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## **NEW ORLEANS ARCHITECTS DOMINATE AIA LOUISIANA DESIGN COMPETITION AWARDS**

New Orleans architectural firms dominated the American Institute of Architects Louisiana (AIA) Design Competition winners, taking eight of the nine awards given at the AIA Louisiana Design Conference Awards Luncheon held in New Orleans on September 5.

The highest award given, the Honor Award, went to four projects, and all were designed by firms located in New Orleans. Receiving an Honor Award and the Members' Choice Award was the firm Tulane City Center. Eskew+Dumez+Ripple of New Orleans won two Honor Awards and a Merit Award, and Trahan Architects of New Orleans received an Honor Award.

In addition, studioWTA of New Orleans received a Merit Award, and Waggoner & Ball Architects received a Merit Award for master planning/urban design. The final Merit Award went to Post Architects + EOA Architects of Baton Rouge. Only four Merit Awards were given by the team of architects judging the competition.

Tulane City Center received the Honor Award and Members' Choice Award for the Grow Dat Youth Farm. The project uses seven recycled shipping containers and steel trusses to create a large covered outdoor classroom and supporting spaces to serve as an agricultural facility for high school students. Agricultural techniques such as water managed on-site, crop irrigation, waste water treatment and bio-remediating landscape elements were integrated into the design. It included 4,800 square feet of covered outdoor space and 880 square feet of enclosed space. The judges commented, "This is very inventive and responsible architecture using a limited material palette. It is created with a very light hand although it is certainly bright, welcoming and urban."

Eskew+Dumez+Ripple received an Honor Award for the Civic Theatre restoration. The 800-seat theatre in downtown New Orleans was renovated to stabilize the condition of the building and add components such as multiple bar venues, standing, lobby and waiting areas. Wrapped in an ornate pattern and textural white finishes, the new spaces establish a romantic, ephemeral aesthetic of the historical building. The judges commented, "The restoration project leaves just enough authentic history in place to allow the space to feel its age, and at the same time uses light and pattern to transform the space into a completely modern venue."

The firm received another Honor Award for Crescent Park. The 1.4-mile park along the Mississippi River includes bike paths, playgrounds, a dog run and adaptive reuse of two industrial wharfs, along with native landscaping. The park employs alternative energy resources that make it self sufficient. The judges commented, "This project stood out as a model for cities to create new civic spaces stitched together without creating a long term financial burden."

Eskew+Dumez+Ripple also received a Merit Award for the Rosa F. Keller Library and Community Center. This 10,000 square foot 1917 home was restored into a contemporary library and addition for community use. A small glazed lobby is the minimal link between the original home and addition, and transitions the architecture. The courtyard acts as a respite, and the library components pinwheel around the courtyard. The judges commented, "The exterior maintains a respectful attitude toward earlier architecture, and the interiors create engaging public spaces."

Trahan Architects received an Honor Award for the Louisiana State Museum and Sports Hall of Fame. The 28,000 square foot building design interconnects athletic and the cultural/historical fabric of the region. The pleated copper exterior panels allude to the shutter and clapboard of nearby plantations, and compliment the curvaceous interior within the building. The dynamic foyer is sculpted out of 1,100 cast stone panels, and a veranda overlooks the city square, connecting the interior to the public realm. The judges commented, "The sensual cast stone panels and the rigorous detailed copper skin play off one another in exciting and dynamic ways. The building embodies a compelling experiment in juxtaposing two contrasting finish/surface materials."

StudioWTA received a Merit Award for its design of 5940 Magazine. This seven-unit condominium building references both its historic setting on New Orleans' Magazine Street, and maintains a jewel-like quality in proportion and detailing. It includes a balcony, trellis, a shared courtyard, large windows to maximize light, and awnings to diminish solar heat gain. The units feature intricate stonework, natural wood ceilings and private exterior spaces. The judges commented, "It creates an elegant volume that doesn't overwhelm its historic context, creating a design strategy that appears very livable, crisp and comfortable."

Waggoner & Ball Architects received a Merit Award in master planning/urban design for the Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan. The team led an international network of experts in water management, landscape and urban design to create a water management strategy. The plan broadens hurricane protection, includes internal water management, and strengthens corridors, providing a working guide of water management for the next 50 years. The judges commented, "The project develops new public space around new water infrastructural projects, and represents a grand vision that is both pragmatic and beautiful."

A total of 63 projects were entered into the prestigious Design Competition. The Members' Choice Award is given to the project receiving the most votes from architects attending the AIA LA Design Conference.

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