




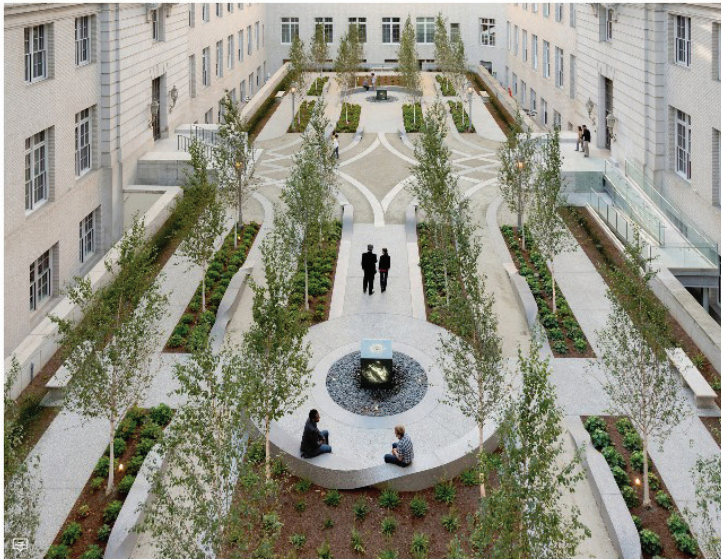
Arch Daily, December 18, 2013 "Selected Works: Ribbons/Cliff Garten Studio"
<https://www.archdaily.com/458656/ribbons-cliff-garten-studio>



Ribbons / Cliff Garten Studio

01:00 - 18 December, 2013

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Architects : [Cliff Garten Studio](#)
Location : [Union Street Plaza Garage, 2001 Union Street, San Francisco, CA 94123, United States](#)
Category : [Plaza](#)
Area : 21840.0 ft2
Project Year : 2013





Commissioned By : General Service Administration, Art in Architecture Program
Engineer : Patrell Engineering
Subcontractor : Quick crete
Budget : 460,000.00 for sculpture, not including landscape
Client : Don Douglass, General Services Administration, Art in Architecture Program Architect, Regional Fine Art Program General Services Administration, Public Building Services + Construction Division



Ribbons is a landscape sculpture for the Art and Architecture Program of the General Services Administration, at 50 United Nations Plaza, San Francisco, CA. The courtyard design transforms the classical symmetry of the 1932 Arthur Brown building, by inserting a sculptural matrix of paving, seating, fountains and planting into the building's 20,000 sq. ft. courtyard.

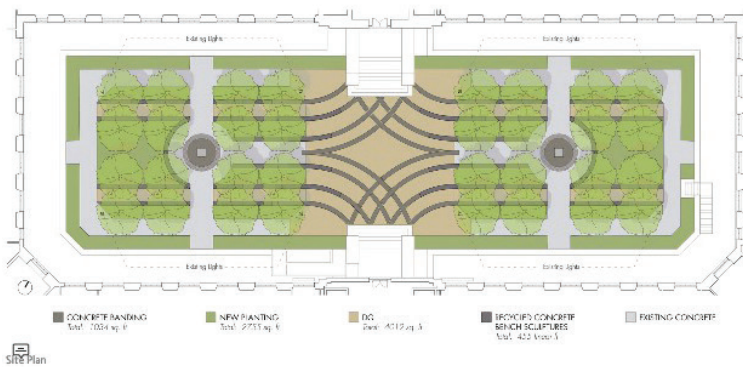




Garten re-envisioned the two classical fountains in Arthur Brown's original 1932 plan (which were never built) as contemporary granite forms. These forms are part of a larger horizontal vocabulary of an elongated classical motif of concrete paving ribbons set into a larger pervious surface of decomposed granite. Elegant cast concrete benches rise from, twist and fall back into these paving ribbons giving a rhythmically punctuated circulation system throughout the courtyard.



These sculptures made of recycled and cast concrete give the impression that the horizontal surface has been lifted to create a three dimensional interwoven form and create points of rest in the courtyard's circulation system. The green character of the courtyard is based on simple sustainable technologies, with low water, shade tolerant planting beneath a grove of 32 white birch trees that create vertical dimension between the active ground plane and the buildings white brick walls. Ribbons cuts a sensitive line between the preservation of the historical architecture and the adaptive reuse of the Federal Building by the GSA and its aggressive Sustainability initiative for the project under GSA's Design Excellence Program.



[View the complete gallery](#)

