

# ByDESIGN

An Online Journal of Exceptional Achievement

## FERNANDO MARTI

Housing Activist,  
Professor, Architect,  
Artist, Writer &  
Poet

**\$5.5 M FOR  
SOCIAL JUSTICE  
AT CED**

Elizabeth Bowler

**CASA ALUMNI  
FELLOWSHIP  
ANNOUNCED**

Joseph Martinez

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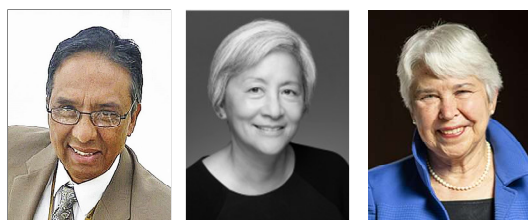
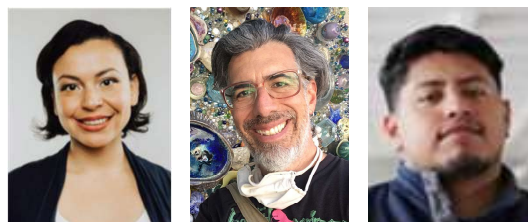
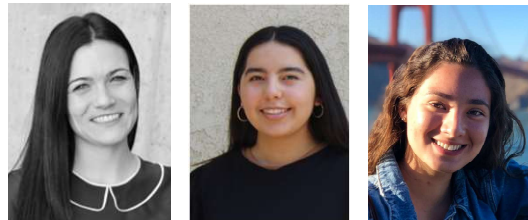
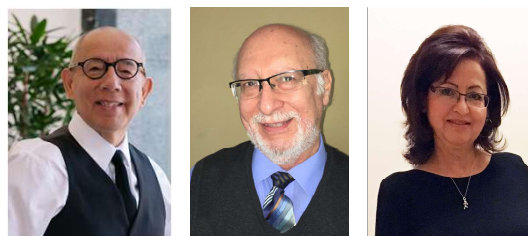
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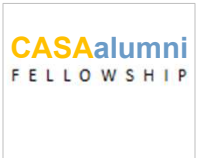



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### ON THE COVER

The cover photograph was taken at Balmy Alley, Mission District, San Francisco, by Benjamin Fanjoy, San Francisco-based photographer, on January 27, 2022.  
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## Design Activism, Catalyst for Social Justice

Rogelio Roy Hernández



Robert Kennedy said: "Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope."

If this is so, then the passion and commitment of those featured in this issue may end up causing a tidal wave of optimism and social justice in the built environment.

In the **Perspective** piece we are proud to announce the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual CASA Alumni Scholarships, which coincides with the **50<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the formation of CASA at CED. Both will be celebrated: students, faculty, friends, family, and alumni of all colors are invited to the party!

The **LiA Activism** article "Chismeando" (translated as "gossiping"), by **Homer Perez, AIA** and **Patricia Centeno, AIA** shares an evening of valuable professional insights imparted to Latinx CASA students at UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design (CED).

The cover story featuring **Fernando Marti**, whose passion for social justice is surpassed only by his extraordinary talents as housing activist, professor, architect, artist, writer and poet. His captivating interview recounts a path from humble beginnings on a ranch in Ecuador to tireless catalyst and community leader, leveraging design as a mechanism for land, housing and social justice.

**Joseph Martinez** highlights an exciting new professional growth opportunity: the **CASA Alumni Fellowship & Internship** program for CED CASA members.

And **Elizabeth Bowler, CED**, describes the **Arcus Social Justice Corps** fellowships, part of a \$5.5 M program.



**Fernando Marti, Mission District, San Francisco**  
Photo: Benjamin Fanjoy

The **Architecture** piece by **Dan Perez**, offers a personal story of struggle, entrepreneurialism and professional leadership. The **CASA Alumni at Work** highlights the professional trajectory of **Leslie Valencia**, whose cannabis consulting work promotes racial and social equity. And **David Salazar, FAICP**, updates us on the progress of the Long Beach Cultural Center, which will promote economic development for the Latino community of Long Beach.

Martin Luther King Jr noted: "There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right." The struggle for social justice is as old as the stars and stripes, endeavored by those compelled to improve the lot of others. To designers who's work creates ripples of hope, ByDESIGN salutes you. Adelante!

## Perspective

### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual CASA Alumni Scholarship

Save the date: **Friday, April 24, 6:30 pm**, for the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual ByDESIGN Presents the CASA Alumni Scholarships at UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design, first floor Gallery. All are invited to celebrate diversity, inclusion and equity. Food and refreshments will be provided.

Our partnership with Latinx in Architecture (LIASF), the Center for Architecture Design/AIASF provides a 501(c)3 mechanism for your tax deductible contributions, which will be accepted until April 1st. No contribution is too small.

**Please send your tax deductible contribution to:**  
AIA San Francisco  
Attn: CASA Alumni Scholarship  
150 Sutter St, Suite 814, San Francisco, CA 94104

**Make checks payable to:**  
Center for Architecture + Design, Check subject line: CASA Alumni Scholarship, Tax ID#: 20-2434734

**Make a Difference: Support Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**



## Chismeando dentro CED, LiASF Panel Mentors CASA Students at UC Berkeley

Homer A. Pérez, AIA, LEED AP BD+C & Patricia Centeno, AIA



Although the connection between LiASF and CASA Alumni has been strong over the past several years, the pandemic sparked an underlying request from CASA students to reestablishing a connection with Latinx design

professionals and licensed architects. The objective: obtain a better exposure to the field of architecture and how to best handle the struggles of the curriculum.

Roy Hernandez, our CASA Alumni liaison, connected us with the 2021 CASA Student Association Board. Through the collaboration of our Steering Committee member, Patricia Centeno, and CASA's Leslie Gonzalez and Samantha Andalon, it was decided the best format to bring the two groups together was a panel discussion where the students would facilitate the discussion and formulate the questions.

The panelists, curated by LiASF, would represent different fields of architecture, different years of experience. and would provide responses relative to how they conduct business in their specific field of architecture.

Questions focused on the Architect's struggles as underrepresented minorities in design schools, getting ahead in their careers, and how they overcame those obstacles, and still continue to do so. Technology, licensure, and licensing exams were important topics students wanted more information, insight, and resources.

The panel discussion was a hybrid format so that students joining on Zoom would have an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the session. Although the students were thankful and felt they gained a lot of information from us, they were also just wanting to hear the stories of how we survived our college years and our biggest challenges.

We feel those human experiences were as beneficial as the concrete information.



LiASF members engage with CASA students at UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design (Photo: CASA)

The mentorship of the younger generation, where there was little or no opportunity before, is of major importance in supporting Latinx/underrepresented students in design professions. It's especially important when students are demanding it. This is one of the many reasons why we believe "Educate" and "Strengthen" are two of the three important pillars of LiASF's Mission.

In these times, there seems to be a greater need for connection between student and mentor, especially with engagement in career development and navigating today's competitive work environment as a design professional. This has become critical now with a growing trend towards remote learning and working. We believe face-to-face mentorship and interaction will take on a more valuable role to the budding design professional and intern at events, such as, "Chismeando dentro CED" and these events will bring added insight where the day-to-day academic/working routine may not be able to deliver.



### Panelists

**Patricia Centeno, AIA, LEED AP** – BAR Architects, Associate Principal; AIAASF Board of Directors; CED Alumni, 19 years' of experience

**Daniel Perez, AIA, Principal**, Studio Perez–AIAASF Board Member, CED Alumni, licensed, more than 15 year experience, firm owner

**Bruno Lopez-Moncada, Architect**, non-CED Alumni, licensed 8-15 years experience, international studies

**Natalie Ramirez, Architect**, non-CED Alumni, licensed, 11 years' experience

**Gustavo Bermudez**, Sutro Architects, Project Manager



## Chismeando dentro CED, LiASF Panel Mentors CASA Students at UC Berkeley

### Homer Perez

AIA, LEED AP BD+C  
LiA SF

Based off what we heard and the feedback from the students, we thought all the panelists presented a good balance of insight into the profession beyond the academic and practical tips on how to land an intern position and take advantage of office time under the tutelage of an Architect.

Another aspect we liked about the panelists was their honesty discussing their experiences dealing with race, gender, and language issues as they were going through their studies and how they confronted them. I could tell the students really resonated with what the panelists had to say and after we adjourned, the students wanted us to stay and continue sharing. This obviously identifies an opportunity LiASF most definitely can continue to contribute.

### Comments on the content of the meeting

We believe the presentation of content and questions was well done because it followed a logical cadence. I was glad there were two moderators for the panel discussion because it allowed for those who attended online to participate if there were any questions from them.

