

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

June 29, 2017



WHY

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

wHY

A COLLABORATIVE TEAM APPROACH

All of us at wHY are honored to present this response to Culver City's Request for Proposals for the City Hall Landscaping and Centennial Garden Project. wHY has been proud to call Culver City home since our founding in 2004, sharing that home with a peerless community of creative thinkers and doers.

Specifically, we look forward to this opportunity to reimagine Culver City Hall's public space as a vibrant and vital contributor to civic life for another century — the high quality public space one expects for this great City. We believe that great projects begin by asking "why?".

We seek to reveal the essence and undiscovered meaning of a project. We are fueled by a spirit of collaboration with designers, cultural influencers, and civic leaders. Our belief is that art is connected to nature and nature is connected to people. We propose to take a "core team collaborative" approach working together as a unified design studio, with wHY serving as creative lead, directing the collaboration of emerging talent. The Creative Influencers – well, they bring the spark and the local flavors.

We are excited to approach this project for its challenges and possibilities. Should we be fortunate enough to move on to the next round we will throw our highest levels of creativity and commitment to the effort.

We will assemble a cross section of individuals thought of as leaders and creative influencers, including writers, journalists, actors, artists, and activists who are passionate about Culver City and participating in the conversation for the future of the Culver City Centennial Garden.

They will be joining the team in a collaborative visioning process to provoke and stimulate our thinking and to cultivate imaginative approaches for the design and program of the Culver City Centennial Garden.

wHY believes creative advisers will give a voice to the community during the process, embedding a strong sense of place and meaning to the project.

wHY

CREATIVE DIRECTORS / TEAM LEAD



Kulapat Yantrasast
Architecture
Project Architect
New York



Mark Thomann
Landscape Architecture
Project Lead
New York



Gregory Fischer
Design Director
Los Angeles

TEAM LEAD | ARCHITECTURE & LANDSCAPE

why

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ABOUT WHY

Founded in 2004, why is a team of 30 creative designers with offices in LA & NYC, with a focus on cultural, museum and gallery architecture, exhibition design and landscape design. In 2014, why reorganized to better reflect the approach and offerings of the practice, as well as the interdisciplinary nature of design in the 21st century. An Ecology of Disciplines, why's four workshops are engaged in every project at different levels, depending upon the scope and requirements. We have expertise in feasibility studies to transform historic sites and buildings for cultural use for clients looking for innovative and cost-effective design. We work closely with artists, and are currently collaborating on projects with Yoko Ono and Doug Aitken.

In less than ten years, with many international collaborations, we have built the world's first new LEED Gold art museum; expanded with the international art market by designing outposts for prominent galleries; explored the intersection of climate, landscape and architecture via an arts education facility for one of the nation's top colleges; and re-presented important art collections for America's top institutions.

Our goal is to connect people and programs with their environment, while making the greatest impact with the least physical presence.

why's Grounds, our landscape studio, collaborates with landscape architects, urban planners, and artists worldwide to develop and program open space. Through the seamless integration of building, landscape and urban environments, the workshop enables art and function, nature and structure to coexist.

Our business practice itself reflects these design priorities. We believe that strong partnerships and client collaborations create design solutions that are simultaneously beautiful and highly functional. Our analytical and graphical approach to design development and our experience working on buildings on three continents enables us to smoothly integrate complex teams and to communicate vividly with our clients and partners — a performative approach to design collaboration.



KULAPAT YANTRASAST
PROJECT ARCHITECT

Born in Bangkok, Thailand, where he graduated with honors from Chulalongkorn University (1990), Kulapat received both his M.Arch. and Ph.D. degrees in Architecture from the University of Tokyo (1993/1996), under a Japanese Government scholarship. Upon graduating, Kulapat worked as Tadao Ando's close associate for more than seven years in Japan, leading several award-winning projects including the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts in St. Louis, Missouri, Fondation Francois Pinault pour l'Art Contemporain in Paris, and Tom Ford's 'House in the Desert' in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Regarded as a new generation architect, Kulapat's interdisciplinary approach to architecture and design is largely shaped and inspired by his passion for food and society, viewing each project as a mix of ingredients that yields its own unique recipe. To this end, why is structured as four workshops — Ideas, Buildings, Objects, Grounds — with one cohesive team capable of taking on all aspects of a project, from the planning and landscape design to architecture and furniture.

His approach and philosophy provides a purity of structure and clarity of thought with an openness and desire for creating dynamic environments, earning him numerous honors and awards over the years. In 2012, he was named one of the art world's 100 Most Powerful People and in 2009, Kulapat was the first architect to receive the Silpathorn Award for Design from Thailand's Ministry of Culture.

In 2014, he was the subject of numerous profiles in leading international publications — Artforum, W, PIN-UP, Cultured — on the occasion of completing three major projects — Pomona College Studio Art Hall, Harvard Art Museums (with Renzo Piano Building Workshop), and Kordansky Gallery. Additionally, why's projects have recently received coverage in WSJ Magazine, The Los Angeles Times, NPR, Christie's Art News and The Boston Globe.

He is a frequent public speaker at leading institutions and organizations and has served on the Artists' Committee of the Americans for the Arts, the United States' oldest organization for support of the arts in the society, since 2005. In 2015, he was appointed a board member of the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, and he is an active member of the Design Council for Collective Design.

