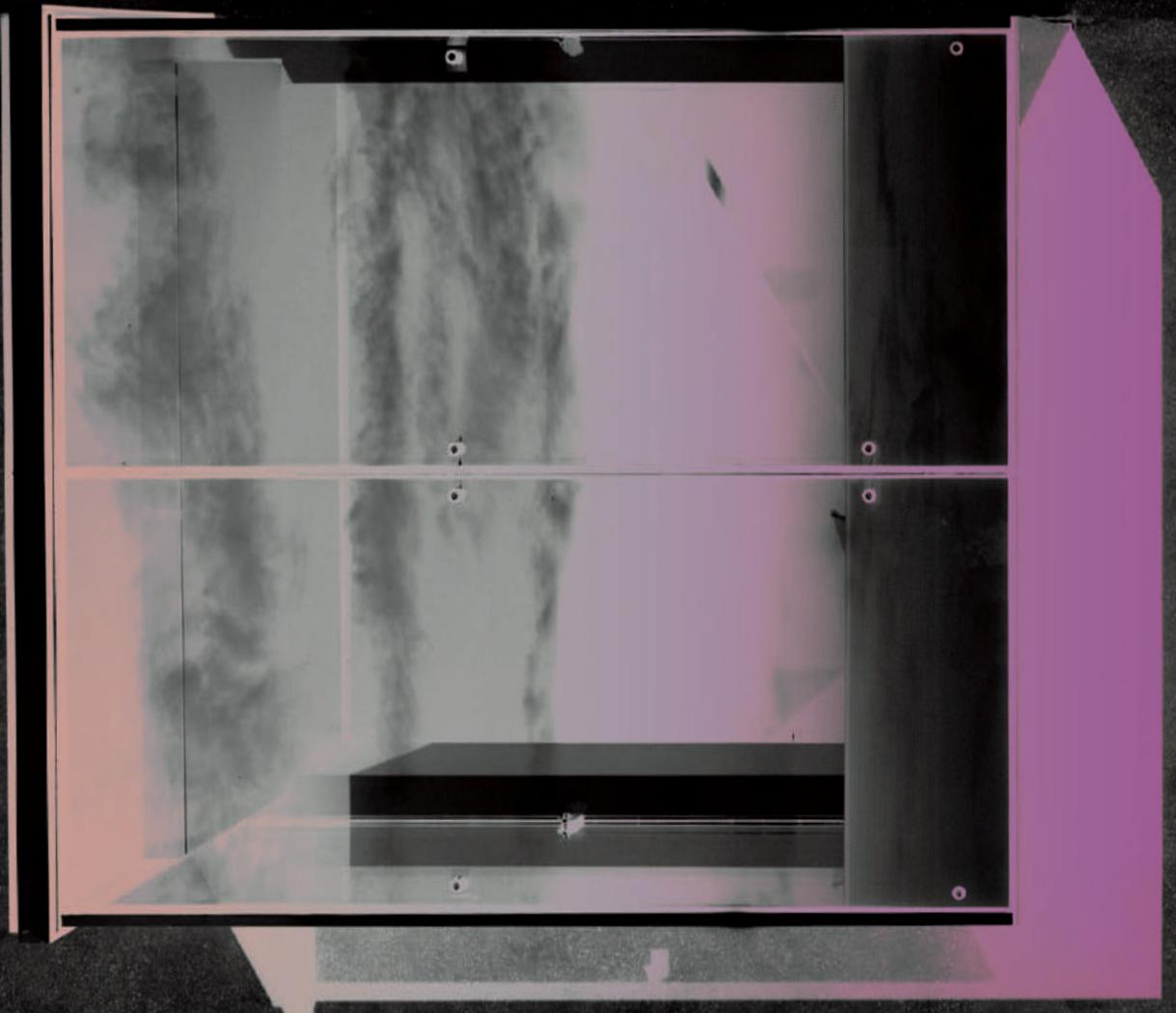


S P A T I A L R E L A T I O N

Jensen Architects, creating holistic designs on both a micro and macro level, P. 52





rulers of the roost

The highly credentialed principals of Tate Snyder Kimsey Caldwell Architects didn't have to leap far to be on board with LEED's ratings—now, their long-held reign over the Western United States is maintained by major California port projects

by David Hudnall

“THINK BACK TO THE WAY THINGS WERE DESIGNED prior to air conditioning,” says John Caldwell, a principal at Tate Snyder Kimsey Caldwell (TSKC) Architects. “Architects and planners had no choice but to pay attention to things like siting, otherwise you'd have problems with heating and cooling. When air conditioning came along, people realized they could build whatever they wanted wherever they wanted and maintain it as a big box of hot or cool air year round. Nowadays, of course, people are starting to see that that's wasteful, and we're getting back to basics, which people are saying is green but which is really just smart architectural planning.”

