Living Wall Fact Sheet

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art’s living wall is the largest in the United States. Measuring 29 feet 4 inches tall and 150 feet wide, the 4,399-square-foot wall provides a multisensory outdoor experience and background for sculpture on the third-floor Pat and Bill Wilson Sculpture Terrace. Designed by David Brenner, Principal and Founder of Habitat Horticulture, it is an ever-changing work of natural art supported with a recycled-water system.

The wall features 26,000 plants of 37 different species. Approximately 40% of the species on the living wall (14 species) are native to California and the San Francisco Bay Area, many of which can be found on forest floors of neighboring parks, including Mount Tamalpais, Muir Woods and the East Bay Regional Parks. An examination of local ecosystems similar to the conditions at SFMOMA helped determine the plant selection and composition that would thrive on the wall. A lighting analysis was performed by Habitat Horticulture to determine the wall’s design and predict the evolution of its growth. Featured native plants include Wild Ginger, Redwood Sorell, Huckleberry, Pink Flowering Currant and Western Sword Fern.

Engineered by Habitat Horticulture’s partner, Hyphae Design Lab, the wall is irrigated mostly by storm water and water condensate (excess water from the museum’s HVAC system). Special moisture sensors monitor the irrigation system so that watering occurs only when needed. The wall is held in place by felt made from recycled water bottles and polyester.

About Habitat Horticulture
Based in San Francisco, Habitat Horticulture designs, installs and carefully maintains distinctive living walls. Led by principal and founder David Brenner, the firm combines unparalleled expertise in horticulture, botany, design and construction, driven by the belief that plant life is integral to well-being, especially in urban settings.

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