

# AUSTIN + MERGOLD

June 2009

## SURAL™ Walls

**SURAL™** is contemplation on the state of building. For some time now we found ourselves having to contend with “local” vernacular typologies – such as bank barns, farm houses, grain dryers, scare crows and vast quantities of vinyl siding – and the local long-established tradition of developer construction that is founded on very pragmatic and rigid approach to built form. There the aesthetics is traditionally a side effect, in the service of the mysterious Curb Appeal®. Recognizing the power of the vernacular, we had attempted to rethink the local M.O. of building. The result – **SURAL™** – is a confluence of rural, urban, sub- and semi-urban conditions that coexist, cross-pollinate and collide, often resulting in truly surreal situations.

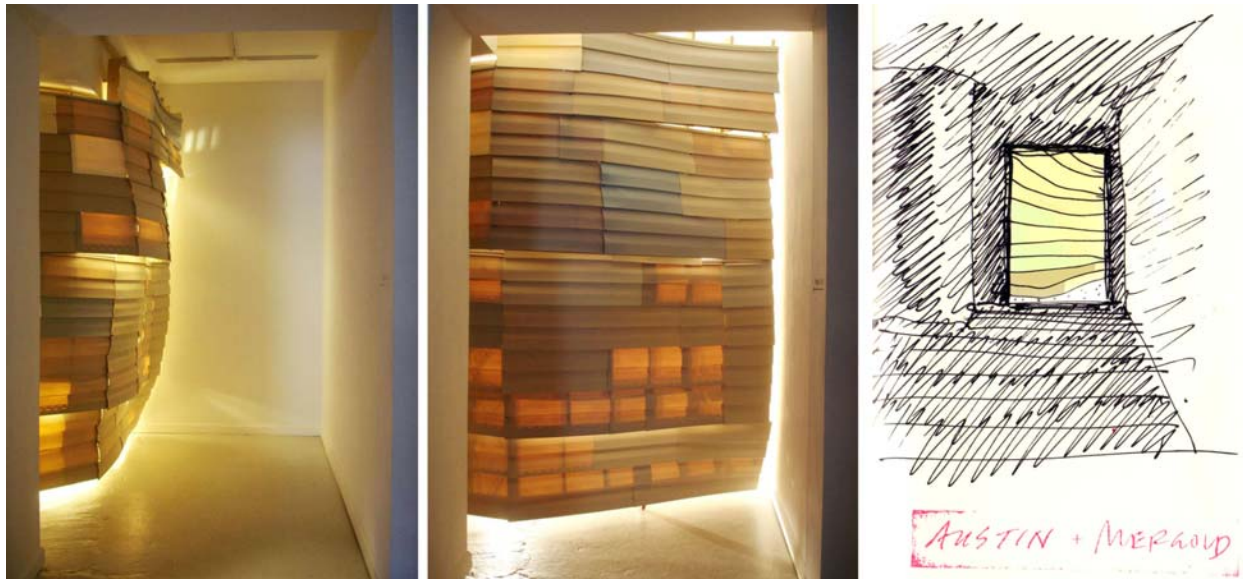
**SURAL™** reuses existing local practices, techniques and “old” technology.

**SURAL™** is an application of the “new” technology for the purposes of the repositioning, re-invigorating and reutilizing vast quantities of material & resources that have already been tapped and/or wasted but are no longer aesthetically or environmentally desirable.

**SURAL™** aesthetic is derived from the local vernacular but shaped by globalization.

**SURAL™ Wall** is a flexible and adaptable system that can be installed in a variety of settings, and, to utilize the classification of suburban housing, it can be attached, semi-detached and freestanding. Incidentally, it is also constructed out of the materials normally used in suburban building type – plywood and vinyl siding. Those decidedly unglamorous materials are explored in the **SURAL™ Walls** using the latest advances in fabrication technology (CNC milling) and innovative lighting to reveal their inner beauty and to problematize the nature of suburban development. **SURAL™ Walls** are the result of love/hate relationship that has been ensuing between suburbia and its residents.

**SURAL™ Wall II** is currently on view at Pentimenti Gallery in Philadelphia. [www.pentimenti.com](http://www.pentimenti.com)



*SURAL™ Wall II*

For more information see [www.austin-mergold.com/work\\_SuralWall2.html](http://www.austin-mergold.com/work_SuralWall2.html)