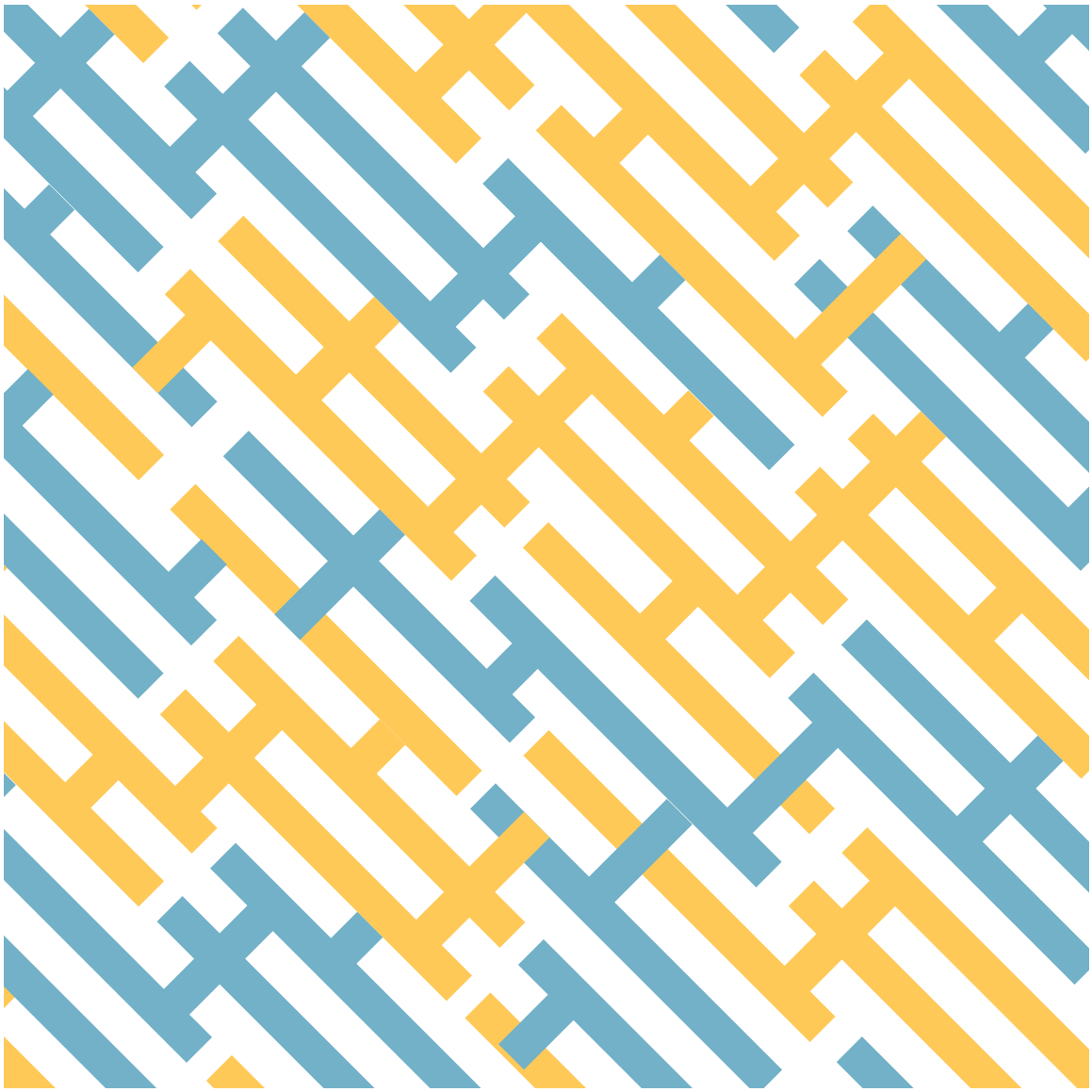
Small Project Design

Annual Review **2022**



VOLUME 7

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CONTENTS

FORWARD + LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As the world explores a new normal after the COVID-19 pandemic, small projects must also navigate and adapt to the unique challenges facing our clients. AIA Small Project Design Knowledge Community has remained focused on celebrating and promoting small projects through this tumultuous period by maintaining the AIA National Small Project Awards and doubling grant opportunities that support design services for architects serving non-profit community partners.

This year's Small Project Awards review committee incorporated the AIA National Framework for Excellence and tasked our jury with viewing small projects through the same lens of holistic project performance. The submissions did not disappoint, and I truly believe the award recipients reflect the premise that small projects have every power to impact and shape communities just as well as any other project.

Thank you to fellow award jurors for sharing your time, insight, and consideration. Thank you to Murray Legge for sharing your relationship and perspective of Austin. Thank you to our AIA staff liaison, Susan Parrish, who helps bring our ideas to life, and the AIA Awards and AIA Marketing staff who have made this publication possible. Finally, my deepest thanks to my fellow Small Project Awards leadership team members past, present, and future who have established this path and continue to carry it out. It has been a pleasure to serve and engage with your collective ideas and passions for our built environment.

Chyanne Husar, AIA, LEED BD+C, BCxP
Small Project Design KC
Advisory Board 2021 Chair
SPD Review 2022 Editor
Small Firm Exchange Chair, 2018

MISSION + LEADERSHIP GROUP

The AIA Small Project Design Knowledge Community supports, celebrates, and promotes small projects by engaging designers and the public.

Chyanne Husar, AIA, LEED BD+C
2021 Chair
HUSarchitecture
Chicago, IL

Through her firm, HUSarchitecture, Chyanne aims to use architecture to bring awareness of social and environmental concerns to the public. She previously worked with her local Chicago Small Practitioners Group and the AIA National Small Firm exchange to make knowledge accessible to small firms across the country. Chyanne enjoys bringing that same passion to the SPD where she's working to promote the impact of small projects on the communities they serve.

