

# ByDESIGN

An Online Journal of Exceptional Achievement

**David  
Baker**

**FAIA  
Architecture,  
Fabrication &  
Housing the  
Unhoused**

**IMELDA & CARLOS  
DELHERRA**

Latino Power Couple,  
From Barrio to Boardroom

**JAMES ROJAS,**  
Exposes  
Underprivileged High  
School Students to  
Urban Planning

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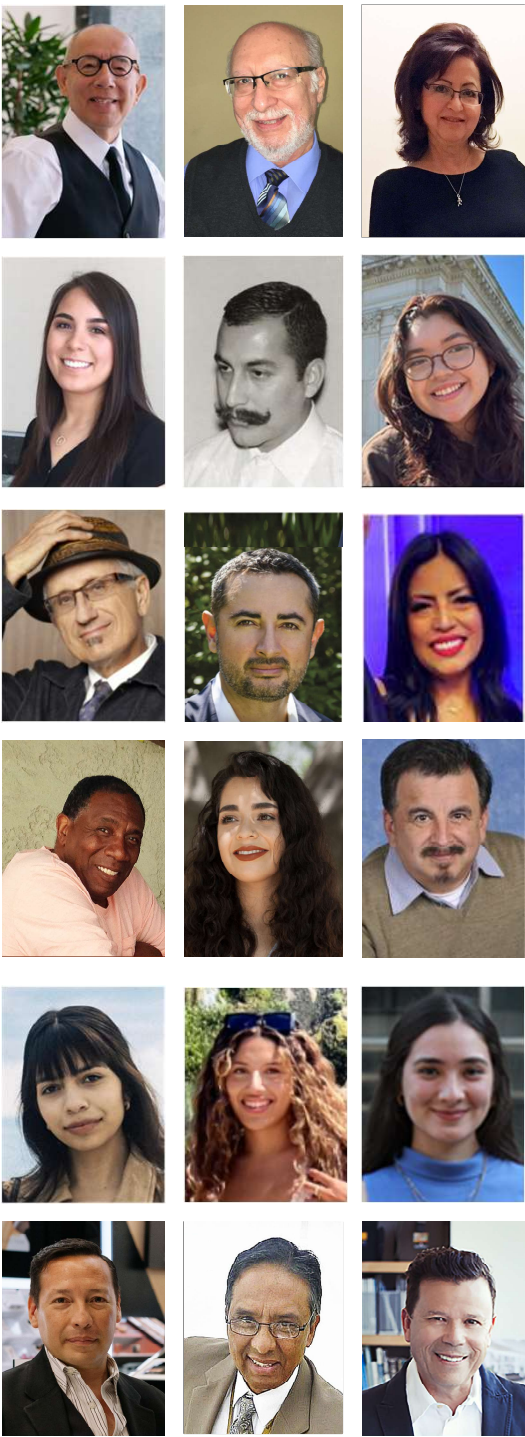
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ON THE COVER

The cover phot was taken at a David Baker Architects project called Potrero in the new public park called Daggett Plaza. 1010 in San Francisco, CA,

# Latino Perseverance, Work Ethic and the American Dream

Rogelio Roy Hernández



“ By 2050, one in three Americans will be Latino. We are the engine of the U.S. economy. Responsible for 2.6 trillion dollars of GDP, which puts us among the top ten GDPs in the world. Our purchasing power is \$1.9 trillion. We are entrepreneurial - 86% of all new businesses launched in the past 10 years were started by Hispanics. And we are creating more tech startups than any other demographic group. We believe in education and building new skills because we understand the connection between education and opportunity. And we believe in the responsibility of benefiting from the American Dream. ”



David Baker, LEED AP, FAIA, Principal, David Baker Architects, San Francisco

This statement comes from a new book: **Hispanic Stars Rising Volume III: The New Face of Power**, by Claudia Romo Edelman. While reading this, and understanding the Latino culture, it reminded me of an old R&B song, “I’m a Soul Man” by Sam & Dave (1967), which says, in part:

“That’s what I got, the hard way  
And I’ll make it better each and every day  
So honey, don’t you fret,  
‘Cause you ain’t seen nothing yet”

Latinos, survivors of the immigrant struggle and societal obstacles, are propelled by a phenomenal work ethic and focus on the American Dream for our *familias* (not the individual). The stories in this issue exemplify this.

The **Perspective** story relates how **Dan Perez’** involvement with AIASF has resulted in his leadership position as Board President in one of the most active and significant AIA organizations in the US. The **Cover Story** on **David Baker FAIA** illustrates the design and fabrication genius of this AIA Fellow, proves professional prowess and social consciousness for housing families and the unhoused, are not mutually exclusive.

The **Development** article highlights an extraordinary story of achievement of Latino power couple **Imelda and Carlos Delherra**, whose families arrived in the US with nothing and they worked their way out of the barrio to achieve remarkable success in the board room.

This issue also announces the **12<sup>th</sup> Annual CASA Alumni Scholarships**, an inspirational evening of scholastic achievement of Latinx students at Cal’s College of Environmental Design. And **James Rojas’ Urban Planning** article relates his story on exposing low income high school students of color to careers in Urban Planning.

**Leslie Gonzales’** thoughtful essay on Emilio Ambasz’ La Casa de Retiro Espiritual, verges on a metaphysical deconstruction of the iconic design. The **Art History** article by **Don Houston** offers a lesson on the godfathers of humanism. And **Alexandra Morales** writes about the gentrification of the community she grew up in, Barrio Logan, in the **Community Design** article.

As always, this issue chronicles extraordinary achievement. And when it comes to Latino perseverance, education, work ethic and focus on achieving the American Dream, you ain’t seen nothing yet. Adelante!

## Perspective

### Latino takes the helm as AIASF Board President, Dan Perez

Dear AIASF Members & Colleagues,

Serving you as the 2023 AIA San Francisco Board President is an honor. I hope to be “the People’s President”, and I look forward to meeting more of our over 2,000 members and allied partners while I advocate for us architects, our profession, and the value we bring to the communities we serve.



Our commitment and efforts to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in the profession and in the built environment will continue, which is reflected in the diversity of our newly elected board members.

We continue to advocate for sustainable and resilient design to combat the climate change crisis. As architects, we can take the lead in the conversations, actions, and collaborations to transform our downtown, and prepare our city for the challenges that lie ahead. We must also continue to build a more inclusive profession where emerging professionals can sustain themselves. Finally, we must adopt new technologies and tools that will help us improve, adapt, and expand the future of architectural practice.

I am convinced that the continued pursuit of these objectives will help us build a stronger architectural profession that creates an enduring future that is more just, fair, and sustainable for all.

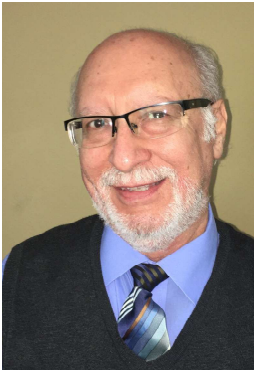
We have a momentous year ahead!

- The call for submissions is now open for the 2023 Design Awards, with entries due by February 3rd.
- We have begun construction on the Center for Architecture + Design, with completion anticipated in mid-May. Donations to support the construction of the new Center continue to be accepted through the Shape Your City Campaign.
- From June 7 - 10 we will host the A’23 Conference on Architecture. We are anticipating 15,000 - 20,000 architects, designers, contractors, and allied professionals from around the world. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase our city, its culture, innovation, and beauty.



# David Baker: Architecture, Fabrication & Housing the Unhoused

Joseph Martinez, Architect



David, your career took off in a flash - as I recall, around the early 1980s, you along with Philip Banta and Tony Cutri formed SOLARC, and won the State of California Energy Efficiency Competition. This was when you all were graduate students at UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design, Master's Program in Architecture. Over the past 40+ years you've blazed an elegant trail - what stands out?

The entire journey has been great, right from partnering with ELS Architects while a graduate student in the CED's three-year program, where we were finalists in the international Energy Efficient State Office Building Competition, through founding the energy consulting firm Sol-Arc, and on to building robust relationships with non-profit developers to design and build more than 8,000 affordable homes over 40 years of practice.

After moving from an early start in Berkeley, DBA has been based in San Francisco since 1988. We opened an Oakland office and fabrication shop, DBA\_Workshop, in 2015, which has changed the way we design and detail our projects and has helped realize my dream of broadening our design practice into direct fabrication. We also made a big leap and opened an office in Birmingham, Alabama, spearheaded by Principal Amanda Loper, AIA, who is

“ This is permanently supportive housing (PSH) that was completed twice as fast and at half the cost of typical similar San Francisco buildings. We were able to combine off-site construction, high-performance computer-designed cladding systems, and custom-prototyped textured concrete by our Workshop to create a state-of-the-art community for 165 residents-and about 30 dogs! ”

expanding our opportunities and impact across the southeast.

We've been at the leading edge of modular housing and-most exciting-combining modular design and construction with innovative financing to really speed up housing for unhoused residents. We recently partnered with Mercy Housing-a legacy non-profit affordable housing developer and longtime collaborator and the San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund (SFHAF), a philanthropy funded start-up, to build Tahanan Supportive Apartments.



David Baker, LEED AP, FAIA  
Principal, David Baker Architects  
(Photo: First Last)

This is permanently supportive housing (PSH) that was completed twice as fast and at half the cost of typical similar San Francisco buildings. We were able to combine off-site construction, high-performance computer-designed cladding systems, and custom-prototyped textured concrete by our Workshop to create a state-of-the-art community for 165 residents-and about 30 dogs! This also reflects cultural qualities of the SOMA Pilipinas Cultural District where the building is located.



James R Boyce Affordable Housing Competition Studio Symposium 2018



# David Baker: Architecture, Fabrication & Housing the Unhoused

**The finished works of architecture are well thought out and have a rich complexity, filled with color, texture and diverse materials to offer the public realm a memorable experience. Can you "sketch out" the design process at your firm? And, further, how do you engage the client and users of these projects in the planning and/or design process?**

A few years ago we were asked to participate in an exhibit on socially responsible design at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. Instead of providing documentation of a single affordable housing project, we decided to really sit down and think about how we designed housing for people.

We realized that we had been iteratively refining a guiding framework for decades, which we've now developed into a book -9 Ways to Make Housing for People-that will be published by ORO Editions this fall ([www.9ways.info](http://www.9ways.info)). It's a toolbox of strategies that work together to elevate housing design at the large and small scale.

Our design process has opened up to more intentional inclusion of the community and client feedback over the years. Our team has developed a robust community engagement process that includes accessible and interactive in-person and online participation.

We're also digging deeper into how to learn from our buildings. DBA Principal Katie Ackerly, AIA,CPHC, is a Cal CED grad and a national expert in Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE). She has developed an intensive tool we call the Site Evaluation Walk (SEW), which involves an inclusive group of stakeholders systematically evaluating previous similar projects before we design.

This type of feedback-walking these sites with clients and talking together with building staff and residents is most useful at the starting point of a design process. Under Katie's guidance, we're also working to embed sustainability so integrally in our design thinking that the separate goal or idea of green certification or green building is secondary.

**Your portfolio features a lot of multi-family housing developments, and given you reside in the Bay Area (San Francisco, CA), what insight can you share with us on the future of urban housing, livable communities, micro-units, etc. and the affordability of housing in California, on the one hand, and other the other, place-making.**

The pandemic has revolutionized urban living and work behaviors. Though they are still evolving, I believe that dense urban centers continue to be viable, but now more for the social aspects and less for the proximity to the workplace.

Now that knowledge workers can commute by opening their laptops- and then step outside for a wonderful hike without the multi-hour drive because they can live in the Sierras, the ability to work remotely is a great option for many people.

