

Perkins Eastman merges with BLT Architects

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The merger of Perkins Eastman and BLTa, which are respectively celebrating their 40th and 60th anniversaries, will expand more services in hospitality, education, and mixed-use sectors.

The firms' combined century of experience and depth of knowledge creates a formidable wealth of talent and an opportunity for collaboration across disciplines and studios around the world.

Perkins Eastman, which now has 1,100+ employees in 24 studios worldwide, has worked on projects on five continents in 60 countries. Its award-winning portfolio reflects expertise in healthcare, senior living, large-scale mixed use, higher education, K-12, hospitality, and workplace design as well as planning, urban design, and strategic consulting. BLTa, now known as "BLTa—A Perkins Eastman Studio," has built an exceptionally strong integrated architecture and interior design firm of 41 professionals with deep roots in Philadelphia. With a studio in Pittsburgh for the last 27 years, Perkins Eastman has built a strong presence throughout Pennsylvania, especially in Western Pennsylvania. The addition of the BLTa studio strengthens the firm's presence in the eastern part of the state as well. In merging with BLTa, Perkins Eastman enhances its expertise in mixed-use, multi-family residential, hospitality, workplace, higher education, historic renovations, adaptive reuse conversions, resorts and gaming, and transit-based projects.

"We are very pleased that BLTa has joined us and we now have a strong partner in Philadelphia. We have had the opportunity to get to know BLTa over the last several years and believe they bring significant skills and experience to our national practice. Moreover, we have always had important clients in Philadelphia, eastern Pennsylvania, and the adjacent states, and with BLTa we can now better serve those that want a combination of our national expertise combined with experienced local delivery and service," says Brad Perkins, FAIA, chairman and co-founder of Perkins Eastman.

"We are thrilled to be merging with Perkins Eastman," says Michael L. Prifti, FAIA, managing principal of BLTa, who joined the firm in 1982, back when it was known as Bower Lewis Thrower/Architects. "This union will give us the opportunity to serve our national clients in jurisdictions where we don't currently practice. Perkins Eastman has new markets we've never touched. And with more feet on the ground, we can more easily and geographically serve our clients," he says. Prifti also notes this merger will give BLTa's architects and designers opportunities to diversify their projects and continue to grow as professionals. Recent award-winning properties within the BLTa portfolio include: The Stephen Girard Building, where the firm revealed and preserved elegant design elements, integrating a 236-key Canopy by Hilton hotel within East Market, the one-million square foot, ongoing transformation of a three square block area; The Bourse, a 380,000 sf adaptive reuse renovation of the first commodities exchange hall in the United States; and One City, an adaptive reuse project that converted an 1899 Renaissance Revival office building into a market-rate apartment building. Each of these properties won a Grand Jury 2021 Preservation Achievement Award given by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia. The Stephen Girard Building and One City also won AIA Philadelphia Awards in the Historic Preservation/Adaptive Reuse Built category, and The Bourse won AIA Pennsylvania's top prize – a Silver Medal. Hospitality Design magazine named Live! Casino and Hotel Philadelphia among the Best Hotel Openings of 2020. Live! Casino Pittsburgh, another BLTa design, also opened in 2020.

Shawn Basler, co-CEO and executive director of Perkins Eastman, notes that combining Perkins Eastman's 40 years of global experience with BLTa's 60 years of local expertise and relationships creates a powerful combination. "They'll be able to draw on our well-established market credibility

and resources, as well as geographic reach, while we'll be able to tap into their deep knowledge of the Philadelphia metropolitan region along with their considerable expertise.”

Link to original press release:

<https://perkinseastman.com/2022/02/08/perkins-eastman-merges-with-blr-architects/>

