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2023 LIBRARY DESIGN

The year's most impressive new and renovated libraries

showcase

by Sallyann Price

Welcome to the 2023 Library Design Showcase, *American Libraries'* annual celebration of new and renovated libraries that address patron needs in exciting and effective ways. This year's selections represent a return to prepandemic normalcy and demonstrate a firm step into the future, with physical spaces designed to draw in communities, celebrate local history, and acknowledge diverse natural environments. For these overhauls and expansions, form and functionality reign. **AL**

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CLIMATE-CONSCIOUS

◀ Bullitt County (Ky.) Public Library, Central Library in Shepherdsville

The new Central Library was envisioned as an eco-friendly oasis in the heart of the town's main shopping corridor. It features a geothermal HVAC system, rain gardens, and 610 rooftop solar collectors, which produce an estimated 50% of the building's electrical usage. The campus also boasts four courtyard gardens, each representing one of the four classical elements—earth, air, water, and fire—and the four seasons with native plants that flourish throughout the year. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction **ARCHITECT:** Omni Architects **SIZE:** 45,000 square feet **COST:** \$10.5 million **PHOTO:** Frank Döring Photography

◀ New Canaan (Conn.) Library

Known for its midcentury modern architecture, New Canaan is home to iconic structures like Philip Johnson's Glass House and Noyes House, as well as the serpentine River Building at Grace Farms. The new facility references these traditions: dramatic glass elements punctuate dry-laid stone walls, and decorative copper pipes symbolize New England's forests. Expansive flat roofs support solar panels, long overhangs provide shade and reduce energy use, and a new adjacent park offers green space. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction **ARCHITECT:** Centerbrook Architects and Planners **SIZE:** 42,000 square feet **COST:** \$40 million **PHOTO:** Jeff Goldberg/Esto

◀ Contra Costa County (Calif.) Library, Pleasant Hill branch

This new library is partially located on a 100-year flood plain, so its blueprint included flood mitigation strategies, such as stormwater retention basins. Its energy-efficient design incorporates local maple and cedar materials, aims for net-zero carbon emissions, and provides radiant heating and cooling, natural ventilation, and a rooftop solar panel array. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction **ARCHITECT:** Bohlin Cywinski Jackson **SIZE:** 23,788 square feet **COST:** \$34.5 million **PHOTO:** Matthew Millman Photography