But some people still want to spend part of their lives in a dense collegial environment. So one question is: how can future housing typologies accommodate this more hybrid lifestyle? Maybe the concept is a modern pied a terre, a smaller place in the city that supplements a home base? Or more flexible shared housing that is designed for a longer residency than a hotel, but is not a permanent residence?

We should also keep in mind that many jobs require physical presence, and the urban housing shortage has especially impacted that group. They have often been forced to live a great distance from their work, a situation that negatively impacts them and also places a huge burden on the economy of California. For example, much of the huge cost inflation of construction is due to the limited pool of both skilled trade and other workers.

It's incredibly important to increase the amount of very affordable housing in urban centers, which requires public investment, as well as "workforce" or "missing middle" housing, which should be the purview of the market-fostered and enabled, but not directly subsidized.

Fortunately, the efforts of YIMBY housing activists at the State level have made significant progress in breaking through the barriers that have hobbled the market in meeting this need. There is a lot of work to be done here as well.



**Above:** Pragmatic and imaginative, 9 Ways is a modern manual for urban housing— getting it built and making it great.

**Below:** Mason-on-Mariposa greenway. Photo: Craig Cozart



David Baker: Architecture, Fabrication & Housing the Unhoused

How has teaching (e.g., UC Berkeley, University of Oklahoma, Georgia Tech, and California College of the Arts) influenced your design aesthetics, and how has teaching changed since you were at Cal?

New ideas primarily originate from younger people, and that continues to be true. With architecture there is a process of folding those ideas into the pragmatic world of constructability, durability, and codes. That's why I think the development of Design/Build Studios has been so great for students and the practice of architecture.

Cal has had some excellent classes focused on design-build. Auburn's Rural Studio is also a leader in this, taking the class to the next level with students spending years designing and constructing a library, community center, or—in the case of DBA Principal Brett Jones, AIA, a skate park. We value design-build experience so much that more than 10% of DBA architects have come from the Rural Studio.

You attended Philip Exeter Academy (prep school), have a BA in Philosophy, and Masters in Architecture. What would you tell the current/next generation of architects - those that are in school today - what you'd do differently, and/or what you missed-out on, and further, your "passion" with the profession.

I have no regrets. Seriously, follow your passion and don't worry about whether it will work out. One of the most positive developments in architectural practice has been

“ I have no regrets. Seriously, follow your passion and don't worry about whether it will work out. One of the most positive developments in architectural practice has been the gradual transition from hero architect to collaborative team member. We are so much stronger together. ”

the gradual transition from hero architect to collaborative team member. We are so much stronger together.

Your web-site is very telling: a big staff, awesome projects, and countless awards. What are you most proud of?

What has been most rewarding to me is building the awesome, talented, and collaborative team that DBA has become. It's wonderful to see them empowered and enthusiastic about the challenges of merging idealism and passion for design and "doing good" with operating a sane and sustainable business. The future is going to be hard, but fun.

What other ventures have you undertaken and what's next for David Baker?

For years I have been the chief "pot stirrer" at DBA: the "why don't we look at that this way" guy, challenging myself and everyone to think outside the box. I've been stepping back for a while, creating some space for others, and some space for myself to pursue my passion as a ceramic artist.

We just celebrated the 10-year anniversary of StoreFrontLab, a participatory space in San Francisco I co-founded with my life partner, Yosh Asato, that explores the storefront as a place of community, creativity, and local industry. We have had a ton of great events over the years. It is part of Shotwell Design Lab, the little compound in San Francisco's Mission District where I live and now also have my pottery studio.



Above: Zero Cottage



Above: Mason on Mariposa Entry  
Photo: Adam Potts



Above: Yosh Asato & David Baker  
Photo: Aubrie Pick



David founded David Baker Architects in 1982 and is considered an industry leader in urban and affordable housing design.

DBA has designed and built more than 15,000 homes nationwide and received more than 500 architectural design honors—including two national AIA COTE Top Ten awards.



David was elevated to the AIA College of Fellows in 1996 and in 2009 received the Hearthstone Builders Humanitarian Award, honoring the 30 most influential people in the housing industry of the past 30 years. In 2020, DBA was honored with the AIA California Firm Award.

David Baker Architects is a progressive architecture firm located in San Francisco, Oakland, and Birmingham, Alabama, that creates acclaimed buildings in urban environments. DBA is known for exceptional housing, creative site strategies, designing for density, and integrating new construction into the public realm. We have a passion for and deep understanding of the power of humane and respectful environments to transform neighborhoods and elevate the lives of individuals and families.

## SELECT EXPERIENCE

### Keynote Addresses

- AIA CC Housing Forum: Driving Solutions for Attainability, 2019
- AIASF Housing Forum: Envisioning San Francisco in 2100, 2017
- British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Association, 2016
- AIA Seattle Urban Housing Forum, 2016
- AIA Colorado 2014 Practice + Design Conference, 2014
- Affordable Housing Design Leadership Institute, Los Angeles, 2014
- AIA Oregon Design Conference: Regeneration, 2014
- CNU21 Living Community, Salt Lake City, 2013
- Banff Session, "Scale" Keynote, Banff, Alberta, 2010

### Juries

- AIA Chicago Disruptive Design, 2018
- AIA Washington DC Residential Design Awards, 2016
- AIA LA Residential Design Award, 2016
- UC Berkeley CED Affordable Housing Competition Studio, 2015
- AIA Arizona Design Awards, 2015
- HUD Innovation in Affordable Housing Student Competition, 2015
- Gold Nugget Awards, Pacific Coast Builders' Conference, 2014
- UNC Urban Housing Studio Jury Chair, Charlotte, 2011

### Teaching

- University of California, Berkeley, James R. Boyce Affordable Housing Studio, 2019, 2018
- University of California, Berkeley, Joseph Esherick Visiting Associate Professor, 2013
- University of Oklahoma, Bruce Goff Creative Visiting Chair, 2009
- University of California, Berkeley, Visiting Associate Professor, 2007, 1981
- Georgia Institute of Technology, John Portman Visiting Critic, 2006
- California College of the Arts, San Francisco, School of Architectural Studies, 2001, 1999



#### 1. Mason on Mariposa

1601 Mariposa Street, San Francisco, CA  
299 Units, 413,150 sf  
Credits: Craig Cozart

##### Awards

Leading Edge Award, AIA California, Gold Nugget Grand Award—Best Multifamily Housing (60-100 du), Pacific Coast Builders Conference

#### 2. Station Center Family Housing

34888 11th Street, Union City, CA  
157 Units, 299,944 sf  
Credits: Bruce Damonte

##### Awards

- Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)
- CNU 2014 Charter Award—Best Building
- Congress for the New Urbanism
- CNU 2014 Charter Award—Grand Prize
- Congress for the New Urbanism
- ULI Global Award for Excellence
- Urban Land Institute

#### 3. Africatown Plaza

1120 23rd Avenue, Seattle, WA  
126 Units, 103,734 sf  
Credits: David Baker Architects

##### Awards

- Gold Nugget Grand Award—Best On-the-Boards Affordable Housing Community
- Pacific Coast Builders Conference



SIDE BAR

David Baker:

David Baker Architects

David is the co-founder of StoreFrontLab-a San Francisco art space exploring the storefront as a place of community, creativity and local industry, which just celebrated a decade of interactive events.

Publications

- 9 Ways to Build Housing for People, ORO Editions, 2022.
- David Baker, FAIA; Amanda Loper, AIA; Daniel Simons, FAIA
- For the People, Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, New York, 2016
- "11 Strategies for Building Community with Affordable Housing." Urban Land Magazine, 2015.
- David Baker, FAIA, and Amit C. Price Patel, AIA. "Focus on the First 20 Feet." SPUR, The Urbanist, 2014.
- David Baker, FAIA, and Amanda Loper, AIA.

CREDENTIALS

Education

- Master of Architecture, University of California, Berkeley, 1982
- Bachelor of Philosophy, Thomas Jefferson College, 1974
- Phillips Exeter Academy, 1967

Registration

CA Licensed Architect #012506

Affiliations

- Fellow, American Institute of Architects
- Lambda Alpha International, Member ULI, Full Member
- Factory\_OS, Chief Design Officer (advisory) SPUR Board Member (former)
- SF Bicycle Coalition Board Member (former) Livable City, Member
- Walk SF, Member

Honors + Awards

- University of California, Berkeley, CED Distinguished Alumnus, 2017
- Curry Stone Design Prize—Social Design Circle, 2017
- Livable City Livability Innovator, *Architecture and Urbanism*, 2014
- NPH Visionary and Innovative Leader in Design , 2014
- AIA California Distinguished Practice, 2012
- Hearthstone BUILDER Humanitarian Award, 2009
- SFHAC Housing Hero, 2008

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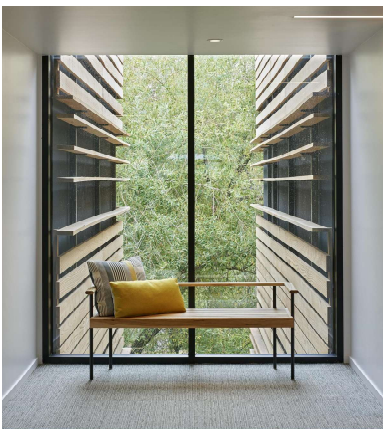


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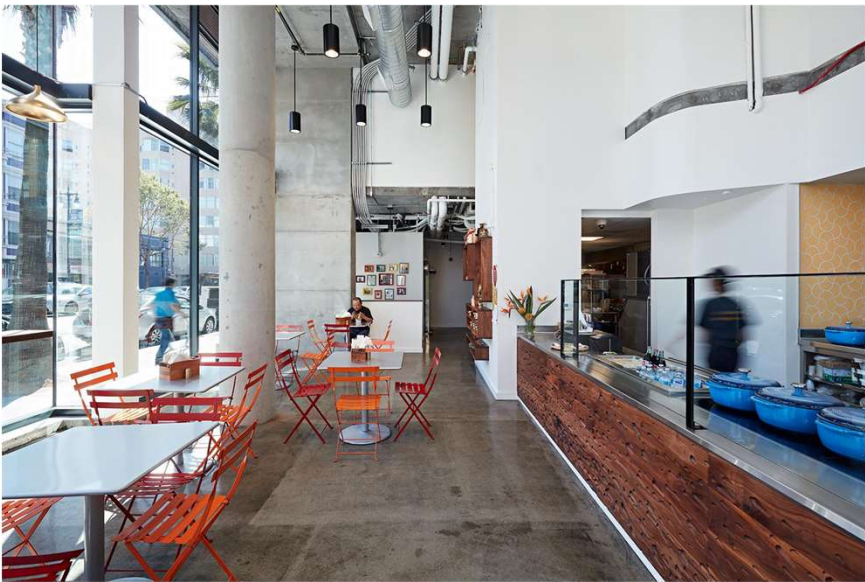


Harmon Guest House Furniture  
Healdsburg, Ca

Western Redcedar console table designed and fabricated by DBA\_Workshop.  
Image: Angie Silvy Photography



DBA\_Workshop designed and fabricated Harmon bench.  
Image: Bruce Damonte



Page Street Studios  
San Jose, Ca  
Lobby reception desk custom made by DBA Workshop,  
Image Credit: David Baker Architects

Bini's Kitchen  
San Francisco CA  
Walnut service counter designed and fabricated by DBA\_Workshop.  
Image: Mariko Reed



# Imelda & Carlos Delherra. Latino Power Couple, From Barrio to Boardroom

Rogelio R. Hernández



The Delherra Family: Imelda is a senior director of construction at the Irvine Company Office Properties, and Carlos is the partner and founder of Mosaic

Student Communities in Los Angeles. Both were raised by immigrant parents in some of the toughest neighborhoods of Los Angeles.

