

Miró Rivera Architects | Austin USA



The work seemed atypical for a young American practice: the careful attention to detail, the conceptual use of materials, the contextual approach. Juan Miró, born in Barcelona, studied in Madrid and completed his post-graduate degree at Yale University in the United States. Miguel Rivera was born and raised in Puerto Rico where he graduated from the University of Puerto Rico School of Architecture before receiving a post-graduate degree at Columbia University in New York. In 2000 they joined forces to found an architecture studio in Austin, Texas.

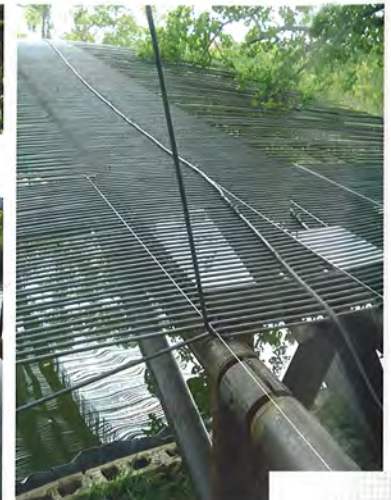
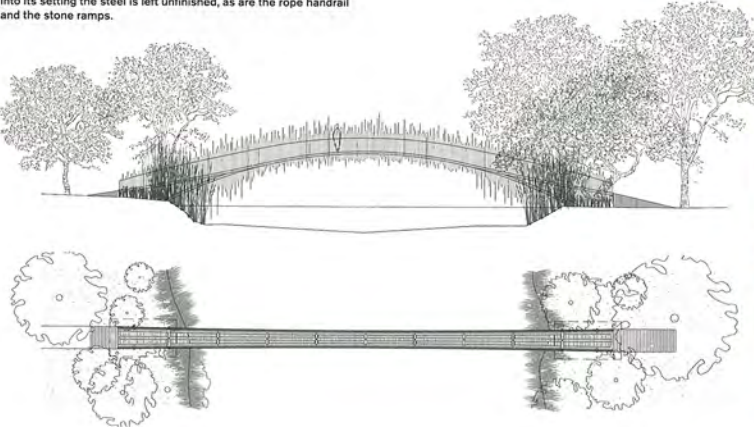
One of the first buildings of the émigré architects is without doubt also one of their strongest. For the boat dock on Lake Austin the architects arrived at an original spatial solution in a simple and very convincing way: with its reduced vocabulary and delicate expression, the longitudinal box for two boats clad with tubular steel elements boasts a sail-like tent structure to provide welcome shade on the wooden patio.

A smaller project further refined the light touch the architects achieved with the boat dock: a pedestrian bridge on a large private property outside Austin, intended to provide a link between the main building and a guest house. The architects used five round steel tubes to span the 82 feet (25 meters), creating an arched structure which they then outfitted with reinforcing rods that resemble the local reeds, protruding in part upward, in part downward. The bridge's material is intended to oxidize to better complement the surrounding natural landscape.

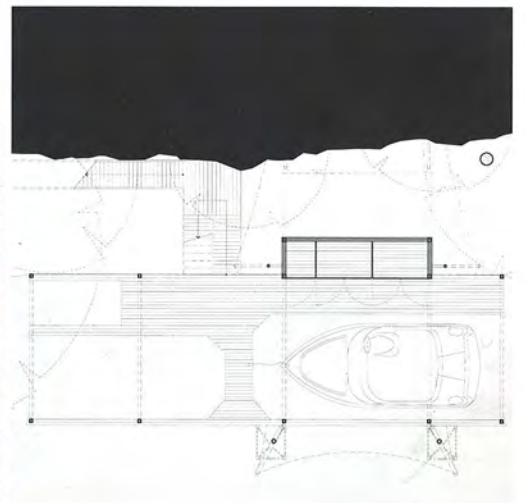
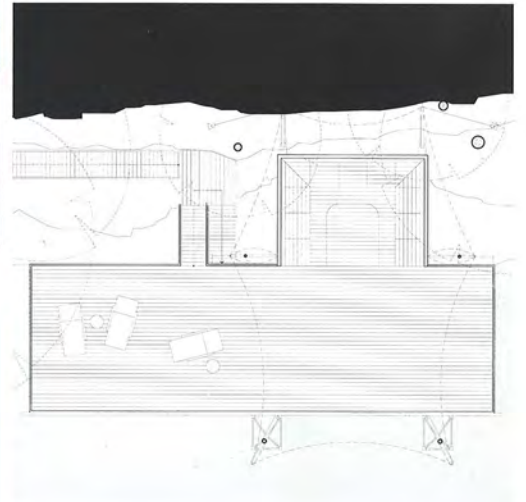
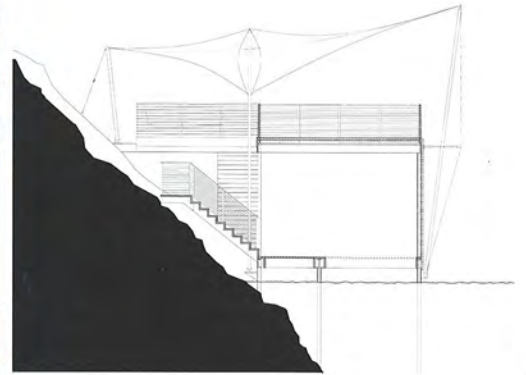
The Stonehenge House, also in Austin, was in fact the conversion of a house that had just been expanded—something of a design emergency job. Yet the result, which makes careful use of materials—copper, wood, aluminum, travertine, and white plastered walls—is spacious and pleasant, touching and beautiful.

