snap

ARCHITECTURAL NEWS + PRODUCTS

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 1

CLASS MATES

KARTELL'S COMPONIBILI SMILE STORAGE UNITS
PAGE 52

SPOTLIGHT ON
EDUCATION

A TEXAS SCHOOL'S LIBRARY-DRIVEN DESIGN
PAGE 19

CONNECTICUT CLASSROOMS IN THE ROUND
PAGE 23

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RESIMERCIAL CATCHES ON
Contract furnishings are more versatile than ever.
PAGE 14

NONSTOP GROWTH
In the Northwest, companies report strong manufacturing activity.
PAGE 37

bnp media

in brief

A BID FOR CULTURE The Büro Ole Scheeren-designed Guardian Art Center in Beijing (left) is being billed as a museum despite its commercial anchor tenants. The fabric-and-paint "femmages" of Miriam Schapiro (below) are on view at New York's Museum of Arts and Design.

The Art of Commerce

THE STRIKING NEW Guardian Art Center in Beijing, near the Forbidden City and the National Art Museum of China, appears more civic than commercial. But its clustered basalt stone volumes will contain a luxury hotel, restaurants, transportation hub and the privately held China Guardian Auctions (its owner holds a roughly 14 percent stake in Sotheby's), which paid for the multi-use complex by architects **Büro Ole Scheeren**.

The structure's lower level is made up of nested volumes, which reference Beijing's classic courtyard houses. Panels in its cladding have a pattern of circular glass openings, inspired by a Chinese landscape painting by 14th-century artist Huang Gongwang. A massive rectangle clad in glass panels arranged in a brick pattern, sits atop the stone volumes.

The museum-like gravitas is part marketing strategy: the auction house is opening some preview gallery space to the public, promoting that access—amid a complex mix of commercial attractions—as the equivalent of a cultural center. "It is a lot more than just a museum," says Ole Scheeren. "It's not a hermetic institution, but rather an acknowledgment of the hybrid state of contemporary culture."

Appearing culturally sympatico with neighboring traditional architecture, including houses and the ancient imperial palace, was also necessary for getting the building approved by Beijing's planning authority, which rejected 30 previous proposals for the site.

"The building's architecture embeds multiple layers of abstracted cultural and historic notions and captures the complex emotional spectrum of Beijing," Scheeren says.

– Justin Chan

Doyenne of Decorative Arts

Late artist and pioneer of decorative patterns Miriam Schapiro is celebrated in an exhibit titled *Surface/Depth: The Decorative After Miriam Schapiro*, at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City.

Working with mediums as diverse as textiles, painting, and sculpture, Schapiro, who died at the age of 91 in 2015, is perhaps best known for her works of *femmages*, a name she created to describe her collages made from a mélange of paint and sewn or woven fabric which portrayed—and questioned—ideas of femininity and women's work. She was often called a pioneer for her role in the 1970s' feminist art movement and notably collaborated with celebrated artist Judy Chicago among others.

The exhibit also includes pieces by nine contemporary artists working in decorative mediums inspired by Schapiro. "It's revealing to see this contemporary work in historical perspective," says curator Elissa Auther. *– Erin Hudson*

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in brief

CHAIR PLAY
Inside the Walls at New York's Friedman Benda gallery highlights furniture by legendary architects. Odd Matter's prototype chair (left) makes use of Reebok's fabric. Upholstery on the Allsteel task chair Mimeo is 3D mesh.

shausen. "Architects are often at the forefront of 'newness' in the design world," says curator Mark McDonald. Both exhibits run through February 17. – *E.H.*

The New Upholstery

Sneaker fabric on seating may be gaining momentum. Reebok just invited designers to find new uses for its Flexweave athletic shoe fabric. Rotterdam-based **Odd Matter** responded by using it on a chair that encourages active sitting.

Last year, manufacturer **Allsteel** updated its 3D mesh on the Mimeo chair using a fabric with similar attributes. Of Flexweave, Odd Matter's cofounder Georgi Manassiev says: "It seemed logical... because of its properties. Light and yet soft." Agreed. – *E.H.*

Furniture by Architects

Manhattan gallery Friedman Benda is hosting two exhibits of furniture by architects. One, titled *Inside the Walls*, features works by Frank Lloyd Wright, Kenzo Tange, Oscar Niemeyer, Lina Bo Bardi and Philip Johnson among other legends. It highlights historic firsts in materials such as fiberglass, plywood, and tubular steel. A simultaneous show titled *No-Thing*, features work by nine contemporary firms, including Andy and Dave, Norman Kelley, and Pezo von Ellrich-

Architecture's First Woman Editor

Mildred Schmertz, FAIA, was ARCHITECTURAL RECORD magazine's first woman editor-in-chief (1985 to 1990) and the first woman with that title at any U.S. architectural magazine. She died on January 9, 2018 at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York City from pneumonia.

During her 33 years on the staff of RECORD, the publication won two National Magazine Awards from the American Society of Magazine Editors. "Mildred was a tireless advocate for the best architecture of the moment—except for what she deemed a passing fad," said RECORD's editor-in-chief Cathleen McGuigan. – *Suzanne Stephens*

The International Design Competition for the Urban Environment of Developing Countries—Focused on Manila—attracted 476 submissions. On the next 42 pages, as chosen by a distinguished international jury, are ...

THE WINNING DESIGNS

A FORMIDABLE FIRST
ARCHITECTURAL RECORD's May 1967 issue (above) announced the results of a competition organized by its first woman editor, the late Mildred Schmertz, pictured first in the second row of photos.

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