Both recognized the relationship between education and economic empowerment. Hard work, tenacity and purposeful determination got them to the University of California, Berkeley. There they met, and as providence would have it, reconnected years later, got married, and built a family.

Driven by the well-known Latino work ethic, entrepreneurial spirit and the shared desire of all immigrants -- to achieve the American Dream, this power couple has accumulated extraordinary professional achievements. Imelda, climbing the corporate ladder of a commercial development company, and Carlos with a successful start-up providing sorely needed student housing. This is their inspiring story.

## Part 1: Imelda Delherra

Tell us a little about you and your family's immigrant story?

My parents brought me to live in the US in 1977 when I was 2 yrs old in search of a better life and more opportunities.

We were undocumented, living in Hawaiian Gardens, CA, until the late 80's when we obtained our legal residency under the IRCA Act,1986.

My parents taught me and my siblings the value of hard work and a strong work ethic. As a child, I remember most that my parents were always working. I rarely had both of them at home at the same time, they were always working in factories and other minimum wage jobs. Despite not having much money, however, I always remember feeling so loved as a child and didn't ever know or feel that we were poor. My mom was my first great role model, an awesome example of a strong, hard-working super mom, she even made my clothes by hand. My dad was loving, intelligent, and also very hard-working but truly my mom has always been the matriarch and leader in our family.



La familia Delherra at a Cal-USC Tailgate, 2022

Your early years were spent living in Hawaiian Gardens, one of Los Angeles' housing projects. What did it take to go from there to UC Berkeley

In my neighborhood gangs ran the streets. I saw some friends and family members become involved and make disastrous and life-changing choices due to peer pressure to join the gangs, try drugs, due to lack of intervention.

**SFO Rental Car Facility**  
San Francisco, CA  
City & County Airport Commission  
Design-Bid-Build  
\$71 million



Turner



**Toyota Headquarters South Campus Expansion**  
Torrance, CA  
Toyota

Turner





Imelda & Carlos Delherra. Latino Power Couple, From Barrio to Boardroom

But I was always good in school, I was competitive, and I always loved to learn. We were fortunate to be part of a good school district that prepared me relatively well for UC Berkeley. But I had to be very focused and find the resources I needed myself. My parents were unable to help much due to their work demands and little education they received themselves. I realized, from early on, that if I ever wanted to succeed, I would have to get an education and help my family move out of the hood. I was very motivated. I knew that one day I wanted to help my parents buy a home in a safer neighborhood. The day I was able to achieve that I knew I had made it!

**You received a BA in Architecture at Cal but you went into Construction Management not Architecture. Why?**

Academically, I've always been very competitive, and I've always strived to be the best at whatever I'm doing. While at Berkeley I met so many truly talented and creative architecture professors and students and I soon realized that I would never be the best designer. However, I loved architecture and I wanted to apply what I had learned at Cal in some way. My senior year I applied for a

summer internship with Turner Construction (a large, international general contractor). My first project was a multi-million dollar ground-up construction project, the new Rental Car Facility at the San Francisco international airport. There I learned what it takes to build a project and I loved it!

I found construction management was a career that existed at the intersection of architecture, engineering, business, and project management.

When I started there were few women in the field and no female mentors, but this did not deter me; I have found this career path both enjoyable and rewarding. Today I try to be a mentor to younger women, and I love that there are many more women in the field than ever before.

**How did the internship with Turner affect your professional trajectory?**

I credit my internship at Turner with providing me the opportunity to explore an adjacent career path. Had it not been for the internship my career might have taken a different trajectory or I might have gotten stuck

wondering what to do with my degree.

The internship with Turner turned into a wonderful and rewarding career. I've been part of some amazing projects throughout the years, including the Toyota Headquarters Campus, which became the first LEED Platinum project of its type. I've gotten to work on many Tennant Improvement (TI) projects in many of San Francisco's iconic high rise buildings. I've gained experience in privately funded projects, as well as public works projects throughout California.

**You eventually moved back to SoCal to join Irvine Company Office Properties. 15 years later, how has your position evolved?**

Eventually, I took an opportunity to work for the Irvine Company because I wanted experience working on the landlord/developer side. I started as a construction manager, running an average of 30-40 TI projects at any time. I gained experience in building office interiors, capital improvement projects, as well as retail amenity projects, warehouse, manufacturing, and eventually lab and cleanroom projects.



**Carmen Lomas Garza Primary Centers**  
LA Unified School District  
Los Angeles, CA



**302 E. Carson**  
Las Vegas, NV  
Design-Build  
\$11.42 million



“ I found construction management was a career that existed at the intersection of architecture, engineering, business, and project management.

When I started there were few women in the field and no female mentors, but this did not deter me; I have found this career path both enjoyable and rewarding. ”



# Imelda & Carlos Delherra. Latino Power Couple, From Barrio to Boardroom

As I gained more experience my leaders saw the leadership potential in me. Eventually I became a Senior Director and today our team consists of 22 construction management professionals and our department manages nearly 1,000 TI projects a year across an office portfolio of 55 million square feet.

**You serve on the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force for NAIOP (the Commercial Real Estate Development Association) and are part of the Women In Leadership committee at the Irvine Company. What do these groups do and why is your participation significant?**

Both of these organizations have something in common, they were started because smart people in my industry see that there is still a lack of diversity and inclusion. We need and want to build a pipeline of diverse candidates that are interested in a career in CRE.

These organizations provide mentorship, educational, and networking opportunities that will eventually lead to internships and career paths with some of the best CRE companies in So Cal.

“ I chose to be part of these organizations because it's important to me to give back. A female mentor when I started my career would have been invaluable, so now I try to provide that for someone else. ”

A female mentor when I started my career would have been invaluable, so now I try to provide that for someone else.

**A character trait you identified in college was "Always wanting to be the best." Looking back 20 years, did the commercial construction field provide you opportunities to do that?**

It absolutely did. During my career I have constantly been given (and taken) opportunities to grow and challenge myself. I always strive to take on complex and demanding projects and roles. I get uncomfortable when I start to feel too comfortable because that's how I know I'm not growing.

As a Senior Director and part of the leadership team at The Irvine Company, my primary responsibilities now are to tackle and solve big problems and oversee a large team.

I'm fortunate that I work with the best of the best in the industry and this keeps me on my toes. My colleagues are on their A game and that keeps me competitive.

**What advice would you give Chicanx/Latinx students studying at your Alma mater, especially young women, on choosing a career in the design, tenant improvement and/or construction industries?**

I would highly encourage them to pursue these exciting and rewarding fields. I became and continue to be passionate about what I do, and we need more women and people of diverse backgrounds in these industries. Additionally, learning about real estate can open up so many opportunities to create your own wealth and legacy. Our story is a good example of this that can hopefully inspire others to follow suit.



**Orange County Innovation Office Park**  
Irvine, CA  
28 2-story buildings, 1.2 M SF  
73 Acres  
LEED Gold



Imelda Delherra, LEED AP, Senior Director of Construction  
Irvine Company Office Properties



**Spectrum Terrace**  
Irvine, CA  
8 4-story buildings, 1.1 M SF  
LEED Gpld



# Imelda & Carlos Delherra. Latino Power Couple, From Barrio to Boardroom

## Part 2: Carlos Delherra

### Tell us about you and your family’s immigrant story?

I am the son of immigrant parents who landed in California in the 1970s.



I was born and raised in Compton, at the time, one of the most violent, dangerous places to live in the United States. My father came to this country in the 1960s under the US Bracero program, which imported cheap, seasonal farm labor from Mexico. He later worked as a janitor and never made more than minimum wage.

My parents were hard-working people with third-grade educations who made the bold move to uproot and create better opportunities for their family. We struggled like most immigrants, facing the uphill climb of adapting to a foreign land.

We lived in a one-bedroom dilapidated shack with inconsistent

gas and electricity, concrete floors, and no insulation behind a single family home occupied by a family involved in gangs. However, my parents built a strong foundation for their sons and instilled strong values and ethics.

### You grew up in Compton, a city made famous by NWA’s rap song “Straight Out of Compton.” How did that environment affect your perspective on life?

On top of growing up in one of the most dangerous cities in Los Angeles, I had to deal with dreadful public schools, an inept and corrupt local government, and a police force which was feared and distrusted. At times, I felt an overwhelming sense of powerlessness.

I had to be laser-focused and determined to overcome the ever-present obstacles. A misstep and a little bad luck, and my life could have taken a deadly turn. For most of my life, I believed I had the worst luck growing up in Compton. But now I have fully embraced it. I consider myself incredibly lucky, to live in the greatest country in the world.

I am proud to have overcome poverty and honor the courage of my parents who gave their kids a better life.

### What did it take to go from Compton to UC Berkeley?

When I was seven-years-old, there was a city boundary change that forced everyone on my block to attend Compton public schools. That was a major turning point in my life. As a third-grader, I could not believe the chaos, danger, and grossly unqualified teachers. I attended for one week, then told my mother I was never going back. I told her I could learn more teaching myself. I was seven years old. A kid that age should not have to take such a deliberate and forceful role in his education, but I had no choice. I knew that if I stayed in that school, my life would have turned out differently.

Luckily, the deep hatred I had of poverty and determination to leave my impoverished environment pushed me to work hard in school. I realized early that education was my only way out.



**Top:** Mosaic Investment Partners Office – 2703 S. Hoover Street (Historical Cultural Monument)  
**Top Right:** Mosaic Office Lounge  
**Right:** Mosaic Office Staircase



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Volume 44     January 31, 2023

**Your first professional position was working at a behemoth Anderson Consulting/Accenture. What was your role, and what were the pluses and minus of that experience?**

I was in the Technology practice, started as an Analyst and rose to the executive management level. My career at Accenture lasted over seven years and gave me the opportunity to consult and work for several Silicon Valley start-ups and Fortune 500 companies like Microsoft, Verizon, and Yahoo!.

I worked all over the United States and Europe, living in major cities like San Francisco, Seattle, and Amsterdam. While Accenture provided me invaluable training and skills and a global network of people, I realized that climbing the corporate ladder was not for me.

Consulting was challenging, testing me daily and forcing me to become solution-oriented and adaptable. It helped lay the groundwork for the next chapter in my life: becoming an entrepreneur.

**Your ambition led you to the real estate market. What were the lessons learned in that phase of your career?**

The first phase of my career in real estate was the “make mistakes and learn” phase. I started buying properties and assembled a multi-million dollar portfolio in California, Nevada, and Texas. Then, 2007 happened, and the world was turned upside down with the mortgage meltdown and the beginning of the Great Recession. I not only lost it all, but also woke up one day and found out my net worth was negative half-a-million dollars! The most important lesson was having the ability to look in the rear-view mirror, identify and

assess the mistakes made, adapt and change and continue to move forward and not give up.

**You've been a partner in a successful real estate development and property management company for 13 years. How did your education and experience prepare you in that transition.**

I had a very solid education at Berkeley which taught me a lot of the fundamentals of business. My education and professional career in management consulting also provided me with a large and strong network. But after college I continued to learn on my own by attending seminars, reading books, listening to podcasts, etc. I didn't have formal training in real estate so I had to learn on my own and through trial-and-error. While there were some costly mistakes along the way, there is no better way to learn than by doing!

