





PAUL MURDOCH ARCHITECTS

Paul Murdoch founded the Los Angeles-based firm in 1991. His wife and partner, Milena, joined the firm in 2001. The practice strives to produce simple, elegant, well-resolved and crafted architecture at all scales. The firm's early mission was centered on the poetic exploration of sustainable architecture, which remains at the heart of its guiding principles today as designers interested in the spiritual dimension of space explored through the relationship of architecture and landscape.

Guiding Principles

We nurture the emergence of form through a visionary process of observation, open dialogue and analysis guided by the following principles:

We rejoice in the mysterious process of nature.

We explore resonance through light, shadow, color and sound.

We nurture emergent form more than promote spectacle.

We appreciate ritual as a way of connecting human and natural worlds.

We feel before creating form.

We tell stories and translate patterns.

We distill experience into symbols.

We organize and communicate through concepts.

We create by entering a cloud of unknowing, each time.

We struggle through complexity and contradiction to foster simple, timeless design.

We are artists interested in paradox.

We search for expression that is both bold and understated.

We respect that history is personal.

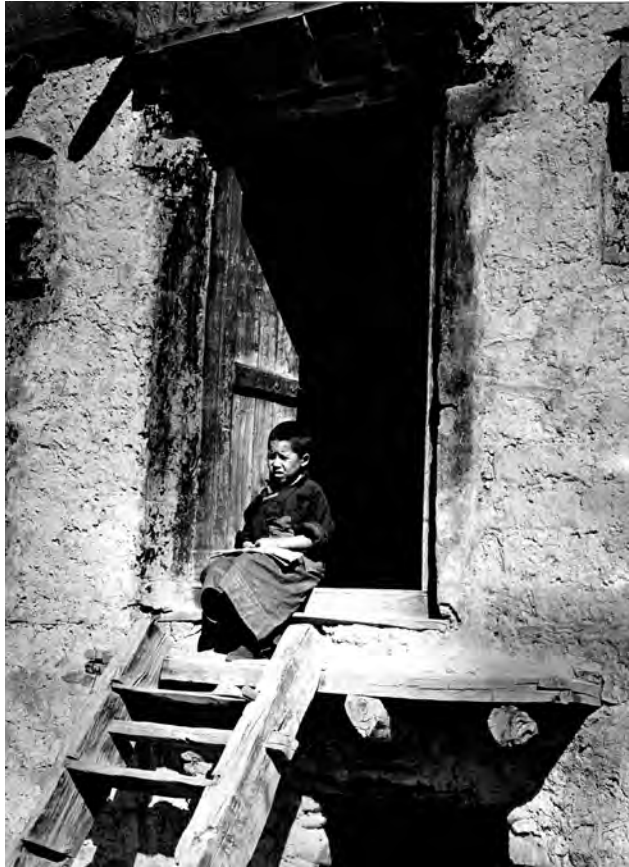
We value new collaborations to meet unprecedented needs.

We recognize science is no longer fiction.

We trust the scientific process.

We allow compassion to quietly guide our actions.

We are diligently passionate and joyful about our work.



Background

Paul earned a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Virginia. It was there that he took a studio under Joseph Allen Stein, an American architect with a practice, Stein Doshi Bhalla, in New Delhi, India. Stein promoted an environmentally responsible, regional modernist approach and invited Paul to India. Following graduation, Paul traveled to Europe and then India where he researched changing Tibetan Buddhist traditions and architecture in Ladakh. This experience served as a deep foundation for his interest in sustainable design and poetics. After returning to the US, Paul wrote a chapter for a book on Himalayan architecture that the National Center for Scientific Research in France published.





Paul attended graduate school at UCLA, where he earned a Master of Architecture degree and met his future wife, Milena. After graduating, Paul worked for seven years with Arthur Erickson Architects, designing, managing and learning technical skills on major transportation, higher education and civic projects. Paul became registered as an architect during this time and then headed the custom residence and small institutional projects in the office.

