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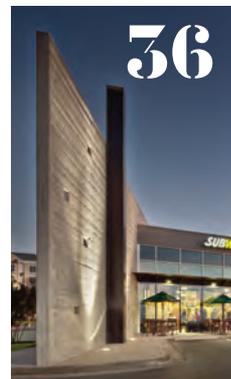
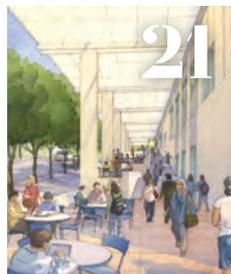
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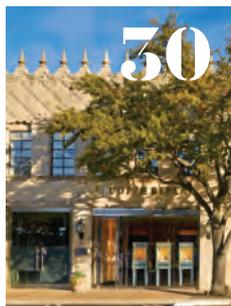
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Retail Development and Design

by Catherine Gavin, Editor

One of the primary challenges of retail design today is the need to create an experience — a reason for people to leave their smartphones and computer screens. Good design sets the stage for this experience; it creates atmosphere and allows for the functionality and flexibility necessary for a store to be successful. But sometimes retail design can go beyond just creating an interesting clean space for product presentation.

Dallas' NorthPark Center and the Galleria in Houston were both pioneering shopping centers of the 20th century. Raymond Nasher and Gerald Hines realized the value of these malls

Retail design can go beyond just creating an interesting clean space for product presentation.

as destinations for the public that could offer much more than just a shopping experience — their vision looked beyond the sale of products to a sense of place. And the projects featured in this issue tend to share this intent. Met Retail in Austin breaks from typical highway architecture and fast-food chain interiors to create a notable building framing an unexpected view of the downtown skyline. Keepers, Eliza Page, and Rogue Running are three local stores that helped launch the revitalization of downtown Austin almost eight years ago. And today amidst development pressures, these stores remind you that you're still in Austin, where the value

of local businesses is written into the city plan. The role of retail development within the urban fabric is turned on its side, however, when individual stores and shopping malls are shuttered and abandoned. Projects like the McAllen Public Library — formerly a Walmart — demonstrate that bringing new life to these buildings is just as important as creating new stores, because an occupied building contributes to the life of a community or street.

Happily, the life of our community at *Texas Architect* has benefitted from the arrival of Monica Cavazos Mendez. A Harvard-educated San Benito native, she joins us from New York, where she was senior manager of professional communications at CancerCare for almost six years. She is contributing to this magazine as an assistant editor, and is the communications coordinator for the Texas Society of Architects.

Catherine Gavin

The annual ARTsPARK continues Raymond Nasher's vision of NorthPark Center as a community space that goes beyond the shopping experience. The festival brings artists, musicians, and actors to the mall for a day of activities centered on local contemporary arts.

Contributors



Gregory Ibañez, FAIA recently returned from a week in Oaxaca, Mexico, where he was inspired and awe-struck by the history, architecture, culture, and cuisine. He also gained an appreciation (and respect!) for the artisanal mezcal unique to the locale. See his article on Patina, a Gensler-designed building materials store in Dallas, on page 46.



Brantley Hightower, AIA worked for Lake|Flato Architects in San Antonio for close to a decade before leaving late last year to create HiWorks. As a sole proprietor he is no longer told what to do by a boss, but he still routinely receives direct orders from his daughter. His story describing three pioneering Texas retail developments can be found on page 30.



Audrey Maxwell, Assoc. AIA is a senior designer at Michael Malone Architects in Dallas. She holds an undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis and a Master of Architecture from Arizona State. In her free time, she enjoys serving the community by participating in various charity activities. Read her article on the Zan Wesley Holmes Jr. Middle School on page 60.



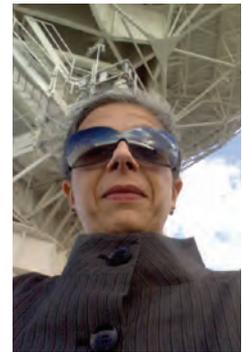
Bart Shaw, AIA has his own practice, Bart Shaw Architect, based in Fort Worth. He and his wife, Melissa, had their third child in November. Bart just recently accrued enough sleep to write a coherent article for *Texas Architect*. See his thoughts on the Cross Timbers Ranch in Lipan on page 22.



Aaron Seward is a frequent contributor to *Texas Architect*. Born in Corpus Christi and raised in Houston, he is currently the managing editor of *The Architect's Newspaper* in New York City. He lives with his wife Joan in Brooklyn, where he is at work on his first novel. Read his article on re-tailoring retail on page 50.



Rebecca Roberts is currently pursuing a Master of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin and wrote about the Met Retail building on page 36. In her past life, Rebecca worked as an editor in educational publishing. She is also a co-founding editor of the Chicago-based literary and art magazine *Two With Water*.



Constance Adams, AIA still feels like an “accidental Texan.” Her practice focuses on the architecture of civil and commercial human space exploration for NASA, Virgin Galactic, and others. Adams has poured thousands of meters of concrete in the former East Berlin, Seattle, and Kuala Lumpur, but her article on Ardis Clinton, AIA, on page 67, is her first piece for *Texas Architect*. Her daughters (4 and 11) and poultry (various) would be very proud of her if they only knew. ■

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For a Gardener: In Memory of Ruth Carter Johnson Stevenson (1923-2013)

by W. Mark Gunderson, AIA

It is difficult to imagine a Fort Worth without Ruth Carter Stevenson. Her generosity and, perhaps more important, her voice in matters of public aspiration were unique. It is popular to speak of global cultural and humanitarian concerns being manifest locally, and Ruth was the embodiment of this idea.

She was born into a certain privilege in 1923 as the daughter of Amon G. Carter, the legendary publisher of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* — a man whose form of promotion for Fort Worth was generally aimed at pushing the city past any perceived accomplishments of nearby Dallas. Through her refined intuitions and convictions, Ruth furthered her father's philanthropic efforts towards raising the city's stature in national and international realms.

Her college roommate at Sarah Lawrence was Fort Worth-friend Cynthia Brants, who would become one of the group of artists known as the Fort Worth Circle. But it was Ruth's first visit to the Art Institute of Chicago that trans-

When not participating in design-related meetings or planning hearings, she could be found working in her home garden and taking care of her property.

fixed her and set art high among her personal priorities. In 1949, at the age of 26, she became a member of the board of the Fort Worth Art Association. A few years later, and to her father's chagrin, Ruth spent \$25,000 on a Van Gogh.

With the death of her father in June 1955, Ruth (Johnson at the time) desired to build a house in the "backyard" of the family property on Broad Avenue. She was 31 years old with five children. Her familiarity with John Entenza's *Arts & Architecture* magazine in California led her to hire renowned architect Harwell Hamilton Harris, who was serving as Dean of the architecture school at the University of Texas in Austin at that time. Thomas Church was hired as landscape architect.

Harris and his wife Jean left UT and Austin for this commission. The design carries forward Harris' regard for Frank Lloyd Wright's 'pin-wheel' plans and later Mayan influences. Once



Ruth Carter Stevenson was close friends with Philip Johnson. In an unpublished interview, he said, "I think that it's the closest friendship I have with a client."

in Fort Worth, he discerned that his use of redwood on West Coast projects might not translate so well to Texas, and his material palette began to include local masonry. It was a pivotal house, no pun intended, and went on to receive the AIA Fort Worth 25-Year Award. It was a source of private joy for Ruth. She endowed the Harwell Hamilton Harris Regents Professorship at the UT School of Architecture in 1985.

In Houston, the Menil Foundation had been created in 1954, and the completion of the University of St. Thomas structures, designed by Philip Johnson and donated by the foundation, provided the opportunity for Ruth to meet him at a Menil dinner party. Caught in a vigorous debate with her father's long-time secretary Katrine Deakins, Ruth took this moment to invite Johnson to come to Fort Worth and design a museum for the Amon Carter collection.

Johnson was quick to point out in later years that the structure was originally envisioned by Deakins to be a "memorial" and not a museum — it was, however, to include not only Carter's Western pictures and correspondence, but a collection of Meissner porcelain and a reconstruction of his office, which Deakins had locked and preserved exactly in situ upon his passing. The sloping museum site provided a view to the east of the downtown skyline, and Johnson's response — a five-bay shellstone "porch" — had the laconic clarity of the simplest urban gestures. Assisting Ruth, Johnson brought together Alfred Barr, Rene D'Harnoncourt, Richard F. Brown (who later became the first director of the adjacent Kimbell Art Museum), and others to constitute the founding board of the Amon Carter Museum, which opened in 1961. Barr was credited by Johnson as proposing that the

museum focus on American art as opposed to strictly Western art.

Ruth founded the Arts Council of Fort Worth and Tarrant County in 1963. She was the first woman to serve on the board of the National Gallery of Art and was its first female chair. She served almost 20 years on the board of the University of Texas System. In 1992 she endowed the Ruth Carter Stevenson Regents Chair in the Art of Architecture, currently held by architect Coleman Coker. By her request, the Amon Carter Museum of American Art has been free to the public since opening.

Ruth brought Johnson back to Fort Worth to design the Water Garden (the name was singular when it opened in 1974) as a gift of the Carter Foundation, and she was instrumental in bringing Lawrence Halprin to design Heritage Plaza. Both landscapes suffered in following years due to lack of maintenance by the city — a sad response to her generosity. But the Water Gardens has been restored, and Laurie Olin is working with funds provided by Ruth to re-open Heritage Plaza.

Gardening was a second true passion for Ruth, and when not participating in design-related meetings or planning hearings, she could be found working in her home garden and taking care of her property. Elements of her gardening life — seeds, cultivation, and pruning — all found their way into her singular understanding of civic contributions.

Other sources have cited biographical details with much more specificity, but this is the Ruth Carter Stevenson that I was privileged to know, respect, and now miss terribly. ■

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Sustained Experience: Lead Pencil Studio's "Diffuse Reflection Lab"

by Matt Fajkus, AIA

Art + Architecture

With backgrounds in architecture and an impressive repertoire of installation art projects, Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo of Lead Pencil Studio are well-suited to explore the interstitial space between the fine and applied arts. Their installation "Diffuse Reflection Lab," at the University of Texas at Austin Visual Arts Center (VAC), is a good example of careful negotiation between the realms of art and architecture. Liberated from the usual prosaic building constraints such as safety standards and waterproofing, the installation is a two-story structure in the VAC's Vaulted Gallery.

An art installation, as opposed to proper architecture, is not responsible for a singular function, and the artists exploit this fact. Han and Mihalyo explain that this freedom enables the distillation of an idea, and that when a specific program and function attached to it are taken away, a space becomes more like a photograph, which doesn't necessarily need to be useful. The installation thus transcends normative pragmatic architectural modes by stripping away all other artifice so that nothing is left but the absolute essence of the space.

Reflection + Surface

The aim of their work is not "high architecture," nor commentary on the trajectory of contemporary architecture. The artists maintain that their current work has evolved beyond the traditional paradigmatic architectural principles outlined

in *Form, Space, and Order* by Francis Ching. Lead Pencil Studio argues that these formal architectural notions are now largely preceded by surface, and rather than the "brick is a brick" mentality set forth by Louis Kahn, they see depth represented by various means. Arguing that meaning is increasingly impacted by experience, surface is explored in this piece primarily for its reflective qualities. "Diffuse Reflection Lab" deals with actual perception and illusion, as reflections are simultaneously real and unreal, conveying brilliant commentary on surface and superficiality. Form is ultimately less important in the work, and the built forms are more infrastructure to prop up or enable reflective surfaces.

Temporal Factors

In working with temporary installation artwork, Lead Pencil Studio is forced to confront ephemerality, and the artists actually embrace the temporal factors that come into play. In their previous practice of architecture, they found that their designed spaces changed quickly after being built, which lead to realization that all design, even architecture, is temporary to some degree. The artists agree with Olafur Eliasson's statement that "the viewer completes the work," and if it weren't for the interactive element of their installations, there would be little point in building them. Nonetheless, they acknowledge that photographs and other documentation provide yet another opportunity to frame the project, and that judgment will be cast differently on the work once it lives exclusively in documented form. The artists understand and accept that the work then essentially takes on a second life, with new meanings that were not previously attached to it.

Context + Process

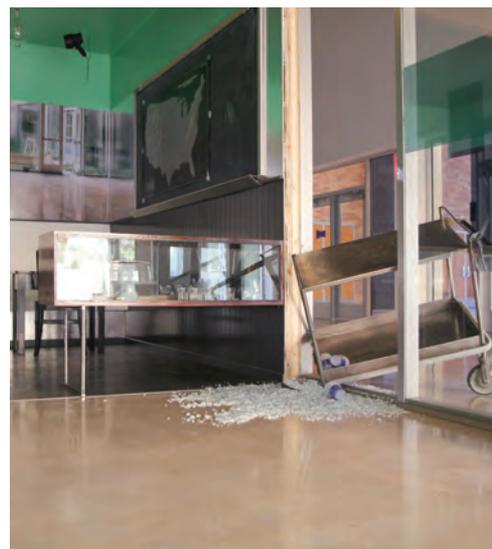
When questioned about the role that context plays in their installation work, the artists explain that they are sometimes fueled by the space itself and draw from it. In the case of the VAC, they reacted to a dynamic space — the adjacent lobby, lecture hall, courtyard with birds chirping, and the abundance of natural light. They embrace these accidental discoveries in the process, as they are not stuck to a predetermined set of plans. In this sense, they operate much like master builders of old — as they have ultimate control over design and construction. When going into a site-specific installation, they are motivated by the challenge of the unknown and find excitement in seeing where the process takes them, while always holding on to the big idea as the inspiration.

Phenomenology, Experience, Space

"Diffuse Reflection Lab" challenges assumptions of perception by capturing unexpected angles, views, and readings of space, in an attempt to slow down the viewer. The artwork aims to preserve and capture spatial observation, which is otherwise typically a fleeting experience. The work is not about creating a "wow factor" nor a singular moment, but rather about operating on nuanced terms to create unique perceptual experiences. Thus, phenomenology comes directly into play, arousing one's senses, reminding us that we're alive — like a pinch in a dream — and disrupting mindless thoughts and routines, which are ultimately goals of all successful art and architecture. ■

Left Artists Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo set up the installation.

Right Detail of "Diffuse Reflection Lab" by Lead Pencil Studio, on view at the UT Visual Arts Center through May 11.



PHOTOS COURTESY JILL CHAN AND THE ARTISTS



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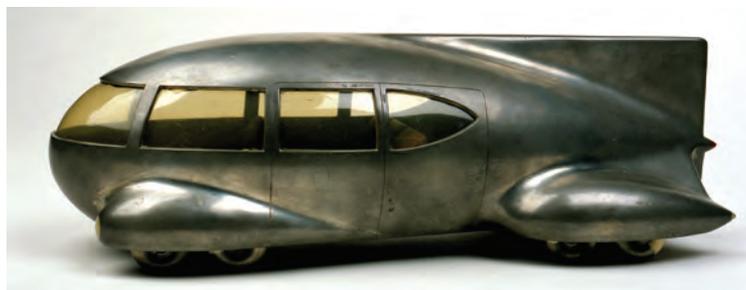
“I Have Seen the Future: Norman Bel Geddes Designs America”

The work of Norman Bel Geddes (1893-1958) was the focus of a recent exhibit at the University of Texas Harry Ransom Center (HRC). Bel Geddes’ vision shaped much of early modern America,

The collection captured his vision of the future and his fundamental belief in the coexistence of art and architecture.

and his work ranged from the design of smaller-scale stage sets, costumes, and lighting to the creation of theater buildings, offices, nightclubs, and houses. Images, sketches, and models of his Futurama exhibit featured at the General Motors pavilion of the 1939-1940 New York World’s Fair, were a highlight of the installation. A prolific draftsman, artist, and writer, the collection of Bel Geddes work — much of which is part of the HRC collection — captured his vision of the future and his fundamental belief in the coexistence of art and architecture. ■

The HRC exhibit was organized by Donald Abrecht, Cathy Henderson, and Helen Bear. It will travel to the Museum of the City of New York in the fall of 2013.



PDR applied its workplace research in the firm’s downtown headquarters. The project is one of the 17 interiors featured in the “Houston Interior Designers” exhibit.

AIA Houston and IIDA Collaborate on Interior Design Exhibit

On January 24, Architecture Center Houston hosted the opening reception for “Houston Interior Designers – How Texans Touched the World.” The exhibit, which runs through March 22, is a juried exhibition of the work of member firms of the American Institute of Architects and the International Interior Design Association. This is the first time AIA and IIDA have collaborated on a showing of member works.

The exhibit features 17 projects by eight firms selected from a pool of 40 projects submitted in the categories of cultural/arts, healthcare, hospitality, mixed use, retail, and workplace/offices. It also features highlights from the interior design programs at the University of Houston, University of North Texas, University of Texas at Austin, University of Texas at Arlington, and University of Texas at San Antonio.

Rusty Bienvenue, executive director of AIA Houston, commented that the exhibit has been very well received, particularly since this is the first time the organization has presented an interi-

ors exhibit. “The opening was a huge success, drawing AIA members that we haven’t seen at openings in the past and members of the interior design community that don’t normally participate here,” said Bienvenue. He noted the special support shown by UH’s interior design program — Director of Interior Architecture and Assistant Professor Gregory Marinic brought every student in the program with him to the exhibit’s opening.

Said Bienvenue: “We will definitely be doing this again and are considering making this a biennial project. It has also spurred us to begin

The exhibit has spurred us to begin thinking about ways we can partner with the IIDA on other programs and events.

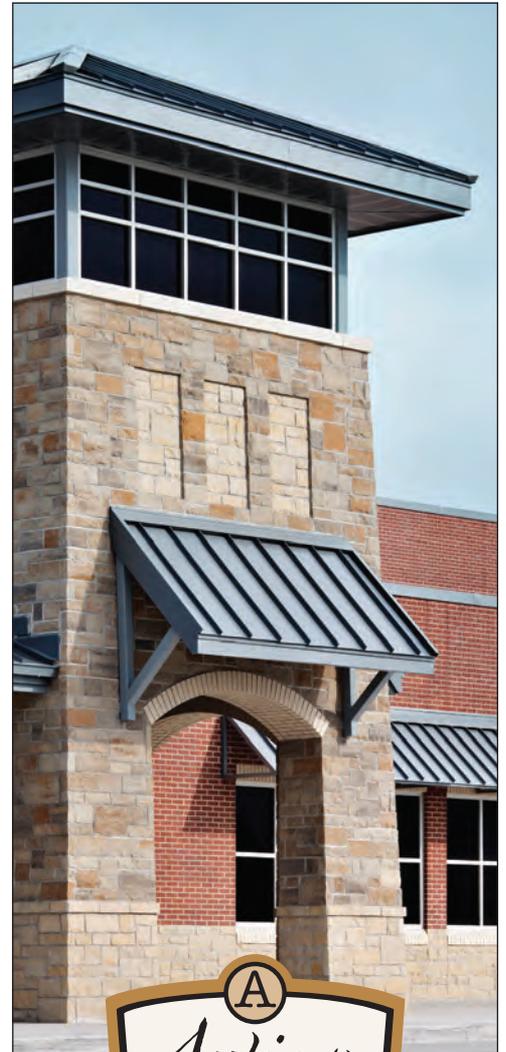
thinking about ways we can partner with the IIDA on other programs and events.”

The firms represented by the selected works include Gensler, Kirksey Architects, PageSouthlandPage, Morris Architects, M Moser Associates, Planning Design Research, Powers Brown Architecture, and RdlR Architects.

