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Creek
p. 24



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House on White Rock Creek, Dallas, by Clifford Welch Architect; photo by Charles Davis Smith.

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TexasArchitect

July/August 2004

Volume 54, Number 4

Texas Architect (ISSN: 0040-4179) is published seven times per year (bimonthly and in April) by the Texas Society of Architects (TSA), 816 Congress Ave., Suite 970, Austin, Texas 78701, www.texasarchitect.org. TSA is the official Texas state organization of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Copyright 2004 by the Texas Society of Architects.

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Periodicals Postage Paid at Austin, TX, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Texas Architect*, 816 Congress Ave., Suite 970, Austin, Texas 78701-2443. Phone: (512) 478-7386. Printed in the U.S.A.

Subscription price is \$20 per year for TSA members, \$25 for nonmembers with addresses in the continental U.S. Reproduction of editorial content without written permission is prohibited. Use of names and images of products and services in either editorial or advertising does not constitute an endorsement by TSA or AIA, nor does comment necessarily reflect an official opinion of either organization. TA is indexed by the Avery Index of Architectural Periodicals, available in major libraries.

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A Refuge for Laredo's Homeless

Local firm works pro bono to help people get off the street and back on their feet

THE indigent population of Laredo, as in many American cities, is growing and each day the staff of Frank Architects witnesses the bleak tableau of urban homelessness that unfolds outside the office windows. This daily scene of anguish and despair motivated Frank Rotnofsky, AIA, to volunteer his firm's architectural services toward improving facilities for the Bethany House, a nonprofit rescue mission that serves meals and provides temporary shelter to Laredo's poorest residents. Rotnofsky assigned the \$1.2 million project to Eduardo Quiroga, Mateo Garcia, and Luis Pruneda. In April, groundbreaking took place for the new 8,000-square-foot Bethany House, which will more than double the amount of space in the current facility. Construction is scheduled for completion in January.

Quiroga, manager of the project, describes the proposed structure as "small but important" for the local community. (Founded in 1982, Bethany House currently dispenses more than 1,000

A rendering of the new Bethany House in Laredo shows the courtyard which will serve as a transitional space for the homeless population it serves; rendering courtesy Frank Architects.

hot meals per day, six days a week, and delivers another 600-plus meals to indigent elderly and disabled in Laredo and five adjoining *colonias*.) The design team developed their concept and the subsequent document work for the project over a two-year period in collaboration with the Laredo Homeless Coalition and the staff of Bethany House. His research, as he detailed in recent e-mail correspondence, also introduced him to people who will directly benefit from the project. "In designing the new shelter," he states, "I was inspired by the expressed needs and concerns of a couple of homeless individuals, whom I am fortunate now to call friends."

Along with the shoe-string budget typical of nonprofit projects, Quiroga had to contend with a small lot and the downtown's historic preservation guidelines. Where others may have seen restrictions, Quiroga instead saw context: "I believe we turned both limitations into assets by lifting traditional Mexican architectural traits into a contemporary and utilitarian design."

Significant to the design – and to its contextual borderland setting – is a central shaded courtyard that serves as a transitional zone for people who seek overnight refuge from the

streets but are too wary to sleep inside the shelter. To accommodate the hesitant, the designers have placed four wide, flat benches within the courtyard to serve as impromptu beds, perhaps a bit uncomfortable but safe. Quiroga realized the need for an outdoor transitional area during a trip to Los Angeles where he observed people sleeping on sidewalks and other public right-of-ways in the vicinity of two downtown rescue missions. City officials, he said, allow transients to sleep in specified areas during certain hours. Later, on that same trip, he saw street people congregating during the daytime at a municipal park. Quiroga recognized that the interaction of transients in Los Angeles mirrored the situation in his home town. "What I learned from observation enabled me to understand how displaced people benefit from and interact in the park," he states. "This conclusion led us to include an outdoor transitional area in the project. This transitional area encourages displaced people to shed their inhibitions and fears, and eventually assures them that it will be safe to enter the enclosed confines of the center."

Once inside, individuals will have access to amenities that most people regard as basic necessities, such as drinking water, toilets and showers, mail and telephone services, and laundry facilities. The ground floor includes a room with 20 beds for males, a room with eight beds for females, each available nightly to individuals for as long as 30 consecutive days, and two efficiency units for families requiring longer periods. On the upper level are transitional housing units assigned to individuals for up to 24 months.

Barbara Kazen, president of the Bethany House's board of directors, praises the design team for showing extraordinary interest in the project. "[Eduardo] and his team have been wonderful. I've never been part of a project with a team that has been so involved and that did so much research as he did."

Along with Frank Architects, four other Laredo businesses (Zertuche Construction, Lopez Engineering Group, Unitech Engineering, and Sherfey Engineering) are providing pro bono services for the project.

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CORRECTIONS

A news story in May/June 2004 ("Viguier Presents Design for McNay Wing" on p. 8) contained two errors. First, the McNay board of trustees did not select Moore Ruble Yudell Architects and Planners to design the San Antonio Art Institute building that was razed last year to make way for the new McNay wing. Although the McNay board of trustees provided land on the museum's grounds, the building was commissioned by the SAAI board of directors. Second, *TA* erroneously stated that the museum reopened in late 2001 after a \$7.2 million renovation when in fact the museum never completely closed during the 14-month project.

Also, while the news story reported that the renovation "brightened the interiors and refurbished the exterior," much more was achieved. As noted by McNay Director William J. Chiego in response to the *TA* article, the museum "completed the construction of a much-needed central heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning plant, replaced all doors and windows, rebuilt the central fountain in the Blackburn Patio, improved handicapped accessibility with attractive new ramps and a larger passenger elevator, replaced all electrical wiring, and installed state-of-the-art lighting in order to bring our facilities up to the highest museum standards."

In the same *TA* edition, the last lines of "AIA Houston Honors 6 Projects" on page 10 were unintentionally omitted. The *TA* staff wishes to apologize to Dan Searight, AIA, who chaired the Houston chapter's design awards committee and volunteered to write the news story for *TA*. The staff also regrets the inadvertent deletion of one of the merit award winners in the On the Boards category. That project was Houston Public Library—eLibrary Prototype by m Architects (Michael Morton, AIA).

We want to hear from you!

Texas Architect encourages feedback from its readers. Send your letters to Stephen Sharpe at editor@texasarchitect.org or 816 Congress Avenue, Suite 970, Austin, Texas 78701. Letters may be edited for clarity and length. Include your name, address, and a daytime telephone number.

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Massive Redevelopment Transforms Lubbock's Inner City Neighborhood

LUBBOCK Construction is underway on the second of two initial components of a \$200 million redevelopment project that will stretch nine blocks between downtown and the campus of Texas Tech University. The project, described as the largest redevelopment in the nation's history funded entirely by private investment, began in 2002 with the bulldozing of an entire neighborhood that in recent years had become infamous locally as a harbor for drug dealing and prostitution.

Known as Overton Park, the 325-acre redevelopment project is primarily financed by the McDougal Company of Lubbock which envisions a mixed-use neighborhood with apartments, single-family housing, and retail businesses interconnected by pedestrian-friendly streets. First announced in July 1999 by McDougal CEO Delbert McDougal, the massive project is expected to be completed in 2007 or 2008. Dallas-based Humphreys & Partners Architects designed the master plan for Overton Park, as well as many individual components of the larger project.



RENDERINGS COURTESY HUMPHREYS & PARTNERS ARCHITECTS

The neighborhood was known formerly as North Overton, popular with university students for several decades because of inexpensive housing located within walking distance from classes. But, according to the McDougal Company, absentee landlords who owned 97 percent of the rental housing allowed the area to decline in the 1980s which led to a dramatic increase in crime rates. The dangerous conditions caused students to look elsewhere for housing.

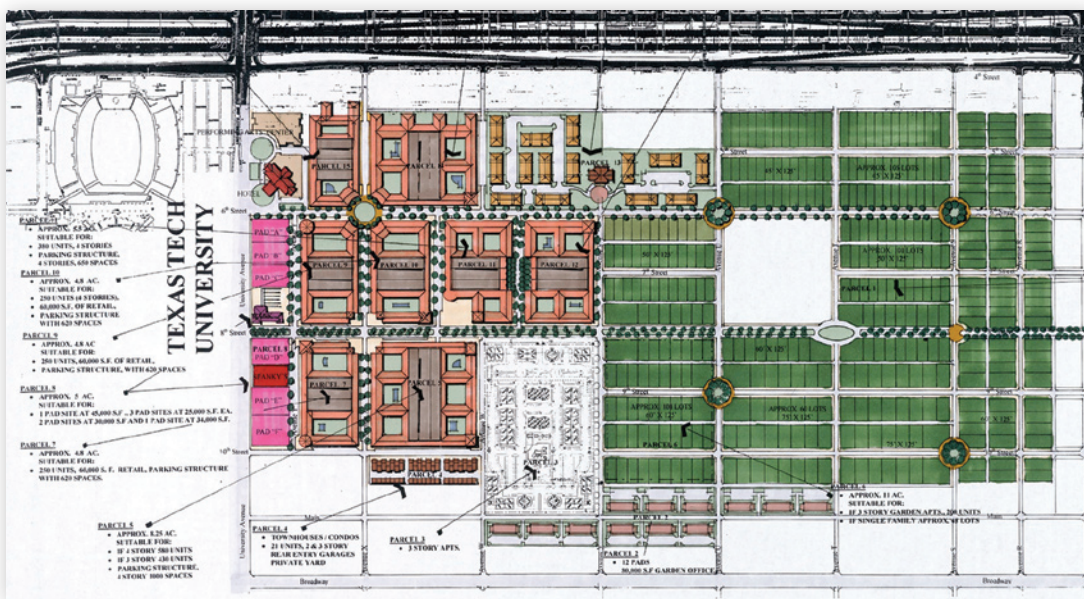
North Overton was founded by Dr. M.C. Overton in 1907, the same year Lubbock incorporated, and soon became a desirable home for many of Lubbock's prominent families wanting to live adjacent to the downtown business district. The neighborhood later linked downtown and the campus of Texas Technological College when the school was established in 1925. In the 1960s, developers replaced many of the original single-family dwellings with apartment buildings.

(above) The Centre, a \$26 million multi-use complex, will cover two city blocks. (below) The Centre is represented as Parcel 9 on the far left of the master plan.

The redevelopment project's first component was completed earlier this year with the opening of a 242-unit apartment complex named Sterling University Trails. The second component, scheduled for completion next summer, is The Centre, a \$26 million mixed-use complex with three levels of apartment units atop street-level storefronts for large and small retail shops. Expected to contain nearly 400,000 square feet of leasable apartment/retail space, The Centre covers two city blocks near the eastern perimeter of the Texas Tech campus and includes a four-story parking garage.

The McDougal Company plans to add other components in the near future, including a 17-story hotel directly across from the Texas Tech football stadium and a subdivision with 400 single-family residences expected to range in price from \$160,000 to \$200,000. McDougal has partnered with the Dinerstein Group of Houston to develop some of the components. The developers have cited several factors that support their decision to invest in Overton Park, chiefly the continued growth in enrollment at Texas Tech but also a sustained migration of newcomers attracted to Lubbock now that the city has topped the 200,000 population mark. The redevelopment project is attracting other investors to Overton Park, including Lubbock-based City Bank which recently announced plans to build a two-story bank along University Avenue.

STEPHEN SHARPE



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House in Brownsville by Neutra Set for Much-Needed Restoration

BROWNSVILLE Following recent recognition as a national architectural treasure, the Richard Neutra-designed Kraigher House appears to be headed for restoration. The two-story residence — designed in 1937 as the first International Style house in Texas — has been abandoned and neglected over the past two decades, but City of Brownsville officials declared in May that they would seek financial assistance to save it from further deterioration by water penetration and termites.

The pledge by the City of Brownsville came shortly after the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced its 2004 Most Endangered List, which included the Kraigher House among this year's 11 most endangered places in the U.S. Earlier this year the house was named by Preservation Texas on its inaugural list of the state's most endangered historic sites.

Neutra (1892-1970), an Austrian émigré who settled in Southern California, designed the house for George Kraigher, a pilot for Pan American Airways stationed in Brownsville. According to Neutra biographer Thomas S. Hines, Kraigher contacted Neutra in 1936 after seeing the architect's work while on a business trip to Los Angeles. Kraigher commissioned the architect to design a country house for him on six acres just outside the city limits of Brownsville.

Kraigher (1891-1984) was an accomplished horseman as well as a pilot and he entertained in Brownsville, often arranging for friends to fly

in from other Texas and Mexican cities served by Pan Am. At the outbreak of World War II, Kraigher left Brownsville and became a U.S. military officer (eventually attaining the rank of colonel) under the Office of Special Services where he plied his flying skills and geographic knowledge in support of critical military missions. In the 1950s, Kraigher built a second house designed by Neutra in Litchfield, Conn., where he lived until his death.

Neutra's design complemented his client's sense of adventure. The compact house is two stories high. Flat roofs, horizontal bands of steel sash casement windows, a second-floor roof terrace with metal pipe railing, and planar walls finished with white stucco are identifying modernist characteristics. Neutra offset interior spaces in plan so that all rooms have access to the prevailing southeast breeze. A spacious, L-planned room on the first floor combines living and dining uses. There is a bedroom with separate bathroom and dressing room on the first floor and a bedroom, bath, dressing room, and den on the second floor in addition to the roof terrace. A two-car garage projects off the northwest corner of the house. The house retains its original cabinetry and fixtures. Neutra's hand is especially visible in the deftly proportioned exterior wall planes, which are sculpturally juxtaposed with overhanging roof fascias to give the small house its dramatic presence. The house is surrounded by semi-tropical vegetation typical of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Adjoining the flat site is a *resaca*, a lagoon-like, ox-bow lake. The house was built by the Brownsville contrac-

The first house in Texas designed in the International Style has sustained significant damage over the past 20 years; rendering by Juan M. Garcini, Assoc. AIA, courtesy the National Trust; photo by Gerald Moorhead, FAIA.

tor A.W. Neck for a contract price of \$5,000. The Brownsville architect Frank L. Godwin supervised construction. Neutra did not see the house until a chance visit to Brownsville in 1951. The Kraigher House was published in the May 1939 issue of *Architectural Record* as "Open-Planned, Window-Walled House in Southwest."

The Kraigher House was owned from the 1950s until 1999 by the Brownsville real estate broker and developer Bud Franke and his wife. After the early 1970s, the Franke family ceased to live in the house and rented it. By the early 1980s the house began to show signs of lack of maintenance; by 1992 it was windowless and inhabited by tenants who lived there rent-free in order to keep the house from being occupied by vagrants. Efforts by Preservation Brownsville and its founding president, Ambrosio Villarreal Jr., led to acquisition of the house and two acres of its six-acre site by the City of Brownsville in 1999. The city enclosed the house and fenced it off but has never begun rehabilitation. In February 2004, Preservation Brownsville and Villarreal were successful in having the house listed by Preservation Texas as one of the most endangered historic sites in the state. Preservation Brownsville and Villarreal also nominated the house to the National Trust's 2004 most endangered listing.

STEPHEN FOX



PHOTOS COURTESY AIA AUSTIN

Twin Valley House



Metz-Fielding Building

AIA Austin Honors 10 Projects

A U S T I N Out of 76 entries, ten projects were selected for honors on May 17 by a distinguished panel of jurors in AIA Austin’s annual design awards program. The projects were announced at the chapter’s annual design awards celebration held at the Lester E. Palmer Events Center. The three jurors for the event were Adèle Naudé Santos, FAIA, dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at MIT and principal of Santos Prescott and Associates in San Francisco; Steven Ehrlich, FAIA, of Steven Ehrlich Architects in Culver City, CA; and Tim Blonkvist, FAIA, of Overland Partners in San Antonio.

