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Vol. 19 No. 2
February/March 2019
concretedecor.net

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Publisher's Letter



Dear Readers,

If you attended the 2019 World of Concrete in Las Vegas, I hope you took the time to visit Decorative Concrete LIVE! This is the third year *Concrete Decor* has hosted this outdoor event. Based on the response from attendees, it's one of the top attractions on their list.

A challenging part of this event is taking the diverse range of products that exhibitors offer and turning them into practical, creative and inspiring applications for a show with worldwide influence. This event wouldn't happen without products and it definitely wouldn't happen without a knowledgeable and talented team of artisans doing the work. Pages 8-11 showcase our 2019 sponsors and the results of this year's Decorative Concrete LIVE! but I want to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to the men and women whose work made it all happen:

Emil Gera, Matt Sampson, Matthew Desurne, Sam Syvrud, Aaron Knox, Hugo Arias, Jeremiah Point, Scott Kummer, Ben Wiese, Cindee Lundin, Shellie Rigsby-Cordell, Rick Lobdell, Tim Maloney, Debbie Ohland, Gregg Hensley, Jesse Watt, Jeff Szalony, Dustin Thornley, Meg Webb, Sheri Mikkelsen, Mike Schwab, Paul Wilson, Mark Haen, Danny Carrillo, Marty O'Mara, Johanne Leclair, Arlene Mazzocco Gallitto and Anthony Kurowski. If anyone is missing here, please know that you're all appreciated!

Added thanks to Jack and Lindsey Christianson at Concrete Accessories for providing space at their store for material deliveries before the show. Plus, WOC show management along with Sue Basham and Rick Yelton provided preshow and on-site support that simply made everything run smoothly.

It takes a lot of people to make big things happen in the concrete industry. I salute these hard-working folks who felt the muscle pain and sleep deprivation that tend to accompany the effort that goes into a production like this.

Up next, our sights are focused on the 2019 Concrete Decor Show in Arlington, Texas. We're assembling one of the best educational programs we've ever developed and are filling the exhibit hall roster with companies that'll help you run profitable businesses for years to come.

If asked what's the single most-important tool in this industry, I'd reply people. We need one another to deliver quality and we need one another's support to ensure business success.

Let's plan to regroup in Arlington this fall when the Concrete Decor Show showcases the best of the best in architectural and decorative concrete. For now, enjoy the magazine!

Sincerely,

Bent Mikkelsen
Publisher

On the cover: Arlene Mazzocco Gallitto, an artist from Cleveland, Ohio, who helped Cindee Lundin with this year's concrete mosaic for Decorative Concrete LIVE!, tweaks a design for one of the corner pieces.

Photo by Stacey Enesey Klemenc



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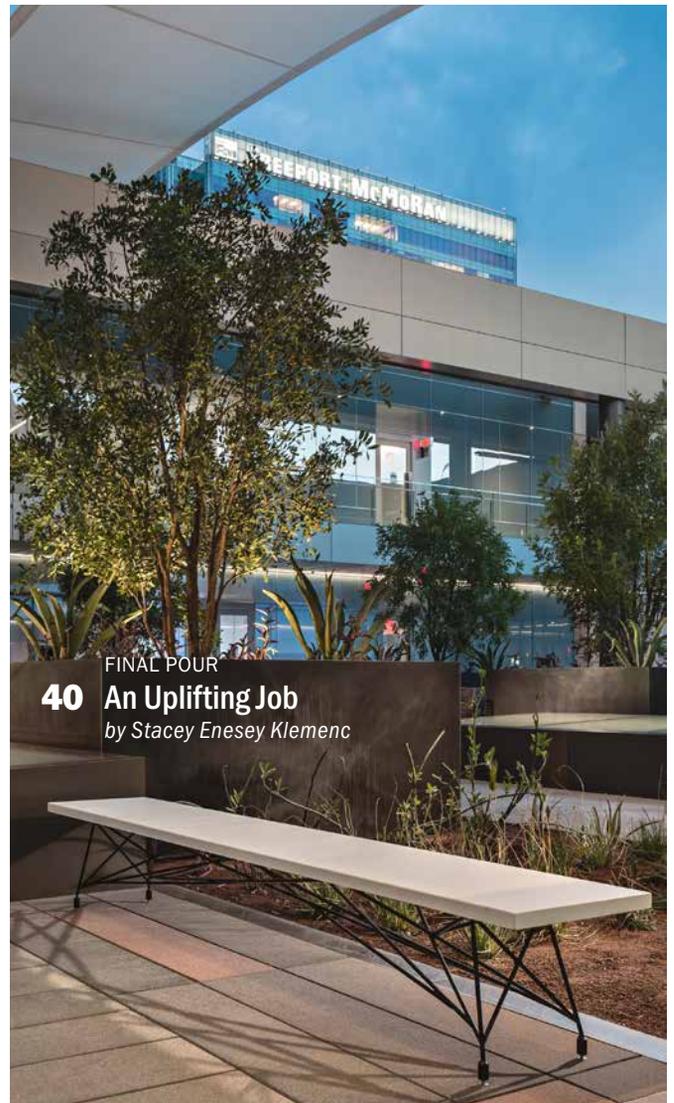


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Greg Iannone is sales manager -- Western region for Solomon Colors/Brickform. He has worked in the concrete construction industry for more than 30 years and has provided training seminars throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico, as well as Mexico and Japan. He can be reached at (801) 376-6750 or giannone@solomoncolors.com. See Greg's article on page 34.



As the co-owner of The Art of Concrete LLC out of Denver, Colorado, **Karen Keyes** has found her niche in the industry exploring the creative side of building and designing with concrete. She helps owners, architects and landscape architects design decorative concrete palettes to enhance space and its community. Reach her at karen@theartofconcretellc.com. See Karen's article on page 12.



Rick Lobdell, a classically trained artist with a master's in fine arts in painting from the Savannah College of Art and Design, has also studied math and drafting. In this series, the owner of Concrete Mystique Engraving in Tennessee will explain how he conceives his well-known designs. He can be reached at rick@concretemystique.com. See Rick's column, "Design Theory," on page 30.

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Rechargeable digital levels hit market

Milwaukee Tool continues to develop new technology for enhanced job-site productivity with the introduction of Redstick digital levels with Pinpoint measurement technology. With a 360-degree full-color display, the new levels are powered by Milwaukee's rechargeable USB Redlithium battery. In about an hour, batteries can be fully recharged either in the product or separately with a charger.

The new family of levels feature an advanced calibration process that's accurate to .03 degrees. Built to protect that accuracy for the life of the product, they also have a frame that's 25 percent stronger than the company's box levels.

Measurements can be easily read through numeric, graphic, color and audio information on the level's high-resolution display. In addition to a Fine Mode the levels also include a unique Pin Mode which allows users to lock in an exact measurement and replicate that measurement in real-time on the display.

Levels are available as 14-, 24-, 48- and 72-inch models.

[\(800\) 729-3878](tel:8007293878)

www.milwaukeetool.com

CRSI releases Rebar Reference app

The Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute recently released the "Rebar Reference" mobile app which has been designed as a ready reference guide for common reinforcing steel data and information.

ASTM standard rebar specifications are provided including sizes, diameters, areas and weights along with typical hook details. Minimum yield and minimum tensile requirements per ASTM are also included. Industry standard bar markings for inch-pound rebar are illustrated for grades 40, 50, 60, 75, 80, 100 (A615), 100 (A1035) and 120.

Links to CRSI's online offerings (resource materials, Rebar U, CRSI website) are also incorporated.

Future releases will include steel mill bar marks and sizes, and a field inspection module including information on concrete cover, types of ties, tolerances and lap splices.

The app is available in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store for iOS and Android devices.

www.crsi.org

Restoration cleaner simplifies process

A new restoration cleaner from Prosoco simplifies the masonry cleaning process for buildings made with multiple materials and substrates.

Sure Klean ReVeal is formulated to clean atmospheric and carbon staining from most kinds of masonry and stone, including architectural concrete block, concrete, fired clay, granite, sandstone, slate and unpolished limestone, marble and travertine.

It can also remove soiling and hard-to-remove deposits, such as white scum, from window glass and is safe for use around most architectural metals. This feature virtually eliminates the need to specially protect and cover nonmasonry substrates and materials during the cleaning process.

Safer and less corrosive than conventional restoration cleaners based on hydrofluoric acid or ammonium bifluoride, ReVeal comes in liquid form, rather than a gel. It has low odor and is nonfuming.

ReVeal is available in 1-gallon and 5-gallon pails and 55-gallon drums. It's compliant in all jurisdictions for sale and use.

www.prosoco.com

Dust-control sprayer helps avoid violations

To combat silica dust, SMK Sprayers has created the Silica Dust-X sprayer, a new battery-powered sprayer to be used with saw blades as an integrated water-delivery system. It's OSHA-compliant in outdoor, indoor and enclosed job sites.

Respirable crystalline silica is created when cutting, sawing, grinding, drilling and crushing stone, rock, concrete, brick, block and mortar. Activities such as abrasive blasting with sand; sawing brick or concrete; sanding or drilling into concrete walls; grinding mortar; manufacturing brick, concrete blocks, stone countertops or ceramic products; and cutting or crushing stone result in worker exposures to respirable crystalline silica dust.

When using a handheld power saw, one OSHA-approved operating method is to use a saw equipped with an integrated water system that continuously feeds water to the blade to keep the dust from getting into the air. The new battery-operated Silica Dust-X sprayer does just that.

About 2.3 million people in more than 600,000 workplaces in the U.S. are exposed to silica dust at work which is linked to many serious, sometimes fatal, illnesses. These include silicosis, lung cancer, tuberculosis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Last year, OSHA imposed the new silica regulation to limit employee exposure to crystalline silica. The rule went into full effect June 23, 2018.

Not only does the new sprayer comply with OSHA guidelines, but it will also help save on labor cost as this product only needs one operator, not two. Plus, Silica Dust-X can be paired with a 5-gallon bucket instead of a 3-gallon container.

www.smksprayers.com

New in-floor heating system launches

Ardex Americas, a system solution provider for specialty building products, recently launched an in-floor radiant heating system, Flexbone Heat.

A comprehensive, single-source heating system, Flexbone Heat combines precision German engineering with inspired design. The system includes three major components: a membrane, heat cables and a thermostat.

The membrane is a three-in-one solution for heating, uncoupling and waterproofing. Compared to other systems, it has less air space under the membrane for faster, more efficient heating.

The cables are manufactured to the highest safety and quality standards with aluminum tubing and FEP cable insulation. The cold/hot junction is self-contained in the cable. There are 34 cable sizes available in both 120-volt or 240-volt.



Finally, there are three options available for Flexbone Heat thermostats, including an enabled option. Each system includes two floor sensors, one with the thermostat and one with the heat cable.

The Ardex in-floor heating systems are ideal for all types of tile, stone and other manufacturer-approved floor coverings.

When installing the system, you can also qualify for Ardex's 10-year complete system warranty.

www.ardexamericas.com

Mini-four stroke engine line expands

The all-new Honda GX50 general-purpose engine expands the company's mini-four stroke lineup with a lightweight model that offers high output — extending into more demanding commercial and rental applications.



The new engine, for sale to power equipment OEMs, is quieter and features reduced vibration over a comparable two-stroke engine, pairing greater user comfort with top-class performance.

With low emissions and excellent fuel efficiency, the engine incorporates an easy-to-start recoil that reduces the pulling force required to start the engine. Featuring a compact and lightweight design, the GX50 is the first Honda four-stroke model in the two-horsepower class that is 360-degrees inclinable during operation and storage.