For me, the most significant thing I got out of the meeting was that students really do want mentorship from licensed architects in any form in any capacity.

They miss the sharing of dialog and exchanging of ideas and gathering of opinions face-to-face. I agree with them, an early apprenticeship in a design profession is important.

I think it's crucial to have those kind of exchanges, so we need to have more of these panel discussions or have more casual gatherings/critiques to assist the students as best we can. Samantha, CASA Chair, even side barred with me working together to speak with high school students, but I told her we need to focus on her generation first, because, in my opinion, that is the immediate need.

### Mayra Jimenez

Landscape Architecture, CED, UC Berkeley  
2<sup>nd</sup> year

### Do you have any comments about the instructors?

Overall, the conversation was very informative and genuine. Nothing was sugarcoated and that was helpful to mentally prepare for our careers. The panelist all gave helpful advice; advice which will always be remembered. Thank you to all the panelists, every story was inspiring and incredible to hear.

### What was the most significant thing you got from the meeting?

As a woman and first-generation architecture student, it was comforting to know everyone has a different path after college. For me, education has always been my top priority and there is a fear, that after college, I will not know what to do. But, hearing their stories made me feel more secure about what's to come. Everyone had their own stories, their own way and experiences, and ended up working it out.

I also learned that not everything is going to be easy, there are a lot of challenges to come and a lot more learning experiences. Overall, I felt I was "chismeando" with my friends about life. It was comforting to know we all come from similar backgrounds.



**CASA**  
College of Environmental  
Design, UC Berkeley



**Latinx in Architecture San Francisco**  
lia.sfcommittee@gmail.com

### CASA Members

Thanks to Samantha Andalon (President) and Leslie Gonzalez, Community Service Chair. CED, UC Berkeley, for collaborating with LiA to set up the panel. CASA students attending: Daniel Chiu, Porscha Outlaw, Maria Pena, Fernando Calderon, Kelly Medina, Angelica Ruiz, Kelvin Hernandez, Sulem Hernandez, Samantha Andalon, Cindy Gutierrez, Leslie Gonzalez, and Jorge Escobar,

## Fernando Marti: Housing Activist, Professor, Architect, Artist, Writer & Poet

Rogelio R. Hernández



**You're an immigrant from rural Ecuador who grew up in the San Gabriel Valley near Los Angeles. What were those early years like?**

I grew up on a farm outside of Guayaquil on the road to the Sierra. It was a small farm, just my mom and dad and one employee.

There was a little village called “Boliche,” and a dirt road that ran along the river that we swam in on Sundays. My dad didn't go to university, he was entirely self-taught. My mom had studied architecture in college, the only woman in her class. She ended up getting very ill in her last year and never finished her degree, but she had that love of building things.

They built everything on the farm – the house, the chicken coops and the stalls, even some of the furniture. I still have a chair my mom built. My Abuelo and my Tía had moved to the States, and my parents sent me to live with them during the school year, so I got a US education, but I went back to Ecuador every summer. I grew up reading science fiction, thinking about the future, and learning to draw from comic books.

Though we never had much money, my Tía also had the stability of owning her own home. She took out the lawn in the front yard and replaced it with fruit trees, long before it was hip to have “edible landscaping.” I came to the university the long way, attending the local community college and working different jobs to pay my way to UC Berkeley.

### **What drove your decision to attend UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design?**

I was attracted by the political aura of the Bay Area, though I had never set foot here until I moved to attend UC Berkeley as an undergrad. Then I found San Francisco and the Mission District, the density and the mix of people from the whole pan-Latinx diaspora, and it felt like home in a way the suburbs never really had.

As an undergrad, I got to take classes with Christopher Alexander and Sara Ishikawa and Sim Van der Ryn, and those professors really shaped how I saw culture and ecology embedded in our built environment.



I graduated in the middle of a recession, and I temped at different odd jobs for a few years before working at Jacobson/Silverstein/Winslow (JSW) Architects, whose principals had co-authored [A Pattern Language](#) with Chris Alexander.

At the time, JSW was beginning to work on affordable housing, and a colleague got me involved with a small nonprofit called Urban Ecology, part of the early “smart growth” movement.

Unlike other infill development boosters, we were starting to realize that urban growth boundaries and densification led to gentrification and racialized displacement, unless it was accompanied with real community control and massively scaled investment in sustainable affordable housing.

We started a community design program at Urban Ecology, providing architectural and planning services to communities of color so they could determine what development would look like in their own neighborhoods. I was living in the Mission, starting to get involved with our own struggle against the first round of dot-com-fueled gentrification through the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition (MAC).

At the same time I was just starting to show my print work, and I met a group of radical print makers associated with Mission Gráfica at the Mission Cultural Center, who were plastering the walls of the Mission with political graphics created for and with MAC. I applied to the graduate program at UC Berkeley with the intention of bringing those strands of my life together: the political with the practical with the creative.



**Fernando Marti**  
Council of Community Housing Organizations, January 27, 2022  
Balmy Alley, Mission District, San Francisco  
(Photo: Benjamin Fanjoy)



## Fernando Marti: Housing Activist, Professor, Architect, Artist, Writer & Poet

**You've taught at top universities. Did that help define the community architect, activist and artist you are or did those things influence the professor you became?**

I'm an "hacelotodo," a generalist. All the things of one's life inform each other: putting a building together, creating art, reclaiming one's cultural roots, reflecting on what you do in words, working with young people.

Teaching is a way to bounce ideas with young, questioning people, see what connects and is real, and what's not so useful. Our role as teachers is to facilitate those questions, to compose the setting and the process, in order to help students articulate those questions for themselves, and see the interconnections that lead to their own next steps in their growth.

**You were a Joseph Esherick Visiting Professor at CED for the Fall semester. Has CED changed much in 20+ years since you matriculated? If so, how?**

I believe we can no longer afford to simply be in the ivory tower or, in this case, the Brutalist concrete tower, disconnected from the struggles our communities are facing. And I don't mean simply commenting on what's going on around us, or making abstract statements about the state of the world, but really bringing the struggles happening just outside the campus into the classroom, and taking the students out into the world.

I love that our tower is now Wurster-Bauer Hall – that Catherine Bauer has been brought in as a visionary who imagined that we could build real multi-racial working-class communities through public housing. Of course, the New Deal vision was crushed by both racism and the interests of the private real estate industry who saw this vision as competing with their own image of the city. That should be a central understanding of all students entering Wurster-Bauer Hall.

After the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter uprising, it's not enough to simply make a racial equity statement. And in the midst of a new racial and social re-segregation of our urban areas, what Carl Anthony calls the new "climate apartheid," architecture



Fall 2021 UC Berkeley Housing Studio, Fernando Martí and Prescott Reavis, professors.

is no longer about the "statement" a building makes, but about whether architecture will have a role in making a world worth living in.

**Can you discuss your 4<sup>th</sup> year studio (ARCH 100C: Architectural Design III) you taught at CED?**

I was invited to teach the 4<sup>th</sup> year housing studio. For the past twelve years as co-director of the Council of Community Housing Organ-

izations my focus has been on community struggles and housing policy. Through the coalition's member organizations we're connected to all the fights for land and demands for housing justice in San Francisco, from the Mission to Chinatown.

The "Monster in the Mission" was a highly visible fight in the heart of the Mission, right at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street BART Station. The original market-rate developer had recently conceded to the community's demands to transfer the land to the city, and this was a great opportunity to connect activists from PODER, who had been central to that fight from the beginning, with the design questions and visions students could develop. The narrative of the struggle touched on a lot of cultural and social issues: How could a building be responsive to the pan-Latinx culture of the Mission? How could the design extend the BART Plaza that was the living room for the very low-income community of the surrounding residential hotels? How could it contribute to culturally-based economic and ecological opportunities, and what were the new ways of envisioning housing post-pandemic?

I wanted the class to be a conversation about design and culture and real people. I reached out to my friend Prescott Reavis, who had been very involved in the East Oakland Black Cultural Zone, to teach with me, and we developed a program on two sites, with students working in teams with community partners in the Mission and East Oakland.

I think students really appreciated working with a real-world "client" and building those relationships that are a key skill to whatever path they take in the future, and thinking about the human and cultural aspects of design, which I don't think is common in design studios.



24th Street BART Plaza, Mission District, San Francisco, for AND, client MEDA

## Fernando Marti: Housing Activist, Professor, Architect, Artist, Writer & Poet

**You have a multi-dimension repertoire of talents: community activist, architect, educator, community planner, activist, artist/printmaker, writer, and poet. You're a Latino renaissance man. Let's briefly go through your endeavors:**

**You have been Co-director of the Council of Community Housing Organizations (CCHO), a coalition of 21 community- and faith-based affordable housing developers and housing justice advocates based in San Francisco. What's been your proudest achievement in this role?**

CCHO is a small organization, just a staff of three, but with twenty-one member organizations and a forty-three year history of making significant change in the City. Our roots are in the community development corporations (CDCs) which came out of the civil rights movement, fighting the urban renewal plans of big business, and creating their own institutions based in their own communities. They came together as CCHO to demand a seat at the table, and to put an affordable housing agenda at the forefront of city policy.

