

Juarez Complex, Mexico City

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1 Presentation of Legorreta + Legorreta

Legorreta Arquitectos was founded more than 40 years ago.

During the 60's and 70's Legorreta Arquitectos was well known for its work such as the Camino Real Hotels, office buildings, laboratories and factories for, as well as low income housing projects for Infonavit and several residential works in Mexico.

In the 80's, Legorreta Arquitectos began designing for other countries and have collaborated successfully with different local architects that have assisted with local codes, continuous contact with the client and for the elaboration of construction documents.

At the beginning of the 90's Victor Legorreta, son of Ricardo, joined the firm leading a group of young architects. Together with Ricardo Legorreta, he is involved in the design of all projects.

In 2000, the office name changed to Legorreta + Legorreta which represents more than a name, it represents the current organization.

2 Presentation of international urban projects of Legorreta + Legorreta

2.1 1985-2006: Westlake Park Master Plan, Westlake-Southlake, Dallas, TX, USA

Three diverse challenges faced Legorreta Arquitectos as we developed the vision for the Solana office park, an 1800-acres campus north of Fort Worth, Texas. The first challenge was to bring the perspectives and ingenuity of three architects together to form a wholly consistent interpretation of needs and appropriate design solutions. The team formed with Mitchell, Giurgola, Barton Myers and Peter Walker needed to formulate an overall concept for the development, and work through the details of context and landscape. The Texas prairie site was a second challenge, with a potential for the complex to be easily lost in the landscape.

Encompassing 1900 acres of rolling hills, the design solution needed to demonstrate a respect for the flat lowland areas an ability to rise above it in scale and contrast. An additional man-made barrier presented a third problem. A major highway dividing the site, presented a difficult obstacle to access and circulation within different components of the development.

At Solana, in a succession of spaces connected by arcades and corridors, Legorreta Arquitectos brought architecture and the corporate world into balance. Designed by Legorreta, the low-lying buildings rise out of the surrounding prairie and woodlands so that “the observer does not have a clear understanding of where the buildings end and the landscape begins.” To create a unique corporate setting for conferences and retreats, were used simple forms, brilliant colors and dramatic shadows. Featuring the native planting schemes designed by Peter Walker, Solana provides a refreshing and decidedly different experience for the IBM employees and visitors to the office park.

Solana contains 1.8 million square feet of office, retail, hotel, fitness center, exercise room, SPA and recreational space, linked by a parkway and shuttle transportation system that foster convenience and ease of access throughout the property. Legorreta Arquitectos designed the South Lake corporate offices for IBM, the Village Center which includes two office buildings, a shopping center, a 200-rooms Marriot hotel and a sports and health spa. The IBM office buildings contain 350,000 square feet offices, conferencing, dining and computer facilities. Mitchell / Giurgola Architects designed West Lake offices for IBM.

Using the highway that divided the property, we were able to turn a negative into a positive. We took advantage of the highway to design an underpass for access to the project and incorporated it into the complex through the use of color and shape. Using brightly colored vertical elements as directional entry symbols, users and visitors are guided through the development. Instead of the highway access detracting from the development, it becomes an important unifying feature.

In 2006, we have been selected to design two new facilities. The new project consists in two phases. First, the extension of the Marriott Hotel Solana, a 1989 Legorreta’s design; and second, in the development of offices set in the same Solana Complex



2.2 1993: Pershing Square, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Pershing Square, located in the heart of Los Angeles, is designed to be an inspiring affirmation of the city's future. With its striking ten-story purple campanile and artistic interpretations of the city's history and culture, this latest incarnation of the 120-year-old park resulted from a collaboration between Legorreta Arquitectos and landscape architect Laurie Olin.

The block was too large to function as a single, symmetrical space, so Legorreta Arquitectos transformed the square into two spacious plazas linked by the east-west walkway and mid block crossings to the surrounding context. The north-south change in level is accommodated along this centerline with a spacious ramp and steps.

The focal point is the 125 foot campanile. At the base of the tower, water flows from an aqueduct into a large, pebble-covered circular pool that dominates the southern plaza. Its timed release causes a tidal action every eight minutes. Artist Barbara McCarren traced an earthquake fault line through the plaza from the pool to the sidewalk, recalling the city's geology.

