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DESIGNERS CHALLENGE

WHICH ROOM DO YOU LIKE BEST?
Hollywood glam, serenely minimal or Brit-chic eclectic? (p. 55)

50 THE GREEN LIST
Ways to Save the World—And Your Money

ELECTRIC AVENUES

The Outer Sunset Lights Up

PRODIGAL CHEF

Can George Morrone Reinvent the Cliff House?

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WHAT TO SEE AND DO IN SF THIS MONTH ... ESCAPING THE CROWDS IN YOSEMITE ... NEW LIFE IN THE OUTER SUNSET. EDITED BY ROBIN RINALDI

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GROUND FLOOR

Last year, Bry Sarté's Sherwood Engineers helped bring to life the century-old Katherine Delmar Burke School in the Outer Richmond, updating its courtyard, ball courts, streetscape and utility systems.

Sarté's favorite way to green his personal life, p. 64.

FROM AN ECO-HOTEL NEAR CHINA'S GREAT WALL TO THE PRESIDIO STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY CENTER. SEE A SLIDESHOW OF SARTÉ'S PROJECTS AT 7x7.COM

GREEN GIANT

If it's sustainable and being built in the city, Bry Sarté's fingerprints are probably all over it.

Bry Sarté, the founder and principal of sustainable-engineering firm Sherwood Design Engineers, has taken on a secret Buddhist temple in Sonoma, an Embarcadero office building that's designed to double as a habitat for hummingbirds, and the transformation of a needle-drop alley into cafe-bedecked Old Mint Plaza. For his next trick: Cesar Chavez ... Boulevard.

"My apologies to anyone living there, but what an embarrassing entry to our city from 101," says Sarté, who in his role as engineer for SF's Streetscape Master Plan aspires

to make Cesar Chavez Street more like nearby, tree-lined Dolores. "A third of our city is streets and sidewalks. That's the majority of our public space. What are we doing with it other than making cars move as quickly as possible?"

This is just one question the 36-year-old Cole Valley resident, who's also an artist and sculptor in his free time, deals with. Another is: How do we make the most of our water? He's working with a team on the Watershed Master Plan for Lake Merced, which he calls "San Francisco's biggest natural resource." He permitted California's first-ever rainwater harvester in a private home in Sausalito. And those plants adorning Old Mint

Plaza aren't just for looks; they are native sedges that absorb rainwater and naturally break down pollutants as the water moves through their root systems before being directed into the city's underground wells, which are critically important as emergency backup in case of a big earthquake or fire. "I'm an engineer and it blew me away how many wells are under there," says Sarté. "Instead of pushing polluted water out to the ocean, we're recharging those wells with clean water, and if we can do it in Old Mint Plaza amid tall historic buildings, a tangle of old pipes and a very small space, then it can be done anywhere." We can only hope. —ROBIN RINALDI