Over that time, CCHO has been involved in one way or another in the funding and construction of 20,000 to 30,000 affordable homes. In a big city like San Francisco, everything is political, even the smallest policy involves petty power struggles between politicians and agencies, positioning for political power and for the next campaign, and powerful interests trying to profit on land entitlements.

In CCHO's early days, we had to struggle to make affordable housing a political issue – now every politician uses “the housing crisis” to promote their own agenda. That's the landscape we have to navigate to get anything done. Making change is all about relationships: building alliances with base-building groups, with tenant organizations, with labor organizations, building power.

“ We can't forget that all the work we do as architects and developers is on what was once stolen indigenous land. Two hundred and fifty years ago the entirety of California was native land, with a very different relationship between the people and their environment. We can't go back to before 1776, when the first European colonizers arrived on Ramaytush Ohlone land, but can we begin to reclaim a different relationship to land? ”

Housing bonds are the easy things – everyone can get behind a bond measure. Progressive taxation is another matter. In 2020 we passed a transfer tax on the sales of properties over \$10 million – turning part of the profits from real estate speculation back into stabilizing communities. We won in spite of the most well-funded opposition campaign led by downtown business and real estate interests. The intent of the new revenue is to fund new social housing innovations, beyond the tax credit projects that are affordable housing's bread and butter – things like preservation of small buildings, coops and land trusts – building for the next generation of community-based housing.

One of the most important things we've done is begin to change the regulatory framework around property ownership.

In the US, private property is held as sacred. Personal property is one thing, that which we use, but private property, land which is parceled out to be speculated on, is a relatively recent idea in human history. We can't forget that all the work we do as architects and developers is on what was once stolen indigenous land. Two hundred and fifty years ago the entirety of California was native land, with a very different relationship between the people and their environment. We can't go back to before 1776, when the first European colonizers arrived on Ramaytush Ohlone land; but, can we begin to reclaim a different relationship to land?

In 2019 we passed COPA, allowing community-based nonprofits a right of first offer and a right of first refusal on the sale of any multifamily property. It was a five-year campaign, getting the policy right, building the alliances, and building up the capacity of a number of smaller organizations who would carry out this housing preservation work. It's a small step, but part of an incremental move toward taking land out of the speculative market and into community hands, for the common good. Now Oakland, Berkeley, San Jose, and LA are considering versions of first-right to purchase laws.





## Fernando Marti: Housing Activist, Professor, Architect, Artist, Writer & Poet

**Prior to CCHO, you were an architect at Asian Neighborhood Design (AND), a Rose Architectural Fellow at Mission Housing Development Corporation, and a designer at Urban Ecology and JSW/D Architects. How did these experiences shape your outlook on design and your “architectural practice embedded in and accountable to communities”?**

In each of these places, design was embedded in a sense of humanism and social responsibility. JSW/D was rooted in design as patterns of human activities, which they took from their early work on individual houses to spiritual communities to affordable housing complexes. At Urban Ecology and AND, I was able to extend these lessons to participatory design for public spaces, working with community organizations in the Mission District, Chinatown, and Oakland. My work with the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition, and later CCHO, taught me all of those design decisions were really subordinate to histories of community organizing and local institution-building. The challenge within our development system, is to stay true to those organizing roots, to the people, and to the ways in which the built environment affects and is shaped by everyday people. As more money comes into it, more bureaucracy, greater professionalization, and more political and real estate interests get involved, then it's easy to become simply another "industry," creating great products but losing touch with what the people are living through.

**You were a founding member of the San Francisco Community Land Trust (CLT). What is the mission of this group?**

In those early struggles against gentrification in the Mission District, a group of us starting talking about alternative housing solutions which could stabilize tenants where they were already at. It gets back to this question of our relationship to land. A CLT is a structure that puts the ownership of land in community hands, while individuals or cooperatives own the building on the land. The future of what happens on that land, for example, permanent affordability, is thus returned to people's hands. Over the course of a year of meeting at cafes and people's back yards we hashed out the outlines of the SF Community Land Trust. It's a bit more of a ragtag organization than many of the other housing organizations in SF, but it's racked up some significant victories: from its first project, saving a 21-unit apartment building in the heart of Chinatown, where the monolingual Chinese tenants are now owners of their building as a Limited Equity Housing Cooperative, to their latest acquisition, a 40-unit building in the Tenderloin of mostly Mayan, Pilipino and Southeast Asian tenants, independently financed through a crowdsourcing campaign. CLTs are now becoming a major force in the housing conversation in California, driven by coalitions such as Stable Homes CA and the California CLT Network.



**Above:** Columbus United Cooperative, San Francisco for AND, client SFCLT



**Above:** Eric Quezada Center, 518 Valencia, San Francisco, for AND

**Below:** Peacock Commons, San Carlos for AND, client Bill Wilson Center

## Fernando Marti: Housing Activist, Professor, Architect, Artist, Writer & Poet

### You serve on the board of PODER, What's its focus?

PODER was one of the founding members of the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition, focused on environmental and economic justice for the Latinx/immigrant community of the Mission and Excelsior. It's become my political and cultural home. This year I'll be working with PODER's youth members on a collaborative art project at the five-acre urban farm they created in the Excelsior, Huerto Colibrí. As more and more of our community is displaced by economic forces, and as the looming climate crisis shapes the thinking of our young people, projects like Huerto Colibrí are reconnecting with cultural land traditions and reshaping urban places, which are critical to maintain our right to the city.

### What is the Justseeds Artists Cooperative?

Justseeds is an amazing collection of political artists, mostly printmakers, from across the US, Canada and Mexico. There's almost 40 of us now, and we run our collective as a cooperative, selling our artwork through our web site, and coming together for political and artistic projects, such as mural and art builds for political mobilizations. Artwork is my outlet for imagining the more liberatory world that the housing and policy work is meant to lead to.

### What's next for you?

The housing question, or really, the land question, is at the heart of the development of our communities: How do we exercise our right to cities? How do we develop community self-determination in a collective way? How do we shape the future of our neighborhoods in a way that's culturally responsive and adapts to the changes climate change is forcing on us?

“ Think about that future, which is also the past, our roots, the beauty in our culture and in our ancestral traditions we want to recuperate, to which we owe who are and can be.

Work to let go of the things we need to let go of, never forget that all we do is still in the context of a patriarchal racialized capitalism, and imagine the beautiful future we have to start building despite all that. ”

There's a whole new conversation happening in the US around social housing, opening up the horizons of the social aspect of land and housing. Community land trusts, cooperatives, urban farms, public art interventions, are all part of that conversation.

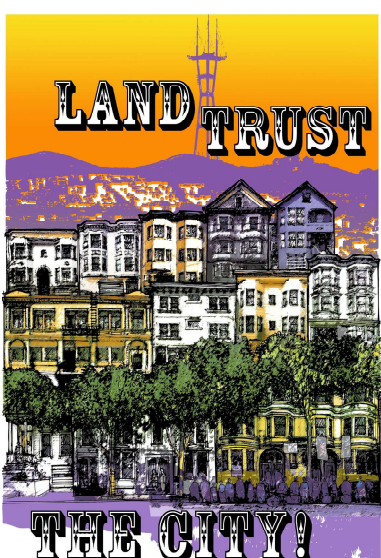
**As a Latino professional who has tapped your full potential, what advice would you give Latinx/ students of color on how they might do the same?**

We architects are generalists – we have to know a bit of everything.

I think that's the experience I brought from growing up on a farm and seeing what my parents did. For thirty years, that farm of theirs kept evolving, until they got bogged down in debt, like many small farmers, and moved to the city.

At 54, I'm still trying to figure out what I'm going to do when I grow up. My life decisions haven't necessarily been made according to financial considerations, or I would be in a very different place today. It's about trying to be true to myself and to the community that I've become part of.

There's a beautiful Eduardo Galeano quote: “La utopía está en el horizonte. Camino dos pasos, ella se aleja dos pasos y el horizonte se corre diez pasos más allá. ¿Entonces para qué sirve la utopía? Para eso sirve, para caminar.” Think about that future, which is also the past, our roots, the beauty in our culture and in our ancestral traditions we want to recuperate, to which we owe who are and can be. Work to let go of the things we need to let go of, never forget that all we do is still in the context of a patriarchal racialized capitalism, and imagine the beautiful future we have to start building despite all that. And keep walking toward that horizon, bringing all that along with you.