“ I didn't have formal training in real estate so I had to learn on my own and through trial-and-error. While there were some costly mistakes along the way, there is no better way to learn than by doing! ”

Mosaic Owned Properties

8

Mosaic-owned Properties

17

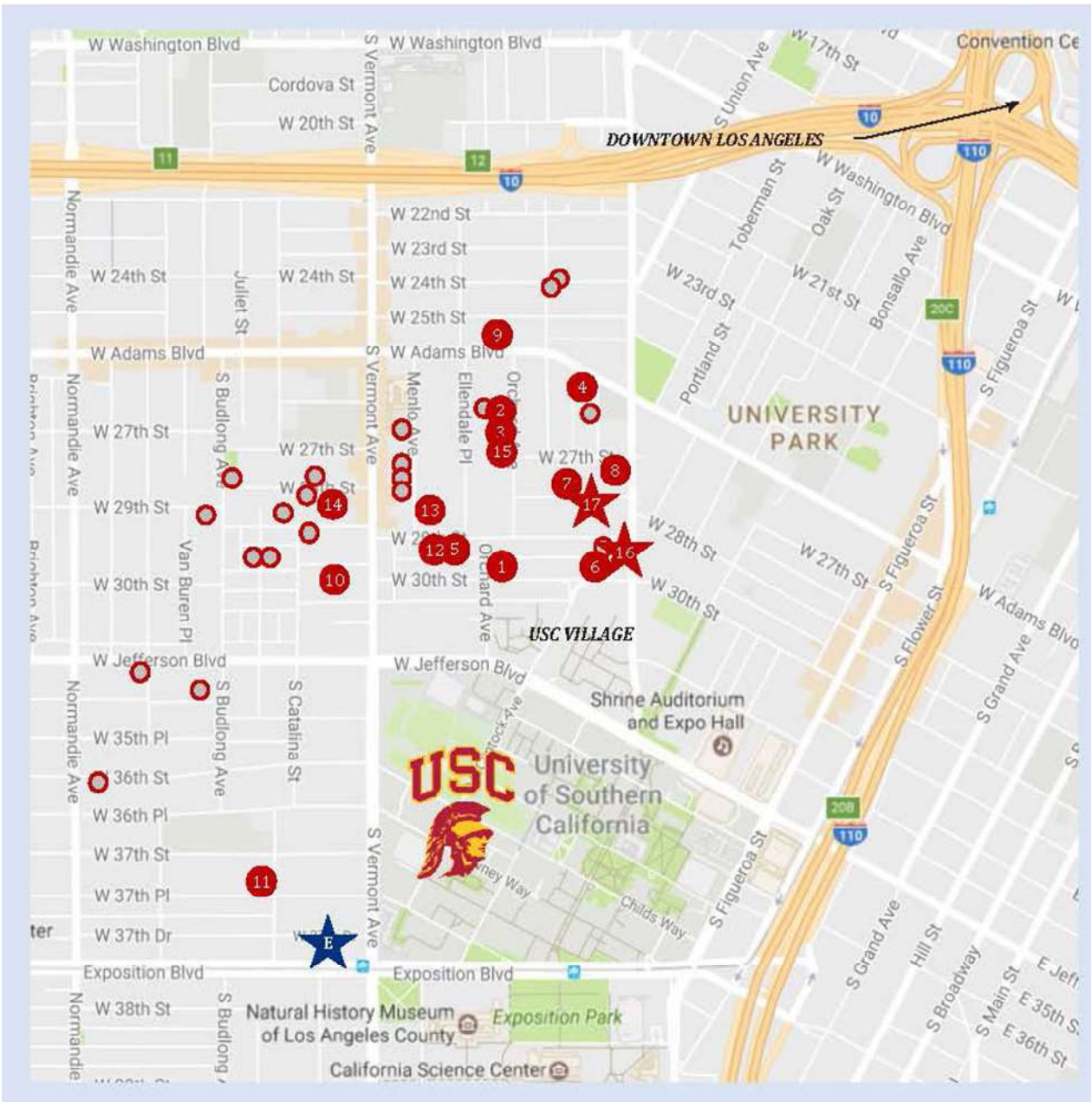
Riviera Lux, The District

E

USC Exposition Project

○

Managed by 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Client Property





# Imelda & Carlos Delherra. Latino Power Couple, from Barrio to Boardroom

Tell us about Mosaic Investment Partners and Mosaic Student Communities, how did you grow its asset-value, property management, portfolio to \$100,000,000?

Lots of hard work and you always need some luck! As Seneca stated, “Luck Is What Happens When Preparation Meets Opportunity”. The lucky part is that I met the right business partner at the right time, and we stumbled upon the great niche within real estate of student housing. USC was ripe for growth and change, and we started in 2009 when prices were rock bottom. We had to be nimble and entrepreneurial to raise the funds from friends and family to start out and had to be really good problem solvers.

The rest is sheer will power, determination and hard work.

Your story is featured in an e-book entitled “Success Habits of Super Achievers.” What advice would you give Chicanx/Latinx students about becoming an entrepreneur and achieving business success.

Being an entrepreneur is often glorified and made to look easy. It is not.

Deep down, you have to really want it and understand the failure rate and be a risk taker. Develop good entrepreneurial habits early: live below your means, save as much money as possible, always have a back up plan, surround yourself with the right network and mentors, etc.



Delherra family, Long Beach, 2021

You also have to understand the principle of “failing forward”. Failure is simply an opportunity to start over again with more experience and knowledge.



**1069 West Exposition Boulevard**  
At University of Southern California  
7 Stories  
53 Units, 153 Bedrooms



**2919 & 2925 South Hoover St.**  
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5 Buildings  
22 Units, 40 Bedrooms

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At University of Southern California  
2 Buildings  
20 Units, 28 Bedrooms  
9,984 SF





SCHOLARSHIPS

ByDESIGN Presents, the  
12 Annual CASA Alumni Scholarships

ByDESIGN

Volume 44    January 31, 2023

Support the dream . . .

Friday April 21, 6:30 pm - UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design, first floor Gallery

All are invited to celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion in person or virtually, at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86755386376>. The inspiring evening will include refreshments, dinner, salsa music, distinguished speaker, auction of custom designed CASA Loteria cards, and awards. This event has provided **\$123,700** in scholarships, fellowships, internships, laptops and software to 83 low-income students since 2011.

**Our fundraising goal this year is \$50,000: \$1,000 for each of the 50 years CASA has existed at CED.** If you were in CASA, went to CED or Cal, or if you didn't but want to make a difference, or appeared in the pages of ByDESIGN -- please consider donating. All funds go to students. **Donate \$1,000 or more and you'll be eligible to win a new iPhone, raffled at the event.**

Recipients of CASA Alumni Scholarships & their professional work



Make a difference!

Our partnership with **Latinx in Architecture (LiA SF)**, **Center for Architecture + Design**, and **AIASF** provides a 501(c)3 mechanism for your tax-deductible contributions, **accepted until March 31st**. No contribution is too small.


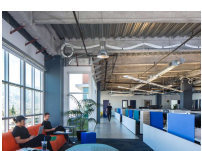













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Any questions, please contact Roy Hernandez at [roy.hernandez@thirdwavecorp.com](mailto:roy.hernandez@thirdwavecorp.com).



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Exposing Underprivileged High School Students to Urban Planning

James Rojas



Many low-income youth grow up in isolation from the greater society, not knowing the opportunities that exist, especially in the design field.

There were three teams of about 8-10 students that rotated for 15 minutes through each design table of their interest. During this quick time frame, we explained urban planning to them. We broke the 15 minutes down to 5 minutes of talking and 10 minutes of serious play.



Recently, we started to change that in East Oakland .

On Wednesday, November 16, 2022, at 8:30-10:30 am the Lighthouse High School held a Design Career Day to expose underprivileged, high school students to the many design paths.

Place It! was invited to share our urban planning/design experiences through hands-on, art making, techniques, which the organizers thought would be appropriate. The event was held in the school's cafeteria and we shared the space with industrial, toy, soft goods, fashion, and graphic designers.

Each designer/design team had their own table to display and talk about their work. We brought an interactive model of San Francisco's Market Street which included small buildings, miniature trees, urban design elements, and three live, scented, plants. We displayed these objects on a long table and placed the Market Street base map on another table.

To make it easier, we told them to build a house and community they wanted to live in. Many of the students were hesitant, however once they got into the flow state there was no stopping them.

At the beginning of each session, we asked students "What does a city planner do? Most of the students had no idea. We quickly explained what we did in a few minutes by asking them a few questions. "Who likes going to the park?" "Who likes drinking clean water?" etc. Then we told them for the next 10 minutes they would be city planners.

Their task was to redesign San Francisco. They gathered around the model and I explained the geography of Market Street. It starts at the bay and bisects two street grid patterns north and south of Market, one is at right angles and the other grid is at an angle. Once we finished explaining the model, we told them to gather the small buildings, landscape elements, and redesign their ideal San Francisco.

To make it easier, we told them to build a house and community they wanted to live in. Many of the students were hesitant, however once they got into the flow state there was no stopping them.

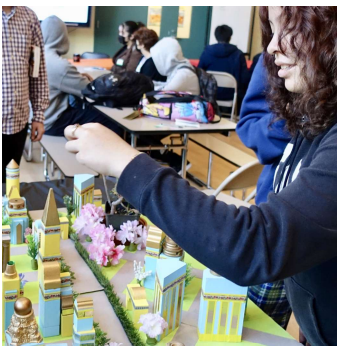
After they finished building, they presented what they built and where they lived in their ideal city.

This 10-minute hands-on activity unleashed a power the students did not know they had. They were allowed to stand up, move around, touch things, and collaborate with others. This physical energy created a natural and comfortable environment for the students to learn about city planning, as one teacher explained. It was one of the most popular design tables.

Many of these Latino and African American high school students grow up in isolated communities, unaware of career opportunities. This was their first exposure into urban planning/design. One student said, "I didn't think about people designing cities."

- Here are the student survey results:
- 92% said design day was successful and fun
  - 91% said they learned something new
  - 89% said their speaker was engaging
  - 76% said they are now considering a career in the design industry

According to the Design Day school's organizer the students had a ton of great reflections and 'ah-ha' moments.





Emilio Ambasz: Creating Fables through Architecture

Leslie Gonzalez, Martinez-Cutri Urban Studio Corporation



Who is Emilio Ambasz?

“I detest writing theories, I prefer writing fables” Emilio Ambasz, one of the first contemporary

architects who began incorporating more greenery into his architectural projects, designed the Casa de Retiro Espiritual, a private residence in Seville, Spain. Designed in 1975, the 2,000 sq. ft. home on a 600-hectare estate was not constructed until 2000. As Ambasz once said,

“I have always believed that architecture is an act of the myth-making imagination...The architect’s cultural and social context changes constantly, but his task, I believe, remains always the same to give poetic form to the pragmatic.”

La Casa de Retiro Espiritual’s inspiration comes from traditional Andalusian courtyard homes and Moorish design from Southern Spain. This includes features such as the presence of light, shadow, and water. The interconnection of these elements draws attention to important architectural moments that are heightened by sensory details.

Alongside these features, the juxtaposition of organic and rigid forms provides protection and presence. The contrast and unity make the home one, while never forgetting the home’s origin in its design and physical structure: the grand aboveground linear walls and the underground curved walls. The house becomes the seed, roots, and tree through the excavated living spaces; the foundation and source from which all spaces will grow.

Emilio was born in Argentina and knew from a young age he wanted to create and become an architect. However, he became more than an architect: he is also an inventor, product designer, curator, professor, industrial designer, and poet. His career pursuits and interests led him through many paths in life, but this diversity became apparent through his work.

Some examples of other projects include: Lucille Halsell Conservatory in San Antonio Texas, where he protected plants through his greenhouse design; The Mercedes Benz Showroom in New Jersey, where the structure is the platform for displaying cars; Prefectural International Hall, in Fukuoka, Japan with stepping garden terraces; The



Emilio Ambasz’ La Casa de Retiro Espiritual, back view of facade

Banca Degli Occhi in Venice, Italy, a laboratory, school, and recovery rooms for cell research.