Honor awards went to:

- Twin Valley House by Danze & Blood Architects – The residence is located on a small lot in a conventional suburban Austin neighborhood. Through manipulation of the massing, the house is deftly opened to extensive panoramic views. The jury was unanimous in their praise of the sophisticated creation of flexible spaces and beautiful detailing.

- Metz-Fielding Building by Hobson Crow Architects – The original limestone walls of this historic commercial building in downtown Austin and the reconstruction of the original facade form the parameters for this contemporary mixed-use project. A zinc-clad penthouse,

discreetly set back from the historic structure, hints at the reinvigorated contemporary interior. Jurors commended the project for its ability to highlight the historic structure while inserting a modern live/work space in an urban setting.

Citation of Honor awards went to:

- The Lester E. Palmer Events Center by Barnes Taniguchi Centerbrook Joint Venture – This 135,000-square foot community events center is tucked into the southeast corner of Austin’s 65-acre Town Lake Park, just across from the center of the city. The site plan maximizes Town Lake Park’s open acreage and minimizes its impact on park activities. Jurors applauded this civic project for its ability to successfully evoke the unique character of Austin.

- King Residence by Atelier Hines Almy – Sited along a forest edge, the house is organized around a plan that reveals the landscape and defines public and private spaces. Jurors enjoyed the sophisticated floor plan and juxtaposition of materials in this new house.

- Anthony Nak Jewelry Flagship Store by M.J. Neal Architects – This elegant finishout was created to show designer jewelry. New windows and an entry were created to enable a dynamic street presence. Very subtle changes in texture define the all-white palette as a background

for the architect’s casework in cherry wood, stainless steel, and glass. Jurors commended the innovative idea carried out from conceptual plan through to the smallest detail.

- Tarrytown Modern Residence by Steinbomer & Associates Architects – Drawing on a rich palette, the architect developed a 700-square-foot glassy master-suite addition opening onto a new trellised courtyard. A new facade to the street aesthetically echoes the pervasive updates throughout the 1957 builder home. The jurors admired the interior and exterior impact of this relatively small addition and remodeling.

- Frisco/Stallones Residence by Jackson & McElhaney Architects – This modest weekend house was designed for a young family with the option of future expansion, when it becomes their permanent residence. With spectacular views of the Blanco River Valley and the surrounding hills, the jurors praised the low-maintenance and sustainable design features of the house as well as its extremely economical budget.

Merit awards went to:

- ARCH: Austin Resource Center for the Homeless by LZT Architects – Designed to be open and accessible to the homeless, ARCH combines a range of services in one facility. Composed of interpenetrating interior and exterior volumes, the LEED-rated building spaces allow light into the interior and create visual connections between floors and uses. Jurors agreed that this project presented an excellent solution for an admirable program.

- Austin City Lofts by PageSutherlandPage – This 82-unit, 14-story tower provides an admirable anchor and landmark for a new mixed-use district in the southwest quadrant of downtown. Two-story units on the top two levels command vistas to the south of Town Lake and to the north of the Capitol Building and the University of Texas campus. The jury complemented the juxtaposition of materials and the elegant facade compositions of the building.

- Twin Peaks by M.J. Neal Architects – This project consists of two dynamic 1,700-square foot single family dwellings for two in-fill lots adjacent to downtown. The main vertical configuration of the houses maintains privacy and views while the screened-in porches provide outdoor living and a relationship with the street. The jurors appreciated the clever massing and use of innovative materials that allowed the three-story houses to seem contextual in a one-story neighborhood.

MICHELLE ROSSOMANDO, AIA



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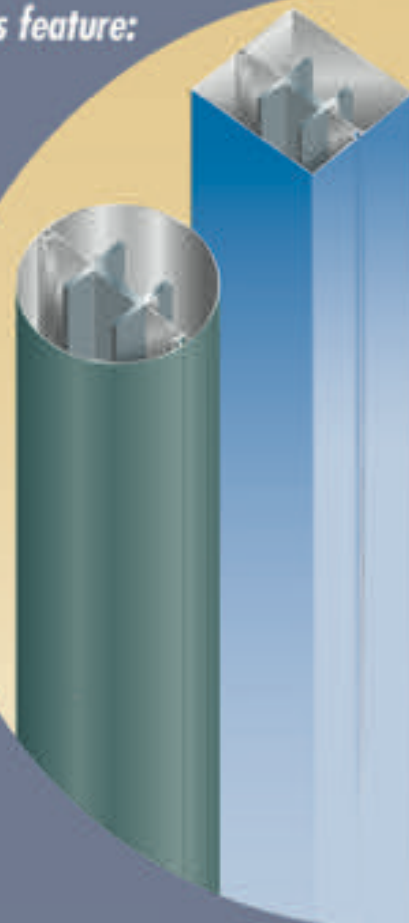
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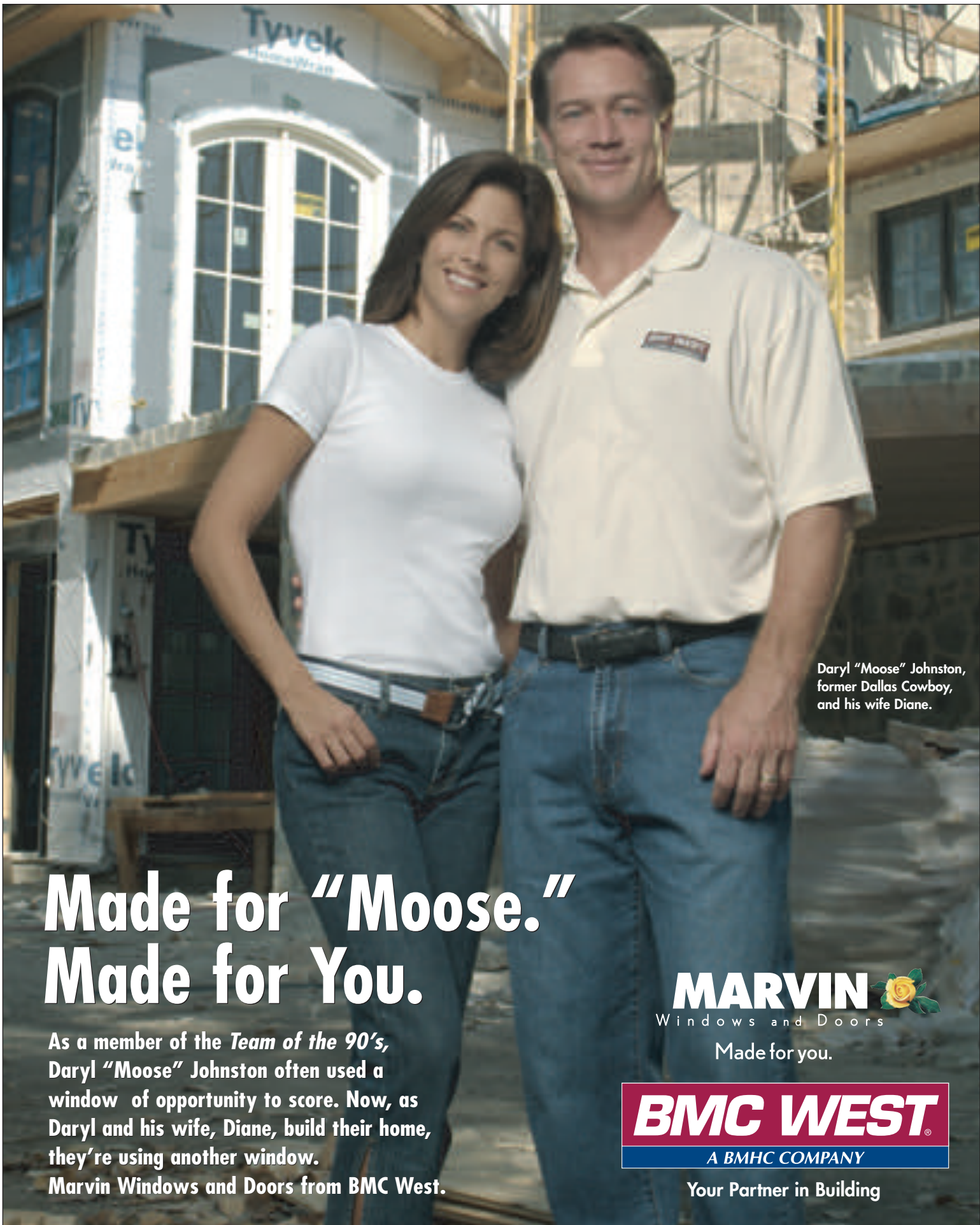


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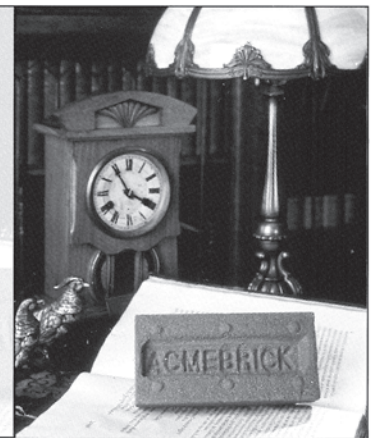
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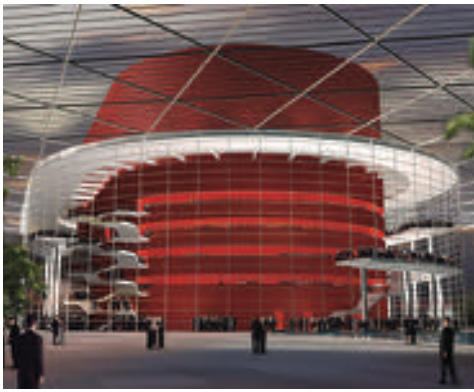
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Foster, Koolhaas Present Designs for Venues in Dallas Arts District

DALLAS Architectural glitterati convened in early June for the public unveiling of conceptual designs for the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House and the Charles and Dee Wylie Theater—the first performing arts venues proposed for the Dallas Arts District since the completion of I.M. Pei's Meyerson Symphony Center in 1989.

In their machine-like proposal for the Wylie Theater — future home of the Dallas Theater Center and other arts organizations — Rem Koolhaas and Joshua Ramos, a principal with Koolhaas' Office of Metropolitan Architecture, reconfigured backstage functions and production support facilities into a series of intertwined elements stacked on top of a radically flexible, glass-walled performance space. At 11 stories in height, the theater will offer a stunning vertical counterpoint to the predominant sprawl of the Arts District.

Across Flora Street, Sir Norman Foster and partner Spencer de Grey achieved a similarly dramatic urban gesture by orienting the Winspear's lozenge-shaped plan on a north-south



(left) Foster and Partner's rendering of the Winspear Opera House. (above) OMA's rendering of the Wylie Theater; images courtesy of the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts.

axis (30 degrees off the orthogonal grid of the Arts District)—a design approach that will contribute to the building's goal of achieving a gold LEED rating. In a gesture of stately neighborliness, the opera house is inflected toward the adjacent Meyerson and is fronted by a Trafalgar Square-sized plaza that will be covered by a monumental shade canopy soaring to more than 75 feet in height.

In their startling designs for these two venues, Koolhaas and Foster have adopted shrewd strategies geared toward civic engagement that will transform the Arts District, upon completion in 2009, from a limestone-clad ensemble devoid of pedestrian life into an energetic, thriving and ultimately rich architectural and cultural mecca. A third venue, the Dallas Performance Hall, will be designed by Skidmore Owings & Merrill of Chicago in collaboration with Corgan Associates of Dallas.

WILLIS WINTERS, AIA

Goff's Centennial Celebrated

BARTLESVILLE About 120 people gathered in this northern Oklahoma town on June 5 to begin a four-day pilgrimage of Bruce Goff's architecture in celebration of his birth centennial. The event included tours of Goff's work in Bartlesville, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Norman, as well as tours of projects in those cities by Frank Lloyd Wright, including his high-rise Price Tower, and the works of several of Goff's students from his years as a teacher at the University of Oklahoma.

Many of the homes designed by Goff were open to visitors. Other architects whose work

was available for touring included Herb Greene, Dean Bryant Vollendorf, Jones Studio, Blaine Imel, Gary McGowan, Arn Henderson, and William Wesley Peters.

A dinner held June 8—Goff's actual one-hundredth birthday—was hosted by OU's School of Architecture and preceded a showing of "Goff in the Desert," a 97-minute chronicle of Goff's work by the German filmmaker Heinz Emigholz.

Goff worked in Tulsa early in his career before teaching at OU and later moved to Bartlesville where he opened an office in the Price Tower. He died in 1982 in Tyler where he spent the final 12 years of his life.

LARRY MARTYN, AIA

Stockebrand on Judd at Chinati

Marianne Stockebrand, director of the Chinati Foundation, will present "The Making of Two Works: Donald Judd's Installations at the Chinati Foundation" at the Marfa Theatre in Marfa. Call (432) 729-4362 for more information. JULY 3

Tour the Varner-Hogg Plantation

Miss Ima's Birthday Tea Party, a celebration in honor of the daughter of the first native-born governor of Texas, will include activities and refreshments on the front porch of the historic Varner-Hogg Plantation in West Columbia. Margaret McManis, author of *Ima and the Great Texas Ostrich Race* will present a program and will be available to sign books. All girls and their mothers or adult friends are invited to the free event. Tours of the home will be conducted between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. The tea party is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call (979) 345-4656 for more information. JULY 10

Murano Glass in Houston

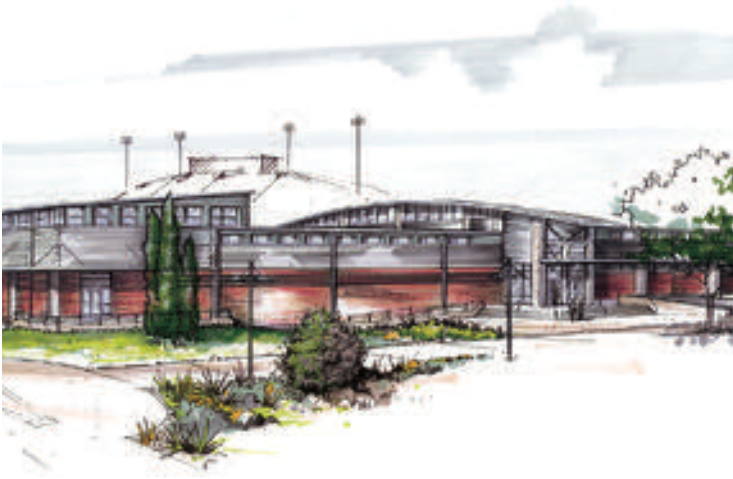
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston presents an extensive collection of twentieth-century Venetian glass in the exhibit "Murano: Glass from the Olnick Spanu Collection." Approximately 290 examples of blown glass, organized chronologically by date, provide a comprehensive look at the era's Venetian glassmaking. Located in the Audrey Jones Beck Building, the exhibit reveals vibrant colors and shapes and the development of techniques, textures, and patterns. THROUGH AUGUST 1

RDA Calls for Projects

The Rice Design Alliance is accepting submittals for "Urban Legends," a mixed-use urban development competition. The juried contest is open to architects and non-architects, individuals or teams up to five. A \$20 entry fee (\$15 for RDA members) provides drawing materials, a box lunch, and refreshments at the end of the day. For more information and entry forms, call (713) 348-4876. AUGUST 7