# Fernando Marti

Joseph Esherick Visiting Professor Fall 2021  
College of Environmental Design, UC Berkeley

Fernando Martí was a visiting professor at UC Berkeley's CED. He is co-director of the Council of Community Housing Organizations (CCHO), a coalition of 21 community and faith-based affordable housing developers and housing justice advocates based in San Francisco. CCHO works to foster the development of permanently affordable housing under community control and through non-speculative means of ownership.

### Professional Experience

College of Environmental Design, UC Berkeley, Design and Housing Development Studio

Asian Neighborhood Design, San Francisco, Architect

Rose Architectural Fellow at Mission Housing Development Corporation, San Francisco, Designer

Urban Ecology, Oakland, Community Planner

Jacobson Silverstein Winslow Degenhardt Architects, Berkeley, Designer

University of San Francisco, Housing Design Studio

### Education

Joint Masters Architecture and City & Regional Planning, CED, UC Berkeley

BA Arch, CED, UC Berkeley

### Boards

San Francisco Community Land Trust, Founding Member  
PODER, environmental justice organization, Board Member

### Community Activism

Facilitated community plans for organizations in San Francisco's Mission District, Excelsior, South of Market, and Chinatown

### Notables

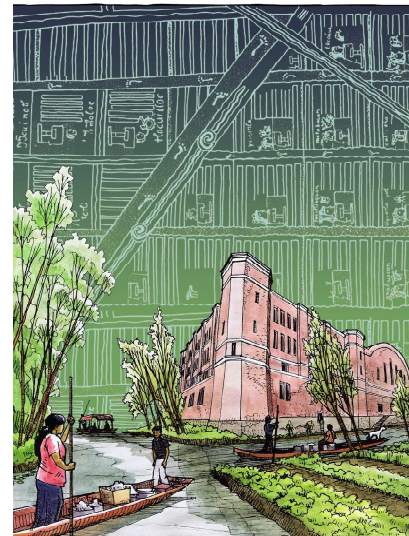
- Writer
- Poet
- Exhibiting Printmaker
- Altar/installation Artist
- Justseeds Artists Cooperative (<https://justseeds.org/artist/fernandomarti/>).

### Selected Publications

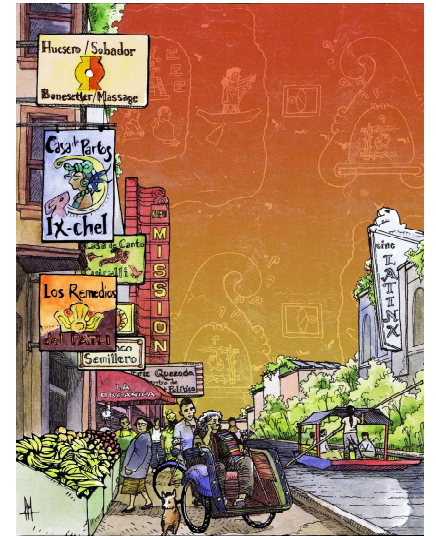
- **YIMBY, White Privilege, and the Soul of Our Cities**, Shelterforce, National Housing Institute, 2019
- **Renters Rising: How San Francisco's housing movement turned an assault on renters into a victory**, with Sara Shortt, Shelterforce, National Housing Institute, 2013
- **Planning Against Displacement: A decade of progressive community-based planning in San Francisco's Mission District**, Martí, Fernando, with Christine Selig, Lupe Arreola, Antonio Díaz, Amie Fishman, and Nick Pagoulatos, in Dialogos: Placemaking in Latino Communities, Michael Rios and Leonardo Vazquez, eds., Routledge, London 2011
- **Searching for the 'Sweet Spot' in San Francisco**, Martí, Fernando and Peter Cohen, in Whose Urban Renaissance? Libby Porter & Kate Shaw, eds., Routledge, London 2009
- **Enterprise Housing in San Francisco: The Future of Home-Based Family Business**, Adams, Daniel, Allyson Coyne, Mason Kirby, Luigi Lucaccini, Fernando Martí, Rose McNulty, Eugene Muscat, Seth Wachtel, and Meredith Walters. University of San Francisco, 2007
- **Alameda Skateboard Park: Teens Show Planners How It's Done!**, Progressive Planning, 2002
- **Islands in the City: The Casitas of Puerto Rican New York**, Urban Ecology Magazine, 2001

### Fernando Marti

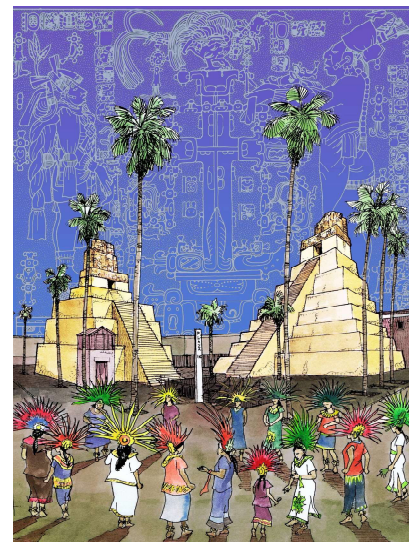
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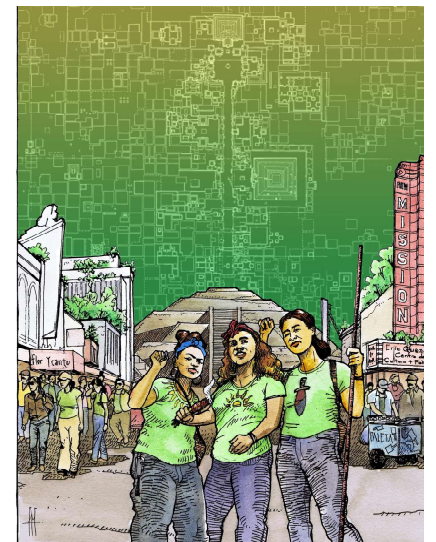
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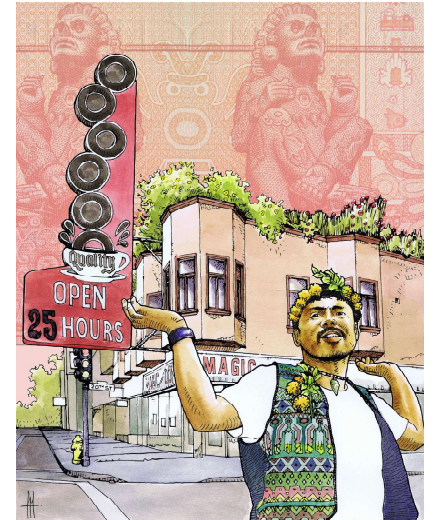
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1. Digital print: Armory Chinampas 2020
2. Digital print: Mission Aztlan 2020
3. Digital print: Plaza 16 2020
4. Digital print: Teotihuacan 2020
5. Screen print 2015 Ceja
6. Digital print: Xochipilli Magic 2020
7. Linocut: Quetzal 2007
8. Etching: Frontera 2010

## CASA Alumni Launches Architecture Fellowship & Summer Internship Programs

Joseph Martinez, Architect



This past year, CASA Alumni launched two inaugural programs: an Architecture Fellowship and a Summer Internship.

The CASA Architectural Fellowship is intended to assist a recently graduating senior (B.A. in Architecture) from the Department of Architecture, College of Environmental Design at UC Berkeley. Similarly, the CASA Summer Internship is intended for a currently enrolled undergraduate student in Architecture. These programs are exclusively under the auspices of CASA Alumni; which is not a part of, or associated with, the University of California, Berkeley.

CASA Alumni recognizes one of its most important responsibilities is providing students mentorship opportunities in respectable firms with a deep commitment to the profession and betterment of the Chicax/Latinx community. As the demographics in California continue to change – California is already 39.4% Chicax/Latinx – and the country becomes more multi-cultural, it is incumbent on future generations of Chicax/Latinx students to assume leadership positions in our profession and society at large.

This program will endeavor to diversify the profession of architecture. These new pilot programs are intended to continue the essential work of CASA Alumni (established in 2010) by providing meaningful opportunities for the next generation of designers, planners and architects, and their future participation with CASA Alumni and the community we serve. Likewise, the Programs will search for additional design firms who wish to participate in promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in their business practices and firms.

### Programs and Inaugural Recipients

#### CASA Fellowship

This is a six-month engagement in a professional office which will provide a broad exposure to the practice of architecture with a basis in research. The fellow will have the opportunity to conduct research, develop and present

case study reports, and further implement those ideas, strategies and concepts on actual projects. The stipend will be \$2,000 per month. It is anticipated the fellow will work approximately 20-24 hours per week.



