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Tony Gale Earns USGBC Award

A lifetime of sustainable thinking LEEDS® the way

When the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) announced the 2016 Leadership Award recipient, they looked to their former Board Member and long-time partner Tony Gale. A second generation architect with 46 years of innovative and sometimes radical architectural philosophies, along with an impressive resume of projects focused on sustainability — prior to and during his 11 year tenure at Starbucks — it's no surprise that Tony is being honored with this prestigious award.

Tony was the principal owner of three award winning architectural firms and served as the City Architect for Seattle for five years. Since 2005 he's been the corporate architect for Starbucks, leading us to pioneer new ways of design and construction. For example, the [Reclamation Drive-Thru](#) in Tukwila, WA, also known as the "container store," won the first international architecture award in Starbucks history. And under Tony's leadership, in combination with many other Starbucks partners, 897 Starbucks stores in 19 countries have been LEED® certified — that's more than any other non-governmental organization in the world.

When asked about his journey and the muses that have shaped his commitment to sustainability, he gives most of the credit to his familial influences. "My grandparents instilled in me a love of nature," he shares and his father taught him that "people are central to the outcome of good architecture." His wife of many years, Johanna, substantially expanded his understanding of sustainable thinking with her experiences as a teenager living in Istanbul, Okinawa and summers on her grandmother's ranch in southern Idaho.

He spent his young summers working for his father or taking on outdoor building projects for the neighbors. All the while reading the works of Emerson and Thoreau. It was this combination of transcendentalist idealism and hands-on work that would lead to Tony's progressive thinking: placing human beings at the center of the design equation.

The first project he credits with this sustainable evolution was in 1970 when he led a student project for the Management Institute for the Training of the Underdeveloped (MITU) to design six sustainable homes on 26th and Howell in Seattle. At the time, sustainable building was practically unknown in the U.S. and he recalls having to go before the City Council to obtain 14 zoning variances for that project. Many of his own architecture professors resisted this new way of building, concerned that these Birkenstock-clad young people promoting composting toilets were destroying the field of design!

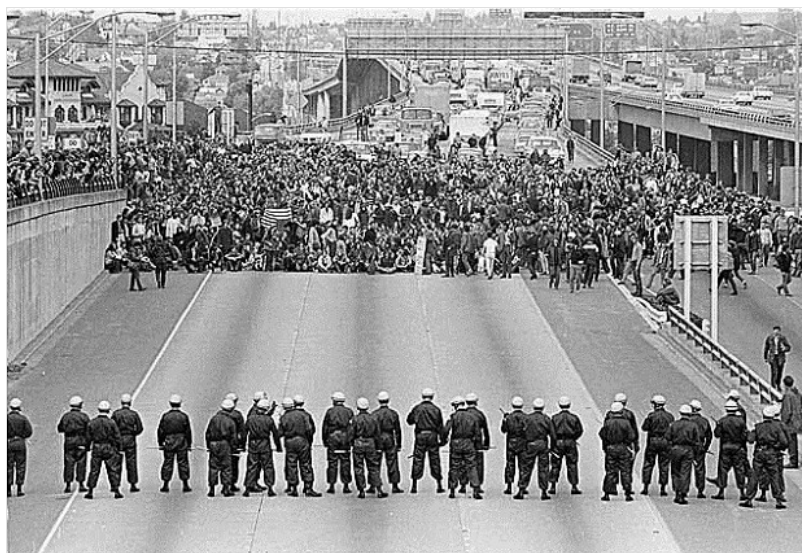


6-1,600SF Homes on 26th and Howell completed in 1970 for \$10.64/SF:
Designed by: Tony Gale (Proj Leader), Jeri Hjert, Dave Leptich & Dale Miller
with Professor Claus Saligman. Constructed by:



with Professor Claus Sengman, Constructed by.
**Management Institute for the Training of the Underdeveloped
(MITU)**

It was also a time of societal upheaval. Local construction sites were being bombed as part of a union dispute. Their site wasn't bombed, but Tony recalls the construction manager and client, Mike Ross, having to retrieve lumber stolen from the job site nearly every week. There were also widespread protests of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, which included the killing at Kent State University of unarmed college student protestors. The day after the Kent State shootings, Tony and about 3,000 other students held a protest in which they shut down the I-5 freeway through Seattle for several hours.