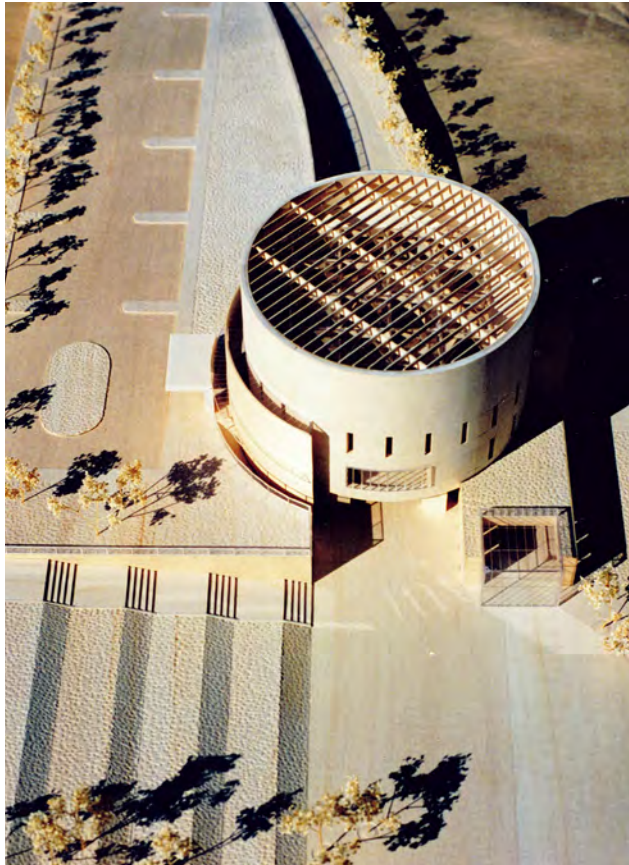




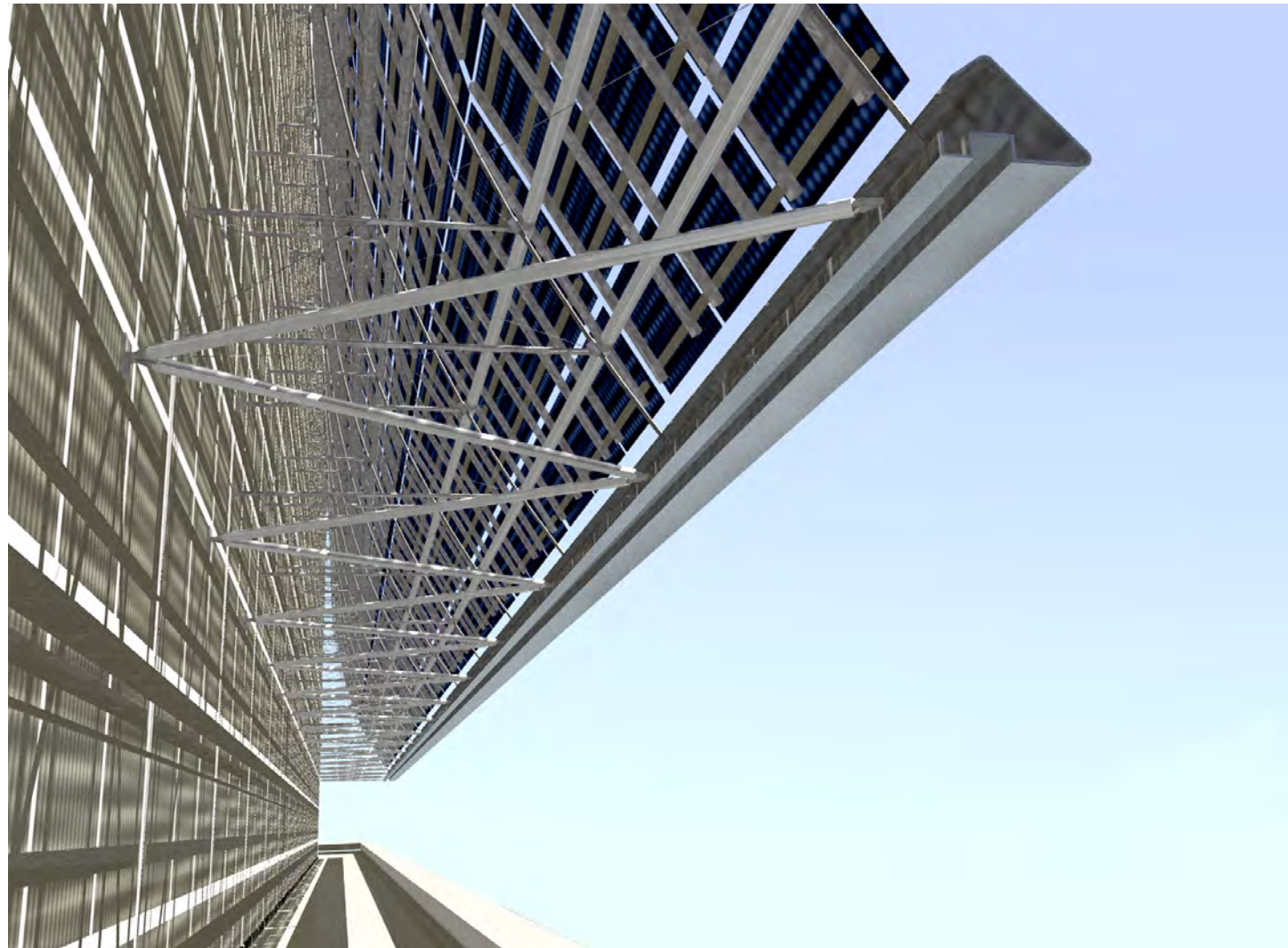
The First 25 Years

When Arthur Erickson closed the Los Angeles office in 1991, Paul founded his own firm, continuing one of the projects he had been leading, the Kaufman Brentwood Branch Library.