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

why

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

why, Founder and Creative Director, Los Angeles & New York 2004 - Present

- Speed Art Museum, 200,000 sf, Louisville, KY
- Project120 Chicago Master Plan & Music Pavilion, Chicago, IL
- Worcester Art Museum Master Plan, 180,000 sf, Worcester, MA
- Grand Rapids Art Museum, 127,000 sf, Grand Rapids, MI
- Museum of Italian Judaism and the Shoah, 110,000 sf, Ferrara, Italy
- Marciano Art Foundation, 100,000 sf, Los Angeles, CA
- Harvard Art Museums Galleries & Interior, 46,000sf, Cambridge, MA
- Art Institute of Chicago Galleries, 46,000 sf, Chicago, IL
- Tyler Museum of Art, 40,000 sf, Tyler, TX
- Pomona College Studio Art Hall, 35,000 sf, Claremont, CA
- CalArts Student Center, 14,000 sf, Valencia, CA
- Kordansky Gallery, 13,000 sf, Los Angeles, CA
- House on the River Ping, 8,000 sf, Chiang Mai, Thailand
- Phuket House, 8,000 sf, Phuket, Thailand
- Perry Rubenstein Hollywood, 7,400 sf, Hollywood, CA
- Venice Beach House, 4,000 sf, Venice, CA
- Hollywood Sign House, 4,000 sf, Hollywood, CA
- LA River Art Bridge, 120 ft span / 1,200 sf, Los Angeles, CA

Tadao Ando Associates, Project Architect, Tokyo, Japan, 1996 - 2004

- Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA
- Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX
- Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, St. Louis, MO
- Fondation Francois Pinault pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France
- House in the Desert for Tom Ford, Santa Fe, NM
- Armani/Teatro, Milan, Italy

Awards & Engagements

Artists' Committee, Americans for the Arts, Since 2005
Silpathorn Award for Design, Ministry of Culture, Thailand, 2009
100 Most Powerful People in the Art World, Art + Auction, 2012
Design Council, Collective Design, Since 2013
Selected, Asian Art Museum Invited Qualifications Process, 2015
CORE Design Award, Notable Honor in the Built Environment, 2015
Board Member, Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, Since 2015
"Top Emerging Architect" in the US, Architectural Review, 2015



MARK THOMANN
LEAD DESIGNER

Mark is the director of wHY grounds, a landscape design studio. The Grounds Workshop is an imaginative landscape and urban design studio that collaborates with architects, urban planners, and artists worldwide to cultivate and program future ecologies and open space. The goal is to connect people and lifestyles to a vision of healthy and resilient cities and environments through the seamless integration of building, landscape and urban environments. The workshop enables art, function, nature and structure to beautifully coexist. Current initiatives include Project 120: a framework plan for a 542 acre park in Chicago, a competition for a school campus in Irkutsk, Russia, The Worcester Art Museum Master Plan, and a finalist in the International competition for Pershing Square in Los Angeles.

Prior to joining wHY, Mark was a partner and landscape design director with Balmori Associates and landscape director with Work Architecture Company, leading numerous international award winning projects and strategic plans, including the Campa de los Ingleses Park at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, the Master plan and vision for Public Administration Town, a new administrative city of Sejong, Korea, the Gabon Conference Center and gardens in Gabon, Africa with Work Architecture Company, as well as the winning Rebuild By Design competition project "Resist, Delay, Store, Discharge" with OMA for a comprehensive strategy for a resilient and sustainable Hoboken, NJ. His works also reveals the collaborative potential of landscape, ecology and art in Skid Rows; Queens Museum Artist Gardens, 2005 with Brian Tolle and the construction and interpretation of Robert Smithson's Floating Island; 2005 for Minetta Brook and the Whitney Museum.

Mark studied politics and conflict studies before pursuing a greater social good and received his MLA in Landscape Architecture and Regional Design from the University of Pennsylvania (1999). He teaches design studios that explore our ecological future and has been a studio critic, guest reviewer and lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, University of Toronto, Cornell University, Columbia University, Princeton University, the ASLA Awards, and Mildred's Lane. He is an invited juror for several international competitions abroad and in China. He is the author of Master Plan for the Sejong Public Administration Town; Topos; 60, 2007 and Forum and Institute for Urban Design publication, Next New York, which highlights forty proposals imagining rebuilt infrastructure, an animated public realm for New York City.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

wHY, Grounds Workshop Design Director | New York, NY

- Asian Art Museum – San Francisco, CA – 2017
- Paristown Pointe Master Plan, Louisville, KY, 2017
- *Skylanding* with Yoko Ono Chicago, IL – 2016
- Pershing Green, Los Angeles, CA – 2016
- Tower Hill Botanic Garden Boylston, MA – 2016
- Smart School Campus w/ WORKac, Irkutsk, Siberia – 2015
- Jackson Park Master plan, Chicago, IL – 2014
- Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA – 2014

Work Architecture Company, Landscape Director | New York, NY

- L'Assemblée Radieuse, Libreville, Gabon, 2014

Balmori Associates, Partner/Design Director | New York, NY

- Beale Street Landing, Memphis, TN – 2015
- New York Police Academy w/ Perkins+Will, New York, NY – 2014
- Sejong City Master plan, Sejong, South Korea – 2014
- Campa de los Ingleses Park, Bilbao, Spain – 2011
- Plaza Euskadi, Bilbao, Spain – 2011
- U.S. Institute for Peace Washington, D.C. – 2010
- *Garden that Climbs the Stairs*, Bilbao, Spain – 2009
- Hua Qiang Bei Road w/ WorkAC, Shenzhen, China – 2009
- Hudson Yards Master plan w/ WorkAC, New York, NY – 2008
- UC Dublin Master plan w/ Zaha Hadid, Dublin, Ireland – 2007
- Robert Smithson's *Floating Island*, New York, NY – 2006
- The High Line w/ Zaha Hadid, New York, NY – 2004
- Shenzhen Park w/ MAD Architects, Shenzhen, China – 2003