In conjunction with the exhibit, Architecture Center Houston held a series of talks featuring interior design legends Margaret McCurry, FAIA, and Margo Grant Walsh. A panel discussion about the future of interiors education is scheduled for March. Visit www.aiahouston.org or contact Associate Director Mat Wolff at (713) 520-0155 or mat@aiahouston.org for more information. ■



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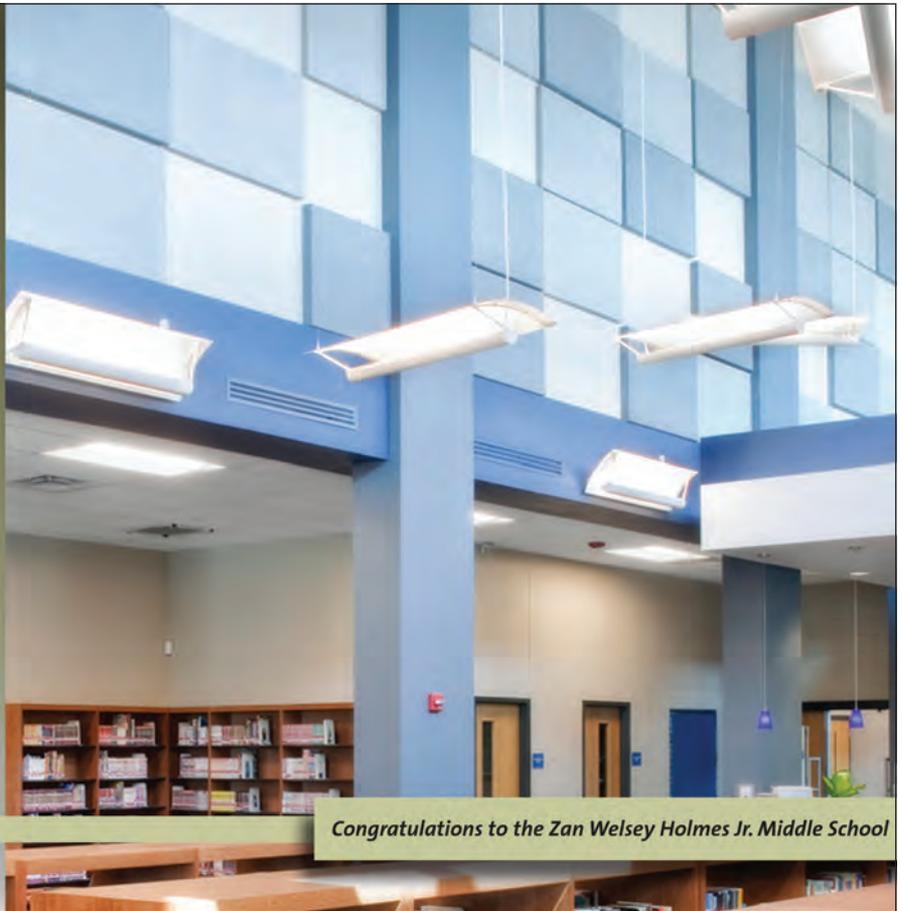
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The call for entries for the 2013 Design Awards opens March 1.

Texas Society of Architects Honor Awards

March 1

www.texasarchitects.org

The call for entries for the 2013 Honor Awards opens March 1.

David Dillon Symposium: The Networked City

April 18-19

www.uta.edu

The second annual David Dillon Symposium will be held April 18-19 at the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas. The discussion will center on the ways that cities make connections between people, places, and ideas. Speakers will include: Robert Bruegmann, author of *Sprawl, A Compact History* and professor emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago; Diana Lind, executive editor of *Next American City*; and Jonathan Massey, associate professor at the School of Architecture, Syracuse University.

National Sustainability Visionaries to Keynote Gulf Coast Green 2013 Symposium

May 2

www.aiahouston.org

Keynote speakers for the Gulf Coast Green 2013 Symposium will be Barbara Campagna, FAIA, the founder of BAC Architecture + Planning; Ellen Dunham-Jones, AIA, a professor at the School of Architecture at Georgia Institute of Technology; and Annie Leonard, the co-director of The Story of Stuff Project. They will speak at the Julia Ideson Building, Houston Public Library on Thursday May 2. Regular registration is from March 4-April 25 ▢



"Diffuse Reflection Lab" by Lead Pencil Studio

May 11

www.utvac.org

The installation by artists Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo is on view at the Vaulted Gallery at the University of Texas at Austin's Visual Arts Center through May 11. See

Matt Fajkus' review of the exhibit on page 10. ■



The Texas Society of Architects' Advocates for Architecture Day 2013 took place in Austin on January 29. More than 150 architects from across the state visited the Capitol to meet with legislators.

Everyday Advocate

by Melissa C. Brandrup, AIA

After finishing architecture school in 1997, I couldn't help feeling there was a void in our profession. For five years, I had been living, breathing, and talking architecture. But as I graduated from Tulane, I realized that our communities lacked an understanding of the importance of architecture.

I decided that getting the rest of the world to realize the importance of architecture would be my charge. I asked myself three questions. *Who advocates for my newfound profession?* The answer: I do. *Where are the supporters?* Everywhere. *How do I get people to realize the effects of space and place?* Help them see how design affects their everyday lives.

Fast-forward 16 years to my role as a member of the Texas Society of Architects participating in the second-ever Advocates for Architecture Day. The opportunity to be an advocate was in front of me again. The meetings were set, and the stage was ready. But I still grappled with the question of how one can cultivate the appreciation of architecture in others in order to strengthen our profession.

I decided that the answer is to confront them where they would notice it most. Regardless of who your audience is, you need to identify the one idea that really drives them. Then, relate it back to architecture and explain how design can change and affect the outcome. After all, everything relates back to architecture and how design matters: where one lives, how one gets to work, where one buys groceries, the productivity level in an office, neighborhood sustainability, transportation — even overall happiness.

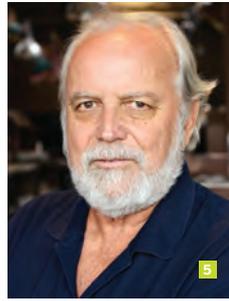
As the El Paso delegation I was a part of walked through the Capitol visiting all six of our elected officials, we kept circling back to the basic fact that architecture affects all aspects of daily life. In fact, every moment of every day is related to the built environment, and the effect that bad design has on us is far-reaching. We see the repercussions in increased obesity rates (lack

Let's make it our charge to help others realize that we are critically important to the quality of their everyday lives.

of walkable communities), crime rates (no eyes on the street), reduced local business ownership (big box retail everywhere), and, most critically, the reduced need to hire an architect due to the over-simplification of buildings.

As architects, we are in charge of the health, safety, and welfare of the built environment. Let's make it our charge to help others realize that we are indispensable and critically important to the quality of their everyday lives. Encourage those around you to see how design matters and, most important, how it can positively affect them. Talk to your local city council and community leaders about architecture and give them the tools to make sound decisions about design. Be the advocate for architecture in your local community. Your efforts will have ripple effects that can be as far-reaching and as long-lasting as a great design. ■ ▢

Recognition



2013 Texas AIA Fellows

Among the 122 AIA members elevated this year to the AIA College of Fellows, 13 are members of the Texas Society of Architects. The 2013 Fellows will be honored at an investiture ceremony during the AIA national convention in June.

The 2013 Jury of Fellows was chaired by Linda Searl, FAIA, partner of Searl Lamaster Howe Architects in Chicago. Jury members were John Castellana, FAIA, of TMP Architecture in Bloomfield Hills, MI; Brian Dougherty, FAIA, of Dougherty + Dougherty Architects in Costa Mesa, CA; Leevi Kiil, FAIA, of Leevi Kiil Architect in Wayne, NJ; Susan Maxman, FAIA, of SMP Architects in Philadelphia; Craig Rafferty, FAIA, of Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Lindeke Architects in St. Paul; and Raymond Yeh, FAIA, of the University of Hawaii, School of Architecture in Honolulu. ■

1 Arthur W. Andersson, FAIA

Andersson Wise Architects, Austin

2 Jay W. Barnes, III, FAIA

Barnes Gromatzky Kosarek Architects, Austin

3 Morris Brown, FAIA

Texas Tech University College of Architecture, El Paso

4 Laurence C. Burns, Jr., FAIA

Kendall/Heaton Associates, Houston

5 Dick Clark, FAIA

Dick Clark Architecture, Austin

6 William A. Dupont, FAIA

University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio

7 Stanley O. Graves, FAIA

Architexas, Austin

8 Anthony J. Haas, FAIA

WHR Architects, Houston

9 R. Murray Legge, FAIA

Legge Lewis Legge, Austin

10 Charyl F. McAfee-Duncan, FAIA

McAfee3 Architects, Dallas

11 Jana McCann, FAIA

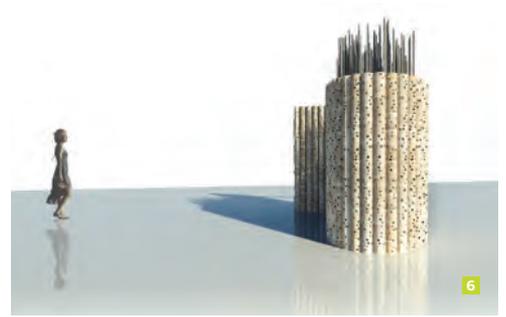
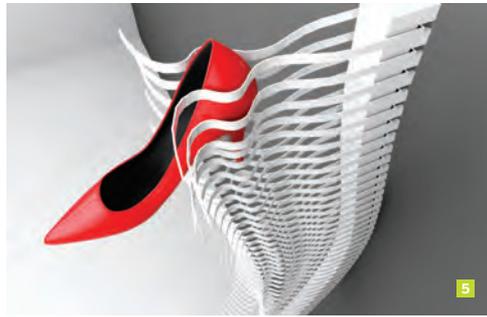
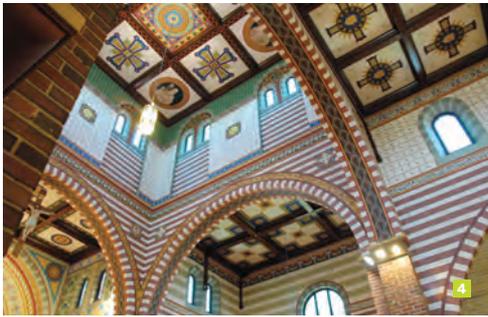
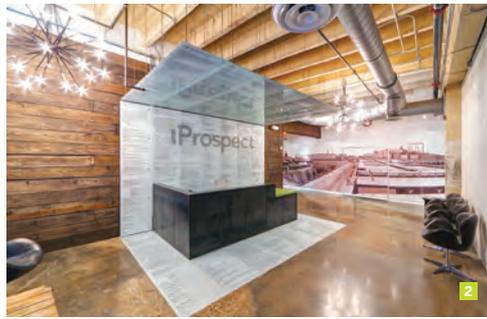
McCann Adams Studio, Austin

12 Jim Poteet, FAIA

Poteet Architects, San Antonio

13 Cynthia D. Walston, FAIA

FKP Architects, Houston



AIA Fort Worth Design Awards

Recipients of the 2013 AIA Fort Worth Design Awards were announced this past January. Six firm projects and five student works were singled out for excellence in design as part of the chapter's Honors and Awards Program.

Firm Awards

1 Ben Hogan Learning Center for the First Tee of Fort Worth

DMS Architects

Borrowing its formal expression and transparent center from the honest simplicity of the dogtrot house, the Ben Hogan Learning Center transforms the traditional language by bending around a state-protected tree while extending to connect with an outdoor practice space. The building was designed to serve multiple functions — classroom, community event center, museum — and maximize the limited resources of First Tee, a nonprofit that uses golf to teach life lessons to at-risk youths.

2 i-Prospect Fort Worth Office

VLK Architects

The new i-Prospect office intertwines historical elements of Fort Worth with the digital communications company's high-tech industry. The rehabilitated, one-story warehouse features an open layout, giant kitchen, and large, adjacent common area to encourage

team building, as well as a range of sustainable elements: the architects salvaged existing walls for partitions, used reclaimed wood for sliding barn doors, and developed accent walls from milled fallen trees.

3 Levitt Pavilion for the Performing Arts at Founders Plaza

Bennett Benner Pettit Architects + Planners

Located in Downtown Arlington, Levitt Pavilion is part of a larger downtown revitalization effort. Sited at the southeast corner of the Plaza, the performance space is aligned to avoid acoustical conflicts with the nearby City Hall, and its platform is oriented so that the audience faces away from the sun. Large overhangs offer additional shading while the inverted roof shape allows for collection of rainwater to irrigate native plantings. Gates from an earlier structure were restored.

4 St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church Restoration

Arthur Weinman Architects

Completed in 1918, this Lindsay church was in dire need of restoration. The architects identified a range of problems, including leaking roof, delaminating plaster, deteriorated stained glass, damaged artwork, and more. They engaged skilled craftsmen — specialty roofers and art and stained glass window conservators — to help restore the building.

5 Shoe Spine

Bart Shaw Architect

Shoe Spine is a conceptual design that seeks to present a way to honor the shoes that have long been relegated to rolling around on the closet floor. Although it's a simple "shove and go" concept, it holds the shoe in way that presents its beauty.

6 Tethering

Bart Shaw and Norman Ward

Tethering is a contemporary interpretation of a traditional Jewish sukkah — a temporary structure commemorating the dwellings of the Israelites during their exodus from Egypt. The design of the sukkah should draw your eyes up to the roof and sky. Perforations in Tethering's wall allow light to filter inside, and its elliptical form allows daylight to travel around the interior surface, giving an awareness of time.

Student Awards

BBP:FT

Christopher Arth, Texas Tech University

Andros Workshop

Nic Allinder, University of Texas at Austin

Holland Tunnel Toll Booth

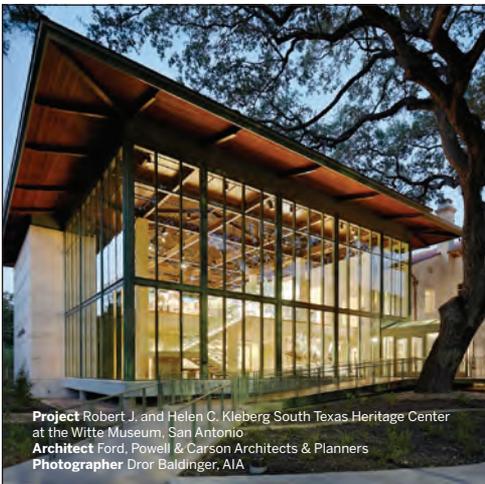
Justin Kyle Bell, Texas Tech University

Birdwatch Towers

Erling Cruz, University of Houston

Buffalo Bayou Cocoon

Tiger Lyon, University of Houston ■ □



Project Robert J. and Helen C. Kleberg South Texas Heritage Center at the Witte Museum, San Antonio
Architect Ford, Powell & Carson Architects & Planners
Photographer Dror Baldinger, AIA



Coming Next Issue

May/June 2013

Feature Articles: Preservation

Comal County Courthouse, New Braunfels
 Volz & Associates

Hotel Settles, Big Spring
 Norman Alston Architects

Robert J. and Helen C. Kleberg South Texas Heritage Center at the Witte Museum, San Antonio
 Ford, Powell & Carson Architects & Planners

City of Houston Permitting Center, Houston
 Studio Red Architects

Beck House, Dallas
 Bodron+Fruit

Residential Feature

4415 Perry Street, Houston
 Val Glitsch Architect

Civic Architecture

United States Federal Courthouse, Austin
 Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects

Portfolio: Sacred Spaces

Texas Tech University Chapel, Lubbock
 McKinney York Architects

St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Lindsay
 Arthur Weinman Architects

Brazos River Chapel, Palo Pinto County
 Maurice Jennings + Walter Jennings Architects

Bonus Distribution

Congress of New Urbanism National Conference
 May 28-June 1, Salt Lake City

AIA National Convention & Design Expo
 June 20-22, Denver

NeoCon World's Trade Fair
 June 10-12, Chicago

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Menil Receives AIA Twenty-Five Year Award

On January 16, the American Institute of Architects announced the Menil Collection Houston, designed by architect Renzo Piano, as the recipient of its 2013 Twenty-five Year Award.

Each year, this award is conferred on a building that has stood the test of time as an embodiment of architectural excellence. Projects must demonstrate excellence in function, in the distinguished execution of its original program, and in the creative aspects of its statement by today's standards. In its announcement, AIA provided the following history of founder Dominique de Menil's vision for the museum, and the decisions and innovative technologies that Piano used to bring her vision to life.

When Menil decided in 1981 to build a museum in Houston to house one of the world's most significant collections of primitive African art and modern surrealist art, her main request was that all of the works could be viewed under natural lighting. She also wanted the lighting to be treated in such a way so that the visitors would be aware of its continuous variations according to the time of day, the season, and the local climate. In addition, she wanted a museum that would appear "large from the inside and small from the outside."

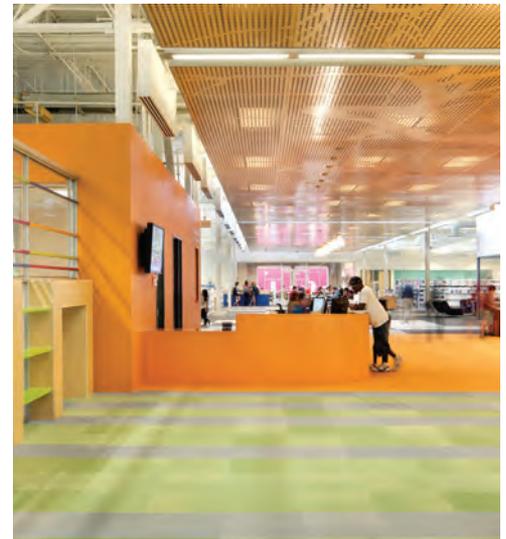
The museum was to be a space that would promote a direct and relaxed relationship between the visitor and the work of art itself, thus resulting in a non-monumental and domestic environment: one that would be in complete contact with nature. In order to achieve this last objective, it was decided to position the building within the greenery of a residential district that included a number of pre-existing residences

used for activities that would complement those of the museum, thus resulting in a "museums village" environment. The museum's integration within this environment of smaller buildings was sought out by articulating lower volumes and by adorning of the exterior walls with wood.

The natural lighting of the exhibition areas gives the building its character. This decision was one that involved a significant risk: direct sunlight, in fact, would be harmful to the artworks themselves. The goal was to provide a mediated diffusion of light within the exhibition halls, without losing the sense of the external climatic conditions. For this reason, a special "solar machine" was built to evaluate the behavior of the light at the various latitudes, the mechanics of the multiple refractions, and the protection offered against the ultraviolet rays.

This evaluation resulted in the definition of a basic structural element, the so-called "leaf" made out of 25-mm-thick ferrocement. Having been replicated 300 times, these leaves serve as the building's covering platform and act as both a light filter and heat shield. These elements, which are also an integral component of the beams themselves, prevent the direct sunlight from reaching the artworks on display, while at the same time enhancing the works of art by providing natural lighting based on the weather conditions outside.

The award will be presented this June at the AIA National Convention in Denver. ■



McAllen Library Interior Honored by AIA

On January 14, the AIA announced the recipients of its 2013 Institute Honor Awards. Among the 28 winning projects from around the world was the McAllen Main Library, which was recognized for its outstanding interior architecture, created by Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle (MS&R).

Set in what used to be an abandoned Walmart, the project presented the architects with the challenge of creating a functional and flexible 125,000-sf library on a single level. The team used forms, materials, patterns, and colors to create elements that organize the space, provide landmarks for visitors, and modulate the scale of spaces within the largest single-story library in the United States. Said the award jury: "The McAllen Main Library represents an important shift in American cultural attitudes toward tolerating big box, suburban structures." See "Re-Tailoring Retail" on page 50 for more information on the project. ■

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Austin Community College at Highland Mall

Barnes Gromatzky Kosarek Architects

As Highland Mall sits largely shuttered and surrounded by empty parking lots in northeast Austin, Barnes Gromatzky Kosarek Architects is at work wrapping up the design development for a new Austin Community College (ACC) campus to occupy the shopping center's former JC Penny department store. The building was chosen for its central location, access to major roadways, proximity to public transportation, and the ample space for future growth.