Lucas Gray, Assoc. AIA
Charrette Venture Group
Brooklyn, New York

Lucas brings to the SPD a passion for design excellence and sustainable building strategies while focusing on residential projects of various scales. He is a national leader in designing and advocating for Accessory Dwelling Units and missing middle housing. Along with his design work, Lucas writes about the built environment and professional practice, and has taught design as an adjunct professor at Portland State University and as a guest critic at the University of Oregon. He was named one of Portland's 40 under 40. Lucas joined the SPD to recognize and celebrate the large impacts projects small in size can have on our communities.

Lindsay Schack, AIA
LS Architecture, PC
Bozeman, MT

Lindsay Schack (AIA, NCARB, CPHC) is co-founder and Principal Architect at Love | Schack Architecture, a remote studio based in Bozeman, serving Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Lindsay's expertise in architectural technology, psychology, and ecology combine to contribute to LSA's diverse projects. These projects in the residential, commercial and community design markets prioritize spaces connected to nature that also achieve maximum comfort from high-performance assemblies. Lindsay has instructed at the School of Architecture at Montana State University and at the Universidad Latina in Costa Rica. A strong advocate for good design in all opportunities, Lindsey is committed to the SPD's celebration of small projects.

Ross Miller, Assoc. AIA
FormGrey Studio
Omaha, NE

Ross is a Principal of FormGrey Studio, an architecture and fabrication studio with locations in Omaha, NE, and Reno, NV. In addition, Ross serves as the President and Co-Founder of Maple St. Construct, a creative-run nonprofit arts organization based in Omaha, NE. He has received numerous honors and recognition for his work in architecture and design, including the 2016 AIA National Associates Award and the 2020 AIA Nebraska Associates Award. Ross is a two-time Louise Blanchard Bethune Fellow for his contributions to the architecture profession through his service on the AIA Strategic Council and a Richard Upjohn Fellow for his contributions to the architecture profession through his service on the AIA National Board of Directors. Passionate about small projects and the large impacts they can have, Ross joined the SPD to further the mission of supporting, celebrating, and promoting small projects to the public.

DESIGN AWARDS JURY

Chyanne Husar, AIA (Jury Chair)
HUSarchitecture
Chicago, IL

Through her firm, HUSarchitecture, Chyanne aims to use architecture to bring awareness of social and environmental concerns to the public. She previously worked with her local Chicago Small Practitioners Group and the AIA National Small Firm exchange to make knowledge accessible to small firms across the country. Chyanne enjoys bringing that same passion to the SPD where she's working to promote the impact of small projects on the communities they serve. Her primary contributions include developing connectivity amongst working groups and Knowledge Community as well as developing and promoting the SFx/SPD podcast which shares stories of small firm/project architects in their own voice – it can be found on YouTube and SoundCloud.

Brian Libby
Portland Architecture
Portland, OR

Brian Libby is a Portland, Oregon-based design and arts writer, as well as a photographer and award-winning filmmaker. His writing has been published in nine sections of The New York Times, as well as in The Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic, Dwell, Architectural Digest, Architect and Metropolis, among others, as well as his Portland Architecture blog. A graduate of New York University, Brian is the author of 2019's "Collaboration for a Cure: The Knight Cancer Research Building and the Culture of Innovation." His podcast with radio station XRAY FM, In Search of Portland, is a deep dive into the city's architectural and cultural history.

Allison Bryan, AIA
Open Studio Collective
Bozeman, MT

Allison is the Founder and Creative Director of Open Studio Collective based in Bozeman, Montana and Portland, OR. She is an anti-disciplinary designer with a background in both graphic design and architecture. With over 20 years of design experience, her work includes award-winning architecture and graphic design – including several years working in global retail design at Nike, Inc, residential design at CLB Architects and in the early days, prototype display design at Urban Outfitters. She founded Open Studio Collective with the idea of keeping an open mind in all things in the design process: mediums, typologies, and relationships with clients and collaborators, to name a few. OSC specializes in thoughtful + creative design concepts that tell a spatial story. Allison enjoys working at all scales, from the design of a product to ground-up architecture. She is a licensed Architect in the States of Oregon and Montana, and is LEED AP.

Roberto de Leon, FAIA
de Leon Primmer
Louisville, KY

Roberto de Leon is a partner and co-founder of de Leon & Primmer Architecture Workshop (DPAW), a collaborative design studio focusing on public projects with a cultural, civic or not-for-profit basis. His work is recognized for its contextual sensitivity, innovation in material applications, and the holistic integration of sustainable strategies rooted in regional specificity. His research operates at a range of scales and environments - both urban & rural – while exploring relationships between local & global building traditions. Roberto holds a Master In Architecture from Harvard University and a Bachelor of Arts In Architecture from the University of California at Berkeley. In 2016, Roberto was elevated to The College of Fellows of The American Institute of Architects.

Dominique Moore, AIA
Perkins Eastman
Stamford, CT

Dominique is an architecture and interior design professional with a demonstrated history of domestic and international design collaborations for residential, education, commercial, and hospitality projects. She serves as Treasurer and a member of the board for NOMA CT, and Chair for the NOMA CT Budget & Finance Committee. Dominique is also a Regional Associate Director for AIA New England, co-chair for AIA CT J.E.D.I. Committee, and an advisory board member for University of Hartford. She is a co-founder of D.C.M.S (Design Coalition of Minority Students) at Philadelphia University, and co-chair of Perkins Eastman Women's Leadership and DEI Committees. Her most recent venture as co-founder of Architecture Workshops a program engaging K-12 students interested in exploring careers in the AEC Industry. Dominique graduated from Philadelphia University with a Bachelor of Architecture and attended Temple University in Rome, Italy.

