

John Zimmer
Principal

Career Summary

John Zimmer received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from Cornell University in 1991. He then pursued a series of internships that balanced Cornell's strong emphasis on design and theory with comparable training in construction technology and professional practice.

In the nineties, at Marshall/Lee Architects in San Francisco, he brought these skills to bear on designs for schools, community centers, and religious buildings. He was offered an ownership position in the firm in 1995, and continued there as a principal until 1998.

After spending a travel year studying the art and architecture of Western Europe, and working for a time with Massimiliano Fuksas in Rome, he moved to New York and joined Polshek Partnership Architects (now Ennead Architects). While there he was centrally involved in a variety of award-winning projects including concert halls, museums, theaters, and schools. He served as both senior designer and project architect for several large, complex buildings, and was made an Associate of the firm in 2005. He left in 2008 to start his own practice.

Since launching Zimmer Studio, John has developed creative solutions for building projects that vary in scale from furniture to whole city blocks. The firm's work has included new buildings, additions, and gut renovations, and has ranged from the highly urban to the deeply rural.

Other activities have included teaching a design studio at Cornell University, and serving as a guest design critic for both Cornell and Parsons New School for Design. John also recently completed the manuscripts for *Art Projekt: Site*, two novels that are the first in a series of architectural thrillers.

Design Philosophy

John creates innovative modern designs that derive from a close study of each project's unique site, program, and intentions. His process is open, flexible, collaborative, and tailored to suit different clients' particular needs.

He invariably looks for opportunities to truly transform an existing context, but sensitively, straightforwardly, sustainably, and with a minimum of means. He believes that the best designs result when equal care is given to both concept and craft, and has an abiding fascination with the intersection between abstract ideas and the making of physical things.

Education, Instruction, & Registrations

Cornell University, Bachelor of Architecture, 1991

Cornell University, Visiting Professor, 5th Year Design Studio, Fall 2007

Guest Design Critic, Cornell University and Parsons New School for Design

City College of San Francisco, Furniture Making and Design, 1996-1998

Travel Studies in Europe, 1998-1999

State of California, Architectural Registration, 1995

State of New York, Architectural Registration, 1999

Selected Project History

with Zimmer Studio, Brooklyn, NY

2008-present, as principal

- **G-Unit Headquarters**, New York, NY
A crisp urban aesthetic embodies the gritty cool of a major hip-hop record label.
- **21st Century Townhouse**, Brooklyn, NY
The traditional Brooklyn brownstone is reinterpreted to accommodate modern living, with abundant daylight and open, flowing spaces.
- **Sheraton Makeover**, New York, NY
A twenty-three story, full-block hotel is completely re-imagined with new facades, interiors, and amenities. Concept design only.
- **Forest Lake Cottage**, Hawley, PA
A rustic, “cabin-in-the-woods” sensibility was fundamental to this new weekend house in the Poconos.
- **Stonehill & Taylor Office**, New York, NY
A growing design practice is given ten thousand square feet of new office space, including a bright, open studio and several elegant conference rooms.
- **Windsor Terrace House**, Brooklyn, NY
An existing two-story single-family house is transformed into a sunny, modern home.
- **Brownstone Addition**, Brooklyn, NY
A custom sunroom, bedroom, and decks provide some breathing room on the garden side of a classic Brooklyn brownstone.
- **New Office Feasibility Studies**, New York, NY
Exploration of the architectural interpretation of G-Unit’s brand, while simultaneously studying the pros and cons of several sites for their headquarters and radio studio.
- **Storage cum Guestroom**, Brooklyn, NY
A new storage room is carved out of an unfinished basement in a nineteenth century tenement co-op. A new “(Z)Bed” (patent pending) allows the space to be conveniently converted into a guest room, complete with half-bath.
- **Tudor City Pied-a-Terre**, New York, NY
Surgical modifications and careful detailing achieve a significantly new look for a one-bedroom apartment.
- **Historic House Additions and Renovations**, Doylestown, PA
An old stone house from the early eighteen hundreds is considered for a number of careful interventions.
- **Midtown Pied-a-Terre**, New York, NY
A studio apartment is completely re-imagined to make better use of limited space, and to create separate zones of activity.

