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# Premier Builder<sup>®</sup> Architect & Design

A Business Magazine For The Builder, Architect & Design Community

**Profile:**

The Rosichelli Style  
Staging Dedicated to the Sale

**Building Tech:**

Contracting Technology Services

## Robert Edson Swain Architecture + Design

Small Firm, Big Ideas...

# contents

November/December | 2015

## features

### 4 | Cover Story

Robert Edson Swain Architecture + Design, a small firm with big ideas showcases a slice of their outstanding local Northwest projects.

## departments

### 3 | Interiors

Masonite Introduces On-Trend Barn Door Kits

### 14 | Profile

The Rosichelli Style...

High-Style Staging Dedicated to the Sale



PHOTO BY KEN GUTMAKER / COURTESY OF RES ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

### ON THE COVER

Hill Climb Residence, Queen Anne, Seattle  
Builder: Mercer Builders



3



24

### 18 | Building Tech

Contracting Technology Services

### 22 | Local News

Windows, Doors & More Recognized with 2015  
Dealer of the Year Award

### 24 | Premier Marketplace

Cool New Stuff for your Project



14



Queen Anne Pavilion, Seattle | Builder: Krekow Jennings | Metal Fabrication: Architectural Elements

# Robert Edson Swain Architecture + Design

Small Firm, Big Ideas...

Located in an industrial neighborhood in Seattle, among boat yards and manufacturers, is a small 6 person architecture firm with big ideas. Almost every aspect of Robert Edson Swain, Architecture + Design is a paradox.

Bob Swain, the firm's founder, defies the tradition of being boxed in by project types. He has been lead Architect on more than 500 projects ranging in scale

from new city master plans to an interior for a private Boeing Jet. Rather than specializing in any specific project type, the firm simply specializes in good design, focusing on regional materials and practices in any place.

By shifting the definition of core-team to include RES associates around the globe, they are able to maintain expertise in various project types and disciplines. Their



PHOTO BY JORDAN INMAN / COURTESY OF RES ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

portfolio is as extensive as larger firms while affording the focus and flexibility of a small office.

Working with team members across the globe influences their design at every scale. On city planning projects in China, they work with large production groups, and at the same time they are working with individual craftsmen in Seattle producing furniture. In this way they are able to dramatically impact individuals at a personal scale, then shift to impact an entire community through design.

Currently on the RES team's boards: various furniture pieces, a private landscape, renovations to a Landmark Historic home, a floating home, concepts for a hotel development, city planning in China and Mongolia, among other project types.

“Collaboration influences our design at every scale. We team with a range of people from large production groups in China, to an individual craftsman building furniture.”

- Bob Swain

The RES team pride themselves in innovation and experimentation. Some of the luxuries enjoyed today while flying on a Boeing jet, like micro-climates and ambient lighting, come directly from Bob's research and development team for Boeing Business Jet. RES continues to develop innovative systems.

On a recent project, they developed a retracting



PHOTO BY ANDREW RYZNAR / COURTESY OF RES ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN



PHOTO BY JORDAN INMAN / COURTESY OF RES ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

Artisan's Kitchen | Builder: Dyna Contracting

window system that disappears into a wall below. With full scale mockups being built and formulas for finishes being developed, their office sometimes seems more like a test facility than an Architecture firm.

If there is one common thread woven into all RES projects, it's collaboration. The RES team's clients are involved in all discussions and decisions, and often their expertise and interests weave into the project workflow.

A recent client, for instance, is an avid musician. His participation in the design of his sound isolated music room was akin to an acoustic consultant. A current residential client has a project management background from Amazon, and is researching land use code as a team member because he enjoys the complex nature of code.

Their unique approach to collaboration also extends well into construction. They work closely with contractors and craftsmen to ensure successful execution of design intent. In working so closely, they occasionally join craftsmen in the field to help complete projects.

In addition to Architecture, the RES team includes site planning and landscape integration on all their projects. This holistic approach is compelling for many clients who return to RES for their needs on multiple occasions. For a few longstanding residential clients, the RES team has designed the landscape, guest houses,

I love working with craftsmen. A hands on experience keeps me sharp and it keeps our work relevant. Contractors respect that we actually know how to build."