IIDA Conference in Dallas

The Texas/Oklahoma Chapter of the International Interior Design Association and the Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter of the International Facility Management Association present the 2004 MetroCon Showcase, an annual conference and trade show at the World Trade Center in Dallas. More than 200 exhibitors, including industry manufacturers and vendors, are expected to participate. The showcase will provide opportunities for continuing education and IIDA will host its annual Leader's Breakfast and Awards Gala on Friday. For more information visit www.metrocon.info. AUGUST 26-27

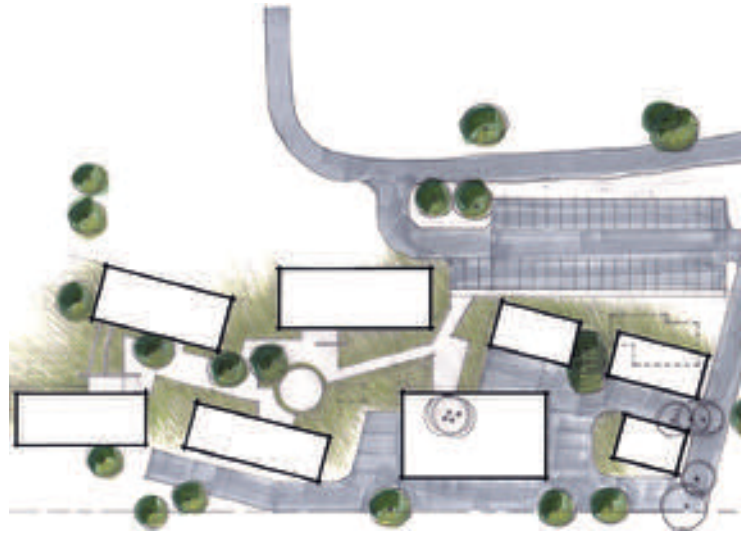


Andrews Performance Complex

Scheduled to begin construction this summer, the \$13 million complex will add a 21,700-sf concert hall and a 85,500-sf arena gymnasium/natatorium to Andrews High School in Andrews, just north of Midland/Odessa. The project is a joint effort between Hunter Corral Associates in Odessa and Austin-based Pfluger Associates Architects. The design and materials are intended to complement the existing high school, designed by Reid Rockwell Banwell & Tarics of San Francisco and built in 1960 with an exposed concrete structure and brick skin. Similarly, the new complex will be composed primarily of brick with exposed concrete structure, metal panels, and glass. The 2,000-seat arena gymnasium and 300-seat natatorium will be joined by a common lobby with locker rooms, concession, classrooms, and offices. The 1,000-seat concert hall will include a lobby, concession, restrooms, storage, and “green” room. Construction is expected to take 16 months.

Inland Fisheries Regional Office Complex

Designed for the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and located at the Tyler Nature Center, the master plan addresses green building principles and the need for minimal environmental impact. The project, designed by the Dallas office of Brown Reynolds Watford Architects, will include several buildings for the 82-acre nature preserve that fosters conservation through ecological education. Among the structures planned for the site is a \$390,000 main office building designed by same firm. All construction is planned around major trees on the site to preserve them and to provide natural shading for buildings and pedestrians. The shape and orientation of each building is intended to maximize natural daylighting and ventilation while minimizing heat gain. Because of the sloping terrain, flat pads are sited to minimize the movement of soil. Pad sites are positioned to create “in between” spaces that are comfortable in scale to encourage people to experience the outdoors.



P.O. Ranch

The 1,600-sf weekend house near Navasota is designed for two couples by Austin-based KRDB. Separation of public and private spaces resulted in two distinct volumes sited at a right angle to one another and joined by a common deck. The siting and L-shaped configuration allow orientation toward a giant lone pine in a field. The public volume, a metal-clad “ark,” opens up to the continuous deck while the cedar-clad “dorm” volume has limited glazing and private balconies. The structure of the building is supported by a deep bell-pier foundation that raises the floor level three feet above grade, allowing for maximum air circulation and avoiding moisture issues on the soggy land. The frame for the building is composed of a metal “bent” system that will be fabricated off-site and quickly raised on the foundation. The curved structure of the public area will be clad in pre-rolled metal panels fabricated to conform to the radius of the steel.



O'Neil Ford in the Details

While restoring a 1939 house by Ford and Swank, a long-time associate sensed his mentor's presence

IN late 2003, Frank Welch, FAIA, completed the restoration of a house in East Dallas built in 1939 and designed by O'Neil Ford and Arch Swank for Alfred and Juanita Bromberg. Welch, a former protégé of Ford's, was hired by the new owners, who because of a deed restriction were required to have the Bromberg family approve any proposed changes to the house. (The elder Brombergs have since died, but their son Alan Bromberg and his wife Anne participated in design meetings with the owners, Dan and Anne Patterson, and the architect.) The restoration took most of two years and gave Welch ample time to reflect on the many years he was associated with Ford and the lessons he learned under Ford's tutelage.

In the late 1930s, Ford and Arch Swank had just begun their partnership when the Brombergs asked them to design a house at 3201 Wendover Road on secluded acreage in East Dallas. Ford at that time was gaining a national reputation for his regional approach to modernism that softened the sometimes hard edges of an architectural style still unfamiliar to most Americans.

Texas Architect asked Chris Carson, FAIA, to interview Welch about his experience working on the Bromberg/Patterson project. Carson also worked with Ford and with him helped found Ford Powell & Carson in San Antonio.

What are some of the details of the Bromberg house that are characteristic of O'Neil Ford?

The Bromberg house was a break from the stripped classicism he was doing. It is linear



(top) The Bromberg residence, circa 1942, with Juanita and Alan Bromberg; photo courtesy Alan Bromberg.

(above) Restoration of the house was completed in December; photo courtesy Frank Welch, FAIA.

and asymmetrical. The house has shifting axes. It doesn't have classical relationships of spaces. When you're in the living room and you're looking through the entry hall, the large entry into the dining room is off-center. If it had been me, I'm sure I'd have centered the doorway. There were reasons why he located that opening the way he did—it showed his pragmatic approach to planning. He punted a lot. And by the way, Arch Swank gets lots of credit for the success of the Bromberg house. Ford, of course, was busy running around, seeing people, trying to get work, and so on. Arch was very patient and visited the construction many times and became close to the Brombergs. Alan Bromberg remembers him well.

The living room, I think, may be the only major space on the ground floor that had plastered walls, canvas-covered. All the other walls were paneled. In fact, there was the then-fash-

ionable knotty pine paneling in the tiny, charming library, which was everybody's favorite spot in the house. There was modernistic use of plywood in gridded patterns in the dining room, for instance, and in the upstairs bedrooms. There were variations on the theme of craft and the use of wood. Each fireplace surround had a distinctive design. I consider the stair rail one of the loveliest anywhere; a railing that has to make a turn on a winding landing. You know, you have pie-shaped treads. It's very difficult to handle the railing without being awkward about it. But this railing is like a piece of sculpture. It's absolutely beautiful. And [O'Neil Ford's brother] Lynn Ford gets the credit for figuring out what to do about that.... There's a funny kind of modernistic light fixture throughout the house. It's a recessed coffer in the ceiling with light bulbs above a translucent piece of glass. The glass is held in place by round screw knobs, stainless.

By the way, the new owners were very, very anxious to not do anything to the house that would affect its integrity. As were the Brombergs. They had this deed arrangement with the Pattersons that no changes would be made without their approval. They looked over our shoulder and were cooperative, approving what we did.

What major changes did you make?

The only change we made, besides updating the baths' and kitchen equipment, was to add what I call a family gallery across the rear with glass

windows looking out on the landscape. It's a place for the family to hang out together which is what families do these days. There really wasn't a place like that on the ground floor if you didn't include the really big screen porch where the Brombergs lived in the summertime. We kept the back brick wall in the gallery and it is exposed inside this room.

It is interesting that a house built in 1939 could be still viable without a tremendous amount of changes?

No one wanted any changes. There was some change in use of spaces upstairs. The Pattersons originally wanted to have their master suite where the Brombergs had it, then they said, "No, let's move it to the opposite end of the house" and we started working with that in mind. Then they said, "No, let's go back to the original idea."

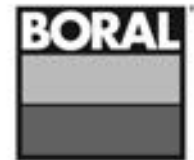
Did you feel like you had to get into Ford's mindset to understand the house before you began your project?

You know, I was extremely nervous about taking on this job. In fact, I've compared it to a surgeon operating on one of his children because I felt so close to Neil. I think my life as an architect would have been utterly different if I hadn't known him. And I'm not even sure if it would have been a life at all. But for a long time every time I would walk into this empty Bromberg house, I had this enormous emotional pull. I just felt his presence there.

Elements throughout the house demonstrate Ford and Swank's attention to detail, such as Lynn Ford's graceful solution for a railing along a turn in the stairway; photo courtesy Frank Welch, FAIA.



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Unfinished Composition

A Barragán house planned at the Menil was the focus of a recent exhibition

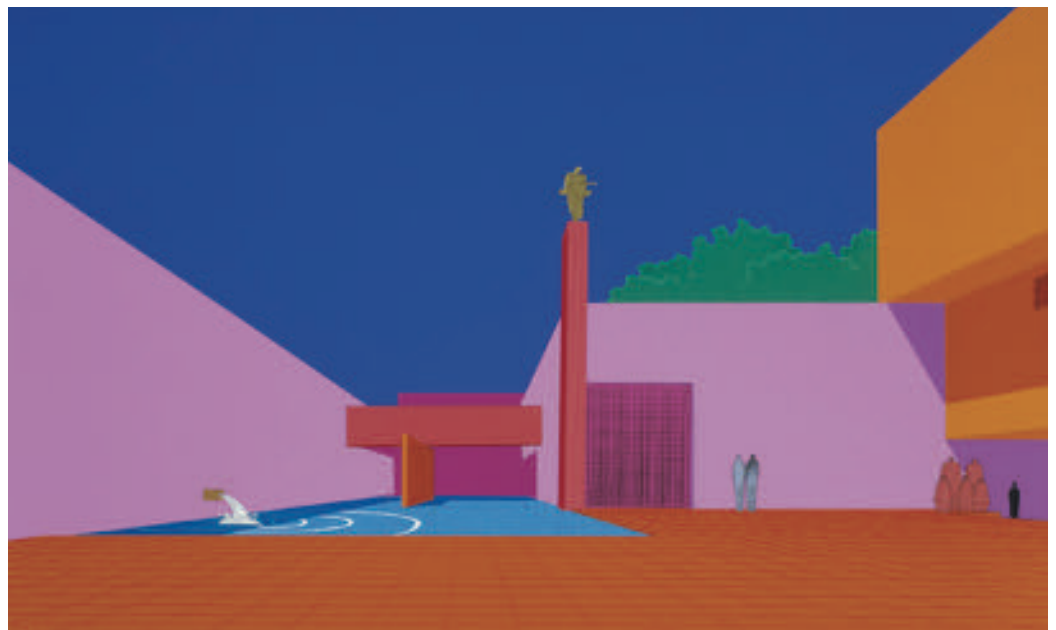
by ERNESTO MALDONADO, AIA

IN 1984 Houston arts patron Dominique de Menil asked Luis Barragán to design a guesthouse for visiting dignitaries and guests of the Menil Foundation. The elderly Barragán, in collaboration with his partner Raul Ferrera, set to work on a residence that would have been his only project outside his native Mexico. However, the project was never built, essentially because the architect and client could not agree on the design, but a handmade model and drawings of the project are still held in the archives of the Menil Collection.

Earlier this year, the Menil Collection exhibited the model and the drawings as *Luis Barragán: An Unbuilt House for the Menil*, which was installed between February 11 and May 23.

The exhibition also presented some of the client/architect correspondence that allowed the viewer to sense the connections (as well as the differences) between the client and the architect. The strongest connection between the two was a belief that art has a spiritual dimension. De Menil viewed “art is incantation.” The ideas held by Barragán (who died in 1988) about art closely paralleled his client’s, as evidenced in his words upon accepting the 1980 Pritzker Architecture Prize: “...religious spirituality and the mythical roots...lead us to the very reason of being of the artistic phenomenon.” A second connection was that both were devout Catholics and each actively promoted a progressive and modern approach to spiritual art. But while they shared these commitments, the client and the architect also came to the project with vastly different assumptions; some related to urban and landscape design, and some related to the budget.

The exhibit displayed a letter from de Menil requesting a 3,000-square foot guesthouse with its practical and spiritual requirements and the site information. The project was to be located across the street from the Rothko Chapel in a tree-lined Houston neighborhood that included several gray-painted, one-story bungalows set back on their lots in typical Houston style. Although Raul Ferrera (without Barragán, who was too frail) visited de Menil in May 1984, the



architects responded with an 8,500-square-foot version of Barragán’s classic Mexico City house: one that begins with a wall, built on the property line, that contains a series of almost treeless, paved courtyards served by the building’s interior spaces. For Barragán, containment was the first step in the design process. Plaster-faced masonry boxes were placed on the L-shaped site to create a drive court and a terrace with pool-fountain and pergola. They were to be painted in Barragán’s signature palette of vibrant colors.

Barragán comments in a letter that the house was intended for visitors staying only a few days or weeks, not a house that had to accommodate the everyday functions of a family. This led to some spaces not typically included in residential design, such as an art chapel complete with hidden clerestory light for viewing paintings. The most interesting “room” for the guesthouse was a third-floor, open-air courtyard enclosed by walls nine feet tall—undoubtedly one of the most enigmatic spaces of the compound since only the sky was visible from the space. But one familiar with Houston’s climate must wonder how a heavy rain would drain and how much heat the foot-thick masonry walls would retain during the long summers. While these are not legitimate critiques of the design as an abstract composition, they do point out that this building was not an exercise in contextual design. The Barragán-Ferrera design would have brought a completely new sensitivity to the neighborhood.

It seems that these practical concerns and the budget considerations of a design three times larger than requested were the basic differences that kept the design from being realized. In contrast to Barragán and Ferrera’s ideas, de Menil wanted the building to be intimate and

De Menil House (1984-1987); Presentation Board 8: Perspective, 1986; courtesy The Menil Collection, Houston; photo by Hester + Hardaway.