2022

CATEGORY ONE

Up to $250,000 in construction costs

small project construction, object, work of environmental art or architectural design element up to $250,000 in construction cost

Enough House

MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects
Shobac, Canada

Enough House, a prototype in Riverport, Nova Scotia, explores precisely what constitutes enough in both size and craft. At just about 700 square feet, Enough House is a dwelling in a series of affordable, modest houses designed by the team to demonstrate the idea of economy as an ethic.

The home is flexible and intended to be replicated and customized to specific sites, and it can easily grow to a 1,000-square-foot single-family house. Enough House is proto-urban, and its material expression can be easily adapted to relate to other cultural contexts. In total, it is a small building that could make a potentially significant impact.

This first iteration of the home serves as accommodations for an intern architect. In a way, it acts as a gatehouse, communicating with two adjacent buildings that date to the 1800s through its traditional gabled roof form. Enough House engages with the other structures by framing courtyards and bolstering microclimates through its pivotal position on the site. It optimizes both prospect and refuge in the landscape.

Through its very existence, the project is a physical argument for accessibility. The house sleeps seven people across two floors and a loft. The overarching design strategy was to design highly efficient and compact servant spaces throughout, allowing the remaining spaces to feel as large as possible.

The light timber frame has become the dominant domestic construction system in North America. Still, despite its widespread use, high level of sustainability, and relatively low cost, architects have often been reluctant to embrace it. Enough House builds on and extends this understated, everyday method of construction. As demonstrated by this project, the discipline of listening to place results in an understated architecture that gains power by resonating with its environment.

Jury Comments

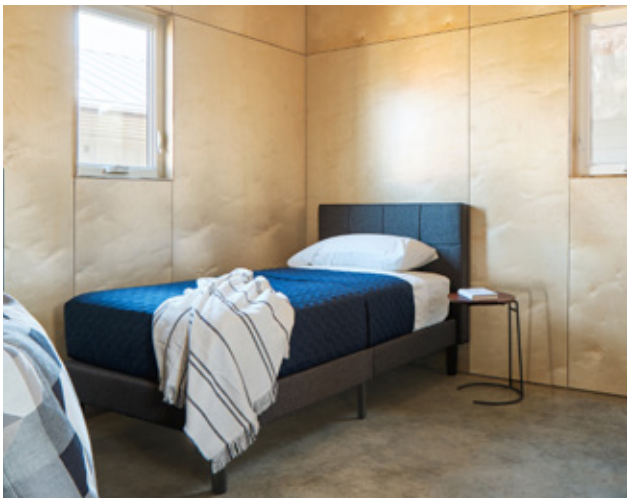
Through a simple form and the use of conventional materials, the project is executed with great rigor and skill, utilizing a carefully considered constructional layering that challenges conventions of frame, substrate, and finish elements.

Jesse's House

Jobe Corral Architects
Austin, Texas

Jesse's House, built through an AIA Austin initiative, is a tiny home for Jesse, a community member who had been homeless for much of his life. The home's design reflects the ideals of shelter and permanence, as well as Jesse's notions of how to be a good neighbor. It is located in Community First! Village, a cluster of micro-homes, services, and amenities in east Austin that supports those experiencing chronic homelessness.

All residents of Community First! Village are committed to working within the community to earn funds to pay a modest monthly payment for their homes. Payments are structured around the size of the home, but all are less than 200 square feet and have no plumbing. Village residents share group bathing facilities and outdoor kitchens.



The space and budget for this project were both minimal, so the team's design solution was simple and efficient. Jesse's House was built with modest materials that form two discrete spaces: Jesse's inward-facing living space and an outward-facing screen porch that he can share with friends. The home's position and dynamic form maximize natural light and breezes while providing a more protected feeling inside. Careful attention was paid to material selection as the design will be replicated several times in a Phase II expansion of the village.

Jesse's favorite chair is positioned so he can watch television without disruption, but he can also open the front door to enjoy any activity happening outside.

In addition, the team carefully inserted special spaces for Jesse to store and display things that he loves and that hold memories, reinforcing the feeling of being at home.

Jury Comments

Working with a modest budget, the project strategy cleverly establishes a series of overlapping domestic zones that transition between personal abode and the surrounding community, creating a rich range of spaces that belie its tiny footprint.

Leimert Park Community Fridge

Ehrlich Yanai Rhee Chaney Architects
Los Angeles, California

This project evolves the notion of a community fridge and is a volunteer project initiated by a group of 10 young practitioners to better serve the Leimert Park community in Los Angeles. Supported by firm partners after forming a Design Justice Committee during the COVID-19 pandemic, the team's design solution improves the life expectancy of the neighborhood's existing community fridge and is a model that can be easily adopted at other locations.

Working closely with organizers from the Leimert Park Chapter of Los Angeles Community Fridges, a nonprofit whose mission is to distribute free food at outdoor locations across the city, the team devised a structure that expands storage and protects the appliance from the elements. The design comprises three modules with 85 square feet of storage space and housing for the refrigerator. Both are tied together under a simple roof of rain-proof corrugated plastic.

The first two modules are identical in size and feature open, flexible shelving that accommodates a variety of products. The third module, the smallest, serves as an endcap for the structure and takes advantage of storage space that would be otherwise unused. Running across the top is a series of wood members connecting the modules and forming a secondary structure for the roof. Overall, the modular design allows for flexible arrangement and easy replication.

The project was completed at little cost, and the firm donated nearly $1,700 in materials and 70 hours of paid staff time. In addition, the team provided an additional 174 unbilled hours of work on weekends during fabrication. The new fridge, painted rainbow colors by community members, has been a hit, and it regularly overflows with fresh produce and other staples. El Sereno, a neighborhood 13 miles to the east, has reproduced the design for its fridge.

Jury Comments

The project is a thoughtfully designed modular system for the sharing, display, and distribution of surplus grocery items, but perhaps its greatest strength is that it provides the perfect participatory 'blank canvas' or framework for the community to engage, adapt and customize.