The new GX50 incorporates a higher displacement, making it an ideal power match for demanding rental, industrial, construction and professional landscape applications. It can be used to power products ranging from brush cutters, rammers and vibrators to concrete screeds, post drivers and winches.

www.engines.honda.com

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White cement with new binder debuts

Cementir Holding recently launched Aalborg Extreme Light 120, the new generation of premixed Ultra-High Performance Concrete (UHPC) with Aalborg White cement and sustainable binder technology. As an innovation-leading company in the white cement industry, Cementir Holding is committed to producing high-quality products in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.

The white cement product is based on Cementir Holding's recently patented sustainable binder technology, Futurecem. It offers the advantages of pozzolanic reactions without the addition of waste materials from other industries to minimize the impact on the environment.

Extreme Light 120 displays a high whiteness but it can be colored and it can accept a customized selection of fibers. The robust UHPC mix has high viscosity, but excellent, high-flow properties with an open time suited for industrial use.

The shrinkage-reduced, ready-to-use, self-compacting UHPC is viable to the design and manufacture of thin and lightweight, high-strength concrete products like façades, cladding, sun screens, garden ornaments or furniture. Binder, admixtures and aggregates are included. Only water should be added during mixing.

www.cementirholding.it

Interface makes wheel change a snap

Bosch recently introduced a new interface feature to speed up the time it takes to change wheels on a grinder.

The metal-cutting and grinding abrasive wheels with the X-Lock mount allow wheels to be changed three times faster than conventional interfaces. The wheels are ejected with a lever pull and firmly connected without having to use a spanner wrench or flange nuts. An audible snap tells the user that the wheel is installed securely on the tool.

The X-Lock accessories not only provide faster change-out for grinders with X-Lock mounts, but most are backward compatible with standard 7/8-inch mounts. High-quality wheels will cover core grinding applications including but not limited to bonded discs, flap discs, wire wheels and diamond blades.

www.boschtools.com

(877) 267-2499

Sprayer/water supply system increases productivity

Milwaukee Tool's new M18 Switch Tank interchangeable sprayer and water supply system promises to up productivity for commercial and residential concrete contractors. The tank, which connects to a powered base, delivers instant, constant and adjustable pressure with no manual pumping.

The system features a backpack frame with wide straps for comfort. Thanks to an interchangeable tank system design, users can easily add on or replace any of the compatible tanks to eliminate cross-chemical contamination. This feature also allows them to simply replace the tank only versus the entire sprayer or water supply. The unit comes with a standard 4-gallon tank.

Designed to meet the needs of concrete contractors, the 4-gallon backpack concrete sprayer delivers constant and adjustable pressure up to 120 psi and a 25-foot spray distance.

The tank is built to be compatible with concrete chemicals and features a dual-diaphragm pump and Viton seals for longer pump life and increased durability. In addition, a wide mouth opening allows for easier pouring and a strainer filters debris from getting into the tank. When equipped with an M18 battery, it provides up to 12 tanks of spraying per charge.

www.milwaukeetool.com

Flooring tool simplifies specifying, ordering process

Laticrete recently introduced its Resinous Flooring Estimator, a state-of-the-art online tool for construction professionals using Spartacote products for their floor coating projects. The new tool allows the general public and authorized Laticrete distributors to specify their floor or wall area, receive a detailed estimate of the individual components of any Spartacote system, quantities and optional accessories, and place an order to be shipped directly from Laticrete in a few quick steps.

Laticrete combined its existing estimation tool with an online ordering system to create a brand-new project estimation experience. It provides a direct purchase path to speed up the entire ordering process and helps introduce high-performance products to customers that may not have known about them previously.

www.laticrete.com/estimator

Concrete line gets new look

Sherwin-Williams has updated its concrete and masonry line to help make selecting products for projects even easier, while retaining formulas that pros can rely on. The new system consists of 19 Loxon and Conflex product solutions, conveniently color-coded to specify each use.

Preparation products will now be noted with a blue chevron at the top of the label, with finishing products in green and specialty products in purple.

www.swconcretecoatings.com



Sealer guards against water and salt

To keep unwanted water and salt penetration at bay, W.R. Meadows has introduced Pentreat 244-40. The water-repellant penetrating sealer offers 40 percent active content silane to help reduce water and chloride ion infiltration, a leading cause of scaling, spalling and freeze-thaw damage on concrete structures. The sealer is an excellent choice to reduce water and chloride ion ingress and improve freeze-thaw damage.

This high-performance, breathable, penetrating sealer is designed for use on new and existing horizontal and vertical concrete and masonry above-grade surfaces. It's ideal for use on such things as parking structures, driveways, plazas, stadiums, bridge decks, piers and ramps.

The sealer chemically bonds to the substrate, reducing liquid absorption while allowing vapor transmission. In addition to being a superior water-repellant sealer, it can help extend the life of treated surfaces while keeping the substrate cleaner. For areas with strict VOC regulations, Pentreat 244-40 OTC is available.

www.wrmeadows.com

Polyurethane hybrid made for parking decks

Extend the life of your parking decks with Aquafin's Pro-Tekt — a fluid applied, multilayer traffic membrane that provides the ultimate safeguard against elements that can damage concrete. The waterproof, vapor-proof and low-odor coating will protect surfaces from spalling, freeze/thaw damage, and chemicals commonly encountered on pedestrian and car parking decks, such as salt, chlorides, automotive fuels and oil.

Backed by a 10-year limited warranty from Dow and Aquafin, the product features a high-aggregate, slip-resistant finish that provides traction even when wet for pedestrians and cars on parking garage ramps. Its fast set and cure times ensure return to service within a few hours of coating. It also can earn LEED credits.

www.aquafin.net

Product aids grinding, densifies in one step

First Cut with Densifier, a new product from Prosooco, cuts significant time out of the grinding and polishing process by combining two steps into one for wet-grind applications.

The product makes the grinding and polishing process more efficient by moving the slurry solids away from the diamond tooling, while also densifying the concrete. This allows contractors to grind and densify floors at the same time, eliminating the need to wait for a floor to be clean and dry before densifying. As a result, contractors can cut up to 40 percent of time out of the entire process.

First Cut with Densifier can be used with traditional walk-behind grinders or power-trowel machines.

This most recent addition to the Consolideck line of concrete flooring products is in response to the growing popularity of using power-trowels for grind-and-polish jobs over the last few years.

First Cut with Densifier, which works on new or existing concrete, comes ready to use. Easy to apply with a low-pressure sprayer, it's VOC-compliant, nonflammable and nontoxic.

www.prosooco.com

(800) 255 4255

Patent awarded for cove molding

Christopher J. O'Brien, CEO of Easycove, a division of J&J Services Group Inc., a manufacturer of uniquely engineered pre-formed coving products for the resinous flooring industry, has been granted a patent for his technical invention of cove base molding.

The patent, titled "Cove Base Molding Systems and Methods" (US 14/964,561), relates to the application of adhesive to the bond channels thereby securing the cove lengths to the wall, including the cove anchor to ensure adhesion to the floor/wall interface. 

www.easycove.com



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Decorative Concrete LIVE! Showcases the Power of Concrete

THE third annual Decorative Concrete LIVE! at World of Concrete 2019 showcased a power-packed mix of the latest technologies in products, tools and equipment for residential, retail and commercial projects.

With demonstrations throughout the show, artisans from around the country wowed the contractors, architects and other visitors who numbered better than 5,000 with the many ways concrete can add beauty, sustainability, resiliency and energy efficiency to building projects.

This year, artisans focused on how decorative and architectural concrete can positively contribute to the wants and needs of an increasingly energy-minded society by using concrete below ground, on the surface, up the walls and in areas in between.

Insulated concrete forms — cast-in-place, reinforced concrete-filled building blocks — returned as a key component for today’s sustainable building practices. “There’s not a better way to tie decorative concrete products to energy-efficient building systems than with ICFs,” says Bent Mikkelsen, show organizer and publisher of *Concrete Decor*.

Artisans installed a variety of finishes both decorative and durable, including cementitious materials and lightweight stucco, on the ICF walls provided by Fox Blocks, the show’s builder partner. “These engineered products also offer vertical carving mixes a new market opportunity.”

And the versatile building blocks aren’t just limited to straight walls and 45- and 90-degree angles, he adds, as was proven by a round window crafted with ICF system components.

An air-heated radiant floor system from Legalett made to be installed in concrete slabs educated visitors on an alternative method to heat buildings. “No longer just a golden opportunity for



decorative concrete applications, these slab-on-grade concrete floors can also greatly contribute to creating an energy-efficient building envelope,” Mikkelsen notes.

Artisans in charge

Heading up this year’s dedicated team of artisans was **Emil Gera** of Gera Concrete in Pennsylvania.

“Small towns are often known for producing football legends, but they should also be recognized for the talent they bring to the concrete industry,” Mikkelsen says. “Emil’s humble leadership and ability to move a team of artisans to the finish line is just one reason he deserves industry recognition for his work at this year’s Decorative Concrete LIVE!”

Gera’s right-hand man, **Matt Sampson** from Florida, also is due accolades for his tireless efforts and dedication for a job well done, Mikkelsen adds. The dynamic duo was among the first to arrive each day and the last to put away the trowel.

Cindee Lundin of Arizona donated her time and talent to this year’s showcase with a project she dreamed up named “Sustaining Life.” Mikkelsen has nothing but praise for her and her trio of dedicated helpers. “When you ask Cindee to do her thing, that’s all you have to do because she not only knows the products of this industry, she knows how to make them perform in ways that simply push their boundaries.”

Notable demonstrations included:

- **Danny Carrillo** and his aides showed how applying proven materials with tools and equipment from Graco, the show’s tooling partner, can add productivity and profits to a project. “When they also create opportunities to deliver high-end finishes that weren’t previously marketable, that’s a game changer that deserves attention,” Mikkelsen says.

- Aquron’s **Matt Desurne** and **Sam Syvrud**, with help from their guru **Scott Kummer** and equipment from SASE, demonstrated how their products’ proven capabilities with pool builders was also an asset to installers of polished concrete and terrazzo.



Emil Gera, Matt Sampson and Shellee Rigsby-Cordell



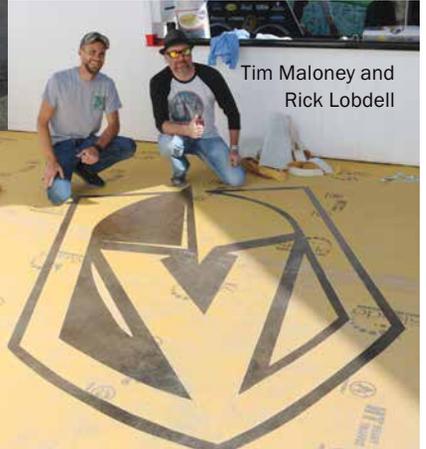
Cindee Lundin and Johanne Leclaire



Matt Desurne and Sam Syvrud



Emil Gera



Tim Maloney and Rick Lobdell



Matt Sampson and Mark Haen



Gregg Hensley

- **Debbie Ohland** etched a stenciled design with a tool from Engrave-A-Crete, an artisan's best friend for concrete carving, and **Shellie Rigsby-Cordell** stained it.



Debbie Ohland

- **Rick Lobdell** and **Tim Maloney** drew on and cut up floor protection from Skudo that doubled as a tool to help them create a stencil of a knight logo for a high-end shot-blasting application.

