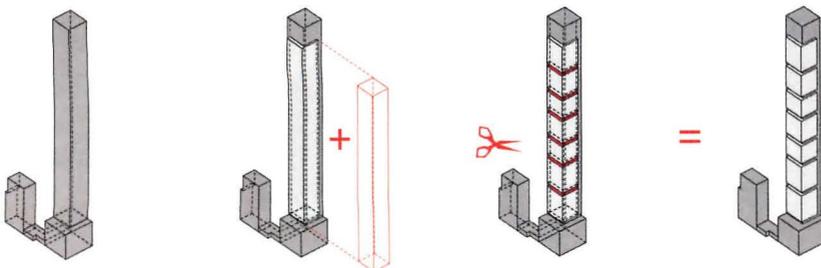
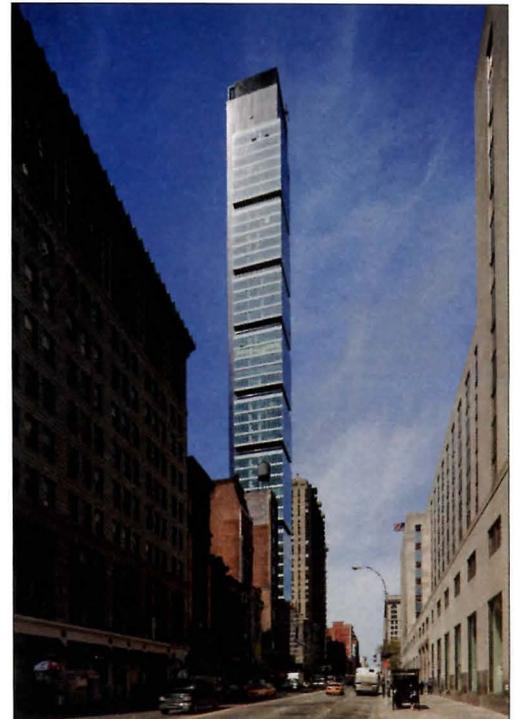


One Madison Park (left) cuts a svelte figure in the Manhattan skyline thanks to a design concept in which pods cantilever from the building's main shaft. The pods give the structure "a sense of lightness," say the architects at CetraRuddy. Floor-to-ceiling glass in each unit provides abundant views of the city (above).



CetraRuddy used rooftop dampers to help provide stability and minimize the sway of the 50-story tower. The firm also placed lateral bracing at the center of the units (between rooms and shafts) instead of the perimeter to reduce the impact on room layouts.

**principal in charge / project architect:** John A. Cetra, AIA, CetraRuddy; **general contractor:** Gerald Bianco, Bovis Lend Lease, New York; **developer:** Slazer Enterprises, New York; **landscape architect:** HM White, New York; **interior designer:** Thomas Juul-Hansen, Thomas Juul-Hansen LLC, New York; **project size:** 930 square feet to 3,310 square feet; **site size:** 0.173 acre; **construction cost:** \$7.50 per square foot; **sales price:** Withheld; **units in project:** 70; **photography:** David Sundberg/Esto. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.





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**multifamily  
merit**

lofts at cherokee studios, los angeles

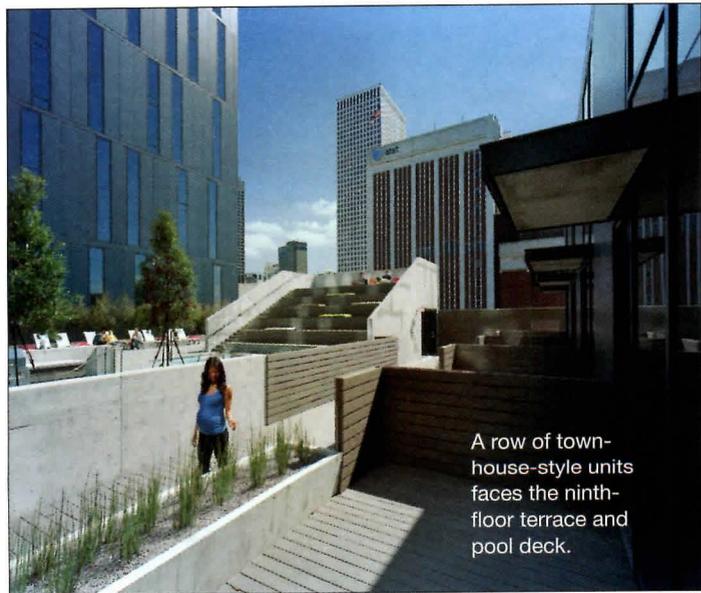
**brooks + scarpa**  
santa monica, calif.

The movable, perforated metal skin of this 12-unit, mixed-use building in Los Angeles captured the judges' attention. "It's very elegant," said one juror. "A very nice solution." Architecture firm Brooks + Scarpa devised the owner-controlled, bifold aluminum panels as a way of increasing the project's engagement with the street, from various points of view. "As you move past it at different speeds—walking and in the car—you get a different perception of the façade," says principal Lawrence Scarpa, FAIA. The skin also provides shading and privacy while allowing natural light, fresh air, and views.—*m.d.*

**principal in charge / interior designer:** Lawrence Scarpa, FAIA, Brooks + Scarpa; **project architect:** Stephanie Ericson, AIA, Brooks + Scarpa; **general contractor:** Brian Crommie, JT Builders, Los Angeles; **developer:** Steve Edwards and Greg Reitz, RETHink Development, Culver City, Calif.; **mechanical engineer:** Albert Bicol, Cobalt Engineering, Los Angeles; **structural engineer:** John Pao, BPA Group, Vancouver, British Columbia; **project size:** 1,000 square feet to 2,000 square feet; **site size:** 0.2 acre; **construction cost:** \$195 per square foot; **sales price:** \$650,000 to \$1.1 million; **units in project:** 12; **photography:** John Edward Linden Photography. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



Residents can change the building's exterior appearance by opening or closing their units' perforated metal screens.