Temporary Tiger

Murray Legge Architecture
Austin, Texas

When it became clear that the COVID-19 pandemic would affect daily life for the foreseeable future, Austin's Little Tiger Chinese immersion school opted to move a significant portion of its classes outdoors. Temporary Tiger, which took a week to build and cost less than $6,000, allowed the school to continue its programming in fall 2020. The shelter allows for learning in an exciting, cheerful environment while providing students with shelter from the intense Texas sun.

The structure is largely composed of 2x4 wooden studs secured to the ground with threaded pile anchors that are easily removed if needed. The team opted for stick framing since it is inexpensive and flexible, but the A-frame walls are also stable enough to include built-in benches for students to sit on. The repetition of frames and diagonal braces lends the structure a playful, graphic quality.

As the owners of the school, it was imperative for the clients to demonstrate to parents that they were taking the pandemic seriously and acting to mitigate the impact on their students' social and academic progress. Working within those guidelines, the team developed and refined the design throughout spring 2020, wrapping up construction just before the start of the academic year. Temporary Tiger has remained in constant use since.

Throughout the pandemic, the school maintained in-person classes without disruption, ensuring stability in the lives of parents and students alike. The structure remains incredibly popular with children, who treat it as a play structure when classes are not in session. In and around Temporary Tiger, climbing the walls is encouraged.

Jury Comments

Designed to address the needs for a safer outdoor learning environment during the height of the pandemic, the project presents a playful structure that allows for multi-use, flexible activities. The modular strategy results in a pavilion-like construction that celebrates light and shadow through the thoughtful articulation of conventional wood framing.

The Seattle Street Sink

Elizabeth Golden and Richard Mohler, University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

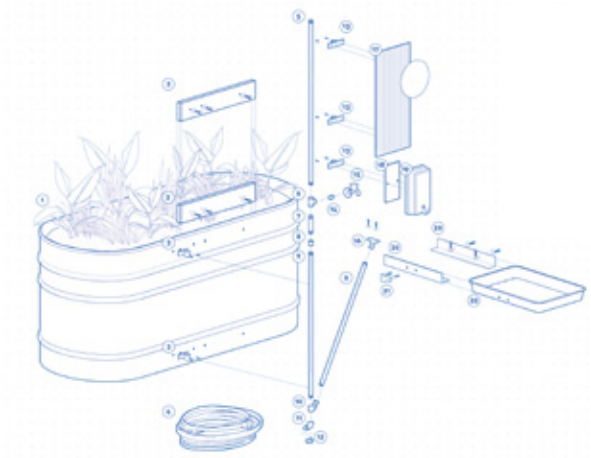
Seattle is the nation's 18th largest city, but it has the third-largest population of people experiencing homelessness. When Washington State enacted its stay-at-home orders during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, that vulnerable population was left with few opportunities to wash their hands in business restrooms and other public buildings. Seattle initially responded with temporary stations that proved inadequate in number and required the constant emptying of greywater.

This project, a collaboration with Real Change, an advocacy group serving the homeless, offers a design for handwashing stations that can be assembled from readily available parts by unskilled volunteers equipped with simple tools. Using hose bibs as a water supply and treating greywater on-site, the Street Sink remedies the issues of the city's temporary stations. A cadre of community groups, faith-based organizations, and volunteers host and maintain the sinks on private property,

sidestepping any bureaucracy and forging new community connections. Modest and impactful, the Street Sink has improved the lives and health of those most affected by the pandemic.

The team developed two sink designs that support hand and clothes washing in a utility sink basin, one of which is accessible to children and those who use wheelchairs. Both can be assembled from parts ranging between $400 and $750, and a companion website provide a part list and DIY videos.

Eschewing the many expensive custom handwashing stations that debuted during the pandemic, the Street Sink is a grassroots effort that has been replicated on the East Coast. However, its success is best demonstrated by Seattle's $100,000 commitment to fund Street Sink installations in all nine city council districts.



Jury Comments

The project is an exceptionally resourceful and clever approach to an urgent basic need. By tapping into (no pun intended) existing infrastructure, the design approach resonates on a range of implementation scales that is highly site and context-specific.

2022

CATEGORY TWO

Up to $2.5 million in construction costs

small project construction up to $2.5 million in construction cost

Goatbarn Lane

Renée del Gaudio Architecture
Boulder, Colorado

Goatbarn Lane is a full-time residence for the architect's father, who sought to live simply and respectfully amid Colorado's unique mountain landscape. Its architecture explores the power of less and, in doing so, the impact of each of its elements grows while sustainability comes naturally. Throughout, the home demonstrates that minimal design can connect us to places, simplify our lives, and inspire us in profound ways.

Colorado's gold mining history informed the design, which flirts with the simple sheds, barns, and homes that miners erected to adapt to the state's rugged landscape. The home reclaims that vernacular through simple yet functional design that firmly roots it in its context.

The steel-clad structure sits along an outcropping of rock that provides shelter from the north. A viewing platform cantilevers over the first floor toward the snow-capped peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Below, steel legs anchor the home to the rock and allow a bedroom to float above the undisturbed hillside. Despite only being 1,860 square feet, the home fosters a rich feeling of abundance.

The home's simple organization and its two volumes foster a calm and clear connection with its natural surroundings as it sits quietly among the pines. Its orderly, exposed structure supported by simple materials reinforces the driving architectural concept.

Goatbarn Lane is built to respond to a warming planet with defenses against wildfires and a highly efficient design. Its cladding, concrete base, and ironwood eaves work together to create an ignition-resistant shell. The home's siting beneath the shade of giant ponderosa pine trees, its floor-to-ceiling windows, and renewable energy allows the home to operate net-zero electric with no mechanical cooling.

