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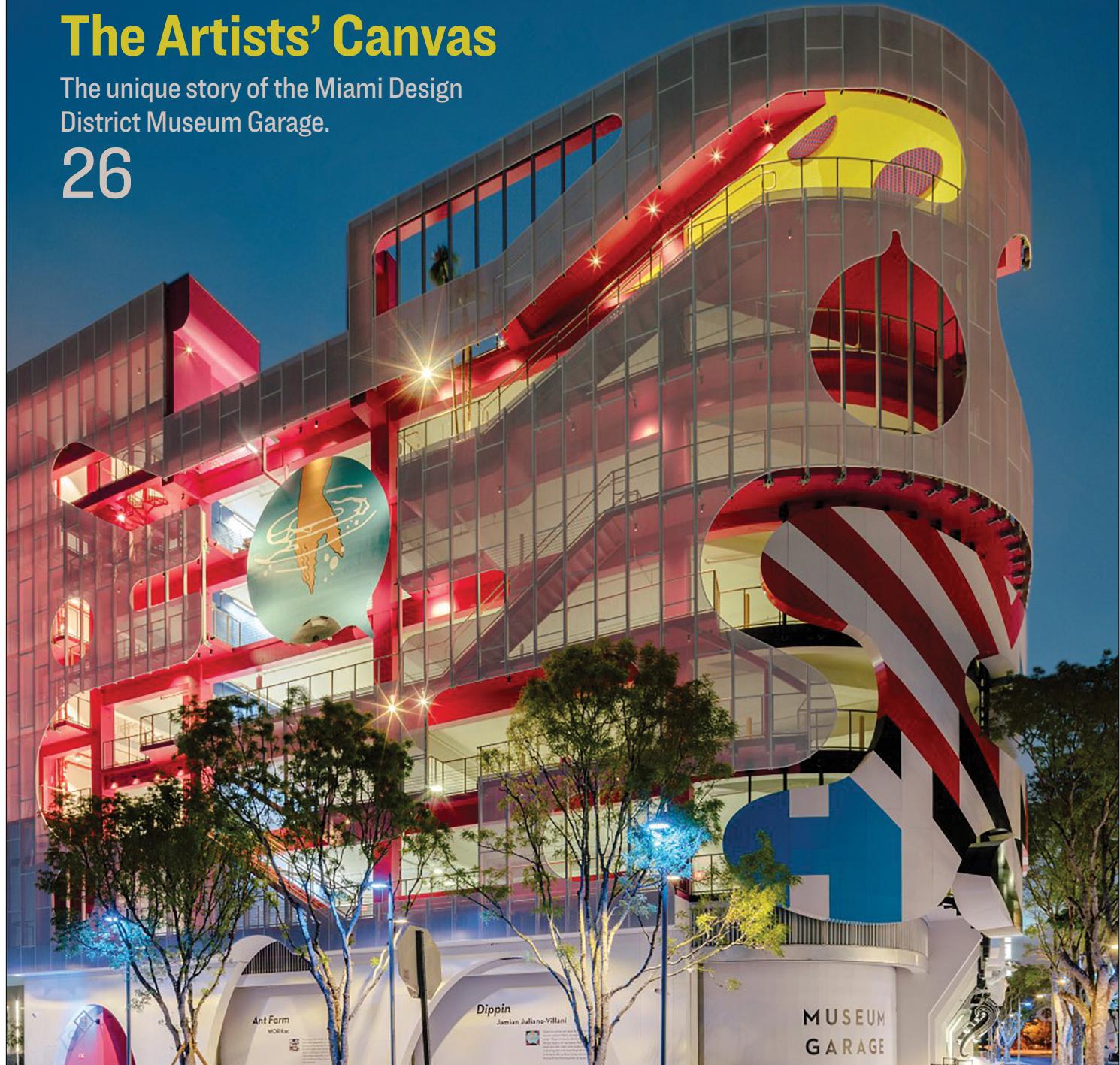
ADVANCING TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

