

## Pacific Design Center, Blue Building

<b>Location</b>	West Hollywood, California
<b>Total Area</b>	750,000 square feet/ 70,000 square meters
<b>Date of Completion</b>	1975
<b>Client</b>	Cohen Brothers Realty Corporation

Affectionately referred to as the Blue Whale, the first building of the Pacific Design Center was designed by Cesar Pelli when he was Partner for Design at Gruen Associates and completed in 1975. Located in the heart of the city's trade center, the Blue Building was conceived as a single, free-standing structure to house showrooms for the interior design trades. Today, it is a multi-building complex that also includes offices for the design, entertainment and arts industries.

The Blue Building contains showrooms for contract and residential furniture and design products on the second to sixth levels, which range from 9,300 to 12000 square meters (100,000 to 130,000 square feet) in area. Glass-walled kiosks offer additional show space in the corridors, which vary from 9 to 37 meters (30 to 120 feet) in width. A skylit barrel vault that extends the full length of the building covers the Galleria mall areas on the fifth and sixth floors.

Phase II, the Green Building, originally included showrooms (and later, offices), parking for 1,900 cars, a conference center with auditorium, and a public plaza. The expansion also included a 300-seat amphitheater on the Plaza, along with a 465 square meters (5,000 square-foot) gallery, now an outpost of the Museum of Contemporary Art. The Green Building connects to the Blue Building at the terrace and first floor levels. Phase III, the Red Building, was completed in 2012.

Expanding the Pacific Design Center raised the issue of how to add to such a distinctive landmark. Because of the isolated form of the original building, the additions were designed as a series of oversized fragments to form a collection of pieces. The Green Building has a unique shape and color, although materials, scale and detailing correspond to the first building. Both buildings are organized as a series of stacked two-level atria. The buildings connect at the terrace and first floor levels.

The Pacific Design Center and Expansion have received several awards. In 1976, the Blue Building received an Honor Award from the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. In 1987, it received a Design Award from Progressive Architecture. In 1988, the West Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce acknowledged it with Landmark Award, and in 1989, AIA Connecticut awarded the expansion a Merit Award. The Blue Building received the 25 Year Award from AIA Los Angeles in 2003.