Paul's interest in eco-cities led to partnerships in Los Angeles advocating sustainable design and development. Initiatives included sustainable design alternatives presented to the developer of the mixed-use Playa Vista project and the sustainable design peer review of the Staples Center Arena, a first in the City of LA. Concurrent with architectural practice and sustainable design advocacy in the early 1990's, Paul formed a partnership with a builder and planner to develop transit oriented, mixed-use projects to ameliorate LA's predominant auto-centric lifestyle, twenty years too early.



In the later 1990's, solar envelope and sustainable design educator, Ralph Knowles, invited Paul to teach second-year design studio at USC's School of Architecture. Paul taught part-time for five years until the growing firm demanded his full attention to a new series of commissions. USC graduate, Eric Cunningham, joined the firm in 1999 as a designer and to head the emerging digital demands of the practice.



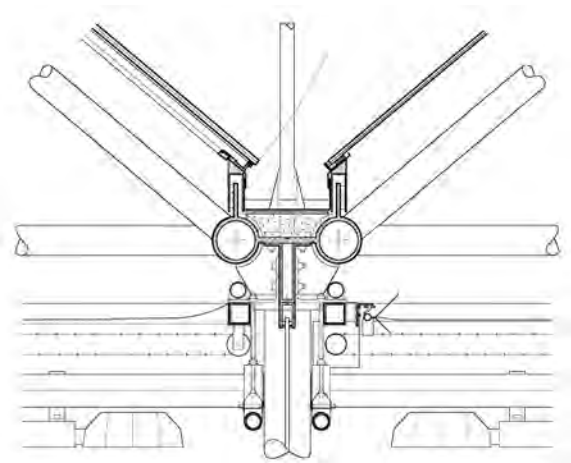
While Paul was at Arthur Erickson Architects, Milena worked for Franklin D. Israel and then with Tim Vreeland at AC Martin Associates. During this time, the couple also started a family. As Paul began and then built the young practice, Milena joined the office of Richard Meier & Partners where she became a project architect on the Harold Williams Auditorium at the Getty Arts Center.





She then joined Ted Tokio Tanaka Architects to serve as project manager of the LAX Gateway Enhancements urban design project. In 2001, as Paul Murdoch Architects started to gain enough work, Milena joined the firm.





Since then, the firm has succeeded in designing primarily cultural, community and educational projects, establishing long-term relationships in the process. A series of projects at UCLA includes the Wilson Medical Student Center, seismic and lab renovations, and the Plant Growth Center.



Multiple civic projects for the City of Los Angeles include the Central Avenue Constituent Services Center, Van Nuys Gymnasium and the upcoming zero-net-energy gymnasium at the Boyle Heights Sports Center.

“Paul Murdoch Architects was able to execute ideas into building tangibles that have helped to make this building a true centerpiece in the revitalization of historic Central Avenue.”

