

CHARLES ROSE ARCHITECTS INC

PROJECTdata

U.S. PORT OF ENTRY General Services Administration

Del Rio, Texas USA

Commissioned by: General Services Administration, Design Excellence Program

Scope: U.S. – Mexico border crossing station; two steel canopies: primary canopy is 370 feet wide and 85 feet deep, covering northbound commercial and noncommercial lanes; secondary canopy for passenger vehicle inspection is a 200-foot span and 350 feet deep; large subterranean ducts help disperse fumes by redistributing air. Unbuilt, net-zero energy design.

The port of entry required powerful and symbolic forms that we could invest with openness, optimism and a gesture of welcome. With that purpose, we designed soaring steel canopies that could be seen from a great distance on the surrounding Rio Grande flood plain. Wing-like in form, these structures temper the harsh sunlight and arid conditions at the border and also mediate a set of complex demands. As with another commission we received from the GSA's Design Excellence Program—a 60,000 SF office building at the Pease International Tradeport—our design resolves inherent tensions between the need for openness and security, shade and transparency. Ample amounts of light, for example, are essential for security and screening vehicles; our solution creates large north-facing slots in the canopy to bring light in; the slots also function as natural vents that draw fumes from idling cars and trucks. The GSA honored our scheme with a design award in 2004.

Materials: Concrete; zinc; painted steel; concrete block.

Cost: \$19,900,000

“...Charles Rose of Somerville, Mass., won a GSA design award in 2004 for a sweeping canopy over the inspection area. The structure was designed smartly to extend east, west and south, providing relief from unrelenting sun during all seasons while allowing filtered northern light to enter interior spaces, reducing the need for artificial light....

The border station is a model of contemporary federal design—and a sign that the nation is seeking to put its best architecture forward.”

Linda Hales, *The Washington Post*, Saturday, July 29, 2006

Awards:

Design Excellence Award, U.S. General Services Administration

Publications:

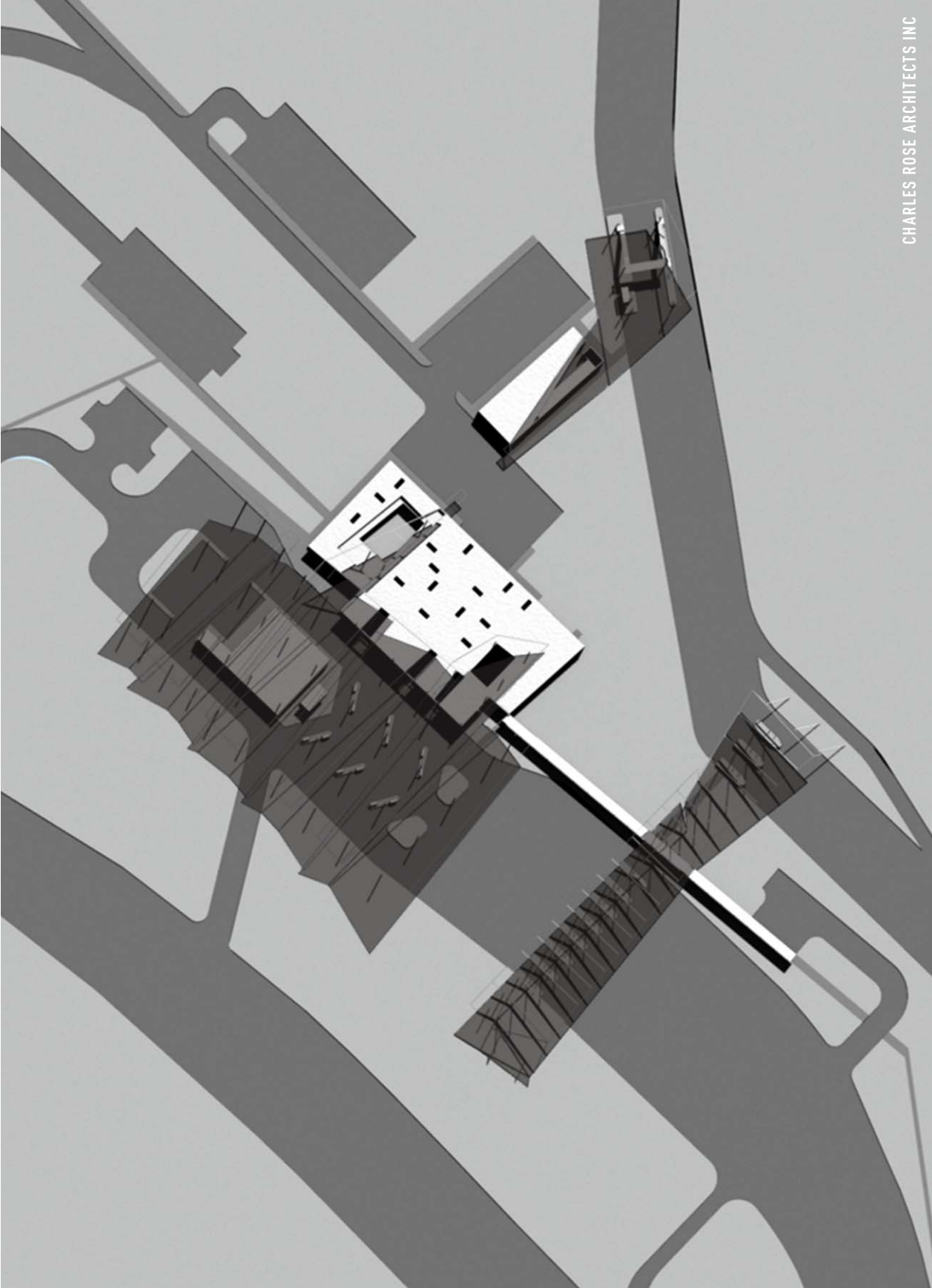
Hales, Linda: “At the Borders, Creative Crossings,” *The Washington Post*, July 29, 2006.

Charles Rose, *Architect*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 2006.

Holtzman, Anna: “Frontline Design,” *Architecture*, October 2005.



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