

Texas Architect

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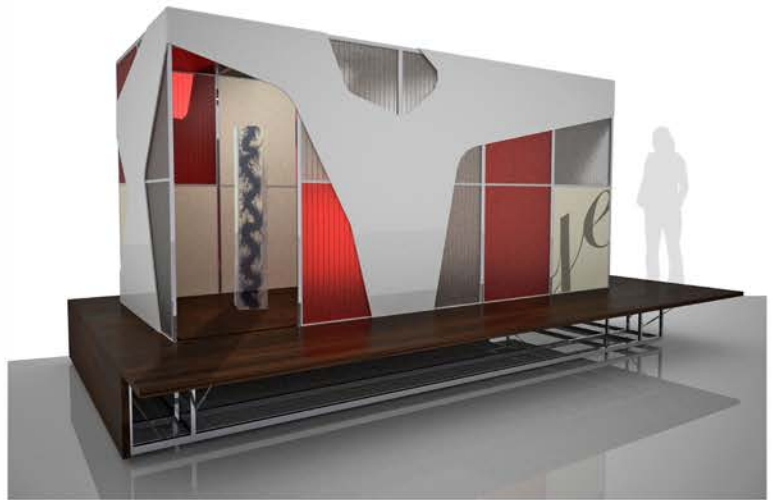


CORE: A Compact Highly Adaptable Home

The design submittal from Hybrid/ORA of Seattle is the winner of the “99K House Competition” sponsored by the Rice Design Alliance and AIA Houston. The competition challenged architects to design a sustainable, single-family prototype that could be built for around \$99,000 in Houston and replicated throughout the Gulf region. Hybrid/ORA’s scheme promotes affordable green building strategies while innovatively reducing energy costs and supporting the longevity of its occupants. Regionally manufactured building materials and balloon framing reduce overall costs, making the project affordable to construct, purchase, and maintain. Additionally, the flexible floor plan allows inhabitants to re-arrange and personalize spaces, promoting social sustainability. The City of Houston and Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority donated a site for construction in Houston’s historic Fifth Ward. The completed house will be sold or auctioned to a low-income family with the help of the local Tejano Community Center.

A Little Room

The Los Angeles team of Amy Wynne and Mark Leveno received the Grand Prize (including \$1,000) in the Temporary Outdoor Gallery Space Temporary Outdoor Gallery Space (TOGS) Ideas Competition sponsored by Art Alliance Austin and AIA Austin. Teams competed in designing a temporary architecture installation that will be built for Art City Austin 2009. More than 269 submittals from 20 countries were judged by panelists who sought to find the most creative, flexible design that also pushed the boundaries of expectations for outdoor gallery spaces. The installation is meant to create space for a gallery of selected artworks, while also showcasing the talents of emerging professionals in architecture and helping to bring Austin to the forefront of art and architecture within the global community. Adaptable to a variety of sites conditions, the structure shelters an interconnected field of gallery spaces. The base structure consists of wood decking on a welded steel frame with hinged side panels and hydraulic arms that reveal the storage of all the necessary components.



New Harmony Grotto

Inspired by nature, University of Houston Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture fifth-year students re-imagined Frederick Kiesler’s Grotto for Meditation, originally commissioned in 1963 by Jane Blaffer Owen as a quiet and relaxing environment in the arts community of New Harmony, Ind. Though never built, the Grotto is considered one of the masterworks by the famed architect and artist who died in 1965. In their semester-long exploration, students studied Kiesler’s esoteric concepts of “co-realism” and “continuous tension,” as well as his early use of recursive geometry and biomorphic form in design. Using 3-D modeling software, they designed a quarter-scale, stainless steel prototype of the shell-shaped space. The students’ Grotto will be constructed next to the college as a permanent fixture on campus and eventually will overlook a water garden already in construction. Faculty advisors for the project were Joe Meppelink, Assoc. AIA, and Andrew Vrana, AIA, with the assistance of visiting critic Ben Nicholson, associate professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