- With the right products for the job, **Marty O'Mara** made stripping, water-proofing, enhancing and protecting decorative concrete look easy with Nox-Crete products.



Marty O'Mara

The 2019 Decorative Concrete LIVE! — brought to you by *Concrete Decor* magazine, the Concrete Decor RoadShow and a host of top-rated sponsors — also held demonstrations that featured moisture barrier products, a waterjet-cut stencil, power troweling, polishing concrete, stamping concrete, forming radius walkways, molding decorative edges, seeding glass in countertops, applying metallic epoxies and effectively using accent colors. 🛠️

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Current Events

Crowds connect with the power of concrete at Decorative Concrete LIVE!



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Fox Blocks



Wagner Meters



Creative Edge Master Shop



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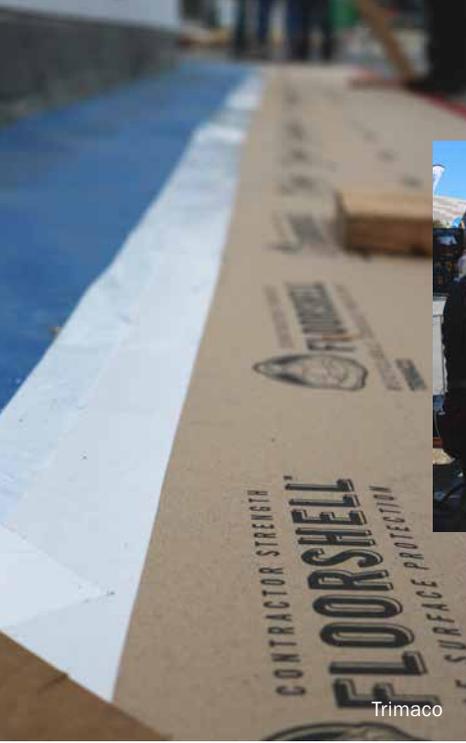
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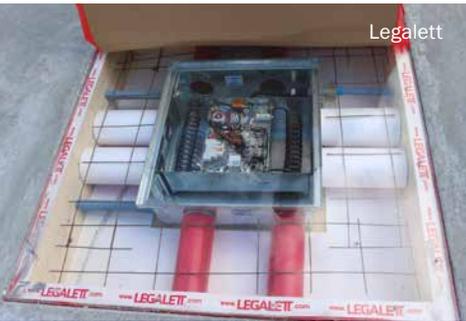
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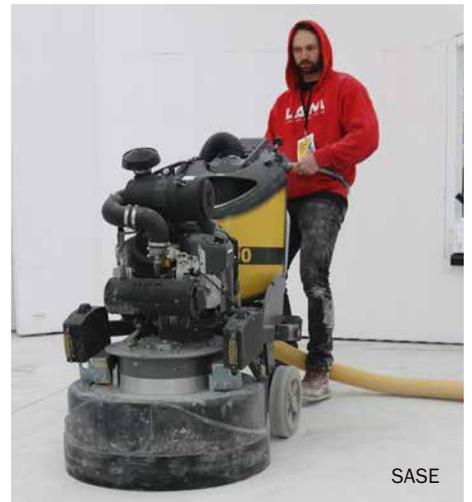
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Laticrete/HP Spartacote



Stone Edge Surfaces



Tangible or Intangible?

What's new for today's decorative concrete industry

by Karen Keyes

LIKE many of you, I attended this year's World of Concrete with great anticipation. Half expecting to see more of the same and half hoping to be blown away by something new and exciting. Well, as expected, there are a few new and exciting things out there, but all and all, on the surface, it looks like there are no earth-shattering changes on the horizon for decorative concrete.

I say "on the surface," because I think we all feel it coming. Something big, something revolutionary. We just haven't been able to pinpoint it yet. Let's dive a little deeper.

Technology is on a fast track

Technology is advancing at a level we couldn't have imagined a decade ago. Is everything going virtual? Are we all going to soon be replaced by concrete printing robots? Maybe ... but I don't think that's the change we all feel. Talking to my many friends in the industry the past few months, they all seem to be grasping at it, but not quite touching it. But it seems to be pretty raw.

Yes, the world around us is changing at a fast pace. If you're online at all and part of any concrete Facebook group, the exchange of ideas (and opinions) is coming at us in all directions whether we are expecting it or looking for it or not. So, many people assume the next big thing for our industry is technology.

Let's put everything online and do away with traditional means and methods. The wave of the future and the next generation of our workforce wants that, right? I don't think so.

Let me ask you this, why are you reading this magazine? Is it so you can surf the web or post your opinion online about something you read here? If you're like me — and many of the readers — I think that's far from the truth.

The reason we read *Concrete Decor* is because we find inspiration from other industry professionals, and we like the tangible element the magazine offers.



A new drainage structure at 38th and Holly in Denver is being installed for SEMA Construction. The project uses Grasscrete, exposed aggregate, stamped concrete, broom-finished concrete and stain in an innovative design dreamed up by the folks at The Art of Concrete and the landscape architects.

Photo courtesy of The Art of Concrete

The tangible element ... isn't that why we all like working with concrete?

Concrete is something tangible we can touch, see and smell. That's why we like print magazines, too. We can see and feel the paper in front of us. It makes it feel more real than something we scroll past in a newsfeed.

Technology has created so much noise out there that much is lost. I think the next big thing for our industry is the tangible element. Yes, technology can be used to promote these tangible elements, and even connect more and more to them. But the next big thing for us is to communicate in a tangible way. Is this new? No. It's taking old technologies and adapting them to today's world.

Just like stamped concrete. We don't see anyone spinning around in the old Bowman hamster wheel anymore to stamp concrete, but we see the technology that Brad Bowman invented back then in today's innovations of

stamps and stencils. Innovation is about transforming the great ideas from the past and evolving them with today's ideas and technologies.



Although this stamping contraption dreamed up by Brad Bowman, one of the founding fathers of Bomanite, never really caught on, his idea of "ornamented concrete" is still on a roll today.

Photo courtesy of The Bomanite Co.

Concrete and its possibilities

I'm so impressed and shaped by the technologies and advances within our industry. I feel like I've grown up with the evolution of decorative concrete. When I was a small child, stamped, formed and vertically carved concrete was innovative. With those leaps and bounds creating the foundation for our industry of "decorative concrete," the industry grew right before our eyes.

Now, any one of us can go to a local supplier and rent a stamp or buy a vertical mix right off the shelf. Yesterday's innovations have become today's respected commodities. One of the things that makes our industry great right now are the intangibles: our relationships, our knowledge and the dreams of what concrete can be.

On a monthly basis, I give the American Society of Concrete Contractors' Decorative Concrete Council presentation on decorative concrete trends to architects. And during those presentations, I always ask the audience what they see as a current trend.

At the end of one of these recent talks, one of the principals said, "Karen, I've attended several of your presentations and I always leave inspired with new ideas and excitement for decorative concrete." That's the fire we want to light in the design industry.

Imagine if we all talk to the design community about what could be possible with decorative concrete. It's our job as decorative concrete professionals to equip architects and landscape architects with tangible elements, so they



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understand what is possible and push the envelope with us.

Imagine if at the next Concrete Decor Show, Decorative Concrete LIVE! or World of Concrete, there were a multitude of architects and landscape architects walking around with their notebooks eagerly taking notes and sketching up new ideas. It can happen in their board rooms when we go to them. I don't see it too far-fetched for them to get as amped up about these shows as the rest of us.

Turning dreams into reality

When I first started The Art of Concrete about a year and a half ago, I met with a small group of landscape architects with very little to offer except my knowledge and excitement. But, because I had known them for a while, they knew my passion and came prepared to the meeting with live projects and questions.

I helped them with a few projects that day, telling them what materials, colors and finishes made the most sense for each application. We scanned scores of Pinterest pages and material suppliers' websites — gathering ideas and figuring out on paper how to turn them into reality.

My crew is currently wrapping up one of those projects we dreamed about together. Instead of a traditional

grouted boulder or sculpted concrete drop structure, the landscape architects wanted something more interesting — yet just as functional — for the surrounding community.

Honestly, they had most of it figured out without me, but I told them what was truly possible. We ended up pouring the flatwork in several steps or platforms. Each platform had several different finishes of concrete along with channels for water to flow. This project will look interesting when dry and when water's flowing over it.

I encourage everyone to write more and present more. Being in front of each other and the design community will help our industry explode with new ideas.

The landscape designer also created areas for people to walk over the elements. I'm excited to see this project being built because it shows how a little bit of collaboration can produce

and advance decorative concrete expectations. We don't have to be limited by what's been done in the past. Instead we can build upon it.

Help spread the word

Tangible elements are what are next for our industry, and the exciting fast-paced world of technology will help us get there. Within minutes, I can collaborate with contractors and architects in different states dreaming up the next exciting project. Technology is linking us all, and the design industry is expecting us to bridge together to make their dreams a tangible reality — wherever we are.

What I love about our industry now is the lack of borders. We are much more collaborative than we ever have been before, and that's where new ideas and innovations are going to come from. We have more resources and opportunities to learn something new from events like the Concrete Decor Show and industry fairs.

We are also an extremely passionate group compared to most other building trades. It's easy to get excited about concrete and its possibilities, and to pass that fire onto the design community.

Because of this drive for tangible elements, I encourage everyone to write more and present more. Being in front of each other and the design community will help our industry explode with new ideas. Seek out landscape architects and architects and don't just talk to them. Show them what you can do in pictures and samples.

You'll get invigorated by their excitement and ideas, and they'll probably convince you to try something slightly new. Combining old techniques with new ideas will continue to push our industry to new heights. 🛠️

As the co-owner of The Art of Concrete LLC out of Denver, Colorado, Karen has found her niche in the industry exploring the creative side of building and designing with concrete. She helps owners, architects and landscape architects design decorative concrete palettes to enhance space and its community. Reach her at karen@theartofconcretellc.com.



**WANTED:
INSTRUCTORS**

Concrete Decor is looking for instructors who would like to teach seminars, lead hands-on workshops or serve as panel participants during our biennial show Oct. 28-31 in Arlington, Texas.

If you'd like to share your knowledge about decorative concrete with your peers, send your proposal to ConcreteDecorShow.com. For more information, call (877) 935-8906.