In the architect's view, what makes a project one that people will fight to preserve is rooted deeply in authenticity. That authenticity only happens when a building emerges so strongly from its place that it cannot be imagined in any other setting. In that way, Goatbard Lane is a truly authentic home.

Jury Comments

The project beautifully negotiates a sloping terrain through stacked building volumes, in the process creating a choreographed series of indoor and outdoor spaces that invite movement and passage.

Hill Country Wine Cave

Clayton Korte
Texas Hill Country, Texas

Stealthily tucked into the eastern edge of Texas's Hill Country, this private wine cave sits on a secluded river bend just a short walk from other ranch amenities. The project, designed under the pretense of an existing excavated cave on the north face of a limestone hill, nearly disappears into the native landscape. Its unassuming exterior entry count provides just a glimpse of what awaits inside, while boulders and lush vegetation help camouflage the cave mouth.

The cave's dimensional constraints were pre-established by an earlier excavation, challenging the team to design a beautiful wine cellar in a site that was neither watertight nor created for such a purpose. The response is presented in two distinct forms: the insertion of a delicate, human-scaled wooden module and a bulkhead that restrains loose limestone at the cave mouth and provides a predictable surface to wed the insert.

Careful manipulation of the solids and voids of the insert ensures the cave can be concealed and revealed to the occupant, enhancing the sought-after qualities of underground construction while avoiding unwanted moisture and darkness. A palpable sense of refuge at the entry is the central tenet of the cellar's design. It offers a sense of subterranean occupation without the overwhelming environmental conditions that might make someone want to leave.

Simple domestic materials, all available within 500 miles of the site, were selected for practicality and minimal maintenance. The interiors contain raw and ebonized white oak that mixes with vertical grain Douglas fir to panel the walls and dropped ceilings. Reclaimed cedar comprises the live-edge countertop surfaces at the tasting bar and floating restroom vanity. With more than 80 feet of geology sitting above it, the cellar is surrounded by white oak casework that provides storage for an ever-growing collection of more than 4,000 bottles.

This project was the first collaboration between the team and the client, and trust was an important factor throughout the design and construction process. The cellar's success has set a new standard for other structures the clients are planning on their ranch.

Jury Comments

This beautifully detailed project takes advantage of an excavated cave-like space carved from a hillside. Within this very tight and constrained existing condition, the strength of the design strategy lies in its ability to orchestrate a range of spatial experiences that frame and capitalize on the unique characteristics of this context.

Little Tiger

Murray Legge Architecture
Austin, Texas

Austin's Little Tiger is a Chinese language immersion school serving children in pre-K, kindergarten, and early elementary school in one of the city's residential neighborhoods. The school had been operating at capacity in a converted bungalow and adjacent church, and this project, taking advantage of Austin's development code for compatible uses, adds a new one-room classroom to flesh out a small-scale campus.

A new master plan for the school drove the project, calling for a new building, fencing, and landscaping to create a more cohesive campus. The new building is tucked behind the 1940s bungalow at the residential site's rear. All school activities take place across the three buildings, so the team needed to create a sense of community and campus identity with the placement of the 735-square-foot structure.

The new building finds inspiration in the classic American one-room schoolhouse and its iconic gable form, rectangular footprint, and single classroom space. Its size was tailored to the students, who are under four feet tall. The gable's shape results in low eaves that assist in reducing the building's scale, and the windows throughout the building are all child-height. Inside, a long and low bay window with a built-in bench serves as a reading nook.

A palette of white-painted cement board and paint-grip metal allows the exterior to fit into the neighborhood context and campus aesthetic easily. The classroom is a vaulted space accommodating between 12 and 15 students. There, abundant daylight streams in through a continuous skylight along the roof's peak, tempering the Texas sun through a series of vertical light baffles. At different moments throughout the year, small patches of sunlight dapple the floor, while the light is diffuse and indirect at others.

The team worked closely with the owners, one of whom is an artist and formerly provided commercial photography for architects. Together, they created a building that is surprising in form while still reflecting the language of the surrounding residential buildings.

Jury Comments

The project is thoughtfully inserted into a residential neighborhood through the articulation of a familiar iconic form while skillfully modulating building elements – in particular the exterior envelope – to provide spaces of occupation of varying scales.

Palms House II

Kevin Daly Architects
Venice, California

Palms II in Venice, California, is a three-bedroom single-family house that transforms an earlier project, Palms I, into a family compound organized around a large courtyard. The project resulted from a decade-long collaboration between the design team and the client, and it responds to the organic growth of the family and the architects' evolving design process. The new home uses conventional materials in unexpected ways to shape a livable, functional, and surprising home.

The original renovation of Palms I was a modest addition to a two-story stucco box that is surrounded by a perforated metal scrim enclosing the home's terraces and offering shading at the south-facing glazing. The owners purchased the lot next to Palm I to accommodate their extended family and turned to the team to create a building that is architecturally cohesive but distinguished from their residence. As the family grew, an intergenerational shuffle began. Palms House I is now the primary residence for one of the clients' parents, and a garage studio is a home for the single parent of another. Palms II is where the original clients now live.

Outdoor space shared by the three buildings is the central organizing element, and a pool located on the property line allows the space to appear more prominent and equally shared between the structures. Palms II is built much like a podium with parallel concrete piers supporting a cast plinth comprising the floor for the upstairs bedrooms. The organization of the piers is such that it allows views through the house to the gardens outside. In addition, by using concrete for the floor, load-bearing walls and ceilings assist in stabilizing the temperature of the ground level allowing it to remain unconditioned during warmer months.

Given that the perforated material exterior of Palm I provides such a significant visual presence, the team opted for a different approach in the new house. Palm II's exterior is clad in thermally modified hardwood siding, requiring no finish or maintenance.