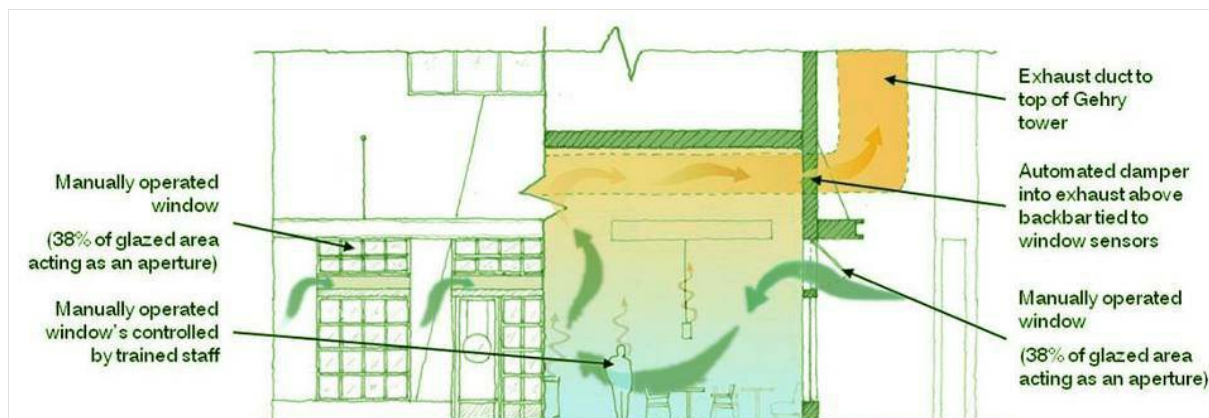
Student Protest in Seattle, May 5, 1970

Tony says wryly that when he went to architecture school, the luminaries at the time talked about their grand ideas but lacked the consideration of the human experience in those spaces. Influenced by the social and political events of the time, Tony would keep social equity central to his work throughout his career.

Many years later, he was working with a store design team that had placed the only restroom on the upper floor, accessible only by stairs. There was no regulatory requirement for accessibility in the store's locale, but he found a way to make his point: he wrote a memo titled "Stop Carrying Grandma Up the Stairs." The memo explained that people might like to take their grandmothers to tea or coffee at Starbucks, and the first time someone would have to carry their grandmother up the stairs, would be the last time she would go. When he returned to the workshop the next morning, the restroom was moved to the ground floor. Tony believes it's all about getting people to tune into a different way of thinking.

Most of Tony's solutions come from nature, a lesson learned from his friend Janine Benyus, the biologist who invented the term "biomimicry" — the practice of emulating what works in nature to create a more sustainable planet. "There's nothing new under the sun, just new combinations," Tony says.

Disney Village in Paris was a turning point in the approach to the delivery system of building at Starbucks. In this project, we traded the traditional "Design, Build" model for "Shop, Design, Build" where we learned to shop for what's available first instead of bringing or importing design elements to a space at the end. The model worked and was the beginning of our design shift at Starbucks when local relevance became the hallmark of our stores. This project also marks a pinnacle fusion of Tony's design insights. Sensors tied to the back bar act as a traffic signal for baristas to manually adjust the window and door openings. Then the summer heat is carried via natural convection into an existing 7 foot square by 54 foot tall exhaust tower (formerly used as exhibit markers in the Park. Disney found the markers out-dated and wanted them demolished), cooling the customer area of the store — effectively making our baristas the human part of the mechanical system. Tony calls this "the bicycle," but this solution operates under the same principle as a termite mound in the desert: giving credit to the ideals of biomimicry, while keeping human participation at the core of the solution. With its locally relevant design, utility cost savings and use of ingenious energy solutions, it's a store to be proud of. The proof of which is the Platinum LEED® certification it earned in 2011.





Disney Paris Cross Section

Tony promoted sustainable building design when it was regarded as the destruction of great architecture, but today it's a mark of the highest architectural standards. What does he think the next revolution will be? He doesn't hesitate before saying, "Net Zero. That's a building which generates its own power, recycles its own water and reuses its own waste." Tony's thinking continues to lead us in being performance-driven through the lens of humanity.

Thank you Tony, for always keeping the human spirit at the heart of the projects you've designed, the teams you have led and the green-forward world you are continuing to shape. Congratulations on achieving the 2016 USGBC Leadership Award. We are humbled by your achievements and proud to call you partner.