Omar Martinez Zoluaga, BA Arch. 2021, CED UC Berkeley



Samantha Andalon, BA Arch. 2023 (GPA: 3.935 Highest Honors)

This year's recipient is **Mr. Omar Martinez Zoluaga**, who participated in programming and designing a 4-story, 92-unit affordable housing development in Barrio Logan, San Diego, CA.

#### CASA Summer Intern

This is a three-month engagement in a professional office which will provide for a broad exposure to the practice of architecture with a basis in research.

The intern will have the opportunity to conduct research, develop and present case study reports, and further implement those ideas, strategies and concepts on actual projects. The stipend will be \$1,500 per month. It is anticipated the intern will work approximately 20-24 hours per week. This year's recipient is **Ms. Samantha Andalon**, who participated in programming and designing a 5-story, 100-unit affordable housing development in Lincoln Park, San Diego, CA.



**Top:** Crest, 4-story, 100-unit affordable housing development in Lincoln Park, San Diego, CA

**Bottom:** Mercado + 4-story, 92-unit affordable housing development in Barrio Logan, San Diego, CA

### Process and Procedures

Nomination of candidates were made and submitted by the current Chair of CASA. Candidates will be reviewed by the CASA Alumni Board.

As appropriate, candidates will be informed of the application parameters (e.g., schedule, resume and portfolio) in a timely manner. Furthermore, the successful candidate(s) will be contacted of their award and the details of their program.

The next issue of ByDESIGN will feature the experiences of Omar and Samantha at M+C Urban Studio Corporation. Stay tuned!

Please contact Joseph Martinez at [jmartinez@martinezcutri.com](mailto:jmartinez@martinezcutri.com) If your firm is interested in participating in the Fellowship Program

## Arcus Social Justice Corps Established at College of Environmental Design

Elizabeth Bowler, Director of Strategic Initiatives + Arcus Social Justice Corps



An exciting event occurred on November 27, 2021 at UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design: the ARCUS Social Justice Corps (ASJC) fellowship awards. The excitement of the recipients was palpable.

Twenty-two fellows had been selected from a field of 56 applicants. They had survived a rigorous process with a focus on design as a tool for social justice.

### Overview

The ASJC fellowship seeks to attract students with the most potential to make direct and transformational social change in the world through planning, research, and design. Arcus Fellows are selected with the understanding they will make a pledge to enter social impact careers for at least three years after leaving the College of Environmental Design (CED).

This three year commitment will be made in good faith, and will not require proven employment documentation after graduation. This program aims to empower students who want to make direct and tangible change in marginalized and vulnerable communities.

### Eligibility

This application was open to all current Master's students at CED who are U.S. Citizens, students with permanent residence, DACA students, and students with refugee status. Since financial need is a spectrum and looks different for each student, we encouraged students who intend to pursue a social justice oriented career to apply. Social justice work in this context is wide ranging and can include anything from creating your own new form of radical practice, working for a non-profit or NGO, government work, on founding your own firm or organization dedicated to social impact.

CED was interested in hearing student's definition of social justice and what this work means to them. Student transcripts and resumes were required to complete the application.

To demonstrate financial need, applicants were asked to submit a Student Aid Report, generated from FAFSA. Following the initial assessment of a student's dedication to social justice work, aid packages were determined with the purpose of alleviating as much debt as possible for each fellow.

“ A key aspect of the fellowship is knowing that one of the biggest challenges of going to the university is the amount of debt one accumulates in getting the degree, and the limitations it engenders to work in social practices. ”

Marcel Sanchez Prieto, Associate Professor of Architecture



Renee Y. Chow, William W. Wurster Dean, Professor of Architecture and Urban Design, greets AJSC Fellows, Carol T. Christ, UC Berkeley Chancellor (sitting) awaits her turn to congratulate deserving fellows who's commitment to social justice resulted in the receipt of fellowships.

### Fellowship Responsibilities while at CED

- Perform outreach to current and prospective underrepresented students;
- Provide training and workshops for graduate students on relevant issues;
- Share knowledge about social justice design work to the CED community;
- Attend lectures and meetings with social practitioners.

**Marcel Sanchez Prieto**, Associate Professor of Architecture described the opportunity provided by the fellowship this way:

“A key aspect of the fellowship is knowing that one of the biggest challenges of going to the university is the amount of debt one accumulates in getting the degree, and the limitations it engenders to work in social practices. What was clear was finding a way to support students interested in social practices, empowering them to make real change in our communities, and to have the tools and knowledge to work and support others in achieving social justice. We are very grateful for the generous 5.5 million dollars by alumni CED John Stryker. With his support we are able to offer approximately 20+ fellowships to incoming students every year.

Accomplishing significant debt relieve for the length of a degree at CED is the purpose of a four year pilot project that will support more than 100 project students.

What we are looking for after graduation is a commitment of three years is to embark in the world working in social practices, entrepreneurs of design, knowledge to create more equitable just and livable neighborhoods. This will not be enforced. This is built on the trust and the efforts and possibilities to do so.”

## Arcus Social Justice Corps Established at College of Environmental Design

Using this analysis, we identified 22 students and awarded them the Arcus Fellowship across four funding levels.

On November 30, 2021 Dean Chow posted the following announcement:

“I am so pleased to write to you to announce our very first cohort of Arcus Social Justice Corps Fellows! After a careful and thoughtful evaluation process shepherded by 13 members of a CED Selection Committee (which included our Chairs, Program Directors, Alumni, social impact practitioners, and staff) we are thrilled to induct the first cohort of 22 fellows into our pilot fellowship program. Each of our fellows has now committed to at least three years of social justice oriented work after graduation and will be receiving debt relief based on their financial need.”

### THE FELLOWS

<b>Amanda Barnett</b>	Master of City Planning & Master of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
<b>Aurora Chavez</b>	Master of City Planning & Master of Public Health
<b>Rumassah Chohan</b>	Master of City Planning
<b>Norris Cooper</b>	Master of Real Estate Development + Design
<b>Mario Devora</b>	Master of Architecture
<b>Cypress Erbez-Benson</b>	Master of Architecture
<b>Claire Genese</b>	Master of City Planning
<b>Vanessa Giraldo</b>	Master of Architecture
<b>Juan González</b>	Master of City Planning & Master of Public Health
<b>María Fernanda Gonzalez</b>	Master of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
<b>Tera Johnson</b>	Master of City Planning & Master of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
<b>Chae Kim</b>	Master of City Planning
<b>Eugene Lau</b>	Master of City Planning
<b>Eleanor Mayes</b>	Master of Design
<b>Cesar Mesias</b>	Master of Real Estate Development + Design
<b>Alanna Muldowney</b>	Master of Architecture & Master of Structural Engineering
<b>Jasmin Muñoz</b>	Master of City Planning
<b>Joseph Mutter</b>	Master of Real Estate Development + Design
<b>Erika Ruiz</b>	Master of City Planning
<b>Keira Thompson</b>	Master of City Planning & Master of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
<b>Obinna Uwakah</b>	Master of Real Estate Development + Design
<b>Ivy Wang</b>	Master of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning



“ Working so closely with folks who had just recently exited homelessness while also experiencing my own homelessness and subsequent housing insecurity showed me the transformative power of affordable housing. It is why I have dedicated the last 10 years of my career to affordable supportive housing and homelessness...”

*I believe that studying the history and implementation of city planning will equip me with the tools to build a bigger and better table for my community.* ”

**Claire Genese, Master of City Planning (MCP)**

“ Demographically – I am a queer, foreign-born, brown, Latinx, abled-bodied cis-male that grew up in a non-English speaking household within a predominantly low-income POC majority neighborhood; it’s a mixed bag...”

*Growing up in the '90s and '00s, the dominant “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” maxim of the time coupled with the positive and negative attributes of an immigrant mentality have allowed me to overcome some of these challenges, but not without sacrifice and hardship...*

*I hope the ASJC fellowship will expose me to new ways of thinking and tackling social justice issues, connecting me to practitioners who are stewarding a more just future.* ”

**Cesar Mesias, Master of Real Estate Development + Design (MRED+D)**

## Arcus Social Justice Corps Established at College of Environmental Design

“ From 2013, I practiced civil rights law in Louisiana, where I litigated cases challenging unjust policies and represented low-income tenants facing eviction or the loss of housing subsidies.