OCTOBER 2018

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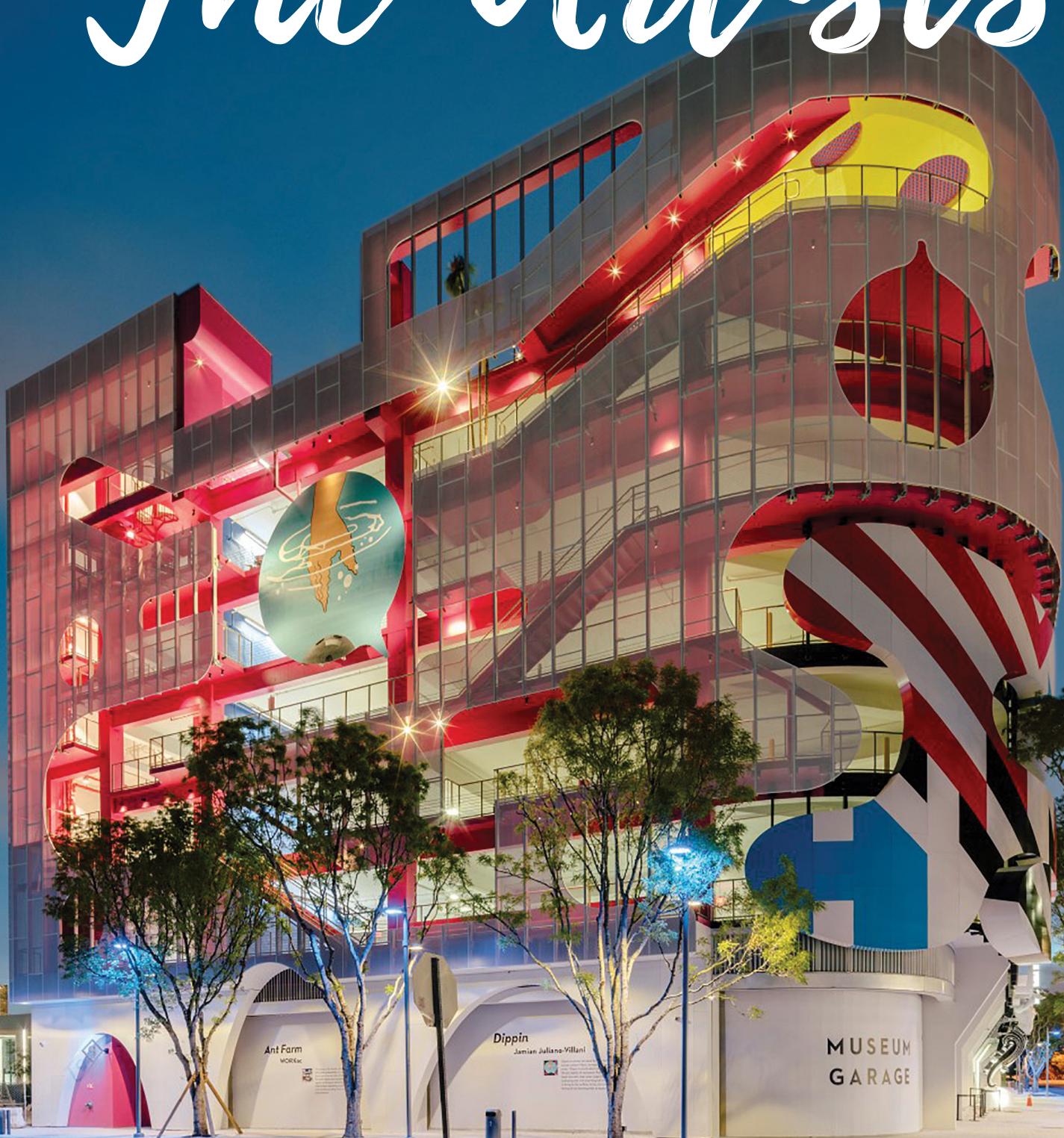
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# The Artists'



MUSEUM  
GARAGE

# Canvas

*The unique story of the Miami Design District Museum Garage.*

By Timothy Haahs, PE, AIA  
and Javier Sanchez, AIA

One of the most highly anticipated retail and cultural developments in recent memory is finally here. Appropriately located in Miami, Fla., the Miami Design District is one of the most exclusive and vibrant destinations we've seen created in years—the brainchild of an extraordinarily creative and gutsy developer, Craig Robbins of DACRA, who has been imagining and laying the groundwork for this project for nearly 25 years, after making this property his first purchase in a then-blighted wholesale district of Miami.

Now totaling nearly 1 million square feet of development with the potential to expand to 1.5 to 2 million more, the Miami Design District has become a prime destination for fashion, art, and culture. Shopping hot spots such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Hermes are just a few of the popular names that attract visitors from all over the world. Art galleries, celebrity-chef restaurants, and a busy event calendar offer even more incentive to experience this cutting-edge neighborhood.

