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Architect Stephen
Kanner stays ahead
of the curve in the
Oakland hills, p.11

ARCHITECTS OF SPECTACLE

**BENJAMIN BALL AND
GASTON NOGUES**
BALL-NOGUES STUDIO, ECHO PARK

In Echo Park, orange graffiti covers the facade of the office and studio of two architects: Benjamin Ball (pictured on the left), a former set and production designer who lists all three *Matrix* movies on his résumé; and Gaston Nogues, who earned the reputation, during a 10-year tenure with Frank Gehry, as a guy who can build anything. Using digital technology and innovative fabrication techniques, the pair has created a string of temporary installations that have made an indelible impression on the design community.

In 2005, Ball-Nogues broke onto the scene with *Maximilian's Schell*, an enormous outdoor sculpture made of gold Mylar scales, at Silver Lake's Materials & Applications. The following year, for a collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Ball-Nogues constructed an off-site gallery exhibit made out of corrugated cardboard entitled *Rip Curl Canyon*, which won a 2007 AIA/LA award.

The duo spent the past summer executing their winning design for the 2007 Young Architects competition, held by MoMA and the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in Queens. At P.S.1's annual outdoor music series, thousands of concertgoers converged under *Liquid Sky*, a carnivalesque crimson Mylar canopy that filtered light into a kaleidoscopic burst of color. The installation was also a performance art piece, with sprinklers and 28-gallon buckets of water that splashed the crowd. "We wanted to create a sculptural space with crazy light effects, but also create anticipation and surprise for the audience," says Ball. —*Chloé Harris*