



# THE COSANTI FOUNDATION

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**The Cosanti Foundation**

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**The Cosanti Foundation Announces the Opening of  
“The Architecture of Possibility: Dome House” at Burton Barr Central Library in Phoenix**

*New exhibition showcases the roots of arcology at Dome House in Cave Creek*

**Arcosanti, AZ.** The Cosanti Foundation announced today that it will be opening an exhibition this June at the Burton Barr Central Library in partnership with Phoenix Public Library. The exhibition, entitled “The Architecture of Possibility: Dome House,” traces the history of arcology—The Cosanti Foundation’s own theory of sustainable urban planning—back to its earliest roots in the design of Paolo Soleri and Mark Mills’ Dome House in Cave Creek. The exhibition opens with a free public reception on Thursday, June 9th from 5:00 to 6:30 PM outside the Arizona Room at Burton Barr Central Library in Phoenix.

Arcology is a combination of the terms architecture and ecology. The concept proposes a shift in architectural and urban design away from sprawl development and toward a human-centered and environmentally-responsible approach. Arcology first appeared in print in The Cosanti Foundation’s 1969 publication, *Arcology: The City in the Image of Man* by Paolo Soleri, which was followed by a record-breaking exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC in 1970 and the concurrent establishment of Arcosanti, a prototype arcology and ongoing demonstration project near Mayer, AZ. Originally considered a somewhat radical theory, many aspects of the arcology concept have been embraced by mainstream culture and by professionals in numerous fields in the half-century since it was initially proposed. Decades before the formal articulation of arcology, Soleri’s design for Dome House was already incorporating key tenets of the theory.

Curated by The Cosanti Foundation’s Assistant Curator Noémie Despland-Lichtert, “The Architecture of Possibility: Dome House” explores the history and current state of this unique dwelling—commissioned by Leonora Woods in 1949. The exhibition introduces viewers to the notion of early sustainability and energy conservation, desert masonry, and the architectural and artistic uses of found objects. The exhibition illustrates the Dome House design, investigates the geothermal properties of the construction method, brings in perspectives from current and

past inhabitants, and presents archival materials from the Cosanti Foundation Archives at Arcosanti and the Mark Mills Papers at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

The Burton Barr Central Library is already home to a number of books and several works of art produced by The Cosanti Foundation over the years, including examples of the widely-recognized bronze and ceramic bell assemblies that are created by hand by the artisans of Cosanti Originals at both Arcosanti and Cosanti (The Cosanti Foundation's two flagship properties). Moreover, the design of the library itself came from architect Will Bruder, a graduate of The Cosanti Foundation's long-standing multi-week arcology workshop program. Arcology remains an important theory for planners and architects worldwide, and The Cosanti Foundation is honored to be partnering with Phoenix Public Library in this opportunity to enhance public awareness and understanding of the concept and its local roots.

### **About The Cosanti Foundation**

Founded in 1965, The Cosanti Foundation is an Arizona-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to inspire a reimagined urbanism that builds resilient and equitable communities sustainably integrated with the natural world. Our vision is a world of equitable communities which improve earth/life balance and do better with less. We pursue this mission and vision at our two flagship locations, Cosanti (in Paradise Valley near Phoenix) and Arcosanti (near Mayer in central Arizona), as well as with projects, programs, and partnerships that hundreds of thousands of people have participated in over the last 57 years.

Through ongoing experimentation with and application of the principles of arcology (a combination of the words architecture and ecology), we seek to demonstrate a kind of construction and community that offers an alternative to sprawl development and a solution to modern social and environmental crises.

The Cosanti Foundation also owns and operates Cosanti Originals, makers of world-famous bronze and ceramic windbells and other artisan items.

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