Another Ambasz project is the Vertebra Chair, the first ergonomically and adjustable chair designed based on his idea of ergonomics over aesthetics; furthermore, he also designed for Cummins Company a very sophisticated engine.

It was through fables that Emilio Ambasz created his architecture, and where his built forms were able to tell those stories and bring his architecture to life. One is able to experience this in La Casa de Retiro Espiritual, so let’s go...

From Afar

La Casa de Retiro Espiritual is situated in the rolling hills just outside Seville, Spain. The lush green surroundings go as far as the eye can see. Located on a promontory, the house takes on a view of a man-made lake, adding a hint of blue to the immense amount of green that creates a “home” for the home.

Initially, the home was designed for an imaginary site near Cordoba, Spain, which is fitting because Ambasz once said, “To me, architecture is an act of imagination”. Potentially not having a designated site or client became a benefit for the project.



Top: Lucille Halsell Conservatory Bottom: Mercedes Benz Showroom

Top: Prefectural International Hall Bottom: Banca Degli Occhi



# Emilio Ambasz: Creating Fables through Architecture

Nature played many roles in this home. The home was so deeply integrated underground that one cannot see this house without seeing the green that surrounds it.

We may ask ourselves how nature became part of the home's fable, and the answer can range anywhere from a means of being away from people, getting away from society, or creating something new without the influence of others.

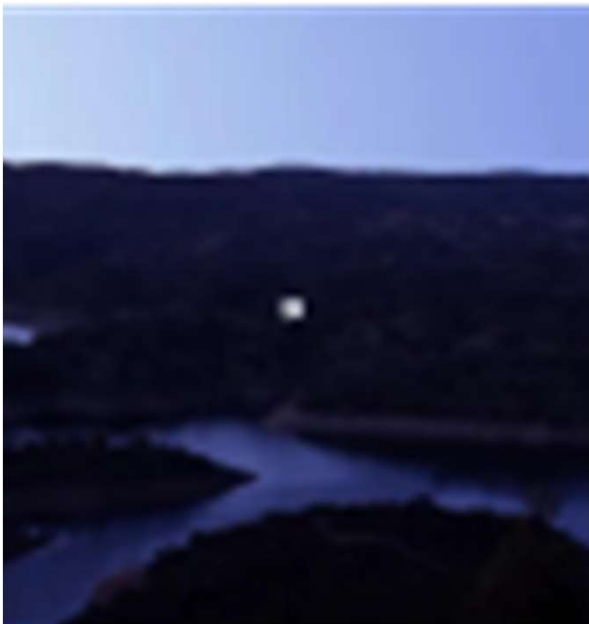
The home can also symbolize a tombstone or a sacred place, hence the name Casa de Retiro Espiritual (Translated from Spanish: Home of Spiritual Retreat). Considering the home can be seen from far away, another fable the home presents is its way of providing a presence of humanity, whether that is how we interfere with nature, or how we want to leave nature alone. The house may represent a tree, a unique tree that stands tall and loud, drawing attention to itself to become one with nature.

Whatever your point of view, the house can free one's mind to create your own fables.

## Approaching the house

As we delve into La Casa de Retiro Espiritual, Ambasz presents the fable as one walks toward the entrance. As if the walls were to say "I am here, you have arrived". Their white wall protrusions from nature interrupt the topography created in this serene countryside. Walking toward the enormous 50-foot-tall white walls, one has the sensation of being small. Instead of remembering the vast countryside, now everything becomes introspective.

An oak tree in front of the white facade stands organically in juxtaposition and brings balance to the rigid form of the white walls. This juxtaposition begins to define the central notion of the project, that of "contrast".



Top: Night view

The white concrete stucco walls meet at a 90-degree angle. The enormous door and hanging balcony above are found at this corner. The wooden door is pushed into the building creating an indentation, drawing in, while the balcony is pushed out of the facade, reaching out. Their use of wood engravings and Andalusian latticework draws attention to detail giving the facade more texture. The Andalusian Style speaks through the use of wood for both the balcony and door because the material and color contrast against the white walls.



Top: Side view  
Bottom: Low back view

The fusion of modern and traditional designs shows a vertical transition: it begins from the earth to the warm traditional door to the white walls, guiding the eye from the ground up to the sky as one approaches the home to get a glimpse of it all.

But the fable does not stop there. On the outside, the old is attached to the new, but as we will see, on the interior the new is enclosed by the old.

“ As we delve into La Casa de Retiro Espiritual, Ambasz presents the fable as one walks toward the entrance. As if the walls were to say "I am here, you have arrived". Their white wall protrusions from nature interrupt the topography created in this serene countryside. ”



Entrance View



Side view of entrance



# Emilio Ambasz: Creating Fables through Architecture

## Once “Inside”

It is a new experience to enter from the corner of a building but more so when you enter to “exit”. A fable we have only begun to excavate. Is the inside of the house really the inside or is the inside what we make it to be? Being in the open again, we must ask ourselves if Emilio wanted us not to be fooled by the white walls and to remember nature is around us too.

Upon walking through the carved wooden doors to enter the house, we are positioned at an elevated place. This allows us the space to look below and contemplate where we are headed. Potentially, not only in the house but in life. We are situated in a place of introspection. Ambasz’s fable of the home representing a tree gives us the liberty to choose our path down the steps walking with an appreciation for nature.

The thought-provoking steps lead to the central patio where elements such as water, shadows, and light, and their interaction are discovered.

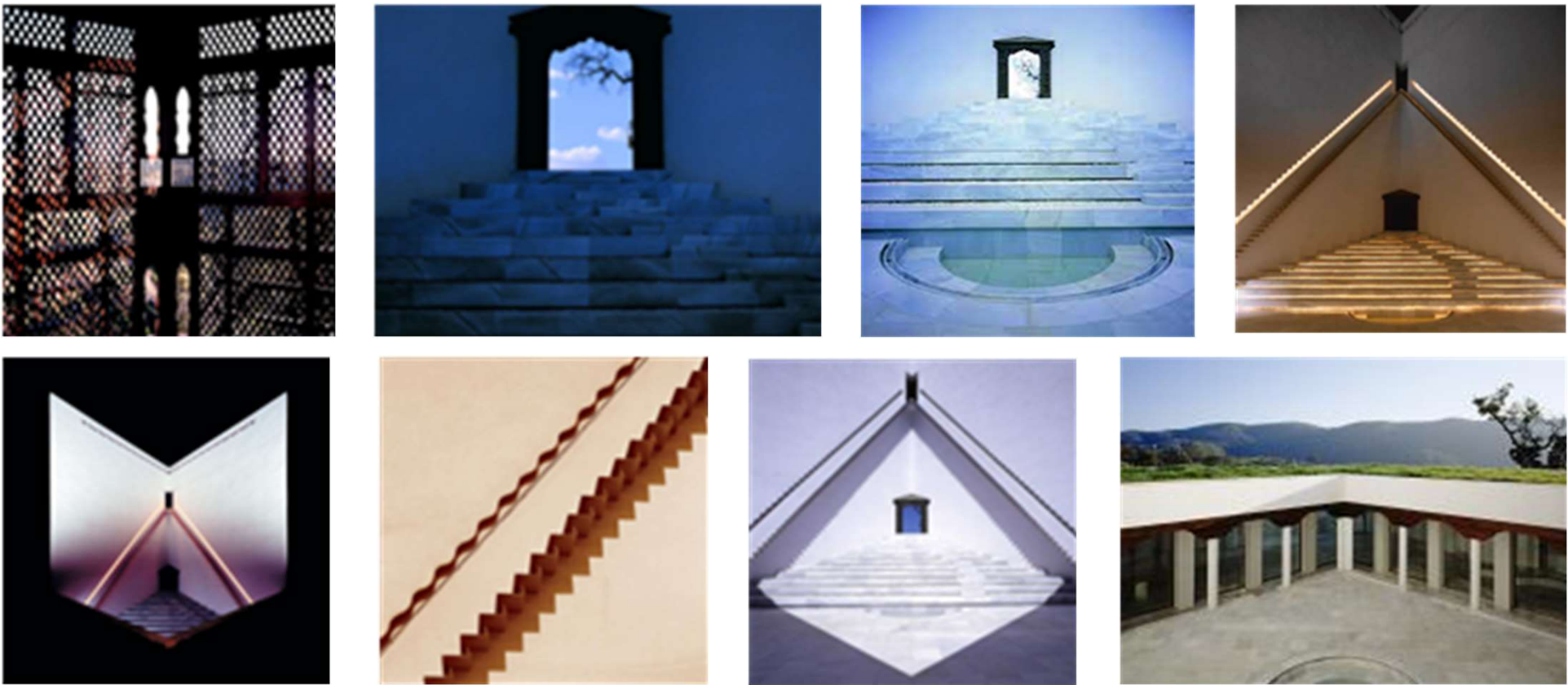
The water in the patio is loud but becomes quiet as one ascends the stairs of the “L-shaped” walls leading to the balcony. Water makes this ascent and descent meaningful because of the sound water makes as it travels down the stair’s handrail. Water is meant to make the journey through the house a relaxing experience, the sound of the water makes a connection between the home and the lake below. Could it be that Ambasz wanted us to feel as if we were floating above water?

“ Upon walking through the carved wooden doors to enter the house, we are positioned at an elevated place. This allows us the space to look below and contemplate where we are headed. Potentially, not only in the house but in life. We are situated in a place of introspection. ”

The shadows are ever-changing and used to frame specific areas in the central patio at different times of the day. Standing in the depths of the shadows, we observe elements and see their true essence without disrupting the flow of the home. Shadows accentuate the steps down the entrance and parts of the white walls. Could this reflect back to our own lives and must we detach our minds from our bodies to fully see who we are?

Light comes in from the top and opposite sides of the “L-shaped” walls. This light reflects on the water in the central patio creating a soft and diffused look on the white walls. Additionally, light’s intensity is moderated by the sun’s reflection on the inner wall. From observations in the shadows, meaning is revealed in the light. Could the light also display truths about ourselves we wouldn’t have otherwise seen?

This indoor-outdoor living area is further affirmed by the interior spaces opening onto the patio through glass walls, as Andalusian courtyard homes opened onto a courtyard. The continuous space creates a connection to nature revolving around the home because nature can be seen from the central patio. Additionally, the use of Andalusian wood designs on the tops of the columns on the perimeter of the central courtyard connects us to nature. This continuous outdoor space extends below ground to the inside of the “cave” we have begun to enter.



Top row: Balcony Latticework, View through the entrance, Water Element in Central Patio, Illuminated Central Patio  
Bottom row: Inner façade, Stairs to balcony, Central patio view, Columns Around Central Patio



# Emilio Ambasz: Creating Fables through Architecture

## Underground

The "Andalusian cave" contains mostly white color keeping the space very bright. However, there are areas where vividly colored furniture is used to denote specific activities.

Further excavation through sunken areas is used to mark programs. The different colors draw one's eye to them. The living room with red couches, a seating area with pink cushions, yellow and orange lights coming in from different rooms, and green plants remind us of the landscape that rests above.

Ambasz incorporated his idea of "Green Over Grey" in many projects. He simultaneously deals with sustainability and respects nature. By having the building below ground, there is a continuation of greenery and reverence for nature by seldom disrupting the landscape. Ambasz reminds us to be one with earth. The house became one with earth by deeply grounding itself as a seed that becomes roots below and a tree above.

Having the house underground provides a cooler environment because there is no direct heat gain. One would think the house being underground, would mean dark living spaces, but on the contrary, an immense amount of natural light enters the home. This is attributable to the skylights, sunlight reflecting from the white walls, and glass around the patio and courtyard.