The architectural team, Jay W. Barnes, FAIA, N. Thomas Kosarek, AIA, and Lauren Goldberg, AIA, is proposing to renovate the building, and open up the interior to allow natural light to filter into the rehabilitated spaces. The primary challenge, explains Kosarek, was creating a transparent and inviting environment for the new academic use.

The existing building is a two-story 200,000-sf cast-in-place concrete box with no windows. The proposed interior plan works off of the existing column grid and uses a series of columns to mark a long east-west axis through the building. Programmed as a typical student commons with



flanking flexible spaces and classrooms, the central corridor guides both people and light into the building. The floor plate above the hallway will be removed in rectangular sections, creating a linear lightwell illuminated by a new series of clerestory windows to be installed in the roof above.

A number of windows will be also punched into the facades of the building to allow more natural light into the rehabilitated spaces. The new entry will be completely transparent, and a new metal skin will partially clad the building. The sidewalks will be widened and programmed as student spaces. The transformation of this abandoned box is highly anticipated by its neighbors. "The community is very much behind this design," says Kosarek. ■







Cross Timbers Ranch

by Bart Shaw, AIA

Project Cross Timbers Ranch, Lipan

Clients Greg and Laura Bird

Architect Lake|Flato Architects

Design team Bill Aylor, AIA; Ted Flato, FAIA; Ryan Jones, AIA; Trey Rabke; Nathan Campbell, AIA

Photographer Frank Ooms Photography

There was a long steel table sitting under an old oak tree where Wayne Gossett, the project superintendent, fabricated the architectural details of Cross Timbers Ranch. Found throughout the buildings that comprise the new weekend home and retreat, the unique handcrafted elements add to the character of the ranch-tech approach to the design. Bill Aylor, of Lake|Flato Architects describes the interaction between the architect and superintendent as “old school.” “Handing off a sketch to a craftsman, whether he is using a wood chisel or a welding torch, produces results that are more human,” says Aylor. The details of the retreat tie the materials from the outside into the interior spaces and garner attention throughout the project, contributing to the rich authenticity of this enchanting place. The carefully crafted elements form clean lines of a modern design that echo a heritage of Texas structures.

“I love the fact that when you arrive here, you immediately relax. It has something to do with the way the architecture blends with the landscape.” This is the way Laura Bird describes the ranch. Laura and her husband Greg wanted a retreat for family weekends away that could also be used for corporate gatherings and events. The site would be on their working cattle ranch, about 45 minutes west of Fort Worth. On the ranch, there was an old red house that sat on a ridge between the fields and the pond. From this hill, they could see the path of the hollow running back to the Brazos River. Working with the architects, Laura and Greg decided that this was the place to build. The house was torn down, and the trees that had grown around it quickly bestowed age and distinction on the new complex that arose among them. The water tower that formerly sat behind the old house became the anchor around which the new buildings were aligned.



Greg and Laura wanted private family quarters, guest rooms, a common pavilion area with a game room, and a wine cellar. Lake|Flato's initial design scheme housed all these functions in one structure. As the design evolved, the mass separated, bringing the scale down to four distinct buildings. This aligned with the Birds' desire to shut down portions of the complex so that it could function independently as a family getaway or a corporate retreat. The buildings follow the ridge, forming an L-shaped plan against a stand of trees that creates a sense of protection in the courtyard. Sitting on the south end of the plan, the pavilion is the largest of the buildings. A walkway joins the porch of the pavilion on the west side and continues past the wine cellar structure to the family house. The guest cabins lie perpendicular to the east, forming the northern leg of the complex.

The pavilion is a large dogtrot structure with a communal room on one side and a playroom on the other. The open living, dining, and kitchen area provides a wonderful place to visit and relax — separate from any uproarious fun across the breezeway. Large plate steel counters, rubbed with bluing agents to add patina, provide ample serving area. Steel light fixtures, designed by the architect, are set between the steel trusses above. Like the other buildings of the home, the pavilion is clad in paint grip sheet metal and sinker cypress siding. Its strong, gabled form releases at its end and is fully expressed in a tall sleeping porch. This element addresses the approaching drive — acting as a lantern guiding visitors who approach

Handing off a sketch to a craftsman, whether he is using a wood chisel or a welding torch, produces results that are more human.

in the dark — and is equally compelling from the interior. The horizontal siding members are dense at the bottom and more open at the top, creating a sense of privacy while allowing light and air to flow freely. The sun and moon turn the floor and walls into canvases for patterns of light, with straight lines fragmenting the organic lines of trees and passing clouds.

Previous spread and this page *The pavilion of the Cross Timbers Ranch expands graciously across the landscape. Hand-crafted steel details define the character of the interior spaces.*





The pavilion is bisected by a large breezeway that separates the open living and dining area from the children's play area.



- SITE PLAN**
- 1 LIVING/KITCHEN
 - 2 SLEEPING PORCH
 - 3 GAME ROOM
 - 4 WINE CELLAR/PORCH
 - 5 FAMILY CABIN
 - 6 GUEST ROOM
 - 7 DOGTROT
 - 8 PORCH



Between the pavilion and family quarters is a humble structure that is the hidden jewel of the complex: the wine cellar. The chimney stack of the wine cellar and its overlook align with the center of the courtyard. The cellar is only partially buried in the earth, so its elevated roof becomes a raised vantage point, while its concrete recesses take advantage of the earth's cooling for the storage of the wine. The roof rises about four feet above the walkway. As you ascend the stairs leading to the overlook, the built world recedes around you, offering a position where the only thing you look upon is the natural landscape.

The craftsmanship of the complex is apparent in the door of the cellar. Constructed of steel and Ipe, the door is counterweighted with shot put balls welded to steel rods. Its proper balance was achieved by trial and error. Wayne used Laura as a test subject to tune the counterweight; when she could open the door, it was properly balanced. The cellar also provides protection as a storm shelter, so it was important that it be easily accessible.

The walls of the structure are beautifully formed, but it is the poured concrete ceiling that is genuinely intriguing. Rows of oil barrels were used as forms — in homage to the occupation of the owner — to create a vaulted interior space. A residue of blue paint from the barrels left a beautiful, though unintentional, patina that graces the finish.

The family residence is a retreat from the retreat when there are guests in the other areas of the complex. It sits quietly on the corner of the compound and looks out onto unique elevated views of the pond and trees beyond. Its wood ceilings and steel counters are reminiscent of the pavilion, but have a more intimate scale. There's also an office on the north side of the house nestled under a shed roof as if it were an extension of the porch.

The guest quarters and service areas reside in the eastern leg of the complex with a breezeway between the two. Finished in the character of the home, the guest quarters have steel barn door hardware, steel counters, and steel mirror mounts — all crafted by the same hand.

A courtyard stretches between the two wings of the complex, and the grill is the centerpiece of this space. It is formed by two parallel concrete walls. The grates, set in between the low walls, are held by steel rods

Between the pavilion and family quarters is a humble structure that is the hidden jewel of the complex: the wine cellar.

anchored with tie rods shafted through the concrete. Wooden newel posts cap the steel ends so they can be handled as the grill heats up.

The architecture of the ranch is characterized by a rugged authenticity and an impression of age that belies its recent construction. Most of the custom steel elements that run throughout the project and contribute to its ranch-based spirit were crafted on site by Wayne. The pipes, for example, were set in a field, allowed to rust, and then lightly sanded and sealed prior to installation. These details create the attraction of age from the outset.

It is the landscape, however, that completes the ageless feeling of the complex. Landscape architect Rosa Finsley consulted on the project, and her touch rendered a natural entourage filling all scars left by the construction. Bill Aylor puts it this way: "This project reinforces how important landscape is. It makes the compound feel more natural. It pulls it back in time."

Cross Timbers Ranch is a balanced blend of rugged ranch utility and calculated refinement. The craft of one man and the latent Texas aura weave their way through the work of Lake|Flato to yield a stunning final product. But it is the human element that really draws us in to this home and retreat. It is a place that finds its meaning in the interactions of the people who worked on and now enjoy it. This unique ranch embodies the desires and personalities of the individuals who commissioned the project, the mind and soul of the architect who conceived it, and the hearts and hands of those who crafted it.

Bart Shaw, AIA, is principal of Bart Shaw Architect, based in Fort Worth.



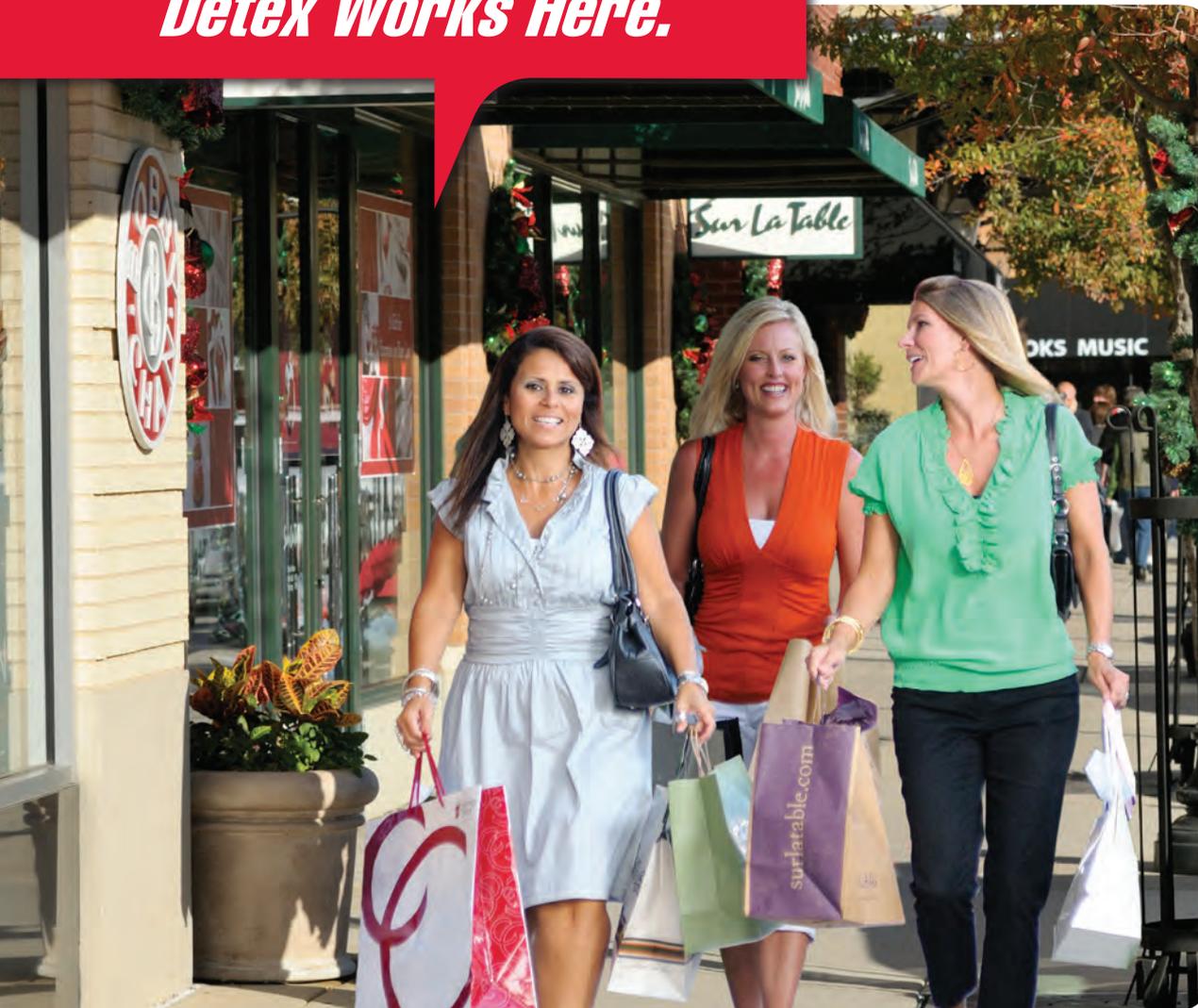
The perch above the wine cellar looks out toward a pond. The wine cellar below has a unique concrete ceiling that was poured in place over old blue oil barrels. The water tower anchors the complex and ties the new structures to the history of the property. The play of light and shadow in the sleeping porch and the fires in the large grill focus visitors on the present moment.

Contractor Duecker Construction

Consultants **STRUCTURAL:** Jack Harrison P E Structural Design Consulting; **INTERIOR DESIGN:** Harry J Crouse Design; **LANDSCAPE:** Kings Creek Gardens

Resources **CONCRETE:** Lehne Construction Company; **MILLWORK:** Oncken & Sons Cabinets; **WOOD DOORS:** BMC Building Materials; **FINISH HARDWARE:** Alexander Marchant; **ROOFING:** Durst Sheet Metal & Roofing; **ALUM CLAD WINDOWS:** Marvin Windows; **WATER SYSTEM:** Living Water USA; **ELECTRICAL FIXTURES:** Steven's Lighting

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This issue explores the role of retail development and planning initiatives in the life of communities and city streets, as well as the importance of the experience and functionality of a retail space.

The following articles represent a variety of retail environments. As a group they provide insight into both the placemaking efforts of retail development and the role of design in creating spaces that continue to perform over time. Current retail design trends and the value of the rehabilitation of abandoned retail buildings are both explored.

Retail Development and Design

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Gensler
Gregory Ibañez, FAIA

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Re-Tailoring Retail

Aaron Seward



Pioneering Shopping Centers

by J. Brantley Hightower, AIA



The retail shopping center is a familiar fixture of the American suburban landscape. Its ubiquity today obscures the fact that it represents a distinct architectural typology that has only recently emerged.

It is a curious fact of history that many of the defining innovations of retail architecture originated in Texas. This is partially due to the fact that Texans embraced the automobile earlier than the rest of the country. Developers and the architects they teamed up with saw the uniqueness of the emerging urban condition and endeavored to create an appropriate architectural response that was later exported to the rest of the country.

Three projects in particular — Highland Park Village and NorthPark Center in Dallas, and the Galleria in Houston — are important landmarks in the development of the modern shopping experience. While each of these projects is a product of its individual era, as a group they speak to the value that design can bring to cities and the people who live in them.

Highland Park Village

Incorporated in 1913, Highland Park was built as a garden suburb on the northern frontier of Dallas. As was the case with other western cities, the growth of Dallas was made possible not by the expansion of commuter rail lines but by the widespread ownership of the personal automobile. As a bedroom community, Highland Park offered a seductive alternative to urban living but lacked a traditional business district where residents could shop.

It is a curious fact of history that many of the defining innovations of retail architecture originated in Texas.

Developers Edgar Flippen and Hugh Prather recognized an opportunity to create a concentrated shopping center that would cater to the car-traveling shopper. Along with Dallas architects Fooshee & Check, they



created a concept that organized individual shops around a central square of parking. The idea was that shoppers would drive to their new center, park for free, and then shop at several different stores before returning to their vehicles. By turning the center's back to the surrounding neighborhood, they created a defined shopping plaza the likes of which had never been seen before Highland Park Village opened its doors in 1931.

The architects imbued the facades with an eclectic mix of the Mission Revival and Spanish Mediterranean styles. The aspirational quality of the architecture enhanced the novelty of the shopping experience and created a space that in some ways acted as a town square for the growing suburb of Highland Park. Other contemporary developments, such as Kansas City's Country Club Village, also used an exotic architectural language to create a unified retail environment. But whereas that development sought to integrate the district into existing street grids, in Highland Park the goal was to create an inwardly focused plaza.

Highland Park Village originally provided local residents with conveniences such as a grocery store, drug store, and gas station. These types of

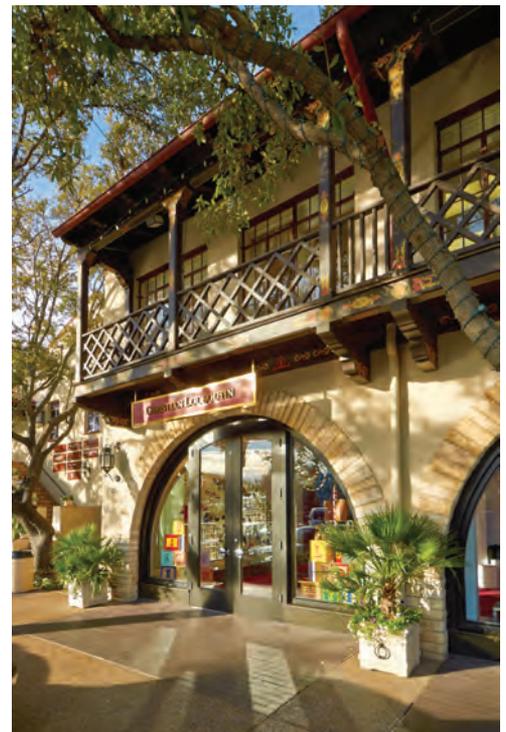
The aspirational quality of the architecture enhanced the novelty of the shopping experience and created a space that in some ways acted as a town square for the growing suburb of Highland Park.

amenities continued to define the offerings of Highland Park Village until the middle part of the last century, when many of the site's unique architectural elements were altered or removed in attempts to "modernize" the property. After the plaza was sold in 1976, the new owners began to restore the architecture to its original grandeur and leverage its uniqueness to attract high-end retailers. OMNIPLAN of Dallas has continued this trend, making Highland Park Village one of Texas' premier addresses for luxury retail.

Previous spread *The eclectic Mission Revival and Spanish Mediterranean flourishes of Highland Park Village give the shopping center a whimsical feel.*

NorthPark employed a restrained modernist language to create a distinctive shopping experience.

This page *Although the types of stores in Highland Park Village have changed over time, the character of its architecture has always created a unique type of urban space.*





The integration of modern sculpture into the design of NorthPark differentiated it from other contemporary shopping malls built on the frontiers of cities across the United States.

NorthPark Center

By the mid-1960s, the model of providing for the retail needs of a growing suburban population with concentrated shopping centers had been well established. The new game for developers was to anticipate where a city's growth was heading. This is precisely what Raymond Nasher did in the early 1960s when he acquired 97 acres approximately six miles north of Highland Park Village.

Nasher intended to build an enclosed shopping center on that land. On paper, this goal was unremarkable; NorthPark would not be the first

To animate the vast interior world of the mall, Nasher made the unprecedented decision to display much of his growing art collection within the public concourses.

enclosed, air-conditioned mall. But it would be the first one with a clear architectural vision. Nasher hired Harrell+Hamilton Architects of Dallas (now OMNIPLAN, the designers of the 2006 expansion of NorthPark) to create a premier modern shopping experience designed by prominent architects. When it opened, NorthPark was the world's largest air-conditioned retail establishment. Eero Saarinen had been hired to design the Nieman Marcus store, but the architect's sudden death in 1961 prevented this from occurring. Kevin Roche ultimately completed the project, creating a modern store that harmonized with the spatial design of the rest of NorthPark.

To animate the vast interior world of the mall, Nasher made the unprecedented decision to display much of his growing art collection within the public concourses. The fact that he was a collector of modern sculpture was lucky, for the large-scale works could be displayed without being overwhelmed by the spaces in which they were located. Art pieces were



The Galleria sought to create a self-contained wonderland of high-end stores packaged in brand-name architecture.



also incorporated into outdoor areas of the mall, creating an integrated composition with a landscaped courtyard space.

