## **DESIGN**

the architecture magazine



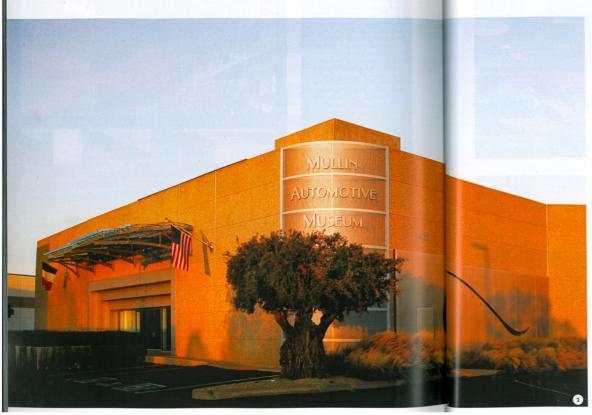
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SPECIAL FOCU

UNLEASHING THI CONTEMPORARY

AR. ROMI KHOSL

## WHERE ECOLOGY MERGES WITH TECHNOLOGY





Text: Team Design Detail | Photos: Laura Doss

he Mullin Auto Museum. located in Santa Barbara, California is a place where the barriers separating ecology and technology slowly evaporate. One will be awe-struck to find eco-consciousness has become a design priority in a museum that showcases gas guzzling vehicles. The major credit for this goes to David Heartz, the principal architect of Studio of Environmental Architecture.

Previously, it was an automotive museum owned by the newspaper tycoon. Oils Chandler. Mr. Mullin purchased the building with the mission of transforming it into a new world class museum that celebrates the Art Deco Movement. It was a movement that produced exquisite decorative art and magnificent automobiles. The 45000 sqft. museum holds the private automobile collection of Peter Mullin. It displays some of the finest historic French automobiles from Bugati to Voisin, as well as decorative art from the same period. Interiors of the museum include a theater, gift store, private club, archives and offices - in addition to display areas for cars and automotive artifacts.

When a discussion was held on eliminating certain green features due to budget constraints, the team insisted on retaining the same as that they were not merely a cost, but an investment. The museum features dramatic luxury details, such as

 An abstract graphic design of a 1938 Talbot Lago adorns the street view of the museum





 An elevated platform with a turn table showcasing most exciting automobiles

3) Energy-efficient lighting installed throughout the museum

4) Vintage cars displayed along the ground floor a grand entry way covered by repurposed automobile wind shields, a lush green roof that doubles as an event space, and ubermodern wind turbines vaulting off of the roof over the entrance.

The architect had to face a real challenge to create a unique structure out of an existing warehouse, within a relatively tight budget of five million dollars. He was able to attune with this limitation by changing the focus and creating highly dramatic and outstanding features. Although he moved along with the idea of keeping the basic core and shell very simple without showing an extravagance in the employment of budget, he was able to produce maximum architectural effect in a few areas.

The major effects among these include a stunning pair of vintage gates from Argentina that were remodeled to create the entrance to the unusumis glass elevator, which lifts visitors up to a mezzanine, and to the green roof. The museum also features a photovoltaic array that, along with the wind turbines, supply all the energy needed for the building. Energy-efficient lighting is also installed throughout the museum, which is controlled by an automated day lighting system to maximise natural light.





A firm dedicated to the conservation of ecology, David Hertz Architects Inc. FAIA, & S.E.A. (Studio of Environmental Architecture) has a long history of over 30 years in designing and constructing environmentally responsible residential and commercial buildings, S.E.A. has won several awards like the City of Santa Monica Sutainable Leadership Award, the Eco-Home Networks Sustainable Living Award, to name a few. David Hertz' innovative works include Mullin Automotive Museum in Santa Barbara, 747 Wing House in Malibu, Californication House in Venice and Butterfly House in Venice among many others.





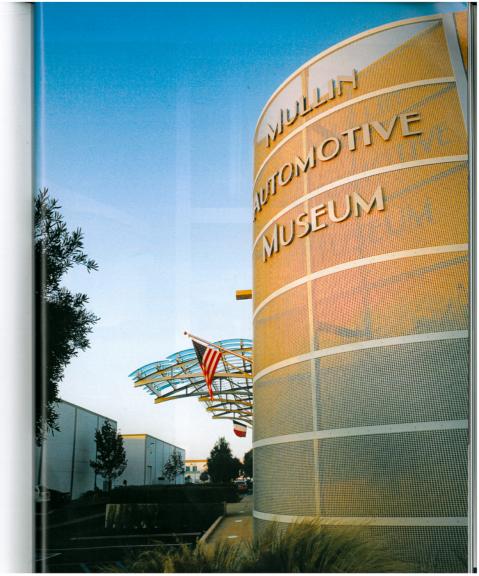


The ground floor level display area was designed to recreate a 1930s Parisian auto show with lighting, decorations, and furnishing from that period. Three elevated platforms — one with a turntable — situated in the center of the space, showcase some of the very special automobiles in the collection. It has a "barn-find" that displays a bygone and unrestored French car in the setting of a decrept country barn, with hay on the floor and gas cans lying all around. There is another room that displays a rusted chassis of a 1925 Bugatit that was dredged up



 The interiors are designed to provide privacy within the public space













## FACTE

PROJECT LOCATION PRACTICE ARCHITECT : MULLIN AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM : SANTA BARBARA IN OKNARD, CALIFORNIA : STUDIO OF ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHITECTURE : DAVID HERTZ : 45,000 sp. ft. 7) Entrance to the Museum
8) View from the mezzonine

 Aluminum panelling below the canopy that resembles the skin of a Vintage Bugatti race car

10) Night view of the museum with the olive tree and other greenery rendering a natural beauty to the museum after 70 years from beneath the chill waters of Lake Maggiore in Switzerland.

At the point of entrance below the canopy, the architects envisioned an aluminum paneling around the glass doors. A design plan was made, where the aluminum shroud minicked the skin of a vintage Bugatti race car. After numerous mock-ups of aluminum finish and the shifting and spacing of rivets, approval was made to proceed which resulted in a surprising facsimile of the skin of a vintage Bugatti race car.

The street side of the exterior features three fabric wrapped scrims to cover the existing building alcows. Each of these scrims has a graphic abstract from the front fender, roof, and rear fender of a 1938 Talbot Lago. Extensive new landscaping that includes several 100 years old olive trees, adorns the exterior. The roof incorporates a roof deck with a grassy garden area for guests. Thus, with a fine balance of oxygen and carbon emissions. Mullin Automotive Museum proves that it is not yet time to entirely forget ecology for the sake of technology.