Moreover, the cross ventilation the house produces keeps the house cool without the use of mechanical ventilation a la nature's breath. The natural environment is further integrated with a passive design strategy allowing the living spaces to be underground and the earth to serve as an insulating roof.

“ The house invites contemplation and introspection, and that is what we must do with architecture: Emilio Ambasz would not have wanted otherwise. ”

## Aerial View

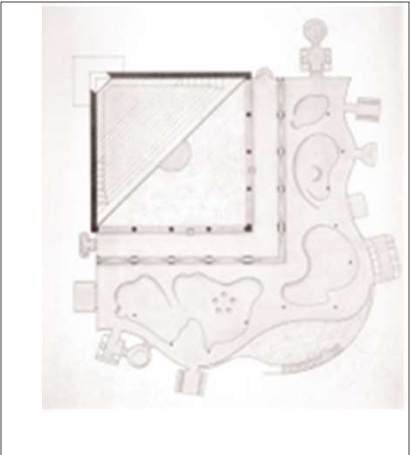
We must read the fable as a whole, if not seen from above, how would the world know the overall composition of the home?

Here we are presented with a juxtaposition of the orthogonal and the curvilinear. The white facade is denoted by straight rectilinear walls and is reflected on the opposite end of the central patio by the edge of the grass-covered roof. However, these straight lines are met by the curved openings in the ground where the home's skylight and second patio are found. The curves penetrate deep into the ground to create the curved walls of the home.

We are reminded of the nature and topography where the house is situated, and the orthogonal lines frame the house. The straight lines of the white walls extend and protect the curved lines of the home as if trying to keep the "jumbles of life" in order, not ready to let go.

La Casa de Retiro Espiritual is the seed that becomes the walls of architecture, and in turn, the home of man. The house is the foundation from which other architects can draw inspiration, and from which architecture can begin to be bold and simple all at once to inspire introspection; make a connection with its inhabitants and people who view this house. The seeds have also been planted in the minds of society to seek deeper within, understand ourselves and those around us, have an open mind, and be at ease knowing that people express themselves differently.

The house invites contemplation and introspection, and that is what we must do with architecture: Emilio Ambasz would not have wanted otherwise.



Top: Red couch  
Bottom: Dining area

Top: Curvilinear wall  
Bottom: Seating area

Linear and Curving Wall Indication

House Plan

**About the author:**  
Leslie Gonzalez, is a Designer at Martinez-Cutri Urban Studio Corporation, San Diego. She received her BA Architecture '22 from the College of Environmental Design at UC Berkeley. She is a contributing writer on Architecture for ByDESIGN.





*This article is dedicated to Spiro Kostof*

The tale told here takes us back to Humanism's beginnings and ancient Egypt. To embark from any other starting point as the origin of Humanism is to tell half-truths. It would be akin to building a building without its foundation.

The story of Humanism for many begins with the Renaissance, “the Rebirth.” But this starting point suggests, as its name implies, that Humanism existed at least once before.

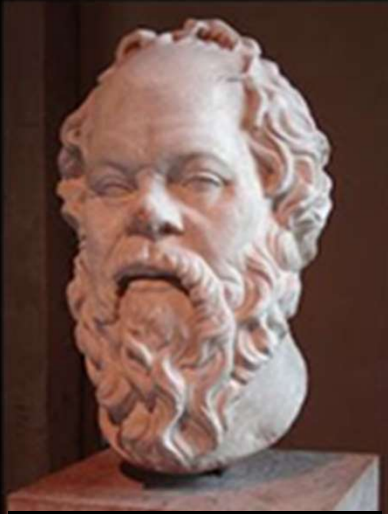
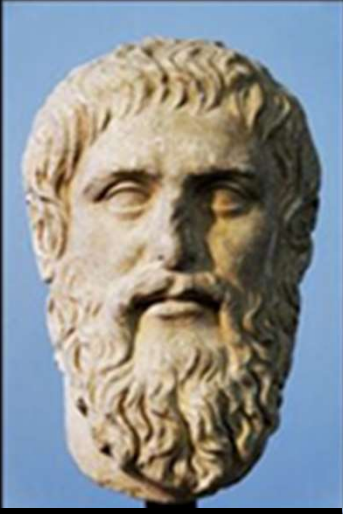

The age of the great philosophers Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates from the European perspective is the basis of Humanistic development.

But like so many social and physical innovations, art presaged their development. Humanism is no different. It, too, has roots extending back in time beyond these men. Which is the reason ancient Egypt is significant. In Egypt, wise men set the standard for what is considered human.

### The First Godfathers of Western European Humanism

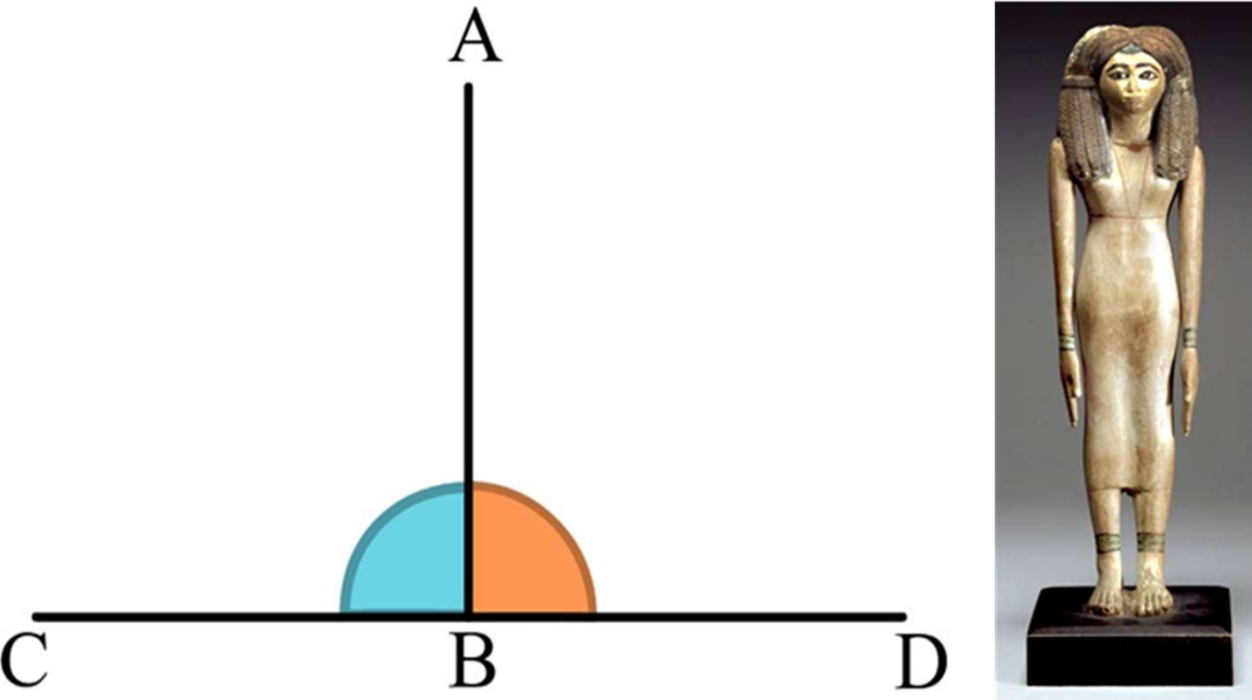


The Great Greek Philosophers

		
Socrates 470 – 399 BC	Plato 424/423 - 348/347 BC	Aristotle 394 - 322 BC

### The Power of Normal

The Egyptians were experts in mathematics. They discovered and then exploited Orthogonality; from the Ancient Greek (orthós), meaning "upright," and (g?nía), meaning "angle."





# Art History

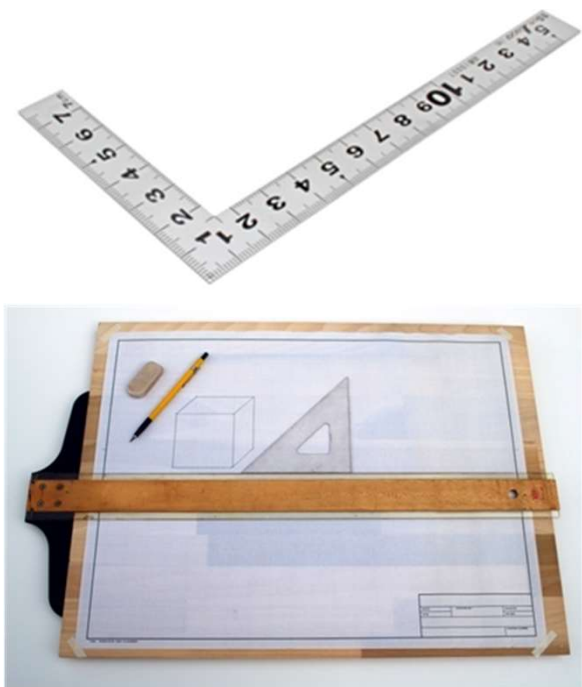
## An Art History Lesson

The right angle was sacred to the Egyptians because they connected the built-form with human attributes such as warmth, trustworthiness, status, and power. Thus, standing upright was the accepted standard of humanness.

The ideological connection between form and these attributes resulted from ancient Egyptian education. Its focus was practical and included language and mathematics, ethics, and the rules of conduct. The student received instruction from a teacher or master. And if the student was talented, they had the possibility of becoming an apprentice. It's within the framework of apprenticeship that the bond between the "right angle" and human social and psychological attributes was forged by the master.

The orthogonal paradigm was simple and harsh to some extent. People were indeed animals, but the person who "stood upright" was unique by their display of the same fidelity and trustworthiness as the right angle. This, in turn, meant they deserved the status and power of a human being. As simple as this orthogonal perspective may sound, it was pretty complex and was expressed in Egyptian sculpture.

Under the instruction of master stone and metal masons, students gained access to humanness by way of the carpenter's square or T-square.



In any event, the first part of the lesson was of transmitting an appreciation of the beauty and perfection of the right angle, a mathematical truth that was both desirable and good. To complete the lesson, the master added the socio-psychological components to the form. Not only was the right angle a fact in the real world, but it also described how people and things "ought to be." In essence, defining what was to be considered "normal."

Masters displayed the "Power of Normal" by using astronomical knowledge, which only high-ranking priests would have at their command. Cloaked under the rubric of magic, the correct uprightness of a sculpture could be tested by God Ra, the god of the Sun.

Students were required to leave their work outside on specified days during the summer months. And at noontime, the shadow of their sculpture would disappear if it was correctly constructed. Thus, confirming their work, and therefore its maker, as "normal," the way things and people should be.

