



## Making Things

### Jay Baker Architects

#### Jay Baker

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- Esteemed historian Stephen Fox opens *Making Things* with a review of that body of work
- For Jay Baker's design contributions to architectural practice, the American Institute of Architects honoured him as a fellow in 2002. Iowa State awarded him the Alpha Rho Chi Medal (1978), identifying the one graduating architecture student who most exemplified leadership, service and merit. He received that school's Design Achievement Award (1992) for distinguished contributions to the arts
- As President of the Rice Design Alliance (1992), Jay recognised the dormant potential of Houston's historic Hermann Park and initiated, organised and delivered an international design competition intent on achieving built improvements to the park

*Making Things* reviews the collective portfolio of Jay Baker Architects since its establishment in 1991, by presenting twenty projects from across varied design platforms. Sixteen of these projects feature houses, commissioned over a twenty-five year period, and are complemented by and contrasted with an additional four projects that were self-initiated, ranging from the design of a toy to a public park. Uniting these discernably diverse projects is a common denominator. Baker's work contributes to his belief that in order to make things well, it is necessary to serve the integrity of an idea, ensuring greater incisiveness in response to design challenges. The body of work presented in *Making Things* extols the virtue of creating fit, particularly when working in multifarious contexts. Opening the book is an appraisal of Baker's comprised life's work by esteemed historian, Stephen Fox.

Since founding his firm in 1991, Jay Baker has produced a body of work recognised for design excellence at national, regional and local levels. For his design contributions to architectural practice, the American Institute of Architects honoured him as a Fellow in 2002. Iowa State awarded him the Alpha Rho Chi Medal (1978), identifying the one graduating architecture student who most exemplified leadership, service and merit. He received that school's Design Achievement Award (1992) for distinguished contributions to the arts. He received his Master of Architecture degree from Rice University School of Architecture (1980), having been awarded a full merit scholarship for his studies there. He subsequently taught architectural design at Rice for ten years. As President of the Rice Design Alliance (1992), Jay recognised the dormant potential of Houston's historic Hermann Park. He initiated, organised and delivered an international design competition intent on achieving built improvements to the park. The success of the competition prompted the commission of a Master Plan, subsequently adopted by City Council. Today, as Past Chairman of the Board of Hermann Park Conservancy, Jay is Chair of the Projects Committee, volunteering his time and expertise in overseeing the execution of \$120 million of improvements to Hermann Park, funded by both the private and public sectors.