

CONTACT
Margie O'Driscoll
T: 415.874.2628
E: modriscoll@aiasf.org



Announcing Unbuilt San Francisco

A Collaborative Exhibition On View August – December

“Today’s urban landscape is shaped in profound ways by the buildings that never came to life, the plans that fell short. They show us how people defined the future, and why those visions in turn sparked resistance. It’s a parallel history of San Francisco and the Bay Area, for better and for worse.”

– John King, Urban Design Critic, San Francisco Chronicle

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (June 25, 2013) - [AIA San Francisco](#), [Center for Architecture + Design](#), [Environmental Design Archives at UC Berkeley](#), [California Historical Society](#), [SPUR](#) and the [San Francisco Public Library](#) are pleased to present *Unbuilt San Francisco*, a collaborative exhibition on view August – December, 2013.

If San Franciscans like to describe their city as “49 square miles surrounded by reality,” the visionary ideas that were too grandiose for even San Franciscans to consider remain some of the most fantastic designs for any city in the world. Imagine the Ferry Building surrounded by office towers, a grand casino

on Alcatraz, the city wrapped in freeways and a subdivision covering flattened hills north of the Golden Gate Bridge.

This ambitious five-venue exhibition and its accompanying programs will provide San Franciscans and Bay Area residents with an opportunity to confront visions for the region that never came to pass. Images include early designs for San Francisco City Hall and other landmarks, neighborhood-scaled plans that were blocked by community activists, and provocative works by architects prodding society to take on challenges such as sea level rise.

Each of the five institutions will display treasures from archival collections, architecture firms and private architectural collections, and host companion programming, panel discussions and lectures.

Venues // Exhibition Dates // Gallery Hours

[Unbuilt San Francisco: Grand Visions](#)

AIA San Francisco / Center for Architecture + Design

130 Sutter Street, Suite 600, San Francisco

August 15 – October 25 | Monday - Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm | Free admission

Two themes – *Dreams Deferred* and *On the Boards* – frame the collection of thought-provoking photographs, original drawings, renderings and models that make up *Unbuilt San Francisco: Grand Visions*. The exhibition juxtaposes outlandish unbuilt work with existing plans which will, in time, have a major impact on our city. Featured content includes Vincent Raney's drawings of a United Nations at the foot of Twin Peaks; OMA's designs for Prada's West Coast headquarters, located near Union Square; Fougerson Architecture's envisioning of a future San Francisco with agriculture woven directly into the urban framework; and an early look at the revitalization of Pier 70's Waterfront Site. *Grand Visions* is the theme of the 10th anniversary celebration of the [Architecture and the City festival](#).

[Unbuilt San Francisco: The View from Futures Past](#)

California Historical Society

678 Mission Street, San Francisco

September 6 – December 29 | Tuesday - Sunday, 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm | \$5 suggested donation, free for members and children

SPUR

654 Mission Street, San Francisco

September 6 – December 20 | Tuesday, 11:00 am - 8:00 pm; Wednesday - Friday, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm | Free admission

The twentieth century saw both a series of ambitious efforts to reimagine the city of San Francisco and the explosive growth of the Bay Area as a metropolitan region. In *Unbuilt San Francisco: The View from Futures Past*, the California Historical Society and SPUR will present some of the most revealing episodes in these distinct but related streams of civic discourse, through projects that were proposed but never realized. Concern with a particular site, problem, or opportunity often spans a period of decades, and presents a window into the City's changing attitudes, politics, and values. Every bit as much as the cities we build, the cities we imagine and reject reveal the collective creativity of the urban project and the imperfect civics of placemaking.

[Unbuilt San Francisco: Ambition and Imagination](#)

The Environmental Design Archives at UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design

Wurster Hall Gallery (room 110), 280 Wurster Hall, University of California, Berkeley

September 14 – November 8 | Wednesday - Saturday, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm | Free admission

Preview Benefit Reception September 13 | Tickets go on sale August 1st

Unbuilt San Francisco: Ambition and Imagination, at the College of Environmental Design, will focus on buildings that never came to be, such as a residential resort on what are now the ruins of Sutro Baths, a water cascade down Twin Peaks, and early versions of landmarks like Coit Tower, Crissy Field, and several of the city's most acclaimed recent buildings. Another section, *Rhetorical Visions*, will include renderings and models that challenge viewers to imagine new ways of urban life.

[Unbuilt San Francisco: Public Spaces](#)

San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

Skylight Gallery, 6th Floor, Main Library, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco

August 24 – November 27 | Monday - Thursday, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm; Friday, 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm;

Saturday, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm; Sunday, 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm | Free admission

The San Francisco Public Library's San Francisco History Center will present original architectural renderings and other images which give an inkling of a city very different from the one we know today. This exhibition focuses on "what never was" in the public spaces of San Francisco. Imagine the reality of a Panhandle Parkway: Recommended Plan (1964); visualize Suggested Illuminated Water Effects of a Monument and Cascade at Twin Peaks (Bernard Maybeck, 1933); and consider a Suggested Design for Main Public Library Building (Reid Brothers, circa 1910).

Opening Reception

[Unbuilt San Francisco Exhibition Opening](#)

September 6, 5:00 - 9:00 pm

Annie Alley, between 678 and 654 Mission Street, San Francisco

The California Historical Society and SPUR will celebrate the opening of this exhibition with a reception from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm on Friday, September 6th, with live music, art making and performances in Annie Alley, a side street turned pedestrian plaza. The event is sponsored by the Yerba Buena Community Benefit District.

Related Event

Unbuilt San Francisco PechaKucha

September 5, 5:00 - 9:00 pm

AIA San Francisco, 130 Sutter Street, Suite 600

Join designers participating in the *Unbuilt San Francisco: Grand Visions* exhibition for [PechaKucha 20x20](#) (20 slides in 20 seconds each). The exhibition and program are part of the 10th anniversary celebration of the [Architecture and the City festival](#), taking place in September 2013.

Image: [Cultivating the Urban Eutopia](#), courtesy of Fougeron Architecture



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AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter Street
Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94104

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