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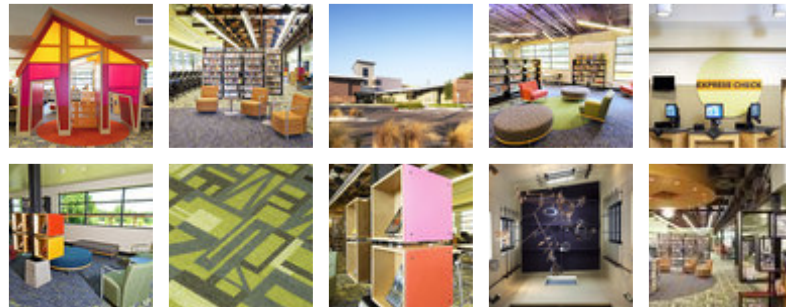
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Modern Inspiration from Austin's Twin Oaks Library



Though I've always loved libraries for all the wonderful books they contain, I've never really encountered any that contain many examples of modern or sustainable design. feels a bit weird to say, but one new library in Austin is full of inspiration with neat modern ideas and sustainable features.

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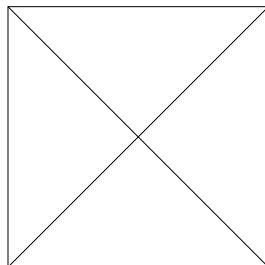
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The new 10,000 square foot [Twin Oaks Library](#) in South Austin was built to meet the needs of the changing neighborhood, which has a lot of schools and growing families with kids. A diverse area, the library also had to satisfy a range of different users with different personalities. Luckily architecture firm [Hatch + Ulland Owen Architects](#), interior design firm [Laurie Smith Design Associates](#) and City of Austin Library Facilities Construction Manager John Gillum were up for the challenge.

Built on the site of a former post office, the structure has tons of sustainable features large wood trusses of reclaimed Douglas Fir, some of the bricks from the original post office reused, recycled or recyclable furnishings and low-VOC paint. An application for LEED certification is in the works.

Though the space has a lot of neat elements that are great for the community like workstations of computers and outdoor community spaces with WIFI that can be used even when the library is closed, we of course are most interested in the fun interior aesthetics. Patterns and colors are mixed and varied, but it's the details that have us swooning, especially the modular book display systems custom built for the library.

A sculptural display fixture sketched out by Laurie Smith Design Associates and built and installed by local neighborhood resident Ed Barbee pro-bono spices up the main entrance area with custom-colored light-transmitting resin. The same bold and bright resin panels were utilized for custom-designed, four-square steel, maple & resin book display cabinets located on structural columns. You can also see the resin used in a neat kid-scaled, "crooked-house" portal that leads to the kids' area (and that we sort of wish we had in our own house somewhere). Even the interior signage is fun and modern, and a great typewriter mobile art piece ("Black Well" by Stephanie Strange) sets the creative tone for the space.

Are there any libraries near you or that you've seen that inspire you? Have you ever borrowed an interior idea for your own home from something you saw in a library? Let us know!

(Photos: [Paul Bardegjy](#) and [Sherwin Field](#))

Los Angeles [Adrienne Breaux](#) September 15, 2010 09:30AM