

## INDIAN MOUND MUSEUM WINS AIA HONOR AWARD

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A museum in Florence designed around an ancient Indian mound believed to be 2,000 years old has received the AIA's highest recognition. **Lambert Ezell Durham Architecture, LLC** won an Honor Award for the Indian Mound Museum at the 2017 AIA North Alabama Design Awards.

The 3,438-square-foot **Indian Mound Museum** features an auditorium, gift shop, entry lobby and interactive display area to depict various historical eras of Native Americans who lived near the mound, which is the oldest and largest in the Tennessee Valley.

Because the mound is the museum's focus, the plan configuration curves slightly, reflecting the mound's footprint. The design provides spacious views of the mound from within the museum. Its prominence reinforced with views of the mound immediately before entering and after exiting the exhibit area.

"We took great pains from a design effort to see the mound," explains project architect Calvin Durham. "You see the mound before you enter and after, which is the point of the museum."

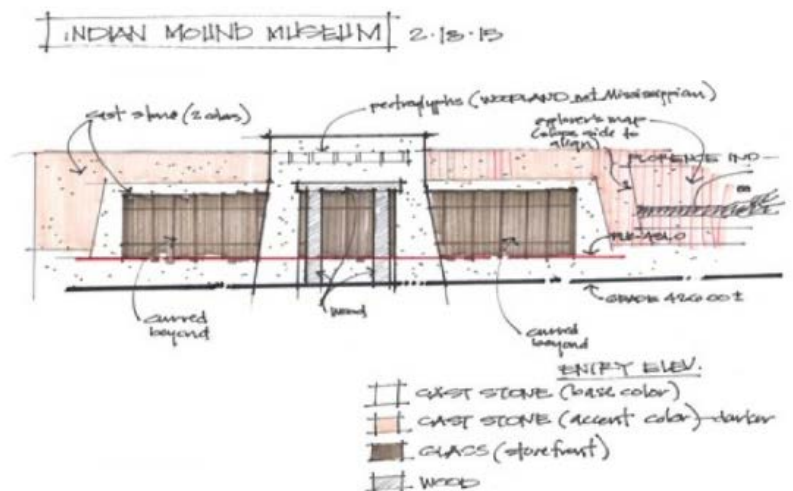
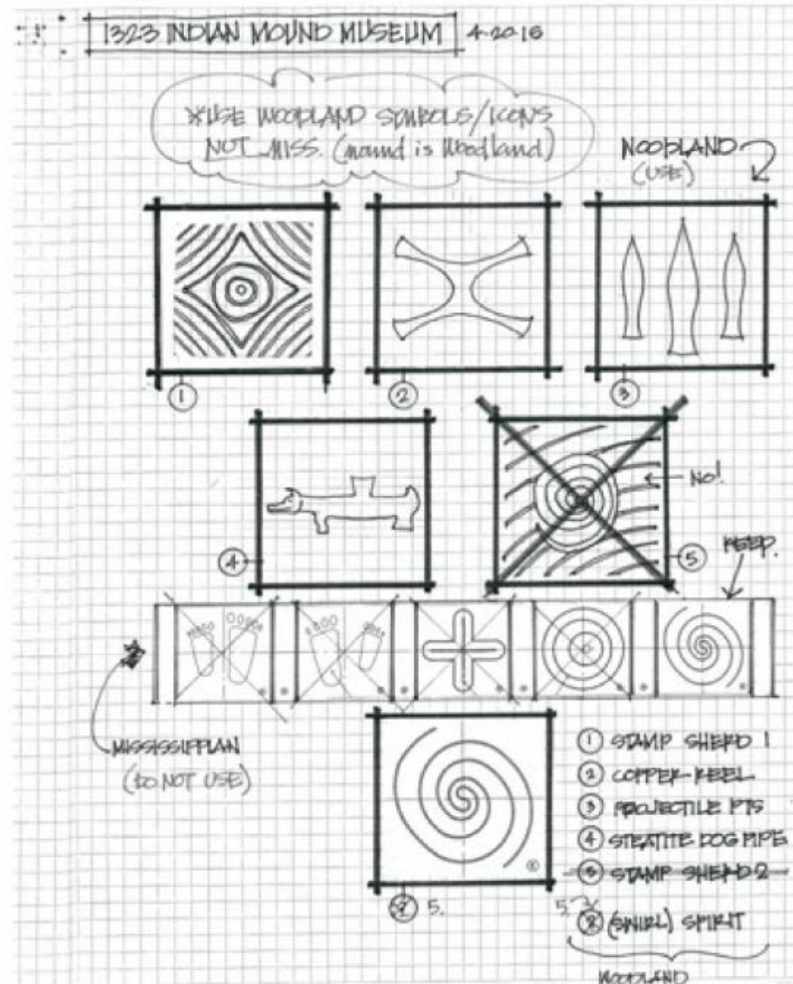
Challenges included working with a very narrow footprint, which was managed by extending the property line. The building was originally used as a radio station that had few windows.

The cross section of the mound's profile with its steep sloping sides and level top is incorporated into the museum's entry design, veneer forms and other architectural elements.

The Tennessee River was known to the Indians as "Singing River" and they believed a spirit lived in the nearby waters. The Indian swirl symbol for this spirit is anchored in the entry lobby floor and expands out into adjacent areas.

Cast stone and native cypress wood were selected for the museum's exterior along with a natural color palette for both the exterior and interior. High ceilings and large skylights produce an open and sunlit entry into the museum. Incorporated prominently into the museum's cast stone facade is an explorer's map of the river, mound and surrounding embankment.

Petroglyphs of the original Woodland Indians are carved into the cast stone veneer above the entry element. These elements are part of the overall design and serve as a teaching device.





*Image 1-They believed a spirit lived in the adjacent waters. The Indian swirl symbol for this spirit is anchored in the entry lobby floor and expands out into other adjacent areas. Symbols are incorporated into the plan, to both serve as a teaching tool and enhance the design.*

*Image 2- Cast stone and native cypress wood were selected for the museum's exterior along with a natural color palette for both the exterior and interior.*

*Image 3- High ceilings and large skylights produce an open and sunlit entry into the museum. The museum's focus is a domiciliary mound that is the oldest and largest in the Tennessee Valley, and the museum's plan configuration curves slightly, reflecting the mound's footprint.*

*Image 4 -Incorporated prominently into the museum's cast stone facade is an explorer's map of the river, mound and surrounding embankment. Petroglyphs of the original Woodland Indians are carved into the cast stone veneer above the entry element.*

*\*Article By Jessica Armstrong and Images  
Courtesy of Lambert Ezell Durham  
Architecture, LLC*