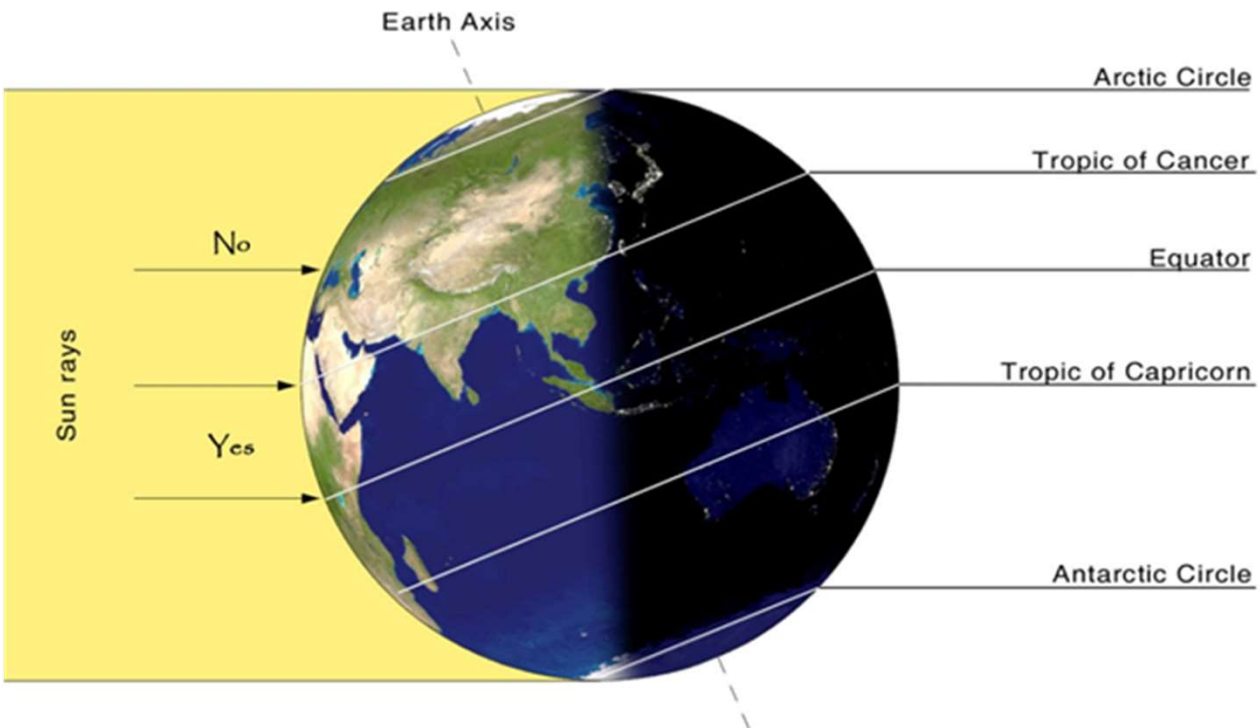
When the Sun is directly overhead, an object's shadow disappears if it is vertically straight. The level shown in the example below looks photoshopped into its background. It is not.



This phenomenon is known as Lahaina Noon and occurs only on the Equator and within the tropics. In the USA, it can only be seen in the State of Hawaii.

Egyptian craftsmen had a number of these "magical tricks." The Colossi of Memnon is described as "singing" when the morning sunlight hits it on particular days.

With the "Power of Normal" confirmed as perfect and ideal, orthogonal perception coupled with the mathematical limitations of Phi and the unabashed use of color dominated sculptural aesthetics for millennia.



Unfortunately, the advent of computer-aided drafting will break this age-old connection.



# Art History

## An Art History Lesson

### Transition

Roughly at the collapse of the Bronze Age civilization, a transition in sculptural style takes place. The erectness remains along with color, but a curious smile creeps into the composition, the Archaic Smile of ancient Greece. On the walls of Egyptian temples, the ancients captured events and rituals, but none carried the quizzical nature of the Archaic Smile. Intentional expressionism has made its way into sculptural form, and rightly so because it correlates to a transition in status and power between cultures.



The Archaic Smile, taken in the context of a political transition, can be seen from two perspectives victor and vanquished. From the victor's point of view, it signifies the end of a long struggle and the accomplishment of a deeply cherished goal. With the advent of white supremacy and dominion over all of Greece, sculpture exhibiting the smile flourishes throughout Greece.

But the Archaic Smile isn't a smile as far as the vanquished are concerned. It's a subtle sneer that says we won and sums up the veiled contempt held by white clans for the defeated native classes.

Moreover, the smirk carried a sense of negative condescension and incivility that proved divisive, heartless, arrogant, high-handed, and dictatorial; a grin that poured salt on a gaping wound and captured the futility of a seven-hundred-year struggle to maintain Greece's African cultural unity. The first Greek godfathers of Humanism emerged to address this abuse of power by Athens' white aristocracy.

### The Godfather's

With the fall of the last native stronghold in Greece, natives abandon their homes in Messene. City Pylos experiences a massive exodus; the family of Peisistratus is one of them. Instead of seeking solitude in the hinterlands, his family decides to immigrate to City Athens. Once ensconced in its hills, the family rises to prominence through its connections and wealth.

Unlike other Messenian families that also relocated to Athens and lived in the city, the family's choice to relocate to the hills of Athens was a strategic move probably promoted by his relative Solon. Solon has reached the end of his career and sought youth to take his place as the defender of the fledgling constitution. The political situation was dire.

Although aristocratic by birth Peisistratus and his family have achieved something that eludes us even today, his family lineage includes early white immigrants into Greece who obtained position, status, and power through marriage with native women. He himself has two wives, one of which is native. His early forefathers undoubtedly participated in native cultural life and accepted it as their own. In layman's terms, Peisistratus and his family could identify with more than one culture without sacrificing one cultural identity for the other; Orthogonal cultural identification.

Thus ethnic labels or clanships did not capture how the family self-identified.

The importance of Peisistratus and his family identifying as "bicultural," a type of orthogonal thinking and doing (Ogden), brought them together with native hill people. This, in turn, produced a new way of thinking, the idea of government by the people as opposed to civil war.

Peisistratus' relative, Solon, must have had a similar idea. Still, Peisistratus and his sons took it to another level when they created the Assembly of the People, the origin of the House of Representatives.



It was the first time men could remove the chains of hatred, bitterness, and resentment, plus the physical chains of what amounted to slavery with their own hands by the vote.

During this birth of Humanism, sculpture exhibiting the Archaic Smile comes to an abrupt halt at least in Athens and is replaced with what will become the signature of Humanism in form: the human body.

Under the Peisistratide, plays, music, and literary works flowed from their patronage. The humanities flourished, especially sculpture. Hippias and his brother Hipparchus championed this cause both politically and artistically. At this time, *The Hymn to Hermes* (N. Brown) is written.



As the hill people move from the fields into city politics, bringing their god-head Hermes to the city's center, native craftsmen and artisans innovate. The orthogonal posture for statuary is abandoned.



Natives also adopt expressionism to convey their sentiments in a tit-for-tat manner. On the one hand, they accentuate body posture with the addition of counter-point, and on the other, highlight its dynamic potential with the introduction of the S-curve.



### About the author:

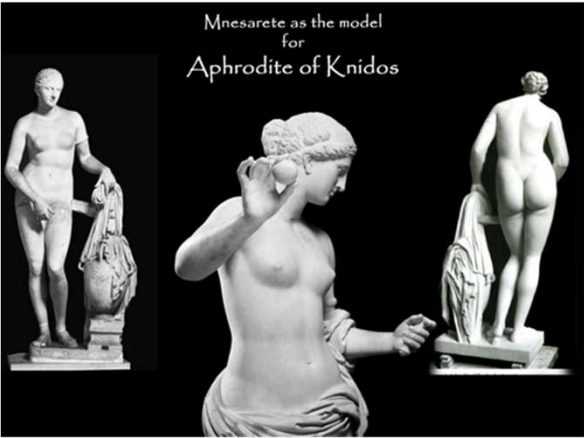
Don Houston is Director of Facilities and Maintenance at Mission College, Santa Clara, CA. He received a MA Architecture, University of California, Berkeley and a B.A. Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley

### The Message in the Model

The message in this nonverbal communication placed white aristocracy on notice that the "body," the people, were now engaged; and they would stand as a check and balance and act forcefully to protect their interests as well as those of the State. With skin in the game, natives stood behind their commitment and Athenian military power benefited, especially its navy.



Even the murder of Hipparchus by white aristocratic forces and his brother's instigation of war and subsequent defeat at the Battle of Marathon cannot stop the message in the model. And none delivered that message better than the hetaerae Mnesarete.



She is famous for her bicultural beauty and gifted intellect. Yet she is given the nickname Phryne due to her yellowish complexion resembling the color of a common toad, a vulgar slur similar to the indignity suffered by mulatto women of the antebellum south when called "high-yellow." Nonetheless, her physical beauty sends the message of the people through time.

In collaboration with sculptor and, by some accounts, lover Praxiteles, she is the body model for Aphrodite of Knidos, statuary that sets the highest standard for sculptors for ages to come.



However, little did Mnesarete know that the same forces that destroyed the Godfathers of Athens would one day do the same to her legacy by removing color from statuary.

It only takes about five hundred years for sculptors to become color blind and strip their work of color, thus portraying Mnesarete's body and face as white. This "whiteface" theme will then extend another two thousand years and have a dramatic resurgence during the English romantic period.



Genrich Ippolitovich Semiradsky Roma, 1889

Still, be that as it may, Mnesarete achieved immortality as the classical symbol for Humanism as Aphrodite Pandemos, the love of the people.



# Gentrification in Four Dimensions: A Perspective of Barrio Logan

Alexandra Morales



The first time I heard of the Los Patios apartments was when my older sister sent me the link to their website while I was in class.

At first glance, and being quite distracted, I thought 'what hotel is this?' and 'is she planning our next vacation to Mexico City?' But as I read more, I realized it was located in our neighborhood, Barrio Logan, San Diego, my hometown.

The renderings of the building were beautiful, almost magical, and not unlike Luis Barragan's work as found throughout Mexico City. The buildings' colorful facades, beautiful pink landscaping, and the views of Coronado bridge intrigued me. I was eager to tour this place upon my return home from UC Berkeley.

My first impression of the units was that it felt like I was in an IKEA kitchen made for kids. I remember feeling claustrophobic because of how small the units were, especially going up into the loft, the ceilings were a lot lower. The views of the Coronado bridge and Downtown skyline were wonderful, but the views of the junkyards adjacent to the building were not as great, which almost created a surreal juxtaposition.

“ As someone who is intimately familiar with Barrio Logan, the loft-style units felt unwelcoming to me and to the families in our neighborhood. In fact, I imagined hearing my father's remarks during the tour, “*Y estos apartamentos de juguete para quien son? Así no puede vivir uno.*” By the end of the walk-through I concluded that this building was not made for us. ”

Across the street I could see the center for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) my mother would take us to, and right next to it, the Family Health Center, another familiar place. Additionally, from both the outside and inside, the colors of Los Patios were not as prominent as the renderings online. Needless to say, I was not completely satisfied with the apartment units and felt misled by the images on their website.

Having a background in community activism in Barrio Logan, particularly in the fight against gentrification, I knew from the moment my sister sent the website that these 40 loft/1 BR apartments were most likely market-rate apartments that would attract middle and higher class working professionals. For example, the typical 400 Sq. Ft. Unit will rent for \$2,000 per month.

As someone who is intimately familiar with Barrio Logan, the loft-style units felt unwelcoming to me and to the families in our neighborhood. In fact, I imagined hearing my father's remarks during the tour, “*Y estos apartamentos de juguete para quien son? Así no puede vivir uno.*” By the end of the walk-through I concluded that this building was not made for us.

In my final year of college, and as an Urban Studies major, there is an insightful quote from my architecture classes that has stuck with me.

Mary McLeod, in her essay, "Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: From Postmodernism to Deconstructivism", argues that deconstructivism architecture is exclusive to certain groups. She writes, "Most likely only a small cultural elite will appreciate the iconoclasm of forms, the inversions of common sense and everyday expectations...that its marketing appeal may well be to a narrower group..." (pg. 693).

This quote is the essence of what Los Patios represents in the Barrio Logan neighborhood. The Los Patios apartments do not accurately reflect the needs of the residents from the neighborhood; instead, they cater to a new demographic of people who can afford to live in a gentrifying neighborhood.

If Barrio Logan is a community of predominantly Latinx families, then why are developers building loft-style units that can only fit two people, if that? Who are these lofts really intended for? What is the role of the architect and developer for Los Patios in this neighborhood?