Awards & Engagements

- Faculty, University of Pennsylvania, School of Design, 2010–17
- Columbia University, GSAPP, Adjunct Associate Professor, 2012–15
- ASLA – American Society of Landscape Architects Member
- Fellow, Magic Grant. Brown Institute for Media Innovation, Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, 2015–17

ABOUT OUR TEAM & APPROACH

wHY starts by listening to the stories; stories of the place, stories of the city and stories of the characters. Through series of conversations and design tests, the stories are subtly incorporated into the presentation of the project, weaving into one consistent and engaging experience.

The design process is a truly collaborative process utilizing the team's expertise on the ideas, experience, and narratives and wHY's expertise with the variety of tools we use to conceptualize, ideate, and visualize the possibilities.

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY

CASE STUDY 1:

WHY

SPEED MUSEUM OF ART

Speed Art Museum | Louisville, KY USA

SCOPE: Master Plan, Design Architect, Landscape Architecture, Engagement

WHY's design for the new Speed Art Museum encompasses a thorough re-design of the original 1927 neoclassical building plus two additions and a sculpture park. It is Kentucky's oldest and largest art museum, and the region's leading cultural repository.

The process commenced by developing a comprehensive strategy for the museum's physical, curatorial and programmatic growth and expansion. WHY utilized a unique "Acupuncture Architecture" approach, which pioneers careful and precise interventions at multiple points in order to heal the whole. The expansions bring a contemporary, transparent architectural presence to the surrounding area.

For the Speed, WHY's acupuncture architecture approach has proven to meet their physical space needs while strategically activating the museum in ways unimaginable both inside and out.



AREA: 200,000 sf

BUDGET: \$50 million USD (£41 million)

COMPLETED: 2016

CASE STUDY 2:

WHY

PHOENIX PAVILION

Project 120/Chicago Parks District | Chicago, IL, USA

SCOPE: Master Plan, Design Architect, Landscape Architecture, Engagement, Fundraising

Jackson Park is the southern anchor to Chicago's 7-mile green necklace along Lake Michigan and site of the 1893 World's Fair, designed by the renowned landscape architects Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted. WHY is leading an initiative to re-design and activate the 500+ acre urban park, incorporating many of the original master plan ideas.

The master plan is the first phase in unlocking the potential of the park and creating a place where people can experience art, culture and science within a naturally beautiful setting. Among the catalysts are Skylanding, a sculpture and landscape designed in collaboration with the Japanese artist and peace activist Yoko Ono, as well as the construction of a new multi-functional pavilion for performances, events and exhibitions. Due to the rich history of the park and diversity, the project has required substantial involvement and engagement with the public.



AREA: 532 Acres

BUDGET: \$25 million USD (£21 million)

COMPLETED: Sculpture 2016, Pavilion 2018

CASE STUDY 3:

WHY

POMONA COLLEGE STUDIO ART HALL

Pomona College | Claremont, CA USA

SCOPE: Design & Executive Architect, Landscape Architecture, Engagement, Fundraising Interior Architecture, Furnishings, Fixtures

The Studio Art Hall, a LEED Gold building, brings art making, art appreciation, and art interaction together as a series of pavilions under one roof to re-imagine the program and site as a vital center of daily campus activities. Exposure to the studio arts is a critical part of the College's mission, and the Studio Art Hall creates an environment where an appreciation for the creative art process can be born and enhanced.

Begun with a rigorous programming phase in collaboration with faculty and students, WHY uncovered a desire for mixing and exposing different disciplines during the art-making process. The integration of semi-public collaborative 'Grey Spaces' encourages people to have collisions of different thoughts and influences throughout the buildings and courtyard landscape.