-Councilwoman Jan Perry

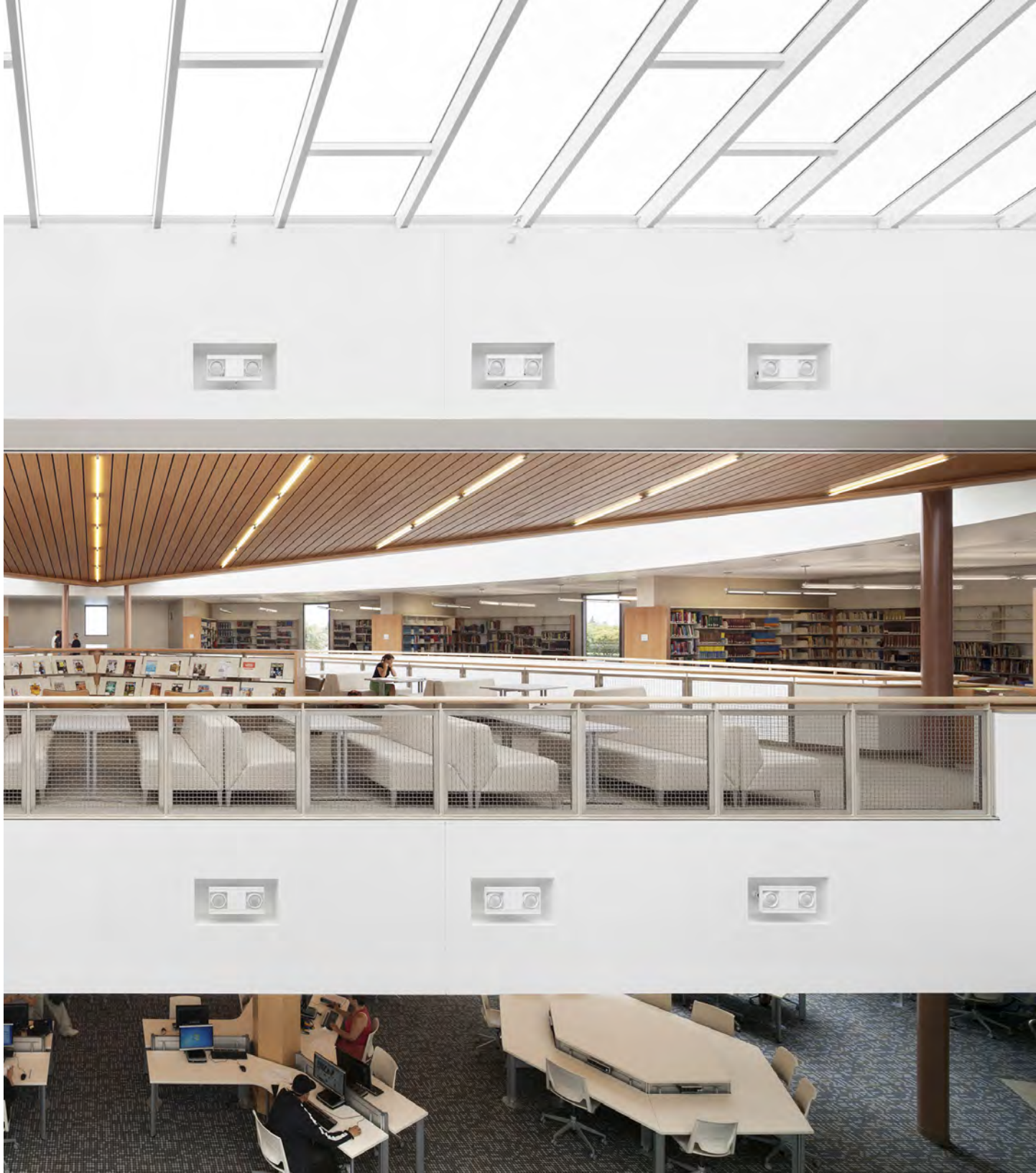




California Community College bond-funded projects include the Oxnard College Library Learning Center, the Oxnard LRC Classroom Renovation, and the Pierce College Library Learning Crossroads Building.

“The design surpasses all the objectives of the College in a beautiful building that has already become well-loved on campus. It promotes a student-centric perspective by breaking down previous barriers of separation and providing a warm, comfortable environment enjoyable to use”

Michael Bush, V.P., Business Services, Oxnard College





Acting as architect for the American Jewish University over the last twelve years has led to many capital improvements on campus such the Ostrow Library and Shapiro Synagogue.

