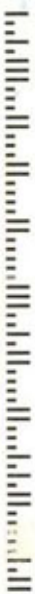


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2008 SEG D  
Design Awards







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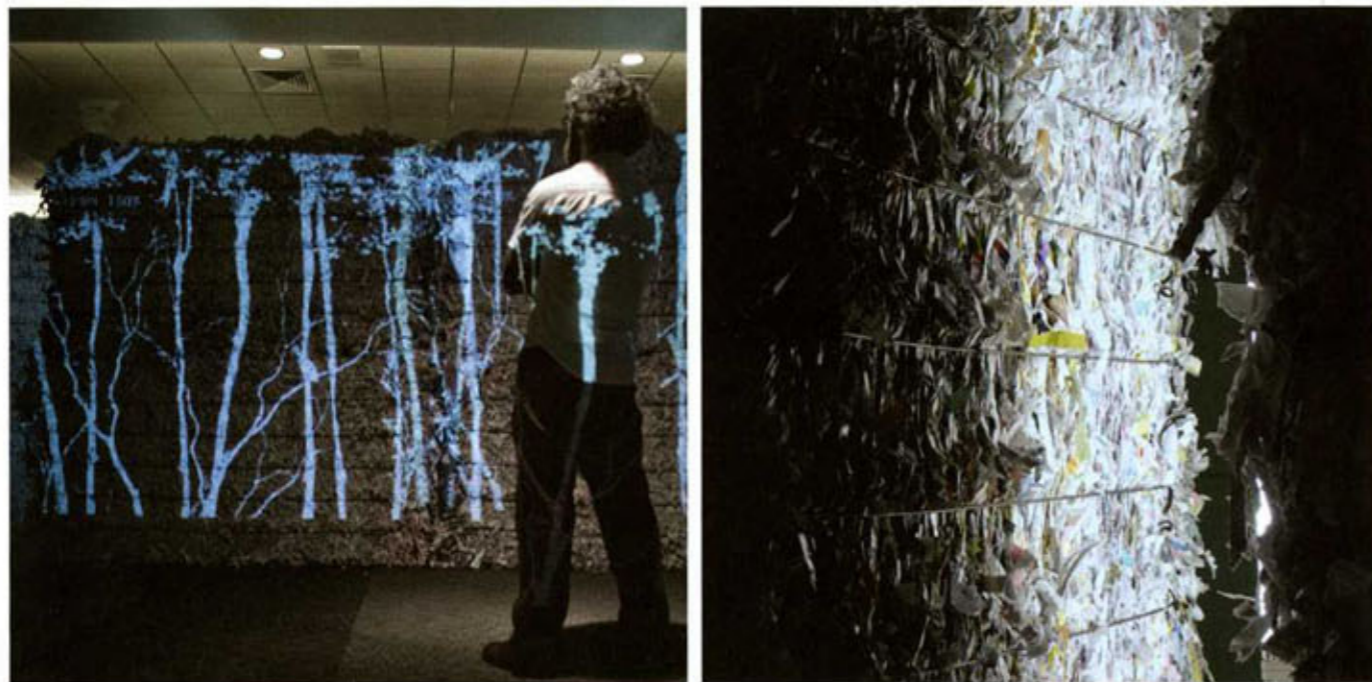
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On the cover: The Santa Monica Civic Center Parking Structure features a dramatic façade of multicolored channel-glass bays. Beck & Graboski Design Office designed vertical glass sign enclosures that complement the channel glass and are illuminated at night with neon. Story, page 76. Architecture: Moore Ruble Yudell Architects & Planners. Signage and environmental graphics: Beck & Graboski Design Office. Signage fabrication: C & C Signs. Photo: Terry P. Graboski.



# Beauty of the Waste

Gensler's Baltimore team reveals the ironic beauty of a resource we routinely squander.



Asked to create a sustainability-focused installation for NeoCon East, Gensler's Baltimore office found the poetry in bales of shredded paper diverted from a recycling plant.

When the Merchandise Mart asked Gensler's Baltimore office to create a sustainability-focused experience for NeoCon East, Jim Camp and his team took it personally.

The exhibit's goal was to promote dialogue around sustainability and offer visitors a point of pause and inspiration in the generic Baltimore Convention Center lobby before they entered NeoCon.

"For us, it became an exercise in how we could use design to illuminate designers' opportunities—and responsibilities—to plan for tomorrow," says Camp, Gensler managing director. After much exploration and some soul-searching, the team came up with an approach they called "Your Own Two Hands," in which they looked at sustainability from a very personal point of view. "We wanted to think about it from the standpoint of how we all could have the most impact and incorporate sustainability into our lives."

The team began researching materials with an eye toward local availability, visual impact, and suitability for creating a unique space in the lobby. They discovered Vangel Paper, a company that accumulates and bundles locally obtained paper waste, shreds and bales it,

**Location:** Baltimore  
**Client:** Merchandise Mart  
**Design:** Gensler  
**Design Team:** James Camp, AIA, LEED AP (principal in charge); Peter Stubb (project manager), Ehren Gaag, Jason Neal, Norma Morales, Steve Clifton, Karen Hill  
**Consultants:** Flux Studio (lighting)  
**Fabrication:** Vangel Paper (paper bales)  
**Photos:** Clark Vandergrift

## Jury Comments

"Environmental poetry. Beauty of the waste. A very sensible exhibition of the world's future. A very telling installation."

"This is not so much an exhibition about sustainability as it is a project in sustainability. No ink is shed and no structure is erected in this clever design that blends projection and waste to provoke and inspire."

Honor Award

One Day Poem Pavilion  
 Zoolu Zollverein  
 Spiritus Institute  
 de Young Museum  
 NY Times Facade  
 NeoCon East  
 Teknion 2007  
 Drive By  
 University of South Australia



Vertical slots between the bales created dramatic light wells that accentuate the paper's texture and raw quality.

and sends it on to companies that recycle it to make new products. The bales weigh between 1,300 and 1,800 pounds.

"The beauty of this material is its raw quality, and it's amazing how architectural it is," says designer Jason Neal. After building a model from wood blocks, the team stacked and arranged 40 bales (each about 30 in. wide, 40 in. tall, and 7 ft. long) into a simple construct of "walls" that eloquently expose the life cycle of the waste paper.

The bales also serve as screens for simple projections and a 1-minute looping video on how the waste paper is processed before being sent back out into the marketplace. They are also dramatic light wells for fluorescent lighting that accentuates their texture

and even their content; one bale, for example, shows thousands of pieces of shredded automobile registrations.

"There are micro and macro stories within the bales," says Peter Stubb, project manager. "You could look at them individually, or see the larger picture. For us the project was about distilling elements down to the minimum to convey a message about how we use resources. Fortunately, the paper was so eloquent that it made our job easier."

The project brought some personal epiphanies for the design team. "My biggest takeaway," says Camp, "was that most of these bales go to China. It's cheaper for them to buy our recycled waste than to harvest it. And we obviously don't have a market for all the waste we're generating." [X]