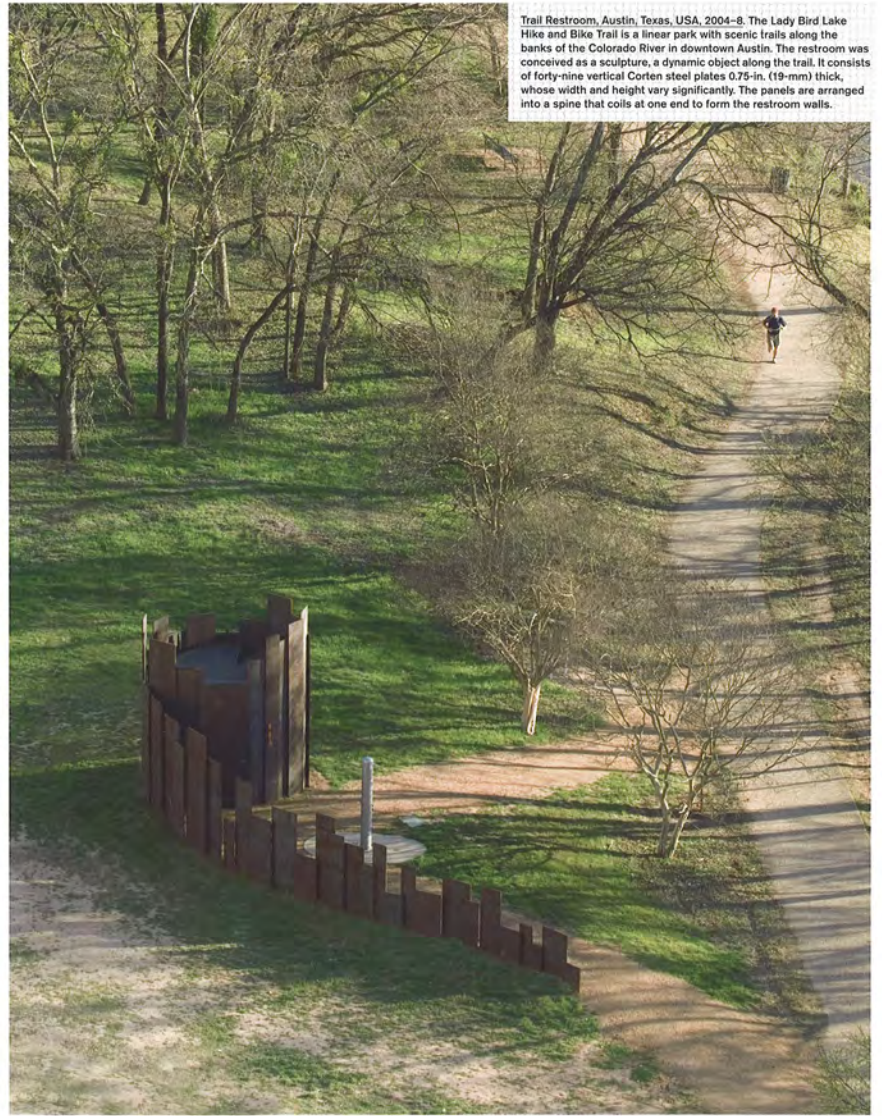
One of the latest jobs realized by Miró Rivera is the most modest so far: the Trail Restroom for a public park. Even with a small budget, the architects demonstrated with great sensitivity that effort and resourcefulness pay off in design, and a new place can be created that enhances day-to-day life. // Peter Cachola Schmal

Pedestrian Bridge, Austin, Texas, USA, 2002–5. With a design inspired by the reeds that cover the lake, this pedestrian bridge is a light structure integrated in its setting. The bars/reeds intertwine at the abutments and “grow” over the bridge, camouflaging and turning it into a symbiotic, almost invisible link. To further integrate the bridge into its setting the steel is left unfinished, as are the rope handrail and the stone ramps.



Lake Austin Boat Dock, Austin, Texas, USA, 2001-2. The boat dock is located at the base of a heavily wooded bluff on Lake Austin. The design is light and dynamic—a structure that appears to float, belonging with the boats in the lake. The box consists of a structural steel frame. The canopy is a tensile structure providing shade to the upper deck; its white stretched fabric, mast, tensioning cables, and stainless steel gear are inspired by sailboats.





Trail Restroom, Austin, Texas, USA, 2004-8. The Lady Bird Lake Hike and Bike Trail is a linear park with scenic trails along the banks of the Colorado River in downtown Austin. The restroom was conceived as a sculpture, a dynamic object along the trail. It consists of forty-nine vertical Corten steel plates 0.75-in. (19-mm) thick, whose width and height vary significantly. The panels are arranged into a spine that coils at one end to form the restroom walls.



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Stonehenge House, Austin, Texas, USA, 2001–5. The architects were asked to make adjustments to a house that had just recently been renovated. The ground-floor entertaining room was greatly expanded by eliminating the screened porch and second floor above, creating a double-height space, including a tall copper-clad fireplace. A terrace and trellis were designed to better unify the house and garden, and the dining room was appropriated to create a foyer with a large door clad in copper tubing.

