

# AIA Conference, 2013

## Composites in Architecture

If you strolled the expo floor of the Architecture (AIA) show in Denver 2013 – or almost any other major builders show like IBS or Greenbuild – you were sure to find pavilions dedicated to materials like wood, concrete, metal, stone and tile. But composites? No such luck. At the 2013 AIA show you really needed to search out the composite materials.

**AIA 2013**  
NATIONAL CONVENTION  
AND DESIGN EXPOSITION  
JUNE 20-22 DENVER  
COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER

On the show floor, you would have likely entered the large **Owens Corning** display and found a section of the booth highlighting **Tecton's Apex pultruded siding** that doesn't warp and buckle like vinyl. You might have also found some of the larger booths featuring composites like **Best Bath** and their specialty **bath products** near one of the shows heavily travelled entrances, or maybe you were drawn in by **Bradley's** open 4 corner booth featuring sleek looking *Advocate* **solid surface sinks** with built in hand dryers or **Kalwall's** translucent **day-lighting panels** in their strategically positioned booth on a busy main corner of the floor. But unless you had all three days of the show to walk and study the more than 750 exhibits, you could have missed some of the exciting composite products and solutions spread around the floor – with many of these products showcased in small 10x10 booths in less travelled areas of the exhibit hall.

## The Composite Gems

Some of the most exciting of these smaller composite exhibits included:



- **Hall Composites**, a fabricator of high strength and light weight carbon fiber products that are expanding beyond their traditional customer base of competitive sailing into the furniture and architectural composite arena.
- **Armortex**, showcasing their UL listed bullet and blast resistant fiberglass composite panels that have been approved for use by the US Marshal Service and the GSA, certified to give protection against shrapnel damage from blasts.
- **Gurit**, a provider of composite materials, composite engineering services, and tooling. Gurit helped attendees understand composite core materials and also had several case studies available to share including the highly publicized Makkah clock tower (photo above) and their structural FRP roof panels in the Haramain (Saudi Arabia) high speed rail terminal.

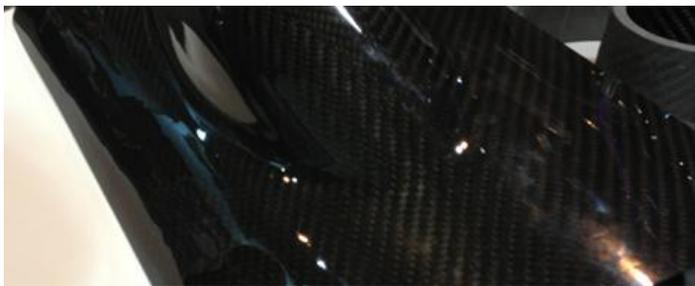
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Tecton's APEX brand pultruded siding as shown in Owen Corning's exhibit booth.



Armortex bullet resistant composite panel shown with bullet lodged in the fiber matrix.



A portion of a light weight carbon fiber shroud with a stunning surface appearance as displayed by Hall Composites.

## Raising Awareness of Composites

So, how does the composites industry help more architects and builders learn about the great things that are made available through the use of composites?

That is a question that the American Composite Manufacturer Association ([ACMA](#)) Architectural Division (AD) is helping to answer. The AD is undertaking its most important initiative since its program to gain inclusion in the international builders code (IBC). The architectural division has arranged for a composites pavilion at AIA shows beginning with AIA 2014 in Chicago. The pavilion will provide a significant boost in awareness of composites at the show and will allow composite companies to leverage our industries combined strength to capture a larger share of attendees time.

The pavilion sub-committee is led by Jeff Mooney of Best Bath Systems. If you are a member of the ACMA and would like to be a part of the composites pavilion at the AIA 2014 in Chicago, please send a message to Jeff at [jeffm@best-bath.com](mailto:jeffm@best-bath.com).

## And Speaking of the Architectural Division...

The AD utilized the day before the Denver AIA show to hold its mid year meeting. The group's current initiatives include:

- AIA 2014 Composites Pavilion
- CSI Approved Guide Spec
- ACMA Recommended Practices Guide
- Educational Outreach
- Membership Recruitment

# Architectural Division Notes

## CSI Approved Guide Specification

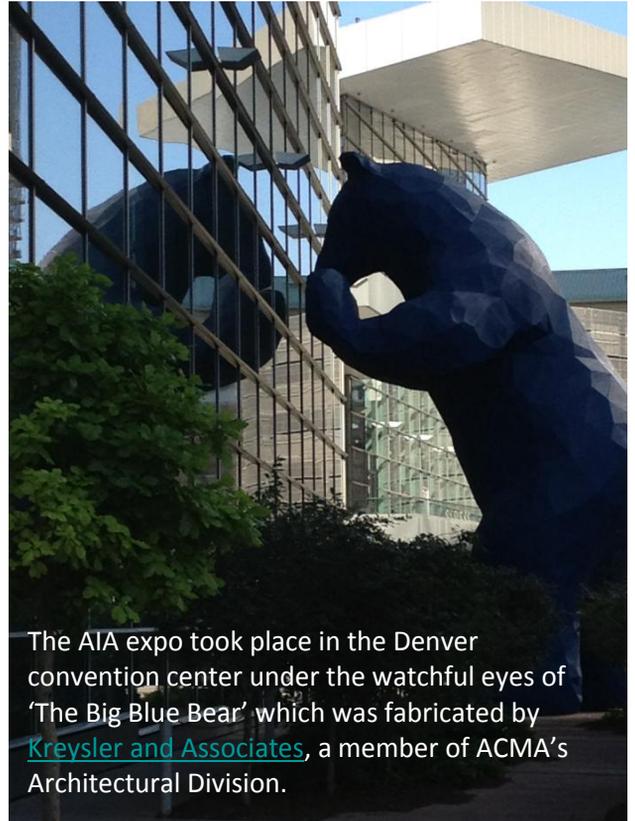
The guide spec allows architects and other specifiers to more simply define the requirements for a composite material to be purchased. While this spec is intended to be passed from the procurement group to the fabricator; a pro-active fabricator can use the guide spec to develop a specification for their product(s) and make this available for the procuring person to review, and return the specification that clearly fits the fabricators product and process. The guide spec final approval from CSI is expected July of 2013.

## Recommended Practices Guide

The ACMA's architectural best practices guide was last revised in 1995. There have been significant advances in composites since this time such as the notable inclusion of composites in section 2612 of the IBC. The guide is being updated to reflect the current state of composites especially as it relates to the world of building and construction. While the content is being edited and added by the members of the architectural division of the ACMA, the final design and presentation will be completed by a consultant through funds provided by the ACMA's Composite Growth Initiative fund. (Thanks, CGI!)

## Educational Outreach

As part of the [May 2013 CMAIA conference](#), the AD and ACMA arranged for the ACMA to become a provider of AIA continuing education credits. This further encourages the architectural community to spend their time on composite materials. The AD is organizing more formal education sessions that allow us to leverage the ability to provide these education credits.



The AIA expo took place in the Denver convention center under the watchful eyes of 'The Big Blue Bear' which was fabricated by [Kreysler and Associates](#), a member of ACMA's Architectural Division.

## Membership Recruitment

Although the membership of the Architectural Division has grown and current membership has been active, the AD sees an opportunity to diversify beyond its traditional exterior facade fabricators and supplier make-up to include more of the composite materials fabricators found throughout the industry.

If you are interested in joining the Architectural Committee and helping to grow the use of composites in the built environment, contact our membership chair Gale Tedhams of Owens Corning at [gale.tedhams@owenscorning.com](mailto:gale.tedhams@owenscorning.com).