



Award of
MERIT

Grace Farms
New Canaan, CT

BuroHappold Engineering
Gabe Guilliams, Pei-Chun Yang, Nick Mykulak, Chris Coulter



“Simple visual progression: lighting helps one walk through this space. The lighting language is compatible with the architectural vocabulary.”
—Lumen Awards Judges

Gently flowing down its hillside, forming pond-like spaces on its journey, The River Building at Grace Farms imbues a sense of calm. This is the new home for Grace Farms. Its mission: to create an environment where visitors draw inspiration from nature, encounter the arts, pursue justice, foster community and explore faith. The lighting seamlessly supports this mission, creating a sublime evening experience as day transitions to night. BurroHappold succeeded in maintaining the architecture’s remarkable connection to the site, inviting people to engage with the expansive surroundings.

The walkways, courtyards and glass-enclosed volumes beneath a 1400 ft long, sinuous roof structure are transparent, dissolving the boundaries between inside and out. Wooden ceilings, both inside and out, are bathed in light, and this warm glow becomes the primary wayfinding cue. The delicate balance of brightnesses enhances the transparency of the glazed volumes and unifies the dining room, library and sanctuary.

By connecting the structure to the landscape and its topography, by day and into the night, The River Building ultimately connects people to place and to each other.

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