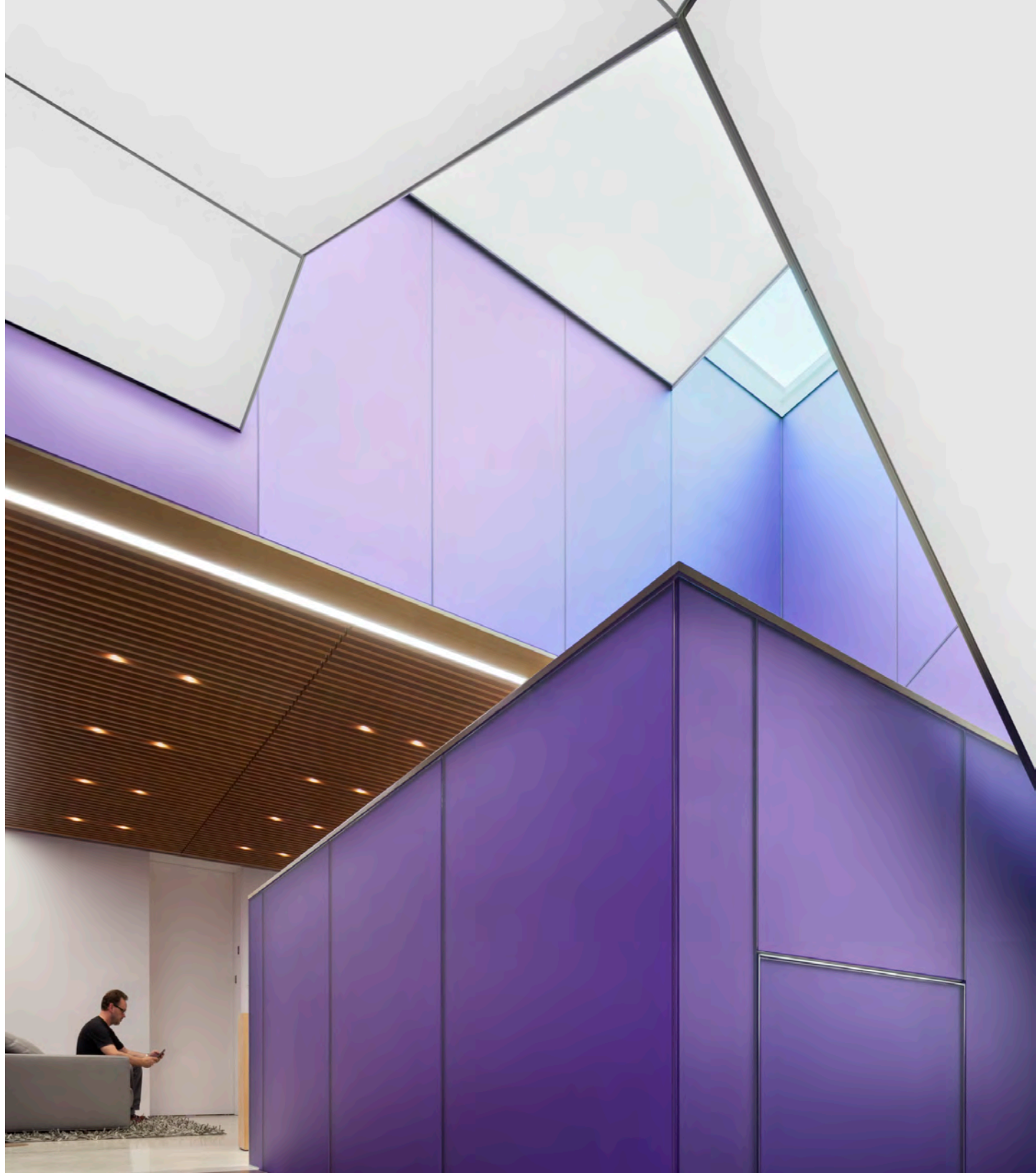
“What began as a library project evolved into a series of much needed improvements that have attracted donor support and reinvigorated our students, faculty, staff and wider community of constituents. We now have a renewed image and rich variety of amenities in what many of our supporters describe as a breathtaking transformation.”

Jay Strear, Senior Vice President





Serving a clean technology venture capital firm, the firm designed their office headquarters in Menlo Park using prefabricated structural modules. Bold colors express the VC firm's disruptive market positions while wood finishes lend a warm, sophisticated air to the transparent interior.



In 2005, the firm entered a 2-stage, international competition to design the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, PA. The proposal was selected from among 1,100 entries.

What had been a practice of mostly local, modest projects became national in profile, presenting many new challenges and dimensions of consideration over the last thirteen years as the project has been implemented.