A row of townhouse-style units faces the ninth-floor terrace and pool deck.

**principal in charge:** Steve Dumez, FAIA, Eskew+Dumez+Ripple; **project architect:** Jack Sawyer, AIA, LEED AP; **general contractor:** Gibbs Construction, New Orleans; **developer:** Brian Gibbs, Gibbs Development, New Orleans; **interior designer:** Eskew+Dumez+Ripple; **project size:** 675 square feet to 1,200 square feet; **site size:** 0.7 acre; **construction cost:** \$119 per square foot; **rental price:** \$1,200 to \$2,500; **units in project:** 250; **photography:** Timothy Hursley. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

**multifamily  
merit**

930 poydras residential tower, new orleans

**eskew+dumez+ripple**  
new orleans

At first glance, this sleek multifamily building in downtown New Orleans doesn't immediately call to mind the city's French Quarter. But one aspect of that historic neighborhood directly inspired architect Steve Dumez, FAIA. "In the French Quarter there's a semi-private transition from private to public," he says. "Our thought was, can we transform that into a denser, more high-rise model?" He and his team created a ninth-floor communal space featuring city views, a coffee bar, and WiFi. Outside, on the same level, an amenity-laden terrace tops the mixed-use project's parking garage. "The terrace is terrific," said a judge.—*m.d.*



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Ground-floor commercial space is topped by second-story common areas, with residential suites occupying the upper levels.

## multifamily

### merit

seattle cancer care alliance patient house, seattle

**weinstein a|u architects + urban designers**

seattle



**principal in charge:** Ed Weinstein, FAIA, Weinstein AIU; **project architect:** Scot Carr, AIA, Weinstein AIU; **design staff:** Cory Harris, LEED AP, and Danielle Rawson, Weinstein AIU; **general contractor:** Mike Bang, Walsh Construction, Seattle; **developer:** Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, Seattle; **landscape architect:** Karen Kiest, Karen Kiest Landscape Architects, Seattle; **project size:** 275 square feet to 550 square feet; **site size:** 0.3 acre; **construction cost:** \$190 per square foot; **rental price:** \$69 to \$143 per night; **units in project:** 80; **photography:** Michael Burns, Seattle. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

The judges called this Seattle multifamily project “a very disciplined effort.” The building houses out-of-town cancer patients (and their caregivers) while they receive treatment at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, and the architects at Weinstein AIU aimed to avoid an institutional feel. “We wanted it to be both ‘of the city’ and a sanctuary,” says principal Ed Weinstein, FAIA. He and project architect Scot Carr, AIA, placed the building’s common spaces on the second floor, where residents can experience varying levels of privacy and community, as well as a serene landscaped courtyard.—*m.d.*

## multifamily

### merit

ge5, memphis, tenn.

**archimania**

memphis



Scale and mass helped these five modern townhomes play nice with the existing structures in a Memphis arts district.

**principal in charge / project architect:** Todd Walker, FAIA, Archimania; **general contractor:** Jim Eggleston, EB Construction, Memphis, Tenn.; **developer:** Phil Woodard, Woodard Properties, Memphis; **interior designer:** Archimania, Memphis; **project size:** 2,176 square feet to 2,250 square feet; **site size:** 0.19 acre; **construction cost:** \$126 per square foot; **sales price:** \$425,000 per unit; **units in project:** 5; **photography:** Jeffrey Jacobs Photography. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

Presented with a former parking lot on the edge of a historic arts district, Archimania let context and site be its guide. The result is this five-unit, live/work townhouse project highlighted by polished concrete masonry blocks, metal bays, and glass storefronts that merge with the existing architecture of the industrial buildings in the district. Intended for live/work use, each three-level home is marked by bays and front-loaded balconies that address the street. “I like the way they stand out with the façade,” one judge commented.—*n.f.m.*



## single-family housing

### grand

modular 4, sustainable residence,  
and prescott passive house, kansas city, kan.

#### studio 804

lawrence, kan.

The judges bestowed one collective Grand award on the three entries from Studio 804, the University of Kansas design/build program led by Dan Rockhill. “We want to encourage this direction,” said one juror, commending the studio’s “continued research” into single-family housing solutions.

With each project, Rockhill and his students have explored a different facet of residential design and building, often expanding on the previous year’s effort. In 2007, they created Modular 4, a

prefab, 1,500-square-foot home in Kansas City, Kan. The next year they shifted their focus away from residential work and onto a sustainable prototype for an arts center in tornado-devastated Greensburg, Kan. “That building really charted the course for our interest in LEED,” Rockhill notes. The studio’s 2009 project, the Sustainable Residence in Kansas City, achieved a LEED Platinum rating. And its 2010 undertaking, the affordable Prescott Passive House (again in Kansas City), not only reached LEED Platinum status, but also is a certified Passive House.

Studio 804’s consistent push for attractive, eco-friendly housing impressed the judges. “We’re trying to prove that you don’t have to give up good design to do sustainable work,” Rockhill says. He and his students have succeeded at that effort time and again. Currently, they’re working on another sustainable project, the new Center for Design Research at the University of Kansas.—*m.d.*

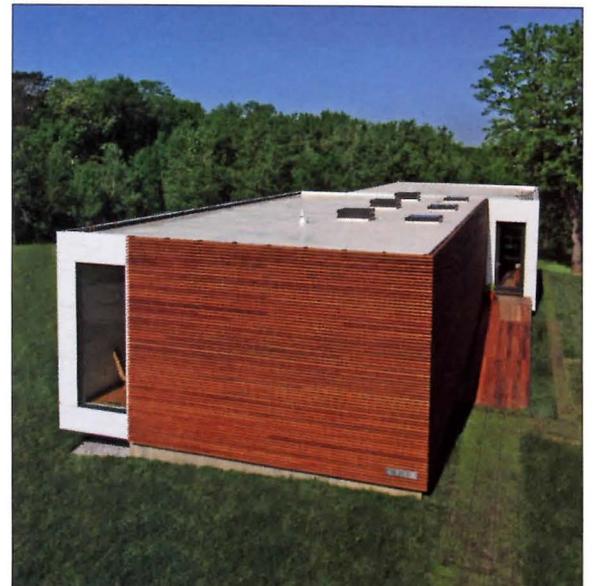
Prescott Passive House’s super-insulated, extremely airtight building envelope helped it achieve Passive House certification. Louvers and a burned-wood skin clad the exteriors, and the interior flooring (right) is concrete.