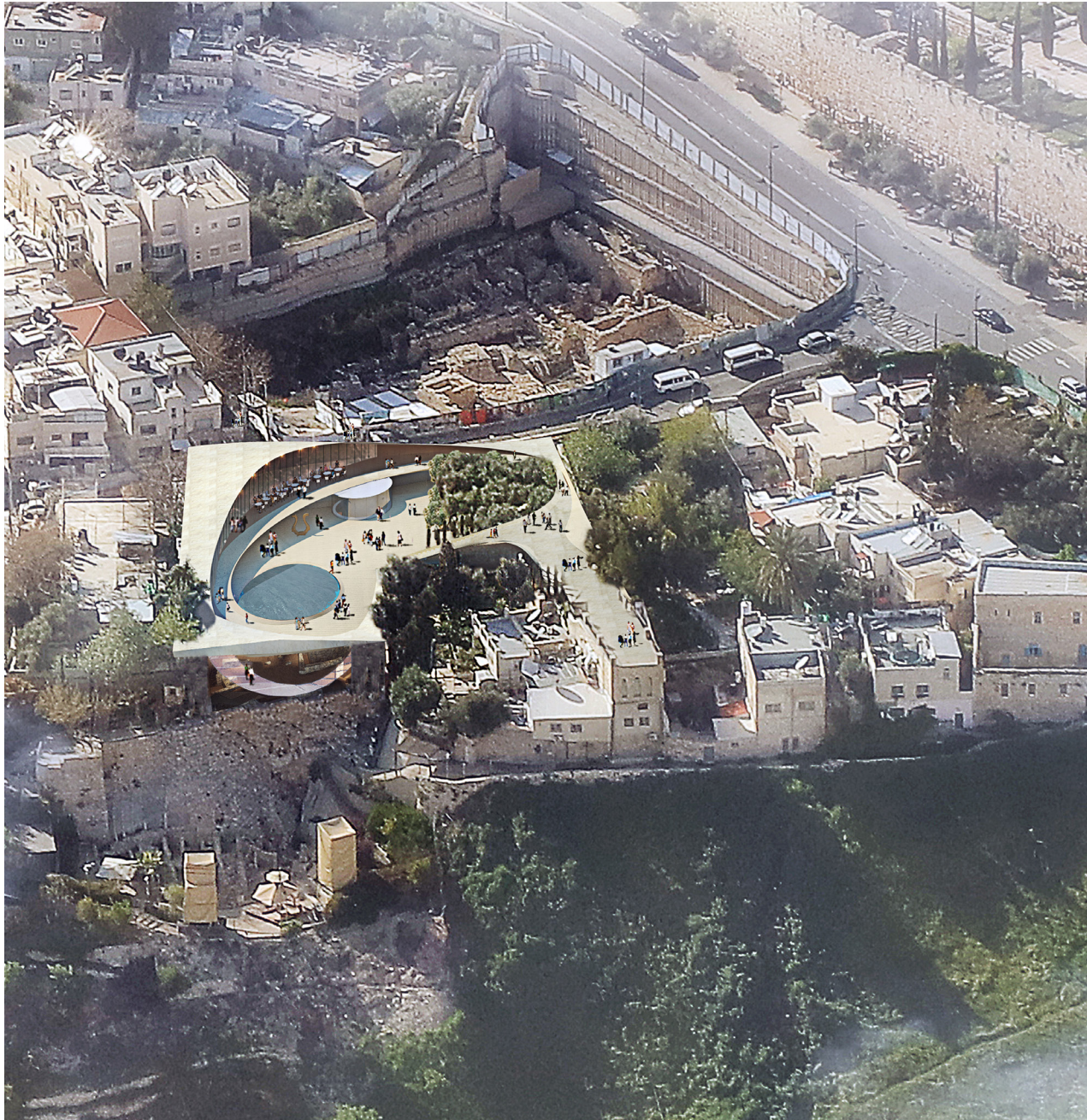
AREA: 35,000sf

BUDGET: \$28 million USD (£23 million)

COMPLETED: 2014

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY



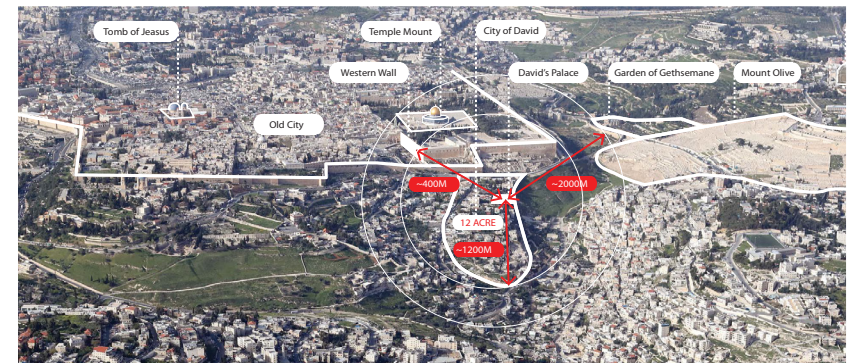
POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO SETTING, PLACE-MAKING AND CONTEXT

WHY began looking at the historic context of the city, focusing on the history, the stories and the natural landscape for a commission to build a visitor center over the excavation site of the City of David in East Jerusalem.

The site is complex, with layers of history and excavations that date from 3000 B.C. to today. The master plan process revealed connections that inspired a new narrative and visitor experience for the millions of tourists who visit the site every year.

The visitor center is a contemporary pavilion that highlights the views and related heritage of Ancient Jerusalem. Envisioned as a landscape, the building follows the undulating forms of the hills and the Kedron Valley.

The project is an exercise in the delicate balance between scale, heritage, and large groups of visitors in a densely populated residential neighborhood, using material, narrative and the master plan as tools to integrate and create balance.



CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY

why's finalist entry for Pershing Square in Los Angeles was based on a reading of the lost topography of the city and its underground parking structure in the city of cars. The understanding of both the historic and modern context of the plaza, shaped a new ground of rolling urban hills that housed new spaces for program and activities in the city.

why's Design Director, Mark Thomann, similarly explored the relationship between the movement of people, river and the cultural forms of the Guggenheim Bilbao for the Campa de los Ingleses Park in Bilbao. The park has spaces for events and kiosks, activating the city, making it accessible and providing a green lung.



POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO SETTING, PLACE-MAKING AND CONTEXT



CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

why

UNDERSTANDING SPATIAL NEEDS OF CONTEMPORARY USERS & IMPACT ON DESIGN & FUNCTION



The village-like open, porous nature of the architecture of why's Pomona Studio Art Hall encourages collaboration among art majors as well as non-art majors with program elements arranged around a central courtyard that itself is part of a prominent diagonal path through campus. Accomplished through semi-public, collaborative 'Grey Spaces,' the building maximizes the intersection between students, faculty and staff as they move through the studios and public areas.

A strategic, non-hierarchical stacking of studio spaces (mediums) fuels an openness and unrestricted approach to art. The expansive use of glass provides students with transparency to the whole — insights into the creative processes of their peers and faculty members in multiple disciplines

"The Studio Art Hall reflects a different ethos and different way of thinking about art. The building is beautiful and imaginative and really meets the needs of our community."
– Michael O'Malley, associate professor of art



CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN WHY

One of WHY's principles of design for cultural spaces is to reach out and invite the visitor in. For museums and galleries, this is critical to engage the next generation of patrons, who are looking for social opportunities and activities.

Openness and flexibility become design parameters that shape facades and interior – exterior spaces that are inviting and inspiring.

In addition to the qualitative experiences, flexible spaces require the infrastructure and mechanical systems to allow for events, connectivity and programs for contemporary performances. WHY has developed numerous cultural projects that subtly integrate these systems into the architecture.



UNDERSTANDING SPATIAL NEEDS OF CONTEMPORARY USERS & IMPACT ON DESIGN & FUNCTION



CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY



SUSTAINABILITY IN DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND USE

Sustainability is measured through efficiency of design and ecological innovation.

The Speed Museum came in under budget due to quality control and management protocols at WHY. We worked closely with engineers and construction managers to identify complexities surrounding materials and construction techniques. We are capable of BIM modeling to maintain the complete integration of all consultants throughout the building process.

The Speed Museum used innovative frit systems to allow for an open and transparent building skin. The Grand Rapids Art Museum, the first LEED Gold Museum in the world, was a combination of visionary design with close collaboration between architect and engineering teams.



CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

why



BALANCING BUDGET, QUALITY AND PROGRAM THROUGH DESIGN PROCESS

No matter the scale of the project, the interdisciplinary structure of why and the process of close collaboration and engagement with consultants and stakeholders allows why to be strategic and test ideas efficiently.

Another underlying principle of why's process is that of urban acupuncture and acupuncture architecture. We approach each project and ask why? This process helps identify specific solutions and strategies. This acupuncture strategy is very effective and resourceful for the design team and the client and through the process of asking why – we reveal exciting new possibilities.

These strategic points of intervention are checked against cost models and design reviews that are creative engineering as opposed to value engineering.



CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN
why

REJUVENATING FOR DIVERSITY AND VITALITY

Proper storm water management and drought tolerant planting should be a matter of course with any improvements. The more critical goal should be bringing – for the first time – public life to this important public space, and enabling it to serve as a catalyst for the civic and commercial vitality of downtown Culver City.

Rather than propose a single concept, we propose a careful analysis of the site with you and with the citizens of Culver City, to identify core objectives and chart a course for best utilizing the resources at hand. Our initial thought is that spreading the current budget across the site on planting and some water management runs the risk of not achieving project goals while leaving an impression of wasted public funds. Instead, we propose using a small portion of the budget to address a limited set of high impact, low cost moves, while concentrating the remaining budget on a lasting high-impact area. Not only will this be the most prudent and effective application of resources, it will stand as inspiring proof of concept for further work.

What follows are our initial thoughts on what presently stands in the way of a vital, vibrant and accessible park, and the broad stroke measures to achieve it. We expect these thoughts to develop and even change during the research, exploration and outreach process, should why be retained for this project.

THE LARGER CONTEXT

City Hall sits at the center of Culver City’s downtown commercial core. Together with its neighbor to the East, it constitutes an urban fabric dead zone that is negatively impacting the growth of commercial street frontage to the west. The former Sony building compounded this problem, however changes underway will soon reverse this. While City Hall will never directly contribute to the continuity of urban fabric, it can host a variety of public needs that will enable it to effectively bridge to the western properties. Further, the City Hall open spaces are well positioned at the intersection of the residential, commercial, and working populations.



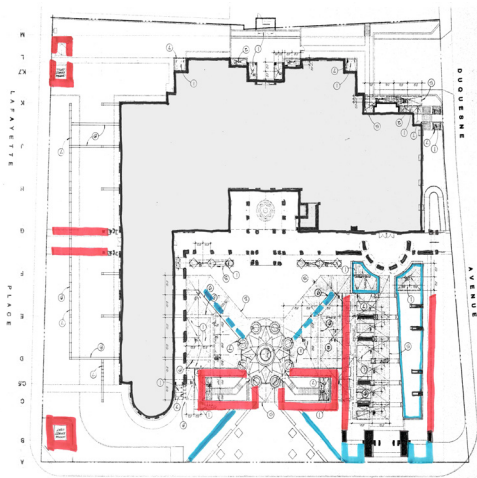
CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY

MAIN ENTRY

The entire main entry seems designed against inhabitation thanks to multiple layers of visual and physical barriers and its hourglass funneled entry. Beautiful groves of trees flank the narrow entry, yet seating blocks access. Oversized stair openings from the garage below are placed lengthwise across the plaza, planted with massive dense hedges. Once through, visitors face waterless concrete fountain encircled by raised concrete planters in an empty plaza that turns its back to the City it represents. Even here, benches serve more to block people from sitting under the cool shade of trees than provide seating.

