

SHOWCASING BC & ALBERTA'S ARCHITECTS AND INTERIOR DESIGNERS

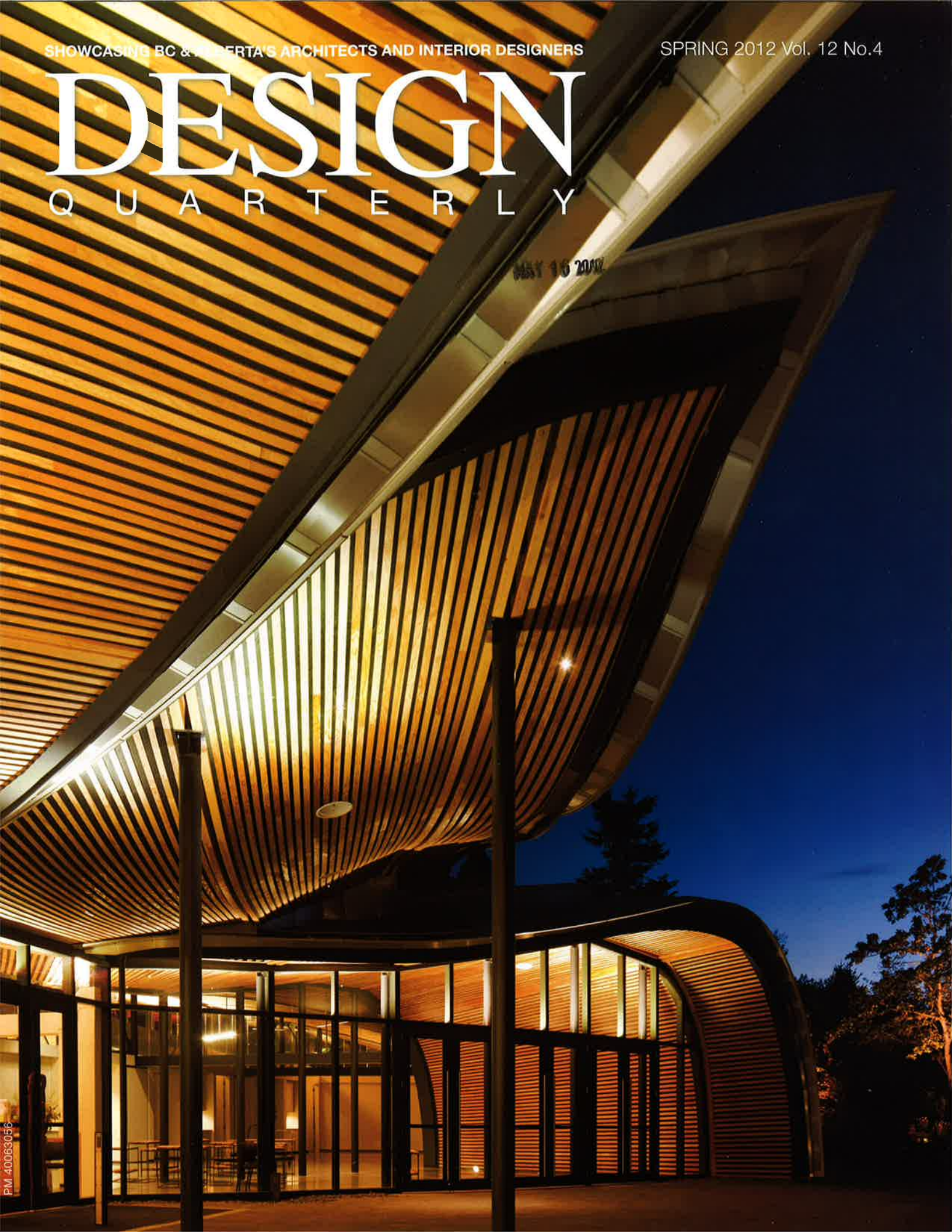
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DESIGN

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flooring that lasts

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Historically, recycled rubber flooring was most commonly used in the sports industry. More recently the durability, low maintenance and acoustic qualities of recycled rubber flooring have contributed to its increased use in commercial sectors such as museums, banks, schools and health care. When architects start to plan their building design, the end user is always forefront in their minds. In many cases, the group of people who most benefit from a well thought out design are the employees who work day to day in the building.

In an effort to improve the workplace environment, the focus to create a space that allows views to the outside, creating flexible and private work spaces while offering easy maintenance and comfort becomes top priority. With this in mind, recycled rubber flooring has been chosen for several public buildings, including BC Hydro. Part of this flooring's appeal is its slip resistance and ergonomic benefits by reducing fatigue and increasing the comfort for the employees. This was also the reason recycled rubber flooring was chosen for the Centre of Excellence at Okanagan College in Penticton. In complementing the other flooring choices, 20,000 square feet of recycled rubber flooring was installed in the classrooms as a product that met the needs of faculty and students to provide a durable, resilient finish without compromising the performance of the radiant flooring system that was installed throughout the building. Along

with its slip resistant, sound reducing and impact absorbing characteristics, recycled rubber flooring is simple to maintain.

As Robert Parlane, an associate with CEI Architecture, summarizes, "A main factor in choosing recycled flooring was the maintenance of the surface. Purchase cost is one thing, but maintenance cost is a whole other thing... maintenance can become very expensive over the life of a building."

The flooring doesn't require waxing, making things so much easier on the custodial staff. By using a no-wax flooring option that reduces VOC emissions and improves indoor air quality, the project is showing its commitment to using environmentally responsible materials in its buildings without forgoing quality and longevity.

This is also evident at the Whistler/Blackcomb Mountain Ski Resort ticket/lobby area where recycled rubber flooring was installed more than 10 years ago. After years of thousands of visitors trekking in ski boots across its surface, the flooring doesn't show its wear.

Instead, Whistler/Blackcomb Mountain continues to replace other areas within the Resort with the recycled rubber flooring because it is so durable. Not only found in ski resorts across North America, but also in ice arenas where hockey players are walking in sharp skates, the recycled rubber flooring continues to perform and show its hardness.

For any facility — commercial, retail, school, museum, recreational — creating

an inviting atmosphere is important. This is done using colours, textures and embellishments. Recycled rubber flooring is available in a variety of colours where the SBR (tire component) is combined with EPDM (coloured granules) to create whatever the imagination can conjure. With the process of the two compounds mixing, the final result often matches the look of stone or carpet, but has all the excellent properties of recycled rubber.

Also, a logo or design can be incorporated into the floor — so, whether it's a store name, a team logo or even a directional sign, valuable floor space is used. And with the option to use an interlocking tile format, patterns in the floor are easy to create and recreate just by moving the tiles around. Using an interlocking tile will also double the floor life — in areas of high traffic, simply switch out the tile with a less used area, or flip the tile.

When comparing recycled rubber surfaces to other flooring products, the life cycle cost of the rubber far exceeds other materials as most companies will take back the old floors, regrind them and put the granules back into other products, proving the sustainability of recycled rubber flooring, and also helping projects to achieve LEED credits. □

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