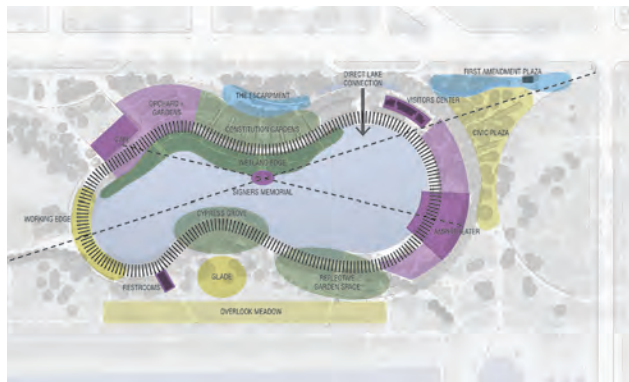




CONSTITUTION GARDENS

NATIONAL MALL DESIGN COMPETITION

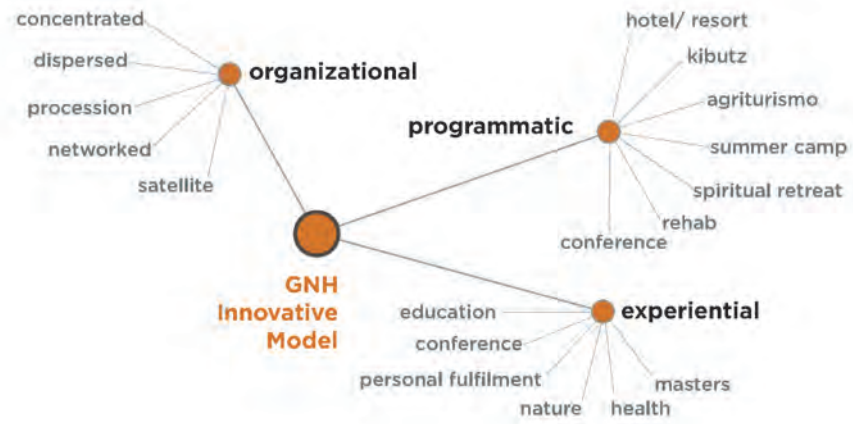
TRUST FOR THE NATIONAL MALL



In the attempt to build upon the Flight 93 experience, the firm has made additional efforts to practice at a national and international level, especially at places of great historic significance such as UNESCO sites. The firm was selected as one of twelve teams from 1,200 registered to propose a new master plan for Constitution Gardens on the National Mall.



Research of Development Precedents



The Prime Minister of Bhutan invited the firm to lead a master plan for their Gross National Happiness center.





The Government of Norway invited the firm, as one of eight teams from 300 international candidates, to submit designs for the July 22 National Memorials in Norway.



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Oslo



The firm submitted open-competition designs for museums in Helsinki and Budapest and a World War I memorial in Washington DC.





While none of these projects has led to commissioned work, the experiences expanded the firm's design and digital capabilities in master planning, museum design, public art, parametric modeling and biophilic building design.





Emerging from a dearth of public financing during the recession, public agencies in California began to initiate community-based, environmentally progressive projects well suited to the firm's capabilities and interests. These include the Gaffey Street Pool Restoration and Bathhouse, and a Housing Maintenance Facility at UCLA, DMV Inglewood Field Office Replacement and Boyle Heights Sports Center, all designed for Zero Net Energy, and the Willowbrook Community Event Center designed for Zero Net Water use.



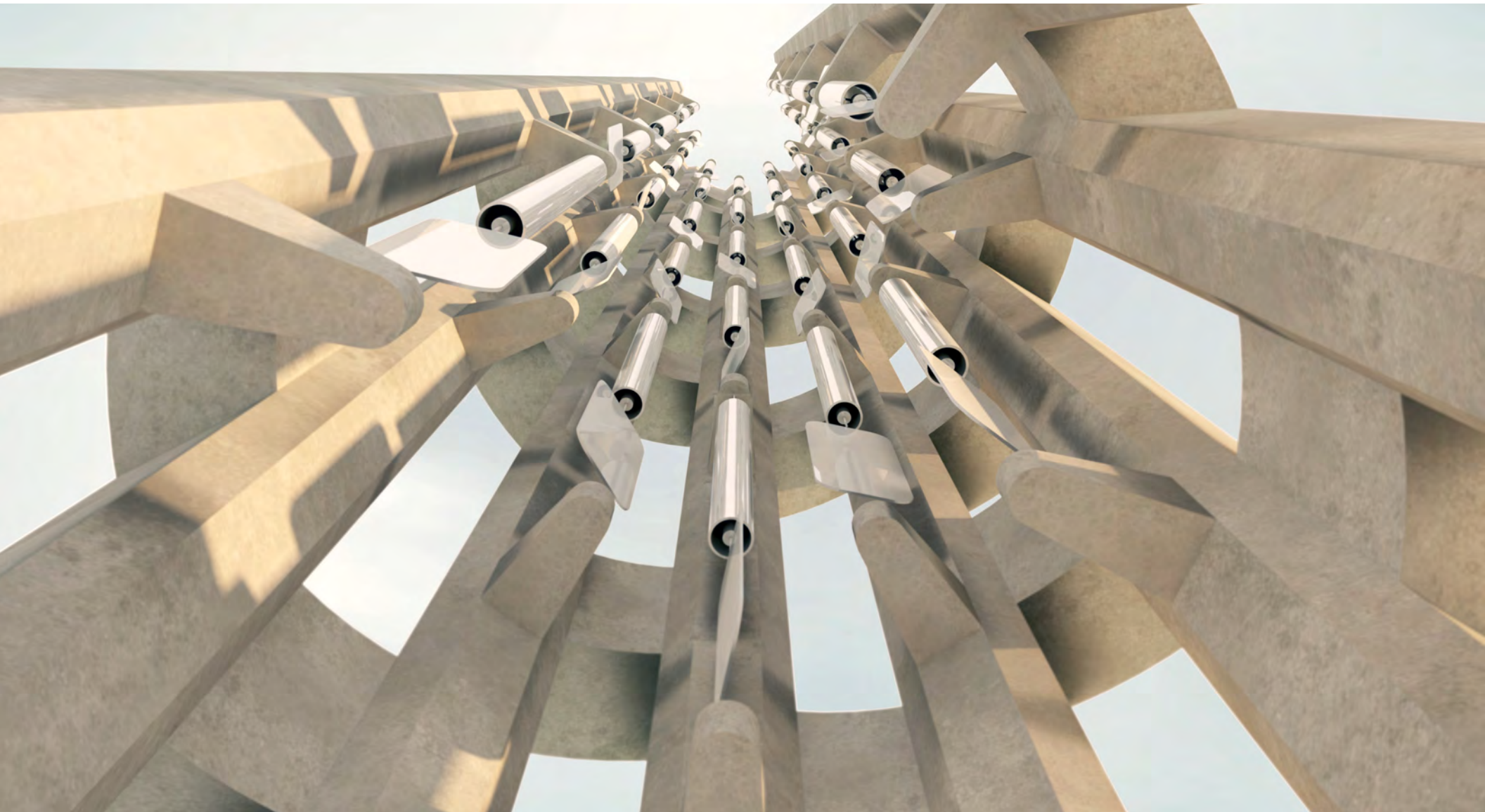
Parallel to these cultural community projects, the firm began to pursue cultural transportation projects in California as funding expanded dramatically to promote public transportation and transportation-oriented communities, a design and development interest that Paul explored twenty years prior. An initial assignment was station programming for two high-speed rail stations in Southern California. Then, the firm was selected as a small business leading a team of large engineering firms for LAWA's on-call architectural design services. Recently the firm led architectural aesthetic and visualization efforts for the P3 team selected to design, build and finance the new \$4.5 billion Automated People Mover at Los Angeles World Airport.