The other and perhaps more important innovation of the development was Nasher's purchase of the surrounding land. He recognized that if he acquired the available property around the mall, the land could be sold later at a higher price to other developers looking to capitalize on of the proximity to the established mall. It thus acted as a catalyst for continued retail development.

The Galleria

The 1970 opening of the Galleria in Houston expanded on many of the ideas of NorthPark but deployed them at a larger, more audacious scale. Eventually growing to over 3 million sf, the Galleria is the largest mall in Texas. Similar to Nasher's vision for exhibiting art in the vast corridors of NorthPark, developer Gerald Hines sought to pack his project with unique amenities that would make the mall itself a destination. These included two hotels, three office towers, and the first-ever ice skating rink located inside a mall.

Although its aesthetics were based on Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II — a vast shopping district in Milan created by the construction of a low glazed vault above an existing city street — the Galleria in Houston is more like a walled citadel for shopping. Partially in response to Houston's hot, humid climate, architects HOK and Neuhaus & Taylor created an environment where shoppers could park in a climate-controlled structure, walk through an enclosed skyway, and enter into the mall without ever touching the city or breathing outside air. The Galleria became not just a place to shop but an oasis that provided respite from Houston's long summers.

Hines also actively sought to bring to Texas stores that had not previously had a presence in the state. From Chicago he imported Marshall Field's and Crate & Barrel, and from New York he brought Lord & Taylor, Macy's, and Tiffany's. Although these stores have a ubiquitous presence in

shopping malls today, their arrival in Houston was seen as a reflection of the city's growing wealth and status.

With the success of the Galleria, the shopping mall was fully leveraged as a catalyst for wider urban development. The surrounding Uptown area of Houston grew throughout the 1970s and 80s to essentially become a city

The Galleria became not just a place to shop but an oasis that provided respite from Houston's long summers.

unto itself. With its own skyline and as much office space as many traditional urban centers, the area around the Galleria represented a new type of edge city that would become increasingly commonplace on the interstate loops of cities throughout America.

Conclusions

The cliché is that the key to any retail project is "location, location, location," and while it is true that each of these three developments enjoyed a favorable address, their architecture proved to be an equally critical reason for their success. These projects show that good design brings sustained value over the course of many years. Most shopping centers go through a predictable cycle of growth followed by decay and ultimate closure, yet all three of these projects have remained vibrant centers of commerce for many decades.

Part of the Galleria's lasting legacy is that it taught Texas developers about the importance of good architecture. By hiring notable talent to design individual stores (Philip Johnson, for example, designed the Marshall Field's), Hines succeeding in creating an engaging shopping environment that was an attraction in itself. The success of the Galleria catapulted his career forward, and he would go on to work with other "starchitects"



Top *The Galleria acted as a catalyst for the development of the Uptown area of Houston.*

Center *NorthPark similarly spurred retail development in its general vicinity.*

Bottom *Highland Park Village was more tightly constrained and thus remains a compact retail node within Highland Park.*



including I. M. Pei, Cesar Pelli, and Frank Gehry. In doing so, he proved that speculative projects could gain demonstrable value through design. Texas cities are more interesting places as a result.

It is an ironic twist that these private retail projects, often designed to mimic grand civic spaces in Europe, have at times presented favorable alternatives to the public spaces provided by Texas cities. While there will always be a need for public parks and plazas, the role of the shopping mall has become one of similar social significance. Nasher saw this fact not as an indictment of the low quality of our public spaces, but rather as a lofty goal that retail architecture should aspire to achieve. Indeed, he saw his mall as having a social responsibility to “serve as a catalyst to link art and business for the benefit of all.”

The annual ARTsPARK event held at NorthPark Center reinforces Nasher’s original goal. Arts and cultural organizations from Dallas and the surrounding counties come together to encourage the public to make art a part of their everyday lives. Painters and sculptors set up alongside live performances by dancers and children’s theater groups, filling the corridors of NorthPark with activity centered on local contemporary arts one day each spring. This event is not only a catalyst that links the arts and business for the benefit of all, but also a tribute to the creation and encouragement of community through good architectural design.

J. Brantley Hightower, AIA, is the founder of HiWorks in San Antonio.



AERIAL IMAGES OF NORTH PARK AND HIGHLAND MALL BY HAWKEYE MEDIA



Standing Up to the Strip Mall

by Rebecca Roberts

Project Met Retail, Austin

Client Zydeco Development

Architect Studio 8 Architects

Design team Milton Hime, AIA; Bhavani Singal, Associate AIA; Ethan Glass, AIA;
Jonathan Pearson, Associate AIA

Photographer Andy Mattern; Brian Mihealsick



Located on the southeast side of Austin and nestled near Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, the Met Center is a growing mixed-use business park. Full of hotels and offices, the center also has green space that includes a disc golf course and trails for hiking and biking. The Met Retail building, designed by Studio 8 Architects, is situated at the entry to the Met Center site at the intersection of Highway 71 and Riverside Drive.

According to Milton Hime at Studio 8, “Howard Yancy of Zydeco Development wanted something unique because it was the last parcel of land and the most visible. He wanted something simple and clean as the entry feature for Met Center.”

The 5,757-sf structure was completed in August 2008. The primary, north elevation of the building is composed of uniform aluminum and glass storefronts marked horizontally with a continuous steel awning. The facility can accommodate up to four tenants and currently houses three restaurants: a Subway, a Jalapeño’s Mexican Food, and a Starbucks with

a drive-through. The building is a creative yet utilitarian response to the programmatic needs of the Met Center.

The most readily apparent feature of Met Retail that distinguishes it from other developer-oriented retail projects is the large reinforced concrete wall that constitutes the building’s east facade. This wall is both functional and aesthetic. The height and width of the wall respond to

The most readily apparent feature of Met Retail that distinguishes it from other developer-oriented retail projects is the large reinforced concrete wall that constitutes the building’s east facade.

building code requirements for protection from a nearby gas pipeline — it is essentially a blast wall in case of any accidents. It also serves as a sound

Previous spread and this page *Building code necessitated the blast wall at the Met Retail site. Studio 8 Architects used the requirement as an opportunity to customize the building's aesthetic and break from typical highway architecture.*



barrier from traffic, and a tall vertical beam extends from the base of the storefront and rises above the top of the wall.

Constructed as a tilt wall, the board-formed concrete captures the rough surface texture of the wood forms. Glass blocks set randomly within the wall and spectrum lighting, which illuminates the facade at night, enhance the textured effect. Although Subway and Starbucks have established brand-oriented design aesthetics, both tenants worked with Studio 8 designers to maintain some of the building's features in their interior spaces, creating a more unique atmosphere. The use of the textured concrete wall as a finish — rather than the restaurant's emblematic wallpaper — brings a distinct atmosphere to the Subway that is enhanced by the tiny shafts of daylight filtering through the glass blocks. Exposed structural trusses run along the ceiling of all three tenants' spaces. Visible through the windows from the outside of the building, these trusses aid in creating design uniformity among the various tenants.

The textured concrete wall extends beyond the north facade of the building creating a sight line to downtown Austin. The downtown skyline, the Texas State Capitol, and the University of Texas tower all mark the horizon. This same view can be seen sitting within any one of the Met Retail restaurants looking out the storefront windows.

Due to the proximity to the airport and the fact that much of Met Center's current infrastructure consists of hotels, many people who patronize Met Retail businesses are visiting Austin rather than living nearby. With this demographic in mind, the design details that distinguish the Met Retail building are important because they help foster an experience that is unique to Austin. The restaurants located in the Met Retail building have many locations in the United States and around the world and offer a cuisine that is accessible in myriad places. However, the orientation of the Met Retail storefronts provides someone who has just arrived in Austin for the first time the opportunity to take in a view of the city. The features of the concrete wall inside the Subway work to form a more idiosyncratic environment than the restaurant's standard decor.

The details of Met Retail's design that give it its individuality are illustrative of current trends in retail design. Because many consumers can go online to order products for home delivery, retailers are coming up with ways to make the in-person shopping experience desirable. Design is one way to accomplish this goal. Retail spaces with an individualized atmosphere serve not only as venues to provide goods to customers but also as venues to provide customers with an experience. By paying attention to the aesthetic details of the concrete tilt wall and the views of Austin visible from the Met Retail storefronts, Studio 8 has created a building that falls within retail design's trending toward the individualistic and away from the warehouse-like store shells that populate much of the suburban American landscape.

Because of the individuality of the structure, Studio 8 won an AIA Austin Design Award in 2009 shortly after Met Retail opened. What clinched the award was that Met Retail was a developer-oriented project that, unlike many other projects of this nature, paid significant attention to the details that would make the structure unique. "The AIA jurors wanted to see retail developers sticking their necks out more and taking a chance on more distinctive design," says Hime. Hovering at the cusp of retail design's move toward experiential-based design, Met Retail is an example of how developers are rethinking the importance of establishing a distinctive sense of place.

Rebecca Roberts is currently pursuing a master's degree in architecture at the University of Texas at Austin.



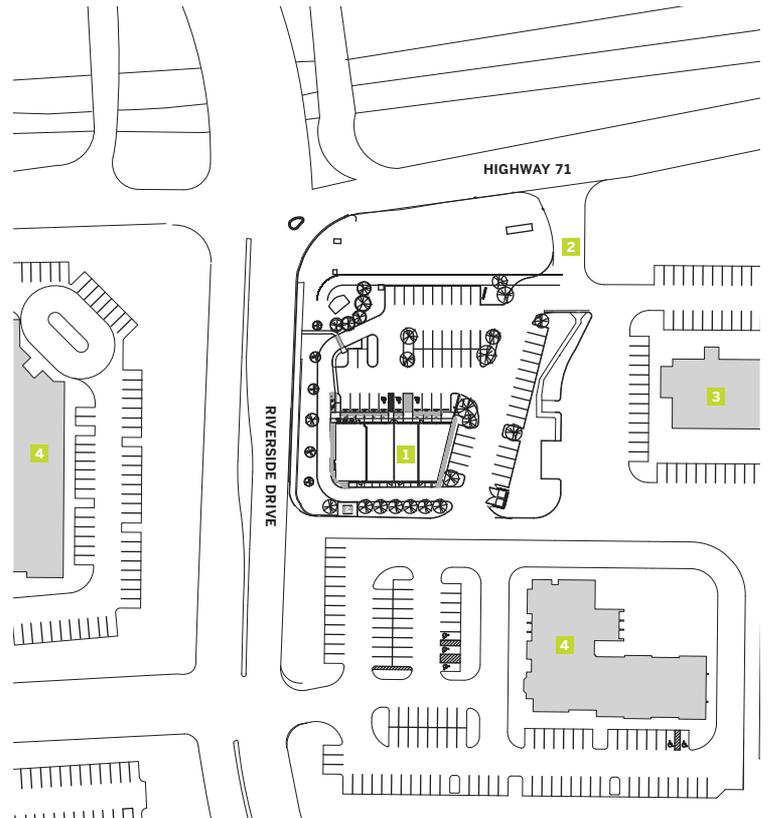
Met Retail's storefronts are simply detailed and with a steel awning. The vertical steel brace carries the eye above the blast wall. At night, lighting draws attention to the texture and scale of the wall. During daylight hours, light filters through the glass blocks into the restaurant space.



Contractor Rizzo Construction

Consultants MEP: Bay & Associates; **STRUCTURAL:** Bihner Chen; **LIGHTING:** Spectrum Lighting

Resources **PRECAST ARCHITECTURAL CONCRETE:** Central Texas Tiltwall; **LIMESTONE MASONRY UNITS:** Featherlite; **GLAZED MASONRY UNITS:** Pittsburgh Corning; **METAL MATERIALS:** Berridge; **STOREFRONTS:** PPG Glass (Arrow Glass & Mirror); **ARCHITECTURAL METALWORK:** Jett Enterprises



MET CENTER PARTIAL SITE PLAN

- 1 MET RETAIL
- 2 MET CENTER ENTRANCE
- 3 GAS STATION
- 4 HOTEL



Buy Local

by Catherine Gavin

Project Keepers, Austin

Client Chuck Haidet and Mike Reynolds

Architect The Michael Malone Studio at WKMC Architects

Design team Michael Malone, AIA; Bruce Williams, Associate AIA; Richard Smith, AIA; Audrey Maxwell, Associate AIA

Photographer Jud Haggard Photography

Project Eliza Page, Austin

Client Elizabeth Gibson

Architect Kevin Gallagher

Interior designer Kasey McCarty Interior Design Studio

Photographer Casey Woods Photography

Project Rogue Running, Cedar Park

Client Ruth England, Chris McClung, and Steve Sisson

Architect Runa Workshop

Design team Aaron Vollmer, AIA; Jean Pierre Trou, Associate AIA; Andrew Logan; Juan Carlos DeLeon

Photographer Juan Carlos DeLeon



Downtown Austin is experiencing unprecedented growth — towers of hotel rooms, condos, and offices are going up, and many of them are banking on retail at the ground floor. This flurry of construction has its roots in a Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (RUDAT) hosted by the AIA in Austin in 1992; recommendations for the redevelopment of downtown as a viable and vibrant community day and night supported the reintroduction of residential development and all of the amenities that go along with it. Local retail was central to the equation, and as the community armed itself with the “Keep Austin Weird” campaign through the early 2000s, the city government and planners paid attention. The Imagine Austin Plan, unanimously adopted by the City Council in June 2012, identifies growing local businesses and entrepreneurs as a priority.

Two retail corridors — in addition to other concentrated pockets of retail development — have emerged from the recent growth: Second Street and Congress Avenue. Second Street arose from a private-public partnership in which the city set a goal of at least a 30 percent representation of local retailers. The spaces are smaller, rarely exceeding 1200 sf, to encourage small business tenants. Congress Avenue was historically a retail corridor and offers larger spaces, which have been more attractive for a few

national chains. Fred Evins, redevelopment project manager at the City of Austin, notes that these two corridors have and will continue to support the growth of a vibrant mix of stores in the area. Efforts to make Congress more pedestrian-friendly and expand daytime retail uses to East Sixth Street are in the works.

With the changes currently underway and more on the horizon, the original pioneers of the neighborhood are happy to see the newcomers. Keepers, Eliza Page, and Rogue Running are three local Austin retailers that opened downtown from 2005 to 2008. These stores have weathered the economic downturn and the growing influence of online shopping, and are now poised for the full-speed-ahead growth of downtown. Each store targets a specific market and does so with a very different design solution. Flexibility, simplicity, curb appeal, and storage are fundamental to all three designs, and these characteristics are properly integrated with the brands and cultures of each store. The life of a retail store is one of fluid changes defined by the passing of the seasons and short-lived trends. In a city where buying local still matters, the continued relevance of these stores is a promising sign.



Keepers

A retail pioneer on Congress Avenue, the Keepers clothing store opened at the southeast corner of Congress and Sixth Street in 2005. Michael Malone, AIA, transformed a formerly neglected banking hall on the ground floor of a 1970s office tower into an elegant men's clothing boutique. The location, affectionately known as "Main and Main" in Austin's planning circles, has long been prime real estate. At the time of the renovation, Keepers was to be the anchor retail tenant for a mixed-use redevelopment of the entire block that was to include two Cesar Pelli towers. The project never materialized; however, the potential redevelopment of Keepers' block is now once again on the table.

Keepers' success is a testament not only to the brand and the company's specialized customer service, but also to the clean lines of the design. The prominent corner and lack of a street entry have proven to be an uncannily fruitful combination. Accessed via the lobby of the tower, the 2,500-sf store has three glazed walls that provide ample views of the well curated double-height interior space. The plan is organized around a central U-shaped cash/wrap and display cabinet. Additional display gondolas flank each side of the register, and wall units mark the perimeter of the store. The millwork is all designed to maximize merchandise visibility and display flexibility, while also providing necessary discrete storage.

The rear of the store provides support spaces for store events and custom fittings. A hospitality bar, which doubles as a shoe display, is a focal backdrop for the store. A "made-to-measure room," which can be closed off as necessary with sliding wood doors, provides a private fitting space for clients.

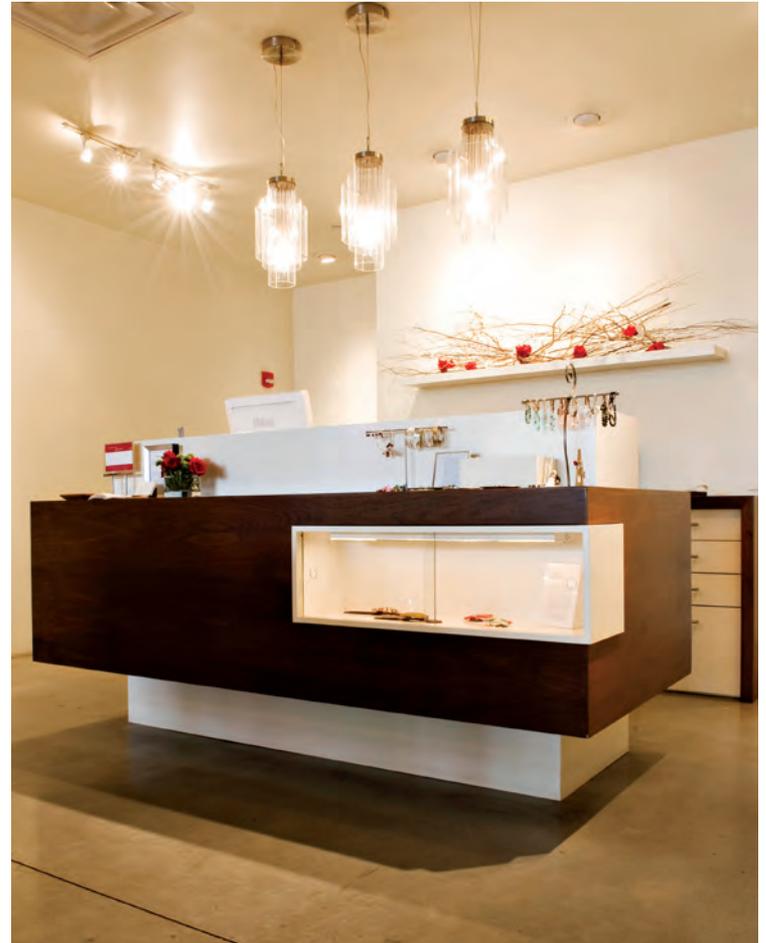
The clear-sealed eucalyptus plywood of the millwork and stained concrete floor contrast the polished travertine columns of the former banking hall. Sustainability efforts went beyond the use of eucalyptus tree by-product and the refinishing of the existing finishes. In an effort to minimize heat

Keepers' success is a testament not only to the brand and the company's specialized customer service, but also to the clean lines of the design.

gain and UV damage to the clothing, the glazed panels of the storefronts were tinted with protective ceramic films.

"We wanted a store inspired by the colors of Texas that would be visually compelling with functional ease and a high amount of flexibility," says Chuck Haidet, owner of Keepers. He notes that the store still looks great and that the only improvement they are investigating is the illumination of the window displays at night. This change speaks to the evolving demographics of the area and the fact that downtown is becoming increasingly residential, with a diversity of evening traffic beyond the younger patrons of Austin's bars and music venues.

Meredith Sanger of the Downtown Austin Alliance attributes the success of Keepers to its highly specialized customer service. She comments, "Over 100,000 people come to downtown every day for work, and Keepers has developed a large client base in that market."



- FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 CASH/WRAP AND DISPLAY
 - 2 GONDOLA
 - 3 OFFICE
 - 4 BAR/SHOE DISPLAY
 - 5 MADE-TO-MEASURE ROOM
 - 6 FITTING ROOMS
 - 7 STORAGE

Previous spread Plans for future growth of downtown Austin include five new tower proposals.