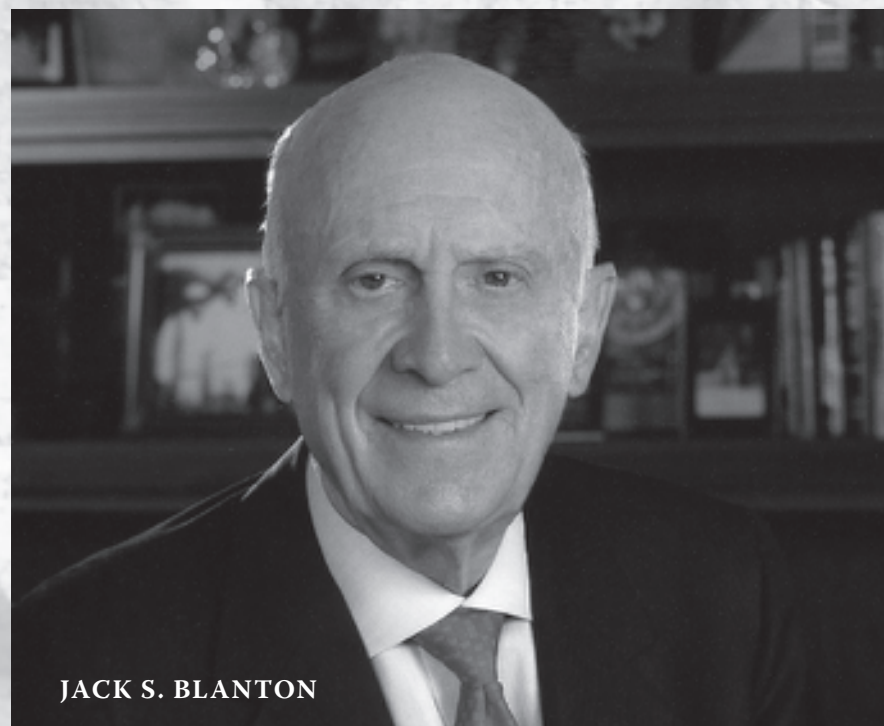
to fit within the existing context of the neighborhood. Undoubtedly, the design as presented would have made a bold statement that heralded a departure from the American suburb as pastoral idyll. A charitable view of the design is that Barragán was 20 years ahead of his time, since it is only recently that the idea of claiming the entire site for the owner of the property has taken hold in Houston. The design underscores the gap between two cultures: one where buildings are objects in a landscape and one where buildings create their own landscape.

A benefit of exhibiting the drawings at the Menil Collection was the ability to walk down the block and imagine the three-story walls of color proposed for a site that still contains its original gray bungalow. Rendered by hand, the drawings and the model are typical of the way in which Barragán’s projects have been published. The spaces are described by their walls and windows with very minimal “entourage” to define the use of the spaces. The sections are diagrammatic. It is left to the model to pull the concept together into a coherent composition. While one views the drawings, our current computer-generated world of architectural presentations feels at least a century removed. The quaintness of the presentation, even for 1984, makes one appreciate more than ever the leap of faith that architects require of their clients during the design process.

The writer is a principal with Glassman Shoemaker Maldonado Architects in Houston.

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JACK S. BLANTON

Texas businessman, philanthropist and civic leader Jack S. Blanton will receive the Texas Society of Architects 2004 Cornerstone Award. He is being honored because of his life's service to elevating architecture and the arts, and to promoting the value of community service and civic leadership.

Blanton is regarded as one of Houston's most exceptional business and civic leaders. Some of his greatest achievements have occurred as chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas, chairman of the Greater Houston Chamber of Commerce and chairman of the Houston Endowment.

After earning his law degree at the University of Texas, Blanton joined Scurlock Oil in 1950 and quickly ascended to its presidency in 1958. He helped make Scurlock into one of the largest crude oil gathering and transportation entities in the country. In 1982, when Scurlock became a subsidiary of Ashland Oil Inc., Blanton was named chairman and CEO. Blanton currently serves as president of Eddy Refining Company. He has served on the Board of Directors of SBC Corporation, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Texas Commerce Bank, Baker Hughes Inc., Ashland Oil Inc., and Pogo Producing Company.

While Blanton was extremely successful in the oil business, his greatest achievements have occurred in the role of civic leader. When he became chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas in 1987, higher education in Texas was faced with a 26 percent reduction.

Blanton was instrumental in influencing the Texas Legislature to support the University of Texas System (and therefore, higher education in Texas) more fully.

In 1990, Blanton was named chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Houston Endowment, the largest private foundation in Texas, founded in 1937. Education is the focus of the Endowment, which has been at the core of Blanton's career as a public servant. Approximately 80 percent of the grants are dedicated to the greater Houston area, supporting abused women and children, health needs of lesser income families, civic beautification, cultural areas and virtually all areas of education. At any given time, the Houston Endowment provides scholarships to approximately 5,000 young people, including one annually to each accredited school of architecture through the Texas Architectural Foundation (TAF). In addition, Blanton has personally endowed scholarships at universities across Texas. In 1997, the Endowment made a \$12 million donation toward financing a new building on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin named the Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art. In addition, Blanton and his late wife Laura Lee Blanton have given a building at Southern Methodist University named the Laura Lee Blanton Student Services Building.

In recognition of his accomplishments and contributions, Blanton will be honored during the Texas Society of Architects' 65th Annual Convention in Houston. TSA President Jeff

Potter, AIA, will present Blanton with a specially engraved commemorative gift during the Presidents' Gala, Saturday, October 23. In addition, the Society will make a donation to a charitable organization in his honor.

The Cornerstone Award is the Society's highest public recognition and was inaugurated in 1999. This year's selection of Jack S. Blanton gives witness to exemplary contributions Jack Blanton has made in promoting effective civic duty, celebrating architecture, art and the quality of our shared lives.

THE TEXAS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS CORNERSTONE AWARD

Created in 1999, the Cornerstone Award is presented in recognition of outstanding contributions that enhance the quality of life by elevating architecture and the arts, promoting the value of community, or preserving the natural environment.

FORMER RECIPIENTS

- 1999 George and Cynthia Mitchell, Galveston
- 2000 Lady Bird Johnson, Austin
- 2001 Raymond Nasher, Dallas
- 2002 Bill Ratliff, Mount Pleasant
- 2003 Ruth Carter Stevenson, Fort Worth

For ticket information, contact the Texas Society of Architects at 512.478.7386.

CITYLIVING

by STEPHEN SHARPE

Although adaptive reuse of commercial and industrial buildings as loft residences is uncommon in Texas, two urban projects demonstrate successful transformations



WHILE popular in many parts of North America, adaptive reuse of commercial and industrial structures into multi-family residential space is a relatively new trend in Texas. Dallas has been the principal beneficiary of the trend so far, mainly because so many of its surviving warehouses are located relatively near downtown. Urban “lofts” – essentially any space with an open plan – have prospered in Dallas also because of the city’s popular light rail system which has generated the interest of architects and developers in creating live/work/play nodes adjacent to DART stations. Among the most successful of these is Mockingbird Station, a mixed-use development that includes a lively entertainment district flanked by residential projects, including some adapted from existing commercial buildings. Houston’s new Metro light rail system appears to be driving new downtown development in a similar fashion. However, the projects being planned along the Metro’s initial rail line are almost exclusively new construction, albeit designed to look old through use of materials recycled from older structures, because few of the original commercial and industrial buildings have survived into the twenty-first century.

Like Houston, most cities in the Southwest have not retained their warehouse districts and other commercial areas; many of those areas have been demolished to make way for new construction. Also, the original urban fabric that has survived in most Texas cities typically does not offer the same opportunities for residential development. Generally speaking, commercial and industrial structures in most Texas cities are few and far between, usually isolated and slightly removed from the downtown. Another significant factor is the Texas tradition, proven again and again over the last 50 years, of people choosing to build larger houses on larger lots in the suburbs rather than enduring the physical restrictions of living in or near the urban core.

The King William Lofts retains an industrial look and feel even with the insertion of balconies and other amenities; photos by Poteet Architects.

But a minority of homeowners in Texas cities are finding greater value in closer proximity to their downtowns, and are seeking out newly adapted residential lofts. Two recent adaptive reuse projects, one in San Antonio's King William Historic District and another in Houston's historic Heights neighborhood, demonstrate how architects have refashioned non-residential structures to accommodate an intrepid clientele willing to take a gamble on full-time city life.

King William Lofts

The King William Historic District, just south of downtown San Antonio, where restored, century-old Victorian homes stand stoically along the leafy residential streets, is an unlikely setting for an adaptive reuse project. Yet, adjacent to these stately dwellings are a few industrial buildings that date back to the early 1900s. The Blue Star Art Complex is among the best known adaptation which developed loft apartments, galleries, retail shops, performance spaces, and artists studios from a collection of warehouses.

New to this area is the King William Lofts by the local firm Poteet Architects. The project manages to blend in seamlessly with the existing residential neighborhood. Firm principal Jim Poteet, AIA, has worked on other projects in the vicinity and has become very familiar with the viability of some of the original structures for adaptive reuse. Poteet was hired by developer Stephen W. Yndo to reconfigure two buildings from the mid-1920s to create 11 loft-style residences. "The fact that an industrial use co-existed with this Victorian neighborhood at the turn of the century only adds to the area's richness," Poteet says. "It is this type of unsentimental preservation that excites me."

Poteet brought the structures up to code with a minimal amount of new insertions to the existing fabric. Each of the 11 units have at least two parking spaces, with the residential units ranging in size from 2,000 to 4,500 square feet. The complex is oriented along a north-south axis and stretches between the more commercial South Alamo Street northward to the more residential Madison Street. Each building is framed with reinforced concrete infilled with red structural clay tile ("frasiertile" manufactured in McKinney). The smaller building is two-story and contains three units,

**"THE FACT THAT AN INDUSTRIAL
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Jim Poteet, AIA, architect for the King William Lofts

**"THE IDEA WAS TO KEEP THIS
SPACE VERY CLEAN, MUCH
LIKE IT ORIGINALLY WAS,
WHILE CAREFULLY ADDING
MODERN AMENITIES."**

Nonya Grenader, FAIA, architect for the 22nd Street Lofts

each with a ground-level storefront on South Alamo. The larger building, with eight units, sets perpendicular to Madison Street and enjoys the closer association with the quiet residential enclave of the historic district. The Madison building was originally erected as a single-height warehouse but the architect raised the roof to add an intermediate story and a full-length dormer along both sides.

The majority of the individual owners have hired Poteet Architects and FAB Architecture in Austin to design the interiors in ways that capture the industrial feel of the structures while adding amenities such as balconies and solid interior walls. The original wood ceiling trusses are left exposed and skylights allow light into some of the interior spaces. Many of the owners are young professionals who relish living far from suburbia.

22nd Street Lofts

Houston, a place not known for its architectural preservation, has only a few older commercial and industrial buildings. Fortunately, in the historic neighborhood known as The Heights, a former textile mill dating back to 1894 has survived the recurrent boom and bust cycles that periodically redefine the cityscape. Nonya Grenader, FAIA, recently adapted one of the buildings into four residential spaces perfectly suited to tenants who desire a bare-bones environment for living and/or working.

Grenader's concept for the project is not far removed from the building's industrial beginnings. (The former mill complex, consisting of several concrete-framed buildings, is now owned by several investors, including the architect's husband, Jonathan Grenader.) The mill's tall smokestack still stands and the Seth Thomas clock in the tower continues to keep time. Both vertical elements make the complex a neighborhood landmark.

Insertions into the existing structure are minimal and are basically confined to the center of the open-plan warehouse where all plumbing, electrical, and HVAC services were installed. Consolidation of the services allowed each of the four units to contain one long, uninterrupted, single-height interior space of about 2,400 square feet. The units are illuminated on three sides by large operable steel windows. About half of the original windows were restored; others were beyond repair and were replaced with reproductions fitted with the original wire glass where pos-



sible. A stairwell, with an opening punched through the concrete ceiling, was added for access to the upper-level units. All in all, the structure was sound and required no material abatement. “The idea was to keep this space very clean, much like it originally was, while carefully adding modern amenities,” Grenader says.

The concrete structural grid that defines the ceilings are one of the most impressive aspects of the interior spaces. The geometry bestows a handsome elegance that seems somehow incongruous with the industrial-strength material. The original fire-suppression system, which still functions, was painted and left exposed. Sequestered within the inserted core are a kitchen, bath, and storage illuminated by natural light filtered through translucent Lexan panels. HVAC ductwork is partially hidden behind exposed wall studs between the fixed partition and the concrete ceiling.

Parking is behind the complex and the architect has created landscaped areas for communal use on two sides of the building. The project’s industrial atmosphere is experienced most readily from the exterior, particularly when the adjacent buildings of the complex – currently used as warehouse space – are in view. From this vantage point the loft project and its neighboring structures seem to envelope the viewer in an earlier era. **T**

The 22nd Street Lofts displays a monolithic massing on its exterior that opens up inside to reveal a surprisingly elegant geometric grid; photos by Hester + Hardaway.



Inspired Reflection of Place

WHEN the time came for Shawn and Sandra Freeman to build a new house, instead of poring over plans of residences they admired, they chose to start the project by articulating their shared philosophy about life. They wrote a letter to their architect that read in part: “We believe our home should be as inspiring to our children as it is to us, a physical metaphor of the lives we wish our children to live—of grace, style, and quality without pretension, of warmth and character without falsehood, and of cleverness without malice.”

Beginning with that distillation of their objective, Clifford Welch, AIA, set out to help the Freemans realize their vision. The result is a work of modern architecture, but more specifically a work that may best be described as “critical regionalism” because the architect chose to use materials and aspects of the project’s surroundings that respond to the cultural and regional context of its place.

On a site that backs up to a small creek lined with mature trees, the house is placed squarely across the property with a carport extending at a right angle towards the street, allowing the driveway to enter the carport from the side after wrapping around a large red oak tree centered on the site. The main portion of the residence is set back about 75 feet from the street and the carport’s placement enhances the perception of depth, allowing the view of the entry to develop and become clearer as one approaches.

As with the rendered elevations of the project (displayed as art inside the home), the overall composition of the residence is a series of solid planes, set in layers and at right angles to one another, separated and articulated by open spaces within, and by sections of clear glass on the exterior. Outside looking in, the planes can be perceived as receding back into the body of the house and up into the spaces of the second floor. The plan is open and flows from one space to another on the interior, providing views of the surrounding nature from all vantage points within.

In his interpretation of the cultural and regional aspects of Dallas, Cliff chose not to use a native stone, but instead a stone that has been used often in Dallas as a building material. The Tennessee Crab Orchard ledge stone, prominent in the works of Howard Meyer and others practicing in Dallas’



by **W.D. COLLINS II, AIA**

PROJECT House on White Rock Creek, Dallas

CLIENT Shawn and Sandra Freeman

ARCHITECT Clifford Welch Architect

CONTRACTOR J.D.G. Construction

CONSULTANTS Structural Studios (structural); 360 Design (furnishings)

PHOTOGRAPHERS Charles Davis Smith, AIA, and Clifford Welch, AIA (where noted)

RESOURCES MASONRY UNITS: Acme Building Brands; STONE: Banks Stone; CAST STONE: Dallas Cast Stone, Inc.; LUMBER: Architectural Carpentry Materials; MILLWORK: Purcell Cabinetry; WOOD TREATMENTS: Olympic Stain; BUILDING INSULATION: Owens Corning; ROOF AND DECK INSULATION: GAF; VAPOR RETARDERS: Tyvek; WOOD SIDING: Architectural Carpentry Materials; CEMENT PANEL SIDING: James Hardie Products; MEMBRANE ROOFING: GAF; PRE-ASSEMBLED METAL DOOR AND FRAME UNITS: Pella; WOOD WINDOWS: Pella; WOOD CEILINGS: Conwed

(opposite page) A continuous balcony above the entry opens the second-floor rooms to the outdoors.
(this page) A double-height screened porch runs along the rear of the house.



The horizontally articulated surface of Tennessee Crab Orchard ledge stone serves as a strong design element throughout the house; left and bottom photo by Clifford Welch.





heyday of the '40s and '50s, is still seen in buildings throughout the city, and it is a strong element in the design of the Freeman residence. The stone's horizontally articulated surface contrasts against the more uniform slabs of cream-colored brick, and the still more uniform surfaces of drywall, plywood, and glass. The stone creates a portal element for the street elevation, and is continued into the house to form the enclosure for the dining area adjacent to the entry. The same stone is used as the four-foot-deep spine of the house, which provides a continuous visual core element, dividing and defining the spaces within, both horizontally and vertically.