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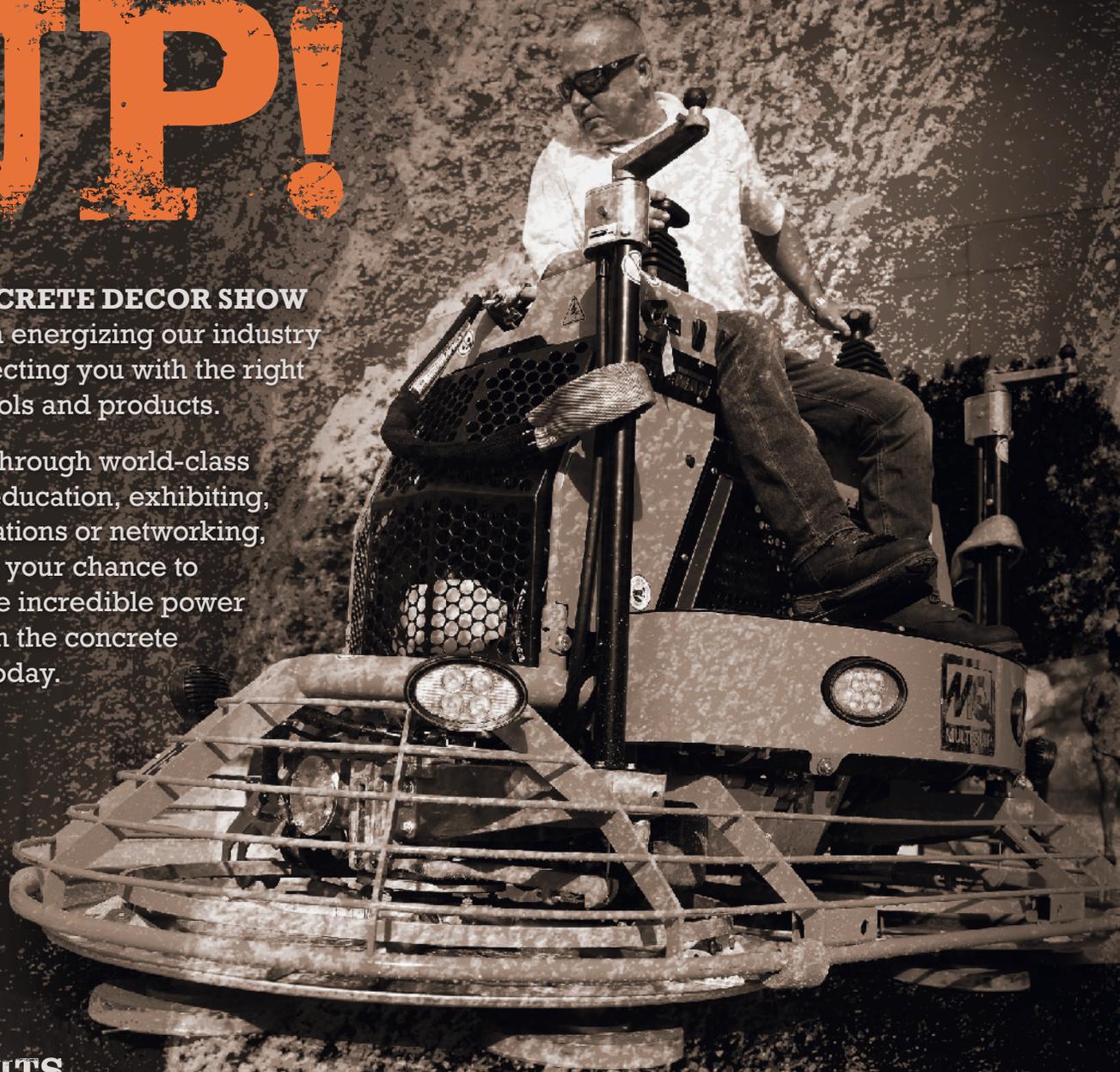
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Photos courtesy of American Society of Concrete Contractors

Texas Splashpad Crests for Big Win

Bullion Coatings bests them all in 11th annual DCC awards competition

THE winners of the American Society of Concrete Contractors' 11th annual Decorative Concrete Awards competition were recognized at a ceremony Jan. 22 at the 2019 World of Concrete in Las Vegas.

Contractors could enter projects in 13 categories. Each category, except countertops and project video, was

divided by size, grouping together projects less than 5,000 square feet and those more than 5,000 square feet. Judges could award a first and second place in each size classification.

No awards were bestowed in the countertop category this year and, in other categories, there wasn't a second-place honoree. From all the winners, a

best overall project was selected.

At the top of the list, Bullion Coatings of Katy, Texas, won the WOW! Award for the best overall project, the Sawmill Lake Recreation Center splashpad in Sienna Plantation, Missouri City, Texas. This project also garnered first place in Concrete Artistry, Under 5,000 Square Feet, and Decorative Coatings, Under 5,000 Square Feet.

Designed to mimic the Louisiana swamps with stars reflecting in the water, the splashpad features 14 custom colors, 400 stars, six constellations, three template trees, a four-color grassy area and a four-color template moon. Bullion used Sundek Classic Texture and Sundek Suncoat on the project which was designed by TBG Partners of Houston.

Second Place in Concrete Artistry, Under 5,000 Square Feet, went to T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California, for the Las Vegas Showgirls Sign.

The other 2019 winners are:





**Decorative Coatings, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Sundek**

Anodamine Office Building

To overcome the obstacle of a wood subfloor in poor condition, the contractor floated wood decking and installed hard-backer. It was then coated with a four-part system of primer, a base coat, Sundek metallics and a urethane sealer for abrasion resistance.



**Multiple Applications, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Bomanite Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia
Albukhary International University**

Turfed areas, linear ponds and a water fountain with a skylight sit above an underground parking area. Before the paving was refurbished, the parking area flooded when it rained. To remedy the situation, the defective structural installation and waterproofing were removed and replaced.

**Multiple Applications, Over 5,000 Square Feet,
Second Place**

Bomanite Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia
The Light Linear



**Concrete Artistry, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Bomanite Malaysia Sdn Bhd**

Albukhary International University

Multiple finishes complement and enhance the Moorish Islamic architecture of the buildings, which are interconnected with walkways and driveways.

**Concrete Artistry, Over 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place
T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California
33 Tehama**



**Multiple Applications, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
T.B Penick & Sons, San Diego, California**

Philip S. Miller Park Amphitheater Splashpad

Aquatic Design Group's intent was to provide an interactive splashpad that accents the city of Fontana's new amphitheater and creates a showpiece for the community to enjoy.

**Multiple Applications, Under 5,000 Square Feet,
Second Place**

Alchemy Concrete, Nelsonville, Wisconsin
Berard Pool, Deck and Patio



Cast-in-Place Special Finishes, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place

T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California

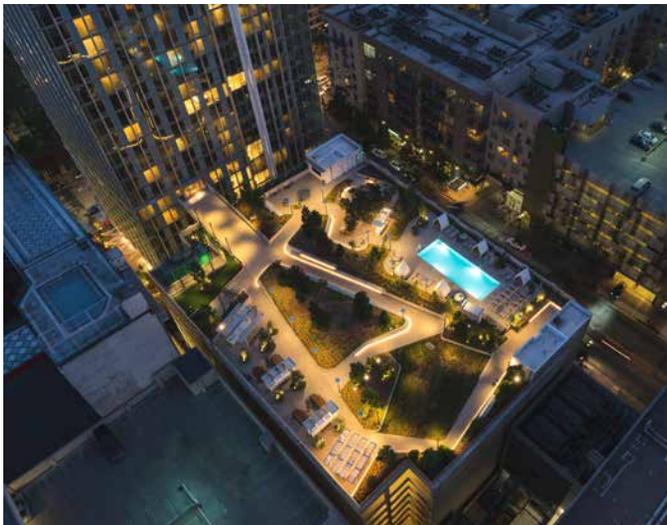
Philip S. Miller Park Amphitheater Splashpad

The splashpad's integrally colored, quarried-stone finish concrete work and monolithically embedded mosaic reflect the pattern found on San Bernardino County's largest library adjacent to the site. Inspiration for the design came from the library's hand-painted Mexican tile.

Cast-in-Place Special Finishes, Under 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place

T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California

Kona Kai



Cast-in-Place Special Finishes, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place

Trademark Concrete Systems, Oxnard, California

888 at Grand Hope Park

Trademark created a new hardscape on top of an existing eight-story parking garage in downtown Los Angeles. This amenity deck consists of 15,300 square feet of decorative concrete paving and 1,700 linear feet of curbs and walls.

Cast-in-Place Special Finishes, Over 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place

LaRusso Concrete, Wilsonville, Oregon

Market of Choice



Cast-In-Place Stamped, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Bomanite Malaysia Sdn Bhd

Karpal Singh Promenade

This multifaceted promenade extends 2 kilometers along the coast in Penang, Malaysia.

Cast-In-Place Stamped, Over 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place

Greystone Masonry, Stafford, Virginia

Garcia Residence



Cast-In-Place Stamped, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Salzano Custom Concrete, Aldie, Virginia

Royal River Front

This project's objective was to convert a mountain home's heavily wooded side yard into a usable space that blended with nature. The patio area is about 12 feet higher than the surrounding terrain so a series of steps and landings was built to provide access.

Cast-In-Place Stamped, Under 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place

Shepherd's Construction Co., Anderson, Indiana

Campbell Residence



Polished, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Hyde Concrete, Pasadena, Maryland

TechSpace

To help achieve more LEED points, the owner chose polished concrete for the common areas and corridors.

Polished, Over 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place

Trademark Concrete Systems, Oxnard, California

The Jeremy West Hollywood Hotel



Polished Overlays, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Industrial Caulk & Seal

Skyline New York Offices

Industrial Caulk was tasked with rehabilitating an existing warehouse to house corporate offices. The biggest challenge lay in polishing concrete as an afterthought rather than as part of the original plan. An aging slab was coated with a polishable overlay to ensure the flooring was uniform and not crisscrossed with repairs.



Polished, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Scout's Custom Concrete, Greensboro, North Carolina

Bennett, North Carolina, Garage/Man Cave

In three days, Scout's produced a concrete floor system that disguised the mistakes of the previous contractor. He had burned the surface with his trowel machine, leaving behind unsightly black marks.

Polished, Under 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place

Industrial Caulk & Seal, Delta, Pennsylvania

Fort Meade Defense Information School



Polished Overlays, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Colorado Hardscapes

Dairy Block

The lobby in this hotel/office building in downtown Denver features a dark matte finish with grinding stopping at 200 grit and sealed with a penetrating sealer. Zinc divider strips create the floor pattern.

Polished Overlays, Under 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place

Hyde Concrete

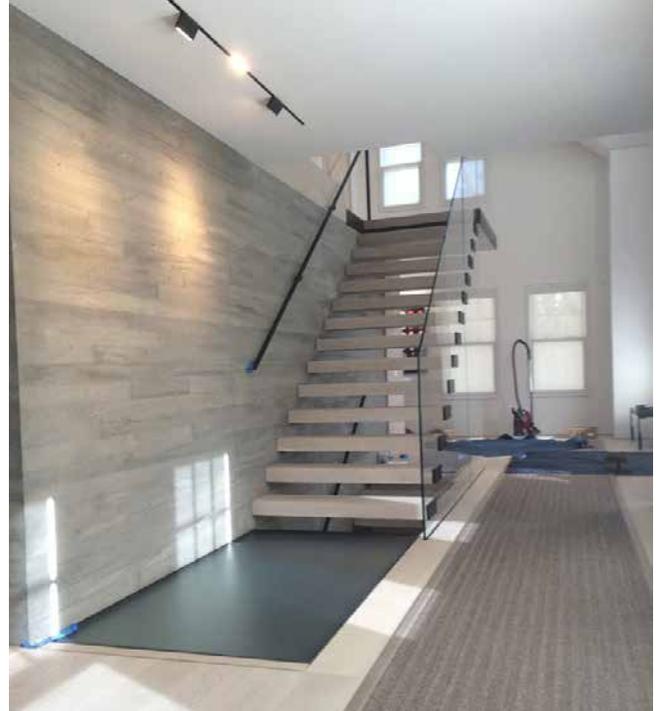
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BUSINESS & INDUSTRY



Stained, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Hyde Concrete, Pasadena, Maryland
TechSpace

To add another layer of dimension and to enhance the overall theme, five different colored stained lines originate at the main elevator lobby and weave through the corridors, connecting all the spaces.



Vertical/Facades, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Modern Concrete, East Providence, Rhode Island
Harbor View Residence

This project featured a showcase wall in the middle of the house that had a tight-seam, wood look with minimal variances in the finish. This was a tough task since the concrete had to be pumped from the rooftop, some 15- to 18-feet up, with each panel custom made.

