

Studio Pages

The Newsletter of Studio21 Architects
www.studio21architects.com

Volume 2: Issue 4



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A Note from Bill How I Ultimately Became an Architect



No one in my family was an architect or even in the building industry, yet as a kid, I was always building things. My materials: Lincoln Logs, Kenner Building sets with their plastic columns & beams used to build skyscrapers, and even encyclopedia sets when nothing else was available.



to renovate our old and dated kitchen. My father could really care less, but I found it magical to see the design process play out and the ultimate transformation during the construction. It was really a very simple project, but it had a lasting influence on me. During my first year of architectural school, however, I almost quit.

At my request, my mother would wake me up at 5:30 in the morning before school to watch a program on PBS that featured architectural students presenting their design projects.

It was only recently, during a trip to Montreal, that I realized how the Expo 67 World's Fair influenced my early thoughts on architecture; specifically Habitat 67, designed by Moshe Safdie, and the geodesic dome, designed by Buckminster Fuller.

But that's not all. On Sunday visits to my



Expo 67 - United States Pavilion

grandmother's house, I could always be found with a pad of paper and pencil drawing something. It will come as no surprise, then, that I was still in grammar school when I knew I wanted to be an architect. A local office supply store stocked the necessary tee square and drawing angles. At about that time, architect Frank Lloyd Wright joined race car driver Mario Andretti as a hero in my world. There was even a time when my mother wanted

Designing buildings was my interest, not designing and building containers to protect an egg from cracking when thrown off the roof of the architectural building (an early assignment). What they were actually teaching us was how to problem solve and develop design skills. The ultimate lesson of that exercise serves me well in what I do today: Problem-solving, looking for alternative solutions, understanding our clients before we start designing, and always learning more about how to build things.

We love working with people. There is no greater satisfaction than seeing how we can transform that all-important part of their lives: their home or their business.

You never know what will influence the decisions and direction of a child's life. Studio21 Architects holds an annual Gingerbread House building event before Christmas every year for neighborhood kids. We enjoy their creativity and enthusiasm and I sometimes wonder if this may spark one of these kids to become an architect. Time will tell.



Habitat 67



Website Relaunch

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website @
www.studio21architects.com

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Is a family owned and operated power equipment sales, maintenance and landscape supplier that was started on the northwest side of Chicago in 1970 as a neighborhood hardware store. They have grown into one of the Midwest premier power equipment and landscape dealers. From professional landscapers to weekend warriors, Russo's large selection and knowledgeable staff can meet the needs for every home project.

In 2007 Russo Power came to Studio21 Architects to upgrade their existing Schiller Park facility with the goal of creating a distinct brand image that had previously been lacking. The existing brick and block building's warehouse aesthetic was softened with horizontal siding and the non-descript entrance was enhanced with tower design and large logo signage that has become a hallmark of future designs. Since then Studio21 has worked with Russo to design three new stores in Naperville, Frankfort, and most recently completed the new Elgin store that went into a 104,500 square foot former Walmart building.

Studio21 has worked closely with Russo Power on each project to develop the interior space plans as well as the exterior redesign of each of the buildings to develop the Russo Power identity.



Bright Ideas

By: David Wafel



▲ This farmhouse kitchen features multiple layers of light that warm the space day and night. Multiple wall sconces and illuminated cabinets provide the kind of sparkle historically provided by candles and hearth, while discrete utilitarian fixtures provide ample work light.

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◀ In a more contemporary home, an asymmetric arc of pendants over the island keeps views clear while providing candle-inspired ambient glow throughout the open plan.

▼ Note the interesting patterns created by these wall sconces. Together with illuminated cabinets, these sconces fill this secondary prep area with attractive light



Light is in the news more often lately than since Edison delivered the first reliable incandescent bulb over one hundred years ago. If you have tried to buy a light bulb recently, you likely came face to face with the bewildering world of modern lighting technology.

When I started in the profession, no one outside of my colleagues used words and phrases such as lumens, color temperature, or color rendering index, but now it is practically required of every discerning homeowner. Perhaps you read the American Medical Association's warning against possible adverse health effects from LED streetlights, or you read positive marketing from manufacturers promising that you will sleep better, heal faster, and be more alert if you buy their light bulbs. How do you make sense of it all? How do you get the right light for your home, and guard against obsolete technology? That- along with bringing fresh creative

solutions to the table- is my job as a lighting designer.

I fell in love with light under the great prairie skies of Illinois, and I am still drawn to the beauty of natural light found in sunsets, stars, and harvest moons. I am also inspired by the more primitive sources of light we have used for millennia, such as campfires and candles. My designs are inspired by sunshine and flames with the goal of bringing a bright sunny afternoon indoors or creating the soft ambient glow of candlelight in the evening. This can be tricky to accomplish, given the quickly changing nature of lighting technology, building codes, and scientific discovery. Yet new technologies also deliver exciting promises, allowing me to transform spaces more easily and inexpensively than ever before. In the end, it is highly rewarding to provide creative lighting ideas to clients, homeowners, developers, administrators, and business owners. Take a look at these photos for examples of my layered, nature-inspired approach to lighting design and see what you can dream up! Light is essential to life- make the most of it. For more information, come visit my blog at <http://www.davidkwarfel.com/who>.

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Published by Studio21 Architects for all our clients, builders, friends and suppliers.

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Any question or comments, or want to be added to our mailing list, feel free to contact us any time.

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Walk- In Wednesdays
at Studio21 Architects

Sunday Monday Tuesday **Wednesday** Thursday Friday Saturday

Free consultations every Wednesday
8:00am to 4:30pm.
No appointment necessary.



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