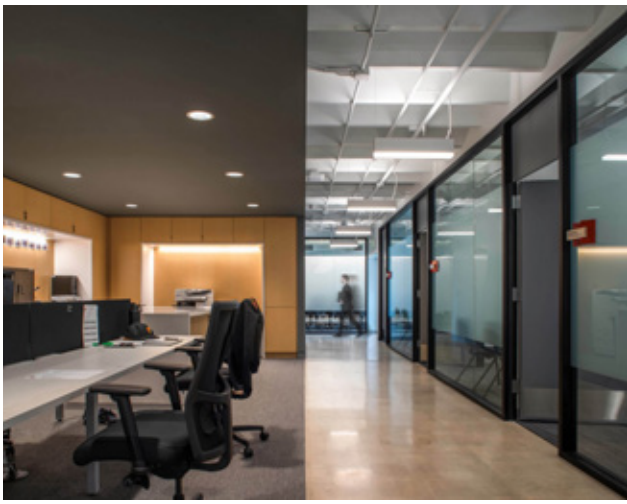
Jury Comments

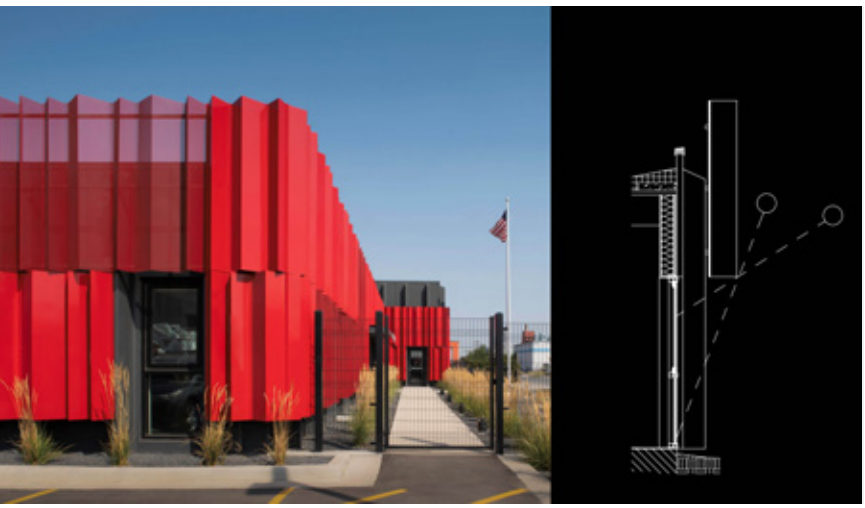
The project offers a unique resolution to site organization and its relationship to an existing residence, creating a shared living complex that capitalizes on the adjacencies of indoor and outdoor spaces.

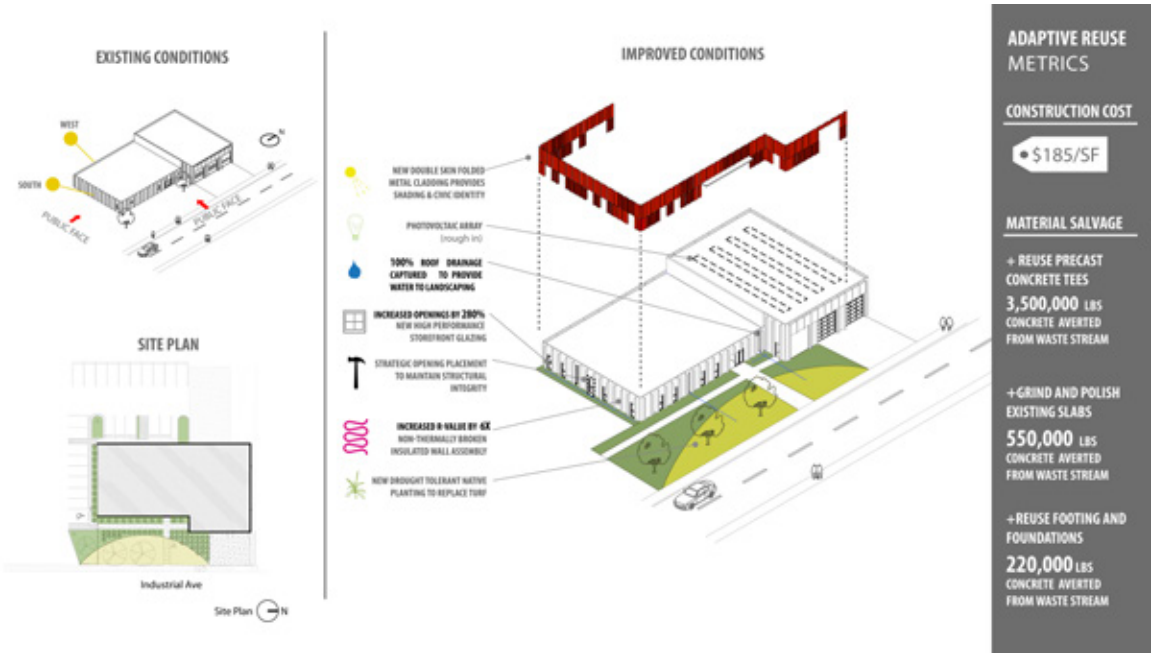
SLC Fire Department Training Center

Blalock & Partners
Salt Lake City, Utah

This project, a facility for the Salt Lake City Fire Department's training exercises, breathes new life into an existing building and achieves a dynamic new civic facade. The original intention for the project was to demolish an existing but largely abandoned station to make room for a pre-engineered metal building. However, the design team convinced the department that it could maximize its $1.3 million construction budget by adapting the largely abandoned station while also being more environmentally responsible.







The new training center is built upon the shell of the former 7,300-square-foot station located on the city's western edge. Given the neighborhood's assemblage of industrial development spanning several decades and the raw nature of its context, the center features an effective cladding strategy that provides texture, depth, and movement. It also operates as a double skin that assists with cooling the building and shades its openings.