Two bright yellow buildings connect the southern and northern plazas, the triangular transit center serving bus patrons. The Pershing Square café, overlooking the bustling park, evokes those of European squares. In the northern plaza brightly painted walls are punctured with squares, rectangles, and circles

to frame views in shades of pink and purple. Large, freestanding concrete spheres, a signature of Legorreta Arquitectos and geometrically arrayed palm trees identify and shape spaces of their own.

The new square is a choreography of elements knitted together to form a lucid yet complex series of spaces. What was once an unfriendly space in downtown Los Angeles has been replaced with an open space that recaptures the lost opportunity of community and contemplation.



2.3 2007: Master Plan American University of Cairo, (Campus Center and Student Housing), New City of Cairo, Egypt

The American University of Cairo, founded in 1919 in the heart of modern Cairo, is moving forward with plans to relocate their campus to New Cairo, a planned community currently under development, East of Cairo proper. The decision to relocate the university was the culmination of a process undertaken by the university in anticipation of its 100th anniversary.

In 1997 the Administration and Board of Trustees unanimously adopted the recommendations of the Century Committee to relocate the university to a new site. While the university continues to make short-term strides in addressing overcrowding and the need for modernizations by upgrading building and infrastructure on the current campus, it is the long-range vision, with the overriding educational needs identified by the Century Committee Report that has clarified the need to establish a new campus and the relocations of the AUC.

In 1997, the university purchased a 260-acre site in the center of New Cairo, approximately 23 miles east of the current campus, for the home of the new AUC. New Cairo is bounded to the west by the Cairo Ring Road, at the north by the Suez Road, and at the south by the Ain El Sokhna Road. Running east / west through the center of New Cairo is the City Center Road which will also accommodate an above-ground metro line linking the AUC with Cairo proper. The AUC site is in the heart of New Cairo; opportunities to influence and shape the new city as well as enhance for the Campus Center and Student Housing for the New Campus Development of the AUC.



3 Description of the Juarez Complex Project (2003-2006)

Juarez Complex is located in the historical center of Mexico City, in front of the Alameda Park. With a total area of 296,000 sqft, the complex is adjacent on the north side with Avenida Juarez, on the south side with Independencia Street, on the east side with Dolores Street, and on the west side with Luis Moya Street.

Juarez Complex has as a primary objective, to regenerate an important district of the historical downtown of Mexico City that was severely damaged by the 1985 earthquake. The complex is formed by open spaces, passages and plazas. The new headquarters for the Foreign Affairs Secretariat and the Superior Court of Justice of the Federal District, as well as mixed use buildings and parking lots are part of the Juarez Complex.

Because of its location, this complex is defined as a transition zone between the “Paseo de la Reforma” avenue with great scale buildings and the Historical Center of the City, with buildings of lower heights and spaces with more friendly scales for the pedestrians. In the architectonic planning Legorreta + Legorreta searches to respond to this new context, reason why, Legorreta + Legorreta designed a 44 feet high basement made out of “Huixquilucan Pearl” stone. The roofs of such basement will be treated as gardens and terraces, to be used as expansion areas for the taller buildings. The height of the basement responds to the one of the Corpus Christi’s Temple which design, materials, and scale have a clear relation with the Historical Center. In coordination with the Historical District Organization, and with the INAH (National Institute of Anthropology and History), Legorreta + Legorreta restored the Corpus Christi’s temple in order to make it work as the main attraction of the rest of the complex.

Of all this outdoor spaces, the main public space is Plaza Juarez which surrounds the temple of Corpus Christi. This Plaza is the key generator of the rest of the complex, and the main pedestrian access to it. In the center of the plaza, Legorreta + Legorreta designed, together with the plastic artist Vicente Rojo, a great fountain that completes the integration to the vegetation in Alameda's park.

The design of the fountain is a water mirror of 114 x 98 feet, with more than one thousand red concrete pyramids that in addition to the movement of water generated by a series of air injectors between each pyramid turns into a great fountain full of movement.





Conclusion

We seek to create an architecture that will serve society and contribute to build better cities. While achieving functionality, efficiency and cost, we shall be able to design an environment that is human and friendly, one that has an atmosphere of intimacy, peace and optimism.