The off-the-grid Sustainable Residence (above and top) earned a LEED Platinum rating. A wind turbine and photo-voltaics generate power on site, while passive solar design works to conserve energy.

**principal in charge:** Dan Rockhill, Studio 804; **project architect / general contractor / developer / land planner / landscape designer / interior designer:** Studio 804; **project size:** 1,500 square feet (Modular 4), 2,400 square feet (Sustainable Residence), and 1,700 square feet (Prescott Passive House); **site size:** 0.5 acre (Modular 4), 0.2 acre (Sustainable Residence), 0.2 acre (Prescott Passive House); **construction cost:** \$133 per square foot (Modular 4), \$150 per square foot (Sustainable Residence), \$93 per square foot (Prescott Passive House); **sales price:** \$200,800 (Modular 4), \$325,000 (Sustainable Residence), \$159,000 (Prescott Passive House); **photography:** Courtesy Studio 804. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



Studio 804 staggered Modular 4's floor plan to separate public and private space. Its white roof reflects the sun's heat, providing a passive cooling effect. Siding consists of Brazilian hardwood and recycled aluminum panels.

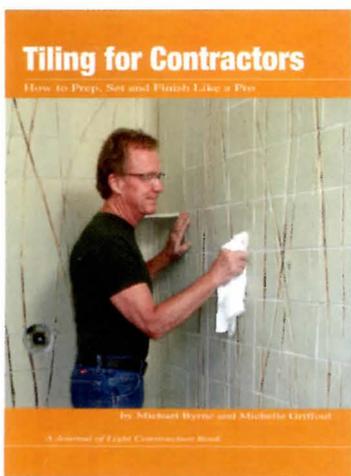


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To capture natural light, this duplex stretches out on an east-west axis and elevates its main living spaces above street level.

**single-family housing**  
**merit**

the park box, portland, ore.

**path architecture**

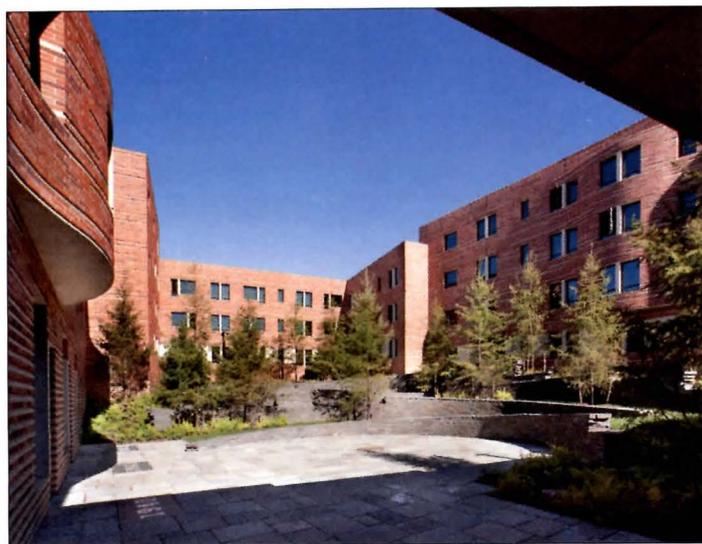
portland

**t**his modernist duplex would look good anywhere, but it addresses the specific environment of urban Portland, Ore. Taking advantage of a corner lot, designer Corey Martin oriented the units to provide private side yards and abundant south light. "It doesn't have an overhang, and that's intentional," Martin adds. "You want to see the sky." Windows located at corners wash reflected light through sparsely detailed rooms. "There's a tautness to it," said one judge, referring to a quality that is present throughout but perhaps best exemplified by the tension rod-supported interior stair.—*b.d.s.*



**designer / developer:** Corey Martin, Path Architecture; **project team:** Ben Kaiser and Jason Kentta, Path Architecture; **general contractor:** Kevin Marshall, KRM Construction, Portland; **project size:** two units, 2,200 square feet each; **site size:** 0.11 acre; **construction cost:** \$180 per square foot; **land development cost:** \$150,000 per unit; **photography:** Ty Milford. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

**principals in charge / interior designers:** Henry N. Cobb, FAIA, and Michael W. Bischoff, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Pei Cobb Freed & Partners Architects; **general contractor:** Nick Caputo, Turner Construction, Somerset, N.J.; **developer:** Mark Burstein, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.; **landscape architect:** Michael Van Valkenburgh, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Brooklyn, N.Y.; **project size:** 112,000 square feet (five dormitories within two buildings); **site size:** 3.2 acres; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** William Taylor. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



**campus housing**  
**merit**

butler college dormitories, princeton university,  
princeton, n.j.

**pei cobb freed & partners architects**

new york

**S**urrounded by brick buildings in varying colors, these dormitories are the centerpiece that ties them all together. Limestone striations create light and shadow and hark back to Princeton's old stone buildings. The façades' random undulations, suggesting the bays that made the early dorms so special, were inspired by the need for larger suites that would keep upper-classmen on campus. "We wanted to create a quality that was distinctive and desirable, and because they're so irregular, no two are quite alike," says Michael W. Bischoff, LEED AP BD+C.