Vertical/Facades, Under 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place
Intricate Concrete, Bay City, Michigan
Faux Stone Wall



Stained, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California
Las Vegas Showgirls Sign

Part of the city's larger Main Street project, the sign features "Las Vegas" in color-changing, 12-foot-tall letters that are flanked by two 26-foot-tall showgirls modeled after the women who accompanied Mayor Oscar Goodman at public appearances.

Stained, Under 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place
Little Feet Concrete, Lexington, Kentucky
Kalinyak Floor



Vertical/Facades, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Consigli Construction Co., Milford, Massachusetts
Wellesley College Pendleton Hall West Addition

A 10,000-square-foot addition was designed to unite two existing buildings to make room for visual and musical arts. The overarching challenge was building a complex structure in a very tight space on an active campus. To identify the right concrete color mix, 160 mock-ups were done.

Vertical/Facades, Over 5,000 Square Feet, Second Place
T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California
Torrey Point



**Cementitious Overlays, Under 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Intricate Concrete, Bay City, Michigan**

Faux Wood Porch

A glue-covered plain-gray front porch was converted into a focal point with less than \$500 worth of materials. Intricate Concrete used a concrete overlayment to simulate the wood plank entry.

**Cementitious Overlays, Under 5,000 Square Feet,
Second Place**

Colorado Hardscapes, Denver, Colorado
Bellevue Station Block B



**Cementitious Overlays, Over 5,000 Square Feet, First Place
Sundek, Arlington, Texas**

Celebrino Event Center

Sundek was given four days to complete this 13,000-square-foot hardscape for a wedding venue in Georgetown, Texas. It took four crews to complete the task on time.

**Cementitious Overlays, Over 5,000 Square Feet,
Second Place**

T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California
33 Tehama



**Architectural Cast-in-Place Concrete, Over 5,000 Square Feet,
First Place**

Baker Concrete, Monroe, Ohio

National Veterans Memorial and Museum

With more than 8,000 cubic yards of concrete, the memorial in downtown Columbus is one of the most complex concrete structures ever built in Ohio. The unique structure consists of three interwoven concrete rings. The Baker team built from a virtually constructed 3D model rather than traditional drawings.



Project Video, First Place

T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, California

Fern Street Public Art Project

To continue creating a more playful public realm for the city of Cambridge, New York, T.B. Penick was involved with a public-art project that involves a bicycle/pedestrian path. The space aims to ease traffic and transform a utilitarian path into a public area that integrates play for all ages.

<https://bit.ly/2SmJLRw>

Project Video, Second Place

Decorative Concrete of Virginia, Lynchburg, Virginia
Academy Center of the Arts

The DCC is composed of contractors, manufacturers and suppliers of decorative concrete products. The council is dedicated to improving the technical and business expertise of the contractors that pursue this specialty market. To enter the 2020 awards competition, go to www.asconline.org or call (866) 788-2722. 📞





Sink In

Sit back and admire the view

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

One of the allures of crafting sinks and surrounding countertops out of concrete are the material's chameleon-like characteristics that can mimic everything from natural and polished stone to draped fabric and tiered surfaces. Seen here and on pages following are an ad hoc collection of sinks made by artisans throughout North America that illustrate some possibilities of concrete's form and function.

Bringing it home

INTEGRAL sink vanities are what drew Tamara Gilgenast of Concrete In-Counters to decorative concrete in the first place. "If we can form it, we can create it," she says. It's this formability that she believes sets concrete apart from the likes of granite, marble and soapstone.

Case in point: She created her very first vanity top for a guest bathroom and wanted it to do more than reflect the rustic and cozy guestroom area. "I wanted to create a rugged and beautiful piece," for her house in Enterprise, Alabama, she says, "that reflected what I love — the Rocky Mountains."

Based on what she learned about The Ashby System in training out West, Gilgenast chose to create the vanity in two

separate pieces to make installation easier. She made the large vanity with the integral sink first and then the riser backsplash which also functions as a shelf.

The two-piece vanity top, which could have been cast as one, is grouted and sealed to ensure easy cleaning as well as no issues with water, soap or toothpaste retention.

The vanity, riser and sink were made with Ashby Admix SR and The Ashby System Marbleizer, and colored with San Diego Buff with custom-mixed vein colors. It has a Broken Flagstone edge.

"This piece is as beautiful today as the day it was installed," Gilgenast says.

 www.councreteincounters.com

Photo courtesy of Concrete In-Counters



Photos courtesy of Exclusive Concrete

Made to order

Brett Carragher, owner of Exclusive Concrete in London, Ontario, Canada, says clients approach him with design ideas and he makes them happen. This fabric-formed sink began with a casual sit down in Carragher's booth at the Market in his town's Western Fair District, a farmers' and artisans' mecca held on weekends where he features one-of-a-kind concrete items.

"They were building a custom addition to their home and wanted a focal point that no one else had for their washroom," he says. The couple had a vision and he brought it to fruition.

Carragher, who is a product distributor for Buddy Rhodes, used Rhodes GFRC admix and a veining technique he's been working on for many years. He sealed the black-and-white beauty with Omega countertop sealer from the Concrete Countertop Institute, where back in 2013 Jeff Girard taught him the essential science behind unique concrete countertops.

The other sink pictured here features a two-tiered ramp sink that slopes from right to left on the upper level and then left to right on the lower. The rocks are simply there for decoration in lieu of a metal drain the client thought was too expensive to include.

"My customers' tastes are very eclectic," Carragher says.

www.exclusiveconcrete.com

Finessing the stone

This 10-foot-long fabric-formed sink was designed for a client who wanted a show-stopper art piece to dominate his remodeled master bathroom.

And Peter Somers of Concretepoetry Inc. in Hingham, Massachusetts, delivered.

Somers says he wanted to design a sink that transitions very subtly from nothing down to 2 inches deep with an elaborate slot drain that you don't see.

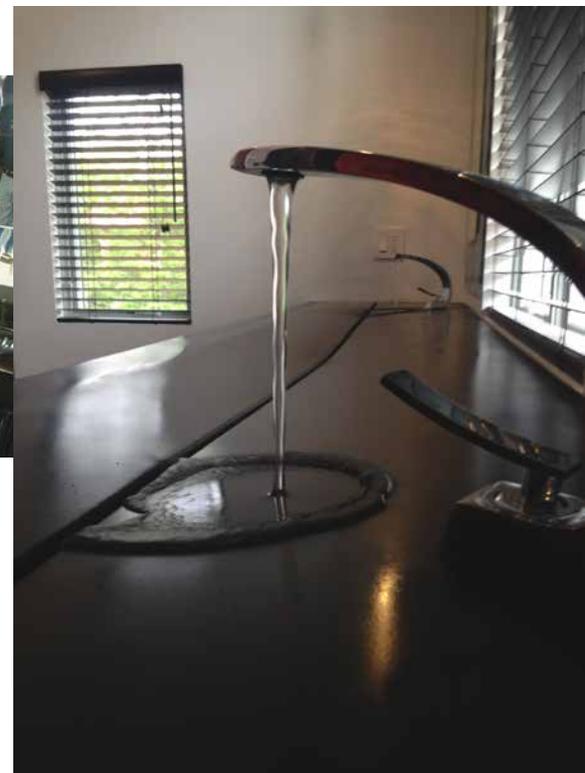
"The challenge was we had to work with the existing plumbing of the original sinks," he says. "Which means there's a drain on either end, not in the middle as it appears."



Photos courtesy of Concretepoetry Inc.

The sink is made with a GFRC mix from Buddy Rhodes that covers a form made by stretching fabric over an armature and soaking it with many layers of fiberglass resin until it's hardened. The coloring is Rhodes' Carbon Black.

www.concretepoetryboston.com



Over a barrel

Drawing inspiration from the tiered vineyards in Italy and France, Mike Hearn, owner of Artisan Elements in Jasper, Georgia, has made this wine-country sink many times. “The rows go up and down the hills like that,” he says, referring to the inside of the basin, “not in a straight line.”



Photos courtesy of Artisan Elements



This one sits in a powder room just off the kitchen in a Craftsman-style home that has a dedicated wine/coffee area. It's made with one-third of a wine barrel — he's also made corner versions with a whole barrel — and a sprayed-face GFRC back. The finish is cream with multiple slurry levels sanded to give it a rustic appearance.

Hearn, whose claim to fame is his all-concrete Fred Flintstone car he raced in the Epic derby sponsored by Buddy Rhodes and Blue Concrete back in 2105, used Rhodes' pigments and water reducer with his own GFRC design mix to make the sink. He sealed it with CCI's Omega sealer.

For the forms, “I use rigid plastic sheets to make the inside rings,” he says, which he can save and use again. The sink's larger outer ring is made from flexible foam for a one-time use.

“I enjoy making these sinks,” Hearn says, as each one looks different although the elements remain the same. “They've gotten a lot of attention.”

www.artisanelementsllc.com

Beachcombers' delight

When Annette Davis of Artistic Impressions LLC in Luana, Iowa, accepts a design job she first sits down and talks to her clients about their interests. This particular one had a shell collection from family trips over the years and they wanted to incorporate them into one of their new bathrooms.

At first, Davis thought about casting them into the concrete but then the family wouldn't be able to see them all. So she surfed through Pinterest to get ideas and landed on a design she could modify.

Putting the shells under a piece of Plexiglas was an easy way to display them. She could also dot the sink basins with pieces of glass reminiscent of sea glass that washes up on beaches. And she could accent the concrete sinks surrounded by a sea of shells with actual fish fossil inlays, also contributed by the family.

If the family ever wants to switch out the shells, all they have to do is unscrew the sinks and lift the glass. The 45-pound sinks are weighty enough to keep the thick Plexiglas securely in place without an adhesive.

Davis used Buddy Rhodes GFRC mix to cast the sinks she made with reusable fiberglass forms from Expressions Ltd. She sealed the sinks with Omega sealer from the Concrete Countertop Institute, where she hails as an alumna.



Photo courtesy of Artistic Impressions LLC



Photos courtesy of StoneCrete Systems

Surprise and functionality

If you want to grab attention design-wise, Ben Ashby of StoneCrete Systems in Farr West, Utah, recommends incorporating something unexpected, such as water or fire.

One of Ashby's recent advanced classes in Las Vegas centered on creating a sink that featured water cascading toward you and then disappearing. "Humans are drawn to moving water," he says. "The more movement, the more it draws you in."

The class combined concrete made with Ashby Admix SR with stacked slate to make the water move and fall. In less than a week's time, the sink went from concept to a working unit in his facility's washroom.

Ashby says the industry-specific products, like admix and sealer, are available from his website while everything else was purchased at a big box store because he likes to keep things simple to keep costs down.

Simple but functional, this countertop and integral sink (above right) are "all about functionality."

Designed for a man who entertained extensively, the flat-bottomed sink is just the right depth for long-neck beers to poke out above a sink full of ice and wide enough to hold beer cans sideways. "The sink is actually a beer cooler with a drain," Ashby says. On the decorative side, its basin is faux finished to look like a tarnished copper sink.

For the finishing touch, the client chose a pot filler-style faucet. "He lines the counter with crockpots and trays of food like he's tailgating in his basement," Ashby says. "The faucet can be tucked away, clearing up counterspace. It's really very functional," besides looking cool.

