



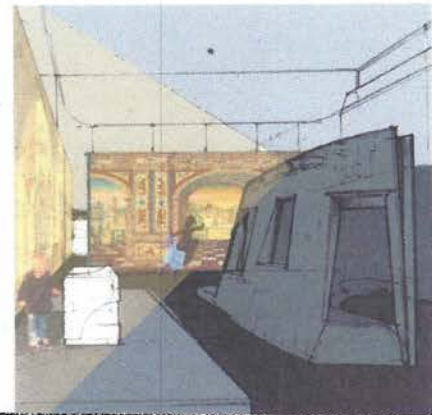
# LEARNING CUBED

## The Getty Family Room Competition

BY DANETTE RIDDLE



Winning isn't everything...unless you lose. Although competitions evoke a mixed reaction on the part of most architects—they are costly and energy consuming—the process can generate benefits beyond that of earning a commission. They shake us out of routine thought processes, and tap into a collective energy that comes from attacking a different kind of problem in a limited amount of time.



**Getty Family Room**  
Learning Cubed  
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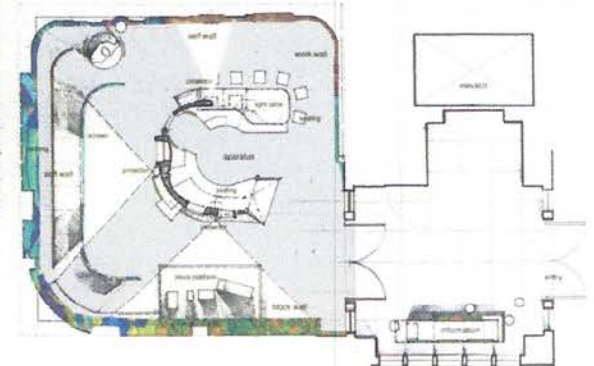
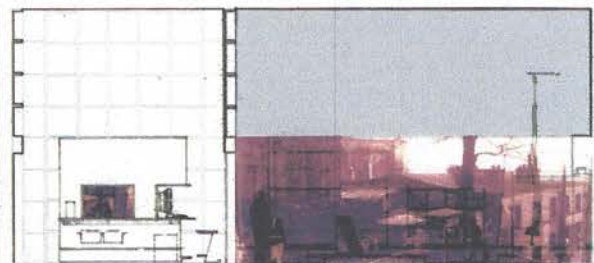
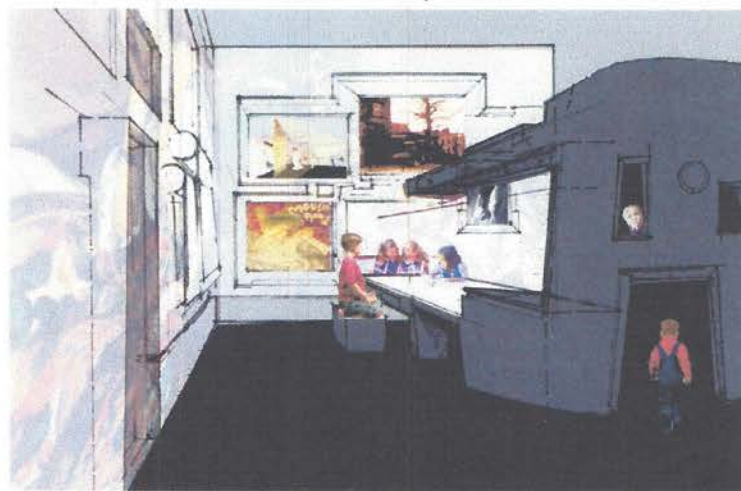
Dyke's 1621 painting of Agostino Pallavicini, Ago, acts as Family Room host and humorously delivers facts, information and observations.

(M)Arch. created an environment, part gallery and part studio, where children can explore art in an interactive and immersive way. Like a Getty gallery, it transports the visitor to a particular time and place. Like a studio, it offers a palette of possibilities and open-ended tools for exploration and expression. The walls act as a receptive "canvas"; the room is essentially blank until activated by imagery, movement, music and activity. The "Block Wall" features projected images of the built environment and consists of 3-dimensional foam shapes that can be pulled apart and

reconstructed. The "Soft Wall" is multiple layers of screen fabric extending from ceiling to floor. Projected imagery is softer, i.e., nature or bodies in motion. The layers are permeable and transparent, allowing the exploration of shadow and movement. A bench provides a place for hiding or viewing. The "Self Wall" affords a more personal investigation. Here, participants explore sculpture with alcoves behind the sculptures allowing children to climb in and gain a sense of proportion and mass. Light walls and rolls of paper along the Self Wall offer a place for drawing. The "Work Wall" is a display area containing several monitors, some of which cycle slowly through Getty works and others capture room activity.

The Apparatus in the center is part enclosure and part furniture, part aperture and part machine. Inside, participants find tiered places for sitting and looking out through the apertures cut into the walls. Outside, the Apparatus houses projectors, light sources, computers and sound equipment.

The Callas Shortridge Architects scheme derives its overall order and meaning from a playful interactive introduction to the basic art elements of Line, Shape and Volume. "Under this collective concept," Callas Shortridge describes, "we proposed interactive elements that took direct cues from the making processes of the art objects we referenced. The notion was that through playful, hands-



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