While law provides potent tools to aid in ending current injustices and reining in future misdeeds, I am excited by landscape architecture's ability to reimagine different relationships to the land and between people to meet the challenges posed by climate change. ”

**Ivy Wang: Master of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning (MLA-EP)**

“ This cohort and their peers have committed to sharing their intentions, insights, and many innovations with us. As a recent alum, educator, and practitioner, I remind myself and my colleagues that we too must commit—to actively and generously listen, to learn from their wisdom and through necessary self and community reflections, support these students with tangible actions, oriented toward justice, from whichever positions we find ourselves in. ”

**Bz Zhang, Citizen Architect Fellow, University of Southern California School of Architecture**

### The Selection Committee

- Renee Chow, M. Arch. CED Dean, Professor of Architecture
- Marcel Sanchez Prieto, M. Arch. ASJC Faculty Director, Co-Founder CRO Studio, Associate Professor of Architecture
- Elizabeth Bowler, MS, ASJC Program Manager, Director of Strategic Initiatives
- Dan Chatman, Ph. D., Co-Chair, Department of City and Regional Planning, Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning
- Daniel Rodriguez, Ph. D., Co-Chair, Department of City and Regional Planning, the Chancellor's Professor of City and Regional Planning
- Louise Mazingo, MLA, Chair, Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
- Greg Morrow, Ph. D., MCP, SMArchS, Director of the Nancy + Douglas Abbey Master of Real Estate Development + Design
- Kyle Steinfeld, M. Arch. Associate Dean for Undergraduate Affairs, Associate Director of the Master of Design, Associate Professor of Architecture

### Outside Committee Members

- Beatriz Guerrero Auna, MCP, Senior Planner of Equity and Public Health, City of Santa Rosa
- Rogelio Roy Hernández, M. Arch. and BA Arch. CED, President/CEO ThirdWave Corporation, Publisher ByDESIGN, Founder/Chair CASA Alumni
- Dan Pitera, FAIA, Professor and Dean of the Detroit Mercy School of Architecture and Community Development (SACD); Senior Principal of the Detroit Collaborative Design Center; '05 Harvard Loeb Fellow
- Brenda Zhang, M. Arch CED, AIA, NOMA, Citizen Architect Fellow at the USC School of Architecture; Core Organizer of Dark Matter University / Design As Protest Collective



Beatriz Guerrero



Roy Hernandez



Dan Pitera, FAIA



Bz Zhang

**Left below:** The fellows pose with Chancellor Christ, Elizabeth Bowler, MS, ASJC Program Manager and Marcel Sanchez Prieto, M. Arch, ASJC Faculty Director

**Middle below:** ASJC Fellows celebrate by striking a pose.

**Right below:** Roy Hernández, Publisher ByDESIGN, Founder/Chair CASA Alumni and Chancellor Christ celebrate the momentous event.



## Immigrants, Migrants and a Dream

Daniel Perez, AIA, LEED AP



### Our Family Story

My family story is the story of immigrants and migrants. My father was born in San Francisco del Mezquital, Durango, Mexico and my mother was born in Crystal City, Texas. My father was born in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution.

His father was killed when he was an infant and his mother raised him and a sister. He assumed the position of "the man of the house" at a very early age and attended school up to the second grade. My mother was the youngest of seven children and attended school to fourth grade. My father started coming to the US at the age of eighteen under the Bracero Program. My mother's family would work seasonally doing agricultural work in various parts of the US. She and my father met in Montana in the mid-1950's while doing agricultural work. They corresponded for four years before getting married. They initially lived in Arizona. My dad was deported just after my eldest sister was born and separated from his young family for months. With the help of the Mexican Consul in Phoenix and a judge in Texas my dad was able to establish permanent residency and rejoin my mom and sister.

My parents and sister then moved to Idaho. I think the draw to Idaho for my parents was that it was an agricultural economy. I was born and raised in southeastern Idaho in the outskirts of a small rural town called Rupert. I have four sisters, three older and one younger.

Like many kids raised in rural America, my sisters and I started working summers once we were in junior high. We worked in the fields thinning sugar beets and weeding potatoes. Our parents wanted us to learn the value of work and money. I got my first in-town job at a grocery store when I was fourteen years old and had obtained my first driver's license. I worked for a year at a potato processing factory before setting off to college.

### Education and a Dream

My parents placed a great importance on education. They wanted to give their children the opportunity they were not afforded.

Three of my sisters went to trade schools. Another sister and I ended up going to Arizona State University for our undergraduate degrees.

My parents were very supportive and they sacrificed so much to help me and my sisters. It was especially difficult for them having two children attending college at the same time.

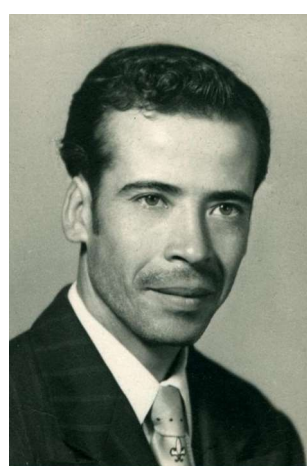
I knew I wanted to be an architect when I was seven years old. My exposure to what an architect did, at the time, was Mike Brady of the Brady Bunch. I would draw floor plans and elevations of houses and give them to some of my sister's girlfriends that I had crushes on.

My parents briefly moved the family to Illinois when I was ten years old. Some cousins took us to the John Deere Headquarters in Moline, Illinois. I didn't know who Eero Saarinen was at the time but I knew I was experiencing architecture. It was settled, I would become an architect.

In my senior year of high school I applied to the University of Idaho in Moscow and was accepted. I made the 700 mile drive to northern Idaho, and all my wisdom teeth had come in. I arrived in Moscow, my mouth was in severe pain, and thought it is really beautiful here but I need to go somewhere else. I drove home, went to see the dentist, and took a year off.

I worked at a potato processing factory for a year and while it was a good experience, and I was able to save money for college, it served as added incentive to pursue my dream of studying to become an architect.

I applied to Arizona State University in Tempe, was accepted and completed my Bachelor of Science in Design in Architectural Studies. The program was set up for students to take a list of required classes for two years in a lower division program, and then apply to the upper division professional program.



**Top left:** My father, Daniel Perez

**Top Right:** Moreno Edubigen Perez, my mother

**Bottom:** Graduation Day with family



## Immigrants, Migrants and a Dream

Fifty students were accepted per year in the competitive professional program. I didn't get in the first time, but I was encouraged by an African-American professor, Rushia Fellows, to keep persevering. I took an additional year of courses in art and architectural history, cultural geography and worked on improving my portfolio. I reapplied to the professional program and was accepted. Professor Fellows was the only person of color on the faculty of ASU CED at the time and there were only three Latinx students in my graduating class.

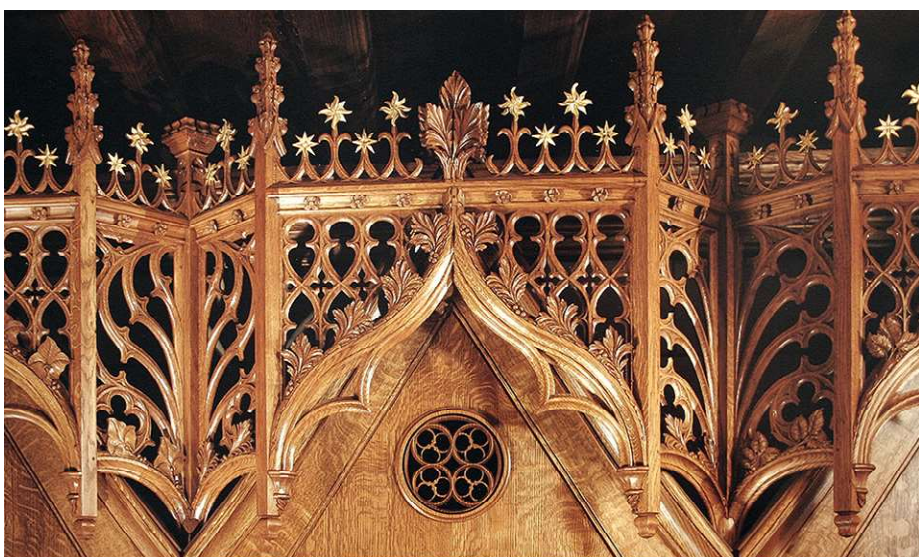
### The Big Apple

I took an Architecture and Urban Design summer course in Italy after graduation from ASU. The class travelled to Venice, Verona, Florence, and Rome. I travelled in Europe with a friend after the class ended. The experience of travelling to major urban centers like Paris, Barcelona, Rome, Athens, Vienna, and Munich made me decide that I needed to live in a large urban center. I set my sights on the largest city in the US and moved to New York City.



New York was very different from where I grew up or where I went to school and that was part of the City's appeal for me. From the outset I decided I should try working at a variety of offices to figure out what resonated for me. I did the S, M, L office exploration but not necessarily in that order.

