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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Learning From Las Vegas Is Topic of Cal Poly Hearst Lecture Feb. 20

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Known for his out-of-the-box designs, architect/landscape architect Eric Strain will speak on February 20 as part of Cal Poly's winter Hearst Lecture Series "Several Afternoons in Winter," presented by the university's College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED). The public is invited to the free lecture "Re Learning From Las Vegas," at 3:00 p.m. in the CAED Gallery (Bldg. 05, Room 105).

Strain is founder and principal of Assemblage Studio, known for its daring and innovative designs. Most recently, two Assemblage-designed gardens were included in a new book called *The Comfortable Garden* by Ann and Scott Zimmerman. The firm was commissioned to design the \$3.8 million Lynn Bennett Early Childhood Development Center at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV). Assemblage won a university held competition in December 2000 to design the new five building, 45,000-square-foot complex, and has already won an unbuilt design award from the Nevada Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

"Strain's presentation will focus on design work that reacts to an environment that he has spent most of his life in," said Architecture Professor Thomas Fowler, who is coordinating this lecture and a related exhibition. "The Assemblage Studio is among a handful of emerging firms in Las Vegas that are trying to improve the design image of that city, and Strain will share with us some of his reflections on the process."

Related to this lecture, on February 19, 2-5 p.m., Strain and Jeff Hartnett, assistant professor at UNLV's School of Architecture, will be jurors of CAED architecture student work on display in the college's stair court.

And a two-day exhibition in the CAED Lobby entitled "Analysis of Las Vegas Strip" will be open to the public February 19 and 20. Student work to be presented is based on a course field trip to Las Vegas.

The next Hearst lecture is "The Making of Modern Israel" from landscape architect Kenneth Helphand, February 28. Helphand is a noted scholar, landscape historian and editor of The Landscape Journal. He has published a book about landscape architecture in Israel and is currently working on another book dealing with 'Defiant Gardens.'

And on March 7, will be a talk from San Francisco architect Chris Deam, who most recently designed the interiors of the new Airstream trailer, the CCD.

The Hearst Lecture Series brings internationally respected design professionals to Cal Poly to speak, visit classrooms and critique student design projects. The series is supported by a grant from the Hearst Foundation. For more information, call Cal Poly's College of Architecture and Environmental Design at (805) 756-1311.

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(Note to Editors: Guest speakers are available by advance request for comment immediately following each lecture. Call Ray Ladd at 756-7432 to schedule an interview.)

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