A centrally supported steel and wood stair angles upward across the stone at the entry and frees the floor space below it where a continuous water feature masks the traffic noise from a nearby thoroughfare. The first-floor ceiling planes remain at a constant level throughout, extending and unifying the individual spaces, and as the floor level at the rear of the house steps down, the height of the spaces is enhanced to open the views to the creek. The roof itself angles upwards from the street side and the lower carport, and the second-floor rooms towards the rear of the house again achieve a greater height, looking out into the trees along the creek.

The second-floor rooms along the front of the house open out onto a continuous balcony, sheltered beneath a large overhang and visually separated from the street by an encased, inverted truss, which allows for the wide spans of glass openings at the first floor below. A two-story screened porch along the rear of the house provides a secure, bug-free outdoor area off the

first-floor playroom overlooking the creek and offers views into the trees from the second-floor rooms.

Built-in and concealed storage is featured throughout the residence, and the architect has used a continuous and consistent reveal detail to articulate the surfaces of panels, doors, and cabinet faces. The reveal detail visually ties into the stronger lines of the mullions at the entry and of the framing of the screen porch, and it again echoes the detailing of the architect's elevation drawings.

Some work has been postponed for the future, including a skylight over the breezeway and second-floor storage, but the project overall is finely executed and demonstrates a high level of quality established at the outset.

From all indications, the new residence meets the standards set out by the Freemans, who had summarized their vision this way in the aforementioned letter to their architect: "...we want our home to live for many generations, to embrace the land and the community, to become essential and important. And someday, we want the families who come after us to admire the integrity and restore it, and enjoy it as much as we did." In the tradition of past architects, whose work remains as valid today as when it was constructed, Welch has achieved a timeless project that meets his clients' program beautifully. ■

The writer practices with GSR-Andrade Architects in Dallas.

(top) Large openings hint at the interlocking of indoor and outdoor spaces.
(bottom) The plan is organized around a central courtyard.



Interior and Exterior as Unified Space

by CARLOS MORENO, AIA

DEEP in the tree-abundant, scenic-rich, and rugged terrain of the Texas Hill Country stands the home and studio of Frankeen and Bill Price, their second home designed by Richard Mogas, AIA, of San Antonio. Visitors to this far northwest side of Boerne know the area well for its vast hills, winding roads, clear views, and secluded hillside estates. To many it is known for the popular golf course of Tapatio Springs, while to others it is seen as an area facing new residential developments springing forth to meet San Antonio's northward expansion. But amid all of this, the Price Residence remains a subdued and unassuming complement to this corner of the Hill Country. Its location, orientation, and composition are every bit as deliberate as the art created by the owners.

The design of the house, at first glance, is certainly unique, but also unassuming—a series of single-story buildings with gabled standing-seam metal roofs grouped like a small village. However, a closer look shows that the architect has adhered to tried and true tenets of design, including proper orientation to the sun, maximized views to the outdoors, considerable use of natural light, and studied use of space. But even more, the home represents a quality of architecture not focused upon itself but on the owners.

As a whole, the house suggests a combination of both Mediterranean and contemporary industrial design. The drive approach to the dwelling and the circulation through and around the house provide a strong sense that the architecture assumes a mutual control of its environment. It complements it, restores it, and makes its finer qualities part of the overall design intent. And this is part of its uniqueness; where movement through and around the home builds a layering of experiences, with artifacts being left behind to be discovered later; such as a series of old coins solidified in one of the concrete steps as though set for the purpose of establishing the idea that this residence is about the big and small details. In simpler terms, the home is episodal, where the natural context and the context of the user are its greatest assets.

PROJECT Price Residence, Tapatio Springs, Boerne

CLIENT Frankeen and Bill Price

ARCHITECT Mogas and Associates Architects

CONSULTANTS Accutech Consulting Engineers (structural); Intec (soil analysis)

PHOTOGRAPHER Brent Bates

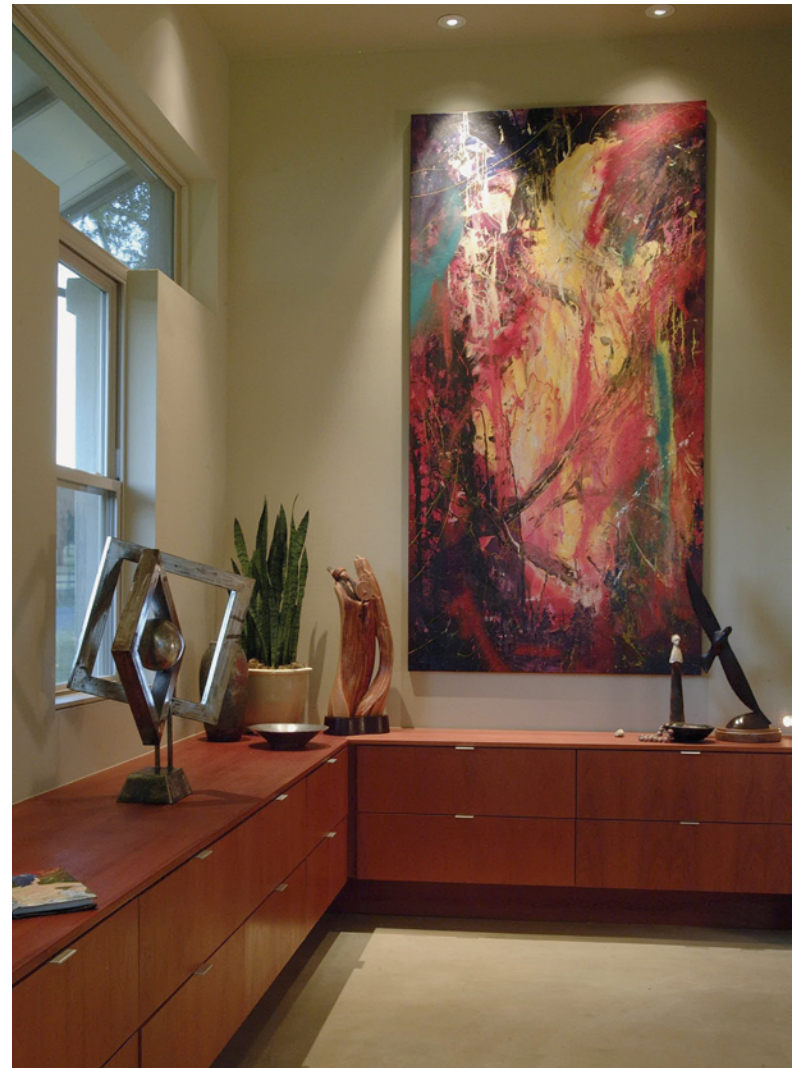
RESOURCES CONCRETE PAVEMENT: Ingram Ready Mix; CONCRETE MATERIALS: Ingram Ready Mix; CONCRETE FLOOR STAIN: Kemiko; MASONRY UNITS: Featherlite; METAL DECKING: Tech Shield Decking; RECYCLED ALUMINUM CHANNELS: GNW Recycling; OIL FIELD PIPE: La Grange Equipment; STEEL BAR JOISTS: Alamo Iron; METAL DECK: River City Steel; POLY GAL ROOF: Laird Plastic; ALUMINUM TUBING: Trident Austin; BUILDING INSULATION: Certaineed; VAPOR RETARDERS: Tyvek; STUCCO: Hill Country Stucco; MEMBRANE ROOFING: Firestone TPO; METAL ROOFING: Kynar 500; METAL DOORS AND FRAMES: Wen-craft; SPECIALTY DOORS: Amco Overhead Door Company; VINYL WINDOWS: Simonton by Norandex; GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING AND ACCESSORIES: USG; PAINTS: Sherwin Williams

A generous amount of glazing allows abundant natural light into the living room. (below) Semi-private spaces benefit from a more regulated use of windows.

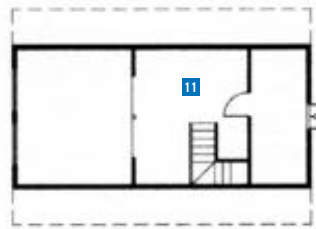


The Price Residence shows specific signs of every attempt to work within its surroundings, primarily in the sequence of space—an interlocking, or merging, of interior and exterior space. For instance, the most immediate observation made upon arrival is of the large punched opening adjacent to the main entry. With this comes one of the design's best attributes, the use of borrowed scenery. This design strategy exemplifies how well the residence frames its surroundings. For instance, views to the east frame the green, manicured golf course of Tapatio Springs while views to the west focus on the pristine Hill Country.

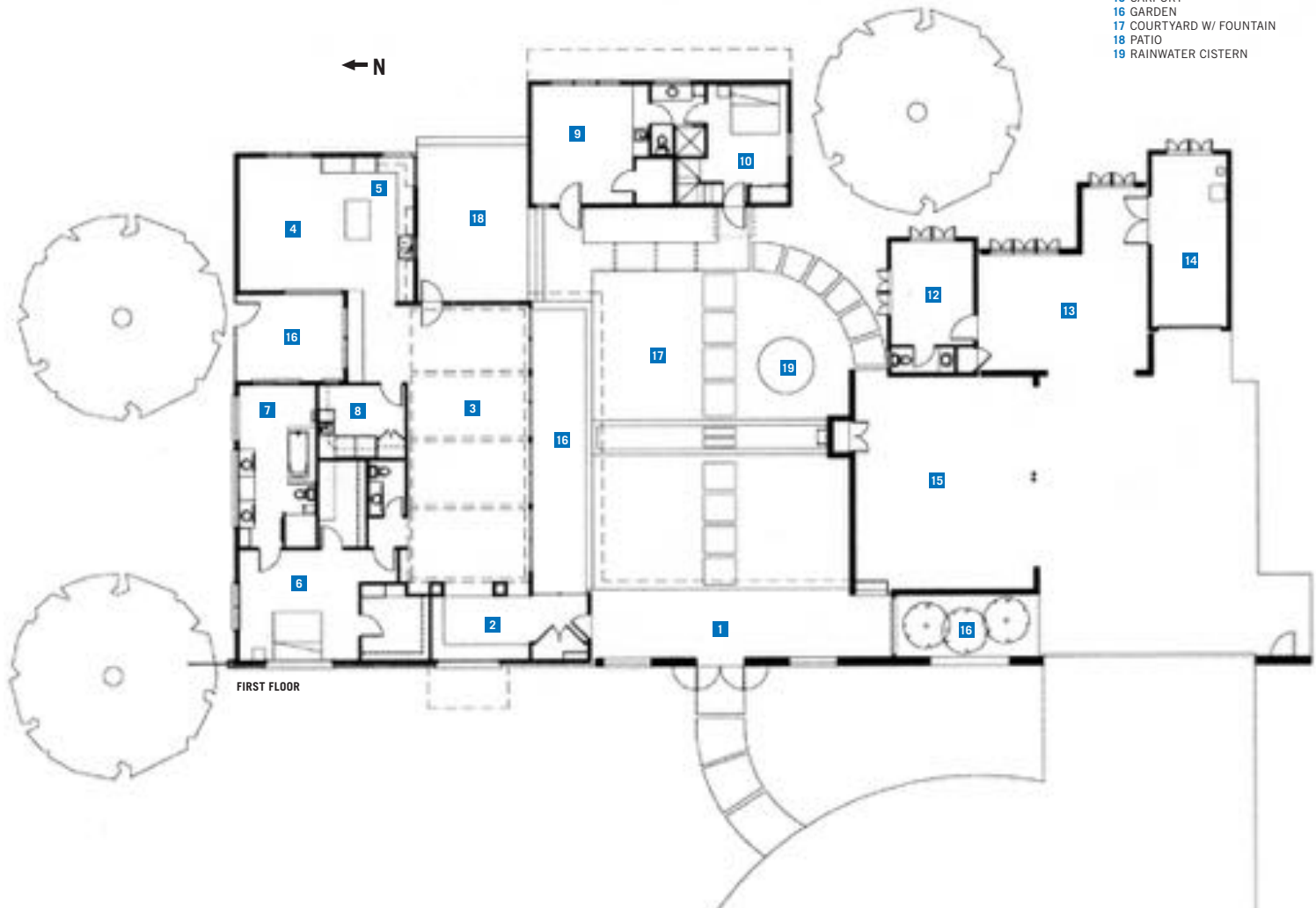
The sequence of interior and exterior spaces captures a use and sense similar to that of the Roman domus. In this case, the home's design is inwardly focused and organized around a central courtyard, which also can be seen through the horizontal gaps of the galvanized steel bars that form the entry gate. It is this courtyard which represents the key visual reference point throughout the residence and also serves as a primary organizing principle, making it readily apparent that all roads lead to this central location. And upon entry, it is from the courtyard that the visitor is primed for movement through the site on concrete pads that lead across the crushed-gravel courtyard to the studios, guest quarters, garage, and garden. But the visitor is enticed to linger in the courtyard enhanced with the Prices' garden sculpture and a cross-patterned water feature, and by the play of shadows on these elements from the daily passage of the sun.



- FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 ENTRY PORCH
 - 2 ENTRY
 - 3 LIVING ROOM/DINING ROOM
 - 4 FAMILY
 - 5 KITCHEN
 - 6 MASTER BEDROOM
 - 7 MASTER BATH
 - 8 LAUNDRY
 - 9 STUDIO
 - 10 BEDROOM
 - 11 SLEEPING LOFT
 - 12 OFFICE
 - 13 WORKSHOP
 - 14 GOLF CART STORAGE
 - 15 CARPORT
 - 16 GARDEN
 - 17 COURTYARD W/ FOUNTAIN
 - 18 PATIO
 - 19 RAINWATER CISTERN



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

The private and semi-private areas evoke the total-design principles typically reflected in Mogas' work. Starting with the organization of the interior spaces, the primary space—the living room—is given center stage. It's a linear space bounded by the vertical planes of a painted drywall partition at one side and a full-length, full-height, floor-to-ceiling storefront window system on the other. Here again, from the interior perspective, the courtyard is an ever-present reference point. At the leading end of the living room is an open view to an intimate private patio from which sights are left open to a small garden and the golf course beyond. The garden itself acts a privacy fence.

The floor and ceiling planes of the living room are presented by an exposed concrete floor and a suspended clear-finished wood slat system. Exposed galvanized ductwork, industrial lighting, and finely tuned mechanical details undergird the industrial quality of the design. Inter-

estingly, just as the courtyard functions, so too does the living room; as it also serves as the space about which the remainder of the house is organized. The den, kitchen, laundry room, guest bath, and bedrooms stem from this space. Through this organization, a breakdown from the public to semi-private to private is readily accomplished, while no space is wasted. Even the bedrooms are configured for ease of accessibility, yet allow for privacy.

To the design's credit, the Price Residence aptly addresses the merging of the interior and exterior without restricting movement. Such unfettered access throughout the house creates a story told by spaces enhanced by the experiences of the Prices and their guests. ■

Carlos Moreno, AIA, practices with Marmon Mok in San Antonio.

Prominently sited at the main entrance to The Woodlands, the new 30-story headquarters for Anadarko Petroleum creates a memorable visual icon for the client. The bridge in the background is by Ford Powell Carson.



Urban Tower in the Pines

by SARA STEVENS

IN the piney forest 30 miles north of Houston, Gensler's new office tower for Anadarko Petroleum is the only building to break the green horizon. At 30 stories and 500 feet tall, it is the tallest building between Houston and Dallas, and can be seen for miles along the Interstate 45.