My first job at Gerald Allen and Associates was a small firm with residential and church projects. I then worked at HOK with a team on a general aviation terminal and cargo facility for Japan Airlines at JFK International Airport. My last job in NYC was at Eisenman Architects where I had a six month stint working on the Columbus Convention Center and the DAAP - University of Cincinnati.



St Thomas, 5th Ave, New York: Canopy for columbarium  
New York's most famous mid-town Episcopal church just opposite St Patrick's Cathedral commissioned a columbarium which was designed by **Gerald Allen AIA**.

I determined I preferred working at small and medium sized offices best because I got to wear different hats. Working and living in NYC was both exciting and challenging. I loved the idea that on any given day I could go visit a famous painting like Les Demoiselles d'Avignon or see a play on Broadway, but there were also the harsh realities of living on a junior designer's salary in a very expensive city. I feel New York City made me become more assertive because it is not an easy place to live. I would still recommend for a young person to live in NYC at least once in their life.

### The City by the Bay

When I left Arizona for New York I had made the commitment to myself that I would work for three years and then apply for graduate school. My degree from ASU was a Bachelor of Science in Design in Architectural Studies. This required that I pursue a Master of Architecture program to become licensed.



I applied to the University of Illinois, Chicago and UC Berkeley. I was accepted to both programs. Peter Eisenman advised I should go to UIC, but ultimately I chose Berkeley. Coming back to the West also gave me the chance to be geographically closer to my family in Idaho. I completed my Master of Architecture degree in 1993. I was the first person in my family to obtain a graduate degree. This was a huge achievement and milestone for my family and me.

### Martin Del Campo, Architect, CED Professor & CASA Mentor

I worked with Del Campo & Maru for a little over three years. Martin Del Campo was a true gentlemen and a great mentor. He always had a smile on his face and a sparkle in his eye for life and the architectural profession. He had all these amazing stories of his family's migration from Europe to Mexico, and his migration to the US. Roy Maru was also a great mentor.

“ I applied to the University of Illinois, Chicago and UC Berkeley. I was accepted to both programs. Peter Eisenman advised I should go to UIC, but ultimately I chose Berkeley. I completed my Master of Architecture degree in 1993. I was the first person in my family to obtain a graduate degree. This was a huge achievement and milestone for my family and me. ”

## Immigrants, Migrants and a Dream

I worked on the Mexican Heritage Plaza project in San Jose, CA while working with Martin. The project is a Chicano/ Mexican-American cultural center which later became the School of Arts and Culture at MHP. I didn't realize at the time what a fantastic opportunity this project was for my career. It was an opportunity to work with and serve communities that look like me.

I also had the opportunity to work on a project in Manila, Philippines, while working with DCM. The project was rehabilitating an existing building into facilities for Epson and Iomega companies. It was the first time I worked abroad. I lived in Manila for six months and met people that I am still friends with to this day. Filipinos have a shared history with Mexico, Central and Latin America of 500 years of Spanish economic colonialization.

Before returning to the US I traveled to Hong Kong, Nepal, Tibet, Bangkok, and Cambodia. This was a fantastic education for me culturally and furthering my architectural education. I so appreciated Martin and remained friends with him until he passed away in 2007.

### Studio Perez

I started my firm, Studio Perez, in 2005. I was working for a small firm, Stoner Meek that did a fair amount of public education work. Jill Stoner was one of my former professors and Susannah Meek was a fellow classmate at Berkeley. I was laid off and in the position of thinking what do I do next. I had worked for small and medium size firms in the Bay Area including Marcy Wong Design, Del Campo & Maru, Michael Willis Architects and Stoner Meek.

I approached a project manager at Oakland Unified School District I was working with about sending work my way and she encouraged me to reach out to the Director of Facilities.

“ Working at small and medium sized firms gave me the opportunity to wear a lot of different hats and the confidence to start my office (that and a little bit of naiveté). ”

Working at small and medium sized firms gave me the opportunity to wear a lot of different hats and the confidence to start my office (that and a little bit of naiveté).

Working with OUSD I was able to work on several projects and establish some credibility.

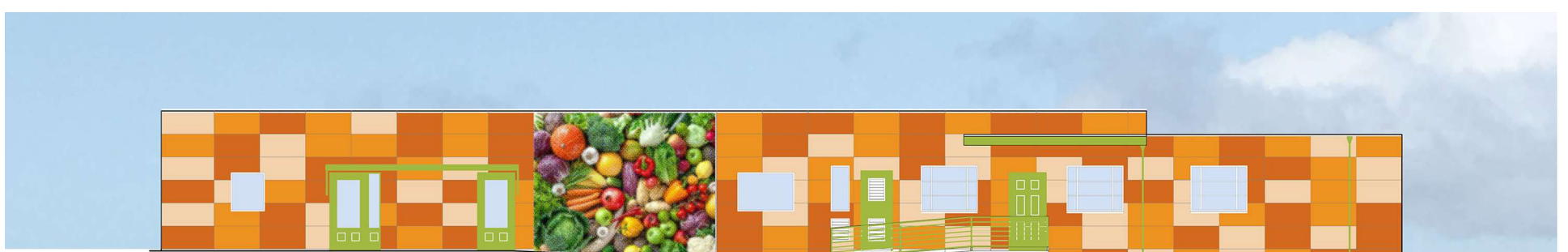
I was eventually awarded a modernization project at Elmhurst Middle School. This project included rehabilitation of the auditorium and upgrade of the clock, bells, and fire alarm systems for the 96,000 square foot campus. This was a huge project for my small office. The auditorium originally from 1912 was in a great state of disrepair and not being used. The middle schools did not have a space to gather all 400 students at one time. The auditorium was gutted and completely refurbished with a new state of the art sound, control, and lighting system. The auditorium became a multipurpose space that was used for traditional music and theater programming but expanded opportunities for yoga and testing. Students and faculty approached me after the project was completed and were so appreciative of their new space.

I started working with Chinatown Community Development Center, a non-profit, on the rehabilitation of their existing SRO residential buildings in 2013. These buildings were originally established as residential hotels with community kitchens and bathrooms. The rooms vary in size from 70 - 150 square feet. Today they are permanent apartments that provide affordable housing for folks with modest incomes.

I was surveying one of the buildings a couple of years ago and I came across a couple of young Asian boys speaking fluent Spanish. I asked them if they were studying Spanish at school, and they replied no, we are Peruvian. It occurred to me that these SRO buildings also provide housing opportunities for new immigrants to the US.



**Digital Arts and Culinary Academy**  
City of Oakland.  
East Oakland



## Immigrants, Migrants and a Dream

I am currently working on a Digital Arts and Culinary Academy project in East Oakland for the City of Oakland. The program provides the opportunity for youth to learn digital audio / video production, culinary arts, or urban agriculture. Residents of this area of Oakland are predominantly African-American and Latinx families. I was awarded this project after George Floyd was murdered and it made me think that this presented perfect timing for me to invest in and work with underrepresented communities of color, mi gente.

I am excited to soon start working on a new project in collaboration with TEF Design and Min Design Co. on the rehabilitation of the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts in San Francisco's Mission District. The building is one of San Francisco Arts Commission's four cultural centers. This will give me the opportunity, as a Latinx Architect, to work with the community I represent.

### Representing at the AIA SF

Participation and representation are very important to me, as an architect and a Latino. I joined AIA SF to promote my architectural profession and community. One of my colleagues used to say "If you don't toot your own horn, nobody is going to toot it for you". This is incredibly true. I have realized the importance of activism and advocacy. I spent much of my career thinking, where are my people? It finally occurred to me that I could play an active role in recruiting more Latinx youth to the profession. The message I hope to send to Latinx youth is "si se puede".

I became active with the AIA SF Mentorship Committee in 2009 eventually becoming Chair of the Committee in 2015. I started serving on AIA SF's Board of Directors in 2016. This year I will be serving as AIASF President-Elect/Vice President and eventually serve as President in 2023. It is very exciting times for the AIA SF Chapter. This year we will get our new headquarters on the ground level of the historic Hallidie Building and host the AIA national conference in 2023. There is so much work to be done, and so much money to be raised. I am here to do my part.

### LiA SF (Latinx in Architecture San Francisco)

As an AIA SF board member, I promoted the idea of the board supporting our committees by establishing board liaisons. I became involved with LiA SF originally serving as a board liaison and increased my involvement in helping shepherd programming and making certain the LiA committees continues to thrive. I didn't participate with CASA when I was at Berkeley and it left me with the question: Why I hadn't?

