

Salk Institute Architecture

Perched above the rolling surf in La Jolla, California, The Salk Institute, revered around the world as a modern architectural treasure, was meticulously restored to reflect its original design.



FACT #1
DISTINCTIVE TEAK
ELEMENTS

FACT #2
SDF – PERFECT FOR
MARINE ENVIRONMENTS

FACT #3
DNA TESTING TO MATCH
ORIGINAL DESIGN

FACT #4
METICULOUS PROCESS
TO RESTORE WINDOWS

Restoration and construction is complete on the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, a masterwork founded by Dr. Jonas Salk, the developer of the polio vaccine, and designed by renowned architect Louis Kahn.

Built to house ground-breaking medical research, the restoration effort was led by the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), which researched and funded the long-term conservation management of the complex that was commissioned in 1965.

Distinctive Teak Elements

During three years of research to prepare for the restoration project, GCI selected the Sansin Corporation to provide the durable, aesthetically-enhancing and environmentally-friendly finish for the Institute's distinctive teak window wall assemblies, which are major features of the design.

Dr. Salk considered the La Jolla, California-based Institute's design to be integral to its success. He sought to create a beautiful campus that would attract the world's best minds to research topics that today include cancer, diabetes, birth defects, Alzheimer's disease and AIDS, among others. Kahn's design entailed two wings of laboratory, study and office space that mirror each other on either side of a central courtyard, with a view to the Pacific Ocean. The institute's concrete construction is accented by the non-uniform appearance of 203 custom teak elements, which include sliding window panes, louvres and shutters.

In the course of its restoration research, GCI's team discovered deterioration in the window walls due to a combination of mold, exposure to the elements and the effects of previous inadequate installation and maintenance efforts. Erosion was found to have impacted some window sills down to one-quarter of an inch into the wood.





GCI's meticulous process to restore the windows included studying Kahn's archived design documentation and performing DNA testing on wood to get replacement teak from the same region as the original. GCI tested many different protective finishes in roof top fence tests by placing teak wood samples on the roof to assess how they would perform in the exposed marine environment. As a result, Sansin was selected to supply its SDF finish to protect and preserve this historical landmark.

"It's an honor to have Sansin's finish recognized for its exceptional performance by an organization of the Getty Conservation Institute's stature," said Sjoerd Bos, Managing Director of the Sansin Corporation. "We're extremely proud to be entrusted to protect the structure of a building that houses the work of researchers—some of them Nobel laureates—who make such an important contribution in the lives of millions of people."

In 2006, the 27-acre site was deemed eligible by the California Historical Resources Commission and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

SDF up to the task for marine environments

Sansin SDF is a superior penetrating finish that provides lasting protection and beauty to wood. Sansin SDF utilizes specially formulated oils and resins that penetrate into the wood, providing outstanding weather and UV protection in a wide range of natural, semi-transparent and even solid hide colors.

Thanks to SDF's unique water-borne technology, it can provide complete protection in just 1-2 coats. Because SDF is designed to be highly water-repellent, it's a natural choice for homes and structures in moisture rich and marine environments.

Not only does SDF protect the outside of the wood, it also protects the inside by allowing the wood to "breathe" which helps prevent moisture from getting trapped in the wood and causing rot.

The Sansin Corporation

Sansin is a global leader in environmentally-friendly wood protection.

For over 30 years, Sansin has been the only wood protection company focused exclusively on researching, developing, and introducing environmentally-friendly, 'water-borne' interior and exterior wood products. Sansin technologies deliver outstanding color, durability and performance without the toxicity found in conventional stains.

Headquartered in Ontario, Canada, Sansin has dealer locations across Canada the U.S. and parts of Europe.

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