Our judges praised how the project resolves grade changes and its "details reminiscent of collegiate Gothic architecture."—*c.w.*

The dorms continue Princeton's campus-planning tradition of creating courtyards and continuous walkways through buildings. Wavelike bays house larger suites for upper-classmen.



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## affordable merit

west hollywood housing, west hollywood, calif.

patrick tigue architecture

santa monica, calif.

The judges admired this special-needs affordable housing project's lush courtyard and patterned façade. Its 42 units all open onto the courtyard, which serves as a quiet sanctuary for the residents. This space contrasts with the front elevation, which holds its own on busy Santa Monica Boulevard. "We wanted the building to have a presence on the boulevard, so the thought was to make a very bold façade," says architect Patrick Tighe, AIA. Sustainable features include photovoltaic panels that wrap one side of the building. "There are so many beautiful things about this project," said one judge.—*m.d.*



The community's dynamic façade gives way to a contemplative, landscaped courtyard that can be accessed from each unit.

**principal in charge / project architect:** Patrick Tighe, AIA, Patrick Tighe Architecture; **general contractor:** Mick Parker, Parker/Sarg Industries, Pasadena, Calif.; **developer:** Robin Conerly, West Hollywood Community Housing Corp., West Hollywood, Calif.; **landscape architect:** AHBE Landscape Architects, Culver City, Calif.; **project size:** 620 square feet per unit; **site size:** 0.3 acre; **construction cost:** \$285 per square foot; **units in project:** 42; **photography:** Art Gray Photography. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



**principal in charge / project architect:** Peter Landon, Landon Bone Baker Architects; **general contractor:** Joy Aruguete, Humboldt Construction Co., Chicago; **developer:** Joy Aruguete, Rosa Parks Limited Partnership, Chicago; **mep consultant:** John Katrakis, J.T. Katrakis and Associates, Barrington, Ill.; **landscape architect:** Mimi McKay, McKay Landscape Architects, Chicago; **project size:** 550 square feet to 1,200 square feet; **site size:** 1.9 acres; **construction cost:** \$181.83 per square feet; **rental price:** \$178 to \$1,155 per unit; **units in project:** 94; **photography:** Andreas Eg Larsson. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

## affordable merit

rosa parks apartments, chicago

landon bone baker architects

chicago

The Rosa Parks Apartments complex is far from the average affordable project, mainly because Landon Bone Baker Architects infused it with thoughtful design and user-friendly unit plans. One judge liked that it's "very quiet and understated." Each of the eight buildings in the project is highlighted by precast exterior walls with 6 inches of blown fiberglass. Colorful bays animate the street, while the largest building—a four-story, 27-unit structure—features solar hot water, geothermal heating, and a heat recovery system for the kitchen and bath exhausts. It is seeking LEED Gold certification.—*n.f.m.*

Building walls are 8-inch-thick precast concrete with thin brick cast into the molds at the street façades. With blown-in fiberglass, walls achieve an R-value of 21.



light commercial  
grand

locust street addition, philadelphia

rasmussen / su

philadelphia

The judges were so smitten with the skillful insertion of this small commercial addition that they gave it one of the few Grand awards this year. “I think the idea that you [could] build a sliver of a building and make it work is cool,” one judge said.

A “sliver” is an appropriate description, for the architects had only a 9½-foot site between the existing building and a community garden. On this space, the client had plans for a less ambitious one-level atrium adjoining an existing cafe, “but then it evolved into a three-story project,” says architect Kevin C. Rasmussen, AIA, LEED AP.

Rasmussen and his partner, Vivian M. Su, LEED AP, resolved the problem by designing a simple volume with an open seating area on the ground floor, and they added two more levels above that expand studio apartments into one-bedroom units.

The addition cuts a very modern figure in its historic district neighborhood, but it fits in because of its scale and use of materials. “Getting approval is a big part of the backstory,” Rasmussen recalls, adding that it was “the most complicated part of the project.”

To satisfy the neighborhood association and the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the duo used laser-cut Cor-Ten steel on the façade and specified a silver-black brick for the side and rear elevations. “The

idea was that the materials would relate to each other and to the old building but still differentiate themselves,” Rasmussen explains.

“Great,” one judge called the result. “It feels like you slid this thing out, like a drawer.”—*n.f.m.*



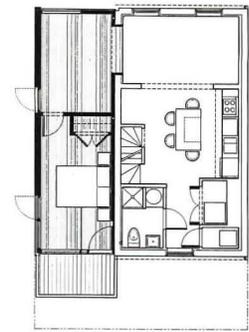
The building's exterior is highlighted by glazed metallic brick and Cor-Ten steel panels with ginkgo leaf cutouts adapted from a traditional Japanese paper carving.



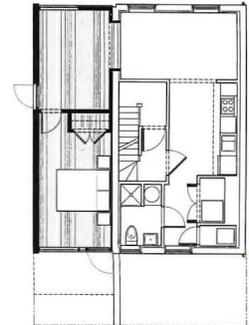
The narrow addition bridges a historic 19th-century row house and a community garden located in the heart of Philadelphia's Washington Square West neighborhood.



