

substance+STYLE

surface

FASHION ARCHITECTURE DESIGN

THE *Annual*
DESIGN
ISSUE

Performance

DESIGN PULLS THE
PUBLIC CENTER STAGE



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*Going to Extremes with
YVES BEHAR, DAINESE
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*Time Framed Installations
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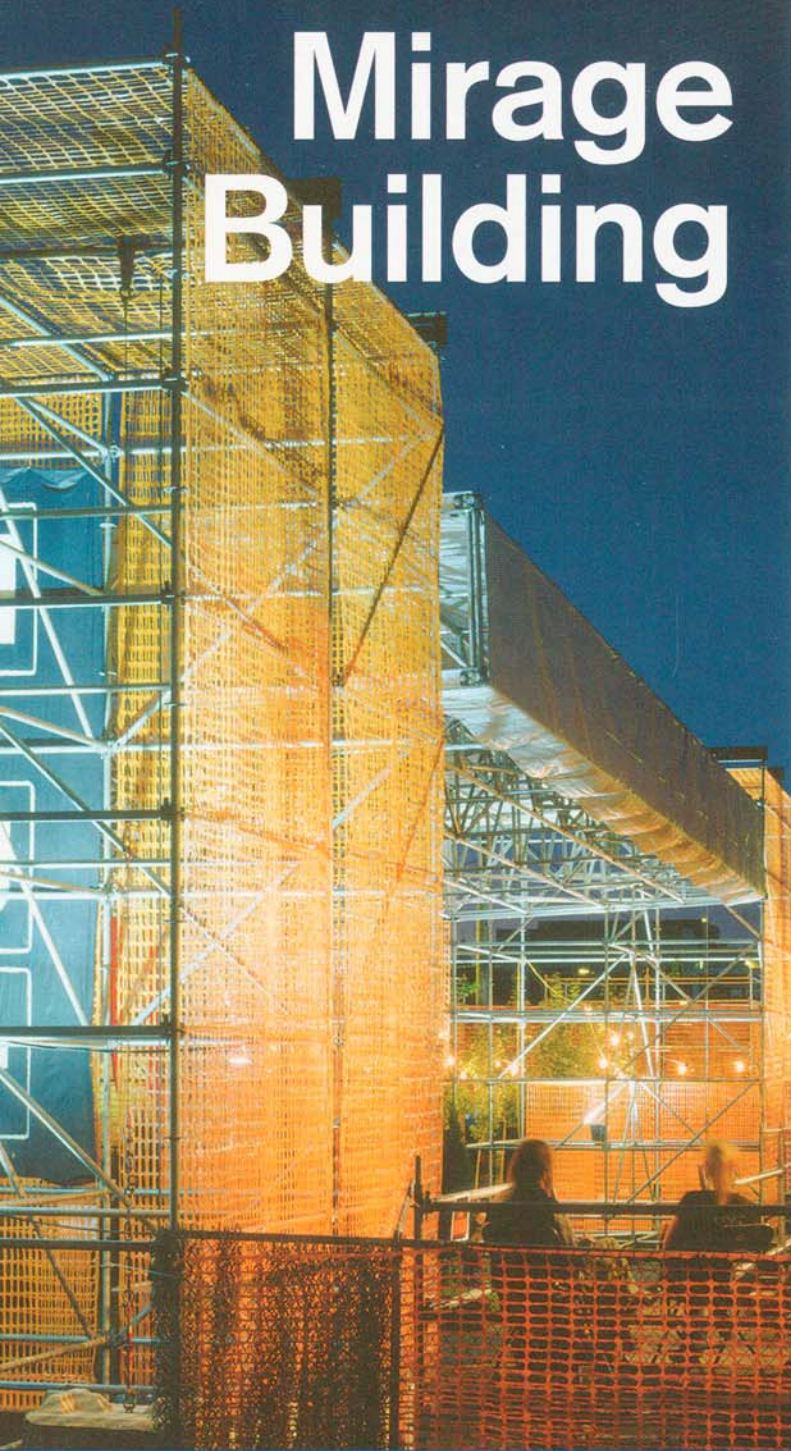
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Mirage Building



A Portland arts organization earns a reputation for architectural achievement – without a building to show for it

Story ANDREW BLUM Photography SALLY SCHOOLMASTER

Raising money to construct a signature building designed by a famous architect is on the to-do list of most art institutions these days. That's not the case with the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA). "We're itinerant by nature and by choice," says Victoria Frey, PICA's executive director, explaining the group's unorthodox approach to design. "We don't mount a capital campaign to build a facility to house a theater, because the kind of work we're presenting may not always fit within whatever box we build."

So for the past two years – and with plans to do it again this fall – PICA has collaborated with Oregon-based Boora Architects on temporary theater and social spaces for its annual September Time-Based Art Festival. In 2004, the architects flipped 200 five-gallon orange buckets and capped them with carpet-tile samples to create a playful, ethereal and recyclable black-box theater in a borrowed warehouse. At the end of the festival, they stacked up the buckets and returned them to Home Depot – collecting an American Institute of Architects honor award for their efforts. For the 2005 version, an empty printing plant was transformed into a theater-in-the-round and cabaret, with a beer garden spilling out onto its asphalt front lawn. At night, metal scaffolding wrapped in orange construction fencing took on the appearance of gauzy lanterns, turning a sleepy industrial neighborhood into a glittering block-long theater district – at least for 10 days.

While more accustomed to wrestling with permanence than performance, the architects embraced their creation's short life. "It's not about how this will serve its client 20 years from now, but about how we make something that's going to be fun and intriguing for this one moment in time," says Boora principal Michael Tingley. For Frey, the design is ultimately about co-creation. "Place is community rather than monument," she says. "Rather than build a place where the community interacts with us, we inhabit and live within and alongside a community. Ultimately, that allows us to respond to the needs of artists and their ideas." **AB**



IMPROVISED THEATER: Materials used in PICA's temporary arts complex included orange construction fencing, reclaimed 2x4, pegboard and astro-turf