This spread *The Keepers* store occupies a former banking hall at Congress Avenue and Sixth Street. It is accessed via the tower lobby. All of the display cases provide multiple levels of shelving with discrete storage below. *Eliza Page* opened on Second Street the same year as *Keepers*, 2005.

Eliza Page

The mixed-use development along Second Street is the darling of Austin's downtown living. The district is lined with restaurants, coffee shops, and even a specialty grocery store. The *Eliza Page* jewelry store was one of the first local stores to open there. Like *Keepers*, in 2005 it moved from another location in hopes of increased visibility downtown. Designed by Kasey McCarty of Kasey McCarty Interior Design Studio and Kevin Gallagher of Dick Clark Architecture, the 1100-sf boutique features a gallery-

The design intent was one of a contemporary and transparent jewelry box, where the focus would be an uncluttered and interesting display of individual pieces.

style approach to the plan and individual jewelry displays.

The store is laid out with wall-mounted display cases along each wall and three tables in the center of the space. A cash register terminates the public area, and storage spaces occupy the rear of the store. The display cases are hung at eye-level to prevent customers from having to bend over to examine the jewelry. Full-length mirrors flank the wall displays for customer convenience, and the entire store is painted a soft white, which avoids an austere atmosphere. Owner Elizabeth Gibson says that the design intent was one of a contemporary and transparent jewelry box, where the focus would be an uncluttered and interesting display of individual pieces. "I think most



people who walk in the store have a refreshing experience because of the architecture. It is a clean, beautiful store, which is quite a departure from a busy downtown city street.”

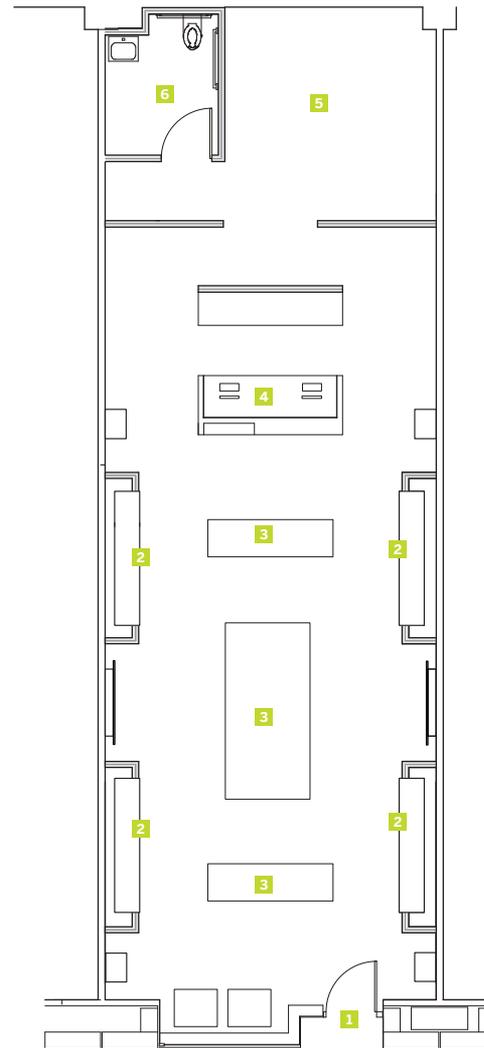
Kasey McCarty emphasizes the importance of the lighting. “The central void in the ceiling is painted black and adds height to the space. It is an economical design element that allows for flexibility with the lighting while also showcasing the lights.” The displays feature high-quality halogen lights. At night, when most of the jewelry is stored away, the illuminated window display continues the store’s street presence for pedestrian traffic.

Plans for the evolution of the in-store experiences are in the works. In an effort to convince customers to come to stores, retailers are increasingly incorporating specialized client-consultation experiences not necessarily available online. A small workstation for customer consults and new modular display cases that can be moved around for events are part of the future plans for Eliza Page. “The design is truly successful and worked from the beginning. It has allowed me to make changes over the years, and it still allows for more to come,” says Gibson. McCarty concurs: “Design that is true to the intent of a brand and its owner can have a very powerful impact on the store’s success.”

Rogue Running

Rogue Running, a running training group with over 3000 members, opened a store in an old East Austin warehouse in 2008 and expanded to Cedar Park in the summer of 2011. Both stores are strategically located within a mile of running trails. Each Saturday, training groups bring 600 runners to the East Austin location and 100 runners to Cedar Park. Working with the architects at Runa Workshop to develop the Cedar Park store, owners Ruth England, Chris McClung, and Steve Sisson sought a design that would reflect the Rogue culture and its Austin origins.

Runa Workshop’s principal, Jean Pierre Trou, Associate AIA, emphasizes that the success of the design is its integration with the Rogue brand. Critical meetings in the early phases of the project helped the architects



The flexibility of the original design of Eliza Page has provided opportunities for upgrades with the growth of the store. Walnut panels enhanced the original displays and a new walnut cash register area was installed.

- FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 ENTRANCE
 - 2 CUSTOM DISPLAY CABINETS
 - 3 CUSTOM DISPLAY TABLES
 - 4 REGISTER
 - 5 OFFICE
 - 6 RESTROOM



The Rogue Running store in Cedar Park reflects its Austin roots. Ruth England collected most of the wood from unwanted fences in her South Austin neighborhood, and the photo of Rogue runners on the back wall is a large reminder of the group's starting point in East Austin.

understand not only what England and McClung were hoping for in the spatial layout and finishes, but also what made the story of Rogue unique.

The 3000-sf store is a long, skinny space, approximately 70' by 30', with an Olympic-quality track stretching the length of the store. A shoe-display wall flanks the track on one side, and a long storage and display wall runs the length of the store on the other. The shoe wall guides circulation and defines the program in the store: stretching and shoe testing occur on the track side while additional clothing, supplemental merchandise, the cash register, and fitting rooms are positioned separately.

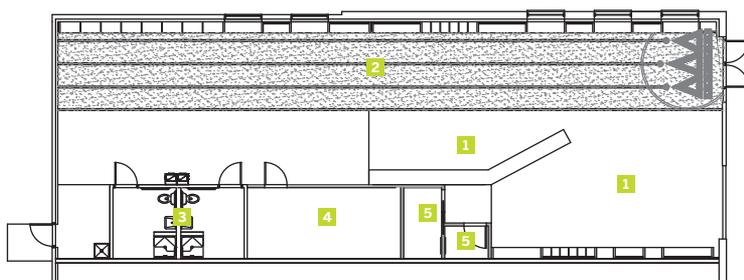
"We wanted to get the feeling of running outdoors into the store," says Trou. In order to bring natural light into the space, new windows were punched into the wall of the shopping center. The choice of materials was also essential to establishing the Rogue character in the store. "We looked for elements that had a little finish, but were also rough," notes Aaron Vollmer, AIA, principal at Runa Workshop. Reclaimed wood, recycled pendant lights, corrugated metal, and polished concrete were all chosen specifically for their utilitarian and rustic appeal.

Once the Cedar Park location was complete, elements of its design were brought back to the original East Austin location; the shoe racks and a few

The choice of materials was essential to establishing the Rogue character in the store.

of the displays were refitted with reclaimed wood and corrugated metal. "We completed the circle," says Trou.

England notes that the project was a great experience for her team. "The architects asked us about us and really gained a true understanding of what we are about — the store reflects that." Vollmer explains the reason for this approach. "You can bring good design to anything, but it is better to bring design that improves the client's model and what they are doing."



FLOOR PLAN
 1 MERCHANDISE
 2 TRAINING AREA
 3 RESTROOMS
 4 STORAGE
 5 DRESSING ROOM

Catherine Gavin is editor of *Texas Architect*.



A Fresh Patina

by Gregory Ibañez, FAIA

Project Patina, Dallas

Client Acme Brick Company

Architect Gensler

Design team Jill Wheeler, AIA; Kyle Jeffery; Michael Cerda; Jean Wallace; JD Busch; Sam Massaro

Photographer Bruce Damonte Photography

Much ink, or more accurately, pixels, have been used to describe the decline of traditional retail in this country. According to the International Council of Shopping Centers, the United States has over 46 sf of retail per capita, a figure that would seem plausible to anyone traversing an outer belt freeway around Houston or Dallas. Since the post-war era, retail has been in the throes of a Darwinian transformation, with Main Street shops and department stores overtaken by malls, which soon suffered with the arrival of big box “category killers.” Now the “e-tailers,” led by Amazon, have delivered a *coup de gras* to the behemoths formerly at the top of the food chain. Even items that benefit from personal inspection are not immune — “showrooming” (choosing a product in a physical store then buying it online elsewhere at a lower price) is the latest indignity to befall the beleaguered sector.

Amidst this market turmoil, and on the heels of a deep recession to boot, comes Patina, a new retail concept offering floor and wall-covering products along with in-house interior design consultation. It is an ambitious attempt to fill a void in the marketplace while creating an entirely new shopping model. And who better to commission this new “brick and mortar” store than Acme Brick, the company behind the brand?

From a consumer standpoint, the purchase and selection of carpet, tile, wood flooring, etc., is typically accomplished in one of two ways. One is with a trip to the big box store, where vast, poorly-lit rows of industrial shelving feature unappealing product displays and employees are unable to offer much in the way of aesthetic guidance. There are some pluses to this approach, including a wide range of available products, transparent pricing, and installation options. The other path, usually followed by a more affluent consumer in the company of a design professional, is a visit to the “design district,” navigating a series of attractive showrooms dedicated to a single product type. Comparison shopping is difficult because of the physical distance between competitors, limited selections, and an arcane “to the trade” pricing structure that obscures the actual cost of the product.

Product installation services are absent save for the occasional tackboard covered with business cards.

According to Judy Hunter, the chief operating officer of Acme Brick, who led the development of Patina, the company wanted to “open a new channel of product sales through retail. We identified a void in the market for a really nice store focused on hard surfaces, which is where we feel the consumer is moving.” Most of the brands offered are owned by Acme Brick, while others, such as Shaw (carpet), are siblings in the Berkshire Hathaway family of companies. There are also private-label products unique to Patina.

Gensler was retained to not only develop the store concept but also define the entire customer experience. Kyle Jeffery, retail design director in the Dallas office, said that the central idea was to combine a design studio and a showroom, encouraging exploration and collaboration in a non-intimidating atmosphere. Rooted in the idea of an architectural firm’s material library, the final result is as an engaging and well-organized space that has a luxe, yet accessible, atmosphere.

Several innovations make Patina a unique entry to the retail world. The first is the level of service delivered by the degreed interior designers who make up most of the store’s staff. These professionals are available to assist

Samples are handsomely arrayed in beautifully detailed store fixtures that allow easy detachment, and lighting is provided by both artificial and natural sources, the latter filtered through the exposed wood trusses overhead.

customers with in-store selections and make house calls by appointment. Employees move between multiple work areas along the store’s central spine, which contains a large community table surrounded by pin-up areas where store products can be arranged adjacent to materials the customer brings from home. A conference room is also provided for use by customers and their design consultants. In addition, Patina offers certified installers for every product in the store, and prices are clearly marked for both the raw and installed options, making cost comparison a simple task.

While the selection is quite large given the 3,500-sf store area, the available materials — wood, carpet, stone, and tile — are “curated” so as to feature complimentary colors and textures trending in the marketplace. Samples are handsomely arrayed in beautifully detailed store fixtures that allow easy detachment, and lighting is provided by both artificial and natural sources, the latter filtered through the exposed wood trusses overhead.

Technological innovation adds a further dimension. Acme developed two new touch-screen visualization tools that allow for easy full-scale simulation of materials. The first is Patina’s Floor Creator©, a table comprised of huge flat panel displays that allow the viewing of flooring materials in different patterns, grout colors, and textures. The second is its kitchen vignette’s Backsplash Gallery©, another electronic display that functions in the same manner. The quality of the images is stunning and provides a clarity lacking in the typical materials board design presentation.

With Patina’s flagship store located on Dallas’ Knox Street, and two other Gensler-designed stores in Fort Worth and Southlake, the company



seems well positioned to take advantage of the improving housing market. According to Gensler, “The store has become so popular that home builders have been using it as a virtual showroom for their customers.” Judy Hunter states that the plan is to roll out stores in the major Texas markets first, with an ultimate goal of establishing 100 stores nationally.

In Patina, Gensler has created a contemporary environment that avoids the faux-residential character typically seen in home furnishing showrooms, and based on the rich and meticulous detailing of the interior, Acme has clearly made a sizable commitment to this venture. The store is composed of a series of rectilinear spaces that are adaptable to differing retail shell configurations, yet it never feels regimented. And the color palette — warm grey tones with metallic blue and copper accents selected to compliment the products on display — is distinctive and welcoming.

Patina serves as an affirmation of the increasing appreciation of design by the American consumer. In the age of Apple Stores, generic products sold in bland spaces are a recipe for obsolescence. While it seems unlikely that we will totally kick the recreational shopping habit so ingrained in our consumer culture, there is no doubt that retailers need to follow this type of creative approach if they wish to lure consumers away from their monitors and smartphones.

Greg Ibañez, FAIA, is the principal of Ibañez Architecture in Fort Worth.



Previous spread *The Gensler-designed displays facilitate easy removal of samples, with additional storage hidden inside the casework.*

This spread *The Floor Creator (above) and Backsplash Gallery (below) utilize touch screens to allow customers to display multiple options easily. The centrally located community table is flanked by pin-up areas emulating the experience of a designer's studio.*



FLOOR PLAN

- 1 ENTRY
- 2 DESIGN AREA
- 3 WOOD DISPLAY
- 4 TILE DISPLAY
- 5 KITCHEN DISPLAY
- 6 CARPET DISPLAY
- 7 DESIGNER LIBRARY
- 8 STORAGE
- 9 CONFERENCE ROOM
- 10 RESTROOMS

Contractor Structure Tone Southwest

Consultants MEP: Lippe & Associates Consulting Engineers;
INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY: Wirestone

Resources **UNIT PAVERS:** Acme Brick; **SITE, STREET, AND MALL FURNISHINGS:** Design Within Reach; **STONE:** Acme Brick, Lone Star Stone, Tecno Art Marmi; **GRANITE:** Acme Brick; **MASONRY VENEER ASSEMBLIES:** Acme Brick; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** Johnston Products of Dallas; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Innovative Millwork Systems; **LAMINATES:** Panolam (Innovative Millwork Systems), Formica; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS**

AND FRAMES: VT Industries, Windsor Republic Doors, Schlage Lock; **GYPSON BOARD FRAMING AND ACCESSORIES:** USG; **WOOD FLOORING AND CEILINGS:** Shaw (Acme Brick); **WALL COVERINGS:** Maharam; **EXTERIOR WALL TILE:** Acme Brick; **AWNINGS:** Victory Awning; **MANUFACTURED CASEWORK:** Faubion Associates; **BOOTH AND TABLES:** Allermuir

Re-Tailoring Retail

by Aaron Seward

Project Rackspace Corporate Headquarters Phase 3, Windcrest
Client Rackspace
Architect Studio 8 Architects
Design team Milton Hime, AIA; Ethan Glass, AIA; Julie Petri; Jennifer Carter; Megan Moshier; Marisa Grande
Photographer Lars Frazer Photography

Project McAllen Public Library, McAllen
Client City of McAllen
Architect of Record Boultinghouse Simpson Gates Architects (BSG)
Design Team Robert S. Simpson, AIA; John Gates, AIA; Danny Boultinghouse, AIA; Charlie Garcia III, AIA
Library and Interior Design Consultants Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle (MS&R)
Design Team Jack Poling, AIA; Steven Rothe; Leanne Larson; Jessica Harner
Photographers Boultinghouse Simpson Gates Architects; Lara Swimmer Photography

Project Montgomery Plaza, Fort Worth
Client Marquis Group
Architect Swaback Partners
Design team John E. Sather, AIA; Joe Conk; Nadar Kavekeb; Katherine Pullen; Maika Winter
Photographers Craig Smith Photography; Shands Photographics

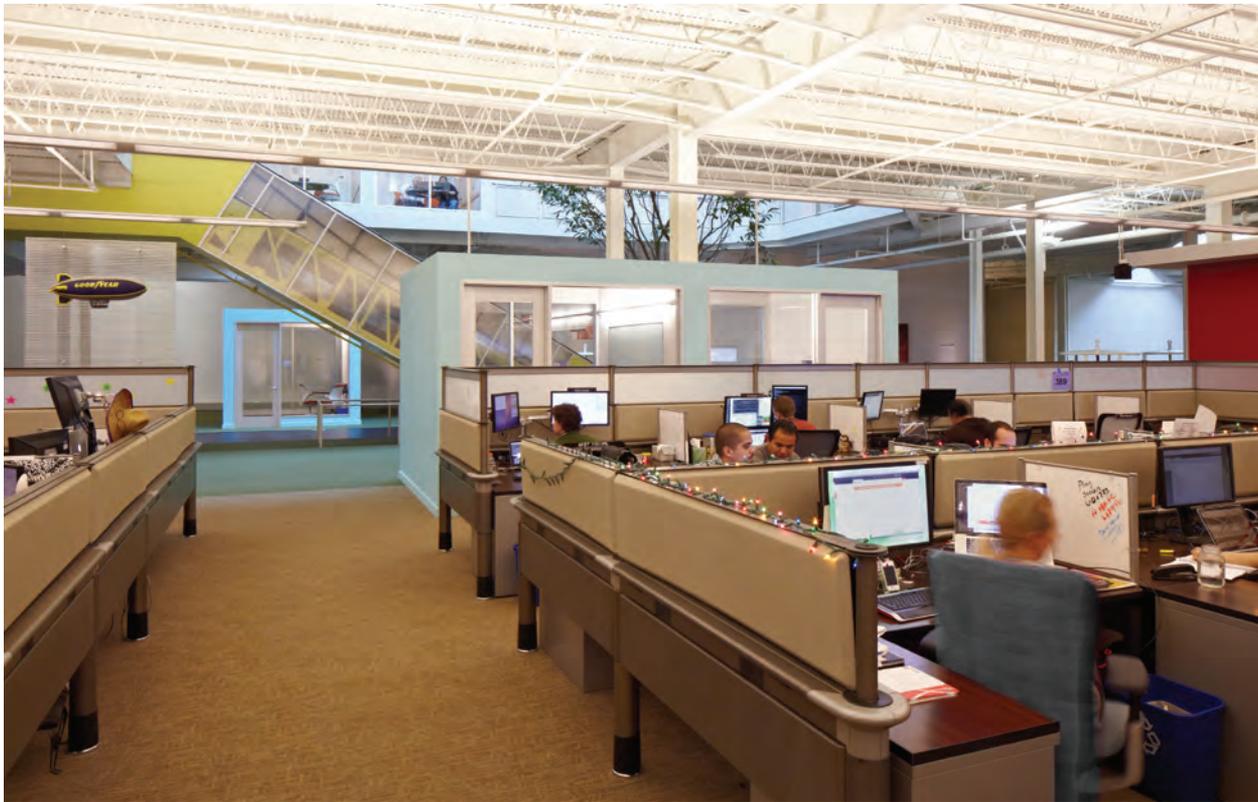
In towns and cities across Texas — and the rest of the country for that matter — there's no shortage of vacant buildings that were once home to bustling retail businesses. The socioeconomic reasons for these vacancies are too numerous to describe here, but the effect on local communities is a bit easier to sum up: dereliction. Whether it's a big box retailer that moved out of one location into a bigger box down the highway, a mom-and-pop shop in an old downtown that closed its doors after its customers were lured away by the big box's lower prices, or an entire shopping mall that withered on the vine due to competition from a newer and glitzier shopping mall, the neighborhoods that these businesses once served are left with an ulcerous patch of blight. Left alone, these abandoned structures soon give way to nature's destructive powers, eventually attracting vandals and other antisocial characters, and as a consequence, property prices in the vicinity decline.

