TOWARD A NEW ORNAMENT

New works by Jeanne Gang, John Ronan, and Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam

Reviews by Sally B. Woodbridge and Cheryl Kent

PLUS

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FTL DESIGN ENGINEERING STUDIO | CHARLOTTESVILLE MUSIC PAVILION | CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

Located just off downtown Charlottesville’s pedestrian mall, the site for a new music pavilion is at an intersection of different urban fabrics: rehabbed nineteenth-century industrial buildings, a freeway, and recent office developments all surround this open space.

An arch spans the site at a 30-degree angle to the mall axis, creating its own strong presence. Covered by a canopy made of PVC-coated polyester, the roof is motorized and integrated into the arch, post-tensioned at the perimeter. This roof system serves seasonal uses from May to September, and is demounted for storage during the colder months. While conceived as a warm-weather venue, the site is accessible throughout the year, so the architects chose to give the pavilion a permanent identity as well. When the roof membrane is removed, the site is activated by another set of programs and functions as an urban park. The arch thus performs on several levels: urban, architectural, and structural.

Bay Brown

FTL DESIGN ENGINEERING STUDIO | DETROIT TRANSIT CENTER ROOF | DETROIT

The architect of the new Detroit Transit Center, transportation powerhouse Parsons Brinckerhoff, chose FTL to design a durable yet inexpensive roof structure to shelter the facility’s bus drop-off, which includes drive-through access and lounge areas and is to be completed in early 2006. The result is a permanent canopy that reaches from the ground to the sky and encompasses 50,000 square feet.

Articulated as seven distinct bays, each 110 feet long and 50 feet wide, the peaked forms create an elegant rhythm. Each bay comprises two trusses, an A-frame, and a PTFE fabric skin, which, when pulled down, transforms a roof into a wall to provide visual relief and natural light while also serving as a large rainwater receptor.

Bay Brown