

TRANSFORMATION BEGINS AT CAL POLY POMONA



Career by Design

Architect Barbara Bouza's Career Does Not Include Glass Ceilings

BY MELANIE JOHNSON

Not many teens navigating the hallowed halls of high school know definitively what they want to do for a career.

Growing up in Santa Maria, **Barbara Bouza** ('85, architecture) loved art, creative problem solving, and math, and she also had an analytical side.

It wasn't until an architecture class in high school that Bouza realized she could pursue a profession that would tap into all of her passions.

"I took the course and I knew I wanted to be an architect," she says.

Bouza is the co-managing director and principal at the Los Angeles office of Gensler, the largest architecture and design firm in the world.

"I don't take for granted the many opportunities I've had," she says.

Wanting to stay in California for college, she enrolled in the architecture program at Cal Poly Pomona. The first year was a crowded field, as the program enrolled more applicants than it had room for. Bouza made it successfully through a rigorous freshman year and continued on.

"It was balanced," Bouza says of the university's program. "There was a strong focus on design and thinking creatively. It also had a practical component as well."

While a student, she interned with the Westwood-based architecture firm RBB, because the program required students to gain work experience in the field. After her internship ended, RBB hired Bouza part-time and she stayed on after graduation.

She worked a few years before deciding to head to London with husband and fellow architect Manuel Bouza ('85, architecture) to study for a year in the Architectural Association's graduate diploma program.

The couple stayed for 3½ years and worked with the internationally recognized firm Foster + Partners.

"I loved it," she says. "I encourage young people to travel and study abroad. It was a great opportunity. It was if we didn't do it then, we would never do it."

After coming back to Los Angeles, Bouza worked at Morphosis, then returned to RBB where she continued to focus on healthcare projects. One of her most memorable projects was the Alta Bates Comprehensive Cancer Center in Berkeley. The American Institute of Architects' San Fernando chapter recognized the project with a design award, and it was also featured in the publication *Architectural Record*.

She then took a job with New York-based Pei Partnership, serving as the Los Angeles point person for the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center project, a 1 million-plus square foot, eight-story replacement hospital that was built after the previous facility was damaged by the Northridge earthquake.

Gensler, aware of her talents, approached her about a career opportunity. She interviewed on a day she will never forget because it was the day after Sept. 11, 2001. She took the job and has been at Gensler's downtown Los Angeles office for 17 years, starting the firm's health and wellness practice with a couple of colleagues, as well as focusing on media, tech, science and aerospace projects.

As a principal and one of two co-managing directors, her responsibilities include ensuring a culture of design excellence, bringing in new client business and focusing on talent development and recruiting.

As co-managing director of Gensler in Los Angeles, alumna Barbara Bouza plays a role in major projects in the city, including the new Banc of California Stadium in Exposition Park (above).

The Gensler Los Angeles office, with about 600 employees and 25 summer interns, is an urban creative campus in downtown for architects, designers, planners and the community. The LEED Platinum building features flexible workspaces, a maker-model shop, wellness rooms, outdoor meeting patio, family room with a bar for coffee and snacks, and a special events space.



FUTURE continued from page 15

business and the liberal arts. STEM focuses on feasibility of ideas (i.e., is it feasible to do this based on what we know about the natural laws.) Business curriculum focuses on viability (i.e., what does this do to produce dollars? Do you have enough capital? Is it legal to do this and how can you sustain it over time?) The liberal arts curriculum focuses on what is desirable to people (i.e., what is the meaning of truth, what is the meaning of beauty, etc.)

Students should be exposed to all three components, but it appears to me that our traditional educational model prevents us from producing innovators. When students go to college and choose a major, they are isolated into expert groups on campus. To graduate innovators on a large scale, all three silos must come together.

I do not purport to have a solution on how to update our models of education. Instead, I hope to encourage conversation on why we should update our models and eventually, how to do it. Humanity requires that Cal Poly Pomona graduate individuals who can articulate and think within the three components of innovation and expertise. They will make significant contributions for the betterment of humanity and advance society on a daily basis. They will not only be prepared for the Future of Work and Human Engagement, but will also define and lead it.

“The future of work consists of learning a living.”

– **Marshall McLuhan**, professor and public intellectual

BOUZA continued from page 30

Holistic Approach

Bouza has learned that architects need to look at communities as a whole, not just the buildings. It’s a message she tries to impress upon students and younger architects.

In Gensler’s work with Netflix, understanding the client’s business has been key. Her team came to recognize that the DVD-by-mail-technology-company-turned-media-empire has a strong culture

of “freedom and responsibility” and incorporated those values in the design of several local and global projects.

“They are an amazing company, and their space needs to be able to evolve as they continue to look to the changing landscape of media platforms,” she says.

Gensler also has done a range of projects for Duarte-based City of Hope, including a medical office building, new workplace offices and a campus master plan. The firm’s strategy and brand design team helped City of Hope develop the communications and graphics materials for its Diversity and Inclusion Strategy program to best align itself to the population it serves.

“Architecture is beyond designing buildings,” she says. “You have to look at the overall client relationship. I always encourage those entering the profession to look at architecture more holistically.”

The ability to collaborate, communicate effectively and listen are as important as the practical skills related to design, she says. In an architecture class, students might work alone on a project; in the working world, it’s about collaboration and the exchange of ideas.

“So much today is about conveying an idea,” she says. “The world is less patient. You have to be quick and to the point, nimble to change and articulate. Know your audience.”



What's up?

October 6 & 7

Pumpkin Festival

A sea of orange pumpkins in every size and shape will blanket the Farm Store’s field at the annual Pumpkin Festival. Bring the family to pick the perfect gourd, wander through the corn maze, stop by the Insect Fair and enjoy other festival activities. If you can’t attend the festival, you can visit the pumpkin patch through Oct. 31.

cpp.edu/pumpkinfestival or 909-869-6722

October 19-28

Someone Gets Catfished in this Shakespeare Classic

Shakespeare penned nearly a dozen comedies, but “Twelfth Night” stands out as a masterpiece. Shipwrecked on the shores of Illyria, Viola disguises herself as a boy and works in the court of Count Orsino. He attempts to woo the unresponsive Olivia but Viola falls in love with the count, upping the stakes in this classic comedy.

cpp.edu/class/theatre-new-dance

November 1

CPP Night at Honda Center

Last year, 1,000 Broncos and friends watched a hockey game and scored an exclusive Cal Poly Pomona-Ducks hat. This year, attendees can get the limited-edition green and gold Ducks-CPP beanie. Tickets are limited, and the event will sell out.

cpp.edu/alumni/events

September 1

Cal Poly Pomona Day at the Fair

If you crave fried foods on a stick, carnival rides and farm animals, Cal Poly Pomona Day at the Los Angeles County Fair is the cure. Student clubs will display their work, and the university will be featured in the parade. You can also visit the goats, sheep and other cute animals, many of which are on loan from the Huntley College of Agriculture.

lacountyfair.com