- Kit Kollmeyer, RES project manager

Coastal Residence: Maury Island, WA



PHOTO BY ANDREW RYZNAR / COURTESY OF RES ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

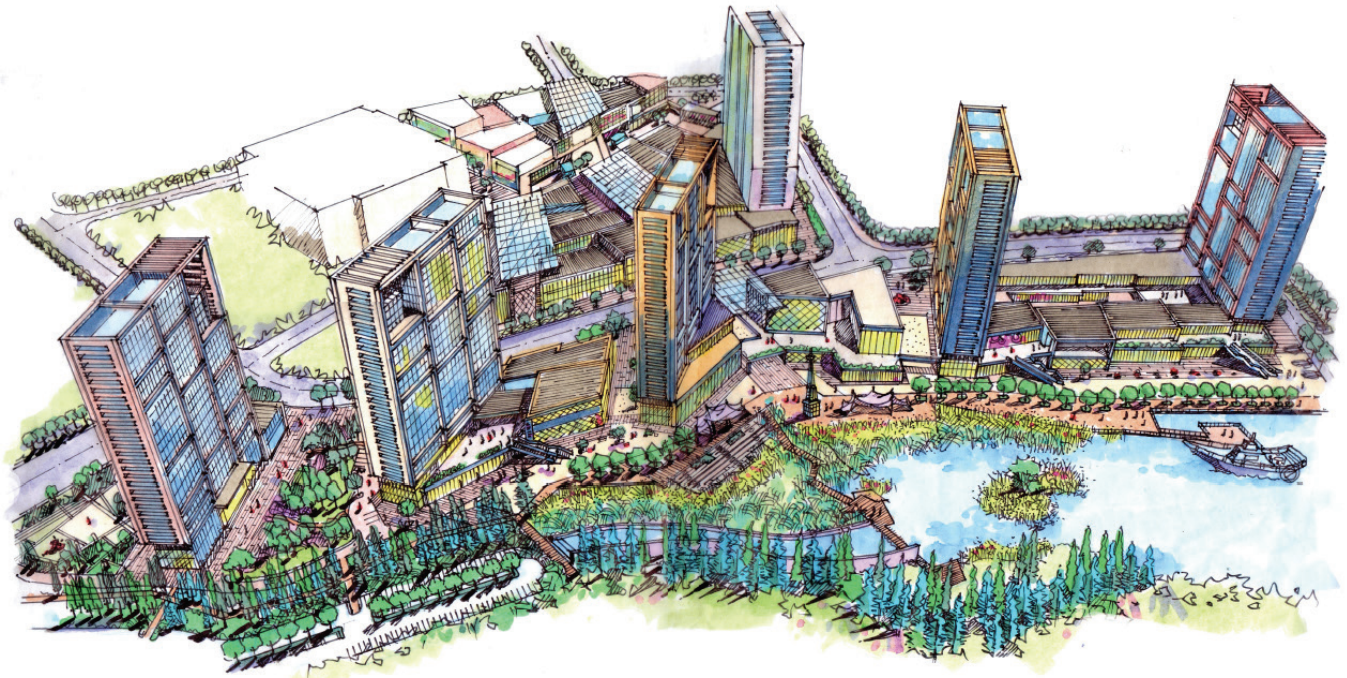


IMAGE COURTESY OF RES ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

The Parkland Bay wetland restoration project currently under construction - Dalian, China

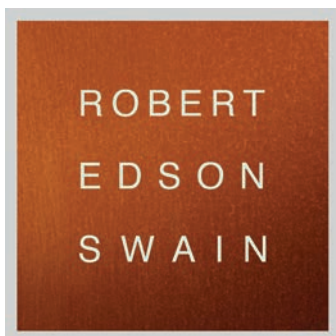
“Details are where we shine. Every detail, no-matter how small is integral to our design.”

- Kyle Kinney, RES project manager

additions, renovations, and furniture, returning for more until their entire lifestyle is immersed in valued design. The fact that multiple projects are designed for returning clients is a testament to that design value.

For the RES team, no detail is insignificant. Any contractor who has built a RES project will say that they are defined by their exquisitely executed details. Structure, function and natural materials are integrated in a way that create living, breathing works that create an enhanced experience of space, culminating in a unique design specific to its place.

For more information visit: [www.bobswain.com](http://www.bobswain.com) ■



The Fauntleroy Chair / Pat Howe Furniture

Meydenbauer Bay Bridge / Builder: Tend Home Services



PHOTOS BY JORDAN INMAN / COURTESY OF RES ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN



Builder: Tanner Construction in collaboration with Pat Howe

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