Ashby sealed the sink/cooler with his UV sealer, a solvent-based polyurethane that's normally used outdoors. "It's a great sealer for wet locations," he says.

www.stonecretesystems.com

Classy sinks

At the Concrete Design School in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, students in the Fabric-Forming Concrete Sink + GFRC Workshop come up with a design, fabricate the mold, cast the sink, demold it, and then finish and seal the concrete.

"Students come in on the first morning to a blank slate. An idea for a sink doesn't even exist," says instructor Brandon Gore, who is also the proprietor of Gore Design Co. and Hard Goods. "And by the end of the second day, we have a sink ready to ship."

The class works as a group, problem solving glitches as they pop up. Rather than using someone else's prepackaged mix, they learn to blend their own — an ultra high-performance



GFRC mix design.

Gore, who began teaching his fabric-forming technique in 2008, says the process has been refined and continues

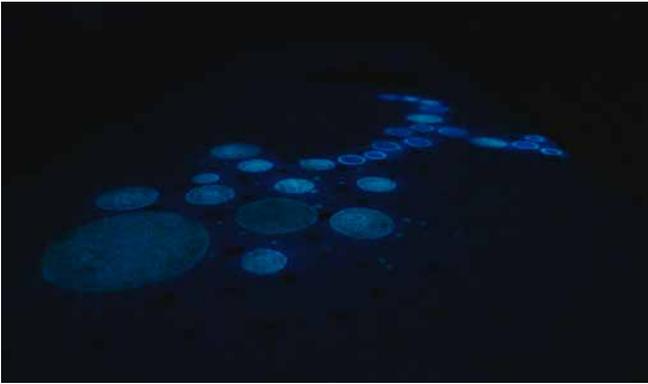


Photos courtesy of the Concrete Design School

to evolve every year. "What we teach today is vastly different from what we taught even a couple of years ago," he says. "We're always improving, making the technique more precise and easier."

The class is offered four times a year at the specially built training facility in the Ozark Mountains of northwest Arkansas.

www.concretedesignschool.com



Crop circle sighting reported

Glowing GFRC makes this 9-foot-long bathroom vanity in a home in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, stand out in more ways than one.

For starters, it makes an interesting design element where form meets function, says Peter Tomé, president of Ambient Glow Technology and the vanity fabricator. The concrete countertop, integrally colored with AGT Sky Blue Fine Glow Sand, also serves as a passive light source at night. It allows the homeowners to visit the washroom in the middle of the night without having to turn on the lights.

The homeowners requested the vanity include a “crop circle” design because of their fascination with sacred geometry and other land-based geometric phenomena. Tomé engraved the shapes, powered by AGT Aqua Blue Fine Glow Sand, with an Engrave-A-Crete Wasp.

“Engraving the geometric shapes required a steady hand to keep the lines sharp,” Tomé says. “Essentially it was like tattooing concrete.”

The vanity also features silver-dipped ½-inch tumbled glass from Heritage Glass. To keep it in place at the bottom of the concrete form when the GFRC face coat was sprayed, water-based woodworker’s glue was lightly rolled onto the form’s surface and then the glass was hand-seeded.

Once cured, the vanity was diamond polished.

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Purposeful ridges

What began as a job to make two adze-textured concrete door panels for a custom lakeside home in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada, ballooned into casting the adze texture into rubber and carrying the theme throughout the house.

As part of the expanded project, Ian Wyndlow of Liquid Stone Studios in Ladysmith, British Columbia, says he was given carte blanche to design a one-of-a-kind bathroom vanity with an integral sink.

“Inspired by the reflection of the

steep cliffs and deep valleys of the surroundings in the lake, we took the idea of terracing the contours and ran the lines vertically, as though to produce a deep fjord,” he says.

The GFRC sink was made with a Buddy Rhodes admixture with 8 percent titanium white color loading. It was sealed with Rhodes’ PS-1 Reactive Sealer.

Wyndlow was also given a free hand to design another bathroom vanity for a custom home in Nanaimo, British Columbia, that was a conventional wet cast pour. The challenge was the local building code dictated it had an overflow.



Photos courtesy of Liquid Stone Studios

“I wanted the design to include ramp sinks and slot drains and decided that instead of the complicated set-up to fabricate separate overflows with the slot drains, I would simply join the two sinks with a ‘moat’ so that if one happened to plug and the water left on, the other sink would act as the overflow.”

The sinks were also equipped with integral soap holders that sloped to allow excess water to drain and had a ridge to prevent the bar from sliding into the sink.

www.liquidstonestudios.com

A little bit country

Designed for an old bureau the homeowners were converting into a bathroom vanity, this mini-farmhouse sink built by Warren Stred of Saint Red Design in Boston, Massachusetts, added just the right touch of country flair.



Photos courtesy of Saint Red Design

To make it look like an authentic farm sink, the clients went with regular gray portland cement which resulted in a mottled look with different greens and grays. “There’s a lot of movement in the concrete and that’s what they wanted,” Stred says.

The 14-by-18-inch sink has a basin that slopes from 7 to 9 inches with a hidden drain and a slot that runs around the perimeter of the base. Stred used Buddy Rhodes GFRC blend and sealed it with the Concrete Countertop’s Omega sealer.

Stred says he used a very rigid resin to make the mold and he didn’t account for the angles around the curve that goes around the edge. “I had to destroy the mold to get the sink out,” he says. Next time he recreates this sink, he says he’ll use silicone rubber for the mold so maybe he can use it more than once.

www.saintreddesign.com

A chip off the old block

This rustic sink — designed by Phoebe McEldowney of Haven Interiors and fabricated in 2013 by Mark Price of In Concrete Design for Highline Partners — has made the rounds on Pinterest.

Inspired by a picture McEldowney found of a reclaimed antique French stone fixture from Chateau Domingue out of Houston, Texas, “It’s a blessing and a curse to be tracked down by people who want this sink,” Price says, as most don’t realize the cost and complexity of custom work.

Overall, though, most Pinterest perusers don’t go to all the trouble of locating Price, who lives in Bozeman, Montana. They simply take the photo to a local concrete artisan, as was the case of Dusty Baker of Stone-Crete Artistry in Hurricane Mills, Tennessee, and ask him or her to make it.

“I think every concrete dude in the U.S. has got this pic and recreated it,” says Baker, who also teaches classes at the Concrete Design School in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. “It’s a great example of how to turn a piece from Pinterest into your own interpretation of it.”

And while Price’s professionally taken photo makes the outcome look lavish and well chiseled, the reality is far from the truth.



Photo by Gibeon Photography; project by In Concrete Design and Highline Partners



Photo courtesy of In Concrete Design

“They are rough,” Price says, adding that “rustification” is the “technical term” he and his buddies use to describe the process that involved the builder whacking the sinks with a hammer. “In the context of the house, which has hand-hewn thresholds, they fit.”

At the other end of the spectrum, Price says, is his prototype of a one-piece pedestal sink with a sleek waterfall leg. With its simple clean lines and finish, that sink is the epitome of smooth. 🖱️

🌐 www.inconcretedesign.com

🌐 www.facebook.com/concretecountertopsnashville



Photo courtesy of In Concrete Design

Part 2: Hand Brushing Dyes

When alcohol is appropriate on the job

by Rick Lobdell

IN Part 1 of this hand brushing series, I discussed how to brush acid stain over exterior, broom-finished concrete. This time, I'll detail how to brush dye on interior floors, something most people think is impossible since most dyes are acetone-based and flash in about 10 seconds. Because of this quick dry time, it becomes incredibly hard to hand brush without leaving horrible brush marks.

Remember when you work with acid stains, you're using water so you have a lot more work time to keep a wet edge. When working with dyes, 10 seconds isn't enough time to keep a wet edge. By the time you dip your brush in the dye, what you've already applied is dry.

From walls to detailed patterns, there are lots of photos and videos on social media where contractors mask off everything. They spend hours taping and protecting before spraying everything in five to 10 minutes. But the key to my success and efficiency with expertly detailed decorative concrete involves using a brush. It saves me a ton of time.

It takes two

I wasn't the one who invented this technique and I'm not the only one doing this. Regardless, I want to show you how to do this efficiently and effectively on interior work with the aid of denatured alcohol. Simply apply the dye, following it with straight denatured alcohol.

This method takes two people. The first one applies the dye, leaving behind a ton of brush marks. He or she should try to leave puddles of color instead of straight lines. These people can travel farther with each dip of the brush since they don't have to worry about keeping a wet edge. It's very important that they stain the entire area this way and don't miss the edge of the cut line.

The second person follows behind with straight denatured alcohol.



Photos courtesy of Rick Lobdell

Because it dries slower, they have enough work time to keep a wet edge. At the same time, they can remove all the existing brush marks and leave a puddle of denatured alcohol that will dry fast enough and not leave any new brush marks.

Try this at home

You may ask: Why not just use denatured alcohol with the dye in the first place? The reason is that dyes need the acetone to first break them down. They're not big fans of denatured alcohol.

Try this experiment. Mix two small cups of the same color dye, one with denatured alcohol and the other with acetone. Watch what happens to the dye particles. Tiny particles of color in the denatured alcohol solution will start to separate from one another. You won't see this in the acetone mix.

Down to the details

Let's break down how to hand brush dyes in detail. As I wrote in Part 1, first hold the brush close to its base like you

would a pen or a pencil. When you dip your brush into the cup of dye, the acetone will instantaneously wick up the bristles. Be careful not to dip your brush all the way to the metal band. You never want too much dye on your brush because it will drip everywhere. And since it dries so fast, it's harder to remove than you expect.

After dipping the brush into your cup, remove the excess liquid from your brush by aggressively dropping the brush down twice, just above the material. This will remove the excess liquid and allow you to pull the brush out of the cup without dripping everywhere.





Next apply the dye on your border as much or as little as you want. You can't stop the brush marks so decide how much you want to apply to the border based on your customer's expectation of color saturation. When you apply the denatured alcohol, you'll remove a little of the darker areas. This will result in a more even application of color.



The second person then floods the border with denatured alcohol. When I say flood, I don't mean apply so much that it bleeds past your cut line and into the main area. I mean apply enough liquid on the floor to give you time to work with it. Working with this small puddle of denatured alcohol on the border, brush through every ounce of what was already applied.

Watch the existing brush marks and make sure you thoroughly brush through them. Remember, just like you would with acid stain, brush with your entire arm not just your wrist. Try to make big circular brush strokes as you go. This helps leave less brush strokes after the alcohol dries.



Once you remove the existing brush marks, move down the border. Don't keep working it in. If you let the denatured alcohol dry while you're still brushing, you'll start to see brush marks again. Let the denatured alcohol dry at its own rate. It will remove any leftover brush marks you made as it slowly dries.



Continue this method until you finish the entire border. If needed, you can go over the area one more time with denatured alcohol. But be careful. Every time you reapply, you remove a little more of the color, resulting in a lighter border. 🖌️

Rick Lobdell, a classically trained artist with a master's in fine arts in painting from the Savannah College of Art and Design, has also studied math and drafting. In this series, the owner of Concrete Mystique Engraving in Tennessee will explain how he conceives his well-known designs. He can be reached at rick@concretemystique.com.

Editor's note: The accompanying video at <https://bit.ly/2Ed00dp> shows Rick Lobdell demonstrating his hand-brushing technique with acetone dye and denatured alcohol. Due to the size of the demonstration, Lobdell did the work solo. On a real job, two people are recommended to complete the task properly.

