

**“KC design firm works with artists to bring new meaning to buildings and streetscapes,”  
by Sarah Mote, Kansas City Star, June 8, 2008**

James Watson and Francis Crick, Timbaland and Justin Timberlake, peanut butter and chocolate great collaborations resonate, dissolving boundaries even as they chart new frontiers. Although it may not share the historic, sonorous or even flavorful import of these epic duos, the collaboration of El Dorado architects and Kansas City artists does blur borders with a sublime harmony. El Dorado is a design and fabrication firm in Kansas City Crossroads District. As for the artists, the roster includes May Tveit, Davin Watne, Mel Ziegler, MK12, Derek Porter, James Woodfill and, most recently, Anne Lindberg.

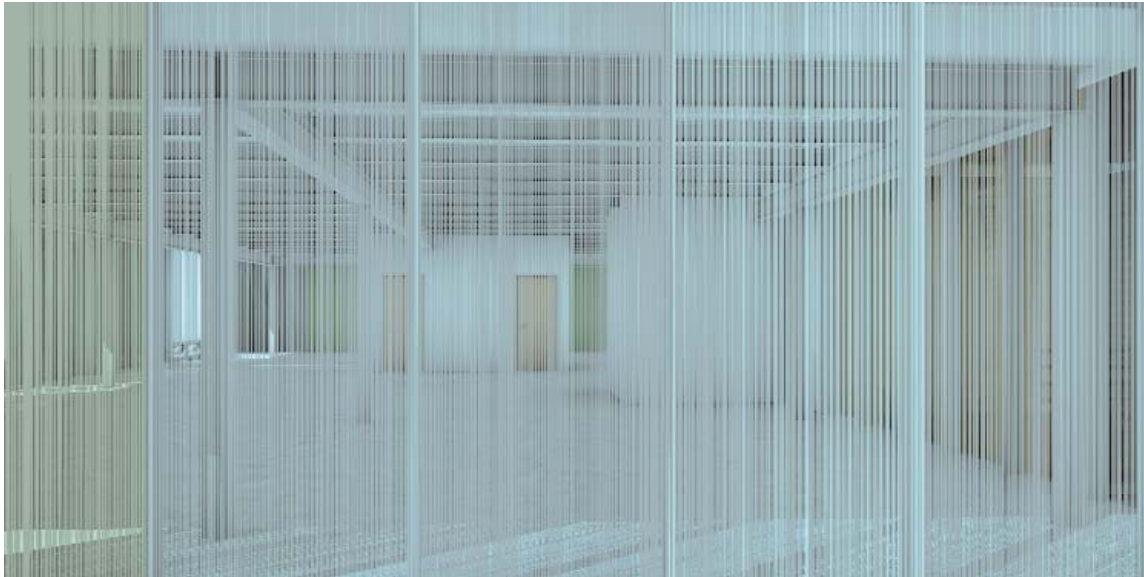
Take, for example, the El Dorado project at 75th and Washington streets in Waldo, which will feature a commissioned installation by Lindberg. The project is on the site of the former Waldo Theater, which burned to the ground in February 2007. The building's owner, Diane Botwin, of Botwin Family Partners, contacted El Dorado architects, challenging principal partner Josh Shelton to replant rather than merely rebuild the site and new building, which will be ready for tenants this month. In some ways Shelton took Botwin's challenge literally. “We were thinking about the building in terms of sustainable design,” Shelton said.

The roof, planted with grass, and the bamboo trees that line the sidewalk give the building two glass boxes an organic rhythm, punctuating its horizontal overtones with subtle vertical notes. “And we liked the idea of glass along Washington,” Shelton said, “The transparency connects the building to the neighborhood, blurring the boundaries between what happens inside and the people and patterns on the outside. But we worried about heat gain and climate control issues.” Enter Lindberg.

Botwin and Shelton had seen her show of linear graphite drawings and wispy installation of wire reeds at the Dolphin Gallery in late 2006, just a few months before the Waldo fire. With the exhibit fresh in their minds, they approached her to become part of the design team and collaborate on a custom glazing system for the second-floor windows. The result: *slips and shifts*, a 200-foot, double-paned transparent drawing of a sometimes sparse, sometimes dense field of inconstant vertical lines.

Lindberg started with a base of 10 digital drawings. She used a stylus and graphic tablet that allowed her to scale her vector drawings to the 4-by-10-foot glass panes but still afforded her control over her handmade mark. Those unique drawings were then combined and layered with three glass colors and three standardized stripe patterns to create 53 double-fritted (layered) panels that make up *slips and shifts*. Thick and nearly opaque at 75th Street, this ribbon of imagery slows down in density as it wraps the second floor and reaches the residential areas to the north. Because her drawing is in the windows, Lindberg's installation becomes part of the fabric of the building. *slips and shifts* picks up the beat Shelton established, echoing the rhythm of vertical lines in the grass roof and sidewalk landscaping. “The building has a clear sense of geometry,” said Lindberg, whose installation, she said, “adds a kind of tender, softer element that graces the building.” Certainly, art lends human scale and expression to a building that otherwise could especially in the modernist style in which El Dorado tends to work come off as cold and mechanical. Lindberg's installation, though, goes beyond decorative flourish to give the building human presence.

“It gives it personality,” Lindberg said. Shelton agrees, “It softens up the rigid lines of architectural logic,” he said, speaking of Lindberg's installation and the process of working with artists. Integrating artist into an architectural process “allows a diverse set of sensibilities into a practice that deals a lot with rigid constraints and pragmatics. It's a potent combination,” he said. “Working with artists helps me be elusive, to have a much more nuanced and playful relationship with those constraints and to reveal them in interesting ways.”



As seen in this digital rendering of the windows, Lindberg's *slips and shifts* becomes a part of the structure.

