

## Going Platinum: California Academy of Sciences LEED Project Uses Polished Concrete as Sustainable Flooring

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**July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008** (Knoxville, TN): The Academy of Sciences, one of the world's largest natural history museums, anticipates receiving yet another accolade, that as the world's largest public space to receive Platinum LEED Certification. The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating system was developed by the United States Green Building Council to define 'green building' and stimulate energy conservation.

Material selection and reuse are a key factor in the LEED rating system, therefore every building component was carefully considered for sustainability as well as aesthetic impact. Jon McNeal, a member of the thirty-person architecture team, explains the choice made by Renzo Piano to utilize polished concrete as a sustainable flooring option: "[The architectural] mandate to take the most sustainable route in materials made [polished] concrete the right fit for us because it essentially takes away the need to use other materials instead of adding". He continues "It is the idea of taking the frugal, necessary material concrete and treating it enough to make it elegant, clean, durable and beautiful... without painting or covering it up."

Perfect Polish assembled a ten-man polishing crew scheduled in two shifts, seven days a week for 8-10 weeks to ensure the almost 200,000 sq/ft project was completed on time. "The end result of the polishing process is determined in large part by how well the slab was laid initially," says David Padgett, Vice President of Perfect Polish. Padgett explained that the Academy of Sciences project required additional grinding steps to achieve the look desired by the architect. McNeal commented that the Perfect Polish team did a great job with the challenge and that the architects were happy with the selection of polished concrete.

McNeal further remarks that the floors are, “really handsome stuff, sure to age gracefully and stand for a few hundred years.” Dave Padgett agrees, “As long as there is a floor, it can look like the day it was poured. Polished concrete is one of the most sustainable products out there, and it has extreme longevity.”

Besides dematerializing the project, polished concrete offers many additional environmental benefits which can contribute to LEED certification. The ambient lighting offered from a high sheen polish optimizes the existing lighting due to its reflectivity. The insulation gained from the thermal mass of constructing with concrete, including walls and exposed concrete floors, help to moderate the daily temperature fluctuations, reducing the load on HVAC systems. Polished concrete also reduces (and in many instances, eliminates) VOCs in the construction, improving the indoor air quality.

**About Perfect Polish:**

Perfect Polish is the leading polished concrete floor company in the nation, offering quality services from polished concrete and terrazzo installation, to decorative designs. Utilizing dry-polish technology, Perfect Polish installation provides flooring solutions that reduce waste, minimize and eliminate VOCs, and contribute to sustainable design.

Perfect Polish has completed numerous LEED and environmental projects, including the Academy of Sciences (Platinum), the JRC Synagogue (Gold) and the San Francisco Federal Building (Silver). Perfect Polish is a member of the USGBC and the International Polished Concrete Institute, under which Perfect Polish crews attend training to achieve IPCI Certification. For more information on how Perfect Polish can help to dematerialize your project, contact them at 1-877-91-SHINE.

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