Create penetrable layered depth. Remove the bushes from the stair openings, and if possible, reduce their length (covering the stepped area now occupied with portend plants). Perforate the solid rows of diagonal benches to open access to the flanking groves of trees. Restore water function to the fountain. Disperse seating between open plaza and the inner tree groves to spark dialog and accessibility.

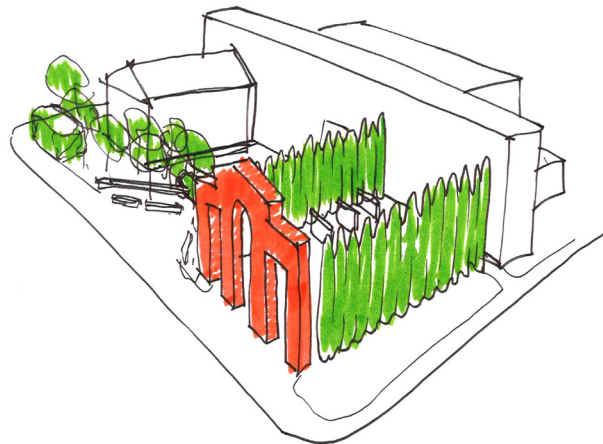


Existing Visual and Physical Barriers

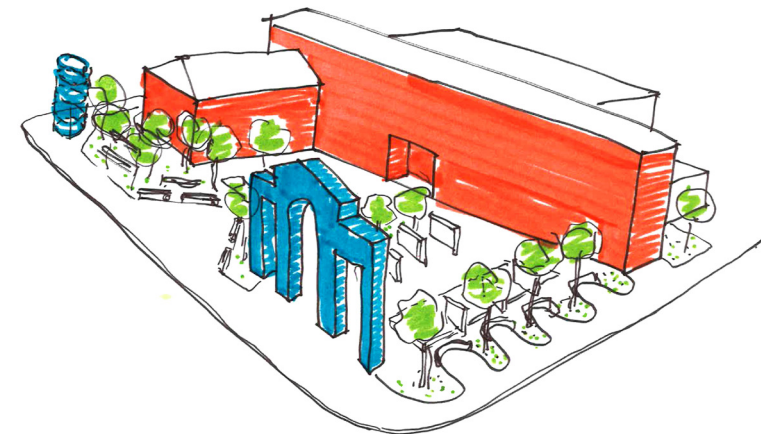
NORTHWEST CORNER

The tall rows of cypress trees may mimic the former City Hall, but they constitute an enormous visual and physical barrier for City Hall and its public space. Taken together with the brick walls, the memorial court is a dark and seemingly unsafe space. Meanwhile, along Duquesne, a wide strip of grass sits under beautiful trees, but the adjacent cypress stands in the way of any reason to use it. Overall, the cypress trees obscure the welcoming 'open arms' configuration the City Hall plan affords.

Removing the cypress trees — while a significant change to consider — would radically transform the presence of City Hall on the downtown core, restoring an inviting sense of civic space as well as light, air, and beauty. This elimination of what is essentially a needless 3 story fence along Duquesne should breathe new life into neighboring properties as well, opening opportunities for access and congregation along that avenue.



Now: A Wall at the Street

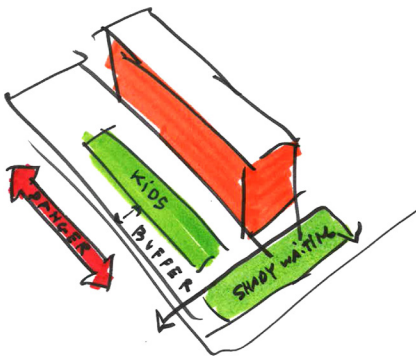


Proposed: A Welcoming Site

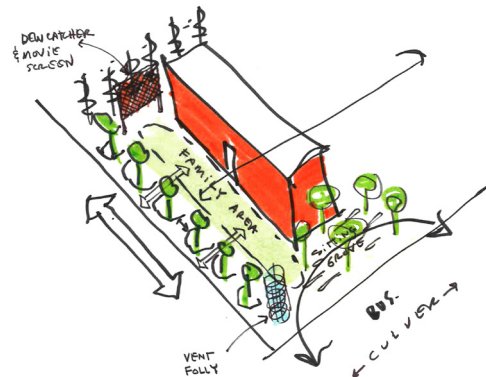
WHY

The adjacent Lucerne and Park East neighborhood are increasingly populated with strollers and families on bikes. For all Culver City's green and bountiful parks, the city center lacks a central green – as meeting place or way-station. The open space along Lafayette currently serves only to push passers-by up against traffic. This large area is presently 100% useless. The overgrown bushes lining the path to the East entry chop the space in half, and stand as a claustrophobic' worse nightmare.

Give this space to the people. Make it family friendly. Create a buffer between this tenderloin and traffic on Lafayette with undulating planters and an additional row of trees. Create a soft boarder along the building with native grasses and wildflowers but keep the bulk of the space open to interpretation with a simple expanse of a low-water, high-traffic grass like Zoysia grass. Incorporate seating into the eastern planters as buffer. At the south end, a 3 story dew catcher can serve double duty as water and education source by day, and projection screen or performance backdrop by night.