This new building also marks the first move of a major energy company's headquarters to The Woodlands. A conservative energy company, Anadarko wanted to offer a state-of-the-art facility without appearing to squander resources. Gensler has worked for Anadarko before, and the firm's architects seemed well suited to the client's goals. Norman Hoover, FAIA, Gensler's lead designer on the project, was pleased to take on the project, as Gensler was hired for the entire process, from master planning to the interiors. And though the client was not looking to push the limits of contemporary design, Gensler sympathized with Anadarko's desire "for something tastefully elegant, but in no way ostentatious."

The tower's facade design uses a supergrid to modulate the transition of scale from the large public spaces in the lower floors to the offices above. "The supergrid idea is an optical device that imparts a sense of verticality but expresses the idea of structure," Hoover explains. Creating a memorable visual icon was one of Anadarko's primary project goals, and the stepping edge of this grid provides that imagery. A mix of granites and attractive pre-cast concrete-clad columns and spandrels set against a curtainwall comprises the material palette for the exterior.

Approached by an ascending drive to a drop-off court, the front entry onto the second level of the building is awkwardly sited and the art Anadarko commissioned for the entrance is inconsistent with the building's style. However, this space is redeemed by the unabashed adjacency of an entry to the parking garage also accessed off the entry court. The design of the parking structure, also by Gensler, is cohesive with the rest of the project both in material and scale, and creates a pleasant progression for employees and visitors.

The tower backs up to Lake Robbins, a small man-made lake that lends the project a corporate-campus atmosphere. By separating the building from the adjacent freeway, the lake and landscaping provide a visual and aural buffer.

PROJECT Anadarko Tower, The Woodlands

CLIENT Anadarko Realty

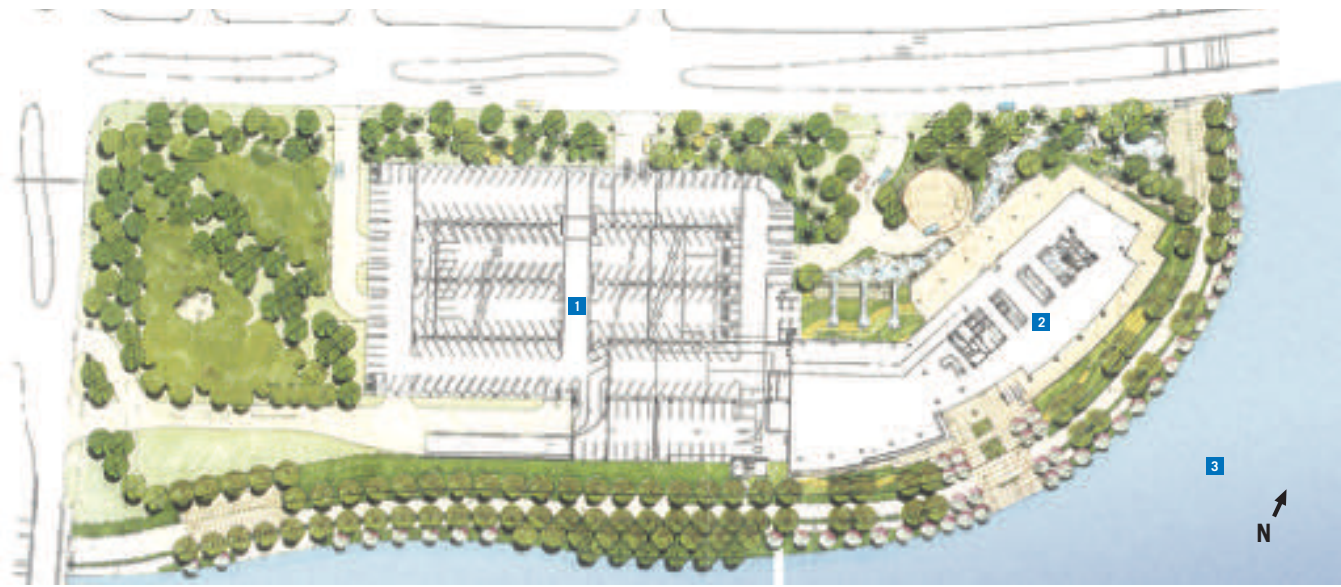
ARCHITECT Gensler

CONTRACTOR D.E. Harvey Builders

CONSULTANTS Pate Engineers (civil); CBM Engineers (structural); CHP Associates (MEP); Rolf Jensen & Associates (fire/life safety); Boner Associates (acoustical); Frank Clements Associates (food service); PSI (geotechnical); Fisher Marantz Stone (lighting); Clark Condon Associates (landscape); HMA Consulting (security); Techknowledge (technology); Wilbur Smith & Associates (traffic/transportation); Ulrich Diederich Graphic Design (graphics); Elizabeth Moore Arnold (artist)

PHOTOGRAPHER Mark Scheyer

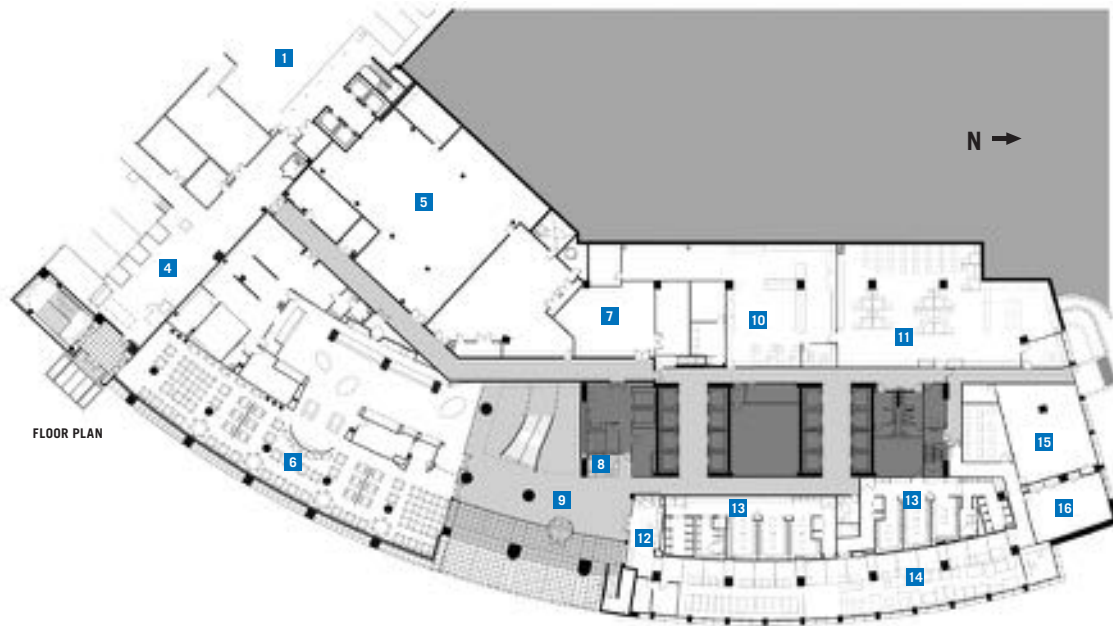
RESOURCES UNIT PAVERS: Pavestone; **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** Southern Star (Hanson); **PRECAST ARCHITECTURAL CONCRETE:** Coreslab; **MANUFACTURED STONE:** Arriscraft; **METAL DECKING:** Vulcraft; **METAL CASTINGS:** MRT/USA; **WATER-PROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** Polyguard; **WATER REPELLENTS:** Hydrozo; **ROOF AND DECK INSULATION:** Performance Roof Systems; **ROOF AND WALL PANELS:** Morin; **ROOF PAVERS AND BALLAST MATERIALS:** Roofblok; **TRAFFIC COATING:** Neogard; **METAL DOORS AND FRAMES:** Raco Interior Products; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** Marshfield Door Systems; **GLASS:** Viracon; **UNITIZED GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** Arrowall Company; **GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING AND ACCESSORIES:** Clark Metal



SITE PLAN

SITE & FLOOR PLAN

- 1 GARAGE
- 2 TOWER
- 3 LAKE ROBBINS
- 4 RECEIVING
- 5 MECHANICAL
- 6 DINING
- 7 STORAGE
- 8 COFFEE
- 9 LOBBY
- 10 REPRODUCTION
- 11 BUILDING SERVICES
- 12 RECEPTION
- 13 LOCKER ROOM
- 14 FITNESS CENTER
- 15 AEROBICS
- 16 YOGA



FLOOR PLAN

Once inside the overly generous second-floor lobby, one feels the architect's desire to maximize the open space in a building straining under 27 floors of small private offices. Walking through the front entry, one is greeted by a view of the lake framed under Anadarko's overhead nameplate. The reception area, set beyond the elevator cores toward the back of the building, is surrounded by a fanciful wall of grillwork. Designed to recall some aspects of Anadarko's previous headquarters, the grillwork harkens back to Art Deco office towers without seeming cartoonish. The traditional motif stands out in an otherwise reserved, postmodernist universe. The combination has been successfully integrated into the project's design details with Gensler even carrying the motif through in some of the lobby area's glass guardrails.

Gensler clustered the employee amenities (fitness center, cafeteria, coffee bar, etc.) around a nicely proportioned secondary lobby, one level below the main entrance. Positioned at water level, this rear facade opens to an inviting lakeside courtyard. Unfortunately, the courtyard appears underutilized—no outdoor seating invites people to enjoy this comfortable, well-proportioned space. [Security concerns may be the likely cause. About midway through the project, in the wake of 9/11, security became a critical issue. One result is that the openness originally intended to encourage access from the public spaces to the lakefront has been carefully regulated.]

Hoover cites Lake Robbins as a key influence on the design. The lake's edge curves around the property, and the tower's floor plan reflects it.

Sleek interior finishes respond to the client's desire for tasteful elegance. The lobby's glass facade invites views out to Lake Robbins.



The company dining room, along with other employee amenities, is set at lakeside. (opposite page) As requested by the client, there's nothing ostentatious about the new headquarters.





This gesture is carried through on the interior as well—curved halls line the lake side of each floor which provide a graceful feature in what could have been an awkward space.

The tower's typical office environments suffer from the combination of high-efficiency requirements and an energy industry preference for closed perimeter offices. From the designer's perspective, this forces common spaces like conference rooms and team meeting areas into the building's interior. While the elevator lobbies and hallways could benefit from direct contact with natural light and open spaces with views to the outdoors, Gensler's hands were somewhat tied. However, at the inset corners of each floor, the designers were able to incorporate open nodes with floor-to-ceiling glass.

The project's lakeside facade features the most interesting urban component of the project—The Woodlands Waterway, a 1.25-mile water transit

corridor which incorporates Lake Robbins. This summer the office buildings along this waterway will be connected to nearby shopping areas via water taxis. And there are plans for a street trolley in the future to link local office parks to high-end retail and entertainment. Spanning the waterway is a Gensler-designed pedestrian bridge that leads from Anadarko Tower to another building owned by Anadarko.

Although the project, which allowed Gensler plenty of control over the design, shows some inconsistencies, the Anadarko Tower is successful in part because of its thorough detailing and consistently high quality. Yet its stronger feature is the design's recognition of the urban potential of the location through the positioning of the programmatic pieces. ■

Sara Stevens works with Wittenberg Oberholzer Architects and the Buffalo Bayou Partnership in Houston.

THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ART IN OUR SCHOOLS.

NO WONDER PEOPLE THINK
CARAVAGGIO
IS A GUY ON THE SOPRANOS.

It's hard to believe. Here's a 17th-century Baroque master whose bold naturalistic painting style first created a sensation, then a movement. A guy

whose life was filled with the turbulence and excess of more than a dozen Mario Puzo novels.

This guy who, while

troubled, ultimately found redemption and immortality in his art. But does the average kid on the street even know who Caravaggio is?

Fuhgildrhead!

Too bad. Especially when you consider how much our children can learn from the conflicted life of a great artist like Michelangelo Caravaggio.

He grew up in less-than-ideal circumstances. Most of his family died in the plague. Much of his youth was spent on the mean streets of Rome. And as a



A self-portrait of Caravaggio as Bacchus. He really *is* probably 15 or 20 minutes on *The Sopranos*.

young artist he struggled for years to make a living. He was angry. For the angry contrast between light and darkness in his work is the very reason why it now hangs in countless museums around the world.

If nothing else, it's a case study of the importance of having an art as an outlet. Unfortunately, one we're fast removing from our kids' lives.

If the arts are indeed a vital part of your child's education (and studies show you believe they are), then you should demand his or her best shot. To find out how to help, or for more information about the benefits of arts education,

please visit us at AmericansForTheArts.org. Because, as Caravaggio would tell you, life without art is torture.



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Welcome home to our range

The multicolored layers of Palo Duro Canyon enliven the open range of Texas. Striations in the canyon walls inspired the design of a nearby visitors' center. Here, vibrant masonry hues recall a familiar feature of the state's landscape: the distinctive colors of Acme Brick. Texans have built with Acme more than with any other brick, since 1891. Today, more than ever, selecting Acme means coming home to trusted quality and style.



"For this design, we found brick to be the perfect material to help us capture the spirit of the nearby Palo Duro Canyon. Acme Brick provided the large palette necessary to create the subtle striations and sculptural qualities."
—Elizabeth Chu Richter, AIA, Richter Architects

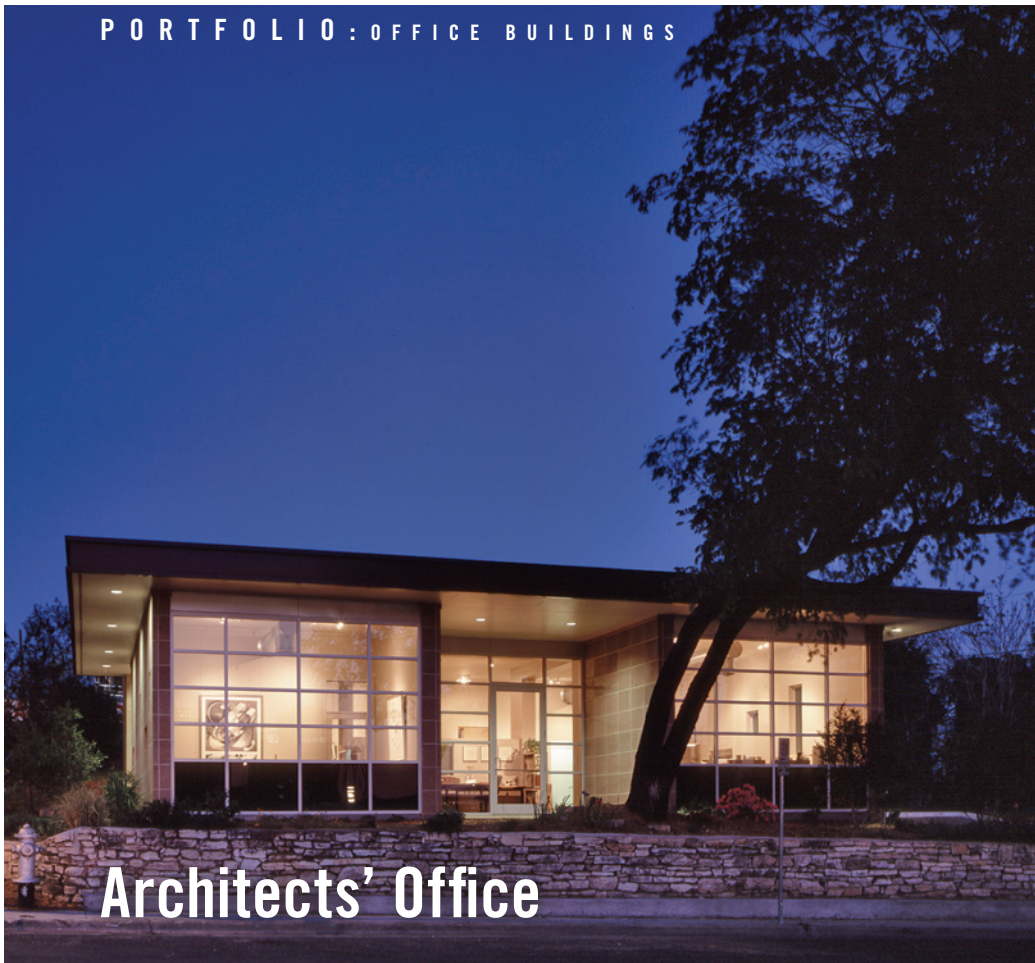


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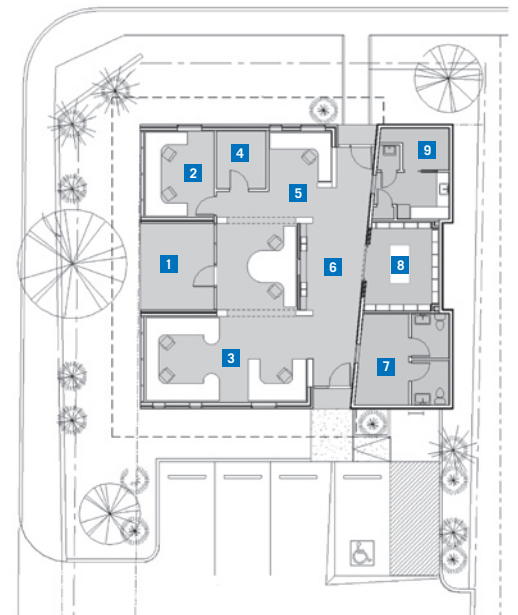
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CONTRACTOR Rayco Enterprises
CONSULTANTS L.O.C. Civil Division (civil); Steinman Luevano Structures (structural); Encotech Engineering (MEP)
PHOTOGRAPHER Paul Bardagjy