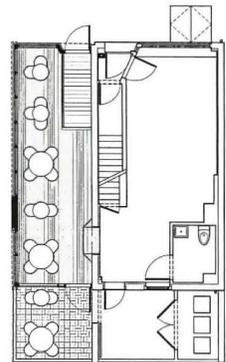
Working with less than 10 feet, the architects inserted an open-plan seating area on the ground floor adjacent to the existing cafe. They also added bedrooms and living rooms to the two upstairs studio apartments.



third floor



second floor



first floor

**principals in charge / project architects:** Kevin C. Rasmussen, AIA, LEED AP and Vivian M. Su, LEED AP, Rasmussen / Su; **general contractor:** John Hanson and Chris Hanson, Hanson General Contracting, Philadelphia; **steel fabricator:** Bill Curran, Bill Curran Design, Philadelphia; **developer:** Gibbs Connors, Philadelphia; **project size:** 900 square feet; **site size:** 0.01 acre; **project cost:** \$250 per square foot; **photography:** Jeffrey Totaro Photography. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



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**light commercial  
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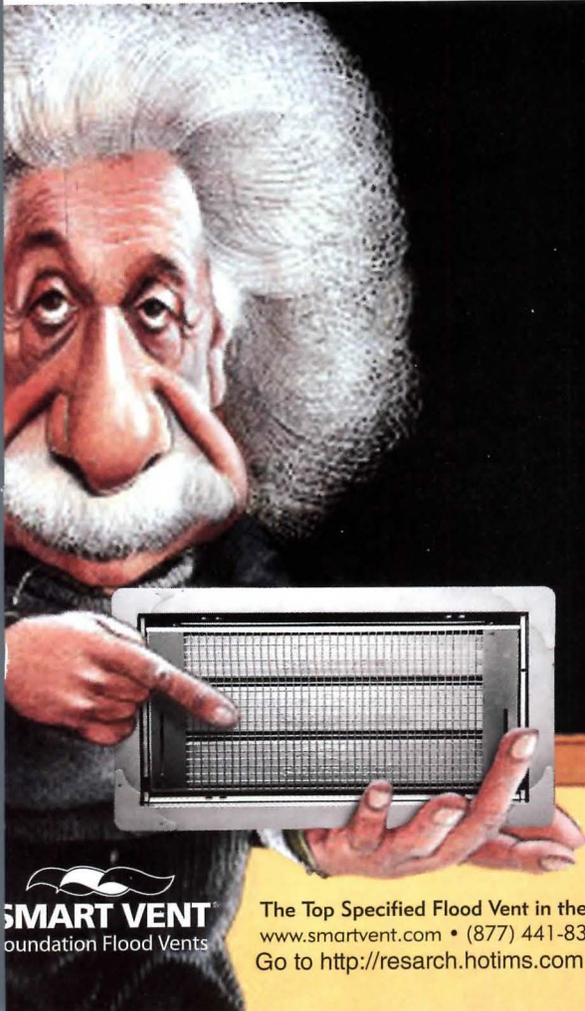
**O**n a rough-and-dirty construction site, this bespoke job trailer creates just the right image for its owner, a high-end contractor. Built on a stock flatbed, the wood frame is insulated, drywalled, and clad in sheets of recycled paper-resin. The equally sleek interior contains radiant heat under slate flooring, built-in casework, and low-voltage lighting. “It sets an impression and raises the expectations for subs and suppliers,” says David D. Salmela, FAIA.

“The wheels, the hubcaps—everything is beautiful,” a judge agreed, “and it provides a nice identity for the company.”—*c.w.*



The trailer is polished yet maintenance-free. Perforated stainless steel security screens are fastened to recycled teak furring strips. Inside, slate flooring takes the abuse of dirty boots.

**principal in charge:** David D. Salmela, FAIA, SALMELA Architect;  
**general contractor:** Steven and Kevin Streeter, Streeter & Associates, Wayzata, Minn.; **project size:** 160 square feet; **construction cost:** \$218 per square foot; **photography:** Souliyah Keobounpheng. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



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tea house, Bethesda, Md.

**David Jameson Architect**

Alexandria, Va.

This elegant pavilion takes the tea ceremony to a new level—literally. The bronze and glass structure, hanging from steel beams like a Japanese lantern, is a metaphor for the mental attitude of mindfulness, and the meditative detachment from thought and time. David Jameson, FAIA, likes playing with the notion of in-between physical space, too. The path from main house to teahouse moves from rectangular stepping stones in the lawn to

crushed gravel, where the stepping stones become irregular and wind between the pavilion and its steel superstructure.

“Your mind begins to cleanse itself as you weave through the bamboo. The path is irregular, the gravel is crunchy, and the between space is activated,” Jameson says.

Designed for use as a teahouse, meditation space, and family music stage, most of the building was shop-fabricated. Its details demonstrate Jameson’s belief that the outside of a building should hint at what’s

inside. The superstructure’s steel cross-bracing alludes to the dreidel-like quality of the roof and ceiling—thin at the edges and folding up on the outside, down on the inside. “Increasing the ceiling depth toward the center makes the space more intimate,” he says, and enhances the acoustics.

The jury praised the teahouse’s modern translation and its smart, rich detailing. “The Miesian connection is very strong,” one judge said.—*c.w.*



Jameson thinks of the teahouse as a ghost structure; you occupy space inside the steel frame. The structurally hung pavilion has a wind stabilizer, and mechanicals are embedded in the floor, with lines to underground compressors.



**principal in charge:** David Jameson, FAIA, David Jameson Architect; **general contractor:** Henry Kawa, RKI, Rockville, Md.; **engineer:** David Linton, Linton Engineering, Potomac Falls, Va.; **project size:** 180 square feet; **site size:** 0.14 acre; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Paul Warchol. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



The trusses form a canopy and create a sense of entry. A folded steel "origami stair" is suspended in a poured concrete plinth. The dreidel-like cherry ceiling, 2-feet deep in the middle and 6 inches on the sides, evokes an abstracted tatami mat. Flooring is vertical-grain Douglas fir laid in blocks with the end-grain showing.