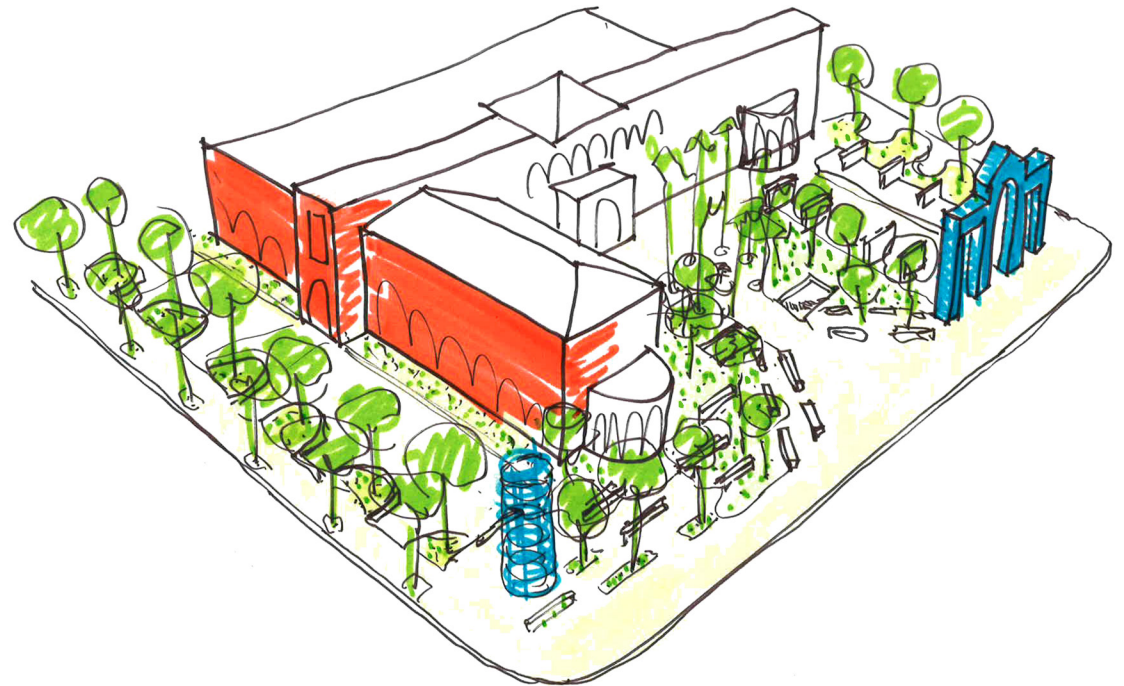
Responsive Progamming



Building Sense of Place

A busy bus stop activates an otherwise uninhabitable corner. With beautiful trees in the direct vicinity, riders are confined to wait in the partial shade of a small retro bus shelter. Massive bushes obscure a comparatively small ventilation shaft for the garage but instead obscure City Hall from its City.

Open this corner up. Extend the sidewalk with permeable hard scape like DG into the beautiful grove of mature olive trees and scatter it with seating. Promote conversation and contemplation among bus riders, and a nice place to sit and take lunch or read a book for others. Eliminate the bush shroud at the vent and create a public art folly instead – channel air up, creating a high tech modern counterpart on the east corner to the historic folly on the west corner. Sunrise, sunset.