One solution is demolition — and it's not necessarily a bad one considering that a large portion of the building stock erected for retail uses, especially in the second half of the 20th century, was flimsy to begin with and has subsequently aged poorly. Another solution, if the bones of the building are good enough, is repurposing the structure for a different type of tenant, one that will keep up the building and, hopefully, become an asset, rather than a handicap, to the community.

Of these two possibilities, there is a growing trend in the latter. Real estate developers, private companies, and even governments are taking an increasing interest in these derelict buildings. New users are drawn to former retail spaces by the savings in construction costs inherent in not building from the ground-up, and by these structure's locations in populated areas along major commercial thoroughfares. In choosing to inhabit them, they are breathing new life into neglected stretches of the urban fabric. They are also presenting architects with a new series of design challenges.

The following three projects — Rackspace Hosting (an internet company in the old Windsor Park Mall in San Antonio), the McAllen Public Library (in an old Walmart), and Montgomery Plaza (a condominium in an old Montgomery Ward facility in Fort Worth) — offer a cross section of some of the design concerns and sociological effects of this phenomenon.





Previous page Studio 8 inserted built-out rooms in the mall's main circulation space that provide conference room functions.

Left The conference cubes also help to provide acoustical separation between the main circulation areas and the open office space.

Rackspace Hosting

The Windsor Park Mall in Windcrest, northeast of San Antonio off of I-35, opened in 1975. It operated as a prosperous retail hub through the mid 1990s, when competition from the newer Rolling Oaks Mall, some seven miles away, and rising incidents of crime, including a couple of shootings, caused a mass exodus of its tenants. By 2005, the old shopping center was vacant and shuttered. It played a brief role in housing refugees from hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and then receded back into its funereal state of obsolescence. The surrounding neighborhood wilted as satellite businesses moved on to greener pastures.

In 2006, Rackspace Hosting — an internet hosting and cloud computing company that services clients around the globe — purchased the mall with an eye toward turning the building into its operations headquarters. In two initial phases of construction, the company occupied one of the erstwhile department stores. Then, in 2010, it hired San Antonio- and Austin-based firm Studio 8 Architects to help it expand into the mall's main circulation corridor.

"There were a couple of challenges with this project," says Julie Petri, an interior designer at Studio 8. "Because Rackspace has an open office culture and the mall is so large, there's a navigation issue. Also, they wanted to have more of a connection with the outside, which is difficult to do when you're in a million-sf mall."

To tackle the latter problem, Studio 8 punched new openings in the exterior and clad them with transparent glass window walls. The firm also took advantage of the existing skylights by opening up the second-floor plate with lightwells, which flood the interior with natural light.

Studio 8 arranged the open office spaces around the circulation corridor, which Rackspace prosaically refers to as its "Main Street." This created

"The great thing is that with Rackspace buying the mall, revitalizing it, and repurposing it, it has revived the neighborhood."

issues not only with wayfinding, but also with acoustical separation; the mall's exposed steel ceilings offer little in the way of sound dampening. The architects solved both issues by erecting support bars to separate the offices — standard low-panel cubicle farms — from the circulation. The support bars accommodate such functions as printing, conference rooms, and restrooms, and are painted bright colors and adorned with graphics — cereal box logos, science fiction movie posters, and the like — which aids in intuitive wayfinding. Freestanding conference cubes with translucent ceilings and glazed walls provide additional separation along Main Street.

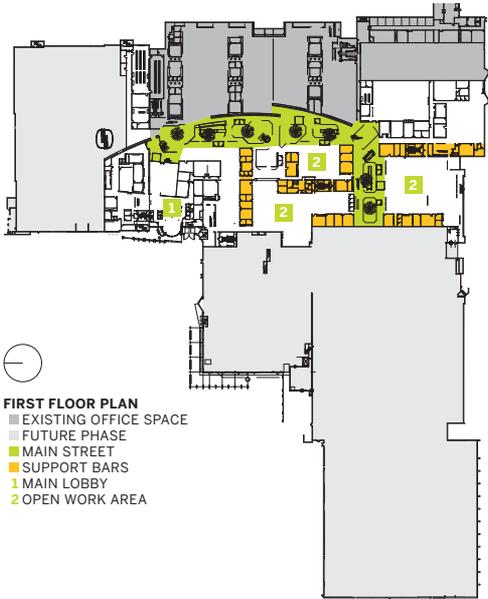
With this Phase 3 expansion, Rackspace now occupies some 500,000 sf of the old Windsor Park Mall, leaving plenty more space to grow in the future. The company employs some 3,000 people at the location, a factor that has had a ripple effect in the vicinity. "The great thing is that with Rackspace buying the mall, revitalizing it, and repurposing it, it has revived the neighborhood," says Petri. "Restaurants have come in to feed the employees. It's helping the community."

McAllen Public Library

The main public library in the border town of McAllen is housed in what used to be a Walmart. It may sound a bit ludicrous, but according to Jack Poling, AIA, a senior principal at MS&R, the firm that redesigned the interior, the old big box store was not an unintuitive choice for the typology. "What you have is a big rectangular box with an entry in the middle

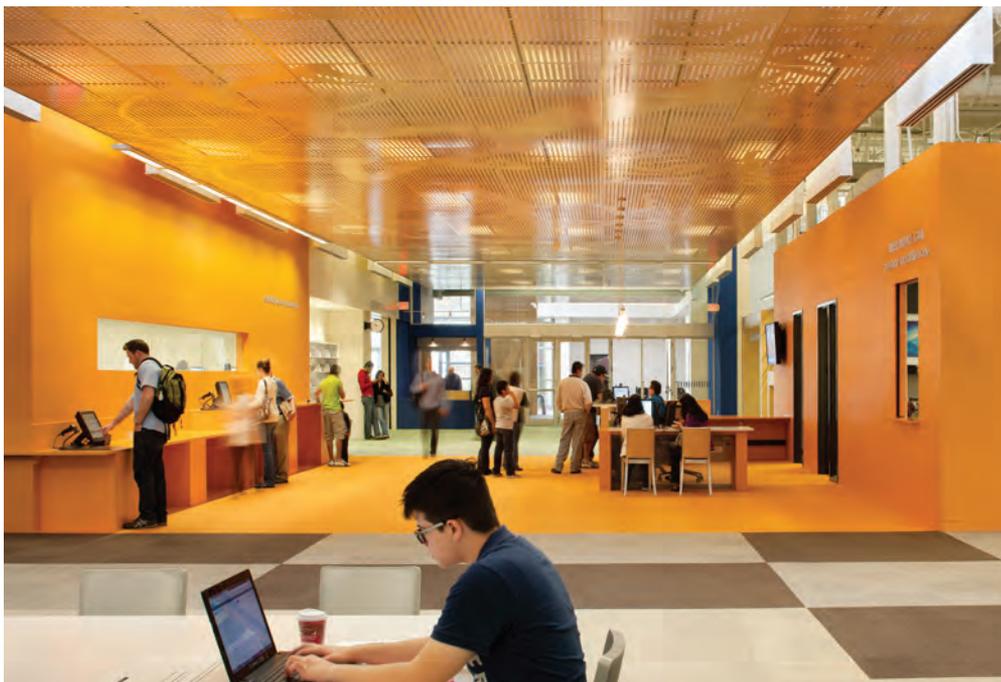


Clockwise from left *The architects took advantage of the mall's skylights to flood the interior with natural light. Studio 8 added a modest entry atrium to the back of the mall building. The reception and waiting area are simply finished. The escalator and a coffee bar maintain the connection to the building's past as a shopping mall.*



Right and bottom right
Colorful pendants and other architectural elements break the neutral white color palette of the big box interior, aiding in intuitive wayfinding.

Bottom left *A strip of suspended perforated wood ceiling marks the main circulation passageway from the entrance to the back of the library.*





Above *The children's area is immediately adjacent to the entrance.*

Right *A large porte cochere, a water feature, and a landscaped seating area transformed the former Walmart parking lot into a public plaza.*



- FLOOR PLAN**
- PERFORATED WOOD CEILING
 - 1 ENTRY
 - 2 CHILDREN
 - 3 TEENS
 - 4 ADULTS
 - 5 COMPUTERS
 - 6 MEETING SPACE
 - 7 STAFF
 - 8 SERVICE
 - 9 AUDITORIUM

facing a parking lot,” he says. “That’s functionally a good starting point.” The challenge came in laying out the library’s programmatic elements on a single massive floor covering 124,500 sf. “Libraries, when they get to be bigger than 40,000 sf, are separated onto two floors for good reason,” continues Poling. “When patrons arrive, they expect to get to the area they want to use without walking 100 yards.”

To get around this problem, MS&R — the library consultant for local firm Boultinghouse Simpson Gates Architects (BSG) — located the circulation desk near the center of the floorplate and arranged the remainder of the programmatic elements in surrounding quadrants. This minimizes the distance any visitor has to walk to check out a book or ask the staff for help.

To delineate this plan, the firm hung a strip of perforated wooden ceiling above the east-to-west axis, which runs above a walkway from the entrance, to the circulation desk, and then into the back of the library. The

The challenge came in laying out the library’s programmatic elements on a single massive floor covering 124,500 sf.

north-to-south axis is demarcated with a meandering orange wall that houses support functions, such as group study rooms.

Within that basic structure, MS&R laid out the rest of the library’s sections based upon how important it was for them to be beside the entrance. For example, the firm placed the children’s section toward the front of the building, immediately to the left of the door. “You want to get children in as quickly as you can,” says Poling. On the right side of the entrance, the architects placed the computer lab and public meeting room, as both will remain open after the rest of the library closes. An auditorium is tucked into the far corner next to the meeting room. That left the adult section and staff offices, which are located in the back left and right quadrants respectively.

Throughout the cavernous space, which was painted a neutral white, the architects used color and pattern to orient visitors, aid in wayfinding, and create more intimate areas. Large colorful pendants hang down from the ceiling calling out where to go to find fiction, non-fiction, large-print books, etc., while color blocks in the carpet indicate pathways through the stacks.

Outside, the formidable big box received a facelift as well. “The city of McAllen didn’t want the library to look like a Walmart,” says Robert Simpson, a principal at BSG. This meant breaking up the long, flat front. To accomplish this, BSG added a taller section to the middle of the facade and cut out floor-to-ceiling swatches of the CMU wall, replacing them with glass window walls.

The architects also added a monumentally sized, 20-ft-high *porte cochere* supported by cast-in-place concrete sections with semi-circular cutouts. This outsized portico links to a landscaped plaza in the middle of the parking lot with a water feature and vegetated berms. Initially, the city elected to plant Texas Sabal Palm Trees in the plaza, but half of them died during the drought. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise, however, as the city opted to replace the dead palms with live oaks. “The trees need time to mature,” says Simpson, “but they will make it a much more appropriately shady space.”

This spread *The developers removed a six-floor section of the building to open up a pedestrian-scaled retail street connecting with West 7th Street. The 80-foot-wide street adds a patch of urban density to Fort Worth's west side. The interiors of the condos bank on the industrial loft qualities of the historic building.*



Montgomery Plaza

The West 7th Street corridor in Fort Worth, which forms the northern boundary of the city's cultural district, has been undergoing a revival of late with the opening of new bars, restaurants, shops, and other signs of economic stimulus. In large part, this growth can be attributed to the opening of Montgomery Plaza in 2009. This luxury condominium, housed in a 1930s Mission Revival-style former Montgomery Ward warehouse and department store, brought a new breed of affluent customer to the area — one interested in urban living and enjoying the good life.

Plano-based Marquis Group purchased the upper seven floors of the solid, cast-in-place concrete warehouse building in 2004 with the idea of turning it into a residential community. They hired Scottsdale, Arizona-based architectural practice Swaback Partners to deliver a design that would go beyond subdividing each floor into the optimal number of condos. "A lot of our work in the past three decades has been based on the development of community," says Swaback partner John Sather, AIA. "In new towers and in urban refill projects like this, we talk about vertical communities. The question for us was how could we make the floors interact, how could we bring these people together, how could we maintain the connectivity of a horizontal community when going vertical?"

In working through this problem, Swaback Partners was given an assist by the framework of the existing structure. "Because of the column bay spacing, we had in various places wider corridor areas than one would normally create if you built from the ground up under today's economics," says Sather. The architects used this extra square footage to create social gathering spaces on each floor, some clustered around fireplaces. This strategy also caused each floor to have a unique plan, giving a different feel to the interior than the typical homogeneity you get with a double-loaded corridor in a high-rise building. They also sprinkled the

Each floor has a unique plan, giving a different feel to the interior than the typical homogeneity you get with a double-loaded corridor in a high-rise building

tenant amenities in various locations throughout the seven floors, rather than packing them all onto one floor. A demonstration kitchen, theater and media room, post office, and fitness room are spread throughout the building — some at the entries, some flanking a pedestrian bridge at the upper floors, and some in a mid-level section — encouraging residents to travel to floors they don't live on, where they will inevitably bump into their neighbors.

Swaback Partners placed Montgomery Plaza's biggest amenity on the roof: a 66-ft swimming pool surrounded by a deck, private cabanas, fire pits, and a relaxation spa. While the dispersed amenities of the lower floors give residents a reason to travel throughout the interior, the rooftop pool creates a social anchor point to the entire community. Again, here the existing structure gave the architects an assist, as the cast-in-place reinforced concrete frame was robust enough to handle the additional loads of the pool.

Montgomery Plaza's 240 condos occupy floors three through seven, and the ground and second floors of the building are dedicated to commercial space. As part of the renovation, Marquis Group removed a six-story portion of the front of the building, leaving the upper floors connected by pedestrian bridges. The move opened up an 80-ft-wide pedestrian promenade between the two towers of the formerly U-shaped structure. Now occupied by sidewalk cafes and retail shops, this design gesture has drawn the vibrancy of West 7th Street onto the grounds of the development and brought a patch of urban density to Fort Worth's west side.



STREET LEVEL PLAN
 1 CONDO LOBBY
 2 RETAIL
 3 RESTAURANT
 4 PARKING RAMP
 5 PARKING
 6 PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE

Conclusion

The underlying assumption of this article is that occupied buildings are better than those without occupants — not just better for the buildings themselves, but better for their surrounding communities. Much of what was covered in the preceding paragraphs supports that assumption well enough. However, there is another perspective.

In the wake of the completion of the McAllen Public Library — which garnered a flurry of national media attention (see ‘Recognition’ page 19), most of it favorable — Robert Simpson was surprised to read a handful of dissenting voices, mostly in the comment sections of various architecture and design blogs. In sum, the objections centered on the idea that in choosing to move its library into an old big box store, the City of McAllen has reinforced the urban sprawl car culture that has come to be seen as unsustainable, as opposed to investing in its historic, pedestrian-friendly core. Simpson had a rebuttal: “People asked us, what did you do that was green? The number one thing we did is not dump a giant building in the landfill.”

The fact of the matter is that most of the built environment in Texas is designed on the sprawl model. This is because the state’s major period of urban growth occurred after World War II, when nearly every American expected to have a two-car garage and a house surrounded by a sizeable yard. Many of us, of course, still expect that. But, as Montgomery Plaza shows, there is a growing interest in Texas in density, urban living, and the vibrancy that they create on the street. As our state’s cities continue to grow at their remarkable pace, this dichotomy, if nothing else, will continue to be a lively subject of debate. Architects will want to be in on that conversation.

Aaron Seward is an architecture writer and critic currently residing in Brooklyn, NY.



Hand-Pitched Appeal

Cordillera Stone

Lewis Energy Group built a community center “to celebrate the natural beauty of the area and the people who live in Encinal, Texas,” with walls of Featherlite Cordillera Stone. Cordillera concrete masonry units echo the hand-pitched natural stone of historic Texas courthouses.

Fifteen standard colors and nine custom blends include the community center’s subtle Sonora, complemented by half-height Padre Island Sand. Nominal bed depths can be 4, 6, 8, 10, or 12 inches, all with a nominal face dimension of 8x16 or 4x16 inches.

Cordillera Stone is engineered for single-wythe and veneer applications, incorporating DRY-BLOCK® integrated water repellent. Made in Converse, near San Antonio, Cordillera ships across most of Texas and neighboring states within the 500-mile radius for LEED-credited “regional materials.”

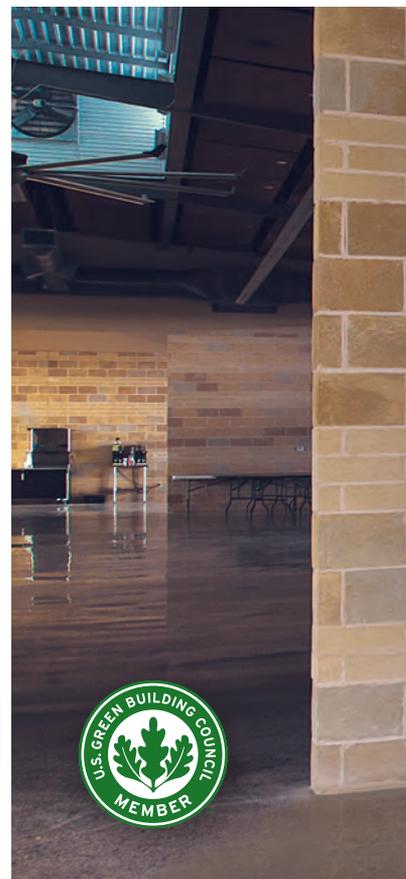
Look for Cordillera when you download Masonry Designer, Acme’s design studio for brick, block, and stone, available free at brick.com. Or contact your local Acme representative for more information about the unique appeal of Cordillera Stone.

architect

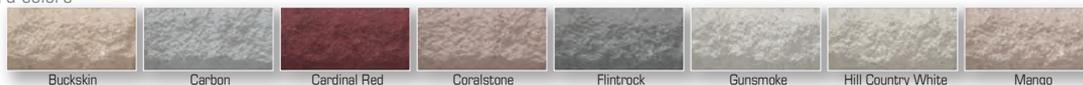
John Grable Architects
San Antonio

contractor

Leyendecker Construction
Laredo



standard colors



Buckskin Carbon Cardinal Red Coralstone Flintrock Gunsmoke Hill Country White Mango



Navajo Padre Island Sand Riviera Sierra Terrastone Umber Western Gold

custom blends



Alamo Chalk La Cantera Madera Monterrey Pedernales Salado San Miguel Sonora Veracruz





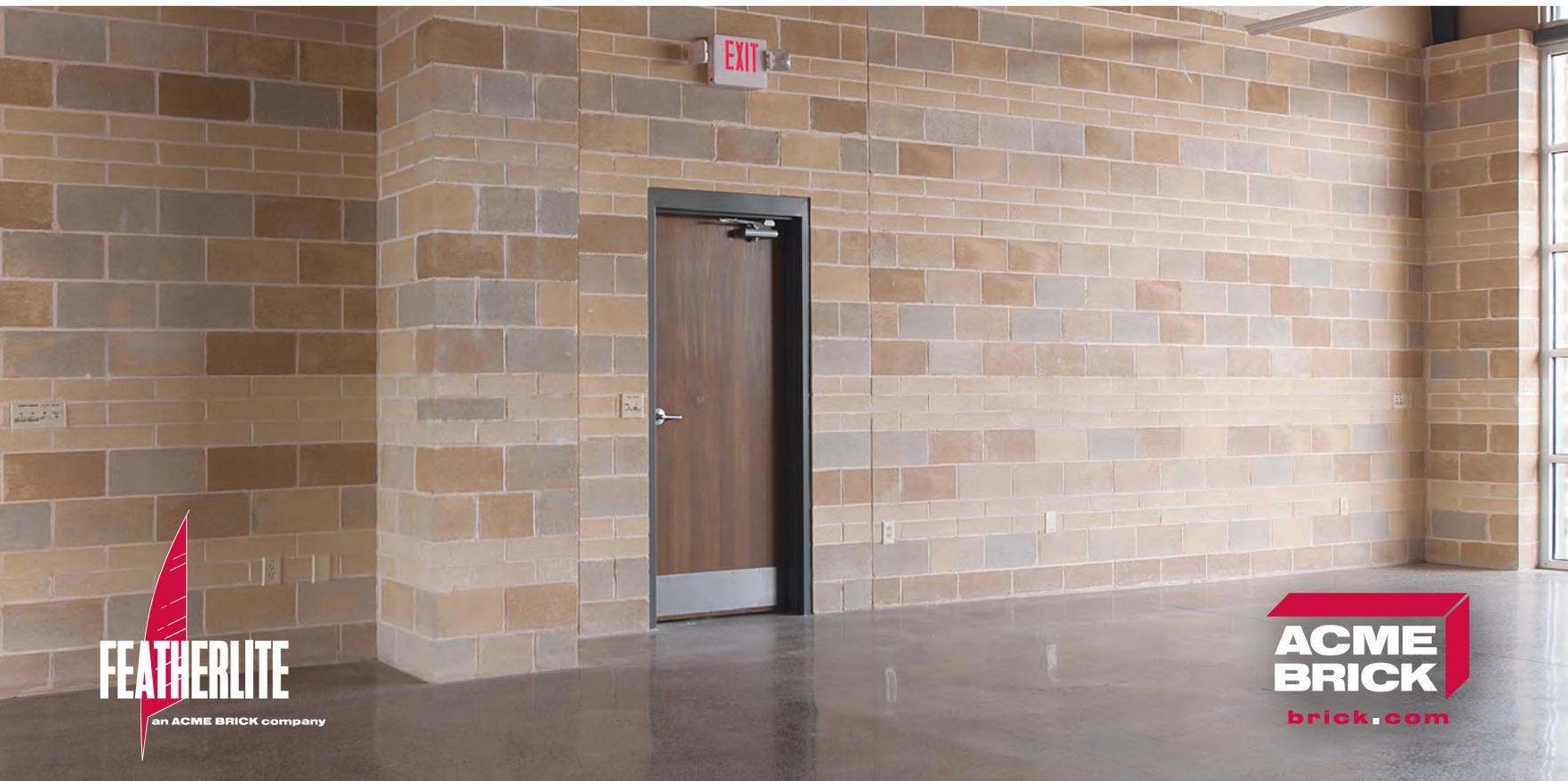
“We consider Cordillera a bellwether low-maintenance regional material with time-honored rough-hewn character.”

