

California Construction

California's Top Projects

Plus:

BIM Cost Management

Sports Facilities

Los Angeles/Long Beach
Market Report

McGraw Hill
CONSTRUCTION

california.construction.com

Garden Sculpture

ValleyCrest Cos. takes palms to new heights



www.california.construction.com

ValleyCrest Design Group/Comstock Studio and Matt Construction joined together to create a three-dimensional garden sculpture along the entrance to the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the new adjacent Broad Contemporary Art Museum.

Like the many masterpieces inside the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the new adjacent Broad Contemporary Art Museum, the outside landscape, through the ideas and work of ValleyCrest Design Group/Comstock Studio, is also a piece of art.

The BCAM and its BP Grand Entrance, both designed by internationally renowned architect Renzo Piano (with Gensler serving as executive architect), opened in February. Matt Construction served as the general contractor on the project, which is another phase of a six-year effort to modernize and upgrade its offerings.

Landscape architect and fine artist Paul Comstock, principal of ValleyCrest Design



Paul Comstock

Group/Comstock Studio in Calabasas, recently oversaw what is being called an original “landscape exhibit” – the museum’s palm garden sculpture.

Working with environmental artist Robert Irwin and Piano, Comstock says the initial plan was to plant palms of only three different heights. Comstock is a self-proclaimed “wandering tree gypsy” whose encyclopedic knowledge of plants and trees is gained from expeditions to 73 different countries over a two-decade career. >>

Garden Sculpture

The award-winning designers refined their ideas over time until the concept became a three-dimensional garden sculpture, installed in a 20-ft x 20-ft grid that repeats the architectural lines of the Piano-designed campus master plan and reflects the interplay of light and shadow native to Los Angeles.

A national landscape services firm, ValleyCrest served in a design-build role to Matt Construction. The project's design-build orientation and team structure provided flexibility for the on-site artistic changes Comstock wanted to make during the course of the installation -- changes not usually feasible once the process gets underway.

"Traditional contracting relationships separate the owner, designer, the landscape contractor and general contractor," says Comstock. "It's a system that has merit and has worked well in the past, but the layers don't allow for flexibility when artistic or financial direction shifts."

He adds that with the museum's Palm Garden, the teams' design process was iterative. "We sourced and discovered exotic and tropical species in unlikely places," he



says. "When we discovered the availability of an extraordinary palm previously thought unavailable, we were able to swing into action immediately with total support from the entire design-build-owner team."

Comstock says the museum's BCAM project team actually broke new ground in landscape history by going beyond

"design-build" to what he calls "build-design."

"Everyone on the team, including the museum directors, staff, artists, architects, general and subcontractors, project managers and landscape designers joined hands in a common purpose," he says.

The design-build team structure also made it easier for Comstock to do some fine tuning, such as tilting a group of mammoth Canary Island Date Palms to make them perfectly vertical before they were anchored down. Some palms are in the ground, but most are in large wooden boxes above ground.

The palm collection has all the features of a rotating exhibit. About 40 trees will be removed as the current winter collection is changed out for the summer collection. There are also several "old souls," including three rare Chilean wine palms. The palms' patriarch is planted two floors below street level, erupting out of the parking garage where it sits in a specially-built planter. <<

**After all, if you've got
the right people there's no limit to
what you can do!**

Anaheim - Bakersfield - Coachella Valley - Emeryville - Fairfield - Fresno
Long Beach - Los Angeles - Norco - Pleasanton - Redwood City
Roseville - Sacramento - San Diego - San Francisco - San Rafael - Santa Clara
Santa Rosa - South San Diego - Van Nuys - Ventura - West Covina

**Your Project. Our People.
The Best Match!**



CARPENTERS ELECTRICIANS CONCRETE WELDERS DRYWALL HVAC PAINTERS PLUMBERS

As America's most dependable supplier of skilled tradespeople, CLP is proud to work with thousands of contractors nationwide who value hiring the best and brightest people to get the job done. In fact, we've built our reputation on recruiting the most hard-working, fast-thinking, and reliable men and women around.

AA/EQE | © 2008 CLP Resources, Inc. | M-111907-A

CLP
SKILLED TRADES SOLUTIONS
WWW.CLP.COM | 1-800-CALL-CLP