<https://www.lospatiosbarrio.com/>



# Gentrification in Four Dimensions: A Perspective of Barrio Logan

The Los Patios apartments profits off of their hyper branding of Mexican American culture, a trend that was exacerbated by the influx of art galleries and coffee shops in Barrio Logan that are not locally owned. This phenomenon is common in other Latinx and historically BIPOC neighborhoods.

Johana Lodoño, author of: "Abstract Barrios: The Crises of Latinx Visibility in Cities", delves into the "aesthetic depiction" and "manipulation" of Latinx urban life and culture. Lodoño concludes that working-class Latinx neighborhoods have been neglected in urban politics.

I've seen this first-hand, zoning regulations allow industrial next to residential. In turn, commercial vehicles drive down residential streets which destroy our roads, pollute our air, and occasionally make it unsafe to cross the street.

It was not until only recently that Latinx neighborhoods have come into the radar of urbanism in cities. Their aesthetics have allowed them to become "selectively visible", or in other words, are only valued for the aesthetics, and in turn make a "profit".

Barrio Logan is a prime example of Lodoño's argument. In fact, if you walk around the streets of Barrio Logan today you will notice many locally-owned mom-and-pop shops like dulcerias, tortillerias, and mercaditos are out of business.

There is a stark contrast between these businesses and the new ones. The new businesses are aesthetic and trendy and appeal to the new and changing demographics of my neighborhood.

“ Ironically, what the new freeway of the 1960s, and also the Coronado Bay Bridge, could not do, and what the proliferation of junkyards and industry could not do, gentrification will be the agent to radically change the complexion of Barrio Logan. ”

While old businesses were owned by local Latino residents, new business owners are much more diverse, most of which are millennial and not from San Diego..

Furthermore, in "Latino Placemaking and Planning: Cultural Resilience and Strategies for Reurbanization" author Jesus Lara analyzes how Latino migrants specifically play a role in the revitalization or "reconstruction" of urban communities throughout the United States. He examines how "Latinos contribute to the phenomenon of urban revitalization through the re(appropriation) of physical space for their own use and the consequent transformation of what were previously economically downtrodden areas into vibrant commercial and residential centers".

Through these writings I am able to analyze my own barrio. The difference in aesthetics, the hyper branding of Latinx/Chicanx culture for profitization, all at the expense of displacing long-time residents.

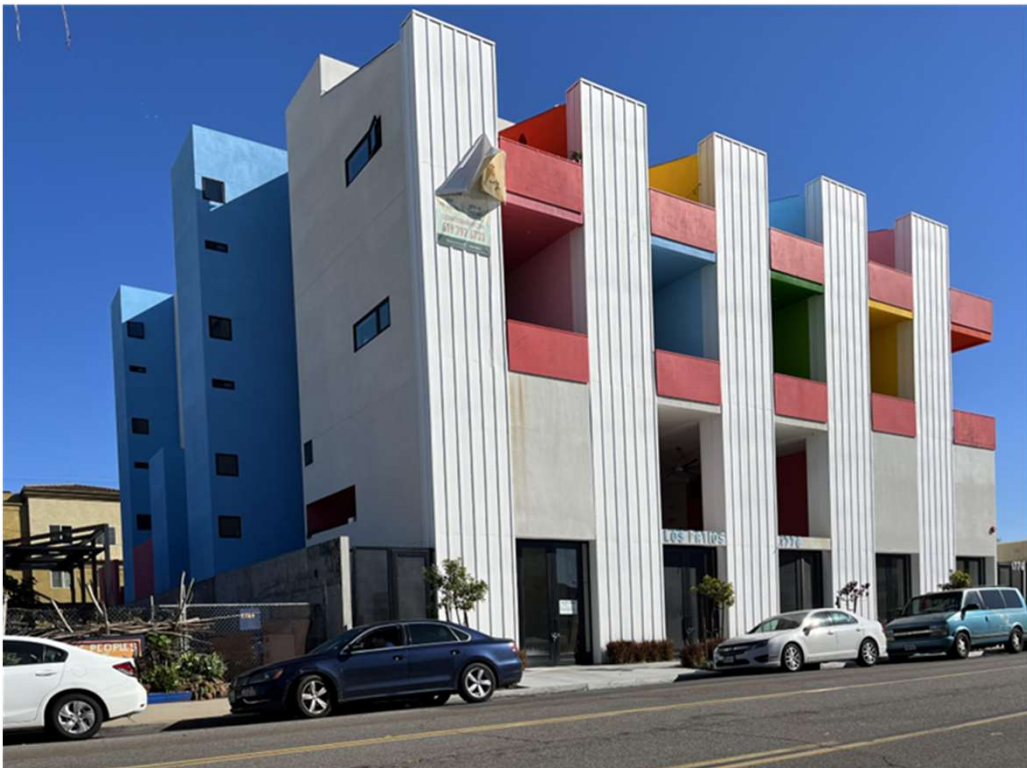
Barrio Logan is an interesting community to analyze because the gentrification occurring here is not what one might see in West Oakland for example. In Barrio Logan, the gentrification that occurs has a marketable aesthetic, one that replaces the authentic Mexican/Latinx culture for a new one; a younger and aesthetic one.

Preliminarily, gentrification is warping the fabric of Barrio Logan in four distinct ways. First the form of Los Patios is "foreign" to the community; it looks and feels like an office building. Second, the loft-style plans are a "stranger" amongst families. Third, the forthcoming resident will be an "outsider" (most likely, millennial), not a working-class individual. Fourth, the neo-Latinx cultural aesthetic of Lost Patios struggles to find its identity in a 100+ year old community.

Finally, the new developments via capitalism is the wave that will flood my community as a result of its close proximity to downtown San Diego and the Bay.

Ironically, what the new freeway of the 1960s, and also the Coronado Bay Bridge, could not do, and what the proliferation of junkyards and industry could not do, gentrification will be the agent to radically change the complexion of Barrio Logan.

**About the author:**  
Alexandra Morales, BA Urban Studies '23, College of Environmental Design at UC Berkeley and is an Intern at Martinez-Cutri Urban Studio Corporation, San Diego.





# ANNOUNCEMENTS

# Young Community Planners

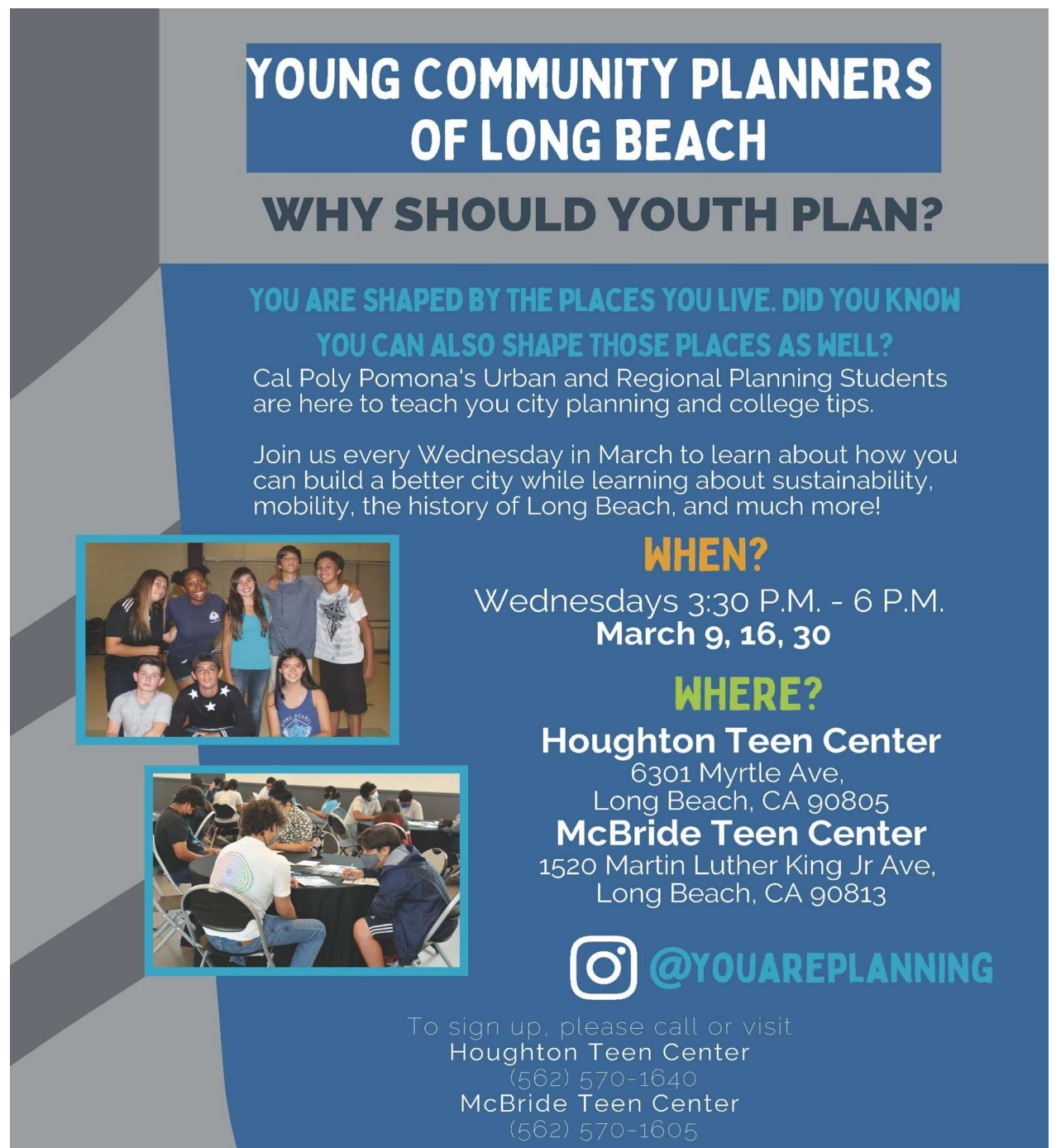
David Salazar, FAICP

## Great event!

Young Community Planners of Long Beach is a program spearheaded by the Long Beach Community Design Center in partnership with Cal Poly Pomona Urban Planning and the Long Beach Parks Department.

This program represents a long term investment in low-income Long Beach youth with the idea that after being exposed to planning and design, they may consider a career in these disciplines. For more information, contact:

David Salazar, FAICP  
 Founder & Executive Director  
**Long Beach Community Design  
 Center**  
 dsplanner@hotmail.com  
 lbcdesign.org  
 562/335-3490



## BOOKS

# Hispanic Stars Rising Volume III: The New Face of Power

by Claudia Romo Edelman



See the story of Carlos Perez, Creative Director, Art Origin, “The Man Who Drew the Apple Logo” (featured in ByDESIGN Volume 12, 2014) in this inspiring new book.

*"It is my hope that seeing all these great stories side by side not only inspires you to chase your own dreams, but also to feel the force of a united community. There are many personal lessons to be learned here and a great amount of hope in seeing them all together. We can create change together. Not by tearing things down, but by building them up. By 2050, one in three Americans will be Latino. We are the engine of the U.S. economy. Responsible for 2.6 trillion dollars of GDP, which puts us among the top ten GDPs in the world. Our purchasing power is \$1.9 trillion. We are entrepreneurial - 86% of all new businesses launched in the past 10 years were started by Hispanics. And we are creating more tech startups than any other demographic group. We believe in education and building new skills because we understand the connection between education and opportunity. And we believe in the responsibility of benefiting from the American Dream. We are helping to write the future of America by paying our taxes, contributing to Social Security, through large voter turnout and disproportionately large numbers in the military. The people in Hispanic Stars Rising tell this story."*