“Architecture matters, when it’s rooted in things that are real and tell a story. This design began with our client’s deep respect for the land, reflected in shades of Cordillera Stone that blend well with the South Texas landscape. The company’s

story unfolds in belt lines of Cordillera that mimic the strata of the earth in oil-and-gas boring logs. Cordillera’s smooth inside face fascinated us as a natural interior finish for an all-in-one building system. Half a dozen buildings later, we are well pleased

with this utilitarian product that is durable enough to handle monsoon rains and desert sun. We consider Cordillera a bellwether low-maintenance regional material with time-honored rough-hewn character.”

— John Grable, FAIA





Setting a New Standard

by Audrey Maxwell, Associate AIA

Project Zan Wesley Holmes Jr. Middle School, Dallas

Client Dallas Independent School District

Architect Perkins+Will

Design team Patrick Glenn, AIA; Kevin Mereness; Matthew Crummey, AIA; Angela Whitaker-Williams, AIA; Courtney Johnston; Lecia Mavros; Matthew Johnson (graphics)

Photographer Charles Davis Smith, AIA



Having just opened its doors this past fall, Zan Wesley Holmes Jr. Middle School (ZHMS) is one of 14 new Dallas ISD schools made possible by a 2008 bond program. The 202,000-sf facility houses grade levels 6-8 and will eventually be home to 1,250 students. Working alongside leaders of Dallas ISD, the Perkins+Will team set out to create a school that met the evolving needs of 21st century students. The end result is a premium facility for learning, where flexibility reigns supreme, engagement is encouraged, and sustainable features are seamlessly integrated.

Formerly, the site was slated to be an extension of the adjacent residential development, but the economic downturn brought about that project's demise. Roads, streetlights, and other infrastructure stood overgrown and abandoned when the architectural team first surveyed the area. Now, sleek aluminum masses, marked by long expanses of windows, stretch out along the generous 29.3-acre site. The media center/library volume seems to extrude out of its own aluminum shell, its facade folding up and over to

Despite the vast site area at their disposal, the architects chose to build up instead of out, thus minimizing the built footprint.

frame views of the lush tree line of the nearby Oak Cliff Nature Preserve. The straightforward, yet thoughtful zoning of elements — parking and athletic zones flanking the building volumes — responds graciously to the landscape and modestly scaled neighborhood. The campus' unique site provides a bucolic academic setting, a retreat from the hustle and bustle of city life just beyond its edges.

Despite the vast site area at their disposal, the architects chose to build up instead of out, thus minimizing the footprint. Building masses strike a diagonal across the site, following its sloping contours. The change in grade is leveraged to create a three-story, split-level design with the main entry



filtering occupants into the intermediate level. Patrick Glenn, the principal architect, explains, “I think it’s important in a school this large that the main, social floor is the intermediate one. Studies have shown that in three- to four-story schools where the first floor is the main level, students on the upper floors are too disconnected and disengaged from the rest of the school because they are so far away. With this configuration, you only have to go up or down one level — the students are better connected.”

The cafeteria, music halls, auditorium, and art spaces on the intermediate floor are bookended by the lower-level gymnasium and upper-level media center/library. The administration block is tucked below the media center, standing watch over the school’s main entrance. Multiple access points and scattered parking allow isolated areas to open for public use —

The cafeteria, music halls, auditorium, and art spaces on the intermediate floor are bookended by the lower-level gymnasium and upper-level media center/library.

band concerts, plays, or basketball games — without necessitating access to the entire school facility.

A gracious corridor running the length of the building bisects the two programmatic zones: a linear arrangement of semi-public areas to the north and private classroom wings arranged in a sawtooth pattern to the south. This public street of sorts serves as both an acoustic buffer and connector between public and private spaces. It is the school’s center of social activity, a highly visible promenade where students interact under the watchful eyes of teachers and staff. The corridors are staggered vertically to allow daylight to penetrate even the lowest level. As students circulate along these thoroughfares, they are afforded views above and/or below, furthering interaction between the floors.

South of the corridor, classroom clusters branch off from the orthogonal bar of multipurpose program like fingers. Three core classrooms and a specialty classroom line the halls of each cluster with the science classroom in the “knuckle” opposite. Each level of the three-story wings is arranged

to accommodate Small Learning Communities (SLCs), which subdivide large student populations into smaller, more intimate groups of students and teachers. Teachers work together to streamline curricula and tackle student-specific issues while students benefit from a more personalized experience.

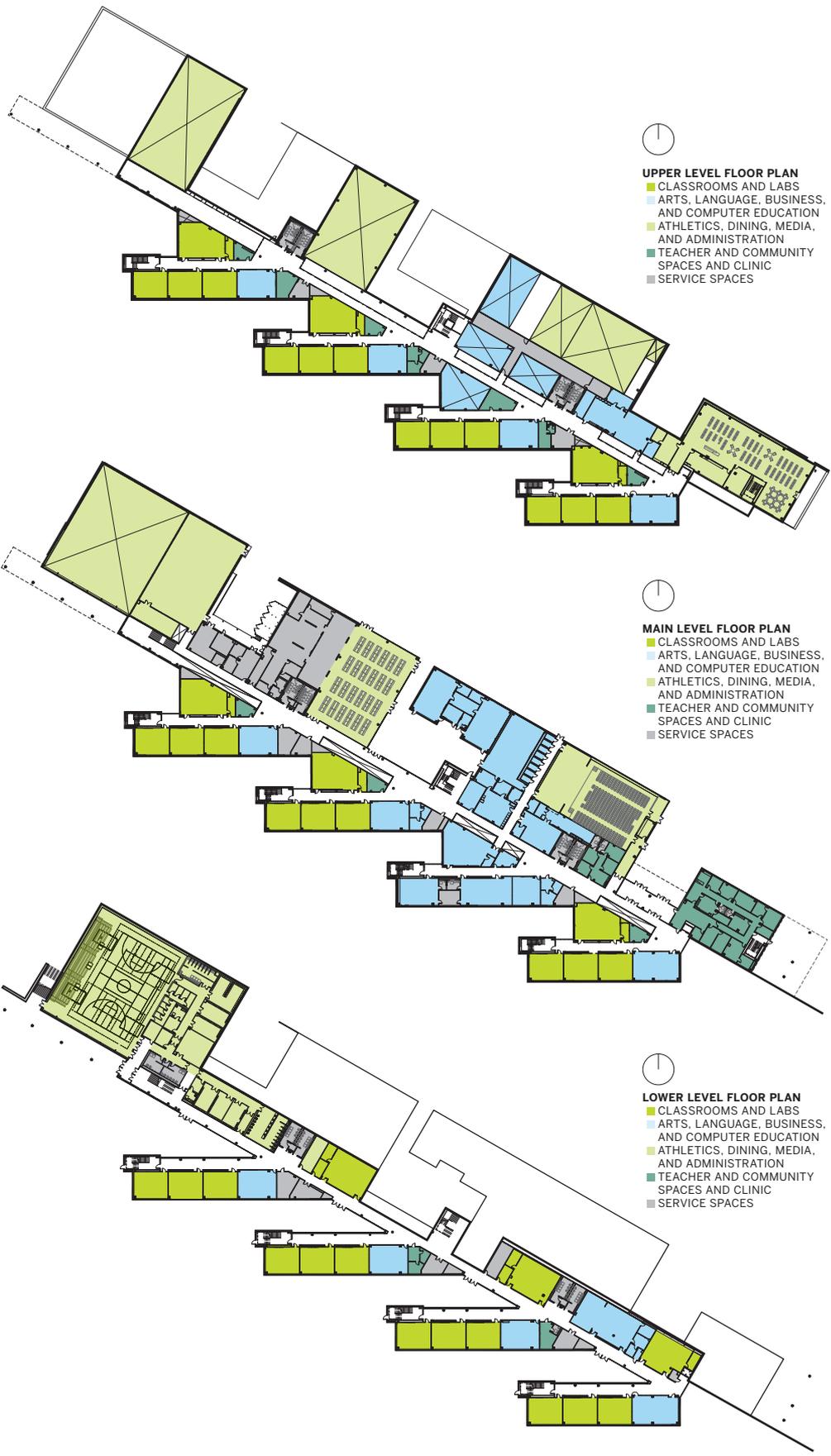
Administrative spaces are strategically dispersed amongst the private wings, augmenting student interaction with teachers and counselors. The inside corners are chamfered where each cluster converges on the main corridor to create a more gracious opening. These serve as intermediate gathering points that further encourage interaction.

Currently students are divided by both pods and grade level. Sixth graders begin on the lower level and make a purposeful ascension as they meet the milestone of each grade. The physical environment, so carefully tailored by Perkins+Will, supports the intimate atmosphere desirable in the SLC school structure, while allowing ample flexibility for future adaptations and developments.

By arranging the private wings in a sawtooth pattern and skewing them off-axis, the majority of classrooms are given a direct view to the nature preserve. Each block is clad with textured bands of metal panels, reminiscent of stratified rock formations, with slashes of windows shifting back and forth strategically within each band. Unlike many older schools, the typical classroom at ZHMS is awash with natural light from these horizontal bands of windows.

The technology-rich classrooms are equipped with digital displays that detect and adjust to the rooms’ light levels. This, along with several layers of lighting control, contributes to a bright environment suitable for focused learning. Principal Barbara Moham notes the difference: “This is huge because I came from a middle school where we had no windows. Not one! It was horrible, like a prison. I know it has made a positive difference on the students — just simply having sunlight.”

Students are also given physical connections to the outdoors. Nestled within the various programmatic volumes are outdoor gathering spaces. One such area is bound by the cafeteria, art rooms, and band hall, all of which have direct access to the secure courtyard. The glazed facades of



Previous spread *The cafeteria has abundant natural light and a visual connection to the main corridor and outdoor courtyard. The media center/library volume projects out over the administrative block. Its folded facade frames views of the adjacent nature preserve.*

Opposite page *The school as viewed from the main drive approach. The skewed classroom blocks cascade off into the distance. The retaining wall serves as the dividing line between the public and private zones.*

Contractor Rogers-O'Brien

Consultants **CIVIL:** Pacheco Koch; **LANDSCAPE:** SMR Landscape Architects; **STRUCTURAL:** Jaster-Quintanilla, L.A. Fuess Partners; **MEP:** Basharkhah Engineering; **KITCHEN:** Foodservice Design Professionals; **ROOFING:** Amtech Building Sciences

Resources **CONCRETE PAVEMENT:** Texas Industries; **ATHLETIC AND RECREATIONAL SURFACING:** Poloplaz; **FENCES, GATES, AND HARDWARE:** Merchants Metals; **RECREATIONAL FACILITY AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT:** Performance Sports Systems; **MASONRY UNITS:** Cloud Ceramics, Summit Brick Co., Interstate Brick (Blackson Brick Co.); **CAST STONE:** Advanced Cast Stone; **UNIT MASONRY WALL ASSEMBLIES:** Featherlite Building Products; **METAL DECKING:** Nucor Vulcraft Group (Russellville Steel); **ARCHITECTURAL METAL WORK:** Fine Line Metal Fabricators (Peachtree Stair Co); **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** McNicols (Peachtree Stair Co); **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart International

Clockwise from the top Students mingle in the school's "Main Street." The art classrooms benefit from direct access to a shared outdoor courtyard. Clerestory windows bring diffused light into the gymnasium. A birds-eye view down the main corridor shows a mural of Zan Wesley Holmes Jr., the school's namesake.

Opposite page The media center/library is perched atop the school like a tree house. The large open spaces look out on to views of the nature preserve.





both the cafeteria and adjacent corridor provide visual connections to the outdoor area while bringing in copious amounts of daylight. The space itself serves multiple functions: outdoor lunchroom one hour, outdoor art studio another.

Abundant daylighting and connections to the outdoors are just some of the sustainable principles underlying the school's design. The new facility meets the standards of the Collaborative for High Performing Schools (CHPS) adopted by Texas in 2009. This program seeks to create schools that improve student and staff health, enhance student performance, and increase a sense of community. It also aims to reduce environmental impact

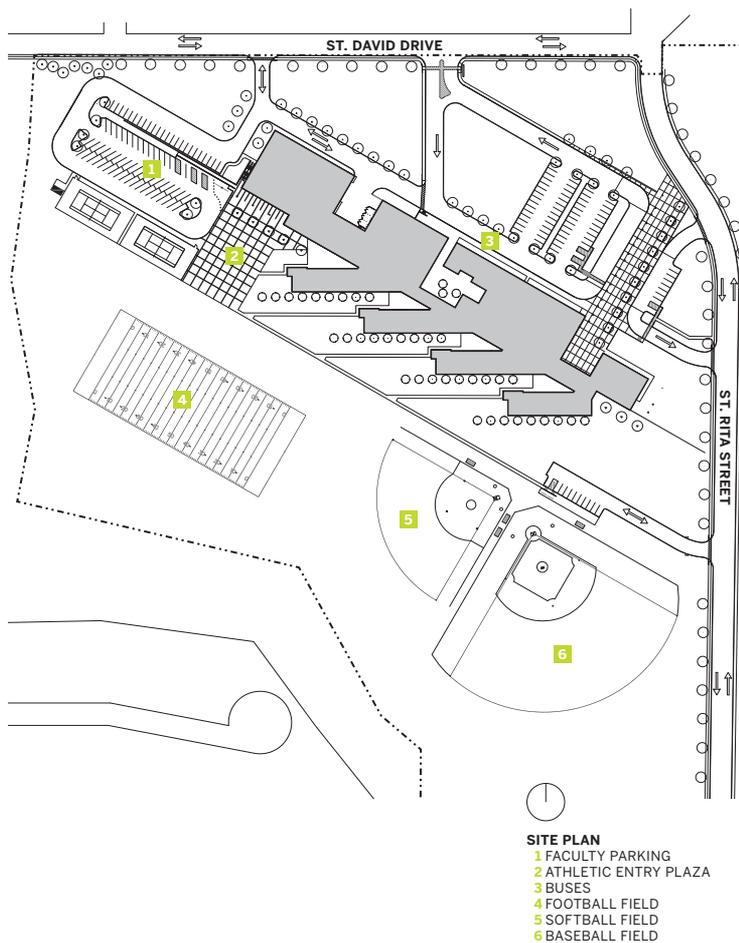
As part of this mission, the team developed a digital interactive application to educate students about the school's sustainable features.

and operating expenses. Perkins+Will incorporated several strategies to meet this mission, earning ZHMS points in the seven main categories: Leadership, Education and Innovation, Sustainable Sites, Water, Energy, Climate, Materials and Waste Management, and Indoor Environmental Quality.

As part of this mission, the team developed a digital interactive application to educate students about the school's sustainable features. The program can be accessed on a school computer or tablet device. Engaging graphics explain strategies such as daylighting, showing viewers how the building's orientation harnesses natural light and reduces the need for artificial lighting. Infographics illustrate how the school's use of water-efficient plumbing fixtures equates to real-time water savings — enough drinking water for 7,876 people a year! Students can even study a diagram describing the intricate workings of the ground source heat pump system used in lieu of a traditional HVAC system. And the school is already reaping the benefits of its energy-conscious facility. They have received over \$1,000 every month from the district through a program that rewards individual schools for cost savings through energy conservation.

ZHMS is an environmentally progressive building that truly embodies a 21st century school, using both technology and the facility itself to teach and promote environmental stewardship to younger generations. The modern, well-designed campus serves as an engaging learning environment, one full of light and new opportunity for Dallas ISD students. In the words of Principal Moham, "If there is one word that can describe our school, we use the word 'legendary'. That's what we are and what we do."

Audrey Maxwell, Assoc. AIA, is a senior designer with Michael Malone Architects in Dallas.



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...with Ardis Clinton, AIA

Article by Constance Adams, AIA

Photography by Nicole Mlaker

It was another hot Texas July — many in the Perkins+Will Houston office were at their desks seeking shelter from the scorching day. As they studiously focused on their work, the office was almost silent. Suddenly their thoughts were interrupted by the clanging bell of ... wait, was that the sound of an ice cream truck?

Down the studio floor came an ice cream cooler on a dolly. It was filled with traditional frozen treats like Drumsticks and Eskimo Pies, and an old-fashioned ice cream jingle played over a phone. Ardis Clinton, AIA, had decided that things were too stale in the office and took it upon herself to lighten things up.

“I like doing things that help boost the sense of community around me,” says Ardis. Now approaching her tenth anniversary at Perkins+Will, Ardis started there as an intern shortly after earning her B.Arch. from the University of Houston. She worked her way up to project manager and associate by impressing her superiors with her diligence, dedication, and almost uncanny ability to deliver even in the face of considerable challenges. Dave Mueller, managing director of the office, has been among her most encouraging mentors at the firm. “Whatever I ask Ardis to do, she does it in a big way,” he says.

When tasked by the networking group WISER (Women In Sales Executive Roles) last

year to find a dynamic speaker to address work/life balance issues, Ardis delivered Houston Mayor Annise Parker. Having cut her teeth at work on projects that were complex both technically and in terms of customer/shareholder diplomacy, like the Galveston National Laboratory biodefense facility and a new private aviation terminal at Houston Hobby Airport, Ardis is adept at both solving tectonic and formal problems and addressing the human management component that often accompanies them.

