Jenda (John) A. Michl

RA, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP

Senior Consultant

Mr. Jenda Michl is a licensed architect with over 20 years of professional experience prior to joining ESi as a Forensic Architect. His investigations identify whether, what, where, how, and most importantly why a construction defect or dispute occurred, along with how best to proceed. Law offices, owners, and insurers rely on his assessments, reports, opinions, and designs during all phases of construction and use. His NCARB certification expedites reciprocal licensure in any state or territory.

Since joining ESi, Mr. Michl's investigations have included wildfire, building envelope, and construction defects, as well as more complex matters requiring clarity of facts and responsibilities regarding product specification, code analysis, standard of care, safety, and much more, on cases valued up to $300M.

Prior to ESi, Mr. Michl founded and owned a firm for seven years, was a design principal for four years, directed another firm's LA office for three years, and worked for a general contractor for three years. He cut his teeth as a designer at award-winning firms in Los Angeles, Boston, and Dallas, and framed houses in Colorado. He regularly used his knowledge of the code to negotiate past plan check and inspector resistance. He has experience in publicly funded construction as well as various flavors of semi-public. Project experience includes hospitality, healthcare, education, factory-built/modular, museum, historic, adaptive re-use, urban planning, offices, multifamily, custom homes, and more.

Mr. Michl is particularly adept at conceptual and schematic design, QC, conflict de-escalation and negotiation. He has also consulted as an advisor, manager, and representative for owners and developers for a wide variety of project sizes and types.

Mr. Michl often collaborates with experts in other disciplines such as chemistry, biomechanics, materials science, explosions, and security, to name a few. They rely on his architectural project management, code, regulation, and construction expertise to apply their data to construction sites and the built environment.

Education

M. Architecture (Honors). University of Texas at Arlington. 2006

BA, Environmental Studies (Honors). Eckerd College, FL. 2002

Contact Information

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ESi Santa Ana

Areas of Specialization

- Construction Defect Investigations
- Cause & Origin Investigations
- Damage Assessments & Repair Solutions
- Building Code Analysis & Regulatory Compliance
- Expert Witness & Litigation Support
- Standard of Care Analysis
- Project Neutral, Dispute Resolution
- Architectural Design & Evaluation
- Peer Review, Design Management
- Conceptual Design & Evaluation
- Site Design & Evaluation
- Building Envelope Investigations
- ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Compliance and Design
- First Party Property Claims
- Prefab & Factory Built Construction
- Sustainable Design & Construction
- Slip, Trip, & Fall Investigation

Licenses & Certifications

- State of Washington, Architecture License 25034645
- State of Minnesota, Architecture License 65346
- NCARB Certification 116598
- LEED AP since 2006, GBCI 0010040337

Languages

- English, Czech

Positions Held

Engineering Systems Inc., Orange County, California

- Senior Consultant, 2024 – Present

Chelsea Design Group, Los Angeles, California

- Design Principal 2020 – 2023

AB Design Studio, Los Angeles, California

- Studio Director, Project Manager, 2016 – 2020

Vertu Studio Inc., Los Angeles, California

- Founder and Owner, 2009 – 2016

FEI Enterprises Inc. (General Contractor), Los Angeles, California

- Project Engineer, LEED AP, 2009 – 2012

Randall Stout Architects, Los Angeles, California

- Designer, 2008

Charles Rose Architects, Boston, Massachusetts

- Designer, 2008

Grant Studio Architects, Boston, Massachusetts

- Designer, 2007

Shipley Architects, Dallas, Texas

- Intern, 2005 – 2006

Professional Affiliations/Honors

American Institute of Architects (AIA)

- Los Angeles Chapter - 2x8 Committee volunteer
  - Committee chair in 2019, vice chair in 2018, member and exhibit designer in 2017
- AIA National Convention, 2016
  - Worked with the AIA to develop a talk on evolutionary solvers as an architectural design tool

Los Angeles County Bar Association (LACBA)

- Member, Real property section

University of Southern California (USC)

- Substitute design studio instructor, USC School of Architecture, 2019

Architectural Schools — Invited Design Reviewer, 2008-Present

- Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCIarc)
- University of Southern California (USC)
- Art Center College of Design
- Woodbury University
- Otis College of Art and Design
- Los Angeles Trade – Technical College (LATTC)
- Roger Williams University
- Boston Architectural Center

Building Bridges Art Gallery at Bergamot Station, Santa Monica, CA

- Curator and creative director of the Hidden ARTifacts exhibit celebrating the design process, 2015

Project Experience

Forensic Investigations

Design, Permitting, Entitlement, and Code Compliance

- Assessed whether a major municipality rightfully gave preferential priority, approvals, and entitlements to its own affiliates, and the damages to neighboring property owners. Reviewed plans, codes, policies, communications, and timelines to assess. Ongoing.
- Investigated disputes of design intent and professional responsibilities of architects, owners, and builders relative to tenant improvements. Analyzed plans, contracts, approvals, communications, codes, policies, and professional obligations. Resulted in a favorable settlement.

- Assessed for alleged non-compliant construction regarding foundations, structural system, framing, insulation, and metal siding. Ongoing.

Construction Defect Claims

- Collaborated with ESi Chemistry consultants on an investigation of mass paint failure at a stadium within a year of application. Reviewed communications, submittals, product specifications, application instructions, purchase orders, change orders, and drawings to identify how and when an incompatible paint was substituted. Findings resulted in a favorable settlement.
- Inspected and determined the cause of systemic window failure at a multifamily property. Ongoing.
- Investigated allegations of construction quality involving water-resistant barriers, air barriers, wood siding, flashing, penetrations, and exhaust locations to a home constructed with minimal and inconsistent drawings and specifications. Ongoing.
- Collaborated with an ESi Structural Engineer to provide architectural repair instruction for decorative elements which were detaching from a building, leading to human safety risks as well as water intrusion. Repair designs implemented.

