

LEVER Architecture Expands with a Home in LA's Chinatown



Members of the LA office, photographed by Paul Vu/HANA

November 10, 2022 -- [LEVER Architecture](#) is pleased to announce the opening of their dedicated office in Los Angeles, underscoring the firm's commitment to and growing presence in the region. Located in the Chinatown neighborhood, the studio is a new hub, which will enable the 15+ strong local team to support clients and projects. Developing an expanded presence in LA further cements the firm's commitment to the region and bolstering the ongoing projects in California and nationally. The LA office will be led by Founding Principal Thomas Robinson.

The new studio occupies the top floor of a two-story historic hybrid timber and brick building from 1895, where the firm is co-officing with Sherwood Design Engineers as of November 1. LEVER's nearly complete [843 N Spring Street](#), which was recently recognized with a design award from the AIA|LA, is LA's first large scale mass timber building and visible from the roof deck. Walkable to Union Station, the Gold Line Metro, and Los Angeles State Historic Park, the office is centrally located in an urban heart of Los Angeles where design and culinary experimentation coincide.

LEVER's roots in LA began in 2009 with the firm's very first project, the design of the Digital Animation Studio and Campus for Disney in Glendale. Other leading creative clients followed including the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences, increasing in scale to today's projects such as [NBCU's](#) new 430,000 sf campus in Universal City, and multiple creative office and adaptive re-use projects.



843 N Spring Street, rendering courtesy of LEVER Architecture

“Expanding in Los Angeles allows us to connect closely with our clients at the local level and participate significantly with the unique design culture of the city,” says Thomas Robinson, founding principal of LEVER Architecture. “We look forward to forging new connections and collaborative opportunities. We are excited to contribute to the culture of experimentation and open-mindedness of architecture and design in LA.”

LEVER has assembled a team with diverse backgrounds and complimentary strengths who excel at creating spaces that empower innovative design and art in all of its forms. This radical practicality is embedded into the design and research process at LEVER, where the team creates buildings that culturally feel part of the established landscape and socially address issues of climate change and equity. Research, experimentation, a commitment to the art of building, a thoughtful approach to making are all integral to the culture of creativity, both in LA and in the studio.

“LEVER is a perfect fit for Los Angeles; the studio excels at not only experimental, forward-thinking design, but also developing a sense of place-making through its architecture in an effortlessly intentional and elegant way,” says client, Ed Chuchla, Chief Real Estate Officer of NBCUniversal.



NHERI Shake Table Testing @ UCSD, progress photos by Paul Vu/HANA

LEVER is excited to share the timber expertise and research cultivated in Portland with Southern California. The team is bringing 7+ years of working with mass timber to an [unprecedented research project](#) currently taking place at UC San Diego. As the architect on a team led by NHERI and the National Science Foundation, a 10-story tower constructed entirely of mass timber will explore the resiliency of tall timber buildings in earthquakes via tests on the nation's largest shake table.

"Our LA team is focused on expanding into public and institutional projects where we can add value with our innovation and equity-centered design approach, creating architecture for a broader audience," Director of Business Development Sigita Moran shares LEVER's outlook for the future. "Making architecture that empowers creative work is what we love and what we do best."

You can find the LEVER team at

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