WIND POWER ROCKS
FOWLER RIDGE
by PHILIP TAYLOR

JEREMY GANTZ on WHERE DOES RECYCLED STUFF ACTUALLY GO?

the green issue

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Going green with your wardrobe doesn’t have to mean switching to organic, willowy fabrics. After all, one third of the green slogan is the word “reuse.” You can save the planet (and money!) and still look chic by wearing clothes that once belonged to someone else. Consignment is the new green.

Photography by Richard Hellyer
GRAM GOES LEED
BY CHRISTY BONSTELL

While there’s plenty of art inside the halls of the Grand Rapids Art Museum, the true artistic achievement lies in the minutiae of the building itself. After all, the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is the one and only gold-level LEED-certified museum in the world.

It all began with lead benefactor Peter M. Wege II, a man known for his dedication to green and sustainable living, and his request that the museum be an ecologically friendly one. It didn’t take long for the designers to come up with one of the most innovative designs in the world. The final product cost $75 million and produced a 125,000-square-foot building with amazing green capabilities—all without sacrificing a sense of style.

“The nice comment we have heard is how beautiful green is nowadays. It is elegant in design. People comment on its design alone,” says Kerri VanderHoff, marketing and public relations director.

One of the most surprising ways the museum is energy-efficient is in the abundant use of natural light—something most curators would faint at. Sunlight is known to have devastating effects on works of art. But the designers of the museum were clever enough to devise a system that is able to harness the power of the sun’s rays while deflecting its less desirable properties. GRAM’s building materials include locally made cement, carpet made from recycled plastic and wood flooring from a sustainable forest. Energy wheels located outside the building filter in fresh air for a truly forward-thinking form of air conditioning.

The building also recycles rainwater for use in its reflecting pools and toilets, and encourages employees to bike or walk to work—even offering locker rooms with showers for those who do. And, as you might guess, the GRAM keeps to a very strict recycling program.

“Our motto is earth friendly, art friendly,” VanderHoff says. “They are not polar opposites.”
Rebecca Taylor dress, $108.
Michelle K shoes, $38.