ABOVE: Entry to the Long Beach City College library, which utilized the design of sloped ceilings to bring in extra light.

That's a fairly concise assessment of the trends this magazine was launched to cover. And Caldwell's firm is an active participant in those trends. Take its office in Las Vegas, which was the first LEED-certified project in the entire state. “We constructed the building in the pre-LEED days,” says Windom Kimsey, principal. “When we decided to go for LEED, there was just a minimal amount of changes we had to make to it. We've always been about siting and orientation. So it wasn't much of a big leap to do LEED, other than the process of just recording what we'd already done.” *Architect* magazine, in its 2009 *Architect 50* list, which recognized ecological commitment and design quality as much as profitability in measuring the best A, AE, and AEC firms in the United States, ranked Kimsey's office number 18, in large part due to the magazine's evaluation of its sustainable practices—a combination of the firm's number of LEED projects and its internal “green culture.”

The firm's Los Angeles office (it has a third office in Reno, Nevada) is not LEED certified, but Caldwell points out its many sustainable characteristics: high-efficiency air conditioning, a 12-kilowatt solar-photovoltaic array on the roof, and skylights throughout. “If you really believe in doing something, you have to commit to doing it at home,” he says.



TOP, LEFT: TSKC Architects received its first contract with the Long Beach Port, for the Pier A project, in 1999. TOP, RIGHT: The Springs Preserve project in Las Vegas, is divided into two functional areas: a ticketing building with offices, a retail shop and cafe, and a gallery building with exhibits and a theater. RIGHT: TSKC served as the architect and interior designer for the Henderson Community Police Station.

“When we decided to go for LEED, there was only a minimal amount of changes we had to make to [the firm’s Las Vegas office]. We’ve always been about siting and orientation. So it wasn’t much of a big leap to do LEED, other than the process of just recording what we’d already done.”

—Windom Kimsey, Principal

TSKC Architects’ sustainable and eco-friendly endeavors are, of course, not limited to its home turf. It provides architecture, planning, interior design, and environmental consulting for institutional, education, and port projects in California, Florida, Arizona, and Nevada. Its involvement with the Long Beach Port ranks among the firm’s higher-profile projects and has given the team the chance to incorporate a variety of sustainable measures since its first contract for Pier A in 1999. “The port work came about through a friend who bid on it but was too small for the job, so we teamed up,” Caldwell says. “We included sun shades, low-E glass—features that aren’t typically used on industrial projects. And we ended up winning an AIA award for it in 2000. Five years later, they had a new project and asked us if we’d like to be involved.”

That project—a \$45.5 million administration and operations building at Pier G—is considerably larger. Pier A was roughly 100 acres; Pier G, a “mega-terminal,” will be more than 300 acres. Planning commenced in 2005, around which time the port decided to promote a green program and build for LEED Silver. The four structures in Pier G will be composed of recycled and local materials, low-VOC paint, high-efficiency air conditioning units, low-E glass, and self-dimming lights. “It’s the largest port on the continent, so we’re thrilled to be a part of it,” Caldwell says.

This type of large-scale work also includes several education projects like the Long Beach City College Library—a 22,000-square-foot structure for which sloped ceilings were used to bring in extra natural light—and Cerritos College’s Center for Advanced Transportation Technology, which was built to LEED standards. All in all, the firm has worked on more than 300 schools. Repeat business and referrals—TSKC Architects has completed 200 jobs for a single community college—keeps things flowing smoothly in the California and Nevada offices. “We just try to blend our resources where it’s best suited for the project,” Kimsey says. “Everyone here has a similar approach to design.” **gb&d**

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