

## **New Orleans architecture firms rack up AIA LA design honors**

New Orleans architecture firms won eleven awards in the prestigious American Institute of Architects Louisiana Chapter (AIA LA) Design Competition.

The awards were given during the annual AIA LA Design Conference Awards Banquet, held on September 8 in Point Clear, Alabama. Only three Honor Awards were given by the nationally-recognized panel of judges, and two of those awards went to Eskew+Dumez+Ripple for The Beacon in New Orleans and Teatro Santander in Brazil. The other Honor Award went to studioWTA of New Orleans for The Julian in New Orleans.

New Orleans firms that received an Award of Merit included Eskew+Dumez+Ripple for the WWL-TV headquarters, studioWTA for The Pythian, Trahan Architects for College Station boutique hotel, Magnolia Mound Visitors Center and the Aurora Event Center; Trapolin-Peer Architects for 800 Magazine; Lee Ledbetter & Associates for the Joan Mitchell Center Artists' Studio Building, and Waggonner & Ball Architects for Green Trees Early Childhood Village.

In addition, Holly + Smith Architects of Hammond won the sought-after Members Choice Award for the renovations and additions to The Moon at 631 Desire Street in New Orleans.

### **HONOR AWARDS:**

**THE BEACON**, New Orleans, Eskew+Dumez+Ripple: This 7-story building with 123 residential units and ground floor retail offers a contemporary, loft-inspired design. Residences are tightly wrapped around an elevated green space courtyard, which opens to the street and provides a calm oasis from the commercial district. The building also features a rooftop terrace, gym, club room and conference room.

**TEATRO SANTANDER**, Brazil, Eskew+Dumez+Ripple: This 1,200-seat multi-venue performing arts theatre in Sao Paulo, Brazil also includes a 300-seat flat floor cabaret theatre and lobby. It offers multiple seating arrangements and surround stage configurations. It was designed with an expansive window wall providing spectacular views of the city behind the stage as a backdrop to performances and special events.

**THE JULIAN**, New Orleans, studioWTA: This 54,000 square feet mixed use building provides 36 apartments and 3,500 of retail space. It establishes a strong urban presence at a busy and vibrant pedestrian and commercial avenue.

### **AWARDS OF MERIT:**

**WWL-TV HEADQUARTERS**, New Orleans, studioWTA: This project involved a dramatic contemporary renovation of a cluster of unorganized buildings and structures into a cohesive work environment. Façade modifications, lighting upgrades and storefront glazing all enhanced the public reception area. A focal point is a slotted walnut staircase tucked behind translucent acrylic rods as the backdrop of the lobby area.

THE PYTHIAN, New Orleans, studioWTA: Two historic buildings were carefully restored to their original design, with replacement of masonry, ornamental terra cotta and cast stone. One building was restored to its 1909 splendor, and the other to its 1950s design. They include 121,000 square feet of commercial and residential space.

COLLEGE STATION BOUTIQUE HOTEL, College Station, Texas, Trahan Architects: This 112,500 square feet, 120-room hotel on the college campus includes a full restaurant, outdoor courtyard, pool terrace, café, bar and lounge, meeting facilities, retail space and parking structure. Contrasting the transparent base, the upper exterior façade is a combination of charred wood and glass for a dramatic effect.

MAGNOLIA MOUND VISITORS CENTER, Baton Rouge, Trahan Architects: The visitors center was designed to be unobtrusive, allowing emphasis on the site topography of the historic 1791 working plantation. The top of the new building aligns with the elevation of the high ground of the mound, establishing a datum which links the old and new architecture on site.

AURORA EVENT CENTER, Aurora, New York, Trahan Architects: Set on the shore of a lake, the design maintains a seamless integration with the surrounding landscape while providing protection from the weather. Internal courtyards are integral to its design, bracketing the main reception hall and providing natural light.

800 MAGAZINE, New Orleans, Trapolin-Peer Architects: This project involved restoration of the exterior of an 1844 era building which had suffered severe architectural and structural changes, while developing the interior as a modern, multi-use and residential building. With a nod to its historic roots, it features the exposed original ceiling joists, beams, columns and brick walls.

JOAN MITCHELL CENTER ARTISTS' STUDIO BUILDING, New Orleans, Lee Ledbetter & Associates: Configured in a L-shape to frame a large communal green space, the building features studio spaces for resident artists. It features a sloped lawn and retention pond, vertical louvers and eight studio volumes.

GREEN TREES EARLY CHILDHOOD VILLAGE, New Orleans, Waggoner & Ball Architects: This facility connects A-frame forms into a modern take on New Orleans' shotgun-style architecture, helping it to blend into the historic neighborhood. The space offers a series of framed views into the garden to provide interface between interior space and the outdoors.

#### **MEMBERS CHOICE AWARD**

THE MOON AT 631 DESIRE STREET, New Orleans, Holly+Smith Architects: This project involved renovation of a historic Quonset hut metal structure into a unique contemporary boutique hotel. The circa 1947 hut was stripped of its deteriorated skin and a wood deck and metal skin were installed. It features windows that emulate original doors, an open-air walkway adjacent to a garden, and a courtyard.

The Design Awards competition included 45 projects entered by architectural firms from across the state.

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