One block east of Interstate 35 in downtown Austin, a professional office building completed in April 2001 emphasizes its natural surroundings. Large west-facing storefront windows offer views of the skyline just beyond a large pecan tree that stretches its branches across the outdoor terrace. Sited on the southeast corner of 7th Street and Brushy Street, the 2,100-square-foot building serves as a gateway to the city's newly rejuvenated east side. The massing is basically rectilinear and the thick, north-south facing walls are composed of oversized CMU blocks to insulate occupants from the din of 7th Street's heavy traffic. Five small windows randomly punctuate the coursing pattern of the masonry on the north and south sides, and more than four feet of roof overhangs protect the building from solar gain. On the inside, rooms are open and airy. Natural light cascades through the windows, illuminating the 12-foot-high studio space.

The rooms at the back of the building, which are located along the east property line, are marked on the exterior by changes in height and materials. A large, translucent skylight in the library/conference room performs the dual function of freeing up wall space for built-in shelves and providing illumination. An archive storage area is located above the library in an unfinished mezzanine space. Minimalist cabinets and shelves throughout the building are made of MDF. Shimmering stacked glass in the middle of the primary display wall allows diffused light into the waiting and gallery areas. The occupants of the architect studio are actively involved in the local arts community and the gallery space exhibits local work on a rotating basis.

SARAH TANNER

RESOURCES CONCRETE STAIN: L.M. Scofield; MASONRY UNITS: Acme Building Brands (Featherlite); MASONRY RESTORATION AND CLEANING: ProSoCo; PRE-FABRICATED WOOD JOISTS AND TRUSSES: Trus Joist MacMillan; LAMINATES: Abet Laminare; BUILDING INSULATION: Batt Insulation; MEMBRANE ROOFING: Carlisle; CEMENT PANEL SOFFIT: James Hardie Company; ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS: YKK-AP; UNIT SKYLIGHTS: Naturalite; PAINTS: Sherwin Williams; MANUFACTURED CASEWORK: IKEA; BLINDS, SHUTTERS, AND SHADES: Mermet; LIGHTING: Lightolier



- FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 COVERED PATIO
 - 2 OFFICE
 - 3 STUDIO
 - 4 FILE ROOM
 - 5 RECEPTION
 - 6 GALLERY
 - 7 SUPPLY ROOM
 - 8 LIBRARY/CONFERENCE ROOM
 - 9 STORAGE ROOM



Chicago Bridge & Iron

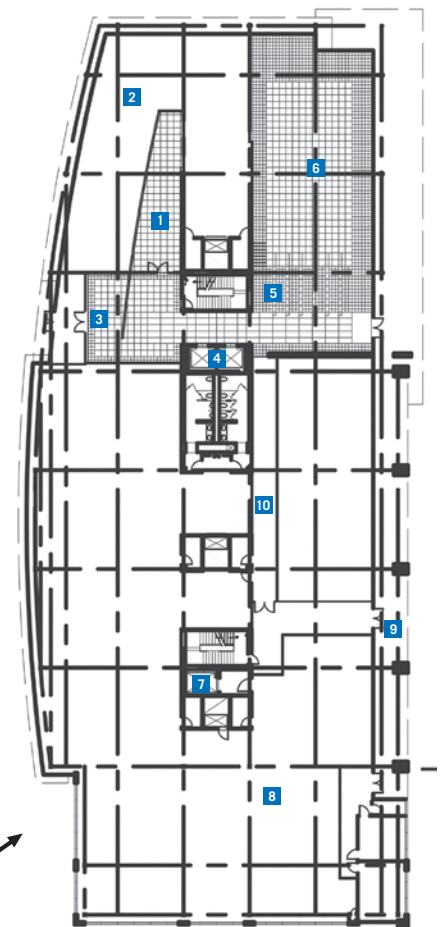
PROJECT Chicago Bridge & Iron Building
CLIENT Chicago Bridge & Iron
ARCHITECT Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum
CONTRACTOR E.E. Reed Construction Company
CONSULTANTS Haynes Whaley Associates (structural); Arcadis G&M (civil); Wylie & Associates (MEP); S&V Surveying (surveying); HOK Planning (landscape design); The Woodlands Operating Company (project management); Kenneth E. Tand & Associates (testing service); IRM International (telecom); Essex Industries (environmental); J&S Audio Visual (audio/visual)
PHOTOGRAPHERS Paul Bardagjy

Chicago Bridge & Iron's new corporate world headquarters in The Woodlands is a 130,000-square-foot building sited on a wooded 13-acre lot. The newly relocated, four-story headquarters of the global engineering and construction company, completed in 2003, features a spectacular view of Lake Woodlands. To maximize the beauty of the location, the low-rise building sits comfortably within the trees and allows views of the lake. The design includes a large plate floor plan and two main facades. A curved facade made of high transmittance glass runs along the lakeside, and a precast concrete and glass facade with punched fenestration adorns the main entry. A glass portico and colonnade covered by a large metal sunshade caps the executive floor, while smaller sunshades on other floors comprise an interesting exterior skin. Access to the building is provided by

a large arrivals plaza and a covered walkway that leads from the garage. The beauty of the land was the inspiration for the interior space. The architect brought the outdoors in by using materials that reflect the natural surroundings, like the rich colors of The Woodlands. The natural wood veneers and reflective metals in the interior are reminiscent of the elegant trees and sparkling lake. Tall, wood-veneer wall panels with polished, stainless steel reveals contrast the monolithic granite wall panels. The architect used these materials consistently in the public spaces throughout the building. The back-of-house spaces are characterized by natural-toned carpets and plenty of natural light.

SARAH TANNER

RESOURCES CONCRETE PAVEMENT: Southern Star (Hanson); UNIT PAVERS: Pavestone; CONCRETE ELEMENTS: East Texas Precast; PRECAST ARCHITECTURAL CONCRETE: CoreSlab; STONE: Lucia; GRANITE: Lucia; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: Wood Arts Systems; LAMINATES: Pionite; WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING: Sonneborn, Protecto; BUILDING INSULATION: Owens Corning; ROOF AND DECK INSULATION: Owens Corning; MEMBRANE ROOFING: Firestone Building Products; METAL DOORS AND FRAMES: Door Pro Systems; PREASSEMBLED METAL DOOR AND FRAME UNITS: RACO Interior Products; WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES: Pionite, VT Industries, Door Pro Systems; GLASS: Viracon; DECORATIVE GLAZING: Vision Glass; GLAZED CURTAINWALL: Viracon, PPG, Ranger Glass, Proclad Enterprises; STEEL FRAMING: Clark Framing Systems; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: USG; WALL COVERINGS: Knoll Textiles; ACOUSTICAL TREATMENTS: Owens Corning; PAINTS: Decor Craft



FLOOR PLAN
 1 INTERNAL CONFERENCE CORRIDOR
 2 CONFERENCE CENTER
 3 PRE-FUNCTION AREA
 4 ELEVATORS
 5 RECEPTION
 6 LOBBY
 7 SERVICE ELEVATOR
 8 OFFICE SPACE
 9 ARCADE
 10 CORRIDOR

Concrete: The Natural Choice

HOMEOWNERS and building professionals across the country offer impressive testimonial to the new role concrete is playing in housing. An ever-increasing number of homeowners, builders, and designers are utilizing concrete products throughout the house—for walls and floors, driveways and patios, siding and roofing. New concrete construction techniques are emerging, even while long-established commercial construction methods are being adapted to the residential marketplace. Today's concrete products offer unmatched beauty, durability, and an affordable price.

Homescaping with Concrete

With technological advances allowing it to take on virtually any color, texture, or shape, concrete is redefining its role on the residential landscape. Concrete's new flexibility has made it a leading choice for homescaping, a trend that places increasing emphasis on outdoor space and curb appeal.

Concrete can be cast in a wide variety of colors. Mixing mineral pigments throughout the concrete produces pastels and earth tones. For deeper tones, finishers use the dry-shake method—sprinkling powdered, pre-packaged color hardeners onto a freshly cast concrete slab, then troweling it into the surface. Precast concrete products, such as paving stones, are available in the same full palette of colors.

Semi-hardened concrete can be pattern-stamped with special tools to create the custom look and feel of slate, cobblestone, brick, or tile. Concrete paving stones come in a wide variety of colors and shapes that can be interwoven into nearly any pattern.

An exposed aggregate finish gives traditional concrete a more natural look. It's done by brushing and washing away surface mortar as the concrete begins to harden, so the gravel in the concrete becomes visible. Using a brush to texture fresh concrete adds interesting shadow lines to the surface. Concrete paving stones can be pre-distressed in a process called tumbling, resulting in a more rustic appearance.

These surface treatments are just as pleasing in the interior as they are on the exterior of a home. Colored and imprinted concrete is an excellent flooring material combining economy, durability, and decorative qualities. Concrete



The basic ingredients needed to produce concrete: water, cement, and fine and coarse aggregates.

stone is an ideal choice for fireplaces, accent walls, and is a popular choice for countertops, which can be cast-in-place or prefabricated in a wide range of colors, patterns, and textures.

Beautiful Homes Built to Last

The beauty of concrete is that it requires far less work on the part of the homeowner to keep it looking like new. The latest innovations in siding and roofing take low maintenance to a new level. Stucco, fiber-cement siding, manufactured stone, and concrete roof tiles are being used to provide superior protection from the elements without sacrificing beauty.

Stucco

Traditional portland cement plaster (stucco) is a time-tested exterior finish. Stucco is made with portland cement and sand, the same ingredients that are the basis for concrete used to build super-highways, bridges, and skyscrapers. Pigments are added to the plaster mix to give a wide variety of colors that don't require constant maintenance like painted wood. Stucco has high impact resistance, sheds water, and breaths, allowing water vapor to escape. It's a proven system that works in all climates. Some homeowners choose plaster for interior walls too, providing a much more durable surface than gypsum board.

Fiber-Cement Siding

Fiber-cement siding has the look of wood, but at lower cost. Unlike wood, it's resistant to termites

and fire. It will not rot, buckle, or warp and holds paint for several years longer than conventional wood siding. Once again, portland cement is the main ingredient along with ground sand and cellulose fibers. Fiber-cement siding can give a home the look of wood with the protection, low maintenance, and lasting power of concrete.

Manufactured Stone

Manufactured stone is made with concrete in special molds to look like quarried stone. It has the same advantages of real stone - beauty and durability - but installs faster and easier. Advanced molding and coloring techniques allow manufactured stone to be virtually indistinguishable from real stone, adding a timeless strength to any home.

Concrete Roof Tiles

Nothing beats the look of roof tiles. Their texture, hue, and shape add beauty and curb appeal to any home. Made with portland cement, sand, and pigment, concrete roof tiles offer homeowners a cost-effective alternative to slate, cedar shakes, or clay tile without sacrificing beauty or durability. And since they're weather and fire resistant, they provide safety for everything under the roof.

Concrete Wall Systems

Architects, builders, or homeowners interested in switching to concrete walls have a number of different methods from which to choose. One of the fastest growing homebuilding systems in

North America is known as insulating concrete forms (ICFs). Two basic types of ICF systems are currently available. One uses hollow polystyrene blocks that stack and interlock in a manner similar to children's building blocks. The other uses panels or planks that are held a constant distance apart by a series of plastic or metal ties. After using the forms to construct a hollow wall with vertical and horizontal steel reinforcement, contractors pump concrete into the cavity to create a solid structural wall with insulation on both sides. Unlike traditional concrete forms, ICFs stay in place, and the polystyrene insulation on either side of the concrete functions as the insulation for the home. Once crews complete the wall, electricians and plumbers cut channels for cables, wires, and water lines into the forms. Drywall is screwed into the fastening surfaces on the interior side of the forms, while any desired exterior finish, such as brick, stone, stucco, or siding is easily attached.

Another concrete homebuilding system that is familiar to most contractors and designers is concrete masonry units (CMUs), also known as concrete block. Masons will lay a series of



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courses, or rows, using the CMUs, which are typically eight inches wide by eight inches high and 16 inches long. Each course is set on a layer of mortar to bind the blocks and to ensure proper spacing. As they progress, the masons leave openings for doors and windows, using blocks that are only eight inches long to form square jambs. The most common exterior finish is stucco, while on the inside surface, walls can be furred out to accommodate drywall. An alternative interior option is to apply a skim coat of plaster. There are a number of new types of concrete block systems on the market that make it easier than ever to achieve a wide variety of architectural looks and incorporate rigid insulation for added energy efficiency.

Traditional concrete forming, also known as cast-in-place, is typically associated with basement foundations and commercial construction. However, in recent years, a number of form manufacturers have encouraged the use of their products for the above-ground walls of single-family homes. In conventional cast-in-place construction, a crew erects forms of plywood, steel, or aluminum that make a mold

in the shape of the desired walls. After placing steel bars to reinforce the wall, the crew pours concrete inside the cavity. Once the concrete hardens, the crew strips the forms to leave the reinforced concrete walls. For above ground walls, a layer of rigid foam insulation is attached on both or either sides of the concrete, or in some cases within the inner cavity, to provide additional energy efficiency.

Another concrete forming system, that has up until now been used primarily for commercial projects, is pre-cast concrete walls. With pre-cast technology large sections, or panels, of concrete walls are poured horizontally in a carefully controlled factory environment. Openings for walls, doors, electrical, and plumbing lines are selected in advance of the pour. The factory setting ensures a very high level of quality, which is unaffected by weather or unexpected jobsite conditions. Once completed and cured, the panels are delivered by truck to the job site, lifted into place with a crane, and fastened together. The labor savings realized can be significant. Like traditional concrete forming,

pre-cast systems are beginning to make inroads into the single-family housing market.