After extensively researching sheet metal products, the team developed two cladding widths of the same height. They are bent, folded, and shaped into modules that can be rotated 180 degrees to create an array of profiles across the center's facade. As a way to distinguish the building further, the cladding is painted "fire engine red," and the existing building shell, which serves as a backdrop, is a muted grey.

Since the center offers administrative and recruit training, the overall program requirements were relatively simple. Among its spaces are a handful of private offices, a collaborative workspace, two recruit training rooms, and the apparatus bay for hands-on training. Working within the structural limitations of the concrete tees of the existing structure, the team opted to lengthen existing window openings to allow more daylight to enter the shared workspaces. In addition, interior storefront systems help filter daylight from the offices on the perimeter into the central areas, transforming a once dim and cavernous space into a bright, energetic environment.

Jury Comments

The project excels on many levels and demonstrates the potential of re-use and transformation. There is a wonderful graphic quality to the façade strategy that elevates a sense of civic presence.

2022

CATEGORY THREE

Under 5,000 square feet, with architect involved in fabrication and/or construction

small project construction under 5,000 square feet

A Wall Made of Bricks

Dameron Architecture
Brooklyn, New York

Equal parts time machine and work of art, A Wall Made of Bricks in Brooklyn's Bushwick neighborhood is composed of building materials found at the site dating from 16,000 years ago to today. The team reused 11,000 salvaged bricks from the demolition of an existing warehouse to create this 200-foot-long street wall in collaboration with a group of master masons.

The wall is an essential element of the more extensive botanical garden and venue space the team designed. It serves as a perimeter retaining wall that shields the garden from two highly trafficked streets and retains nine feet of soil on the other side. Local artists, vandals, and renegades informed the design as the team sought to create not just a blank canvas for street artists but a highly specific architectural work.

Material re-use and craftsmanship are the crucial components of the project, starting with the earliest building

materials, stones tumbled and smoothed by a retreating glacier, being brought to the site during the last ice age. Masonry from the site's warehouses and cold storage facilities was gathered, scraped by hand on-site, and carefully cataloged. A poured concrete wall served as a blank canvas for an original composition that showcases the site's material history in an impressionistic manner.

The team conducted thorough research on the provenance and application of the bricks, from the molded makers' names to the layers of pastel graffiti that marked the faces of more recent street-facing assemblies. The bricks were arranged into seven types of bond patterns and placed on the concrete wall as a masonry veneer, creating a facade that melds history and architecture.

Even after construction, the wall continues to evolve. Rainwater washes through the cracks in former foundation stones, stripping them of iron oxide. Calcium from mortar leached through the joints creates a new growth of puffy white efflorescence, while portions of the wall that face north are just deep enough to allow traces of moss growth. The team left its own mark, too, casting the firm's name in concrete bricks found throughout the composition.

Jury Comments

This project is a rich exploration of re-use, determination, and narrative — resulting in a powerful tapestry that celebrates patina, layered history, and continuity.

Marfa Suite

DUST Architects
Marfa, Texas

Marfa Suite is a detached addition to the Mud House, initially designed by Rail San Fratello, and serves as a refuge for its owners when family and friends visit west Texas. The suite was envisioned as a loungy art studio, a low-maintenance earthen structure that complements the original home's character and espouses the poetic pragmatism of the region's historic buildings.

The suite is a series of rooms detached from the main house in a 36-foot by 36-foot square footprint. It requires the owners to engage with their desert gardens and the region's smells, temperatures, and light qualities every day as they move between structures. Adobe brick, the suite's primary building material, references Marfa's history and material culture. The suite's walls are composed of double-whythe 18-inch-thick compressed earth block walls, which do not require exterior plaster to protect the walls from the environment.

Deep engagement with the landscape was a critical element in the organization of the suite's plan. The team incorporated Marfa's unique light into all of the suite's spaces, fostering a calm and relaxing atmosphere that features different qualities of light throughout the day. A large skylight above a bed offers intriguing opportunities for stargazing.

While the suite was intended as a retreat for entertaining friends and family after enjoying the ever-chaining light that washes over the vast landscape, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the owners to re-examine their life plans. After packing up their belongings in their primary home in Tennessee, they moved to Marfa full-time. The suite became increasingly important in their lives, providing a calm respite and a place for the owners to work remotely.

Jury Comments

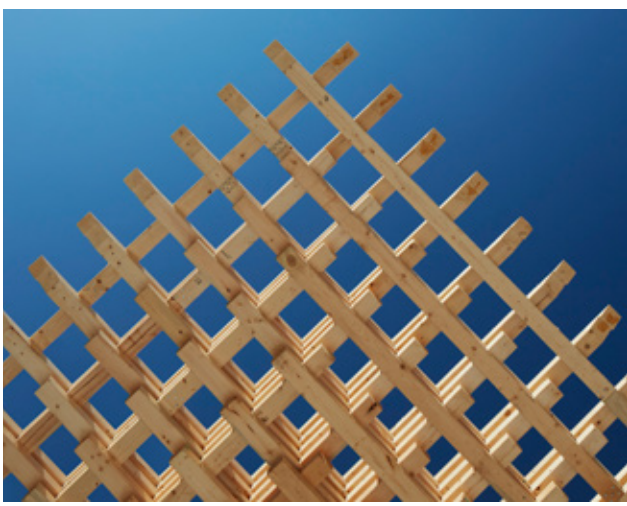
This beautifully executed project strongly conveys a sense of place, utilizing regional construction techniques to thoughtfully craft a series of intimately scaled spaces that draw on the unique context.

Spatial Laminated Timber (SPLAM) Pavilion

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
Chicago, Illinois

The Spatial Laminated Timber (SPLAM, for short) Pavilion is the result of a multi-year collaboration between the design team and the University of Michigan Taubman College. The pavilion is a permanent addition to the campus of Chicago's EPIC Academy, one of the city's most innovative high schools, and demonstrates the potential for prefabricated timber framing panels using robotic technology to achieve sustainable design and construction methods.

