



Photo by Wolfgang Volz

GREEN BUILDER MEDIA DREAMS UP AN ECO-FRIENDLY VISION, CHRISTO AND JEANNE CLAUDE FASHION A PYRAMID IN AL GHARBIA AND JAMES CORNER BUILDS AN URBAN PARADISE IN SANTA MONICA



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Photo courtesy of James Corner Field Operations

THE VISION HOUSE

GREEN BUILDER MEDIA

Green Builder Media, a coast-to-coast operation that tries to create “sustainable living in a green economy,” is the mastermind behind **THE VISION HOUSE** in **PACIFIC PALISADES**. It was created under the CalGreen code, which emphasizes “optimized performance, durability, energy efficiency, water conservation, indoor air quality, efficient systems and sustainable materials.” The Vision House was constructed in the Palisades to demonstrate that environmentally friendly buildings could be created in an urban setting, while adding value to the neighborhood, creating enough energy to be able to sell the excess and replenish the natural environment. The property, created with the hope of redefining modern homeownership, has been described as “contemporary California” and “enhances rather than struggles with the native terrain.” Green Builder Media worked with **STRUCTURE HOME** of Woodland Hills, **KAA DESIGN GROUP**, **P2 DESIGN** and **JILL WOLFF INTERIOR DESIGN**. Solar panels, drought-tolerant landscaping, tankless water heaters, recycled linens and shades, repurposed car parts, reclaimed blown glass, Energy Star-certified appliances and a **TITAN COOL METAL** roof deliver environmental friendliness with the promise of being kid friendly and design conscious. The project took two years, and Wolff says, “It was an educational process for all of us. I had to find products that I didn’t know existed. ... I hope we are educating people about the beauty of sustainability.”

THE MASTABA

CHRISTO AND JEANNE-CLAUDE

Christo and Jeanne-Claude, the architects behind 2005’s controversial **THE GATES** sculpture in Central Park, are creating the **THE MASTABA** — a pyramid of 410,000, 55-gallon multicolored steel barrels. It will be the pair’s only piece of permanent large-scale art. The piece creates a sparkling mosaic and it promises to be the largest sculpture in the world at 150 meters high, 225 meters deep and 300 meters wide. This trapezoidal prism will sit 100 miles south of Abu Dhabi in **AL GHARBIA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**. *The Mastaba* was first conceived in 1977 and has been making substantial progress over the past few years. In 2008, Christo contacted four teams to prepare a structural and feasibility study. All four teams deemed the project feasible, but Tokyo’s **HOSEI UNIVERSITY’S** was selected due to its innovation and thorough engineering. The German firm, **SCHLAICH BERGERMANN UND PARTNER**, was hired to analyze the Japanese study, which proposed layering the barrels flat on the ground and then, using 10 elevation towers, raising the structure on rails to its completed position, which should only take four days. Most recently, in 2012, Christo had a socio-economic benefit analysis of *The Mastaba* by PricewaterhouseCoopers. Christo and Jeanne-Claude were born in Europe on the same day and were a couple for more than 50 years until Jeanne-Claude’s death in 2009. Together they pioneered the nouveau réalisme environmental art movement.

CIVIC CENTER

JAMES CORNER

Santa Monica’s Civic Center is getting an urban makeover. **JAMES CORNER**, a landscape architect and urban designer, and his team from New York City-based James Corner Field Operations are adding two parks to **SANTA MONICA’S CIVIC CENTER**. The parks — **PALISADES GARDEN** and **TOWN SQUARE** — will open to the public this summer. The sustainably conscious 7-acre project uses excess soil from another local development and incorporates bioswales, which improve water quality and divert runoff into a bioretention area. Santa Monica’s natural and cultural history is reflected in the arroyo landscape washes, native foliage and reclaimed threads from Santa Monica’s historical railroads. Emerging from the entrance of City Hall, the pathways of this new urban getaway will connect the Palisades Park with the **SANTA MONICA PIER**, the beach and civic campus. Visitors can enjoy gorgeous hilltop overlooks of the city’s pristine and iconic views, stroll through thematic bays, sit along the appropriately adapted mixes of Western sycamores and Torrey pines, wander through one of the exterior bike bays, and children can glide down one of several slides or seek out adventures in one of the built-in forts. Water fixtures echo the serenity of the neighboring ocean waves, and plush meadows and gardens provide not only a welcomed destination, but also a quintessentially SoCal experience.