Injury Claims from Design and Construction

- Allegations of burns leading to amputation due to artificial turf. Reviewed designs, medical reports, product specifications and documentation, code compliance, and the heat transfer properties of various materials in consultation with ESi Materials Science & Medical Consultants. Findings led to a favorable settlement.
- Investigated the fall of a laborer from a scissor lift leading to death, in collaboration with an ESi OSHA consultant. Reviewed jobsite safety protocols and execution, communications and records, professional responsibilities, safety labels, manuals, equipment, interviews, and depositions. Findings led to a favorable settlement.

Insurance claim investigations

- Conducted and authored reports on multiple wildfire damage investigations involving smoke, toxins, wind damage, heat damage, structural damage, and window and door damage.
- Conducted hail damage roof inspection.
- Investigated a claim involving overflowing sump pumps when there was no precipitation or other evident source of water. Identified damage to the irrigation system as the water source, despite an attempted cover-up by the property manager.

Architectural Work

Lease-Leaseback Integrated Project Delivery for a Joint Powers Authority client

- Led a $20 million full renovation and courtyard creation in a 50,000 sqft office building, Cerritos, CA, 2024
- Public-private partnership with a guaranteed maximum price

Healthcare

- Led the design, scheduling, and budgeting for a proposal awarded $19.2 million for construction by Los Angeles County at a Hospital and Mental Health Center, 2023
- Produced permit and construction drawings for VA medical clinic build-outs in Texas and Wyoming, 2019

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance

- Led ADA compliant design, drawing production, and permitting for 50+ projects, 2017-2023

Women's Shelters, Los Angeles

- Led the redesign and entitlement of a women's shelter including new factory-built units, 2023
- Led the renovation of all units and public spaces for two other women's shelters, 2022

Development Planning

- Shortlisted by LA Metro (landowner): Development proposal for 3+ acres in Venice, CA., 2019
- Designs for the adaptive re-use of a 600,000sf factory were used by WestPac Development to secure entitlements and zoning modifications. San Luis Obispo, CA., 2019
- Urban redevelopment plan spanning miles of downtown Lansing, MI, for WestPac Development. Included street modifications, shuttle service, rezoning, parks, and re-use of massive GM factories, 2018
- Designs and concepts utilized to secure approval for the addition of hundreds of student housing units to create a mixed use development in East Lansing, MI for WestPac Development, 2017 & 2019
- Researched and authored highest and best developmental reports for properties, 2016-2020

Shipping Container Architecture

- Produced permit and construction drawings for multiple structures utilizing modified shipping containers, 2016-2024

GC and Construction Work

- Topanga Public Library, Project Engineer and LEED AP at FEI Enterprises Inc., 2009-2012
- Designed and general contracted Sparadise, a tenant improvement in West Hollywood, CA, 2014
- Residential remodel design consulting for general contractors and owners, 2023-2024

Industry Accolades

Design Recognition

- Venice Biennale of Architecture, 2016 – Invitation to exhibit at "Space Time Existence" by Global Art Affairs
- "Perfectly Imperfect, Imperfectly Perfect," M. Price. Project Feature, PIIP Press, ISBN 978-0-615-95623-7, Library of Congress 2014908275, Page 233, 2014
- LA Magazine "Taking the Plunge," Story about my Melody Lounge bar project, page 50, July 2013

- US Glass, Metal, and Glazing, “Glass Awning” – Feature article, pages 48 & 49, July 2012
- Architects’ Guide to Glass and Metal, “The Glass Awning” – Page 8, February 2012
- Tesla, Santa Monica Showroom – Exhibit of the Flexsit Bench furniture prototype, 2011
- Architecture + Design Museum, Los Angeles – Exhibit of the Flexsit Bench furniture prototype, 2011
- LA Times Brand X pop-up Gallery – Won a competition to design and deliver a pop-up gallery constructed of waste materials generated by the LA Times installed at 5 locations, 2010
- Whole Foods, Nationwide – 150 product display racks designed and fabricated utilizing only materials diverted from the waste stream, 2009

Publicity & Credits

- KCRW (NPR) DnA by Frances Anderton – “5 things to do this week” publicity for an exhibition of the architectural design process I produced and curated at the Bergamot Station Art Galleries, 2015
- “Unchained Reaction” on the Discovery Channel – Led the winning team in a week-long Rube Goldberg machine building competition, Episode 5, 2012
- Architizer Design Clinic Doctor – Dwell on Design, 2010 and 2011
- “Eco Luxury Designs: Three Designers You Should Know” – Diamondgirlmedia, 2011
- Dwell.com – Landing page main feature, August 2011
- “How to be Remarkable” by Colin Wright, Guest author, Page 86, ASIN B0DSZYFDHX, 2011

Presentations

“How to make COVID-19 Your Most Creative Time,” MTS Development, Los Angeles, June 10, 2020.

“Applications of Grasshopper + Galapagos, Evolutionary Iteration Design Modeling,” BIL Conference, 2015.

“Past and Future of Architectural Technology,” Southern California Design Symposium, 2014.

“Evolutionary Modeling in Architecture,” Mindshare LA Showcase, 2014.

“Morphoecological Design,” BIL Conference, 2013.