



CONNECTION

THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN JOURNAL OF THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM

This issue focuses on the topic of
RESILIENCE

Featuring architects, designers and emerging professionals that are changing the face of the profession. We will explore how architects and specifically emerging professionals are leading the effort in resilient design across the globe.

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AHEAD OF THE SURGE

CONNECTION

THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN JOURNAL OF **THE YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM**

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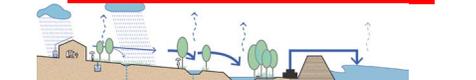
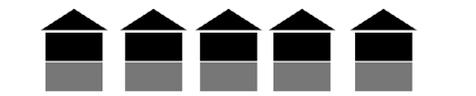
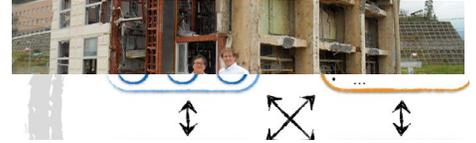
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Image credit Illya Azaroff



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**QUICK
CONNECT**



alternative practice

From architecture to Enclos to structural and industrial engineering, Audrey and Alex Worden are making multi-disciplinary waves from Brooklyn to Boulder, Colorado...

by Beth R. Mosenthal



BM: What are your backgrounds (academically and professionally) and how did it get you to where you are now?

Alex: A number of fortunate events have led us to where we are now. We both have a Bachelors of Science in Architecture from the University of Texas at Arlington. For our Masters we were both accepted to Virginia Tech. Audrey gained a Masters of Science in Architecture with a concentration in digital fabrication and I received my M.Arch.

We worked for a couple years in between degrees. My first job out of undergraduate was at a landscape and master planning firm. I worked there for a year and then joined the architectural studio where Audrey was working, 5G Studio in Dallas.

Audrey: I actually started out of undergraduate on the traditional path to architecture licensure. I had internships at architectural firms while in school, then I joined 5G Studio. While there, I was given the opportunity to manage many of the firms smaller projects like interior finish outs or remodels. I think that these experiences led to my interest in smaller scale spaces and furniture.

Alex: We wanted to get our master's degrees in order to explore the new interests we developed during our two years in the profession. Audrey and I both realized that working was hugely important in our development (rather than going from undergraduate straight into grad school.) After finishing our master's, we moved to New York. I was given the opportunity to join Enclos as one of their first three members of their New York Advanced Technology Studio.

Audrey: I took a position as a 3D designer with a branding firm, creating in store displays, primary packaging, and photorealistic renderings for luxury beauty brands. This was quite a departure from what I had been doing previously, but the work on the in-store displays and the manufacturing work of primary packaging intrigued me. Plus I learned quite a bit about branding while honing my rendering skills.

Alex: We were both fairly nervous about the new positions that were a departure from the traditional field of architecture, but we started to see how we could adapt the techniques we had learned in architecture and apply them towards these new roles. Enclos was specifically more integrated in the field, but from the side of the contractor, which was extremely eye opening and highly rewarding.

Audrey: During this time, some of the furniture and products that we had worked on were getting interest, so we started StudioTJOA. It became a convenient name to enter architectural competitions that we both were a part of. And we have been very lucky in that StudioTJOA has also given us the opportunity to attend and support workshops and lectures both nationally and abroad.

ALEX: We were both fairly nervous about the new positions that were a departure from the traditional field of architecture, but we started to see how we could adapt the techniques we had learned in architecture and apply them towards these new roles.

Alex: After about two years in New York, the studio director at Enclos asked me if Audrey would be interested in heading the new interior division that Enclos was starting. So, after a couple of weeks, Audrey and I began working at the same studio yet again.

After three years in New York, we were enjoying our positions at Enclos, but knew that NYC was not where we were going to put down roots. I reached out to Studio NYL in Boulder to see if I could potentially join their facade group. We are happy to say we have relocated to Boulder from Brooklyn. I am now working at the Skins Group at Studio NYL and Audrey has gone full time with StudioTJOA, working with a number of firms in the area helping with visualization, parametric modeling and fabrication coordination.

BM: Alex, you are currently working for a structural engineering firm. What does a typical day at work look like for you?

Alex: Studio NYL is first and foremost a structural engineering firm, but in the last three years they have been very successful in developing a facade group that specializes in advanced building enclosures. The type of work runs the gamut from waterproofing details in both opaque and vision assemblies, structural sizing of mullions, glass to thermal modeling, and hydrothermal analysis for wall assemblies. So any typical day could see a variety of different projects with varying requirements.

NYL has given me the reins to really use my skills in parametric modeling in both the Skins Group and the structural side of things, helping the engineers derive and optimize their models for analysis. Additionally, some clients really enjoy seeing the hand sketching for their building enclosure systems, so it seems lately I have been utilizing hand drawings in tandem with 3D models and renderings to convey the ideas to the architects.

BM: Alex, where do you find overlaps between architecture and engineering?

Alex: In the four years that I have worked in the facade industry, I have found that architecture and engineering are integral and should not be separate. Even at Enclos, when we were developing curtain wall systems or other more atypical facades, we were in constant conversation with engineers to determine things like max deflections of the mullion or how far the glass lites could be out of plane in a cold bent glazing system. Project delivery methods such as the design-bid-build are starting to go by the wayside and are being replaced with design-build and design assist, or the rare but appropriate Integrated Project Delivery. I am a huge proponent of Design Assist as I have been on both sides (contractor and consultant). During this process the whole project team works through the build-ability of the project. This speeds up the process and tends to reduce change orders in the field because many items, which may have arisen later, were brought up in the coordination meetings.

BM: Audrey, how did your background in industrial design prepare you to work for Enclos?

Audrey: In many ways, I feel that industrial design leads the way in terms of material and fabrication innovations. It can inform architecture and certainly construction. The discipline is not very theoretical, but often operates in our physical reality while focusing on constructability. Especially with complex projects that have components that are not 'off the rack', industrial design often informed my ideas on fabrication and installation. Enclos understands this and has architects and industrial designers in all their studios.

BM: You have co-founded the firm "TJOA" – what is the goal of your practice?

Audrey: StudioTJOA is meant to be flexible. As our meandering path through the design fields have shown, we enjoy the freedom to explore any idea. Our goal is to adapt our skills to any particular problem we are trying to solve.

BM: In pursuing projects as TJOA, what is your typical design process?

Audrey: When we approach an idea, we tend to front load the experiment with construction, feasibility, and materiality. Our designs and our process is heavily influenced by these factors and we try to let the physical environment, the constraints of the project, and the material help guide us through the development. The constructability and the manner of construction aids in the development and definition of the form and structure.

BM: What advice do you have for emerging young professionals in regards to pursuing non-traditional career paths?

Alex and Audrey: DO WHAT YOU LOVE!!!

Thanks Alex and Audrey!



The Honeycomb Gardening System by StudioTJOA



Facade study for mixed-use residential building by StudioTJOA

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