Spatial-laminated timber represents the evolution of conventional framing systems, and the pavilion is a full-scale prototype of a single-story structural framing system used in mid-rise, fire-resistant construction. Much lighter than conventional framing systems, spatial-laminated



timber reduces material use by nearly 50% compared to cross-laminated timber panels. As a project, the pavilion effectively demonstrates ways to minimize timber consumption and overall carbon footprint when used to construct an entire building.

By weaving together timber beams like fabric threads, the team explored the notion of using smaller pieces of wood in place of conventional mass timber construction systems. Doing so means that wood can be sourced from more rapidly renewable forests or potentially from deconstructed buildings.

The pavilion has improved the existing site, an unkempt and underused parking lot. It is now a vibrant space for learning and connection and regularly hosts community events and gatherings. When it debuted during the Chicago Architectural Biennial, it hosted performances by local artists from Chicago State University's drumlins and Back Alley Jazz, drawing attention to the pavilion's presence at the school and its innovative features. It is a natural extension of EPIC Academy's core values, focusing on active and experiential learning through internships.

Jury Comments

This collaborative material exploration into the constructional possibilities of spatial laminated timber beautifully coalesces the spatial consequences of structural logic, module, and assembly.

FIRM FEATURE

Murray Legge Architecture

Murray Legge, a Toronto native, found his way to Austin through the friendships he cultivated in New York while attending The Cooper Union. At the time, Austin offered an economical way of life coupled with an enticing film and arts scene and a vibrant academic environment. After building a solid foundation in corporate architecture, Murray set out on his own to further develop his work.

His firm, Murray Legge Architecture, was built in true partnership with Austin. It enjoys a symbiotic relationship with the University of Texas, Austin, and has found a balanced design process through the skepticism and restraint of Senior Associate Travis Avery that contrasts with Murray's Post-Modern tendency to break everything apart.

With daily 10 a.m. design meetings, MLA's design process is an extension of the studio environment found in architecture school. The collaborative office focuses on elevating its best ideas through an iterative process and won't advance projects until there's confidence in the design. As a result, they find their best projects have engaged clients who often have a range of artistic experiences themselves.

MLA Team:
Murray Legge, FAIA
Travis Avery
Lincoln Davidson
Katherine Odom
Harrison Marshall

Photo Credits:
Leonid Furmansky

Little Tiger + Temporary Tiger

Murray Legge Architecture
Austin, Texas

"The relationship with the client is a critical collaboration – there's a level of appreciation and understanding that makes for a more understanding process. With the Little Tiger projects, the owner was also the builder so that level of understanding translated directly into the built work."

A: MLA's Little and Temporary Tiger projects build upon the collaborative client premise. Meggie Chou and Mike Osbourne are artists and photographers who founded Little Tiger, a Chinese immersion school, in their own backyard. Austin zoning, which encourages integrated community services, allowed the duo to develop their small school within a residential neighborhood community.

When Murray arrived in Austin in the 1990s, he said, the city was one of single-family homes, civic buildings, and strip malls. You could drive for miles to find an amazing club or restaurant, and they would likely be located in a renovated house or strip mall. Little Tiger itself built on this residential experience. However, what is successful about the school building is the familiarity it expresses through its oversized gable roof form. Its form is surprising and unusual, providing a somewhat distorted sculptural experience. The low eaves offer a familiar yet fresh perspective aligned with a child's point of view.

During the pandemic, Meggie and Mike sought to move their classrooms outside. MLA had been experimenting with stick framing for several temporary installation projects, and the firm came to love wood framing as a flexible, familiar product with which to build. Due to Texas' heat and intense sun, the design team evaluated the solar orientation and opted for vertical panels on Temporary Tiger's east side. The entire project is screw-anchored to the ground and structurally engineered, allowing it to be deconstructed and leave no trace once it is no longer needed.

Ready to design

The experience of Temporary Tiger has demonstrated how early installation experiments can serve a practical purpose for architecture. If MLA's experimentation with stick framing for its previous installation projects had not happened, the firm might not have been able to create the project as quickly. The early installation experiments were not so much a research and development process but rather an enjoyable venture of love and playfulness. With this in mind, Murray shared what he envisions for his firm's future.

"Austin is this very unusual city. There's growth that's happening here that does not seem sustainable. We are exploring systemic problems with this growth," he said. *"As architects, we don't have the agency we used to have, but I want to stay optimistic with that goal. We are working to develop research-based projects for concerns that we can not quite address through building, such as the affordable housing crisis. We're focused on smaller accessible dwelling units and searching to find the missing middle that spans that housing solution between an apartment and a $3 million single-family home."*

Additionally, MLA is interested in a new preservation perspective for Austin. The design team volunteers with Preservation Austin, and it continues to document and study the city's vanishing improvised public space. In so many ways, Austin has thrived in spite of architecture. It is an event city that only seems to need some picnic tables and lights, begging us to consider how these informal spaces can inform the future of the city and its built environment.

"We're also very excited to continue to work on schools. Designing spaces and buildings for kids is a fun challenge. We think a lot about how architecture is understood and perceived by the public and how we can improve on that. Childhood memories are a powerful thing, and it is interesting to think that when you design a school you are having that kind of subtle and deep impact on the on the kids that attend the school. The experience can embed in their memory in a positive way. I like to think that the kids that get to use the Temporary Tiger classroom will remember it as a positive and playful moment, to be in school outside and encouraged to use the 'classroom' as a playscape. We're grateful to have had such great clients and to have had the opportunity to create something positive in the midst of such uncertainty."

PHOTOGRAPHER CREDITS

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Small Project Design

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