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Concrete Contractors: Be Aware of Asbestos

OVER time, the everyday tasks associated with working in the concrete industry have changed. Originally, concrete was made on a construction site when sand was mixed with cement and water in a motor-driven mixer. Nowadays, many times concrete is premixed and delivered to work sites via ready-mix trucks equipped with a rotating drum, cutting down exposure to cement and concrete dust.

Concrete has been used in one form or another for more than 8,000 years, making it one of the oldest man-made building materials. All concrete essentially is a mixture of water, cement and aggregate (usually sand or rock). As building practices and standards have changed, so have these filler materials. One of these changes was the removal of asbestos in concrete.

As time has progressed, safety regulations and various factors have placed restrictions on the use of asbestos in building materials. Those who have worked with concrete have adapted to these changes and many now realize the health risks associated with asbestos. In addition to health risks, the removal of asbestos can have a significant impact on the environment as well.

History of asbestos use in concrete

Asbestos was often used as an additive in various industrial and commercial products between 1940 and the 1980s due to its unmatched ability to resist fire and electricity. These naturally occurring fibers are strong, abundant, microscopic and able to effectively absorb sound. Before the Toxic Substances Control Act was established in 1976, asbestos was often used in shipbuilding, cement mixtures, wallpaper, flooring, ceiling tiles, automotive brake materials and a variety of building materials.

At this time, it was unknown that exposure to asbestos fibers would be linked to the development of



Image source: Pixabay

Concrete workers should be aware of the health risks associated with asbestos which may be present in concrete placed prior to and during the 1970s.

mesothelioma cancer, asbestosis and lung cancer. Due to negative health impacts, asbestos use has been banned in more than 60 countries. The United States has yet to fully ban the substance and 30 million pounds of asbestos are used in the country each year.

During peak years of use, asbestos fibers could be found in more than 3,000 consumer products and can still be found in homes, schools and buildings across the U.S. Although there are many types of asbestos, chrysotile asbestos is the most common of the six different forms of asbestos fibers. It accounts for more than 90 percent of asbestos found in buildings nationwide.

Asbestos is still widely used across Russia, China and India. Russia leads the world in asbestos production and is second to China in asbestos use.

Occupational exposure for concrete workers

Exposure to asbestos fibers is the No. 1 cause of occupational cancer in the United States. According to the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization, asbestos is responsible for more than 50 percent of all cancer caused by occupational hazards. Occupations most at risk for asbestos-related diseases include firefighters,

construction workers, electricians and service members. U.S. Navy veterans who served the country during World War II and the Korean War are the most at risk among the veteran population.

For those working with concrete, spotting asbestos is extremely difficult. Fibers were evenly distributed throughout the concrete mixture and are set in the hardened matrix, making it impossible for those removing concrete to see them with the naked eye. Unlike other building materials such as tiles or drywall that may show fine fibers as they disintegrate, concrete products don't show asbestos when broken.

Renovating an older building may require removing asbestos-containing concrete, putting workers at an increased risk of inhaling or ingesting the fibers. Although asbestos fibers are sealed within the concrete, chipping or breaking asbestos-containing concrete could release these fibers into the air. Inhaling or ingesting these airborne fibers puts workers at risk of developing asbestos-related diseases, like mesothelioma. To confirm the presence (or absence) of asbestos, professional testing should be conducted before any construction is performed on potentially asbestos-containing concrete.

Family members of those with

jobs that involve high risk of asbestos exposure are at risk of secondhand exposure. Employees bring home the asbestos fibers on their hair, skin and clothing and unknowingly transfer the carcinogen to their loved ones.

For anyone who may believe they have been exposed to asbestos at their work site or have concerns about potential exposure, immediately discuss working conditions with a supervisor. Prior to the beginning of a project, a certified professional should test the work site for asbestos. Workers should be equipped and properly trained on appropriate safety equipment if asbestos is present, additionally to prevent exposure and potential health effects.

Concrete demolition safety

Before approaching a project involving concrete removal, it's important to understand the potential risks of asbestos exposure. If you're planning to remove concrete, make sure you're prepared. Use safety goggles to protect your eyes, as well as a face mask for dust. It's important you're equipped with the appropriate power tools or machine-mounted tools.

Prior to starting your project, research (if possible) when the concrete was laid. If the concrete was placed before 1975, testing should be done by a licensed professional. 🛠️

The above article is courtesy of the Mesothelioma Cancer Alliance, www.mesothelioma.com.

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Demonstrations, such as this one held last December at the Colorado Concrete Expo sponsored by Bobcat of the Rockies, are delivered by trained professionals under controlled conditions.

Photos courtesy of Jeff Keyes, Solomon/Brickform

Demo Versus Training: What you need to know

by Greg Iannone

ITHINK we can all agree we'd be happy if the decorative concrete industry were bigger. You know, if the pie were just a little bit bigger. What are we doing as an industry to positively influence the decorative market? What are you doing as a contractor, material supplier or manufacturer to help grow the pie? What are we all doing to help plant the seed for the next generation of skilled craftsmen to harvest? What are we doing to help develop the next generation of skilled craftsmen?

One thing I see a lot of manufacturers and material suppliers offering are demos, i.e., demonstrations.

I'm not seeing a lot of training. I mean, "real training," life-sized hands-on training where real-life conditions come into play. Let's take a moment to talk about each. What is the difference between a demo and training?

Demos are for show

A demo is just what the name implies, a demonstration. Performed by a trained professional under controlled conditions, it's meant to entice and generate interest in a product or system. It's meant to whet your appetite and leave you wanting more. It was never meant to be the "be all, end all" to training.

A demo is meant to have a larger-than-life, almost circus-like atmosphere. Demos sometimes get misconstrued as a form of training because the trainer may hand someone a trowel or tool and have that person get involved for a minute or two.

This doesn't in any way, shape or form suddenly designate or make this person qualified on this new product or system. It may make he or she curious, excited and wanting to "get into" this type of work. If so, mission accomplished — the demo was a success. It doesn't, however,

mean that the participant is trained and/or qualified. A demo should be viewed as a gateway to training.

Trainings are hands-on

Training — real training — can come in different forms. Ideally, you'll have some type of "skin" in the game. One such type of training is to pay a fee to attend a very intensive training facility for several days or weeks with life-size projects. First you learn about the specific products or systems, and then you participate on a project "hands-on" from start to finish.

You can also align yourself with a qualified contractor, someone with whom you don't compete and is outside your geographical territory. You can offer either some form of compensation or split your profit and pickup his or her expenses on a real-life project(s) where real things happen. Where consideration

must be given to sun, wind, rain and high/low temperatures. Where a bad decision or misstep can be the difference between success and failure.

After one job, you still won't be fully trained, but you'll be on your way. You may want to do several small projects as outlined above before you do one on your own.

A third option is to enlist the help of a manufacturer. Perhaps you saw a demo and liked it, and now you want to be trained. A manufacturer may have the ability to provide the type of training as indicated above. Or, the company may be able to introduce you to a qualified contractor as previously mentioned. Lastly, it can bring out its trainers to work with you and your crew on-site. They can be there to help guide and back you up.

These options can be both helpful and useful and should all be considered very carefully. Once you have participated in one of these types of trainings, you should continue to practice and hone your skills. As I've written before: Work at your craft and be the best version of yourself on every project.

Raise the bar on quality

Performing at your highest level on every project and improving your skills are all big steps in helping our industry grow. It will give you the confidence you need to go back to clients and ask for referrals, to offer resealing packages, to maximize your potential and get the really tough, yet rewarding, projects. It will be a differentiating factor that separates you from your competition.

If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times: Decorative concrete done well is like a billboard on the side of the road. It's free advertising of work done well. Or, in the digital era in which we now live, it's like an Instagram, Facebook or LinkedIn post going viral and bringing a lot of positive attention to your work. If we raise the bar on the quality of our work, it's only natural to think that our decorative concrete market will grow exponentially.

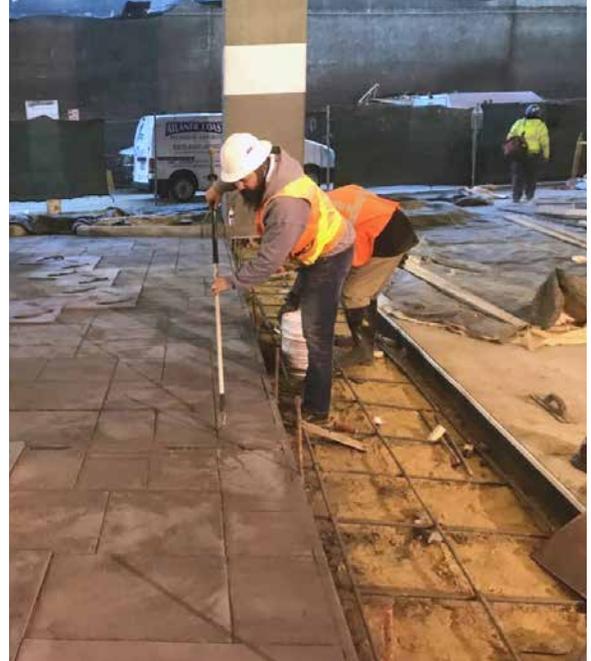
Tom Dombalis, president of North Carolina-based Atlantic Coast Concrete and a contractor who's truly qualified to comment on all things concrete — decorative or otherwise — is

a huge advocate for proper training. He has welcomed many contractors from other geographical regions to work side by side with him and his crew. His only request is that you come open minded and forget what you saw on YouTube. His philosophy is to improve our industry through quality work and not quantity of work. It's to offer quality decorative concrete at a great market price.

Dombalis believes that "life is four quarters long and we should be steady to the end." Invest in what you do, do it right and for the right reasons.

Don't be the "quick flash in the pan and onto the next job" kind of contractor. It won't help you and it won't help our industry.

Learning new things can be scary. However, as you continue to perfect your craft, all the while seeking out the necessary training to grow your skillset, can ultimately prove to be highly profitable. It will be like riding your bike without the training wheels for the first time or bowling without the bumper guards. A little scary at first



One way to get training is to align yourself with a qualified contractor outside your geographical territory with whom you don't compete. This training was conducted by Atlantic Coast Concrete at the JW Marriott in Charlotte, North Carolina.

but oh so liberating. The higher profits you'll be able to command aren't so bad either. 🛠️

Greg Iannone is sales manager -- Western region for Solomon Colors/ Brickform. He has worked in the concrete construction industry for more than 30 years and has provided training seminars throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico, as well as Mexico and Japan. He can be reached at (801) 376-6750 or giannone@solomoncolors.com.

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Lack of proper maintenance resulted in the need to strip and recolor this decorative installation. Sealer incompatibility and stain failure figured in the demise of the decorative treatments (photo below). The restoration result is pictured above.

MAINTENANCE DEALS

Plans can potentially please both parties

by Joe Maty

If done right, polished concrete — and other decorative concrete approaches — offer low-maintenance solutions in interior and exterior settings.

That’s “low-maintenance” as opposed to “no-maintenance” or “maintenance-free.”

“We sell polish as ‘maintenance simple,’ not ‘maintenance-free,’” says Shawn Halverson, CEO of Surfacing Solutions Inc. in Temecula, California.

But the reality that polished concrete and decorative concrete installations require some degree of maintenance to retain their appearance and performance present a potential opportunity for the contractor, in the form of maintenance services going forward.

The key word here is “potential.”

The hitch: if the contractor sells the client on a maintenance program going forward, will it pay off for the contractor?



Photos courtesy of Emil J. Gera Concrete Contractor Inc.

