

# NEW AMERICAN LANDMARKS

A SKYSCRAPER, CITY PARK, BASEBALL STADIUM, HOTEL, MUSEUM, PARKING GARAGE, RESTAURANT, AND MORE—ALL OF THEM ICONIC, ALL OF THEM GREEN. THIS IS WHAT SUSTAINABLE DESIGN LOOKS LIKE NOW. BY KARRIE JACOBS

TIM GRIFFITH/COURTESY OF CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

## THE SCIENCE CENTER CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, SAN FRANCISCO

● Yes, the stunning new 410,000-square-foot building designed by eminent architect Renzo Piano is home to a planetarium, an aquarium, and a four-story rain forest. Yes, there are penguins and an albino alligator. And yes, the building is wonderfully energy-efficient and the walls are full of recycled materials. But the *pièce de résistance* is the living roof. The unique system of wire mesh gabions that hold the soil in place on the hilly, 2½-acre terrain was invented by Paul Kephart and his team at the Carmel Valley-based Rana Creek

Living Architecture (Kephart has been in the green-roof trade for 20 years). They orchestrated the plantings to attract wildlife: the beach strawberries to draw native birds; self-heal, a large tubular flower, to entice hummingbirds and bumblebees; and stonecrop to appeal to the threatened San Bruno elfin butterfly. Kephart recently visited the roof, and nature had arrived. "It's a field of dreams," he says. "We built it and they came." 55 Music Concourse Dr.; 415/379-8000; [calacademy.org](http://calacademy.org).