

The Best of Milan 64 Marlon Blackwell Goes Golfing 68
Our Man at NASA 88 Billing Basics 43 Publish or Perish 45

ARCHITECT

THE
COUNTS

THE
BAKERY

THE THIRD PLACE

ARCHITECTS FORECAST THE FUTURE OF THE COFFEE SHOP

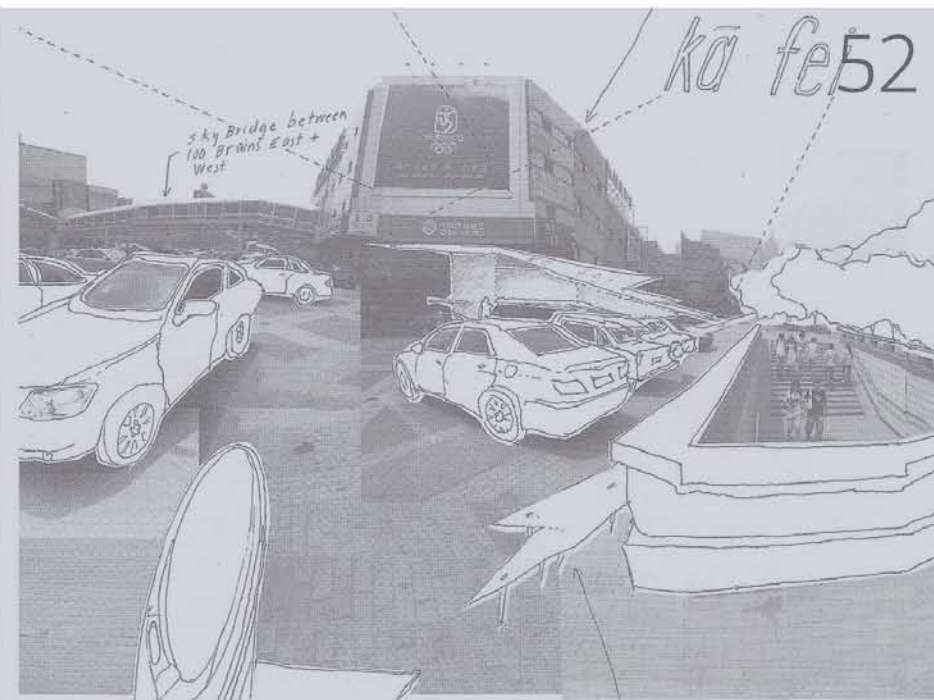


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CONTENT



TIMOTHY HURSELEY



STUDIO WORKS



PAUL WARCHOL

FEATURES

- 52 **The Next Starbucks**
As the global coffee chain mulls big changes, five teams of architects present their ideas for a 21st century "third place."
- 58 **Tales From the Downturn** NED CRAMER
Design-business consultant Jack Reigle doles out some strategic advice: Plan ahead, be objective, and stick to your strengths.
- 60 **Art Is Hell** MIMI ZEIGER
In Manhattan, Matthews Architects marries industry to nature at the Hell's Kitchen home of an arts nonprofit.
- 64 **Best in Show** JULIE TARASKA
It was back to basics at this year's Milan Furniture Fair, with a bumper crop of hardworking wooden chairs. But other trends—perforated and woven metal, creased and folded surfaces—added texture to the show.
- 68 **On the Links** VERNON MAYS
Near Fayetteville, Ark., Marlon Blackwell brings clean, contemporary design to an unexpected building type: the golf clubhouse.

IT'S A FACTORY OF A BUILDING. YET, IN A CITY THAT IS MEAN AND HARD, NATURE HAS THE ABILITY TO MODERATE AND GIVE BACK TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Peter Matthews on his Affirmation Arts building (above), from "Art Is Hell," p. 60.



ON THE COVER
James Biber, partner, Pentagram Architects. Photograph taken by Mark Mahaney at the City Bakery in New York.

Floors 1→5



1. entry 2. reception 3. gallery 4. glass stair 5. art storage 6. art receiving 7. catering kitchen
8. glass landing 9. library 10. office 11. conference room 12. main studio 13. glass studio
14. craft studio 15. terrace 16. mezzanine studio 17. artist-in-residence apartment