The Next 25 Years

With the planned dedication in September of the Tower of Voices at the Flight 93 National Memorial, the firm's thirteen-year tenure with the project will come to a close.

This moment is pivotal for the firm as it embarks upon new ventures. Through its guiding principles, the practice will build upon its history with the following core values and differentiating strengths.



Emergent form and compassion

The practice focuses on a compassionate process of nurturing form that is uniquely suited to each project, rather than employing a singular style, palette of materials or a certain building typology. Each project emerges from a unique set of factors through an original approach that expresses architectural tectonics and humanist proportions. The firm approaches each project with optimism and the intent to improve current conditions. Most of the work, for agencies dedicated to public place making, are cultural facilities that serve communities through education, recreation, transportation and interpretive uses.



The projects that best align with the firm's interests and capabilities are public in purpose, with a client-champion for architecture beyond the norm and with aspirations and resources for big thinking and service to address historic challenges of our new, emerging civilization. These projects artistically transcend cultural meaning by revealing and interpreting history, as in our memorial designs; by programming places for new socio-economic models of living, such as the GNH Center in Bhutan; or by offering scientifically based tools to meet pressing challenges, such as carbon and water-positive buildings or labs to advance food nutrition in low water environments.



Pioneering “firsts”

Through its creative process, the firm has become known for pioneering many “firsts” with clients, particularly for public agencies with modest budgets and layered approvals. In some cases, the project set out to create something new, and in others, an original solution emerged in response to challenges that were not initially understood.

For example, the firm invented a new type of building for UCLA, a research greenhouse to support molecular-level research in food science; created the first public roof garden for the City of Los Angeles to provide much-needed, safe park space in the South LA community; proposed a new type of center in Bhutan for the exploration of happiness; and designed the first facility as Zero Net Energy for the California Department of General Services, the first 21st century national park in the US, and under contract with a Federal agency, the first 30-meter high musical instrument using all natural forces.



Small studio leading large projects

Paul Murdoch leads the vision for each project as the Principal in Charge. Milena Murdoch heads most projects as Principal Project Manager and collaborates with Paul to develop designs. They are hands-on leaders who work closely with a dedicated staff to translate freehand sketches into digital formats from early design modeling through construction documents.