The Design District offers visitors an opportunity to experience history, culture, and art together in one community. In addition to the significant retail component, one can visit two free-to-the-public museums, upscale restaurants with live music and open mic nights, and a theater featuring classic films. The developer also understood the importance of retaining the historic feel of the development, resulting in the preservation of some of the site's existing



The Miami Design District Museum Garage's varied facades add interest and visual appeal.

buildings and transforming them into spaces for events and art installations.

The Design District is among the hottest new neighborhoods in Miami, with no signs of slowing down considering the significant plans for future development. Residents and visitors alike continue to flock to the site to check out the constantly changing and evolving experience offered there. One of the most unique experiences upon arriving at the Design District is found as soon as one parks. In true Miami fashion, DACRA and the design team took the design of the district's parking facilities to the next level, making them destinations in their own right.

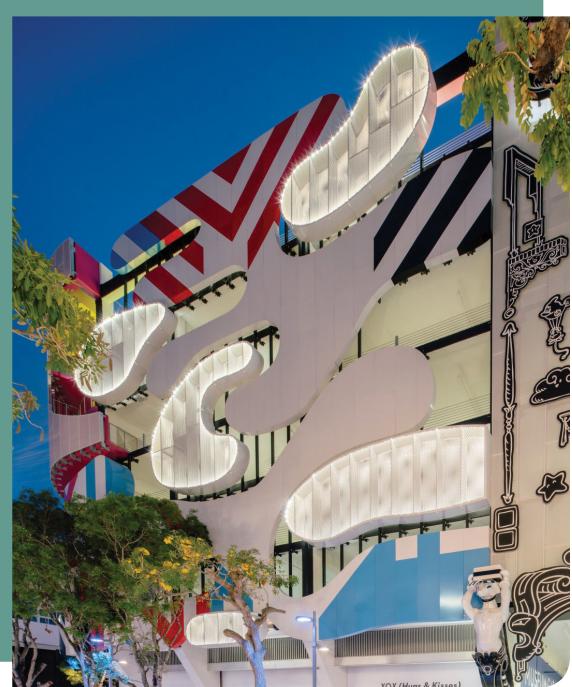
Many people, particularly those of us in the parking and design worlds, are already familiar with other famous parking garage designs, particularly in Miami. One of the best examples of this is the 1111 Lincoln Road garage on Miami's South Beach. That garage opened in 2010 and was designed by renowned architect Herzog & de Meuron. It has long been identified as one of the most distinctive and creative garage designs in recent history. 1111 Lincoln Road not only features significant retail space and an impressive penthouse living quarters on the roof, but it has also become a destination for events and photo ops. And while the 1111 Lincoln Road garage may take the unlikely title of "garage hosting the most weddings" the new Miami Design District Museum Garage will most likely take the title of "most selfie'd garage."

### The Museum Garage

The Design District Museum Garage perfectly reflects Miami's vibrant and flashy character. You wouldn't expect that one of the most highly anticipated and attractive new shopping districts in the country would count its parking garage as one of its biggest attractions. However, the developer wanted to ensure that every moment of the Design District experience from arrival to departure was rare and exciting, and the Museum Garage certainly accomplishes that goal.

The Museum Garage was the final piece of the Design District parking puzzle, following the construction of the City View Garage in 2015 and the Paradise Plaza Garage in 2016. Both of those facilities similarly capture the character of the Design District in their own ways, but the Museum Garage will certainly be the most memorable.

DACRA employed an unusual approach to the design of the Museum Garage. Rather than retaining one architect to design the entire structure, DACRA retained five different designers to offer five completely different looks in a take on a row home configuration for the facades.



The design came together through employing the same concept as the French surrealist game "exquisite corpse," in which an artist draws a head on a blank piece of paper, folds it to conceal the drawing, and passes to the next artist, who then draws the torso. This activity continues until the drawing of the body is finished. In the case of the Museum Garage, the design was refined by Tim Haahs. The idea was that the garage would serve as a canvas to the art of the facades.

Selected Museum Garage designers participated in a real-life approach to this game. facade curator Keenan-Riley coordinated the designs with four



additional artists and architects. Each team member blindly developed three options for their own section of the garage, with no idea as to the look of the other facades. Ownership picked one option from each designer and then asked the designers to refine them, now with the visual of the other adjoining facades as inspiration. The result is what now sits in the Design District today: one of the most cutting-edge and creative parking facilities ever developed.