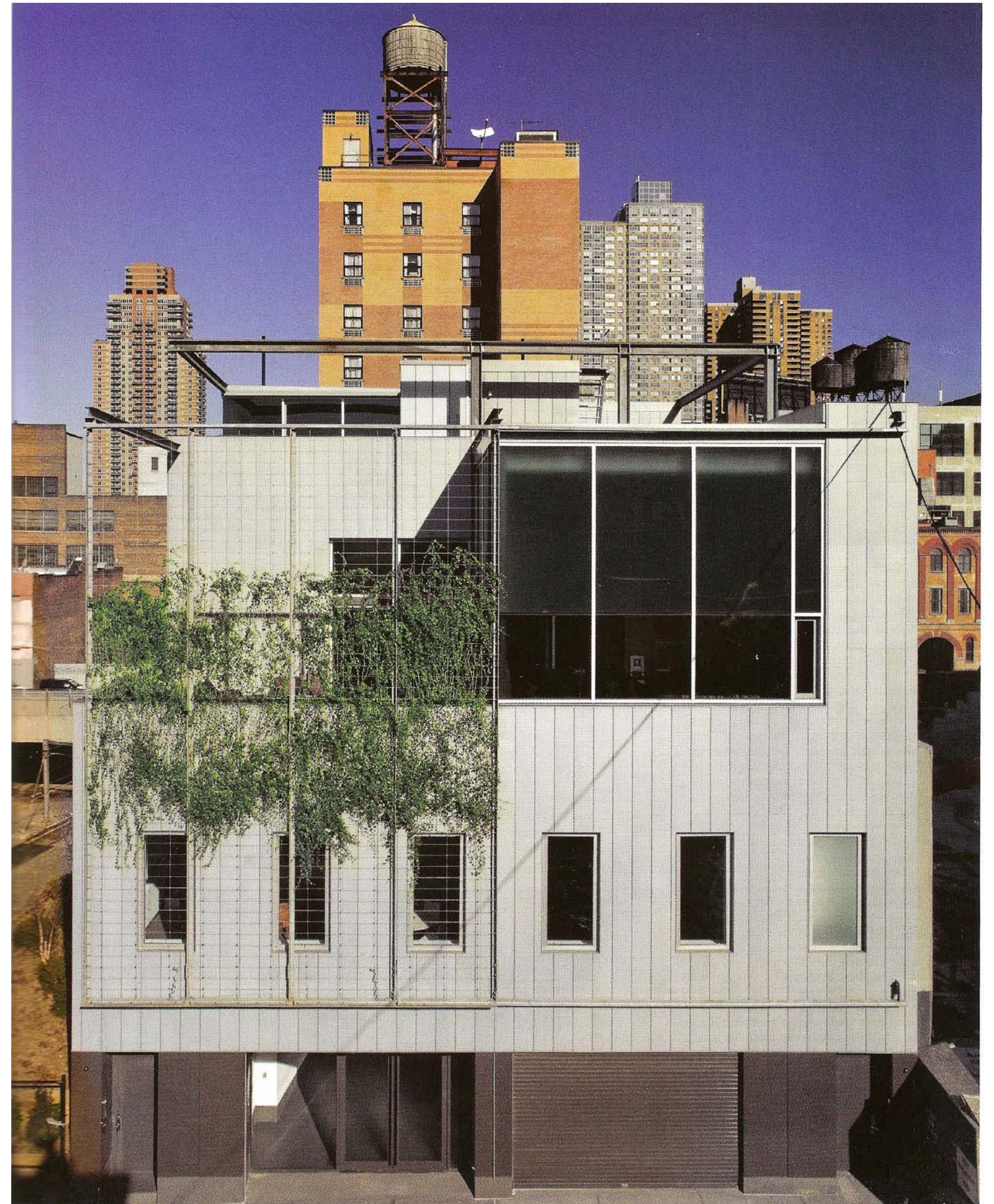
ART IS HELL

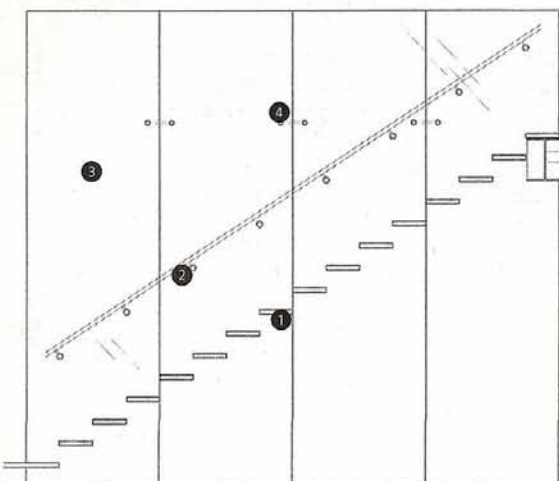
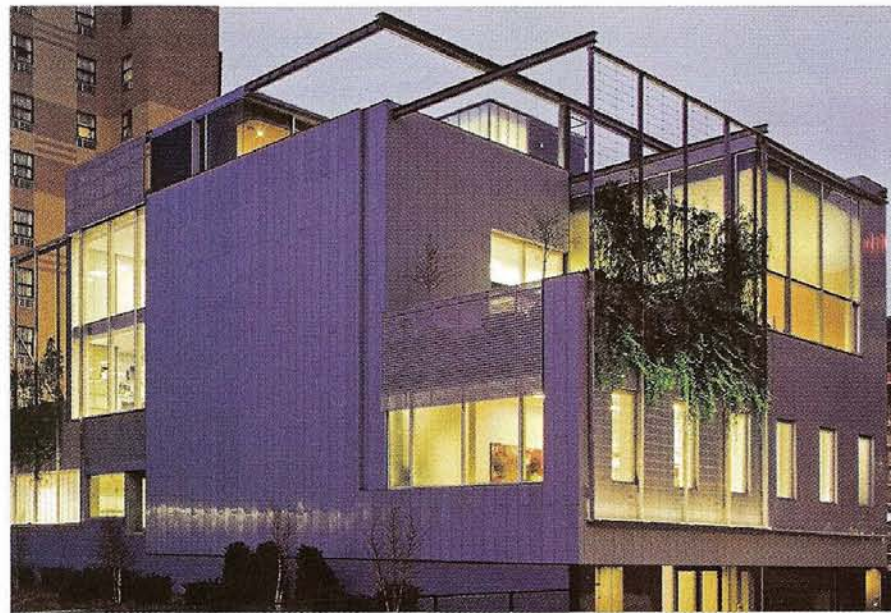
INDUSTRIAL-INSPIRED AFFIRMATION ARTS UNITES ART AND NEIGHBORHOOD IN A WEST SIDE STORY.