Protecting the investment

On a maintenance contract's plus side, there's the obvious: "Maintenance helps to make our work stay looking good and protects the client's investment," Halverson says.

For the contractor, long-term maintenance also provides an attractive, functioning portfolio entry to show potential customers.

Matthew Newcomer, project manager with Preferred Global Inc., a flooring, painting and concrete-polishing contracting company in Noblesville, Indiana, also emphasizes the "low-maintenance" label for polished concrete. He says an ongoing maintenance program will prolong the polished concrete's life and preserve its reflectivity. Clients, he says, may want the contractor to maintain the floors due to lack of equipment or staff.

Owners may not realize how dirt and debris can deteriorate a polished surface, thinking it immune to such wear, Newcomer says. Foot and vehicle traffic — combined with residues like sand, dirt, chemicals and metal shavings — can cause abrasion equivalent to 200-grit sandpaper. Without adequate maintenance, he says, a highly reflective polished floor can be dulled down to a 200-grit finish.

Unlike VCT floor coverings, polished concrete doesn't require "messy waxes" or wax stripping and reapplication for

maintenance, Newcomer says. Facilities can remain open for maintenance and avoid downtime.

Maintaining a decorative concrete installation keeps the project "looking great for many years, which adds value to what we do," says Emil Gera, owner of Emil J. Gera Concrete Contractor Inc. in Weatherly, Pennsylvania. "It's also a source of income and keeps good relations with customers, which equates to more referrals."

The playbook

Newcomer offers an example of a maintenance regimen as outlined by Preferred Global. Key elements include:

- Deep and thorough cleaning using an auto-scrubber and white cleaning pads to remove contaminants that can damage the floor. If needed for heavier dirt, soft-bristle brushes are sometimes used. A mild-pH cleaner is used to remove stubborn and sticky contaminants. Client use of an auto-scrubber for this purpose is suggested on a weekly or even daily basis, depending on traffic.
- Resealing and burnishing on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, depending on traffic. The sealer acts as a sacrificial wear layer, providing a barrier between concrete floor and surface contaminants. Sealer must be replaced due to traffic.



Photo courtesy of Surfacing Solutions Inc.

This decorative floor has held up for years with simple maintenance — cleaning with water.

- A comprehensive rejuvenation program, using diamond polishing pads to repolish the floor. As with initial polishing, a series of diamond grits are used in a sequence from 200 to 1,500 grit to return the floor to its original shine and clarity. The good news is that such an extensive restoration program is typically only needed when maintenance is lacking and residues on the floor lead to degradation of the polished surface.

A contractor's maintenance program addresses the risk of degradation due to owner neglect or use of improper cleaning methods and materials, Newcomer says.

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Selling the plan

During initial project discussions with the client, the importance of maintenance gets attention from the get-go, says Gera. He advises clients on what to look for in determining when maintenance is needed and to contact him with any questions.

“If there’s an issue or concern, it’s easier to be safe and explain than to just let it go and see an issue escalate and need major repairs.”

A first step in any maintenance work is determining the types of sealer and color products that were previously used. “This is crucial,” Gera says, as newer sealers may not be compatible with earlier versions. To remove “years of contamination,” the surface should be thoroughly cleaned with a pressure washer, floor scrubber with nylon brush and a strong degreaser.

Then, color issues are addressed, if needed, and the surface dries, usually overnight. A reactivator is applied — a type of solvent that facilitates adhesion of new sealer to existing sealer — followed by a light coat of new sealer.

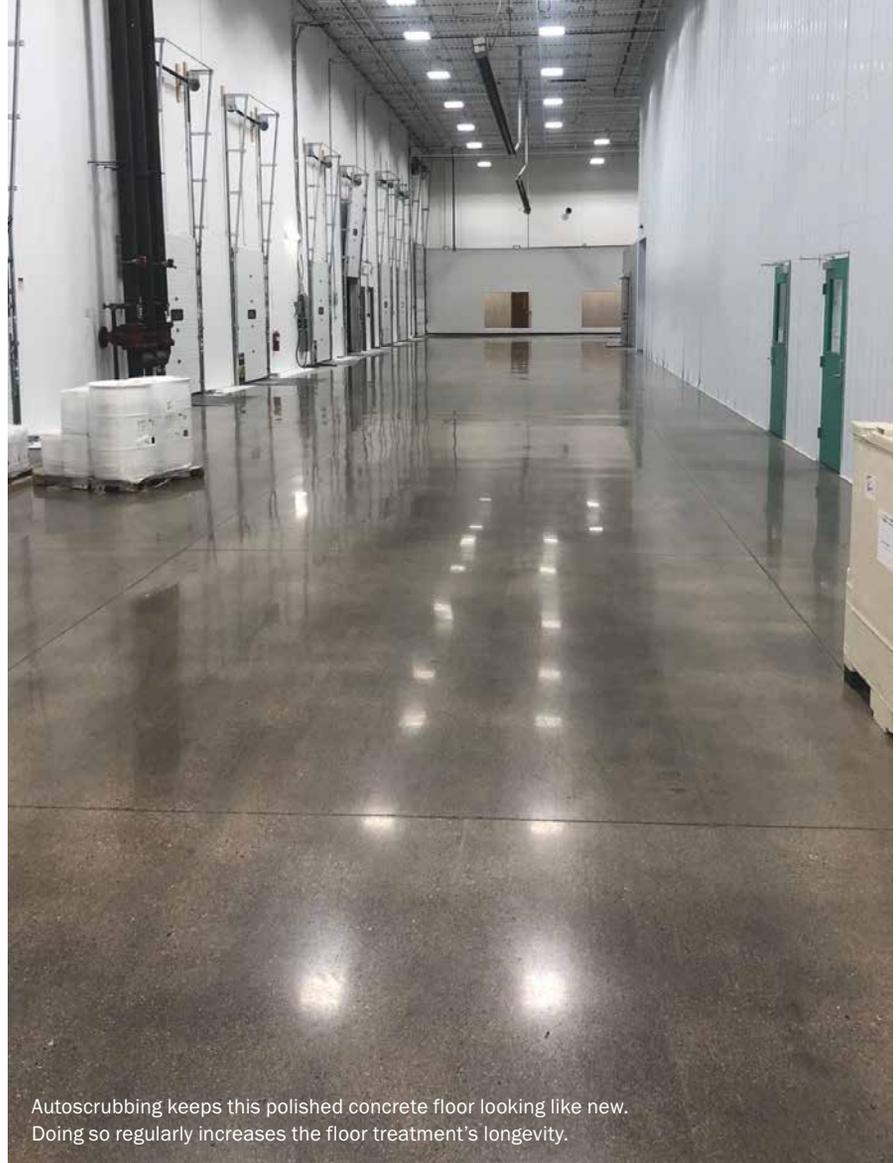
“We’re seeing much better performance out of the newer generation of sealers. Generally reseals are taking place at four or five years as opposed to two or three,” Gera says.

“One major issue we’re seeing is an incompatibility between the older sealers that are non-VOC compliant and the new, compliant ones. These jobs are making us strip the surface of all the old sealer, and restaining and antiquing along with applying new sealer. These are the jobs costing us money to service.”

Besides the additional time to do the work, Gera says, there’s the challenge of explaining to the customer that it’s costing extra to strip old sealer.

Marketing and pricing

For now, Gera says he restricts sales and marketing of maintenance programs to previous customers, mainly because of sealer incompatibility and not knowing what other installers may have used. With projects of this type, he says, “The only option is to strip the surface and start over.” He’s currently exploring ways to deal more efficiently with



Autoscrubbing keeps this polished concrete floor looking like new. Doing so regularly increases the floor treatment’s longevity.

Photo courtesy of Preferred Global

such scenarios to potentially expand maintenance services to owners who aren’t past customers.

Halverson says the matter of pricing is extremely important, but the contractor should give the cost a positive spin because of the value maintenance can deliver to the client.

Newcomer says Preferred Global’s maintenance programs are priced on an individual basis, depending on customer needs.

Brent Schmiegelow, owner of American Concrete Concepts in Conway, Arkansas, says the contractor may have to put a hefty price tag on maintenance programs to justify “running around the country” with equipment in tow to fix everything from eroded concrete floor joints to pickle-juice stains. He’s found that owners of big-box and grocery stores soon realize the maintenance program they signed up for “has gotten expensive.”

One possible option for contractors

is to limit the scope of an ongoing maintenance program to major repair/restoration work, where it’s worth the investment of both contractor and owner, Schmiegelow says.

Gera says it can be difficult to recoup and charge for all the man-hours to perform proper maintenance, which involves trips back to the site — one to clean and do detail work, and another to reseal.

“Because of this, when we schedule maintenance calls we map out as many as we can that are close to each other.” Invariably, there’s that one that’s out of the way, which costs a half-day’s work.

“I give my customers a ballpark idea of what the maintenance will cost and try to hold to it. I explain to them that their first service is time and materials, and we base future maintenance on this. We usually charge travel to the job in one direction,” a policy that offers the “best way to be fair to both us and the customer,” Gera says.

"I also consider maintenance a type of advertising. We keep the jobs looking great, our customers' friends and family see this, and it equates to more work and referrals."

Educating the customer

Newcomer says Preferred Global emphasizes educating the customer on proper floor maintenance, in the form of a detailed pamphlet and a free training session if the customer opts to tackle maintenance in-house. The customer also has the option of signing up for a Preferred Global maintenance program.

Newcomer says the education and training program for customers has "drastically reduced the warranty calls we've received as a result of improper maintenance practices." The training covers cleaning and maintenance functions, including types of brushes, pads and auto-scrubbers to use, and acceptable detergents and cleaners.

Crucial to any maintenance program is the ongoing update and revision of the program, particularly in manufacturing facilities, in response to changes and introduction of chemicals involved in the manufacturing process. Also important are preventative measures such as installing walk-off mats at entrances to catch dirt and debris, cleaning up spills in a timely fashion, and sweeping or mopping daily. 🧹

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An Uplifting Job

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

WHEN Brandon Gore of Gore Design Co., now located in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, accepted a job furnishing a huge outdoor patio on the top floor of a client's building in Phoenix, Arizona, there were three massive cranes on the job site. Together with the landscape architect, Gore designed concrete chairs, long benches and an immense table supported by a steel base which were all precast in his Arizona shop. He used an ultra-high performance GFRC mix to fashion the high-strength pieces.

When the furniture was completed and ready to be placed, Gore ran into a glitch. The cranes were already packed up and gone. Sure the chairs could fit in the elevator, but there was no way the table and benches could — unless they were cut in half. “And that would have ruined the integrity of the pieces,” Gore said. So it wasn't really an option.

He considered trying to hoist the pieces up through the elevator shaft, but the logistics were too complicated. Then he had a eureka moment — why not hire a helicopter to do the heavy lifting? The contractor was adamantly against this idea since it said it had a no-helicopter policy on its job sites (really?), but Gore persisted. The contractor finally relented when the client agreed to sign a waiver.

Very early on a Saturday morning, the big production unfolded. With a host of policemen on motorcycles looping the area, multiple firetrucks on hand and ambulances on the ready in the wings, the helicopter whirled and whisked the concrete up and away. It took three separate lifts to get the table and benches up on the roof.

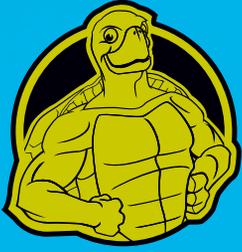
“It was an awesome way to finish the job,” Gore says. “I'd like to do this every time.”

www.goredesignco.com



Photos courtesy of Gore Design Co.





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