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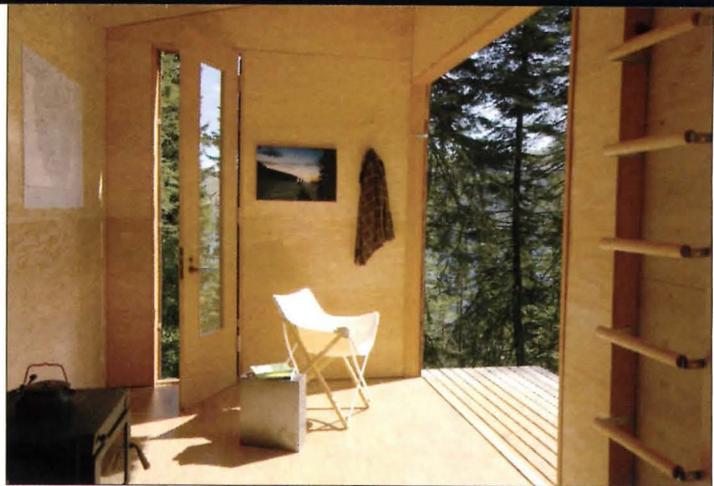
## outbuilding merit

signal shed, wallowa county, ore.

ryan lingard design

portland, ore.

The Signal Shed proves that a great sum of money isn't necessary for good architecture. Designer Ryan Lingard built the outdoor adventure post largely with recycled products—windows, hardware, siding—and set the structure on piers to limit site disturbance. Large sliding doors create a connection to the interior, and operable rain screen shutters protect the windows. A dark stain helps the shed blend in with the forest. One judge lauded its “absence of almost everything,” while another commented: “It sets apart and fits well with the land.”—*n.f.m.*



This off-the-grid shed is a study in simplicity and thrift. Built with recycled materials, the structure features an 8-foot-tall barn door, a wood stove, and laminate floors.

**principal in charge / project designer:** Ryan Lingard, Ryan Lingard Design;  
**general contractor:** Greg Morrow and Taylor Morrow (with Ryan Lingard), Morrow and Sons, Eugene, Ore.; **project size:** 150 square feet; **site size:** 1/3 of an acre; **construction cost:** \$66 per square foot; **photography:** Ryan Lingard.  
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Oriented toward a family room/screening room and open to an outdoor pool deck, this kitchen balances illumination with a large skylight.

## kitchen merit

ridgeline house, pasadena, calif.

**montalba architects**

santa monica, calif.

The work—and former residence—of Southern California modernist Clay Matthews, this house proved a solid platform for a recent major renovation. “It had pretty good bones,” observes David Montalba, AIA, LEED AP. Montalba made the most of that raw material in a kitchen/family room that also serves as a screening room for its owner, who works in the film industry. Our judges admired the seamless integration of kitchen functions with casual dining and entertaining, as well as the connection of indoor spaces with the adjacent pool deck.—*b.d.s.*



**principal in charge / project architect:** David Montalba, AIA, LEED AP, Montalba Architects; **general contractor:** Ben Lunsky, Sarlan Builders, Beverly Hills, Calif.; **project size:** 4,700 square feet (whole house), 888 square feet (kitchen/family room); **site size:** 0.86 acre; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Dominique Vorillon. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



Simple forms, utilitarian components and abundant south light lend this new bath an astringent clarity. The room revives the spirit of an original porch (left) that had been entirely enclosed since the arrival of indoor plumbing.

## bath merit

little farmhouse bath, douglas county, kan.

**rockhill and associates**

lecompton, kan.

design/build architect Dan Rockhill bought the farmhouse across the road for guest space and to protect his own property. Capitalizing on its Spartan agrarian charm, he opened up a side porch-turned-bathroom, enclosed since the arrival of indoor plumbing. Floor-to-ceiling warehouse sash glazing reveals the porch's original lines, while filling the new bath with south light. An open shower and a lavatory fabricated from salvaged farm equipment further the rural-modern theme. Our judges deemed the result “a very spare, elegant reuse.” One remarked, approvingly, “You’re still on the porch.”—*b.d.s.*

**principal in charge / general contractor:** Dan Rockhill, Rockhill and Associates; **project size:** 77 square feet; **construction cost:** \$123 per square foot; **photography:** Dan Rockhill. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

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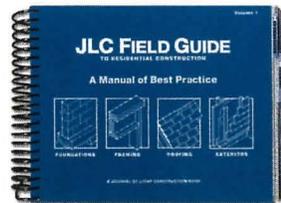
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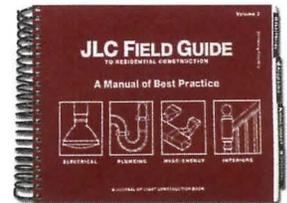
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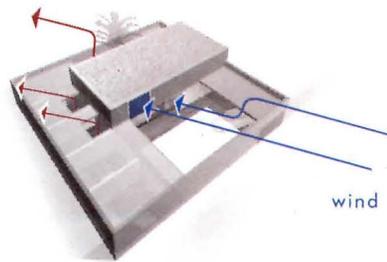
hamley wood

on the boards  
merit

suliman house, juba, sudan

studio 27 architecture

washington, d.c.



A roof designed as an air scoop directs prevailing winds through the building (left). Living spaces cluster around a walled central courtyard (below).