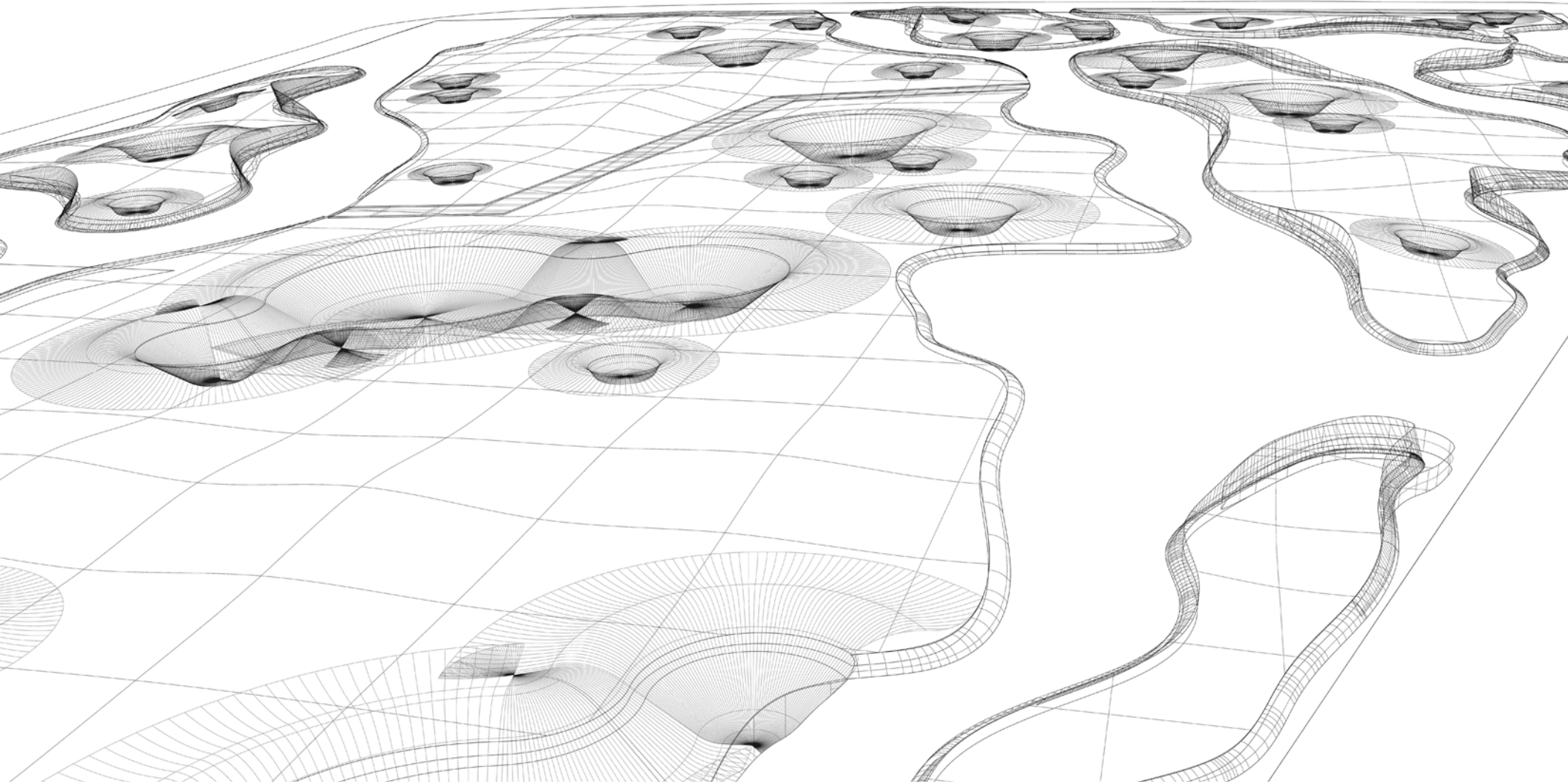
Distinguishing capabilities of the intimate design studio are experience, perseverance and its ability to lead and collaborate with multi-faceted teams for large scale, long-term complex projects. For the last 13 years, the firm has master planned and led the phased implementation of the Flight 93 National Memorial, a 2,200-acre memorial covering an entire landscape. The scales of design range from major earthwork and storm drainage infrastructure to the typography of one-inch high inscriptions.



In Bhutan, the country had developed many policy initiatives to promote their socio-economic goal of Gross National Happiness, but for years the application to real lives of their citizenry remained elusive. The Prime Minister invited the firm to lead an international, diverse team to help them define what type of programs and place would be suitable for this exploration. Los Angeles World Airports asked for public-private partnerships to provide equity and design-build proposals for a new \$4.5 billion automated people mover (APM) at LAX. The firm led the architectural aesthetic and visualization portion of the winning proposal.

Architect magazine recognized the practice in their ranking of Top 50 firms in the US by noting, “Paul Murdoch Architects showed that small firms can compete with big multinationals.”





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