Ardis' focus on social intelligence is not limited to client interactions and networking. Taking a lead in coordinating Learning and Development activities for Perkins+Will, she has also found herself drawn to supporting the growth of new architecture professionals. “Both inside and out of the office,” says Ardis, “I work with architectural interns in assisting with acquiring their licensure.” From her involvement with the AIA Young Architects Forum and Intern Association Network to mentoring student design competitions and organizing intra-office charity contributions, Ardis is recognized for having contributed significantly to the life of the firm. According to Dave, she creates meaningful educational opportunities for interns and veteran colleagues who struggle to accumulate and main-

tain mandated education units,” and she “constantly explores vendors and specialists who can give insight into new products and techniques to enhance sustainability.”

“She is largely responsible for creating a great office environment where work deadlines are well

Ardis is largely responsible for creating a great office environment where work deadlines are well balanced with community efforts.

balanced with community efforts and team social gatherings,” says associate principal Filo Castore, AIA. “Ardis is one of the most versatile young architects out there. She is capable of multi-tasking very well and has a great general sense of both ultimate goals and immediate details.”

It is this combination of general and detail-oriented focus that led Ardis to start transitioning her work over the past few years from technical projects to higher education. “My passion lies in the belief that the buildings I work on are for the greater good,” says Ardis. “I chose higher education because a building can foster greater potential in students. It becomes a vessel inspiring collaboration and creativity.”

And she’s off to an impressive start. The new Student Center for Lone Star College she designed earned her a 2012 Apex Award. Also, when she was tasked less than two years ago with increasing higher education work for Perkins+Will in South Texas, one of her cold calls resulted in a new \$25 million science center project for a private university. Last September Ardis worked alongside industry leaders to lead a team of architecture students at the University of Houston in a two-day charrette hosted by Archifarm; the resulting conceptual design is to be used by the Houston Blues Museum as a tool to raise funds for future growth.

Like many of those in the generation to enter practice since 2000, Ardis combines a strong drive to achieve greater relevance in her work with a willingness to buckle down and take on the hard work necessary to get there. But for many young women in architecture, as in other professions, the hard work gets even more complicated when a punishing professional schedule comes head to head with raising a family.

In response to the challenges of juggling office expectations in the larger firms with feeding schedules and daycare, many female colleagues have left the firm environment for an independent

practice, gaining autonomy but, for some, limiting the type of projects they are likely to secure.

As the gender gap closes, though, this generation seems to be doing a particularly good job of balancing responsibilities between partners. In this respect, Ardis and her husband, Alex Clinton, stand as an excellent example of what is possible in a truly integrated personal/professional relationship. The two met at Perkins+Will not long after Ardis started there in 2003, and after a year and a half of semi-clandestine dating, they were married. While this pattern is not uncommon, especially given the all-or-nothing nature of architectural practice, the fact that they have managed to stay together in the same firm is unusual. According to Alex, “We’ve seen two similar in-house romances lead to marriage; the individuals eventually moved on to other firms and different firms from one another. We’re still hanging in there in the same office. The principals make an effort to keep us from working on the same project together, and we are kept at relatively opposite ends of the office to help maintain our individuality a bit.”

Staying apart during the workday may be even more important to the Clintons now that they are raising twin sons. Since Aron and Aden’s arrival four years ago, the hours in the HOV lane commuting to and from the office are essential coordination time for this ambitious and busy pair. “Communication is critical,” says Alex. “We each know what the other is working on and can appreciate all of the demands. If one of us needs to work over the weekend to get a project out the door or meet a milestone, the other one steps up and takes care of business on the home front. It’s definitely a team effort and not without its challenges.”

Whether the Clintons’ open willingness to work as a team on domestic matters represents a cultural shift in the architectural profession remains to be seen. Certainly, Ardis finds her focus more on social and community relevance than on overcoming gender challenges at work; and this, one hopes, may make her an outstanding example of the contributions her generation will be making to the field at large.

Constance Adams, AIA, practices architecture for civil and commercial space exploration, and she was Ardis Clinton’s studio professor at the University of Houston.

Ardis likes to promote communities and wants people to engage and interact with one another — this is evident in her projects, like the Student Activities Center at Lone Star College shown on the previous spread, and her work mentoring students at the University of Houston.





Ardis and her husband, Alex, have worked at Perkins+Will together since 2003. The couple juggles professional demands while raising twin sons, Aron and Aden. Ardis is dedicated to fostering community both in the office and among her students. She regularly works with young professionals assisting them in navigating continuing education credits.

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BBVA Compass Stadium

Project BBVA Compass Stadium, Houston

Client Houston Dynamo Stadium

Architect Populous

Design team Dennis Wellner, AIA; Chris Lee; Jeff Spear, AIA; Alan Bossert; Bruce Beahm, AIA; Jim Jamis, AIA

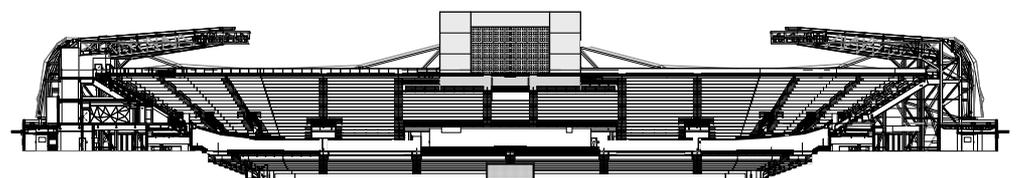
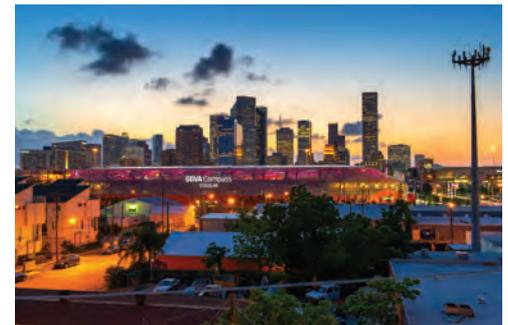
Photographer Geoffrey Lyons

The core of Houston's East Downtown Redevelopment Plan and the new home of Major League Soccer team the Houston Dynamo, BBVA Compass Stadium sets a unique precedent for American sports stadia and innovative design for the region.

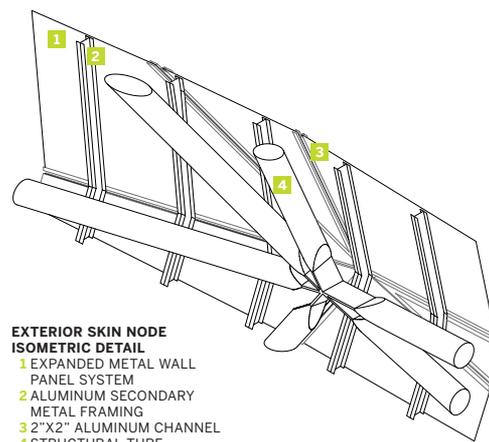
Designed by Populous and completed in May 2012, the 22,000-seat stadium sits on 12 acres of land and is closer to its downtown than any other soccer stadium in the country. The design approach makes use of simple utilitarian materials that echo the area's industrial heritage, while creating a distinctive civic statement in an emerging urban neighborhood.

Situated on a six-block site near other Houston landmarks, such as Minute Maid Park and the George R. Brown Convention Center, the 343,500-sf stadium is instantly recognizable due to its distinctive facade. The stadium skin consists of 94,000 sf of expanded aluminum sheets, arranged in a tessellated pattern, that allow air to circulate throughout the facility. Polycarbonate infill in the Dynamo's signature color, orange, brands the stadium and highlights articulated openings in the skin, which range from pedestrian-scaled ticketing windows to three-story general spectator entries. The continuous exterior surface provides a dynamic sense of enclosure while enhancing the spectator experience.

BBVA Compass Stadium has an expansion capacity of 30,000 seats. It was designed to feature soccer, but fans of many other events, including football, lacrosse, rugby, and concerts, will also have the opportunity to benefit from the stadium's clear sightlines and intimate setting. ■



SECTION



EXTERIOR SKIN NODE ISOMETRIC DETAIL
 1 EXPANDED METAL WALL PANEL SYSTEM
 2 ALUMINUM SECONDARY METAL FRAMING
 3 2"x2" ALUMINUM CHANNEL
 4 STRUCTURAL TUBE

Contractor Manhattan Construction

Consultants **LANDSCAPE:** Clark Condon Associates; **LIGHTING:** M-E Engineers; **ACOUSTICAL:** WJHW; **FOOD SERVICE:** Duray; **PLAYING FIELD:** Millennium Sports; **INTERIOR DESIGNER:** Populous; **GRAPHIC DESIGNER:** Populous; **STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Walter P. Moore; **CIVIL ENGINEER:** WGA; **MEP ENGINEER:** M-E Engineers; **LIFE SAFETY ENGINEER:** Howe Engineers

Resources **FENCES, GATES, AND HARDWARE:** Deacero; **RETAINING WALLS:** Trinity Wall Systems; **MASONRY UNITS:** Camarata Masonry Systems; **METAL DECKING:** Vulcraft; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Buda Woodworks; **AWNINGS:** Avadek; **ROOF AND WALL PANELS:** Crown Corr-AMICO; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** GAF Single-Ply TPO (Reliable Commercial Roofing Services); **TILE:** Dal-Tile; **GLASS:** Viracon; **DESIGN SOFTWARE:** Revit; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** YKK; **STRUCTURAL GLASS CURTAINWALL:** Nana Wall

Portfolio: Stadia

Salt River Fields at Talking Stick

Project Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Arizona

Client Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

Architect HKS

Design team Morris A. Stein, FAIA; Andrew C. Henning, AIA; Byron Chambers; Kevin Suter; M. Ellen Mitchell, AIA; Thomas H. Smith, AIA; Deva Powell, AIA

Photographer Blake Marvin

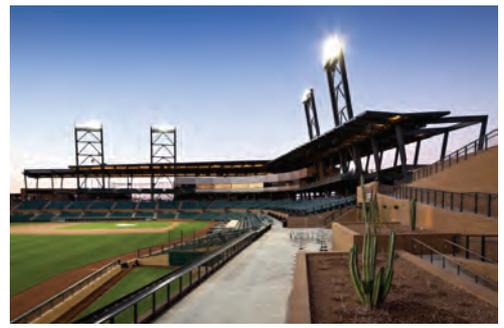
Completed in January 2011 by HKS, the new spring training home of the Arizona Diamondbacks and Colorado Rockies consists of an 11,000-seat ballpark, 18 practice fields, two clubhouses, covered batting cages, and administrative offices. It is situated on 144 acres on the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and is the first such facility to be both LEED Gold-certified and located on tribal land.

The design of Salt River Fields was inspired by significant cultural values and characteristics embodied by its Native American community. For example, the orientation of the various buildings harkens back to the concept of traditional Huhugam dwellings. These ancient homes evolved and developed around a central courtyard and shared walls. Similarly, the new facility centers on the main ballpark while its interconnecting elements radiate outward.

The ballpark and various fields were carved from the land and arranged to create an intimate seating environment, framing and taking advantage of the breathtaking natural surroundings and views. At times, the architecture serves as a backdrop to the lush native landscape, and at other times, it reinforces the natural color palette and forms found in the community. Other interesting features of this complex include a main shade canopy designed as a modern reinterpretation of the traditional ramada shade structure, and clubhouse buildings that serve as a central home for all team activity.

The design team limited the use of team colors and branding to the team clubhouse and practice areas. Subtle layers of earthen colors are balanced with the native landscape to complete the overall design composition throughout the entire complex.

The exterior color palette was inspired by the rocks found at the convergence of the Salt River, and many of the venue's raw materials were taken from earthen excavations located on community lands. Further connections to the land, as well as the stewardship that the Community

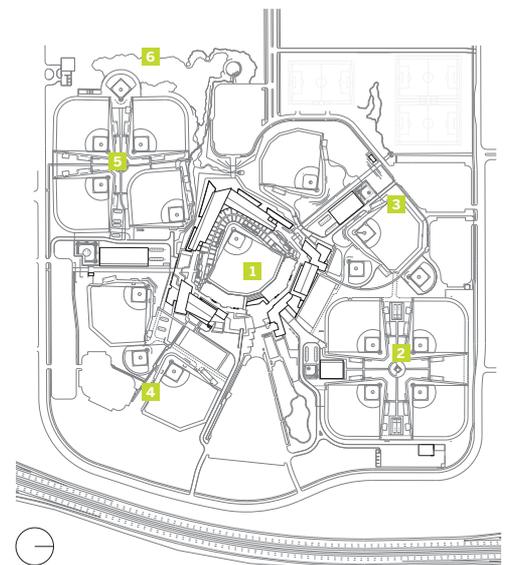


has for the entire valley, are found in the project's sustainable elements. These include siting the stadium and relocating vegetation to provide for maximum shade; passive water harvesting via desert arroyos and an onsite retention pond; and a displacement ventilation system that focuses air conditioning only in the occupied spaces, among others. ■

Contractor M.A. Mortensen Company

Consultants **STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING:** HKS Structures; **SUSTAINABILITY:** HKS DesignGreen; **INTERIOR DESIGN:** HKS Interiors; **MEP ENGINEERING:** WSP Flack + Kurtz; **CIVIL ENGINEERING:** Lloyd Consulting Group; **FOOD SERVICE:** Systems Design International; **WAYFINDING:** FocusEGD; **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE:** Ten Eyck; **ADA/ACCESSIBILITY:** Access By Design

Resources **UNIT PAVERS:** Acker-Stone; **ATHLETIC AND RECREATIONAL SURFACING:** Astroturf; **ROOF AND WALL PANELS:** Centria; **METAL DECKING:** Epic Metals; **ATHLETIC FLOORING:** Mondo USA; **WHIRLPOOLS, SPAS, AND HOT TUBS:** Hydroworx; **GLASS:** Viracon; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** Kawneer



- SITE PLAN**
- 1 MAIN STADIUM
 - 2 DIAMONDBACKS MINOR LEAGUE FIELDS
 - 3 DIAMONDBACKS MAJOR LEAGUE FIELDS
 - 4 ROCKIES MAJOR LEAGUE FIELDS
 - 5 ROCKIES MINOR LEAGUE FIELDS
 - 6 COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP TRAIL



BRIK is an interactive portal to professionally reviewed research and case studies on all facets of the built environment.

New Site Provides Easy Access to Research on the Built Environment

The Building Research Information Knowledgebase (BRIK) is a new resource from the American Institute of Architects and the National Institute of Building Sciences. The website, www.brikbase.org, is an interactive portal connecting individuals to professionally reviewed research and case studies on all facets of the built environment, from pre-design through occupancy and re-use.

The tool was created to support builders, designers, researchers, clients, and occupants in the quest to design, build, own, and operate high-performance buildings. Visitors to the site can easily search for information based on the category of research they are interested in, such as performance, infrastructure, materials, or systems. The categories are further broken down into subcategories for more tailored searches.

BRIK launched in January with a database of 500 reports. Initially, efforts will focus on gathering research related to healthcare facilities, learning environments, and high-performance buildings, but research in other areas is welcome.

The website presents research programs and products in three, clearly defined and identified levels:

- Partners' research will be vetted under a Memorandum of Agreement with partnering non-profit associations, educational institutions, national labs, and government agencies.
- Contributors' research provided by firms and companies will be reviewed before posting.
- Individuals may submit research that will also be reviewed before posting.

There is no cost for contributing research to the site. For more information, see "Frequently Asked Questions" on the BRIK website.

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Trends of the Trade

CLIDE Awards Call for Entries

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is currently accepting applications for its Celebrating Leadership in Development Excellence (CLIDE) Awards. The call for entries ends on March 15.

The CLIDE awards are bestowed on endeavors that exemplify one or more "Principles of Development Excellence" and serve as examples of quality development practices in North Central Texas. The Council encourages individuals to submit applications for outstanding projects, programs, or policies in their community that are helping to ensure a sustainable North Texas. Entries are being accepted in the following five categories: new development, redevelopment, special development, raising public awareness, and public policy and planning.

For more information, including the specific eligibility requirements for each category, visit www.developmentexcellence.com. Applications must be submitted online. Awards will be presented at the NCTCOG Assembly on June 14, 2013.



BRiK is an interactive portal to professionally reviewed research and case studies on all facets of the built environment.

UTSA Summer Career Academy

High school and college students are invited to participate in a two-week summer introduction to the careers of architecture and interior design hosted by the University of Texas San Antonio. The Summer Career Academy in Architecture and Interior Design will be taught by faculty members of the College of Architecture and held at The Architecture Studios of the Monterey Building, UTSA Downtown Campus.

The course will introduce participants to many of the challenges and rewards involved in the creation of the designed environment. It will provide the students with visual and hands-on design exercises, field trips to local firms and project sites, and tours of significant San Antonio architecture. Previous architecture or design experience is not required.

The Summer Career Academy will take place from June 10-21, 2013, Monday through Friday from 12:30 - 4:30 pm. The cost of the program is \$650, and space is limited to 28 students. Admission is on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information and application materials, contact Professor Stephen Temple at stephen.temple@utsa.edu.



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Renew your American Institute of Architects (AIA) membership by March 31, 2013, to continue to receive important member benefits at the national, state, and local levels while supporting the profession.

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The renewal period closes March 31. After this date, you will be considered a lapsed member and will lose the AIA designation, member-login privileges for www.texasarchitects.org, and a host of other opportunities to stay connected and engaged with your colleagues and the profession.

To renew your membership, visit the AIA website at www.aia.org/renew. ■



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Life, Fruits, and Veggies on the Street

by Andrew Albers, AIA

Farmers markets are one of America's fastest growing expressions of public life. Since 1994, there has been a 448% increase in the number of farmers markets across the country, as tracked by the USDA — the organization currently lists 168 markets in Texas alone. This explosion in farmers markets has gone hand-in-hand with an increasing awareness of the economics of food production, concerns over national health, and a desire to have a direct relationship with the producers of the food one consumes.

The typology of the markets is a relatively simple affair. They typically consist of stalls of approximately 100 sf, accessible circulation space, service access, limited water, limited power, and some restroom facilities. They often find themselves in parking lots because of the need for hard, accessible, easily cleanable surfaces.

It is a salute to the program that these markets allow the otherwise anonymous space of a parking lot to become a lively center of activity. Program and demand activate these spaces, but there is no reason why the experience could not be better.

In the fall of 2012, Rice University School of Architecture students were given the problem of designing a new home for Urban Harvest, a Houston not-for-profit that hosts four farmers markets. As part of the larger program, some of the students attempted to address the spatial needs of the market.

Essential to mitigating the harsh Texas sun and making outdoor space usable is shade. Many students saw addressing this need as the means by which the spaces could be structured and formalized. One project peels away the landscape to

Program and demand activate these spaces, but there is no reason why the experience could not be better.

insert a plaza underneath. The delaminated landscape surface becomes the shade structure for the market below. Another project proposes a space of shelter that would evolve over time. Linear shade structures provide immediate shelter. Strategically placed trees would mature in the spaces between, providing a future second level of shade. A variation on this strategy, pictured above, proposes a “House of Landscape,” a unifying structure that unites market space, landscape, and gardens while allowing for trees and plants to grow within and around the structure.

As farmers markets continue to be vital parts of the urban experience, these spaces are tremendous opportunities for architects and landscape architects to help transform the city. With simple well-conceived solutions, a vibrant program might be married with dynamic architectural expressions. ■ □

Andrew Albers is a lecturer at Rice University and vice president at The Office of James Burnett in Houston.

Design & Studio Awards
Call for Entires



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