**principal in charge / project architect:** Hans Kuhn, Studio 27 Architecture; **project size:** 7,000 square feet; **site size:** 1 acre; **renderings:** Courtesy Studio 27 Architecture. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

designed for a Sudanese businessman with interests in both the U.S. and his home country, this family compound responds sensitively to local cultural and climatic conditions. Rooms and courtyards, which connect via open-air walkways, reflect the traditional separation of men's and women's domains and a highly structured intimacy gradient. High walls and covered walkways provide shade in the hot, dry climate, while the vented roof structure captures prevailing winds. "It's something more contemporary that's building off of a tradition," remarked one judge, who called the result "empathetic without being patronizing."—*b.d.s.*



**design team:** Stephen Luoni, Assoc. AIA, Jeffrey Huber, AIA, LEED AP, Peter Bednar, and Cory A. Amos; **developer:** Ralph Bunche Agape Community Development Corp., Alexander, Ark.; **project size:** 1,000 to 1,750 square feet; **site size:** 420 acres; **construction cost:** \$85 to \$150 per square foot; **sales price:** \$85,000 to \$250,000 per unit; **units in project:** 124; **renderings:** Courtesy University of Arkansas Community Design Center. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



on the boards  
merit

ralph bunche neighborhood vision plan, benton, ark.

university of arkansas community design center

fayetteville, ark.

his plan seeks to revitalize a 100-year-old African-American neighborhood with appealing, affordable (less than \$100,000) single-family houses clustered around neighborhood parks. Its site design, which handles stormwater runoff within the landscape, enhances the setting and obviates the need for road improvements and subsurface drainage. The houses include both familiar gable-roofed types and towerlike forms that create a "skyline" and maximize views of the nearby downtown. Our jury praised the development's compactness and the buildings' strong, simple geometry. "The sculptural nature of it is very successful," said one judge.—*b.d.s.*

This neighborhood revitalization plan cuts land development costs with low-impact site planning. Homes include both traditional gable-roof designs and a more modern "tower" (left).

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## on the boards merit

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reverse engineering the rent, dallas

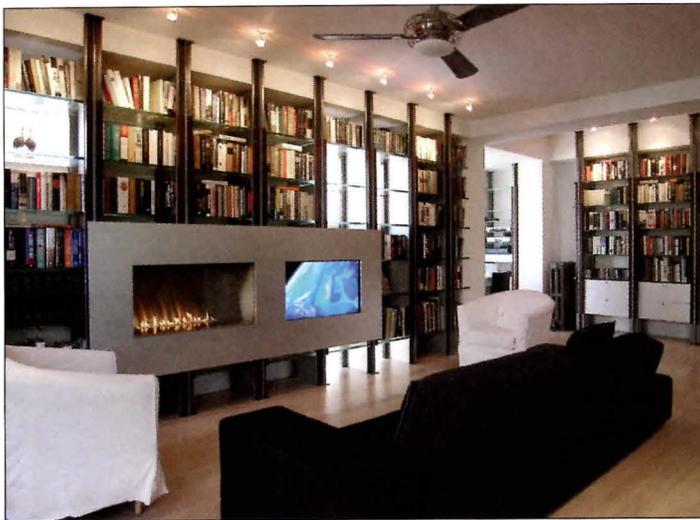
**edward m. baum, architect**  
dallas



A four-plex configuration gives each unit a private side yard with covered and secure parking.

Edward M. Baum, FAIA, counts as neighbors many working class families who pay around \$1,000 a month in rent but are still priced out of the housing market. “I got to thinking,” he says, “What could we do for that much money?” Working backward from the rental figure, Baum developed a scalable scheme of four-unit structures that offer comfort, durability, security, and the prospect of home ownership. Our judges praised not only the social mission of the proposal, but also the simplicity of the buildings and the “quilt-like effect” of the site plan.—*b.d.s.*

**principal in charge / project architect:** Edward M. Baum, FAIA, Edward M. Baum, Architect; **general contractor / developer:** Don Romer, Vision Impact, Grapevine, Texas; **project size:** 1,346 square feet; **site size:** Applicable to sites of varying sizes; **construction cost:** \$150,000 to \$175,000 per unit; **total number of units in project:** Varies; **overall density:** Maximum 14.6 units per acre with 2.5 cars per unit; **target market:** Working-class families; **grand opening:** 2013, pending site acquisition; **project completion date:** 2013, pending site acquisition; **renderings:** Courtesy Edward M. Baum, Architect. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.



Stock materials combine to form a flexible and elegant storage system (right). Anchored at floor and ceiling, the living room shelving unit supports a gas fireplace and flat-screen TV housed in the same aluminum surround.



## architectural design detail merit

kit of parts, washington, d.c.

**mcinturff architects**  
bethesda, md.

tasked with providing shelf space for a client’s extensive library, Mark McInturff, FAIA, and project designer Colleen Gove Healey devised a modular intervention that left existing walls essentially undisturbed. The system starts with doubled-steel-angle uprights, infilled with cherry, which support glass shelves separated by aluminum-plate spacers. Fixed at floor and ceiling, the assemblies proved highly adaptable. “Every time we came up with another thing to do, we looked back at those bookshelves,” says McInturff, who used the same system to support work and seating surfaces and an aluminum-faced cabinet that houses a gas fireplace and television.—*b.d.s.*

**principal in charge:** Mark McInturff, FAIA, McInturff Architects; **project designer:** Colleen Gove Healey, McInturff Architects; **general contractor:** Added Dimensions, Takoma Park, Md.; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Julia Heine. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

