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## **New home for USC's School of Cinematic Arts features architecture by Urban Design Group**

LOS ANGELES -- With high performance capabilities that are rare for an educational facility, the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California (USC) debuts its new complex this month, featuring the architectural work of Urban Design Group, Dallas, Texas.

The university and Urban Design Group worked together to turn the client's vision for highly efficient, durable and useable buildings into reality.

Located in the heart of USC's Los Angeles campus, the complex is composed of six structures in total. The first two components—named after legendary filmmakers George Lucas and Steven Spielberg—opened for classes this January. Featuring a total gross area of 137,000 square feet, these components of the complex have a mix of high-performance capabilities (designed for LEED Silver status) to last 100 years, as well as thematic aesthetics to recall the school's 80-year history. The buildings' California Style was in vogue in the southern part of the state when the university offered its first film courses in 1929.

Surrounding a central courtyard, the Lucas and Spielberg structures contain classrooms, administrative offices, an indoor/outdoor café, exhibition/installation halls, eight screening rooms/theaters that seat between 42 and 200 people, and audio/visual editing labs. Construction is currently under way for the four other buildings, which will have a gross area of over 63,000 square feet. Located immediately adjacent to the Lucas and Spielberg buildings, the new facilities will be completed in August 2010 and will include animation and digital arts production spaces, four soundstages, a Production Equipment Center and a new headquarters for the school's admissions/student services operations.

Significant design aspects include:

- A computerized 3D model for design that USC's facilities management team will use as a framework for other parts of the campus
- Superior earthquake resilience—typical for nuclear energy plants—because of “fused rotating walls” that reroute fissures to repairable areas instead of destroying the buildings
- Spacious design for free-flow collaboration between students and professors, and flexibility for the changes in educational programming and technology.

The USC School of Cinematic Arts is one of the highest ranked academic institutions in the world for preparing women and men to pursue careers in all aspects of film, television and interactive media. For more information visit [cinema.usc.edu](http://cinema.usc.edu).

The Urban Design Group offers architectural, interior planning and design services to its worldwide clientele from studios in Atlanta and Dallas. For more information, visit [www.urbandesigngroup.com](http://www.urbandesigngroup.com).

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