HELL'S KITCHEN, stretching from 34th Street to 59th Street on Manhattan's West Side, has enough grit (industrial and otherwise) to live up to its historically noir moniker. But the neighborhood is slowly transforming, beginning with a bit of rebranding. A small swatch of this urban fabric, now dubbed Hudson Yards for its proximity to the submerged rail lines, is undergoing commercial, residential, and cultural redevelopment. Quintessential Hell's Kitchen soup, the context is perfect inspiration for Affirmation Arts, a nonprofit that supports professional artists and provides community arts outreach.

Architect Peter Matthews began a gut renovation of a 1900 brick warehouse and stable in 2005. Demolishing the original wooden roof and floors and adding 3,000 square feet, he brought the total space to 15,000 square feet. Galleries, offices, studios, and an artist-in-residence apartment stratify the five-story structure.

Clad in zinc panels, but also covered in vines, the project is a stylized and functional nod to industrial ruins—a sly, conceptual hint that the ivy might someday engulf the studios. "It's a factory of a building; it responds to the energy of the site," says Matthews. "Yet, in a city that is mean and hard, nature has the ability to moderate and give back to the neighborhood."





Stair Section

1. laminated glass step
2. 1/4-inch brushed-aluminum handrail
3. three layers of 1/2-inch-thick glass panels
4. spider connector

PUBLIC SPACE

A 60-foot-long, dark anthrax-zinc wall (top right) leads visitors from the street to a double-height gallery (above) at the rear of the building. The 19-foot-high gallery is illuminated by north light, diffused by translucent Solera glazing panels. In the space, Affirmation Arts shows works by professional artists and hosts exhibitions and events for the surrounding community. To support these happenings, the architect installed a fully equipped art preparation area and catering kitchen behind the zinc wall.

A meticulously detailed glass stair (right) connects the gallery to second-floor offices. The curved, glass-bottomed landing overlooks the Hudson Yards train gully, creating a rough-versus-refined study in contrasts. Glass fabricators Mon-X, from Montreal, built the stair from Canadian low-iron glass, and the curved panels are from Cricursa in Barcelona, Spain.

ARTISTS QUARTERS

Affirmation Arts' mission is to support artists, treating creativity as a professional enterprise, and the new building falls in line with this endeavor. Comfortable artist-in-residence quarters (below) connect to four upper-level private studios. The luxuriously sized main studio, measuring 40 feet by 32 feet, gives the resident artist ample room for making art. Three auxiliary spaces augment the larger space. The mezzanine-level graphic arts studio overlooks Hudson Yards. This daylight space floats over the glassworks studio, connected by a two-story slot. The craft studio (left) on the third level accommodates a variety of media.



GREEN SCREEN

Matthews' design mixes what he calls a "blast-furnace aesthetic" with greenery and outdoor terraces. Bringing nature to the neighborhood, on the south and west façades, a trellis is bracketed off the building face on a galvanized steel frame (left). Hearty English ivy grows on the armature, which is composed of steel tubes and stainless steel cables by Swiss manufacturer Jakob. Plants grow both up and down from planters positioned on a third-floor terrace. The south-facing green screen cuts sun exposure to the terrace, located outside the main studio. The outdoor space (bottom left), with a full view of the Javits Center and the Hudson River beyond, is large enough to host Affirmation Arts events.



PROJECT Affirmation Arts
ARCHITECT Matthews Architects, New York—Peter Matthews (design principal and project manager); Mongkut Punpuing (construction documents)
CONSULTING ARCHITECT

Maurice Saragoussi Architects
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT Horiuchi Solien Landscape Architects
LIGHTING DESIGN S.M. Lighting Design
DAYLIGHTING DESIGN Tanteri & Associates
STRUCTURAL DESIGN Blue Sky Design
M/E/P DESIGN P.A. Collins
ACOUSTICAL & A/V CONSULTANT Cerami & Associates
GLASS STAIR Mon-X International
WATERPROOFING Israel Berger & Associates
SPECIFICATIONS Construction Specifications
ZONING LAW William Vitacco & Associates