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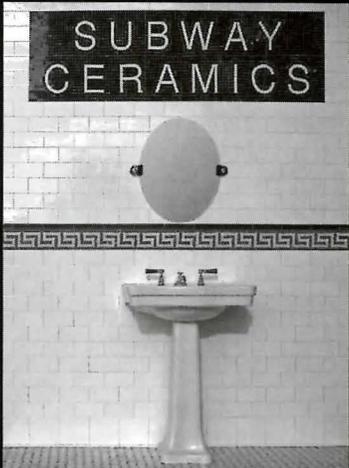
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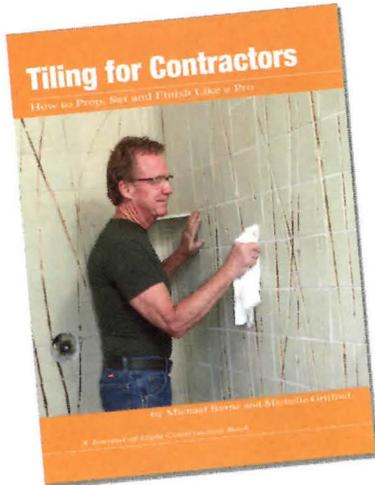
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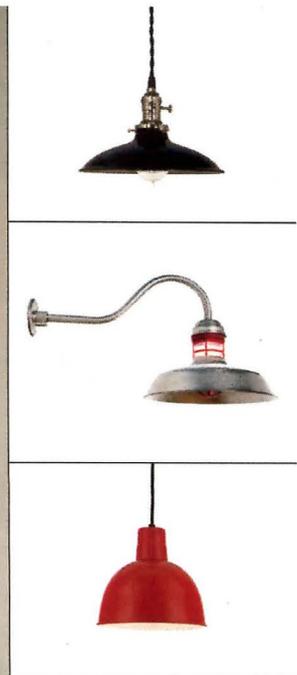
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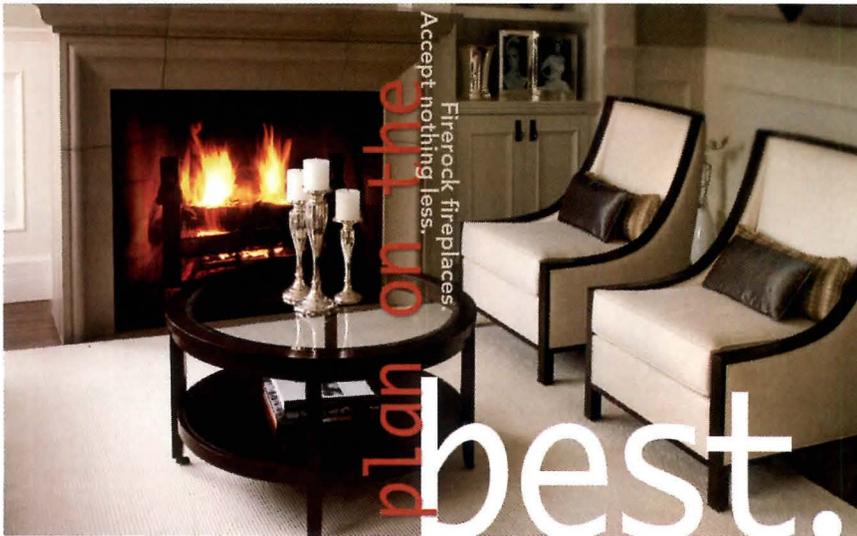
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## architectural design detail

### grand

steel stair, seattle

deforest architects

seattle

**C**harged with refitting a dark stairway as an art gallery, John DeForest, AIA, and Stephen Click responded with a composition of folded planes that constitutes a sculpture in its own right. A large skylight above and vertical slot windows wash the stairwell with light, which filters through treads and risers of perforated steel. A guardrail of blackened steel plate provides structural support and a visual counterpoint to the stair's ethereal transparency. Our judges called the detailing "incredibly competent" and admitted unanimously a temptation to copy the design in their own projects.—*b.d.s.*



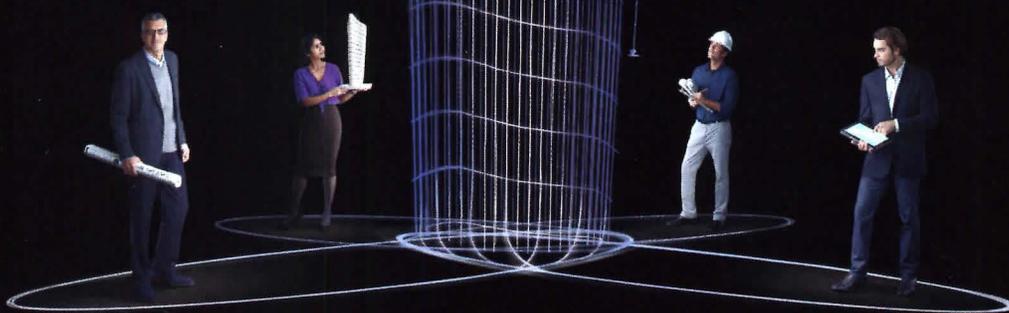
Stair runs fabricated from folded sheets of perforated steel filter light from a skylight above. A steel plate railing provides structural support and a visual counterpoint.



**design team:** John DeForest, AIA, and Stephen Click, DeForest Architects; **general contractor:** Owen Roberts and Bryan Wygal, Roberts Wygal, Bothell, Wash.; **structural engineer:** Lori D. Brown, Evergreen Design Co., Camano Island, Wash.; **interior designer:** Nancy Burfiend, NB Design Group, Seattle; **steel fabricators:** Jay Dishman, Savvy Interiors, Lynnwood, Wash., and John Lucchesini, Five Star Industries, Seattle; **construction cost:** Withheld; **photography:** Benjamin Benschneider. Visit [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for products and additional images.

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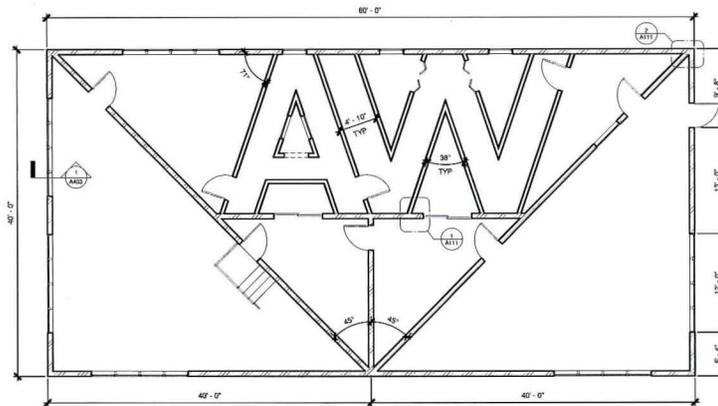
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