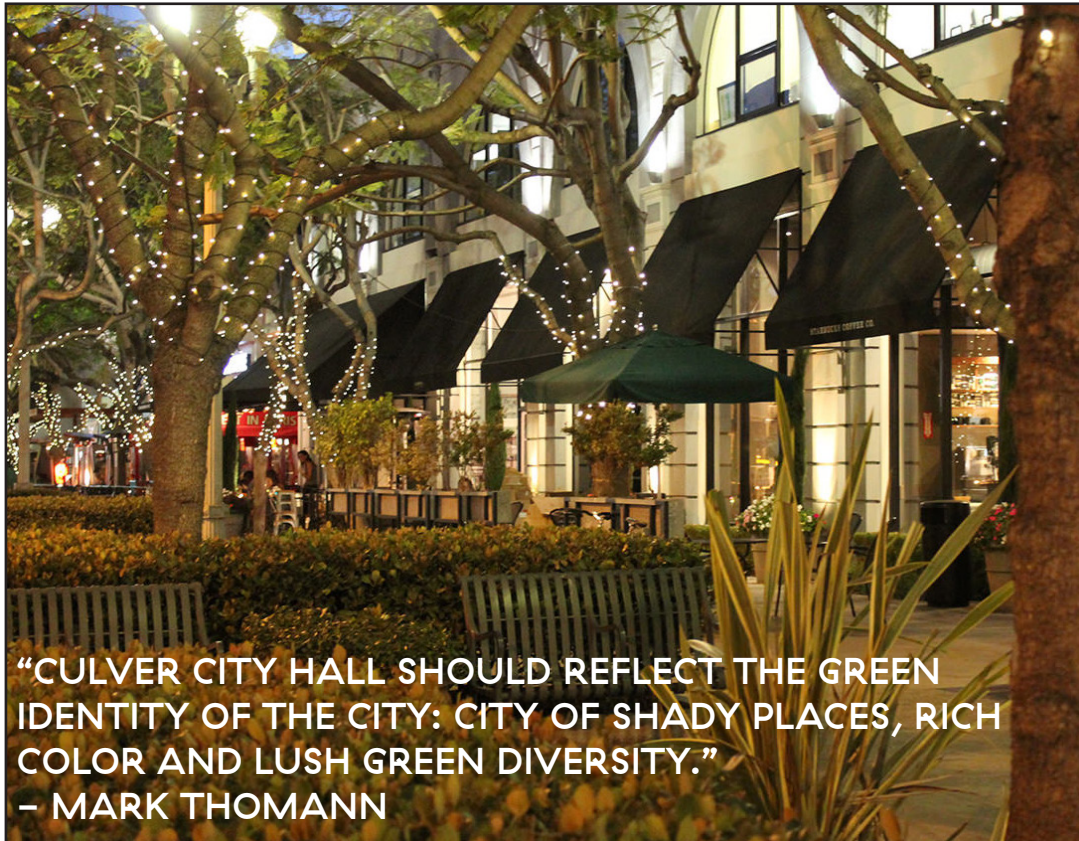
Extending the Streetscape

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY

EMBRACING CULVER CITY

The new Culver City Centennial Gardens open to and welcomes the vibrant streets, buildings, neighborhoods and businesses that embrace it. The new Culver City Gardens breathe with greenery and canopy to bring the smells and sounds of nature to our senses. The new Gardens open in all directions, unifying a set of spaces that nest together into one legible whole. The new Gardens are active and alive, supporting a myriad of overlapping social and cultural experiences. The new Gardens are at rest, calming us with soft spaces, soft surfaces, and shade.



“CULVER CITY HALL SHOULD REFLECT THE GREEN IDENTITY OF THE CITY: CITY OF SHADY PLACES, RICH COLOR AND LUSH GREEN DIVERSITY.”
– MARK THOMANN



A PLACE THAT IS HEALTHY, GREEN + SUSTAINABLE

Culver City Hall has a vital role to play in supporting some of today’s pressing issues – climate change, sustainable development and public health. It is more and more clear that we must act wisely with energy, water, materials and construction technologies to conserve and sustain our world.

The emphasis on canopy vegetation, planted surfaces and shade mitigates the urban heat island effect as well as providing comfort. Stored, recycled water and on-site bio-swale storm water treatment will greatly improve how we conserve and reuse water while also increasing the amount of water available to support a lush environment.

Our sustainability approach employs low-impact strategies to create a comfortable, productive and effective environment for people. The strategies are environmentally friendly while integrating economic and social goals resulting in truly sustainable solutions. These components could be described as follows:

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY



PLANTING

The new Culver City Gardens will include native and water efficient species. Consisting of native grasses, groundcovers, forbs, and select shrubs, this will be an environment that changes with the seasons. California Poppies will cover the landscapes as they do in Gorman north of LA. Lupines, Woolly Blue Curls, Blue-Eyed Grass, Monkey Flower and Penstemon and low-growing California Lilac will thrive here. Plantings will include select native shrubs and small trees such as Flannel Bush, Gooseberry, Western Redbud, Sage and Mountain Mahogany will create a varied tapestry of texture and color.

Streetscape Plantings within these gardens will contain species that feature an international palette in celebration of the many cultures that comprise the population of Los Angeles. A potpourri of Agaves, Aloes, Lavenders, Natal Plums, Kangaroo Paws and other plants from across the world.

Over-structure environments like Culver City Hall create difficulties for landscapes to thrive. Soil volumes are many times limited, constricting root growth. Pavements compress soils, limiting

air and water penetration. Improper subsurface drainage causes anaerobic conditions which is inhospitable plant growth. Poorly chosen soil textures can lead to a host of problems that, once installed are difficult to remedy. For this reason, we will take great care to identify systems that will provide the best growth environment for the landscape.

MINIMIZE WATER USE

The new park should set a goal to be net zero water. At a minimum, low water plants will be planted, and drip irrigation and subsurface turf will be used. But conservation is not enough – reusing that water we waste is the next step. Culver City Hall will re-direct water into storage chambers created under our proposal. Chambers will be sized to hold enough reused water to support fully two months of irrigation need for the entire park – allowing us to provide the green infrastructure, shady grove, gardens of color and central lawn that make Culver City Gardens a true oasis.



CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY

RECLAIMED MATERIAL

All soil will be sourced within 10 miles of the site. Soil and aggregate can be sourced from nearby brownfield sites. Rather than bringing mature plants to the site, young plants can be installed to develop on site.

MINIMIZE LIGHT POLLUTION

Safety is a priority and it is important that the new park is well lit. The lighting will be designed so the space feels well lit up but unwanted light pollution will be minimized. Research shows that dark nights are necessary for healthy cell function and brain activity for both humans and animals. Properly designed directed lighting will save energy in addition to reducing urban sky glow.



MINIMIZE THE HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

The new park will increase the number of trees and vegetation and limit hard surface area. Where hard surfaces are used, they will be light in color. Through shade and evapotranspiration trees and vegetation can provide cooling of 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit compared to typical urban areas. Vegetated roof surfaces will also remove heat from the air through evapotranspiration. Light surfaces will reflect heat away to reduce temperatures and can lower the energy demand in the garage below.

PUBLIC ACCESS

The new park will maximize the use of space as a meeting location with bicycle parking. A walking path through the park provides a place for residents and workers to exercise. In addition, the park will create a beautiful view for its neighbors. Occupants in the surrounding buildings will experience a wellness effect by viewing the natural environment of the park.

PASSIVE COOLING SOLUTIONS

In public space non-mechanical cooling solutions can be used including misting to provide evaporative cooling and shade to

CULVER CITY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

WHY