Autoclaved Aerated Concrete

Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (AAC) systems consist of blocks held together by mortar. But that's where the similarity to conventional mortared block construction ends. AAC is made with all fine aggregates, nothing more coarse than a grain of sand, cement, and a natural expansion agent that causes the concrete to rise like bread dough, with countless small air pockets. In fact, this concrete is 80 percent air. Finishes are applied directly onto the surface of aerated concrete block. The factory can mold it and cut it into precisely dimensioned units. While block-size is most common, it can also be cast into reinforced panels for walls, floors, and roofs.

Concrete Floor Systems

Concrete floor systems are similar to concrete wall systems. They're made with removable forms, masonry, ICF technology, and precast concrete. Each system can be used with its wall

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counterpart or can be mixed and matched with other systems. One major advantage of using a concrete floor system is that you can easily install a radiant heating system. Most systems use flexible tubes embedded in concrete. A special heater pumps water through the tubes and heats the slab. Heat radiates from the slab resulting in a quiet, comfortable home.

Regardless of the exact method used, the benefits of concrete wall systems are readily apparent: superior energy efficiency, outstanding acoustical properties, fire and insect resistance, and resistance to high-wind events such as hurricanes and tornadoes.

Energy Efficient

Saving energy means saving the environment (and money). The mass and light color of concrete, combined with modern insulation materials, reduces temperature fluctuations, keeping homes cool in the summer and warm in the winter—at a fraction of the operating cost of homes built using other materials. That means comfort, since concrete systems virtually eliminate drafts, cold spots, and hot spots in your

home. Many concrete wall systems now incorporate foam insulation that can be four to five inches in total thickness. Steady state insulation values for these walls generally range from R-16 to R-22. Furthermore, the thermal mass of the concrete decreases HVAC energy demand by moderating daily temperature swings. Finally, the monolithic nature of the concrete core minimizes air infiltration as compared to the hundreds of components and joints found in frame construction. The combined effect of these variables often enables homeowners to save in excess of 30 to 40 percent on their heating and cooling costs. The energy efficiency of a concrete and foam wall system also allows contractors to specify smaller HVAC systems.

Acoustic Performance

The mass of concrete deadens sound transmission dramatically, making concrete wall systems a natural choice for urban environments, hotels, multi-family dwellings, and locations in close proximity to airports, railways, and highways. Similarly, concrete floor systems offer unparalleled rigidity and damping properties

to mitigate vibration concerns or excessive deflections.


Durability

Concrete puts little burden on the environment—or the pocket book—since it’s so durable and easy to maintain. It doesn’t rot or rust and actually gets stronger with age. Termites and other pests can’t eat it. Concrete resists flying debris during tornadoes and hurricanes, doesn’t burn, and can survive earthquakes. Unlike other building materials, it is completely inert and doesn’t off-gas chemicals. Concrete is not damaged by moisture and can generally breathe and dry if not prohibited by adjacent structures.

A concrete mixture can be customized to take local environmental factors into account. Whether dealing with air-borne salts in the gulf region or freeze-thaw conditions in the Great Lakes, concrete mixtures can be easily tailored to perform in any climate. By simply outlasting other materials, concrete conserves energy and resources. No other building material can provide such long-term value for the homeowner.

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Environmental Friendliness

Concrete offers a natural choice for homeowners and designers concerned about the environment. Once in place, concrete is there for the long run. It doesn't rot, rust, or burn, lasting decades with minimal upkeep. Manufactured locally, from common and abundant materials, concrete puts little stress on the environment. It's made with sand, gravel, and water mixed with a small amount of cement. The cement reacts with the water to form a hard mass that is strong, durable, and can be formed into any shape. Most concrete uses a significant amount of recycled material such as fly ash and slag, by-products of power plants and steel mills. And old concrete is recyclable too—it can be crushed and used in new concrete. All-in-all, concrete earns high marks as a green building material.

The growth in the number of homes utilizing exterior concrete wall systems has been impressive, to say the least. In 2002, nearly 15 percent of the single-family homes in the United States were built with exterior walls of concrete masonry, ICFs, or other concrete systems—a figure that is expected to grow to

22 percent by 2006. The growth of ICF homes has been particularly dramatic. In 1994, the number of ICF homes built in the U.S. was less than 1,000. According to PCA forecasts, in 2003 nearly 45,000 ICF homes will be built across the country.

Examples of concrete homes within Texas are easy to find. During the last four years, the City of Lubbock has demolished more than 80 substandard and deteriorating homes, replacing them with homes built with ICF exterior walls. The project is part of the city's Affordable Housing Reconstruction Program, which is partially funded through a combination of state, federal, and private partnerships, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which supplies Community Development Block Grants. The homes have proven to be so energy efficient and disaster resistant that the city no longer accepts bids for wood-framed housing. Although the affordable concrete homes built by the city justifiably receive most of the attention, the majority of ICF homes in Lubbock are being constructed for the private housing industry.

In the Houston area, a number of high-end custom ICF homes have been constructed over the last several years. Also, the Lakes of Sanger development just north of the DFW Metroplex is expected to eventually consist of over 400 ICF homes. A number of other concrete homes have been built in the state, ranging from entire subdivisions of luxury homes to 1,200-square-foot homes for Habitat for Humanity.

As the number of housing starts continues to increase, the number of manufacturers of concrete homebuilding systems has grown from a mere handful in the early 1990s to well over 70 today. As energy prices continue to climb, as noise pollution from airports and highways becomes a politically hot issue in many communities, it would seem that the sky might be the limit for the future of concrete home construction. ■

JIM NIEHOFF

Jim Niehoff is residential promotion manager at the Portland Cement Association.

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TRENDS OF THE TRADE

Retail construction expected to boom over next few years

Retail construction will be the key driver in nonresidential construction in the next three years due to increased consumer spending, according to Edward Sullivan, vice president and chief economist for the Portland Cement Association. Growth in the retail area is expected to increase by 3.1 percent this year, but economists expect a 12.7-percent increase in 2005 and a 14-percent increase in 2006. Looking at the overall U.S. construction picture, Sullivan predicted that residential construction will slow down due to rising interest rates, and non-residential construction will increase thanks to job growth and higher consumer bullishness. He also expects a 1.5-percent overall increase in U.S. construction activity in 2004 and a 2.6-percent rise in 2005. To learn more, visit http://www.csemag.com/news_stories/news112.asp.

Hospital CFOs predict increase in capital spending


Nearly three-fourths of chief financial officers said they plan to increase their hospitals' capital spending over the next five years, according to a survey of CFOs at 460 hospitals and health systems nationwide, conducted by the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) in partnership with GE Healthcare Financial Services. Survey results, as reported in an issue of "Financing the Future," indicate that CFOs expect to increase capital spending by an average of 14 percent per year, with spending in certain regions of the U.S. rising more than others. In contrast, average annual increases in capital spending between 1997 and 2001 were merely one percent. Driving this increased spending are three primary, often competing issues CFOs face in operating their companies: staying ahead of deteriorating fixed assets (plant, property, and medical equipment), a need to upgrade technology, and increasing capacity. States expected to need the most significant percentage increases in capital spending are Idaho, Georgia, Florida, California, Tennessee, Alaska, Texas, Rhode Island, Arkansas, and Arizona. These states reflect some or all of the key factors influencing future capital needs, such as high projected rate of population growth, low historical capital spending, potentially diminishing health status of residents and high physician demand. CFOs overwhelmingly cited new technology as a primary contributor to their increasing capital budgets. They also cited plant and facilities as an important area for future spending and offered two key views on the state of their infrastructures. Nearly one-third indicated that their hospitals are in worse condition than they were 10 years ago, and almost half believe their infrastructures are deteriorating faster than they can make capital improvements.

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Conversation Piece

A bidet piques curiosity in a small South Texas town and invites the neighbors over for a look

AS a young architect, I often leafed through architectural magazines and product catalogs to learn as much as I could about the profession. I inevitably was struck by the images of the sumptuous bathrooms, the virtual quintessence of luxury. Along with a huge whirlpool bathtub, a graceful pedestal sink, and acres of porcelain tile, those featured bathrooms typically included the most exotic of all plumbing fixtures—a bidet. I suspect that many people were intrigued by the thing, as I was back then, and curious about what it was for. But I was too polite to ask and, besides, I didn't know to whom I would pose the question. It took me years to figure out, and only recently have I come to appreciate the versatility of this most uncommon of household amenities.

So, several years ago, when my wife and I decided to build our house, the idea to include a bidet in the master bathroom didn't engender much discussion. We agreed, with hardly a second thought, that a bidet was one of those conveniences required in one's dream home. Having spent some of her youth in Europe, my wife was as matter-of-fact about the bidet as most people are about lavatories and toilets: they simply are part of the infrastructure of a bathroom. Thus we came to include a bidet in the plans for our new house which was to be built in Portland, a small town in South Texas. In addition to sheltering our family (including three teenagers), we wanted the house to present the proper image of its owners' good taste, success, and creativity within this most conservative of communities.

Little did we know how this innocuous enamel fixture would change our lives and, I am now quite sure, our reputation in the community! Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that a bidet would be more useful as a conversation piece than as a piece of plumbing. But, as the house was being built, I began to understand its affect. Soon I was explaining to the plumber that, no, the drawings did not mistakenly include side-by-side toilets and, yes, his failing to pipe both cold and hot water to the fixture on the left could quite possibly jeopardize my marriage.

As work on the house progressed, I frequently found myself engaged in conversation with friends, acquaintances, and the occasional curious stranger about the bidet. Reactions varied and, depending on the context of the discussion, seemed to offer insight into the personality of the individual. Sometimes the mere mention of the word "bidet" was enough for the scrupulously polite to change the subject. Ladies seemed either to stumble innocently into the conversation and then awkwardly steer it in another direction or want to prove their worldly sophistication through some casual but knowing observation. Guys, especially those with a propensity to share an occasional dirty joke, could rarely pass up the opportunity to indulge in creative conjecture concerning its use. Children, with bewildered looks on their faces, might have been told that it was a water bowl for our pets, a magazine rack, a foot washer, or a tub for soaking and washing delicate clothes. Older kids just pointed, whispered, and giggled.



After construction was complete, we moved in and shared the unspoken hope that the parade of the curious would subside. However, as I mentioned earlier, we had three teenagers. Within our first two years in the new house, I truly believe that 75 percent of the teen-aged population of Portland had personally visited our bathroom and then compared notes about their experiences. (Thinking about it now, I'm mildly relieved to know that the vast majority of their visits to our bathroom were for entertainment rather than necessity.) Much to our amazement, our own children endured this most embarrassing of parental eccentricities by pretending that the bidet did not exist. I am convinced, however, that among their friends the bidet was our family's single most defining attribute.

Over time we have learned not to be distressed about conversations concerning our bidet, but I still occasionally ponder whether this unexpected notariety has had a positive or negative impact on our family's standing in the community. I would guess that we are known as the family of that eccentric architect who lives on the corner. No doubt, that's how most architects in the world want to be thought of anyway. Being too conventional could be interpreted as lacking creativity in one's approach to life. But, could there be a more undeniable confirmation of eccentricity than having a bidet in South Texas?

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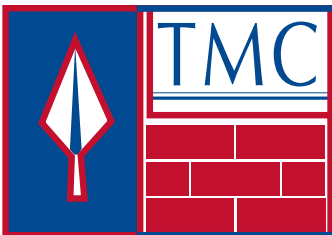
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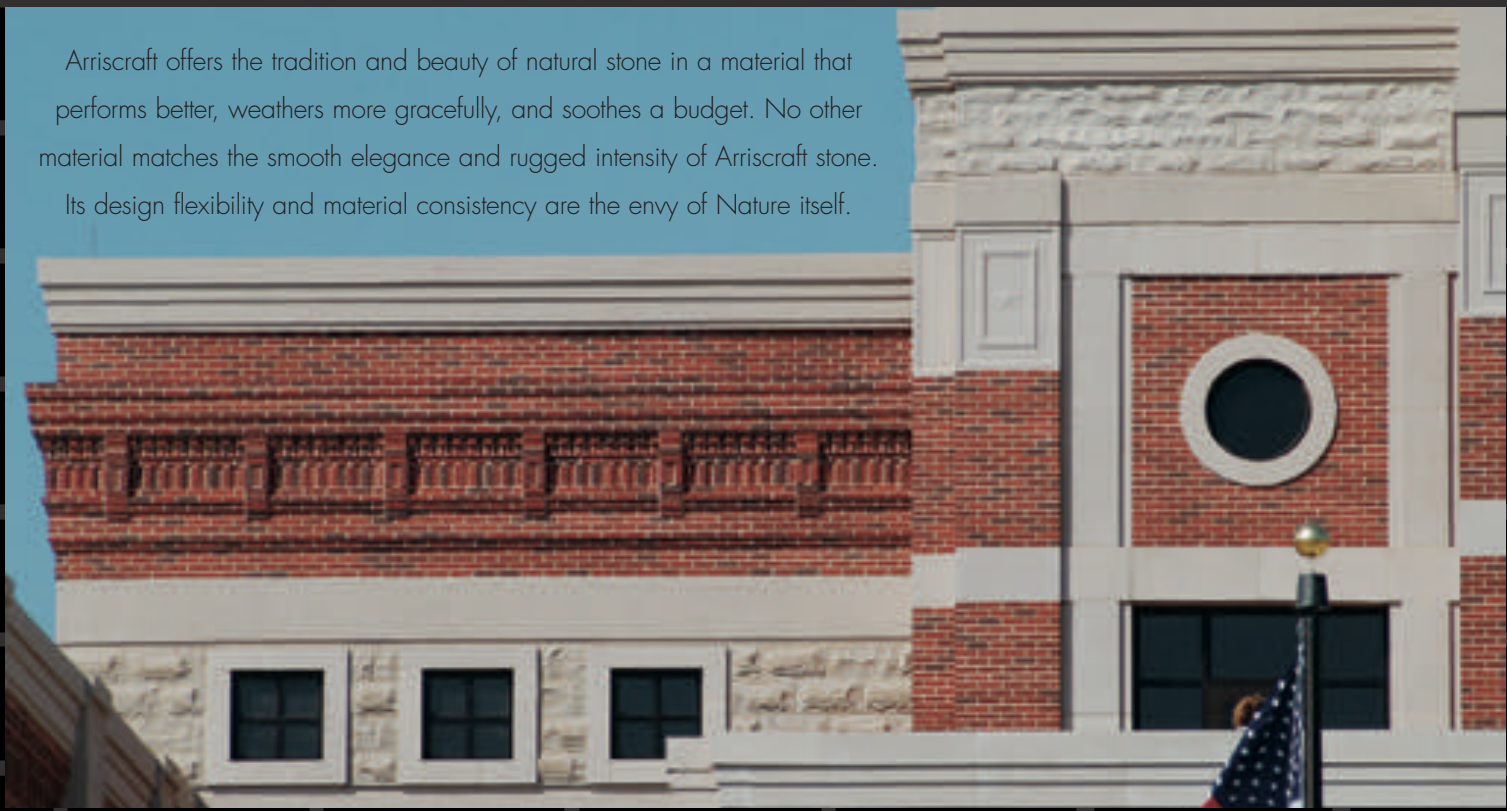
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