



*Innovative Design and  
Excellence in Architecture with Steel*

*National Winner*



# Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center

**T**HE MASHANTUCKET PEQUOT MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER, LOCATED IN MASHANTUCKET, CT, is a tribally owned and operated complex that showcases the story of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, their history, the histories and cultures of other tribes, and the region's natural history.

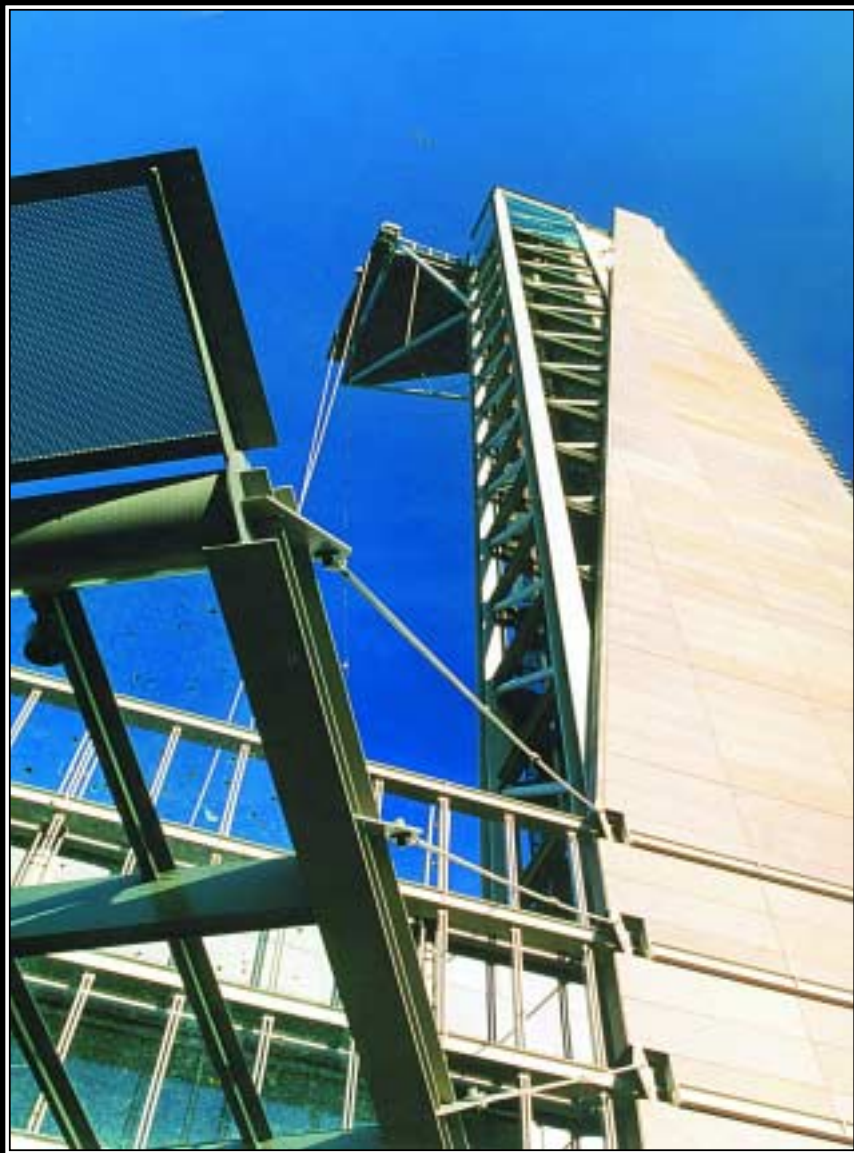
The Museum consists of permanent exhibits, the gallery for temporary exhibits, a 320-seat auditorium, a



restaurant, classrooms, a museum shop and administrative offices. The Research Center houses a library, a children's library, reading rooms, stacks, a research department, storage facilities and conservation laboratories.

The \$100 million complex, whose striking silhouette results from the individual formal articulation of its three principal program elements—Gathering Space, Museum and Research Center—provides a visual, spatial and textural link to the cultural heritage of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe. The circular Gathering Space, which is the formal and symbolic center of the institution, unifies the Research Center with the





### ***Juror's Comments:***

*The museum and research center was a clear winner. The elegant use of steel to create a series of dramatic spaces was truly inspirational. Nested in a wooded site, it is a contextual landmark. Clean, simple detailing with slender structural components are some of the building's greatest attributes. The museum and research center is completely successful.*



Museum and provides a view of the forest. It is the dramatic arrival point for the complex, accommodates formal celebrations, and is the point from which visitors access all areas. Its radial structural system and orientation on the site, with respect to the cardinal points, establish the overall order and geometry for the project.

The intersection of a half cone and half cylinder offset in plan, which recalls the tribe's historic fort, is the generating geometry for the Gathering Space. Leaning pipe columns

## Project Team

**Project:** Mashantucket  
Pequot Museum and  
Research Center

**Architect:** Polshek  
Partnership, New York, NY

**Owner:** The Mashantucket  
Pequot Museum and  
Research Center

**Structural Engineer:** Ove  
Arup & Partners, New York,  
NY

**General Contractor:** Cives  
Steel Company, Gouverneur,  
NY

arranged in a radial pattern around the semicircular base provide immediate support of the glass wall. Lateral support of these columns is provided by a horizontal arched vierendeel pipe truss, which transmits the thrust loads of the wall into the floor diaphragm of the elevated dining area. Roof support is provided by sloping 36" I-beams that are radially arranged and span from the top of the wall columns to the main roof truss. The main truss spans 180' and functions as a three-dimensional tied arch, built of a combination of I-beams and pipe sections. The roof beams are both supported by the arch and provide its stability.