As you will see in images throughout this article, each facade clearly tells a unique story and offers a very distinctive look. They even have their own names: Ant Farm, XOX, Serious Play, Urban Jam, and Barricades.

### Ant Farm

The Ant Farm facade, by WORKac from New York, includes a series of stairways and public spaces. This is the only facade of the garage that has habitable space within it. As its name suggests, the design mimics the old-fashioned ant farm toy, exposing the inner workings of an insect colony. It also has the look of a Chutes and Ladders game turned on its side. Inside, this section of the garage has a number of functional spaces, including a library, a slide, a climbing net, sitting stools and a bench, a DJ booth, and graffiti wall.

### XOX (Hugs and Kisses)

Shown at the primary corner of the garage, the XOX facade embodies the childhood wonder of architect J. Mayer H of Germany. Raised in Stuttgart, home of the German auto industry, Mayer was fascinated by automobiles as a child and used that as his inspiration for his section of the



facade—designed as an abstract combination of interlocking shapes mirroring car bodies, headlights, and paint. The multi-colored patterns of the elements combine the colors of the Barricades and the Ant Farm facades.

### Serious Play

Tokyo artist Nicolas Buffe provided this facade design, combining Baroque architectural concepts, cartoons, video game imagery, and Japanese pop culture into a funhouse-type visual. According to Buffe, “I wanted to invite people to feel joy.”

Unique designs on every side of the garage encourage passers by to take it all in, making the structure part of the community beyond parking cars.

### Urban Jam

Architects Clavel Arquitectos designed this elaborate facade design, inspired by a scene in the film “Inception.” This facade is made up of 36 silver and gold car bodies bolted to a frame. From inside the garage, patrons can see the undersides of each vehicle, while at night, the tail lights and headlights light up. The architect also cites automobile dependence and the frustration of traffic jams as the revelation for his design.

### Barricades

Architect Keenen/Riley’s Principal Terrence Riley also reflected an all-too-familiar driving experience in the development of the firm’s take on the Museum Garage facade. Aptly named “Barricades,” it is meant to reflect the temporary barricades used in road-repair projects—Miami locals would especially understand and appreciate this reference.

A collaboration between Keenen/Riley and Tim Haahs developed the concept for the south side facade. With the need to provide ventilation and natural illumination, the idea was to provide openings that did not necessarily follow the garage ramps behind them and to avoid the





Unique design elements capture both the eyes and the imaginations of those walking or driving past.



typical look of a garage. As patrons drive by this portion of the garage, powder-coated metal shelves of varying colors create different reflections on each bay.

The roof slab's traffic deck coating was done in a multi-color graphic that resembles the images we are used to seeing from a Doppler Radar.

### The Structure

The garage structure itself is very complex. It occupies almost every square inch of the property and has a basement level that is several feet below the water table. The main structure is made of cast-in-place post-tensioned concrete using long-span spacing on the columns to provide better visibility and easier access for parking. The structure was designed in conjunction with the specialty engineers who worked on the custom facade elements that were designed to meet the intent of each of the designers and the requirements of Florida's High Velocity Wind Zone Code.

Each portion of the garage structure required modifications to meet the requirements of the different facade designs. Anchors had to be embedded in the concrete to support the facade sub-structure, which was different for each facade. The Ant Farm facade required the garage slabs to extend in different ways on each floor to provide for the habitable portions of the facade and at the same time support the sub-structure. The Keenen/Riley facade has planters sticking out through the barricades that are also part of the base building. The five main facades are lit from within with fixtures that are custom to each. Power had to be routed up to and then into each one of the facades.

The complex development of the Museum Garage perfectly reflects the developer's focus and commitment to creating a unique experience in every single detail of the development. While one could spend days

reflecting on all the details of the various artistic and architectural expressions employed on the facade, the garage also perfectly serves its primary purpose of providing parking for this rapidly expanding development.

### Different Uses

The 927-space garage includes significant retail space on the ground tier that complements the function of the surrounding development. It has a basement level with car lifts that double the capacity of this valet-only level. It is also situated directly across from the Design District museums and therefore provides visitors with a direct access to them or any one of the constantly changing destinations in the Design District.

The garage will accommodate the parking needs of this growing district for many years to come, providing an attractive and convenient parking experience for visitors from the time they arrive until they depart. However, its progressive design and corresponding entertainment and retail features perfectly complement the vibrant character and unique experience of the Miami Design District as a whole, while telling a story all its own. P



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