- **Farm House**, Feeding Hills, MA
A house on a working farm doubles in size, but the massing is controlled so that the charming scale of the existing structure is maintained.
- **Park Slope Co-op**, Brooklyn, NY
A two-bedroom apartment is completely reorganized with a larger living area, improved circulation, and contemporary but cozy styling.
- **Sterling Inn Restaurant**, New Rochelle, NY
Floating “clouds” create intimate spaces within a sprawling dining room, and modern objects create a lively dialogue with the historic brick shell.

with Polshek Partnership, New York, NY (now Ennead Architects)

2000-2008,

Associate, 2005-2008

As senior designer and project architect:

- **Gateway Center** Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY
A new classroom and social-space building that acts as the symbolic “front door” to the college.
 - Designed to achieve LEED Gold Certification
 - Merit Award, AIA/New York Chapter
 - High Honor Award, AIA Westchester/Hudson Valley
 - Award of Excellence, Society of American Registered Architects
- **Frank Sinatra School of the Arts** Long Island City, NY
A new high school for the performing and visual arts; cross-pollination of ideas and mixing of media is encouraged by the use of central gathering and circulation spaces.
 - AIA NYC Design Award of Merit
 - AIA New York State Excellence in Design
 - Collaboration Platinum Award, schooldesigner.com

As project architect:

- **Holland Performing Arts Center** Omaha, Nebraska
A new 2,000 seat symphony hall for the Omaha Symphony Orchestra and a 450 seat chamber music hall are at the heart of this major addition to the cultural life of Omaha.
 - Merit Award, AIA/New York State
 - Honor Award, AIA Nebraska
 - Merit Award, United States Institute of Theatre Technology

As a member of the project team:

- **Pfizer Plant Laboratory at the New York Botanical Garden** Bronx, New York
A new state-of-the-art multi-disciplinary lab designed to allow interaction among scientists, and allow flexibility in the use of space.
- **Newseum** Washington, D.C
A new museum showcasing first amendment rights and a free press, with residential and office components.
 - National Design Award, Society of American Registered Architects
- **Brooklyn Museum Entry Pavilion** Brooklyn, New York
The grand entry stair from the original Beaux-Arts building is re-imagined as a stepped glass entry pavilion.
 - Merit Award, AIA/New York State
 - Annual Award, Municipal Arts Society
 - Cultural Project of the Year, Best of 2004, New York Construction
- **Lycée Français** New York, New York
This new home for a K through 12 French school looked to the tradition of French Rationalism for inspiration; the rigor of the planning is reflected in the glass and pre-cast concrete facades.
 - Honor Award, AIA/New York State
- **Scandinavia House** New York, New York
A new pan-Scandinavian cultural center, referencing Alvar Aalto and Nordic design traditions. The building includes a theater, event spaces, galleries, and offices.

with David Smotrich and Partners, New York, NY

1999-2000, as Project Architect

- **Cranwell Resort and Spa** Lennox, MA
A new 35,000 square foot spa building at an existing resort. An indoor pool, massage and treatment rooms, and weight and aerobic training facilities were designed to provide modern therapies in a bucolic context
- **SUNY Health Science Center** Brooklyn, NY
A state-of-the-art Open MRI-assisted surgery suite formed the centerpiece of this expansion of an existing medical campus.
- **Legend Yacht and Beach Club** Legend, NY
A new boathouse and bathhouse, with approximately 30 single-family homes, that formed a new planned community on Long Island.

with Massimiliano Fuksas Architetto, Rome, Italy

1998, as staff architect

- **Stairway to the Stars** Bethlehem, Israel (Project)
A monument to peace designed for the Palestinian government. A processional stair led to a viewing platform over the city; a suq at its base was intended to provide revenue.
- **Ospedale Bolzano** Bolzano, Italy (Competition Entry)
Design for the Physical Therapy and Day Hospital wings, as part of a competition entry for a regional hospital.

with Marshall/Lee Architects, San Francisco, CA

1993-1998

As Principal, 1995-1998

- **Marinwood Community Center Expansion** San Rafael, CA
Programming and master planning of a recreational complex, design of several new buildings and swimming pools, and additions and alterations to an existing bathhouse. Built elements are dispersed across the site and incorporate diverse geometries, creating a playful, energetic ensemble.
- **Park Elementary School Additions and Alterations** Mill Valley, CA
Winner of a 1998 AIA/CASH Design Award, this modernization and preservation of a 1930's elementary school upgraded the facility to meet current educational, life-safety, and ADA standards. The historic charm of the original buildings was maintained, despite invasive modifications and an extremely tight construction schedule.
- **Office Area Renovation at St. Gabriel Convent** San Francisco, CA
Remodel of an administrative center for a Catholic parish, located on the ground floor of a convent. The design blends elements inspired by both sacred and commercial architecture, to express the way the function of the rooms straddles the religious and secular worlds.
- **District Architect** Novato Unified School District, Novato, CA
Manager of the firm's role as single-source provider of architectural services to a school district with over 100 buildings.