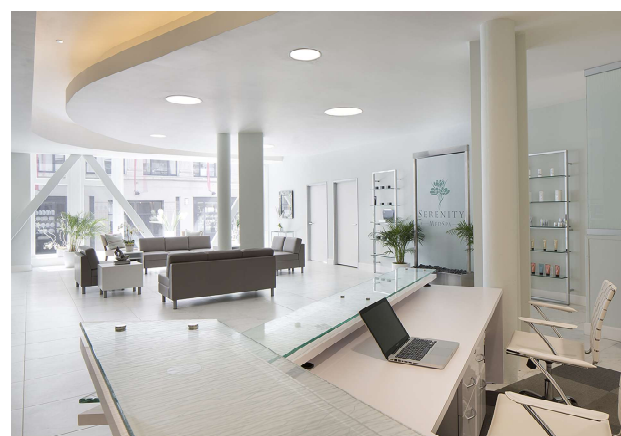
I had my challenges and successes in my trajectory of becoming an architect and I decided that it is never too late to get involved. LiA started collaborating with CASA Alumni (non-profit) and the CASA student organization a few years ago to help instrument scholarship opportunities for Latinx students through the SF Center for Architecture and Design. This is a really exciting opportunity for me to help support and mentor Latinx students.

### Percentage of Latinx Architects

Recent statistics from ASCA indicate Latinx architecture professionals represent only 8.5% of architectural professionals in the US, which is disturbingly low. Latinx students studying architecture is in the 20 percent range. There are actions Latinx organizations, professionals, and schools can implement to expand the pipeline of Latinx Architects, thankfully some of this is happening. My former alma mater ASU has recently revamped their curriculum to become more inclusive.

This is where organizations like AIA, professionals, educators, and LiA can make a dent. AIA SF, through the Center for Architecture and Design, is looking at curating K-12 programming to help expand the pipeline. LiA has career day programming where architects go into schools to talk about the architecture profession. Individual Latinx professionals and educators can take more active roles in recruiting and mentoring Latinx students. There is more work to be done in removing the barriers for Latinx students into the architectural profession.

**Elmhurst Schools Campus East Oakland**  
Auditorium modernization, fire alarm, telephone, intercom, clock systems upgrades for the entire campus, advanced production lighting and AV systems.



**Serenity Med Spa San Francisco**  
The space is abstracted into a series of curves, planes, solids, and translucency to create a light and airy backdrop for the doctors and their work of rejuvenation.



## Leslie Valencia

Cannabis Consulting, Racial and Social Equity Partner, 7 Cities Group



Your professional journey has ambled through a variety of positions, supported by a Master's in City/Urban, Community and Regional Planning and a BA in Architecture from UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design.

**You have acted as a Lead Graduate Student Instructor at Cal, Smart Water Project Manager, an Independent Consultant, and a Planner II at the City and County of San Francisco. What led to you accept a Partner position at 7 Cities Group?**

I actually did my Masters in Urban Planning thesis at UC Berkeley on Equitable Cannabis Policy, because at the time, Proposition 64 had just passed and Oakland was one of the first jurisdictions in the State to develop a Cannabis Equity Permit Program designed to repair some of the negative disproportionate impacts that past drug enforcement had on communities of color.

I immediately saw the similarities that the failed Drug War had to redlining and predatory lending and felt that it was a great opportunity to advocate in real-time, and demand reparations for communities of color. I shifted my focus from shared equity homeownership models as an asset-building tool for low-income communities of color, to cannabis equity. While doing on-the-ground research, I became an avid advocate and helped advocate for the program in Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

After graduate school, I worked as a consultant because I also became a new mom, and an in-person 9-5 job was just not realistic for the lifestyle that I had planned. My most important goal in life is to be able to raise my own child, and it still is. As a consultant, I worked on a wide range of projects and developed a report titled Cannabis Equity Workforce Development for the San Francisco Office of Economic Workforce Development through a racial equity framework.

In the Spring of 2019, I also became one of the core members that launched Equity Sessions (equitysessions.com), a 6 Workshop series for Cannabis Equity Applicants and Business Partners in San Francisco. This grassroots effort was created to make up for the fact the city was not delivering effective outreach or technical assistance in the implementation of its Cannabis Equity Program.

While working for the San Francisco Planning Department for the past 2 years was very rewarding, I was only able to make it work because we were working from home during the pandemic.

“ I immediately saw the similarities that the failed Drug War had to redlining and predatory lending and felt that it was a great opportunity to advocate in real-time, and demand reparations for communities of color. ”

The stress of returning back to the office, and that date constantly changing, was too much for me to bear, so I actually left before finding a new opportunity, because I did not feel safe going back into the office when it was required this past November.



Leslie Valencia, Partner  
7 Cities Group  
Walnut Creek, CA  
www.go7cities.com

I am extremely grateful to be working with incredibly intelligent forward-thinking individuals who understand the importance of family, and the deficiencies of government politics. Now, Cannabis Equity Programs exist nationwide, and the fact I get to work with those applicants directly is a dream come true.

**What are your roles and responsibilities at 7 Cities Group working to "empower underrepresented entrepreneurs to compete and succeed"?**

I assist, primarily cannabis equity applicants, in navigating the very complicated business start-up and licensing process journey. From business formation to site acquisition, community engagement, building permits, variances, we assist applicants from start to finish.

Starting a business in this country is already hard enough, and cannabis has several layers of extremely complicated and everchanging regulations, which make this even more challenging, so I am glad I can be of service and utilize all of the knowledge I have accumulated throughout my career.

**How did your background in design prepare you for this position; what do you like most about your job?**

Believe it or not, the application process requires you to do basic things like calculate square footage, provide architectural drawings of your property, floor plans of your security plans, and the permitting process requires you to go through the building, fire, and other inspections. It also requires you to decipher ordinances, codes, regulations, and you often have to cross-reference these with local, state, and national laws and regulations.

I am still baffled at how complicated this whole process really is, and I have immense admiration for all of my friends, clients, and colleagues who have been able to remain resilient through it all.



**Leslie Valencia**  
Interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate, Real Estate, 2017  
Financing Affordable Housing, UC Berkeley  
MA City Planning, 2017 Affordable Housing & Economic Development, CED UC Berkeley  
B A Architecture, 2012, CED UC Berkeley

## The Creation of the Long Beach Cultural Center

David Salazar, FAICP



It was a historic day for the Long Beach Mexican American/Latino community. On October 12, 2021, the Long Beach City Council voted unanimously to approve the development of a Latino Cultural Center in the city. The work to establish a center had been a long time coming, and for many in the community, long overdue.

As far back as the 1980s, the idea of creating a cultural center has been advocated by local Latino activists. With a burgeoning population of approximately 42.4% (the largest ethnic group in the city) the Long Beach Latino community will now have a cultural home to call their own ("a creation of place") to celebrate their history, culture, and identity through art, dance, music, and food.

The center will be operated and managed by Centro CHA, Inc. of Long Beach and is envisioned to not only be a hub to showcase and celebrate Latino culture, but it will also cultivate community-based economic development with focused programs that promote entrepreneurship and small business development through a parallel project of the El Mercado de Long Beach and a Latino Cultural District.

The initial site of the Cultural Center will be at the Jennie Oropeza Center at Cesar Chavez Park in a historic Mexican American neighborhood in southwest area of the downtown.

Initial programs will be conducted at the Oropeza Center, which will allow for the exploration of a permanent facility within the park that could include an adaptive reuse of an existing building or new construction as part of the planned park expansion.

The Long Beach Community Design Center in partnership with Centro CHA, Inc. will work with an architectural firm to develop conceptual drawings and a construction cost estimate for the Cultural Center, as well as potential public/private funding sources.



### LONG BEACH COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTER

Long Beach Community Design Center  
6285 E Spring St  
Long Beach, CA 90808

A feasibility study will be carried out in partnership with Centro CHA, Inc. and the City for the El Mercado de Long Beach and Latino Cultural District projects. The study will review the potential scale, scope, and site of the projects and identify options to address food insecurity, workforce housing, community health care and the economic crisis caused by the pandemic that has disproportionately affected the Long Beach Latino community.

The study will also help explore project financing options to include tax-increment financing, bond financing, foundation support, and local, state, and federal funding opportunities.

The El Mercado de Long Beach and the Latino Cultural District project, along with the Latino Cultural Center will not only display the vitality and spirit of the Long Beach Latino community but will also provide community based economic development and become a regional economic generator offering city residents, visitors, and tourists an authentic cultural experience.



“ The Long Beach Community Design Center, in partnership with Centro CHA, Inc., will work with an architecture firm to develop conceptual drawings and a construction cost estimate for the Cultural Center as well as potential public/private funding sources. ”

#### See local news segment:

<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/on-air/long-beach-creates-its-first-latino-cultural-center/2716225/>

**David Salazar**, FAICP, is a board member of Centro CHA, Inc. and the Founder and Executive Director of the Long Beach Community Design Center, [www.lbcdesign.org](http://www.lbcdesign.org)